

TO: ROBERT N. AEBERSOLD, INTERIM PRESIDENT

FROM: TOMMIE CARR, COORDINATOR OF MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS/
DIRECTOR OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

DATE: MARCH 14, 2005

RE: SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT OF [REDACTED]

RECEIVED

FEB 06 2018

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY & EQUITY

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT:

Complainant [REDACTED], a student, alleged that Professor Josh Perlstein subjected her to sexual harassment on or about April 30, 2004. Specifically, complainant charged that on that day, Professor Perlstein made several unwelcome comments to her, which made her very uncomfortable and gave her a long kiss on the cheek from which she was visibly shaken. Further, complainant alleged that Professor Perlstein invited her to his play on the following week and suggested that they go to dinner after the play to which complainant claimed that she gave a noncommittal reply. As complainant and Professor Perlstein departed, complainant stated that Professor Perlstein hugged her goodbye and as he hugged her, he allegedly grabbed complainant's butt and squeezed it. Complainant charged that Professor Perlstein e-mailed her later in the day regarding their earlier meeting and despite her objections, Professor Perlstein continued to send complainant unwelcome e-mails until complainant's parents e-mailed him warning him not to talk to complainant any further and not to approach her on campus again.

While attending a show a few days later, complainant alleged that Professor Perlstein, immediately came over to her, touched her hand, and apologized. In addition, complainant charged that Professor Perlstein approached her after the show in an attempt to allegedly "talk together about what happened."

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION:

The Office of Multicultural Affairs/Affirmative Action conducted a full investigation of complainant's allegations to determine whether Professor Perlstein sexually harassed complainant, in violation of Central Connecticut State University's Sexual Harassment Policy.

Complainant reported the allegations of sexual harassment to the Office of Multicultural Affairs/Affirmative Action on September 29, 2004. She was initially interviewed at length on said date and interviewed again on January 14, 2005 regarding Professor Perlstein's response to the allegations. Complainant was provided with copies of the University's Sexual Harassment Policy as well as the Discrimination Complaint Procedures. She filed a written statement of charges on October 13, 2004. Professor Perlstein was notified of the complaint on November 9, 2004 and provided a copy of the allegations on November 11, 2004, in addition to a copy of the University's Sexual

Harassment Policy and the Discrimination Complaint Procedures. He was subsequently interviewed on November 30, 2004 with his union representative, Caryl Greateorex present. Professor Perlstein provided a written response at that time.

Neither complainant nor Professor Perlstein identified any individuals who had first hand knowledge of this matter. Therefore, no other individuals were interviewed. The investigation was concluded on January 31, 2005.

FINDINGS:

At all times pertinent to the complaint, complainant was a student at the University and Professor Perlstein was a professor in the University's Theatre Department. Complainant had been a student in Professor Perlstein's [REDACTED] class approximately [REDACTED] years prior to the alleged incident. All students in the class, including complainant, developed a very friendly, close working relationship with Professor Perlstein as well as with each other.

On or about April 23, 2004, Professor Perlstein attended a musical that complainant [REDACTED]. Professor Perlstein congratulated complainant on the show. Complainant and Professor Perlstein agreed to get together for "catching up." Complainant, later, e-mailed Professor Perlstein to arrange a day and time for them to get together.

On or about April 30, 2004, complainant met Professor Perlstein as planned. They agreed to go to the park to talk. The conversation initially began by talking about what was happening in their lives. Complainant talked about her classes and her plans for after graduation. Professor Perlstein discussed the stressful things that were happening in his life. Professor Perlstein alleged that as he spoke, complainant began rubbing his back in a soothing manner. Complainant acknowledged that she touched Professor Perlstein's back, but claimed that she patted his back as encouragement. Complainant asserted that as Professor Perlstein talked about his life after college and his current career, he indicated that he kept returning to Connecticut. Complainant responded that it must be his destiny to which Professor Perlstein answered, "I think my destiny might be sitting right here on the bench with me...but my destiny's not Connecticut." In addition, complainant contended that Professor Perlstein went on to say how amazing it had been to have complainant in his [REDACTED] class and what a rare and talented person she was. He then said that on the day that they hugged after her play, on or about April 23, 2004, "the whole room swirled around me." These comments made complainant uncomfortable and she perceived them as "hitting" on her as well as unwelcome. However, she did not express this to Professor Perlstein. After several additional comments, Professor Perlstein kissed complainant on the cheek. Complainant was shocked and unable to object, but did make an exclamation. Professor Perlstein confirmed that complainant appeared shocked by the kiss. In response to complainant's question about his upcoming play, she claimed that Professor Perlstein told her to "come on Tuesday night" and they would "go out for dinner afterwards." Complainant stated that she made a noncommittal response.

Complainant asserted that as she and Professor Perlstein returned to campus he tried to hold her hand, but complainant made her hand go limp and Professor Perlstein took his hand away. Professor Perlstein affirmed that he indicated to complainant that he had been moved by their interaction and suggested that they get together again. Further, Professor Perlstein stated that complainant responded negatively to his suggestion and that he was confused "over her upset" since he perceived that she had been very expressive of her feelings. Complainant claimed that as she and Professor Perlstein parted he hugged her and grabbed her butt. Professor Perlstein denied that he grabbed complainant's butt.

Later that day, Professor Perlstein sent complainant an e-mail indicating that he thought the earlier meeting was "splendid" and to "forget the troubles....today we had none." Complainant emphatically replied 'no' to the e-mail. Professor Perlstein's response questioned complainant about her 'no' reply. He apologized and said he thought that he should not pursue another meeting, but suggested that they meet the next day, in case he had misread her intentions. In complainant's response, she clearly described what she felt about the meeting earlier that day, including her inability to express her feelings at that time. Complainant concluded this e-mail with "Don't talk to me again." Despite this clear statement, Professor Perlstein sent another e-mail to complainant stating that he regretted nothing but her rage and felt that all was not lost. Complainant did not reply to the e-mail. Then, Professor Perlstein sent another e-mail to complainant in which he stated that he realized that he "violated a trust" and that he considered her "in other ways," even for a moment. Complainant's father e-mailed Professor Perlstein a warning to cease all contact with complainant. Professor Perlstein sent an apology to complainant's father and assured him that he would cease contact with complainant immediately.

On or about May 5, 2004, complainant attended a play directed by Professor Perlstein. Complainant alleged that when she arrived with a group of friends, Professor Perlstein immediately came over to her, brushed her arm, and apologized. However, Professor Perlstein denied that he made a first contact with complainant. He contended that complainant initiated a brief conversation by congratulating him on his play and he interpreted her actions as a sign that they could clarify any misunderstandings that had occurred. Complainant acknowledged that she did congratulate Professor Perlstein as the group congratulated him in order not to alert her companions to what had transpired between she and Professor Perlstein, but did not intend to begin any conversation regarding the events that had occurred. Since that time, complainant and Professor Perlstein have had no further contact.

Professor Perlstein provided a written statement in which he admitted that he had exercised poor judgment and misunderstandings arose from those judgments. While Professor Perlstein acknowledged that he had been very moved by the interactions that occurred between him and complainant on or about April 30, 2004 and that he felt it would be nice to get together again, he maintained that he did not coerce or suggest anything physical. Further, Professor Perlstein contended that he was confused by complainant's negative response given his perception of feelings expressed earlier by

complainant and that he had attempted to relieve complainant's upset. Professor Perlstein indicated that he intends not to have any further contact with complainant.

ANALYSIS:

The findings of the complaint were analyzed to determine if Professor Perlstein sexually harassed complainant, in violation of the Central Connecticut State University's Sexual Harassment Policy.

The University has a zero tolerance sexual harassment policy. The policy defines sexual harassment as "any repeated, unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when: 1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly the basis, term, or condition of any individual's employment or a factor in an individual's grade, evaluation, promotion or retention; or 2) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive learning or working environment."

The above noted findings suggest that on or about April 30, 2004, complainant was subjected to conduct of an unwelcome sexual nature by Professor Perlstein. While complainant perceived Professor Perlstein's unwelcome comments on or about April 30, 2004 to be "hitting on her" and made her uncomfortable, she was unable to communicate it to him. However, when Professor Perlstein kissed complainant, she was visibly shaken and he admitted that he was aware that complainant appeared shocked by the kiss. In subsequent e-mails sent to complainant by Professor Perlstein, complainant made it clear that she did not want Professor Perlstein to contact her any further. However, Professor Perlstein continued to e-mail complainant despite her statement until complainant's father intervened at which time Professor Perlstein ceased to e-mail complainant.

On or about May 5, 2004, complainant attended a play with friends. As part of the group she congratulated Professor Perlstein after the play. Professor Perlstein perceived complainant's congratulations as an opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings to which complainant again responded that she did not want any further contact with him. In a written statement, Professor Perlstein admitted that he had exercised poor judgment in his interactions with complainant and misunderstandings occurred.

Based on the above noted findings, Professor Perlstein engaged in conduct on or about April 30, 2004 that constitutes repeated, unwelcome sexual advances and such conduct had the effect of creating a hostile and offensive learning environment. It is, therefore, determined that the totality of Professor Perlstein's actions constituted sexual harassment in violation of the Central Connecticut State University's Sexual Harassment Policy.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that Professor Perlstein have no further personal contact with complainant.

-----Original Message-----

From: Deventhal, Thomas (Theatre)
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2014 1:39 PM
To: Pisano, Lou (Human Resources)
Subject: RE: New message from [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]

This is Thom Deventhal. I never worked with you directly so you may not remember me, but I teach in the Theatre Department. 5 years ago we had a new hire named Sheila. She's had some trouble with Josh and wondered if she might talk to you.

May 23, 2013 6:50 pm

[REDACTED] I have not felt right since messaging you. Please forget I did, although I'm quite happy to have seen your wall photos. Perhaps I'll get to hear [REDACTED] one day (Are you still playing? So sorry to read about [REDACTED]). If you would like to pursue this the colleague I mentioned is Sheila Siragusa and she is on facebook.

Hope I didn't upset you.

Breath and Laughter,

Thom

February 26th, 9:50pm

Hi Thom,

I am sorry for such a late reply...I had no idea my FB email even HAD a "junk mail" folder, and your message went directly into it. I just found your message tonight and read it for the first time. I'm sorry I didn't see it sooner...and I am sorry to hear that people are still having "issues" with Josh, even after all this time! Could it be possible that the real issue is with the man himself? I hope you're well, and I hope that the Theater department is in a happy place. It usually was when you were in it.

Take care.

February 27th, 12:04pm

I feel so wonderful having been rescued from the junk files!

Thanks for replying. I assumed that I had touched a nerve that didn't want touching. Things are a little better today. It is astounding how long things can last tho.

Nice to have the opp to look in your facebook window and watch your mom journey. Good work! [REDACTED]

Breaths and laughter...

February 27th, 5:15pm

Haha....sorry again it took a year to reply! Having had SO much time to gain perspective on my college years, I still look back with feelings of sadness and hurt on my final experiences with Josh outside of the theater department. I assume you are still on faculty in the department, and don't want to make anything awkward between you and Josh, but I just have to know....was I simply too naive, to think I could have an innocent friendship with him at a time when he was clearly hoping for more, even from such a "child" as I was? I got the impression from several of my girlfriends who were majoring in theater that his incredibly forward behavior with me was just one of many instances of him pushing boundaries with students. One of the hardest things for me to "move on" from was the feeling that I was the one to blame, for making an issue over the fact that one of my trusted professors wanted to kiss me and hold my hand off-campus, telling me I was "his destiny". Maybe he (and you?) blame me for making a stink about it to the school board, and feel as though I had no right to take an issue with him. If so, I can say that I was a completely naive and innocent girl who

walked into a dangerous situation without a clue, and wish that I could go back, knowing what I know now, and see all the warning signs that I never saw as [REDACTED]. If put in the same situation again, I would still report it, that remains true. But I can't help but feel a bit haunted by memories of that experience, especially knowing that it still seems to be repeating itself with other women? Anyway, not to end on a negative note, but your email got me thinking, and all my old questions come back to the surface.

Hope the GOOD kind of drama at school is flourishing, and wish you all the best, as always!

February 28th, 9:23am

Thank you so much for your reply. I carry absolutely no resentment nor assign you any blame. I respect admire and applaud your bravery in taking action and it makes me ache to know that it lingers in such a negative way for you. We had a new faculty member that called Josh on his behavior. I got all twisted up about what was the best way to respond to the request for an interview by human resources and decided that I simply had to tell the truth of what I knew. The result? HR simply turned around and said to Josh "Thom says..." and did nothing. His previous 3 complaints (one of which being you) weren't even on record. Apparently, university policy is that as long as he's a good boy for 3 months, the files are cleared. Josh became passive aggressive from then on and the colleague that filed the complaint? She didn't receive tenure and is gone. She was collecting info for a lawsuit and asked if I would be willing to give her your name (Josh never told me, but I pieced it together from little clues dropped here and there over the years), so I wanted to be sure I wasn't causing you further harm by getting you involved or even bringing it up. Thus my first message. The lawsuit is passed. Sheila got a settlement and tenure, though she of course has no interest in teaching here and has moved on. My approach has been to try and put it in the past and keep him at arm's distance and just do my job to the best of my ability, but I have found the lack of institutional will troubling and been haunted myself that I am complicit by my choice of inaction. Funny, I was just talking about this this morning with my wife. In one of those bizarre life co-incidences, my high school girlfriend married a professor here. She met him when she was a student in his class. Last summer he announced to her that he was leaving her to move in with a student, and it wasn't the first affair he had had with a student during their marriage. My wife's opinion was that all these incidents together were a clear indication that the institution fosters an environment that is not safe for female students. This is all painfully relevant as Josh recently finally got "lucky." I don't know what the current status of their relationship is, but I know they have had an extended affair. Unfortunately I have no evidence, but--esp. as an actor, someone who has studied human behavior for 30+ years, I have absolutely no doubt that this is true. During my last visit to The American College Theatre Festival I was shocked to learn from several people that only know Josh from that annual event that they also view him as a predator. Your reports of others feelings is the latest slap in the face. There's no question that everyone would be better off if he were no longer here. I find myself imagining going to the Dean and insisting that she take action, but the institution's track record makes me feel like I'd be hung out to dry.

Whew, that's a lot. So what do you care about any of this? As I write I feel more certain that I have to take action. So I guess the only thing to say is, if you're interested in contributing, let me know. If not, it's been fabulous visiting your page and seeing the fiercely beautiful woman and mom you've become.

Breath and Laughter,

Thom

February 28th, 1:49pm

Thom....wow. Can I just start by saying thank you? When I finished reading your message, I just sat at my computer and cried for a few minutes. You have no idea how amazing it is to finally feel validated, after almost ten years of carrying around feelings of confusion and guilt regarding my interactions with Josh. No one at CCSU EVER told me "It's not your fault". Ever. You are the first person to openly admit that HE is a predator, and that I was a victim! It's amazing how simple truth frees, and even though I have obviously moved on with my life since college, that experience caused me serious emotional and relational trauma for years to come...I was really dysfunctional for a while because of that experience. I feel slightly sick knowing that Josh's behavior has continued unchecked, and although I am proud that Sheila took the stand she did, it is shocking to me that the Dean continues to turn such a blind eye on this miscreant. Your wife is absolutely right - the campus CAN'T be safe with him wandering around it...how do you think I felt after filing my complaint, being interviewed, knowing HE was interviewed, and finally being told "he's been advised not to contact you again." That was IT. I still had to SEE him everywhere, he still came up to me on several occasions, trying to "help me understand" how I had misinterpreted everything, and how hurt HE felt....I had absolutely NO protection whatsoever, and my predator continued to roam free. (I even made my then-on-boyfriend walk with me to class for a few weeks, just so I didn't feel so vulnerable!) All that being said, I will do ANYTHING to support you in your desire to take action against Josh, just say the word. I will write a report, go to the Dean with you, testify in court, ANYTHING. To know that you are willing to keep trying, even in the face of conflict in your department, etc., makes me so much prouder to know you than ever. If you would like to meet and discuss things outside of FB, I will make it a priority to meet up with you ASAP. What if he could be gone by the end of the semester? It's a good goal, in my opinion. Do you think Sheila would come back to add her voice, if needed? Do you know who any of the other female alumni were who filed complaints? Let me know how I can get involved. (I'll warn you, I'm HUGE pregnant with [REDACTED] the moment, [REDACTED] so that is part of my motivation to become involved as soon as possible - I don't want this opportunity to slip away.) You are a credit to your department, your vocation and your gender, and the fact that you are willing to continue pursuing justice for us women who have/had no voice is a testament to your true integrity and honor. Let's do this.

