

April 23, 2009

TO: Jim Bennett, Chairman
JSU Board of Trustees

FROM: Charlie Waldrep
Waldrep, Stewart & Kendrick LLC
Attorneys At Law

Our Firm was engaged as special counsel to review the dissertations of Dr. Carl Henry Boening and Dr. William A. Meehan. Both of these dissertations were submitted to the College of Education at the University of Alabama pursuant to the curriculum requirements for the Doctor of Education Degree in the Area of Administration of Higher Education. Dr. Boening's dissertation was entitled "*Faculty Renewal Through Sabbatical: An Analysis of Sabbatical Application Patterns, 1986-1996*" and dated 1996. Dr. Meehan's dissertation was entitled "*An Analysis of Sabbatical Application Patterns, 1988-1998, At Jacksonville State University*" and submitted in 1999.

Both dissertations were thoroughly reviewed and portions of which appeared to be the same or similar were highlighted and cross-referenced. We also highlighted information that was contained in one dissertation, but not the other. We did not engage the services of an expert to determine whether plagiarism was involved as it is our opinion that only the conferring university can make that determination absent some legal challenge by a party claiming some proprietary interest in the Boening dissertation.

Accordingly, we submitted our work product to legal counsel for the University of Alabama system and we were informed that an anonymous claim of plagiarism was made against Dr. Meehan some year or so ago and that an investigation of same had determined that the allegation was without merit. We were further informed that the University of Alabama would not reopen the investigation in light of the fact that one of the faculty members involved with the dissertations had died, another faculty member has moved to another state and is no longer associated with the University, and that Meehan's dissertation was over 10 years old.

In conclusion, we believe very strongly that the Trustees and Administration of Jacksonville State University have no grounds to pursue the allegations of plagiarism any further. The University of Alabama is the institution that conferred the Degree of Doctor of Education in the Area of Administration of Higher Education on Dr. William A. Meehan and only the University of Alabama, under these circumstances, can question whether there were any violations of its curriculum requirements. The University of Alabama has determined that there are no violations of its curriculum requirements in this instance, so that decision should conclude this matter.