



October 28, 2014

Dr. Sabina Burton
5768 Maple Grove Lane
Platteville, WI 53818

Dear Dr. Burton:

I am writing this Letter of Direction in response to some of your recent activities in which you have displayed unprofessional and concerning interactions with your campus colleagues. In this Letter, I will describe some of the specific incidents that have caused me concern and give you directions about my expectations for your future behavior.

The following is a summary of the most serious incidents that have led to this letter:

1. I have received dozens of your emails since May 2014 in which you have made serious accusations against Dr. Dalecki and have claimed that he has abused you. Each time you have failed to support your allegations with factual basis. This would have been disturbing even if you only sent the email to Dr. Dalecki himself or to me, but at times you have sent them out to your entire department or to the Provost and Chancellor, such as the email of October 2, at 8:40 PM . It is entirely inappropriate for you to engage in this public and unsubstantiated campaign against Dr. Dalecki.
2. You wrote an inflammatory email on June 6, 2014 at 10:45 PM to the entire Criminal Justice Department accusing recently resigned colleagues of unethical behavior and threatened to ask the Wisconsin Attorney General to investigate what you claim—without supporting information—is a conspiracy. You also threatened to involve students in your campaign. It is entirely inappropriate for you to make unsubstantiated and inaccurate claims of unethical behavior against people and it is particularly wrong and disturbing that you might involve students in your personal campaigns.
3. After partially organizing a visit by colleagues in Germany, in June 2014 you abruptly informed your chair that you had no intention on being part of that visit only a few days before your German colleagues arrived, forcing Dr. Dalecki to assume responsibility for the entire visit. You knew that you were arranging for this visit to take place over the summer and you should never have set up this event if you were unwilling to follow through.
4. You asked Dr. Valerie Stackman, a new Assistant Professor and your mentee at the time, to house-sit for you during the summer. This request was inappropriate and placed a junior colleague in an awkward position. As a result of this unprofessional demand as well other poor interactions with Dr. Stackman, we had to remove you as her mentor. You have continued to complain about this and have refused to take responsibility for your own part in your removal as Dr. Stackman's mentor.



5. On October 7, 2014 at 7:23:18 AM, you sent an email to Academic Staff member Deb Rice demanding information regarding an independent study for a criminal justice student. The tone you used was unnecessarily accusatory and entirely unprofessional.

6. On October 16, 2014, at 4:34:12 PM, you threatened Dr. Patrick Solar, a second-year assistant professor, with consequences to his potential tenure bid because you were displeased with his interpretation of his role as committee chair. You said:
“I am doing my best to treat you with the respect and collegiality due a junior faculty member by a senior tenured faculty member. I will be writing an annual evaluation of your performance giving you my input about your possibilities for tenure as I am required to do by policy. I will of course reference this violation [sic] but I’m sure that with your hard work and commitment to following policy in the future I will have fabulous things to say about you that may help offset this little bump in the road.”

It was wrong for you to threaten Dr. Solar on his tenure application at all. It was even more inappropriate for you to threaten Dr. Solar over a matter in which only you believe that he has improperly carried out his duties as committee chair.

7. On October 23, 2014, I learned that you had told students who wished to pass on a concern about Dr. Stackman to by-pass the interim department chair because, you said, he was biased. Standard operating procedure provides that students should start with the department chair for any such concerns. It was wrong for you to tell students that the interim chair was biased and wrong to involve students in your campaign against Dr. Dalecki. I also fear that you may have instigated the complaint against Dr. Stackman.

These events show a consistent pattern of unprofessional and inappropriate behavior by you. I am particularly concerned by your attempts to bully junior faculty and your involving students in your personal grievances. As a result of these behaviors in the last eight months, I am compelled to provide you with a clear set of directions to solve the issues and problems that you have created.

Direction #1. You will actively work to resolve your complaints and issues on the most local level possible: your department, before invoking assistance from the administration.

Direction #2. You will cease all email activity making groundless and unwarranted accusations against Dr. Dalecki or any other members of the university community.

Direction #3. You will hence forth treat your colleagues in the criminal justice department with respect and keep your comments about them to the appropriate arena.

Direction #4. You will apologize to Dr. Solar for your inappropriate comment regarding his progress toward tenure. When it becomes time to consider Dr. Solar for tenure, you will recuse yourself if you are unable or it appears that you are unable to consider his application fairly.

Direction #5. You will cease involving students in your personal disputes and grievances.



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Failure to follow these directions will likely result in disciplinary action.

I strongly suggest that you contact the University's Employee Assistance Program for confidential help (608-342-1530; voelz@uwplatt.edu).

Yours very truly,

Dr. Elizabeth Throop
Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Education