Monday 7:25pm

My turn to say wow, and I'm sorry. I lost your reply. I've been trying to figure out what I said. I thought you hadn't replied to the last message.

I was crying quite intensely as I read your previous message to my wife, and I'm shuffling as I write now. I am filled with so much shame that it took me so long. Thank you for your kind words. I couldn't believe he was as despicable as he obviously is. I am forwarding your message to the Dean. She has said she is on it and doesn't need anymore names from me, but I want to be sure she stays hot.

A [REDACTED] f-a-a-e-e-a-ll!! What a blessing! What name? When's the due date?

I don't know what the Dean's plans are, but I have been told that she's trying to stay focused on current issues and that she is preparing a "Special Assessment." According to Tom he asked how long that may take and her reply is, "I don't know, there's never been a special assessment that plays all the way to the end 'cause the individual it's being leveled at has wound up retreating every time."

Thank you for your beauty, strength and honesty. I will not withdraw or release pressure in any way. May your last month of pregnancy be comfy and SERENITY.

Wednesday 12:28pm

Thrilled to get your reply...I was starting to get worried!! All my prayers go with you in your pursuit of the Dean...please keep me apprised of any developments - I am eager to know how this pans out, especially if any of my involvement can help in any way. I'm glad you included my email in your case to the Dean...don't hesitate if I can be of any more use! (You can see how zealous I am for a certain lowlife to be brought to judgement!)

Can't wait to meet our [REDACTED] we are going to name [REDACTED]...It's a pretty glorious time to be alive.

All the best to you, your wife and family. Hope any/all of your spring productions are going swimmingly!

From: Pisano, Lou (Human Resources)
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2014 4:17 PM
To: Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre)
Subject: FW: New message from [REDACTED]

Hi Thom. Can you send the chain of emails in connection with this response so I can see the full content of the conversation?
Thanks,

Lou

-----Original Message-----

From: Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre)
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2014 7:55 PM
To: Pease, Susan (Dean Arts and Sciences); Pisano, Lou (Human Resources)
Cc: Callery, Jr., Thomas (Theatre)
Subject: FW: New message from [REDACTED]

Hi Lou, Sue and Tom,
I know you said that you had all the names and info you needed, and Tom said that you were steering away from old claims, but I found this message so moving I had to forward. I already shared [REDACTED] previous message and had thought that [REDACTED] didn't respond to my response. I was thinking that it must be too much for [REDACTED] had decided to leave it. But I just discovered that she in fact, responded immediately.

Breath and laughter,
Thom

From: Facebook [notification+window1awr-4@facebookmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 28, 2014 2:19 PM
To: Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre)
Subject: New message from [REDACTED]

Marquez, Ernest (Diversity and Equity)

To: Ailing, Anne (Chief Human Resources Officer)
Cc: Price, Bonnie (Diversity and Equity)
Subject: Complaint - theater department

On September 30th I received a complaint from assistant professor Sheila Siragusa about associate professor Josh Perlestein, both of the theater department. I reviewed the written complaint and spoke to both Sheila and Josh separately. I also spoke to department chair Tom Callery regarding the complaint.

Based on my brief investigation I have concluded that this complaint is more appropriate for Human Resources than for this office. Therefore, I will be turning the complaint file over to your office,

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you very much,
Ernie

Ernest R. Marquez, Esq.
Interim Chief Diversity Officer
Central Connecticut State University
860-832-1652

Directed toward me:

9/07 My first day on the job. Josh came in to "share" the joke about how he'd imagined a really Sophia Loren-like, sexy, dark woman when he was talking to me on the phone and how it turns out that I am nothing like that.

10/07 Told me he had a sexual dream about me as we were carpooling home together. DREAM ABOUT YOU: One time we got in the car and he said, "I had a dream about you last night." "It was pretty exciting." It was clear it was sexual. I responded by acknowledging it "Isn't it sweet." Didn't skip over it, but then quickly moved it into something else (started talking about Liesel or something). He dropped it.

Spring 08 Told me if he had to say what actor I most reminded him of he would say it was Kathy Bates (like 20 years my senior and archetypically cast as the ugly crone). I tried to remain light as I protested and he asked if I was hurt by that and I said yes. The next day, several students arrived at my class telling me that Josh had told them the anecdote. When I confronted him about it he said he only wanted to illustrate how our perception of our self is often so different than what it actually is.

4/08 A female student came to me to report that a male student in her cast had shoved a female student quite violently in rehearsal and that he had been behaving erratically throughout rehearsal of the play and she wanted to have him removed from the cast because she and others felt unsafe. The reporting student was very mature and responsible and the male student had a reputation for making people uncomfortable with his anger.

Feeling a bit intimidated myself, I called Josh in to the conference with this female student to ask advice about how to proceed. He agreed that he should be removed from the project. When I asked if he would deliver this info to the male student he refused. When I asked him to be with me while I delivered the information he refused. So I negotiated the situation on my own, alone, with the student (who was removed from the show and voluntarily apologized to the students involved).

5/08 I went to Josh because I was afraid of a male student who had repeatedly "joked" about beating me up and "smacking me in the head with a board" I knew I had to confront the student but I didn't know how. Josh was not forthcoming, and so I suggested that I talk to this student and then Josh would knock on the door at the end so the student knew he was present nearby. Josh agreed.

After return sabbatical: threats about my job

He was coming into the office and saying things like "with this economic crisis, we need to protect your job. If someone is going to get fired, it's going to be you. We need to make sure the classes we are teaching are appropriate.... Get more students"

Trying to push me towards intro to theater classes (away from acting classes). "Just want to warn you." He didn't want to talk about it at a faculty meeting.

The next meeting I brought it up (it was my re-hire meeting). The first thing I did was address the situation, I want the job, it's scary to hear I might get fired. Everyone was shocked... the numbers are not down, they are up because of the crisis. (he was in the room, intentionally threw him under the bus).

Lannie went away and found numbers to support the idea that numbers were up.

After these conflicts (and he found out about my rebuttal), the student who went to the [redacted] came in with her monologue and it was the one I had already coached her on, and Thom Delventhal had too. She got up to do her work, and Josh went instantly into this theoretical/philosophical thing about her approach (she had already [redacted]). He went into a deep pull apart (unnecessary, ill timed).

She said "I really want to start stronger. I want to figure out what my action is at the beginning." Sheila and Tom responded, started to adjust it. Tiny tinkering. Josh interjected, "I don't think that helps you... it is an intellectualization. You are too intellectual already" (tearing into me, via her). He lectured for 10 minutes while she waited onstage. She started to cry and left the classroom. I said "I think we were talking about the piece and excluding [redacted], and we were ignoring her, and she was trying to keep her performance energy up."

There was agreement. We talked for a couple of minutes about other things. She didn't come back. I asked [redacted], her sister, to go check in on [redacted].

[redacted] and [redacted] didn't come back. I went go look for them. [redacted]: "I can't go back. I'm so embarrassed, etc." me: "It was our fault, we all agree." She agreed to come back in and work (just for a couple of minutes)

I went back in the classroom. [redacted] came back in. We started working. She said a couple of lines. She said "I just need to tune things up moment to moment." Lines... Tom gave her a short note. Then Josh talked for 10 minutes again.

Sheila: "Hey- I want to let other people have time, is that ok" (to get her off the stage).

The next day, a student of mine [redacted], great progress, he was a tough case). But he had been Josh's advisor, I had him for a semester.

Josh: "Whoever was advising you really screwed things up and I'm really pissed off about it." "it really sucks" (as he walked by the door) (really loud and violent)

██████ was hearing it too. I stood up and went into the hallway and said "I was ██████ advisor, you know that."

Josh then makes light of it.

██████ apologizes to Sheila.

Sheila says don't apologize (didn't want ██████ to freak out).

██████ still apologizing (Sheila- no big deal, 2 minutes to fix).

Josh now making light of it too.

(had to go a LONG WAY to make ██████ feel ok)

Later that day, Josh acting 3 class met, Josh said "I want to talk about something." "██████, I hope don't mind you bring it up. When I critique you, I'm not trying to hurt your feelings. I don't intend these things personally." (suggesting ██████ had been oversensitive, and then basically telling everyone).

Josh: "Tom and Sheila tell you how great you are, and that's just not my style."

Spring 2009

Jeans comment: Josh, Ken and I were standing in front of Diane's desk in the main office, I was wearing jeans, that Josh commented that he liked. I said "I know, I never wear jeans, I don't know why I don't wear them to school", and I walked to my office and overheard him mumble something and Diane replied "Oh, now now now, none of that kind of talk here".

At meetings, in front of students at practicum, in his classroom (students tell me about what he says, on their own volition, I do not solicit this information) or in the hallway, when Josh says something offensive and critical about me, he will subsequently apologize in private. For example, when we were in practicum, and he mentioned to the new students that there was a possibility of getting a BFA in acting, I chimed in "also in directing" (which is the program I head) and said "No, there's not a BFA in directing, it's only acting and design." I said "what?" He said "there's no BFA in directing, it's a concentration" (41 students and faculty present) Later-privately: "I'm really sorry I said that, I was just really confused, I had forgotten we had changed that a couple years ago." I said "Are you going to go back in the next class and straighten it out?" And he said "No, there's a catalog, they can

look it up." I said he really should tell them, and he refused. I brought a listing of all the BFA programs in the department back into the meeting and showed the students all the offerings of the department. I prefaced it by saying we've changed the program recently and there was some confusion.

As Josh and I tried to work out the conflicts between us, he said "I thought I was hiring a "yes" person"

After a directing student won (for the first time), the top honors at the Kennedy center ACTF conference, he made a Comment about the directing awards not really having anything to do with us, unlike the Irene Ryan awards (the acting awards).

August of 2009:

During height of our disagreements about the direction on the BFA program (which was resolved by Thom and I removing ourselves completely from the running of the program as the only way we could see to make it work) he sent me, through Facebook, a message that was a page of photos of topless call girls with phone numbers.

At the next meeting, I brought it up and said "you seem to have a virus in your facebook, because I received a message from you and when I opened it it was a page of call girls" and he said "oh, yea, somebody sent that to me and I can't get it off my page" (it is easy to remove things from and you don't get a message from face book unless someone sends it)

Didn't enter As You Like It (my 2009-2010 prodction) into the ACTF competition "because it was a Spring Show". The Tempest, which was entered in previous year was a Spring show—also said that we were only entering 2 shows this year-though every other year we enter 3 shows in the ACTF. AT the first meeting in the fall, he asked everyone if we thought we should enter this year's spring show. I commented that he'd said we never send spring shows and he said it changes all the time.

When he needs me to do something like take on extra work, he reminds me, in a threatening way, that my reappointment is dependent on my taking on the work.

Other faculty member telling me that he is always talking about how I was never in my office, and not taking enough initiative, then saying "what am I supposed to say?", and then I asked if he thought it was true, and he said no instantly, and I said how about telling him you don't agree?

Toast for As You Like It. Traditional toast, colleague to colleague, and comment specifically about the director's work. I had given effusive toasts for his work, while we were in deep conflict knowing its vital that the students don't see any of this played out, and his toast after As You Like It was "To the cast and crew for a wonderful production." Toast in total.

During meetings, he doesn't look at me, and he refers to me as "she" and "her". when I said "who's "she""? He said "She—(pointed at me) La." In the same meeting, someone asked me for my email address, and I said "siragusashm@ccsu" and he said "Schmutz" (which is Yiddish for dirt)

Whole campaign to get me to direct the musical in the fall, after Ken Mooney's resignation, when I had already taken on an additional course. Tom Callery didn't want me to do it, the dean didn't want me to (seeing that I had already taken on the course and the marketing) but Josh insisted I do it, saying that it was crucial for my re-hire. (I have never directed a musical, it is not my field, nor was directing a musical ever mentioned as part of my job before). Josh called Tom Callery at home late at night with a laundry list of why I should do it. After many attempts to refocus him, Tom told him Josh the decision was the chair's (Tom), and he didn't want me directing it. Josh then went to me and other faculty members, and said that Tom was making executive decisions without our consent. "We need to protect ourselves. He's trying to take over the department, and we need to look out for our own interests."

There have been multiple times when Josh has threatened my re-hire, using it as the reason I need to do things he wants me to do.

Josh told me "I was giving students random questions to answer—and I asked them why do they call Ships "she"? (my nickname) It was really funny one kid went on about how there was this woman named Sheila who fucked so many people that they talked about boarding her."

He recently told me this joke: "What's Australian foreplay? "Brace yourself, Sheila"

Directed toward students:

Josh came in one day laughing and saying he had just come from class, where he asked them what animal other students reminded them of. One student said of [REDACTED] "Sloth!" And everybody agreed. And its so true, isn't it! (the sloth is a hideous animal, [REDACTED] is overweight and has been the object of Josh's frequent comments about her body)

In a BFA meeting with [REDACTED] and the 3 performance faculty, Josh discussed her audition piece, her physical characterization, and said "you looked like you were taking a shit."

Frequent topic in performance faculty meetings is Josh commenting that students are too fat or otherwise flawed (or, if they are beautiful, he makes frequent

comments about how they aren't smart) to "make it" and we should tell them so they study something else.

Denied [REDACTED] casting in student directed shows (for disciplinary reasons), then cast him in his own directed show.

Told [REDACTED] to do a laundry list of things to be accepted into the BFA program, then 6 months later denied her access after she completed all those assignments. Again, she is someone who is frequently singled out for being overweight.

Students have to complete 2 acting projects to get a BFA-big roles. He frequently denies their proposals for acting projects, because the role is too small, or forgets to give them required paperwork. He admits he forgot to give them things, but then says they needed to be in the program longer for other reasons.

10 students are standing in the hallway, joking about having a car wash to raise money, someone says "we need pretty girls, eye candy, to wash the cars" Josh said "let's get [REDACTED]" while making a gesture indicating the size of her breasts—and then "there's not a lot going on there". Group included [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

In a BFA meeting, he said to a female student "I used to have this really bad acting teacher who said outrageous things to people. Like you really can't act if you're not having sex. Even though its so outrageous that he would say that, its really true. IT gives you depth of experience."

A few students, male and female, were actively pursuing the leads in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, which were a former football player and his beauty queen girlfriend. Josh repeatedly came in to say to me and other faculty members, how crazy it was that these students would think that they could get cast as an attractive man or woman. The tone was making fun of them, for not understanding how ridiculous it was that these students would think they could play attractive people. "Oh my god-[REDACTED] came to me saying he wants to play Brick!" He brought it up in a faculty meeting—"is it our responsibility to tell them they aren't going to get cast as attractive people."

BFA meeting, he asked student [REDACTED] who he wanted to cast in his show, whether she wanted to do the musical or the mainstage production, if she had to choose. ([REDACTED] is the most talented musical actress we have) She said- if she had to pick, she's choose the mainstage, to improve her acting chops. Josh said ok in a way that conveyed that he would seriously consider her. She was not cast, and she was really shocked. This happened with several other students, where he lead them to believe he wanted them for a role, then cast someone else. For example, telling [REDACTED]-practice your accent (he wants to cast him) while fellow student [REDACTED] tells [REDACTED] that she's heard him tell that to everyone—it isn't a suggestion specific to [REDACTED], but that is how it sounds.

After a student was kicked out of school, one semester before graduating, for making an offensive sexual comment, I said to my colleagues that we need to educate students about appropriate behavior, boundaries and the law. Josh said I don't think there is one way, I don't want to be about one viewpoint. I replied that this wasn't about viewpoints, it was about the law. Josh then proposed that we do an original work about sexual harassment, exploring all the different points of view, and that he was going to spearhead the project out of his acting class. The student who was the object of the harassment was still in the department and would have been subjected to this project.

4 people auditioned for the BFA program last year, accepted 3, and sent 1 away to work on specific things. The BFA students, it is understood, get whatever mainstage roles we can give them, because they are required to complete 2 major roles to graduate. Josh did not cast 5 out of 8 in the BFA and cast the major role to the student we rejected last year for the program. This will challenge their ability to graduate. Thom Delventhal subsequently created several projects so they could fulfill their BFA requirements. Josh's response was resistant, saying "We don't want to set a precedent that we're going to do special projects for them."

Josh talking about Maggie, (Cat On A Hot Tin Roof), that the character is supposed to be sexual. We had general conversations about student's maturity and comfort with their sexuality, students who could convey that on stage or not. The conversation turned when Josh said about [redacted] (who wanted the role) "I don't want to fuck that" (meaning [redacted]).

Saying in the faculty meeting that he could cut all of Maggie's text in Cat- as long as she touches her breast the audience will be happy. *Maggie needs to be intensely desirable -*

In Conversations with [redacted] (who was interested in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof) talking about the character of Maggie "she's really a sexual being and you are not" and saying the other part, Big Mama, is old and overweight. "how would you feel if people call you fat? You'd have to be okay with that" Asking if that's "hard for her to hear" until she was in tears.

Several students who were not cast in Cat, were invited into Josh's office to talk to him about not getting cast. He had asked them to write essays about why they should be cast (this is not common practice, I've never heard of this in a professional or educational setting). [redacted] and [redacted] had crying breakdowns later that day (I had to send Jake to counseling) because they were so upset. Josh came in the next day and said it was good for them to have the "struggle".

Whole series of comments about [redacted] show not being that good after it got invited to the festival (having not chosen his show)
Comments about [redacted] not being ready to direct on our mainstage (after she won the [redacted]).

*ref to
Kate Winslet
"Eyebrow"*

Series of follings for [redacted] show being entered into the Kennedy Center Festival:

- He missed the deadline for registering her show
- Response to me in meeting about no respondent and so video and then subsequent comment about the only reason [redacted] show went was the video
- I wrote to the organizer, Paul, asking if a respondent could come (it's Josh's job to do this)
- Josh then sent the dates to the organizer-said it was September 9th, when the show was the 10th and 11th
- Paul said he could do it and asked Josh for the correct dates, Josh wrote him that the show was October 10th and 11th.
- Paul called several times and left messages for Josh, emailed him as well, to clear up date confusion. Josh did not return Paul's calls and did not answer emails.
- On October 9th, I asked Josh for Paul's number, and learned from Paul about all the communication snafus. I asked him if he could come the next night, and he was able to do so- and said he was glad to speak with me because the communication with Josh had been so frustrating.
- Josh came into my office the following Monday and said he heard the show was invited to the festival.
- I responded that the director had been invited and he said "oh—I didn't think so"
- The next day came in and apologized also about his comment because he heard the show got better.

Wouldn't let several students do an acting project for As You Like It because the rolls were too small to merit that level of study (after a year of text work), and then when complaining that the students didn't have their acting projects A & B yet (which they need to graduate) we reminded him that he nixed those, and he went on a rant about people that shouldn't be in the BFA program because they are not actors.

ADA violation with Ryan Campbell. Refused him accommodation in the classroom

Directed toward other faculty:

Constant age jokes to Lani Johnson's face in meetings
Constant sex jokes about Lani being gross to consider sexually
Campaign against Tom C after directing the musical thing
Campaign to get rid of the technical area of the department because it really doesn't exist. "There's really nothing but the acting program."
Comments about Ken Mooney being a monster while he was still here
Extremely negative comment ("mistake") on Thom's promotion review
Constant denigrating Jarek, professor I replaced, with and in front of students

Submitted to Ernest R. Marquez, Esq. on Sep 30, 2010 by Sheila M. Siragusa

Lani-
no
recall-
No

Alling, Anne (Chief Human Resources Officer)

From: Siragusa, Sheila (Theatre)
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2010 4:03 PM
To: Alling, Anne (Chief Human Resources Officer)
Cc: Sheila Siragusa
Subject: RE Josh Perlstein

Dear Anne,

I'm deeply concerned that I'm being retaliated against for asking that Josh Perlstein's behavior toward me change.

Some incidents have taken place since Monday of this week that I'm sending to you for consideration.

On Monday, Thom Delventhal returned from your office eager to talk with me privately. In the conversation, he relayed to me that he was going to ask me something that you'd advised him against asking me. I stopped him and said, "are you sure you want to ask this anyway?" I think he thought I was joking, so he continued.

He commented that he had spoken with Josh and that Josh was firmly stating that this problem was me and that he had no intention of changing anything in his behavior. Thom said in light of this, it seemed I had a decision to make if I wanted to stay here. I either didn't let him intimidate me and stay or not. I proceeded to explain to him that I had been trying everything I knew to handle the situation as best I could, and that it isn't right that I should have to defend myself at this level and that this was why there are laws against making a difficult work environment. He said he understood now. He seemed very concerned that I feel taken care of and listened to, as he always does. Nonetheless, I think his comment made clear his lack of understanding about the issue.

On Tuesday, the faculty gathered for a meeting (called by Josh when there wasn't enough time to pursue his topic at the monthly meeting last Friday). The meeting was to discuss the possibility of moving our program from a BFA to a BA program. He indicated in the Friday meeting that he was trying to find ways to solve the problem of low numbers in classes, which he has spoken about for several semesters. I asked if the enrollment was down. Tom Callery said that it was indeed lower in the past couple of years, but that he didn't have the numbers with him. Lani had said last year that numbers weren't down when I asked at a faculty meeting (after Josh had privately brought that crisis up with me when talking about possibly being asked to cut faculty).

In the discussion, I became concerned that the bulk of what I teach would change to electives. Josh said that it would probably be necessary to not offer those classes as often. As it is, the classes I'm talking about: Directing, Acting 4, American Theatre Today, and Shakespeare in Performance are only offered once every two years. For this reason, the question seemed like a legitimate concern:

I brought it up and Josh shifted the focus to what we would have to do to recruit greater numbers of students. SO the question was not answered. When I brought it up again, Scott told me that Josh wasn't talking about eliminating the BFA, but only enhancing the BA program. Thom Delventhal approached me as the meeting disbanded and addressed it directly, saying that we would just beef up teaching Theatre for Education intro classes, which he and Josh, and two adjuncts, Jackie and Barbara could teach.

I asked what I would teach and he said I could teach a section of that. I responded that I didn't know

anything about teaching theatre education and he said "well we have to be flexible, we can't always teach the high level courses that we want". While I felt he was missing the point that this change would eliminate the courses I am trained to teach, and was hired to teach, I backed off. I replied that I was afraid, because others would have the qualifications to teach those things and therefore make my job more doable by an adjunct than by me. He walked away, clearly thinking I was being inflexible.

When I returned to my office, Josh went to the doorway of Tom Callery's office and said "I thought that went very well". Tom Callery responded, "me too, except (silence and then quiet laughter) oh well " and then they laughed again.

Later in the day we convened (without Tom Callery) again and I began the meeting with an apology, saying that I'd misunderstood until Scott had commented in the last meeting that Josh wasn't trying to eliminate the BFA. I felt that I'd caused an interruption for no reason.

Josh said thank you and then proceeded to explain that he had meant to eliminate the BFA, but he was only wanting to approach that carefully because (and he pointed to where Tom Callery was sitting and shrugged his shoulders) and then said he didn't want to say anything behind anyone's back.

We continued to talk and then I brought something up that I had brought up in the earlier meeting (with Lani and Tom C present). I requested that we think in idealistic or even unrealistic ways about what we want for the department in order to not limit ourselves in our thinking and therefore stop envisioning things because we can't get them right now.

Josh, Thom D, Ken Mooney and I had a biweekly meeting last year for exactly that purpose, which we called "the committee". We invited Tom C and Lani so they wouldn't feel excluded, but told them it was for the express purpose of dreaming and stretching, as they both (having both been chairs and here for the longest of all the faculty) had difficulty looking around the problems and focusing on the possible.

I brought this up again in the second meeting, saying we should think about consciously thinking that way and that we should be careful of getting hooked into the "language of impossibility that Tom C and Lani are so versed in".

Josh instantly stopped me and repeated what I said and said that he thought Lani had all the best wishes for the department. I said that I hadn't meant it that way (knowing full well they both have the best wishes for the department...they made it!) and that I meant they were focused on how things couldn't work from running the department for so long and that it would be a danger to us to fall into that. Asking instead that we approach issues with new energy and possibility.

Josh interrupted me and said, "I'm sorry but I'm uncomfortable talking about people that are not present," I responded that this was exactly what we talked about for a year on the committee and he repeated that he refused to talk about the issue. Thom D and Scott just stared at the floor. Thankfully, my phone alerted me that I had another scheduled meeting and I got up and calmly excused myself and asked to be filled in later about anything I needed not to miss.

This feels like retaliation to me because from what I heard today, Josh is engaged in actively eliminating my job and Thom D and Tom C seem to be unaware and therefore not stopping this.

In conversations I've previously had with Tom Callery and Thom Delventhal, they have told me

stories of Josh treating them in similarly abusive ways, and while they have wondered why I don't just put up with it, like they do, they ultimately have supported me in my action to get Josh to stop this behavior.

Today, from what I heard and saw, and from Tom Callery's email last weekend, I believe Tom is characterizing Josh's inappropriate behavior as a personal conflict I'm having with Josh, which is making his job more difficult, and that he is working with Josh to make him more comfortable with this unfortunate situation.

I know you are working on this as quickly as possible, but I am having difficulty coming to work this week. As you know, I do not have the luxury of not attending.

I hope that some action is taken to alleviate this situation for me.

Thanks again for your time.

Sincerely,

Sheila Siragusa



Central Connecticut State University

December 2, 2010

Professor Josh Perlstein
Theatre Department

Dear Josh:

This letter is a follow-up to the Article 16.5 Investigation into the complaint filed against you by Professor Sheila Siragusa.

We met on November 16 and 30, 2010, with your AAUP representative Donna Sims present. The following recommendations were made to you in order to address the concerns raised by Professor Siragusa:

- 1) Be sensitive to others' feelings and consider how they might react to something you say before you say it.
- 2) Listen more than you talk.
- 3) Consider the fact that others may be offended by something that you may not consider offensive.
- 4) Do not make off-color jokes.
- 5) Someone else in the department should be assigned as a mentor to Professor Siragusa and you should step back from being her "self-appointed" mentor. I have discussed this with Tom Callery and he plans to ask Thom Delventhal to serve as Sheila's mentor, in accordance with the Faculty Senate Promotion and Tenure Policy and Theatre Department guidelines.
- 6) Do not use e-mail to have a conversation with other faculty, including Sheila, about other faculty, students, or personal issues. E-mail should be used for routine departmental communications only.
- 7) Do not invade others' personal space.

I trust that you have and will continue to take seriously the concerns raised by Professor Siragusa, some of which were corroborated by colleagues. It is incumbent upon you to do everything you can to modify the behaviors that are making her uncomfortable so that the department can move forward in a productive way.

Also, please remember that retaliation, whether covert or overt, is illegal and will not be tolerated.

Thank you for your cooperation throughout this investigation, and I am confident that you will make a positive contribution toward a renewed spirit of collegiality in the Theatre Department.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anne B. Alling".

Anne B. Alling
Chief Human Resources Officer

Cc: Donna Sims, AAUP

DIVERSITY & EQUITY

CCSU



Central Connecticut State University

June 13, 2013

Lou Pisano
Director of Human Resources
Central Connecticut State University
Davidson Hall 101
New Britain, CT 06050

Dear Mr. Pisano:

This letter is to inform you that the Office of Diversity and Equity has received a complaint from Sheila Siragusa, Assistant Professor in Theatre. Parts of the concerns discussed in her complaint are related to the University's Consensual Relationship Policy. I've attached the sections of Ms. Siragusa's complaint related to this matter.

If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to contact me at 860-832-1652.

Sincerely,



Rosa Rodriguez
Chief Diversity Officer

Enclosures

COPY

1. A letter from a professional colleague and friend

DATE: May 31, 2013
TO: Attorney Jacques Parenteau
FROM: Penny Remsen
SUBJECT: Sheila Siragusa

Dear Attorney Jacques Parenteau,

I want to report to you an incident that happened on Friday, May 24, 2013

At approximately 10:30am I was walking with my neighbor, Kathleen Lugosch, and our dogs on January Hills Road near our homes in Shutesbury, Massachusetts.

We approached two women walking toward us, and I recognized Josh Perlstein's wife, Anna Dolan. I said hi and asked how she was.

Anna stated the following:

"I feel like shit. Josh is having an affair with a student."

She then said she could not believe it given that they had been together, 23 years. I cannot testify to the number of years, but I do believe that is what she stated.

Sheila Siragusa is one of the most trustworthy people I know. I think that the treatment she has received from Mr. Perlstein and the administration at Central Connecticut State University is unconscionable and egregious.

Should you require any additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Penny Remsen

2. Summary of retaliatory incidents

Details of retaliatory actions toward me as a result of my submission of a complaint against Prof. Josh Perlstein (submitted to Human Resources by me in October of 2010):

COPY

Central Connecticut State University
Office of Diversity/Management
Complaint Form

Name of Complainant: SHAILA S. BAGUSA Date: 6/13/13
 Address: [REDACTED]
 City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip: [REDACTED]
 Work Phone: 860-832-3656 Home Phone: [REDACTED]
 Cell Phone: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

Sex: ☐ Male ☒ Female
 Your status: ☐ Student ☒ Faculty/Instructor ☐ Retired/Non-Campus
 Type of Complaint: ☐ Discrimination ☒ Harassment ☐ Retaliation

I was discriminated/harassed/retaliated against on the basis of my:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Disorder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ancestry | <input type="checkbox"/> Marital Status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color | <input type="checkbox"/> National Origin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Record (State Employees) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex (including pregnancy or sexual harassment) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genetic Characteristics | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intentional Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Race |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Civil Rights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Disability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retaliation |

I believe that I was discriminated/harassed/retaliated against by:

Name of Respondent: JOSH PERLSTEIN
 Address: [REDACTED]
 City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip: [REDACTED]
 Sex: ☒ Male ☐ Female Work Phone: 860-832-3655
 Home/Cell Phone: [REDACTED]

Status: ☐ Student ☒ Faculty ☐ Administrator ☐ Retired/Non-campus

Equal Opportunity Employee/Instructor

(CDE, Nov. 23)

COPY

Name of Respondent 2: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female Work Phone: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____

Status: ☐ Student ☐ Faculty ☐ Administrator ☐ External/Non-campus

Specify: _____

~~Please do not write in this space unless instructed to do so.~~

If anyone witnessed this incident or is aware of the situation, list their names below.

Name of Witness 1: THOM DELVANTAL

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female Work Phone: 800-882-3452

Home/Cell Phone: _____

Status: ☐ Student ☒ Faculty ☐ Administrator ☐ External/Non-campus

Specify: _____

Name of Witness 2: TIM CAHILL

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female Work Phone: 800-882-3450

Home/Cell Phone: _____

Status: ☐ Student ☒ Faculty ☐ Administrator ☐ External/Non-campus

Specify: _____

~~Please do not write in this space unless instructed to do so.~~

COPY

Replete your complaint in detail. Include the following information. Add additional pages if necessary. Attach documents you believe may be helpful in investigating your complaint.

1. Describe the specific incident(s) of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, list date, time, location, names, and titles of the people involved in the incident(s).
2. Explain why you believe that you were discriminated/harassed/retaliated against because of your protected class status (race, age, sex, disability, etc.)
3. Provide the names and titles of people you believe were treated more favorably than you due to their protected characteristics. List the protected class status (race, age, sex, disability, etc.) of each person.

I believe I have been harassed, retaliated against and treated unfairly based on my gender by Prof. Josh Perlshick.

Having reported Prof. Perlshick to Human Resources in Oct of 2010, I have been victim to his consistent and daily efforts to discredit me. He has talked about me to many students, both in and out of class time and attempted to recruit them in his quest to take PR with my report @ COSU.

In addition, he deals with students in a way that I feel duty bound to comment on and respond to in this document.

Attached are dated incidences of this retaliation.

EM. Sullivan

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

CCSU's Office of Diversity and Equity Complaint Form

Page 2

COPY

Continuation of page 3 of Office of Diversity and Equity Complaint Form:

I believe I have been harassed, retaliated against and treated unfairly, based on my gender, by Professor Josh Perlestein.

Having reported Prof. Perlestein to Human Resources in October of 2010, I have been victim to his consistent and daily efforts to discredit me, to his hostile treatment, to his negative comments about me to other faculty members and to students. He has commented about me both in and outside of the classroom and attempted to recruit students in his quest to interfere with my work here at CCSU. Professor Perlestein also deals with other faculty members and students in a way that I feel duty-bound to respond to in this document.

In addition, my complaint of retaliation is against those who adopted Professor Perlestein's position and retaliated against me by denying my reappointment (Dean Susan Pease) in Spring of 2012 and by denying me a positive recommendation for tenure this year (Theatre Department Chair Professor Tom Callery, Professor Thom Delventhal, Professor Gil Gigliotti). Dean Susan Pease in particular has been heard to describe me as a "troublemaker" since my original complaint against Professor Perlestein. Despite the fact that I received a positive recommendation from the University P&T Committee, I have been denied tenure by Provost Carl Lovitt and President John Miller.

I have attached documentation as follows:

- 1. A letter from a professional colleague and friend, who has called my attention to a particular transgression of Prof. Josh Perlestein's and provided this documentation to my lawyer, Attorney Jacques Parenteau.**
- 2. Summary of retaliatory incidents**
- 3. Reportage of collections of incidents sent to HR. Each incidence is dated and they go as far back as September of 2007, within weeks of the start of my employment at CCSU.**
- 4. Letters sent to Provost Lovitt and Dean Pease during processing of my reappointment and tenure.**

**Sincerely,
Shelia Stragusa**

Documentation on subsequent pages.

COPY

1. A letter from a professional colleague and friend

DATE: May 31, 2013
TO: Attorney Jacques Parenteau
FROM: Penny Rameen
SUBJECT: Sheila Stragusa

Dear Attorney Jacques Parenteau,

I want to report to you an incident that happened on Friday, May 24, 2013

At approximately 10:30am I was walking with my neighbor, Kathleen Lugoeh, and our dogs on January Hills Road near our homes in Shutesbury, Massachusetts.

We approached two women walking toward us, and I recognized Josh Perlestein's wife, Anna Dolan. I said hi and asked how she was.

Anna stated the following:

"I feel like shit. Josh is having an affair with a student."
She then said she could not believe it given that they had been together, 28 years. I cannot testify to the number of years, but I do believe that is what she stated.

Sheila Stragusa is one of the most trustworthy people I know. I think that the treatment she has received from Mr. Perlestein and the administration at Central Connecticut State University is unconscionable and egregious.

Should you require any additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Penny Rameen

2. Summary of retaliatory incidents

Details of retaliatory actions toward me as a result of my submission of a complaint against Prof. Josh Perlestein (submitted to Human Resources by me in October of 2010):

COPY

- Professor Josh Perlestein making repeated comments about having to be careful about what he says in our department so he is not misrepresented have continued since Oct 2010
- Chair Professor Tom Callery making continued reference to events perpetrated by Professor Josh Perlestein as a personality conflict between Josh and me.
- Professor Josh Perlestein actively pursuing other faculty members to "side with him" about my action and creating endless conversations with individuals and in groups about my work in the department and my value as a faculty member.
- Professor Josh Perlestein suggesting more than once that my job could be terminated due to the current fiscal crisis.
- Professor Josh Perlestein discussing my teaching style and content negatively in his classes (with our shared students)
- Professor Josh Perlestein enrolling students in his conflict with me, through criticism of my actions to my students and compelling them to apologize to me for what they understand to be them causing conflict.
- Professor Josh Perlestein twice commenting to other faculty members that he "will do anything to see me terminated".
- Dean Susan Pease commenting that, "she should have known I'd be trouble" in reference to my submitting my complaint to HR after having already approached her about the problem with Professor Josh Perlestein.
- Professor Josh Perlestein's presence on my Promotion and Tenure committee after my filing the complaint in fall 2010, despite my request for protection against that. He subsequently recused himself from the committee with the insistence that he meet with the committee to express his concerns before my meeting. My meeting was still dominated by his continued discourse about my performance.
- His return to my committee in the spring of 2012 with the report of Chair, Professor Tom Callery dismissing discussion about the rightness of his presence on my committee.
- His presence in my classes to review my teaching performance and the allowance of his documents about that review into my tenure materials after the committee reviewed them (other members did not see his reviews) and before it went to Dean Pease and Provost Lovitt.
- His unquestioned opinion about my work outside of the university in consideration of my materials. These opinions were the basis of the bulk of the negative comments in my committee's letter to Dean Pease.
- The lack of communication from anyone in my department, including Chair Tom Callery about Dean Pease's recommendation that my tenure track position be terminated and my ensuing rebuttal letters to both Dean Pease and Provost Lovitt.
- Denial of tenure by the University, despite the University P&T Committee's recommendation of granting such tenure.

COPY

3. Reportage of collections of incidents sent to HR.

Sent Sep 30, 2010

Directed toward me:

9/07 My first day on the job. Josh came in to "share" the joke about how he'd imagined a really Sophia Loren-like, sexy, dark woman when he was talking to me on the phone and how it turns out that I am nothing like that.

COPY

10/07 Told me he had a sexual dream about me as we were carpooling home together. LOne time we got in the car and he said, "I had a dream about you last night." "It was pretty exciting." It was clear it was sexual. I responded by acknowledging it. Didn't skip over it, but then quickly moved it into something else (started talking about Liesel or something). He dropped it.

Spring 08 Told me if he had to say what actor I most reminded him of he would say it was Kathy Bates (like 20 years my senior and archetypically cast as the ugly crone). I tried to remain light as I protested and he asked if I was hurt by that and I said yes. The next day, several students arrived at my class telling me that Josh had told them the anecdote. When I confronted him about it he said he only wanted to illustrate how our perception of our self is often so different than what it actually is.

4/08 A female student came to me to report that a male student in her cast had shoved a female student quite violently in rehearsal and that he had been behaving erratically throughout rehearsal of the play and she wanted to have him removed from the cast because she and others felt unsafe. The reporting student was very mature and responsible and the male student had a reputation for making people uncomfortable with his anger.

Feeling a bit intimidated myself, I called Josh in to the conference with this female student to ask advice about how to proceed. He agreed that he should be removed from the project. When I asked if he would deliver this info to the male student he refused. When I asked him to be with me while I delivered the information he refused. So I negotiated the situation on my own, alone, with the student (who was removed from the show and voluntarily apologized to the students involved).

5/08 I went to Josh because I was afraid of a male student who had repeatedly "joked" about beating me up and "smacking me in the head with a board". I knew I had to confront the student but I didn't know how. Josh was not forthcoming, and so I suggested that I talk to this student and then Josh would knock on the door at the end so the student knew he was present nearby. Josh agreed.

After return sabbatical threats about my job

He was coming into the office and saying things like "with this economic crisis, we need to protect your job. If someone is going to get fired, it's going to be you. We need to make sure the classes we are teaching are appropriate.... Get more students"

Trying to push me towards intro to theater classes (away from acting classes). "Just want to warn you." He didn't want to talk about it at a faculty meeting.

The next meeting I brought it up (it was my re-hire meeting). The first thing I did was address the situation, I want the job, it's scary to hear I might get fired.

COPY

Everyone was shocked... the numbers are not down, they are up because of the crisis. (he was in the room, intentionally threw him under the bus).

Lanni's went away and found numbers to support the idea that numbers were up.

After these conflicts (and he found out about my rebuttal), the student who went to the [redacted] came in with her monologue and it was the one I had already coached her on, and Thom Delventhal had too. She got up to do her work, and Josh went instantly into this theoretical/philosophical thing about her approach (she had already won a competition). He went into a deep pull apart (necessary, ill timed).

She said "I really want to start stronger. I want to figure out what my action is at the beginning." Sheila and Tom responded, started to adjust it. Tiny tinkering. Josh interjected, "I don't think that helps you... it is an intellectualization. You are too intellectual already" (talking into me, via her). He lectured for 10 minutes while she waited onstage. She started to cry and left the classroom. I said "I think we were talking about the piece and excluding [redacted] and we were ignoring her, and she was trying to keep her performance energy up."

There was agreement. We talked for a couple of minutes about other things. She didn't come back. I asked [redacted] to go check in on [redacted].

[redacted] and [redacted] didn't come back. I went go look for them. [redacted] "I can't go back. I'm so embarrassed, etc." me: "It was our fault, we all agree." She agreed to come back in and work (just for a couple of minutes)

I went back in the classroom. [redacted] came back in. We started working. She said a couple of lines. She said "I just need to time things up moment to moment." Lines... Tom gave her a short note. Then Josh talked for 10 minutes again.

Sheila: "Hay- I want to let other people have time, is that ok" (to get her off the stage).

The next day, a student of mine ([redacted] great progress, he was a tough case). But he had been Josh's [redacted] I had him for a semester.

Josh: "Whoever was [redacted] you really screwed things up and I'm really pissed off about it." "It really sucks" (as he walked by the door) (really loud and violent)

[redacted] was hearing it too. I stood up and went into the hallway and said "I was [redacted] you know that."

Josh then makes light of it.

COPY

apologizes to Sheila.

Sheila says don't apologize (didn't want to freak out).

still apologizing (Sheila- no big deal, 2 minutes to fix).

Josh now making light of it too.

(had to go a LONG WAY to make feel ok)

Later that day, Josh acting 3 class met, Josh said "I want to talk about something." I hope don't mind you bring it up. When I critique you, I'm not trying to hurt your feelings. I don't intend these things personally." (suggesting had been oversensitive, and then basically telling everyone).

Josh: "Tom and Sheila tell you how great you are, and that's just not my style."

Spring 2009

Jeans comments: Josh, Ken and I were standing in front of Diane's desk in the main office, I was wearing jeans, that Josh commented that he liked. I said "I know, I never wear jeans, I don't know why I don't wear them to school", and I walked to my office and overheard him mumble something and Diane replied "Oh, now now now, none of that kind of talk here".

At meetings, in front of students at practicum, in his classroom (students tell me about what he says, on their own volition, I do not solicit this information) or in the hallway, when Josh says something offensive and critical about me, he will subsequently apologize in private. For example, when we were in practicum, and he mentioned to the new students that there was a possibility of getting a BFA in acting, I chimed in "also in directing" (which is the program I head) and said "No, there's not a BFA in directing, its only acting and design." I said "what?" He said "there's no BFA in directing, it's a concentration" (41 students and faculty present) Later privately: "I'm really sorry I said that, I was just really confused, I had forgotten we had changed that a couple years ago." I said "Are you going to go back in the next class and straighten it out?" And he said "No, there's a catalog, they can look it up." I said he really should tell them, and he refused. I brought a listing of all the BFA programs in the department back into the meeting and showed the students all the offerings of the department. I prefaced it by saying we've changed the program recently and there was some confusion.

As Josh and I tried to work out the conflicts between us, he said "I thought I was hiring a "yes" person"

COPY

After a directing student won (for the first time), the top honors at the [REDACTED] conference, he made a Comment about the directing awards not really having anything to do with us, unlike the Irene Ryan awards (the acting awards).

August of 2009:

During height of our disagreements about the direction on the BFA program (which was resolved by Thom and I removing ourselves completely from the running of the program as the only way we could see to make it work) he sent me, through Facebook, a message that was a page of photos of topless call girls with phone numbers.

At the next meeting, I brought it up and said "you seem to have a virus in your facebook, because I received a message from you and when I opened it it was a page of call girls" and he said "oh, yea, somebody sent that to me and I can't get it off my page" (it is easy to remove things from and you don't get a message from facebook unless someone sends it)

Didn't enter As You Like It (my 2009-2010 production) into the ACTF competition "because it was a Spring Show". The Tempest, which was entered in previous year was a Spring show—also said that we were only entering 2 shows this year—though every other year we enter 3 shows in the ACTF. AT the first meeting in the fall, he asked everyone if we thought we should enter this year's spring show. I commented that he'd said we never send spring shows and he said it changes all the time.

When he needs me to do something like take on extra work, he reminds me, in a threatening way, that my reappointment is dependent on my taking on the work.

Other faculty member telling me that he is always talking about how I was never in my office, and not taking enough initiative, then saying "what am I supposed to say?", and then I asked if he thought it was true, and he said no instantly, and I said how about telling him you don't agree?

Toast for As You Like It. Traditional toast, colleague to colleague, and comment specifically about the director's work. I had given effusive toasts for his work, while we were in deep conflict knowing its vital that the students don't see any of this played out, and his toast after As You Like It was "To the cast and crew for a wonderful production." Toast in total.

During meetings, he doesn't look at me, and he refers to me as "she" and "her". when I said "who's 'she'?" He said "She—(pointed at me) I.e." In the same meeting, someone asked me for my email address, and I said "dragasashan@ccsu" and he said "Schmutz" (which is Yiddish for dirt)

Whole campaign to get me to direct the musical in the fall, after Ken Mooney's resignation, when I had already taken on an additional course. Tom Gallery didn't want me to do it, the dean didn't want me to (seeing that I had already taken on the course and the marketing) but Josh insisted I do it, saying that it was crucial for my

COPY

re-hire. (I have never directed a musical, it is not my field, nor was directing a musical ever mentioned as part of my job before). Josh called Tom Callery at home late at night with a laundry list of why I should do it. After many attempts to refocus him, Tom told him Josh the decision was the chair's (Tom), and he didn't want me directing it. Josh then went to me and other faculty members, and said that Tom was making executive decisions without our consent. "We need to protect ourselves. He's trying to take over the department, and we need to look out for our own interests."

There have been multiple times when Josh has threatened my re-hire, using it as the reason I need to do things he wants me to do.

Josh told me "I was giving students random questions to answer—and I asked them why do they call Ships "she"? (my nickname) It was really funny one kid went on about how there was this woman named Sheila who fucked so many people that they talked about boarding her."

He recently told me this joke: "What's Australian foreplay? "Brace yourself, Sheila"

Directed toward students

Josh came in one day laughing and saying he had just come from class, where he asked them what animal other students reminded them of. One student said of [redacted] "Sloth!" And everybody agreed. And it's so true, isn't it? (the sloth is a hideous animal, [redacted] is overweight and has been the object of Josh's frequent comments about her body)

In a SFA meeting with [redacted] and the 3 performance faculty, Josh discussed her audition piece, her physical characterization, and said "you looked like you were taking a shit."

Frequent topic in performance faculty meetings is Josh commenting that students are too fat or otherwise flawed (or, if they are beautiful, he makes frequent comments about how they aren't smart) to "make it" and we should tell them so they study something else.

Denied [redacted] casting in student directed shows (for disciplinary reasons), then cast him in his own directed show.

Told [redacted] to do a laundry list of things to be [redacted], then 6 months later denied her access after she completed all those assignments. Again, she is someone who is frequently singled out for being overweight.

COPY

Students have to complete 2 acting projects [redacted] big roles. He frequently denies their proposals for acting projects, because the role is too small, or forgets to give them required paperwork. He admits he forgot to give them things, but then says they needed to be in the program longer for other reasons.

10 students are standing in the hallway, joking about having a car wash to raise money, someone says "we need pretty girls, eye candy, to wash the cars" Josh said "let's go [redacted]" while making a gesture indicating the size of her breasts—and then "there's not a lot going on there". Group included [redacted] and [redacted]

In a BFA meeting, he said to a female student "I used to have this really bad acting teacher who said outrageous things to people. Like you really can't act if you're not having sex. Even though it's so outrageous that he would say that, it's really true. IT gives you depth of experience."

A few students, male and female, were actively pursuing the leads in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, which were a former football player and his beauty queen girlfriend. Josh repeatedly came in to say to me and other faculty members, how crazy it was that these students would think that they could get cast as an attractive man or woman. The tone was making fun of them, for not understanding how ridiculous it was that these students would think they could play attractive people. "Oh my god— [redacted] came to me saying he wants to play Brick!" He brought it up in a faculty meeting: "Is it our responsibility to tell them they aren't going to get cast as attractive people."

BFA meeting, he asked student [redacted], who he wanted to cast in his show, whether she wanted to do the musical or the mainstage production, if she had to choose. ([redacted] is the most talented musical actress we have) She said- if she had to pick, she'd choose the mainstage, to improve her acting chops. Josh said ok in a way that conveyed that he would seriously consider her. She was not cast, and she was really shocked. This happened with several other students, where he lead them to believe he wanted them for a role, then cast someone else. For example, telling [redacted]-practice your accent (he wants to cast him) while fellow student [redacted] tells [redacted] that she's heard him tell that to everyone—it isn't a suggestion specific to [redacted] but that is how it sounds.

After a student was kicked out of school, one semester before graduating, for making an offensive sexual comment, I said to my colleagues that we need to educate students about appropriate behavior, boundaries and the law. Josh said I don't think there is one way, I don't want to be about one viewpoint. I replied that this wasn't about viewpoints, it was about the law. Josh then proposed that we do an original work about sexual harassment, exploring all the different points of view, and that he was going to spearhead the project out of his acting class. The student who was the object of the harassment was still in the department and would have been subjected to this project.

COPY

4 people auditioned for the BFA program last year, accepted 3, and sent 1 away to work on specific things. The BFA students, it is understood, get whatever mainstage roles we can give them, because they are required to complete 2 major roles to graduate. Josh did not cast 5 out of 8 in the BFA and cast the major role to the student we rejected last year for the program. This will challenge their ability to graduate. Thom Delventhal subsequently created several projects so they could fulfill their BFA requirements. Josh's response was resistant, saying "We don't want to set a precedent that we're going to do special projects for them."

Josh talking about Maggie, (Cat On A Hot Tin Roof), that the character is supposed to be sexual. We had general conversations about student's maturity and comfort with their sexuality, students who could convey that on stage or not. The conversation turned when Josh said about [redacted] (who wanted the role) "I don't want to fuck that" (meaning [redacted])

Saying in the faculty meeting that he could cut all of Maggie's text in Cat- as long as she touches her breast the audience will be happy.

In Conversations with [redacted] (who was interested in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof) talking about the character of Maggie "she's really a sexual being and you are not" and saying the other part, Big Mama, is old and overweight. "how would you feel if people call you fat? You'd have to be okay with that" Asking if that's "hard for her to hear" until she was in tears.

Several students who were not cast in Cat, were invited into Josh's office to talk to him about not getting cast. He had asked them to write essays about why they should be cast (this is not common practice, I've never heard of this in a professional or educational setting). [redacted] and [redacted] had crying breakdowns later that day (I had to send [redacted] to counseling) because they were so upset. Josh came in the next day and said it was good for them to have the "struggle".

Whole series of comments about [redacted] show not being that good after it got invited to the [redacted] (having not chosen his show)

Comments about [redacted] not being ready to direct on our mainstage (after she won the [redacted] level [redacted] at the [redacted]).

Series of follings for [redacted] show being entered into the [redacted]

- He missed the deadline for registering her show
- Response to me in meeting about no respondent and so video and then subsequent comment about the only reason [redacted] show went was the video
- I wrote to the organizer, Paul, asking if a respondent could come (it's Josh's job to do this)
- Josh then sent the dates to the organizer-said it was September 9th, when the show was the 10th and 11th
- Paul said he could do it and asked Josh for the correct dates, Josh wrote him that the show was October 10th and 11th.

COPY

- Paul called several times and left messages for Josh, emailed him as well, to clear up date confusion. Josh did not return Paul's calls and did not answer emails.
- On October 9th, I asked Josh for Paul's number, and learned from Paul about all the communication snafus. I asked him if he could come the next night, and he was able to do so- and said he was glad to speak with me because the communication with Josh had been so frustrating.
- Josh came into my office the following Monday and said he heard the show was invited to the festival.
- I responded that the director had been invited and he said "oh—I didn't think so"
- The next day came in and apologized also about his comment because he heard the show got better.

Wouldn't let several students do an acting project for As You Like It because the rolls were too small to merit that level of study (after a year of text work), and then when complaining that the students didn't have their acting projects A & B yet (which they need to graduate) we reminded him that he nixed those, and he went on a rant about people that shouldn't be in the BFA program because they are not actors.

ADA violation with [REDACTED] Refused him accommodation in the classroom

Directed toward other faculty:

Constant age jokes to Lani Johnson's face in meetings
Constant sex jokes about Lani being gross to consider sexually
Campaign against Tom C after directing the musical thing
Campaign to get rid of the technical area of the department because it really doesn't exist. "There's really nothing but the acting program."
Comments about Ken Mooney being a monster while he was still here
Extremely negative comment ("mistake") on Thom's promotion review
Constant denigrating Jarek, professor I replaced, with and in front of students

Submitted to Ernest R. Marquez, Esq. on Sep 30, 2010 by Sheila M. Siragusa

Covering Fall 2010

visit for our lecture series, which is my responsibility to book. I gladly accepted and received this info:

She

here is info for Kathy for Practicum. I told her \$150. Is that still OK

COPY

Do you want to pick her up so you could have some quality time together??

Kathleen A. Chalfant

J

I replied that I would pick her up (to Josh) then. I happily publicized the event!

Then, on Monday Nov 1, I wrote him to get her number or email to arrange the pick up time/place. (forgot to attach that, I have it and will retrieve it if you want). This was his response:

Shella

At the beginning of the semester we talked about Kathleen Chalfant visiting and you said you would be happy to pick her up in New Haven. She just sent me a message saying that she had not heard anything and that she has now made other plans for that day. She is willing to do a different Thursday if any are available. Have you had any contact with her? I have not heard anything else about this since we talked in September.

Josh

Then before I could respond:

Shella

Here is Kathy's contact info...Josh

From: <clutchack@aol.com>

Then from Kathy

dear josh - i can make a 3:30 class - the high school thing is in New Haven - so all is well for this thursday if i'm still wanted - where are you exactly surely less than an hour and a half from new haven????? - with everything crossed xoxoxoxoxo kathy

COPY

I spoke with Kathleen and she was able to rearrange her schedule for Thursday. We just need to process her pay and make arrangements for travel. I am forwarding her contact info. Please let me know if this is ok for you, Josh.

Her response seems to indicate that he had suggested she wouldn't be able to make it to CCSU because it takes an hour and a half to get here.

Anna,

These emails are presented as oldest first.

This was quite upsetting to me, as the lecture series in the department is my responsibility this semester.

Josh had kindly offered two candidates for bringing to speak to the students (a favor to me as I was in charge of booking the season). He offered to contact both of his lecturers as he knew them both personally (as mentioned above). He confirmed that Kathleen Chalfont was coming on Nov 4 (as you read above) and that a man named Juliano from The Freedom Theater in Palestine (on whose board Josh is a member) was coming on Sep 21. I made and published (even in marketing materials) the itinerary for the lecture series (called Practicum) with those dates and lecturers contained.

A week or so before Juliano's visit, I overheard Josh talking someone in the hallway that Juliano couldn't get a VISA to get here for his visit. I was annoyed that he hadn't told me and was glad that I'd overheard, so at least I knew. I chalked it up to his being busy opening his show that next week. A few days later I mentioned it and he said "oh yeah, I forgot to tell you". I decided to have class anyway with some other activity. On Wednesday before the class (on Thursdays) I decided that I would do what we have traditionally done in other semesters for the same class, which was to count going to opening night of the show as the class time and skip the 8:30 class. I sent out an email to the students.

Wednesday evening I received a call from a student asking about my cancelling the lecture. I told him that Juliano was not coming and he said that Josh was planning to have two visiting company members from the Freedom Theatre take over his lecture. He had never mentioned anything about that to me. Not once. Ever.

Feeling strange that a student was calling me with this info, I asked him if Josh was there. He said yes. I asked to speak to him and there was a long pause and he responded that he couldn't come to the phone right now. I asked the student to have Josh let me know if he'd like me to write the students and reschedule the class.

COPY

He agreed and hung up and in literally 30 seconds called me back and said yes, Josh would like me to do that.

In the other email chain I sent to you, you'll find that Josh included this in his bullet points:

1. The job of the Managing Director is to promote all departmental activities. We have on numerous occasions had the on and off-campus press attend practicum. The visit of my Palestinian colleagues was announced at each faculty meeting this summer and in September and was even mentioned in Practicum 2 weeks before they came. I simply think this was a squandered opportunity. When I see the amount of attention that Easy opening got for the Art department I am simply wishing that we could get the same.

The snafus with Kathleen Chalfant's visit the next week seemed suspect to me in light of these previous events.

Nov 5, 2010

Friday, Nov 5th, 2010

Anne,

This morning was our first full faculty meeting since I've come to you about Josh.

We sat down at the table and saw that Jackie had included the email chain in the faculty meeting minutes. People were looking around uncomfortably.

Tom Callery then called the meeting to order saying, "we'll talk to Jackie about what to include in the minutes. Normally I'd get a chance to look at this, but with all this shit (holding up paper) I've been dealing with(didn't complete the sentence)"

Later in the meeting, Josh was talking about eliminating some tech classes and everyone responded pretty quickly and with clear opposition. He held up his hands and said with heavy sarcasm, "let me go back....we don't want anyone to misunderstand me".

Thanks for reading all this yuck!

Sincerely,

Shelia Stragusa

COPY

Anna,

Things in blue within the email texts that I am forwarding are my notes to you. The most recent appears first in the sequence. Following the email chain, I have notes about content addressed to you.
Sheila

This is from Tom Callery:

You people need to stop this now. Nothing good is going to come of this. Figure it out. Work it out. Grow up! I'm beginning to feel like a middle school principle or chair of an academic department at a University, coope I guess they are one and the same. Is this all so important that you wish to harm the integrity and reputation of this department and all the hard work we've put in building a program of note and recognition. Think about it!! Best, DAD

From: Parlatani, Joshua (Theatre)

Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2010 5:57 PM

To: Shragusa, Sheila (Theatre); Callery, Jr., Thomas (Theatre); Bartley, Scott L. (Theatre); Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre); Johnson, Lani (Theatre); Colon, Jacqueline (Art)

Subject: RE: Fac meeting

Hi everyone

First of all I never mentioned the word failures. Suggestions about what might be done in the future or were not done in the past are intended to point out opportunities. Without this there would be no musical or Mobloryshlock. It seems as an organization that we must be able to mention when things come up short so that we can do a better job tomorrow. The only response that I was expecting was a discussion of how we could make improvements. Since a list was given which suggests that I was wrong and might therefore be treating Sheila unfairly I must make some corrections.

1. The job of the Managing Director is to promote all departmental activities. We have on numerous occasions had the on and off-campus press attend practicum. The visit of my Palestinian colleagues was announced at each faculty meeting this summer and in September and was even mentioned in Practicum 2 weeks before they came. I simply think this was a squandered opportunity. When I see the amount of attention that my opening got for the Art department I am simply wishing that we could get the same.

2. To be honest the season press release which I got on October 14th was very

COPY

difficult to read with strange characters in between words. It also contained misspellings of Eugene O'Neill's name

3. The campus calendar on display at the Student Center has no listing for the play. Some of the online calendars do. In the past there have been articles written for the Herald and I noticed that both Art and Music are featured in the news section of the website. This was not a comment about failure but about opportunity.

4. The poster was shown to me 8 days before we went up and was hung at the end of the week prior to opening.

5. The difficulties with House management were as Sheila mentions but also included students who were brand new to the department and even to theatre. They needed on several occasions to be told not to come in and out of the doors during the show. I was happy to inform them of this but it does appear to me that more direct supervision may have been necessary.

6. I would like to be able to address these concerns in person with Sheila but I have been advised in light of recent events to be extra cautious so as to avoid false accusations or hearsay. This is why I have sent these comments through the mail. I would be more than willing to discuss them at the faculty meeting or with Sheila as long as there is a third party present. Otherwise I have had no problem this year or any other year in taking up concerns I have had with any faculty

I believe that to move forward we should make an effort to listen to and correct concerns rather than to make erroneous defenses.

Josh

From: Siragusa, Sheila (Theatre)

Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2010 1:59 PM

To: Peristata, Joshua (Theatre); Callery, Jr, Thomas (Theatre); Bartley, Scott L. (Theatre); Siragusa, Sheila (Theatre); Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre); Johnson, Lani (Theatre); Colon, Jacqueline (Art)

Subject: Re: Fac meeting

Hello to all!

I just wanted to write down a response to Josh's three points about the failures in Department Management (advertisement for Practicum lecture, house management and advertisement for shows)

1. Publicity for Practicum events have not ever happened in the time I've been here, as far as I am aware. This season, I mentioned two visits we are having this semester (Chris Baker and Kathleen Chalfant) in the season press release, which went out in September. I didn't know about your Palestinian guests for

COPY

practicum until the night before practicum, as you know, so couldn't have advertised even if asked.

2. Faculty members received notice of the shows in the following ways:

- through the press release in September.
- through a separate letter sent to department heads (with request to circulate) in the last week of September and, additionally, to the faculty listserv on Oct 14th
- through campus calendars, both on website page and to the main marketing office
- Through local newspapers including the courier, the herald and the GNBA newsletter and listservs
- Through campus posterage, which happened at the standard time, two weeks pre-opening

3. The only house management that I am aware of was reports from Josh that a student (who has previously been spoken to for the same transgression) was drinking while he was house managing. Otherwise, I put great effort into improving house management focus at Thom and Josh's request and think it went exceptionally smoothly.

I appreciate your feedback and suggestions about department management and suggest, as I did at last month's meeting, that you come to me (and/or email me and others on the faculty) right when there is a suggestion as opposed to announcing it monthly at our meetings. Being in a faculty meeting setting prevents me from properly discussing/addressing your concerns. Also, the opportunity to fix a problem before it is too late is always preferred.

Thanks,

Sheila

On 10/28/10 1:08 PM, "Perlestein, Joshua (Theatre)" <perlestein@mail.ccsu.edu>
<<https://webmail.ccsu.edu/cwa/UnBlockedError.aspx>> wrote:

Agenda

ACTF

Announcements

-I attended Theatre Without Borders Conference in New York 9/4-9/26. I hosted a panel on theatre in Middle East. I cemented a relationship with Ashtar Theatre in Ramallah, Palestine where I will present workshops next fall. CCSU students have been invited to the UN to help them with an event on 11/29.

COPY

--Visiting artists from The Freedom Theatre in Jenin were on campus for 2 days speaking to classes and seeing our production. I also organized a collegier tour for them which included speaking engagements at Brandeis, Columbia, UConn, Holyoke Community College and the Pioneer Valley High School for the Performing Arts. All are interested in hosting tour from Palestine next year. I was disappointed that there was not more publicity around campus for this. I hope there will be more for the visit of Obie-winner Kathleen Chalfant on 11/4

--As producer of the musical things are going very well. [redacted] and [redacted] made presentation to SGA. The budget given by SGA matches last year and they have indicated this should continue into the future

--Cat on a Hot Tin Roof went very well and received high praise from the Dean and Provost among many others. I want to commend [redacted] and [redacted] for stepping up big in the execution of the set. [redacted] and [redacted] were nominated for Irene Ryan. FYI night was full. Faculty night was sparsely attended and I think notice of this needs to go out earlier. Many faculty members on campus who I spoke to said they did not receive any notice of the play until late in the week before we opened. There were also some issues with House management but I believe they have been resolved

--I have visited many classrooms this fall as a part of High Impact Theatre initiative including Playwriting, Intro to Drama, American Drama, Islamophobia and International Terrorism. Several more visits are planned.

--High Impact has started the 12:20 inspired by the dance work of Nicole Carrano. Every week a different event will happen center campus.

--I want to offer praise for Thom Deventhal and his work on the box project. It was very exciting to see Art, Dance and Theatre students co creating.

--The London trip is full with 18 students which has allowed me to bring new faculty member Scott Bartley as a chaperone.

Anna,

This first email from Josh is his announcements for the November faculty meeting minutes. In an effort to save time in the meetings, Tom Gallery has requested that

COPY

we send our announcements to the department secretary and she just adds them to the minutes.

Josh's writing of announcements with the entire faculty cc'd is unprecedented (for him or anyone on the faculty). They have so far gone only to Jacka, the department secretary, (not even to the chair as far as I know).

I've also not seen comments about mistakes that we've made in the department (or even suggested improvements) within announcements before this one. Usually, since the idea behind announcements is for the university to chart our individual and collective achievement in the department and the field, we write them with the intention to shine.

Since January of 2009, in both faculty meetings and performance faculty meetings, (Josh Perlestein, Thom Delventhal and myself) comments toward my work performance like those in the initial email have been made at nearly every meeting, and without opportunity for discussion or rebuttal. Initially I would defend my position, as I was understandably upset at someone's negative responses to my work for reasons I considered unfounded. This would inevitably make it worse, and often significant time in meetings would be taken up with the problem. Since April of 2009 I have practiced (as other faculty will corroborate) indicating that I've heard him and politely refocusing the issue or non-response, thinking that simply "not taking the bait" would alleviate his focus on me.

I foolishly "took the bait" here, perhaps because I felt newly empowered, having recently brought my complaints to the University. My use of the word "failures" may have seemed provoking to Josh. In addition, I realize that perhaps I should have simply responded to Josh and the Chair to adhere to ethics about not causing a colleague professional embarrassment. Nonetheless, I took great care to word it in a civil and professional manner.

The response from Josh directly contradicts what I have stated in my response. I can only say that, to the best of my knowledge, my statements are completely true.

In another document, I have addressed the issue of his Middle Eastern lectures.

The late-night response from Tom Callery was very upsetting, framing, as it did, this correspondence as petty arguing among faculty members. This made an already deeply difficult situation far worse for me, as it is the only time anyone on the faculty (including Tom) has indicated anything but total support about my treatment by Josh being inappropriate and undeserved.

Nov 10, 2012

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Dear Anna,

I'm deeply concerned that I'm being retaliated against for asking that Josh Perlstein's behavior toward me change.

Some incidents have taken place since Monday of this week that I'm sending to you for consideration.

On Monday, Thom Delventhal returned from your office eager to talk with me privately. In the conversation, he relayed to me that he was going to ask me something that you'd advised him against asking me. I stopped him and said, "are you sure you want to ask this anyway?" I think he thought I was joking, so he continued.

He commented that he had spoken with Josh and that Josh was firmly stating that this problem was me and that he had no intention of changing anything in his behavior. Thom said in light of this, it seemed I had a decision to make if I wanted to stay here. I either didn't let him intimidate me and stay or not. I proceeded to explain to him that I had been trying everything I knew to handle the situation as best I could, and that it isn't right that I should have to defend myself at this level and that this was why there are laws against making a difficult work environment. He said he understood now. He seemed very concerned that I feel taken care of and listened to, as he always does. Nonetheless, I think his comment made clear his lack of understanding about the issue.

On Tuesday, the faculty gathered for a meeting (called by Josh when there wasn't enough time to pursue his topic at the monthly meeting last Friday). The meeting was to discuss the possibility of moving our program from a BFA to a BA program. He indicated in the Friday meeting that he was trying to find ways to solve the problem of low numbers in classes, which he has spoken about for several semesters. I asked if the enrollment was down. Tom Callery said that it was indeed lower in the past couple of years, but that he didn't have the numbers with him. Lani had said last year that numbers weren't down when I asked at a faculty meeting (after Josh had privately brought that crisis up with me when talking about possibly being asked to cut faculty).

In the discussion, I became concerned that the bulk of what I teach would change to electives. Josh said that it would probably be necessary to not offer those classes as often. As it is, the classes I'm talking about: Directing, Acting 4, American Theatre Today, and Shakespeare in Performance are only offered once every two years. For this reason, the question seemed like a legitimate concern.

I brought it up and Josh shifted the focus to what we would have to do to recruit greater numbers of students. SO the question was not answered. When I brought it up again, Scott told me that Josh wasn't talking about eliminating the BFA, but only enhancing the BA program. Thom Delventhal approached me as the meeting

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disbanded and addressed it directly, saying that we would just beef up teaching Theatre for Education intro classes, which he and Josh, and two adjuncts, Jackie and Barbara could teach.

I asked what I would teach and he said I could teach a section of that. I responded that I didn't know anything about teaching theatre education and he said "well we have to be flexible, we can't always teach the high level courses that we want". While I felt he was missing the point that this change would eliminate the courses I am trained to teach, and was hired to teach, I backed off. I replied that I was afraid, because others would have the qualifications to teach those things and therefore make my job more doable by an adjunct than by me. He walked away, clearly thinking I was being inflexible.

When I returned to my office, Josh went to the doorway of Tom Callery's office and said "I thought that went very well". Tom Callery responded, "me too, except (silence and then quiet laughter) oh well" and then they laughed again.

Later in the day we convened (without Tom Callery) again and I began the meeting with an apology, saying that I'd misunderstood until Scott had commented in the last meeting that Josh wasn't trying to eliminate the BFA. I felt that I'd caused an interruption for no reason.

Josh said thank you and then proceeded to explain that he had meant to eliminate the BFA, but he was only wanting to approach that carefully because (and he pointed to where Tom Callery was sitting and shrugged his shoulders) and then said he didn't want to say anything behind anyone's back.

We continued to talk and then I brought something up that I had brought up in the earlier meeting (with Lani and Tom C present). I requested that we think in idealistic or even unrealistic ways about what we want for the department in order to not limit ourselves in our thinking and therefore stop envisioning things because we can't get them right now.

Josh, Thom D, Ken Mooney and I had a biweekly meeting last year for exactly that purpose, which we called "the committee". We invited Tom C and Lani so they wouldn't feel excluded, but told them it was for the express purpose of dreaming and stretching, as they both (having both been chairs and here for the longest of all the faculty) had difficulty looking around the problems and focusing on the possible.

I brought this up again in the second meeting, saying we should think about consciously thinking that way and that we should be careful of getting hooked into the "language of impossibility that Tom C and Lani are so versed in".

Josh instantly stopped me and repeated what I said and said that he thought Lani had all the best wishes for the department. I said that I hadn't meant it that way (knowing full well they both have the best wishes for the department...they made

COPY

it) and that I meant they were focused on how things couldn't work from running the department for so long and that it would be a danger to us to fall into that. Asking instead that we approach issues with new energy and possibility.

Josh interrupted me and said, "I'm sorry but I'm uncomfortable talking about people that are not present." I responded that this was exactly what we talked about for a year on the committee and he repeated that he refused to talk about the issue. Thom D and Scott just stared at the floor. Thankfully, my phone alerted me that I had another scheduled meeting and I got up and calmly excused myself and asked to be filed in later about anything I needed not to miss.

This feels like retaliation to me because from what I heard today, Josh is engaged in actively eliminating my job and Thom D and Tom C seem to be unaware and therefore not stopping this.

In conversations I've previously had with Tom Callery and Thom Deiventhal, they have told me stories of Josh treating them in similarly abusive ways, and while they have wondered why I don't just put up with it, like they do, they ultimately have supported me in my action to get Josh to stop this behavior.

Today, from what I heard and saw, and from Tom Callery's email last weekend, I believe Tom is characterizing Josh's inappropriate behavior as a personal conflict I'm having with Josh, which is making his job more difficult, and that he is working with Josh to make him more comfortable with this unfortunate situation.

I know you are working on this as quickly as possible, but I am having difficulty coming to work this week. As you know, I do not have the luxury of not attending.

I hope that some action is taken to alleviate this situation for me.

Thanks again for your time.

Sincerely,

Sheila Stragusa

Nov 23, 2010

Hi Anna,

Sorry I didn't get this to you before the winter break. As I told you, it's a deep struggle for me to relive these incidents. I really focused on resting over the break, which was quite healing for me. Now I want to write this before we start the spring, in hopes that he's had time to reflect about his choices.

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So here goes:

Nov 23:

Josh walks behind me in the hallway while I'm chatting with a student, who is sitting in the box office. He makes pig snorting noises as he passes behind me. I turn and no one else is in the hallway.

Meeting that Josh has called to discuss curriculum issues further. Only Thom and Josh and I can attend. (Anne-This is a continuation of discussion of meeting that I sent you notes about in an email on 11/10)

Josh opens the meeting by talking about how we need to do a much better job on publicity. He is non-specific.

He comments that since Jarek (the professor I was hired to replace) wasn't teaching any advanced classes, that we all have to look to teaching more entry level classes, especially intro to theatre (Anne-see original documentation I sent you re this subject). He says that if there is a good teacher (Inference-unlike Jarek) that those classes will siphon people into the department.

Thom Delventhal talks about education as a feeder, which was discussed in the last meeting, and Josh dismisses him and suddenly breaks off to tell me he's afraid that what he's saying is being written down. I immediately show him my notes and say that I am writing meeting notes. After that I did, indeed, start taking notes of what he was doing/saying for the remainder of the meeting.

Josh provides his notes and says he's created a new core curriculum for the BA. He tells us that Tom Callery is resisting because he doesn't want to let go of the BFA.

Thom D says that these changes might increase everyone's numbers.

Josh agrees and says that Scott Bartley warned him that Tom would resist.

Josh explains that there will be a core for the BA and then they can present a portfolio to be accepted into the BFA

He mentions this makes some courses non-requirements for the BA students (Anne-again, this touches on my 11/10 notes)

We begin to talk about program changes and that we will have broad base introductory courses (theatre workshop 1) that will include education, playwriting, design, directing, acting, tech. Josh calls this applied theatre or practical theatre and when I ask about exactly what those things mean, he suggests that I educate myself

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about that (applied theatre and theatre education tracks) so I can present these things to the curriculum committee...but does not answer my questions, so I remain in the dark.

When I ask another question he squirms and sighs and says, "we'll type it up".

Josh explains that the word "applied" needs to go on students' transcripts.

Josh asks me to look up NYU's program for applied theatre.

I ask him for patience because he is going too fast even for Thom Delventhal to keep up with conversationally.

Despite the fact that the department has not agreed to proceed with Josh's proposal, Josh tells me that I will have to work on changing the curriculum daily. I said I couldn't spend much more time because I was working hard already as the semester approached the close. I asked him again to have more patience and he said (extremely sarcastically), "oh.....I have infinite patience"

Josh brings up needing to talk about things with this semester's practicum (we rotate semesters taking this class and I am in charge of the fall 2010 semester).

He said we needed more time for breaking into groups (we each have a group of students for particular focus, and historically have, when appropriate, put aside class time to attend to the tasks assigned to the groups. Most of the organization around these focus groups has historically happened outside of the practicum structure.) Thom D apologizes and says that he didn't do the prep work to merit breaking into groups and Josh corrected him and said it was only because I had not allotted time.

Then he said that Anna Dolan, Josh's wife, was upset because I had yet to contact her about what she has to do next in our collaboration (Anna and I had been working together on writing short plays in the practicum class). Anna and I had prepared in an extremely detailed manner about dates and what we would do together and separately on those dates (Anne-I have multiple emails to back this up). In addition, we had been talking as we went along with the sessions we were doing together.

I registered surprise and said I didn't know she expected a call because we had planned so specifically. He said it was my class and that I should've called. I asked him why she didn't call me to ask and he said it was my responsibility.

He then said that he had spoken to human resources about the marathon 24-hr rehearsal I had with students for our upcoming competition at the Kennedy Center Festival and they had said it wasn't okay to do that. (Anne-we spoke about that and I subsequently held the rehearsal at school).

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At the meeting's end, I asked Josh for Anna's cell number so I could contact her right away and he said, "she doesn't have a cell phone". I asked if I should just call the home number and he said yes.

That night I wrote the following email (I have originals with dates of all of these emails saved):

Hi Anna!

I'm so sorry I didn't call you to give you an update about the practicum rehearsal. Josh said you were wondering why I didn't call and tell you so you could prepare for the Dec 2nd class. I'm so sorry about that, but I didn't even know you were waiting on that.

So every group chose a play and it sounded like they were quite happy with them (based on their animation in rehearsing). There were lots of questions about whether they could use other class members for chorus in their scenes. I wasn't sure what to respond, so I said I thought that would be possible, but that they should be prepared with some choice to do it with fewer people (those just in their group).

Think that's it! Let me know if you need/want more.

Best,

Sheila

And then I right away called the house and left a message saying the same thing.

The next day I received this from Josh:

Sheila It would be better if you contact Anna by email. Josh

I received a response from Anna right away that she hadn't been confused at all and everything was fine.

December 3

On Dec 3rd, we had a full faculty meeting and I took the following notes:

Josh says he has (in his hand) the adjusted documents about what the department requires for Reappointment (Anne-see original document about 3rd rehire meeting).

I asked if he and Ken and Lani had done that together and he said yes. A moment later Lani said she hadn't seen or adjusted the document in years. Josh did not comment.

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Josh suggests that my going to Kennedy Center Conferences really isn't sufficient because of the nature of the conference (not sure why and I didn't ask).

Josh begins to discuss curriculum changes and again is going very quickly in the conversation. I stop him to clarify that we are talking about the applied theater thing again (from the 11/23 meeting) and he says, "applied theatre?" (looking completely confused). I respond by harking back to the other meeting and he says that he is talking more about Boal and social justice theater (looking at me like I'm totally stupid). I just drop the subject.

I mention the deadline for the curriculum changes and remind everyone that our changes need to be done by the 16th. People indicate feeling nervous about the time crunch and Josh laughs and pauses. Everyone is quietly looking at him to see if he's going to explain his laughter and he says, "the person who is doing the presentation (me) has to do some work looking at other schools and seeing what their programs are." To me, he is describing the work of the whole department, specifically the person who is spearheading the changes (him), not the faculty member that represents the department at the curriculum committee.

We begin to talk about the musical next season and Josh comments that we should just hire a director because the main reason the SGA gives us money is to hire someone that is an expert in the field in to direct. (Anne sees notes in original document re last semester's musical) Everyone looks at him surprised (based on the long argument in the summer) and Tom Callery says, "Well Ken directed for years" and Josh responds that he had experience and so that's different. He said if you're going to direct this you should give students someone with expertise.

Josh makes a big announcement about the problem of the department needing to get an additional room at the Kennedy Center conference because Josh and I can't share a room (the four of us had previously always shared a room and this year it's just Josh and I) this year for obvious reasons. Everyone brushed it off and said we'd find the money. He then said we couldn't meet as a department and plan for the festival/rehearse the scenes for one another because he and I couldn't be alone in the same room together. Astonished, I said, "with students?" and he said, "yes"

No one seemed to know what to say so it was dropped.

December 7:

I went out of my office to go to class in Davison and Josh was talking to three or four students in the hallway behind him (looked like he was stopped in mid-traverse through the door). He was leaning against the door, propping it open. As I went through, he interrupted his conversation with the students (also my students) to say, "wow. You're welcome". By the time he said that I was about 10 feet away from him, so I pretended to not hear him because I didn't know how to handle such

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obvious hostility in front of students. Then I heard him say to the students, "you open the door for someone, the least they could do is say thank you".

On Dec 6th I had decided (with Thom Delvaunthal) that we would cancel the practicum class for Thu Dec 9th because we were requiring those students to attend a performance parade earlier in that same day. The practicum was scheduled for a talkback session about the musical "The Spelling Bee", which had just closed. I checked with the stage manager of the show to see if the director had been informed about the talkback and would attend and she said no, so Thom and I considered whether or not the students that were in the show would mind. We talked about it briefly and decided that the show was so universally loved that the students had gotten enough feedback and there wouldn't be much for discussion.

I had sent out an email on the evening of Dec 6th saying the talkback was cancelled and the meeting was at 11:30 am for the performance parade.

Student directing pieces were scheduled for the evening of the same day, the 9th. In light of these schedule changes, we decided to rehearse the scene changes for the show during the practicum time. So we were scheduled to meet from 3-4:30 and to perform at 5PM. The dates of that performance had been published since September.

This same week I had agreed, at Josh's request, that we meet (in spite of his earlier concerns) from 2-4 PM on Tues Dec 14th for ACTF (the Kennedy Center Conference).

On Dec 7th I received the following email:

Sheila and Thom Because our Performance faculty meeting did not happen I have a few announcements/requests Please write an end of semester evaluation of all BFA students touching on class and performance work as well as goals. I would like to send these out as soon as possible I recommend that [redacted] be admitted to the program based on [redacted] work in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof There will be an informal talkback for Spelling Bee at 8:30 on December 9. This will be immediately followed by an Irene Ryan meeting. Candidates have all been registered and must submit scene choices by 12/20. Make sure your candidates know about this. It is for informational purposes. There will be 2 other meetings. One will be the week before 2nd semester and the other will be the Monday before we leave. I will be coaching my students over the break. This will be my last semester as coordinator for this festival. I will be happy to talk about what happens when with whomever decides they want to do this work. Students will be participating in a new York showcase the last week in May. This will be underwritten by TU That's all for now Josh

The "Irene Ryan" meeting he speaks of is ACTF.

So I went into Josh's office and asked him why he had rescheduled this without consulting me, and he said that students had been very upset that there was no

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talkback and so he reconvened it.

I told him that the ACTF meeting had already been called for Tues 14th and he said he didn't care that he wanted this one.

I expressed that all my students for directing were going to be in prep for the shows at that time and wouldn't be able to make either meeting (my directing students included all of the Spelling Bee performers and all of the ACTF competitors.

He said they have to be there.

I couldn't cancel the staging of the show and I told him so.

He responded by saying that this is what screws things up in the department. That I can't just go changing something in the schedule without consulting everyone else who is affected by that decision. I took that note and went and apologized to the three students who were in the Spelling Bee and scheduled the staging extremely tightly and scheduled a talkback for Spelling Bee (with just our directing class) at 4PM.

On Thursday I found out from a student that Josh had cancelled the practicum class again and the meeting for ACTF. No communication to Thom D or L.

December 8:

Josh walked by my office door and made pig snorting sounds again.

December 16:

As the semester drew to a close, a student [redacted] approached me about being her coach for the [redacted], saying that Josh had just waved her away in his office when she came in to ask him about it and said, "right now you're the least of my priorities"

She was angry when she approached me and I proceeded with extreme care, in order to not provoke Josh or give her the impression I was siding with her in criticism of his actions.

The way our preparations for this conference has happened since I arrived four years ago is as follows:

Three students are chosen from each show to compete in the competition.

We divide them up. If the students are chosen from a show we directed, we are automatically their coach. If there are other students out of that classification, we simply divide the numbers and are therefore the official coach of three students and are expected to help them prepare for the festival. We have always been extremely vocal with the students and with one another that the students don't need to take us up on our offer of coaching or can have their scene coached by another professor if that professor is willing, or even have all of us coach at separate sessions. If a student approaches us we make sure that they know they need to let their official

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coach know and get their okay.

With this in mind, I explained to [redacted] that she would have to ask Josh and that if he's okay with it she is welcome to my marathon rehearsal session with the students I have been assigned to.

She came back a couple of days later and said she will be there. Then I received the following email from Josh:

Sheila I would have greatly appreciated it if you had asked me before talking with my Irene Ryan candidate. I told [redacted] that it was very confusing having, in a sense, two directors. So if she meets with you on 12/28 then please mentor her for the entire process I had plans to work with them later in the process Josh

I told [redacted] that she would be choosing only my feedback if she came on that day and she came anyway.

January 14:

I spoke with Thom Delventhal, who seemed riddled with worry about being my DEC mentor. He said that Josh had been "at him every day" trying to persuade him that I should not be rehired. I asked him why he couldn't just ask him to stop (I mentioned to you, Anna, that I had asked him to do that in December when he reported the same thing). He said he was planning to. I again voiced my fears that the process would be about defending my record from Josh's attacks instead of a discussion about my achievements. Thom said he would try to achieve that and that's why there is someone else outside of the department on the committee. I don't feel confident about this Anna. It seems to me that part of Gil Gigliotti's job is to listen to a faculty member's concerns about me during this discussion. But what if Josh never stops talking long enough to allow anyone else to speak? This has been his MO in every meeting I've ever attended, and someone who doesn't know Josh is least likely to be able handle his behavior and understand that it is the norm.

I continue to be quite concerned that the University is allowing Josh to sit on my re-hire committee, when he has been actively campaigning to stop by re-hire ever since I reported his behavior.

This is what I have right now. Thanks again for plodding through.

I hope your break was enjoyable and restful. More light in the sky every day!!! Yay spring!

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Spring /Fall 2011

We're a few weeks into the new semester, and with renewed negative attention from Josh Peristain, I'd like to fill you in on details from the Spring semester to present day. Josh's relentless hostile attitude toward me in the workplace continues to cause me great hardship. Again, I request that you do anything possible to alleviate the effects of this on my work situation.

Spring Semester 2011

First day back, Jan 24th Josh slammed his door pretty much as loud as one possibly could while Thom and I were laughing and chatting in the office hallway.

Jan 25th Kennedy Center conference. I walked up to several students in a circle with Josh to congratulate them on their work in the acting competition. Josh obviously and abruptly left the conversation and walked away. This was particularly bothersome to me, because the entire faculty has worked so hard to keep faculty conflicts separate from the students.

On the first day of the conference (Tuesday), Josh told me that he would only be there only some of Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, because there was no money for another hotel room as he'd used up his travel funding. The conference was Tuesday-Saturday and I stayed there with all of the students (22 students) the entire time, after thinking I was chaperoning with Josh the whole week.

Early Feb Thom Deventhal reports to me that Josh said he is so hurt by what I have done that he will not stop until I am terminated.

I then brought that up (not that Thom said it) to Josh and he didn't deny that he'd said it.

Feb 15

See previous documentation about a November faculty meeting in which Josh proposed large changes to the degree program very close to the semester's final deadline for curriculum changes. Over January break, I had prepared and submitted the changes to the Dean's office and the curriculum committee by the earliest spring deadline (Jan 28). The changes were rejected by the Dean's office on the grounds that vast programmatic changes required a longer discussion and process.

I was feeling nervous about going to the our 2/15 faculty meeting, suspecting that Josh might suggest I was at fault for the changes being rejected and I was exhausted from sending him off in the fall. He did indeed suggest that it was my fault. I very powerfully and clearly defended myself, and suggested he'd set me up for this event

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by proposing changes so close to the deadline and that I'd expected he would blame me. I was very strong in my response, and as Josh argued, people got more impatient with him until Tom Callery finally said that it was clearly not my fault and asked him to stop.

After the meeting, Josh told Tom Callery that he was feeling marginalized by the department. Tom attempted to close the door and Josh said not to as he didn't want to be accused of anything. He continued to talk about how my behavior had marginalized him and that everyone was silencing him as a result. I responded from my office and said that I had been frustrated throughout the entire process with him because so few people would stand up for me in the arguments. He said he was having a private conversation. I asked him why then didn't he close the door? He then began to engage with me. Josh and I fought back and forth for over an hour. Tom Callery interjected periodically that it wasn't true that he was treating Josh unfairly. I spent considerable time keeping Josh from attacking Tom.

Josh told me that they (HR and the folks who'd been reviewing my complaints about him) thought that I might be derailing any possibility that Josh could get in the way of my moving forward in my job. He said he had criticism about me before we got into conflict. This is certainly untrue and heavily documented with Human Resources. He said that he, the AADP and the people over in HR couldn't understand (after going over and going over the document) what I wanted, that my documentation was all unclear.

Josh said that in the fall I refused to have a mediated conversation with him. I reminded him of my reasons (that I had had 4 conversations trying to resolve differences, with other faculty members present, and rather than improving things, his behavior worsened). At this time, I offered to set up a mediated conversation. Tom Callery asked Josh several times if he'd be willing to have a mediating conversation with me. Josh didn't answer our direct questions, and changed the subject, finally saying he wanted to get back to his work.

After the argument ended and Tom C had left, Josh came to my office door and said he felt like he'd just taken a big crap and that it felt great. He went back to his office, and returned a few moments later and said he hoped I didn't take that the wrong way.

The following morning he came into my office again and repeated the same crap comment.

In March sometime Tom C asked me to come and talk to him and when I went into his office he asked me, "what is wrong in our family?" I didn't know what he meant and so asked him to clarify and he said communication was at an all time low in the department. I agreed, saying (as I had so many times before and have since) that we should all commit to having open conversations rather than bustling around and talking about things behind closed doors. He agreed. Then after an awkward pause

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he said, "so what should we do about it?" I suggested that we have a meeting devoted to the issue and then have an agreement to proceed with new commitment and meet more regularly. He said he didn't think we could find time for more meetings. I was totally confused and said, "then why are you asking me what we should do?" He responded that he needed me and Scott Bartley to "get along". I was totally confused, as I'd had absolutely no conflict with Scott since his arrival at CCSU. Worried, I asked him if Scott had been reporting that we had conflict and he said no. I told him I thought we were fine and pressed him and he said he just knows we don't get along. I told him that I had no knowledge of that and that I would certainly go to Scott and clear it up. He again said that Scott hadn't told him anything.

That day I went to Scott and related the story and he said he hadn't complained about it and thought, as did I, that we had a fine working relationship. I stressed to Scott that I was very open to criticism and conversation about work styles if he ever found our communication strained or unsatisfactory in any way. We agreed that we thought our work relationship was characterized by open communication. We are both very vocal and deal with any disagreement we run into right on the spot with one another. I really thought Tom was having some weird, misguided father moment and forgot about it.

A few days later, Thom D told me that Josh had said to him and Tom Callery that Scott and I couldn't stand to work together and were so polarized in our opinions about work that "one of us would have to go" because there was no way we could work together.

Throughout the entire spring, I had been trying to arrange a retirement event to honor Lani Johnson before she left us in May. I have small documentation of several exchanges. The only ones who responded were Thom Deventhal and Catherine Fellows. Thom and I finally arranged a dinner on the night she was being honored at a ceremony at the Hole in The Wall Theatre in New Britain (Thursday May 5) and a ceremony and a gift presentation at the closing day of a show that weekend (Saturday May 7). Catherine, Thom, Tom C and I collected money for a gift. Josh did not contribute. We'd scheduled a four o'clock dinner on Thursday night before her award because Tom Callery was going to another show that evening and couldn't make a later gathering.

A few days before hand, I suggested we have a more relaxed dinner after Lani's award ceremony since Tom C would be at the weekend event and it seemed unfortunate to have an early and rushed dinner on the night of her award presentation. Tom C said he didn't mind and so we moved the dinner to after the ceremony on Thursday night. Josh was quite upset (I heard from Thom D.) because I had moved the event to after dinner and that he couldn't go. This was the first communication I'd had from him about anything regarding Lani's retirement. Josh hadn't responded to a single email or suggestion. He didn't come to the dinner or the ceremony. And, as far as I know, he never had any intention of doing so.

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In the May 6th faculty meeting, we decided on production dates for the 2011-12 academic year. We agreed for Dec 8th and 9th for student shows *Cruze* to be directed by [REDACTED], and *Heart* to be directed by [REDACTED]. Both of these are final directing projects for students that I have mentored in my directing progression for 4 years.

In addition, in May we finalized conversations that had happened all throughout the spring to go forward with [REDACTED] as the [REDACTED] for the coming summer (2011) with his production of [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] that goes to the director that has risen to the top in the directing sequence and it has been supported for the past four years by the department as a participating show in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. This means that an adjudicator will attend the show and nominate students for various levels of further participation in the regional festival (acting, directing, design, stage management, the show itself competing at the festival). It is out of [REDACTED] that my directing mentees have been nominated to compete at the regional festival for three consecutive years (of which two students were sent to compete against all eight regions in the nation and then won the single national college student directing award at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, a first for CCSU).

This practice of the department supporting the [REDACTED] began with a student created show, *Suicide King and the One Eyed Jack*, which was unconnected to my student directed sequence and was of such quality that the faculty wanted to support it for ACTF participation. In subsequent years, the [REDACTED] was filled by only students in the directing sequence and the first year after *Suicide King*, *Betty's Summer Vacation* (for which [REDACTED] won the national award) ACTF support was discussed after the show was staged and the faculty voted to support it. At that point, there was discussion in faculty meetings that the summer slot be the directing sequence "prize" and that we support the student show that earns the slot. Josh contends that I remember that inaccurately and that the agreement never took place. I cannot find documentation in the minutes of the conversation but still maintain that it, indeed, occurred. I present as evidence the fact that for the following two summers we supported the [REDACTED] without renewed discussion or reconsideration. The following summer's *Lorca* (which was invited as one of eight shows out of 42 faculty and student directed shows to go to compete at the regional festival and for which [REDACTED] won the national award) was supported without discussion. In the summer of 2010, *Quake* (for which [REDACTED] was invited to compete for the [REDACTED]) was supported without discussion.

[REDACTED] had directed a production of [REDACTED] in the spring at [REDACTED] (Connecticut) with a group of students there as part of his continuing work toward his MFA in General Theatre Education at CCSU (working with Thom Delventhal as his mentor). There had been discussion about whether or not he should receive the summer slot because I had not worked with

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to my own student directing progression and felt that giving it to him might cause resentment in the students with whom I had been working. Knowing that Thom's mentorship would have a similar directing focus (which it certainly had) we agreed that [redacted] deserved the slot, having done the *Early Stages* slot (for Educational MFA student's work) for the past three years. The other students who were in line for the summer slot were happy and supportive of [redacted] receiving the slot.

The TD (Scott Bartley) and Tom Callery were unhappy with the choice, as [redacted] had, while directing the department's [redacted], built a set piece with department materials without their permission. They both thought it was a bad message to support someone who had committed that transgression. The choice went forward, as it had traditionally been my choice to select the work. And this year, the choice was a joint one between Thom Delventhal and me.

[redacted], Scott and Tom Callery and I met in May and got deadlines to [redacted] for his build. He was asked to have build plans to Scott by June 16th and it was agreed that the build would take place, with Scott and Tom C and their student's help on Friday Aug 26th and Monday Aug 29. I asked at that time if it would be enough time and Tom C and Scott Bartley confirmed that it was.

Thursday May 19 I came to you to thank you for your help and wrap up. I said Josh seemed to be backing off as much as he was able and that I would keep a continuing record of anything and let you know how it was going.

I head into a time that is free of interaction, as the semester ends and the summer break began.

Mid July I received word from Tom Callery that [redacted] had not turned in his build plans for [redacted] by the deadline. I immediately called [redacted] and told him to send the plans right away. I told him I would have zero tolerance for missing deadlines and any other lack of responsibility with the tech faculty. He apologized and promised that it would be the last time I would have to talk to him. It was a long and very serious conversation, and I felt fully confident that [redacted] understood the seriousness of his missing a deadline. I was determined to make this a hassle free event for everyone since Tom C and Scott had initially resisted our choice of [redacted] show.

In July, Josh emailed the following:

(July 22) Hey [redacted] (and Sheila and Thom who I am including in this conversation) This is what I had talked about with Sheila (you working in the summer) but since it was the end of the semester I don't think I had thought it through completely. The plan discussed was what you describe. Essentially Rehearse up until the time of my show, pause and then go full tilt until the week before. Now thinking about it this does not

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make for a very coherent process for you.
How do you think you and your cast would feel about the 2 options you describe. I
neither want to promise people anything in casting. In other words they may think
that if we are opening things up again it is because I definitely want to cast them...
after conditions it could be that you could just proceed as planned because I decide not
to use any of (you) nor force them to choose or anything like that.
My vote would be to do it as Winterstock but that may have already been
assigned...that way noone would have to be recast and Fall Faculty could have an open
slot for casting
Shelia/Thom? What you think>>>Josh

On 22 July 2011 12:44, [REDACTED] wrote:
Hey Josh, I had cast my show in May because I had intended to work on things for a
little during the summer. I haven't done anything yet with them considering I'm also
trying to work around [REDACTED] show. I wanted to go into the semester with already
doing some work in the summer so we wouldn't need more rehearsal time during
school. I agree with you, though. I don't want anyone, including myself, to be
overwhelmed and the mainstage is the priority but we can work this out. Now I have
a couple ideas... The first is that I hold off on rehearsals until you cast your show. If
any of the four are cast in yours, I recast. Or the second option being I hold off on
casts until the spring semester... I can work during winter break if need be. I would
prefer the second option because not only do I not want to recast, but I want a shot
at your show. So you let me know what you think about these ideas.

Also on July 22 I responded as follows: I just want to say how great this
conversation is: everyone so clear about needs and assuming they will get met
because they are being expressed. Why to go Josh and [REDACTED]
I think we should go with your idea [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] the spring. We'll place it
wherever it doesn't compromise Dream Play energy or casting. Maybe winterstock
as Josh suggests. I think we should revisit that when we return with Tom C in
conversation.
Sound good to all?
Hope summer is good.

Sent from my iPhone

As far as I am aware, the only students that know about anything that has happened
with Josh and me are the two students who were called last year about the conflict.
Nonetheless, I have suspected that students have sensed tension between Josh and I.
I deduct this from the frequent incidence of students making negative comments
about Josh and his teaching around me. Students don't make this character of
comment to me about other faculty members, and I suspect they are trying to get me
to comment. For the record, I consistently ask them to be upfront with Josh about

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problems they have with him and defend him in general ways that re-establish their respect and decorum.

When we returned for the beginning of the semester, I was determined to begin anew with Josh. I wanted very much to talk about strength of community and practicing interaction and behavior that is respectful and honoring of one another. I planned to make it clear in the community of students and faculty that Josh and I were in positive communication, thinking that starting with the relationships of the leaders as a model would go a long way in setting positive community mindfulness.

I am in charge of the department practicum this semester, which is a requirement for most of our students and ends up being department gathering meeting, especially around special speakers and the beginnings of semesters. Announcement and welcoming of new members happens there. I welcomed all and introduced faculty members and they came up and spoke and then I gathered everyone into a circle. I asked all to hold hands and then made a joke about not wanting to hold Josh's hand, and both of us made pained faces holding each other's hands and all fell into howls of laughter. This was an intentional attempt on my part to alleviate tension publicly. I then proceeded to talk about how much we value the community of our department and that our efforts to respect and listen and show up for one another is what creates that community. I stressed that it is our actions that create this and not some stroke of luck and asked for a sharing commitment to mindfulness with all the new members. Then I had everyone choose a partner and I chose Josh. I asked everyone to talk about the most difficult moment and then the funniest moment that happened to them over the past few months. Then I asked people to share one thing they learned about themselves in the same period. Josh and I laughed so hard and really listened to one another. It was the best interaction we'd had in years.

I include the following account about the student directed shows to illustrate a pattern that Josh Perlestein is finding an opportunity to derail my areas of involvement in the department (reference documentation Jan 21, 2011 in which I detailed that Josh's curriculum change proposals directly affect the areas that I teach)

There is a history of discomfort and annoyance on the part of the technical faculty around student projects that predates my arrival at CCSU. Student directed shows have gotten significantly more mentored, systematic and regulated since I was handed the projects upon my arrival in the fall 2007. Since those changes have occurred, there has been a détente of sorts. All seem to agree about the positive experiences students glean and the national exposure that the program has brought the department, and the technical faculty have made room to include the program in our season schedule and allowed for their students' participation in the projects.

This fall has been markedly different, and the account I set down as follows illustrates what is Josh Perlestein's new and unprecedented involvement in the student directed shows.

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The next day after the practicum meeting, Friday, September 2, we had a faculty meeting and the subject of student shows came up and Josh led an argument to not support [redacted] show for ACTF because his communication had been poor with Scott and Tom over the summer. Tom and Scott were very vocal about this (which generated the conversation) and I responded by writing [redacted] an email and reaming him for not returning phone calls to Scott and generally being a poor communicator. [redacted] was extremely upset and said that since our phone call in the summer he had been extremely conscientious about communication and had not had any mis-steps. He had not received a single phone call from Scott, as I had suggested, and felt upset that I had reprimanded him.

I called Scott right away and Scott said that he had emailed him. I pointed out that I was under the impression he had called and he said no. Since [redacted] doesn't have [redacted] his stage manager had sent an email to all of us (including Scott) to contact her with anything that needed a response and she would let [redacted] know. I reminded Scott of this and he said he didn't have [redacted] phone number. After looking into the accusation that [redacted] had not been communicating, it seemed quite clear that both Scott and Tom had been in full communication with the stage manager almost daily and for some reason (seeing her daily by this time) didn't tell her what they needed to know or even that they were trying to contact [redacted]. When I addressed this directly they both maintained that [redacted] should have been in contact with them. It was clearly totally baseless.

It was agreed at the end of the next faculty meeting that we would have a vote (after seeing [redacted] show) about whether or not we should support him to go to [redacted]. It was understood in that meeting that failing faculty support, the students could raise the money themselves if they wanted to go. Proof of this is that Thom Delventhal went to [redacted] and told him that we would vote as a faculty after seeing the show and that they would have to raise the money themselves if we voted not to support.

We met as a faculty on the following Tuesday (Sep 13). Before the meeting, I asked Josh about something in his office and he had made the comment "I think we are going to have a fight on our hands" referring to Tom C and Scott about the performance area of the department. I responded, saying that it seemed like there was resistance, but hopefully we can all be upfront and positive about going forward. He then agreed and said we should just continue with a positive focus.

A moment later he went in to Tom Callery's office and closed the door. I didn't even notice until Thom Delventhal came by and mentioned it with a grimace. He said that Josh wasn't going to the meeting but that he was making his vote about [redacted] show clear. When Josh opened the door, he said, "good luck" and laughed to Tom Callery.

At the meeting shortly thereafter, the faculty voted to not support [redacted] show. Josh did show up and was the primary generator of the vote. Nonetheless, the whole

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faculty voted for non-support for ACTF, except for me. The motion was made by Josh and was (verbatim) "motion to not support [redacted] show for ACTF entering and use his show for Early Stages".

Thom Delventhal told [redacted] that we were not going to support his show. A couple of days later, Thom told [redacted] that he and the cast could not raise the money themselves because we did not want the show representing the department and that was inferred in the vote. It had indeed been discussed that way as a reason we shouldn't support him, but faculty members (including me) had forgotten that Thom had already told [redacted] about our vote and that [redacted] was planning to raise the money with his cast if we didn't support him.

When Thom remembered this he discussed it with Tom C and Josh, and they both said that it was inferred in the original vote. I did not agree and wanted another opportunity to oppose. SO I requested another vote and Tom C was quite angry and said there was no way we were going to let the show go. I said I knew that was so but I wanted to go on record opposing. He said I already had and I countered that we had not voted against them raising their own money. Knowing that this was a second harsh blow for the students, I really wanted a chance to vote against it. It was not inferred in the first vote. Josh started adding to the conversation from his office and said that if I had been following rules all along, none of this confusion would've happened. Then Tom C said we should get together to vote about whether or not [redacted] should be allowed to do his show, because [redacted]

This has been a rule in the department as long as I have been here and has never once been observed or enforced. Tom C then added that he didn't know shows had been moved in December and how that was another example of my miscommunication. We had discussed the changes Josh talked about over the summer right when we returned and had even found a new date together for [redacted] show in the spring (with Tom). Josh agreed and I commented that he was the one who changed the show's date. Josh said that he shouldn't have to be the bad guy about moving shows because I'm not following rules and making sure everyone knows everything. Josh said he doesn't think [redacted] should be able to do his show but that he didn't think he could make it to the meeting to vote on it and that he didn't think he should be inconvenienced by my lack of communication and adherence to the rules. I was shocked and Tom C made reference to voting on the new policy document for student directed shows. I didn't know what he was talking about and he said it was in my email.

There I found the following:

IN THE WORDS OF THE GREAT HILLMAHER WITHOUT THE SARCASTIC
"NEW RULES"

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- 1) All class related Student shows will be performed in A123 using only the portable light board and rehearsal cubes. Students will provide their own props, and costumes, etc.
 - 2) Non class related student shows will be performed in A123 or the Turp Theatre using the portable light board in A123 or existing equipment (in the torp) and rehearsal cubes with students providing props, costumes, etc. No student show will be auditioned, cast, rights secured or dates set without proposal paperwork approved by the faculty. No Budget available student director must have a GPA of at least 2.5.
 - 3) Non class related student shows to be performed elsewhere (Weite, Blackbox, or Turp Theatre) with any type of departmental or technical support will require prior approval of the faculty the academic year before the performance. No student show will be auditioned, cast, rights secured or dates scheduled until proposal paperwork has been approved by the faculty. Any budget is subject to faculty and/or chair approval. Student director must have a GPA of at least 2.75.
 - 4) Any mainstage student directed show will be treated as such as part of the season and require unanimous faculty approval and support. Proposals to be approved in the academic year prior to performance. Student director must have a GPA of at least 3.0.
 - 5) Any student directed show to be entered in ACTF will require faculty and chair approval in the academic year prior to the performance. The faculty and/or chair reserve the right to rescind entry due to substandard production or performance values or budgetary considerations.
 - 6) Any show, performances, invited guest artist, event, etc. will be subject to faculty and/or chair approval and will not be scheduled or supported without proposal paperwork approved prior to booking and scheduling. Budget subject to faculty and/or chair approval.
-
- 7) To be included in any student production proposal; student director with GPA, show name, cast size, dates, times, rehearsal schedule, personnel / staff needs if applicable, budget if applicable, all technical needs if applicable, complete production team must be identified if applicable. Venue secured if applicable.

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- 8) No Student show will interfere with a mainstage show with cast, crew, time or rehearsal conflicts without expressed written consent of the parties involved and the approval of the faculty and/or chair.

There had been no incidence of me not communicating or breaching these understandings before the argument we were having just a that moment, so it had clearly been a previous conversation with Tom C and Josh.

Thom Delvethal, who was in the argument about the vote when the document was brought up, said that he read the document and that I hadn't broken any of those rules.

At that point, I realized that, in fact, while things seemed to have calmed down in the spring semester, with the return to school is a return to deep conflict and hostility. Then I decided it was time to send you the new document.

This document includes things from the spring that I had written down before my meeting with you in May. I had held onto them, rather than sending, as things seemed to have calmed down significantly.

April 2012

April 9-10, 2012

Now I am calling for a vote for what we finally arrived at at the end of the last meeting: Josh's desire that we *mandate* casting of student directed shows be only with students that are not cast in main stage. This final moment clarified that Josh intends the case by case to be for mainstage casting and that the student directed shows be solely students not cast in the mainstage. This is what we went round and round about at that meeting. I thought Josh was saying what I just stated and in the final moment he clarified that he was indeed asking for a mandate for student shows, to which I responded that I didn't agree to vote yes. If what Scott says is true and everything (including student shows) is on a case by case basis, we're all set. In this case, Josh should clarify so students in practicum understand that, which they do not now based on his discussion in that class. Sound good everyone?
Shelia

On Tue, Apr 10, 2012 at 8:13 AM, Bartley, Scott L. (Theatre)
<bartley_scl@mail.corn.edu> wrote:

We did vote on this, 2 meetings ago it was presented and there were no objections

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then. As I understand, Student Directed projects were created to give the students who were not acting in shows the opportunity to perform in a piece. The reason there is not technical support for these shows is because we can not complete a main stage successfully. By stating students can not work on more than 1 show in 1 time slot allows more students to be involved and lightens the stress level of those not performing well academically. There also is a line on that proposal that allows exceptions to be made on a case by case basis.

So what are we voting on now?

From: Stragosa, Sheila (Theatre)
Sent: Monday, April 09, 2012 12:34 PM
To: Perlestein, Joshua (Theatre); Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre); Callery, Jr., Thomas (Theatre); Benvar, Cassandra (Theatre); Bartley, Scott L. (Theatre); Sheila Stragosa
Subject: Casting regulations

Hello esteemed colleagues!

Just had a student that was planning to direct come into my office to see how to deal with the "new casting regulations" (his words) that are going into affect next year. It seems Josh announced this in practicum a couple of weeks ago.

The directing proposals and discussions for next year are happening right now, so I think we should all be on the same page about the issue. I think we don't have a faculty meeting until May so, shall we vote on it via email or call a special meeting?

Best,
Sheila

May 11, 2012

HR document May 11, 2012

I failed to document an event in May 2011. Student [REDACTED] came to me with a report that she had transferred to another college because she had been targeted by Josh Perlestein throughout the year. She gave me several examples of these events and I recommended that she talk to her parents about approaching Anne Alling about these events. It is important to note that [REDACTED] had no knowledge of my documentation of the event involving her and had not heard any information about my conflicts with Josh from me (nor did other students in the department) As far as I know they did not know from any faculty member.

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Please see final pages of the previous document to HR dated 9/25/11 for context for these following comments.

Soon thereafter, the faculty begins to discuss forbidding my directing student [redacted] to do his final project in the directing cycle (scheduled to go up in [redacted] and already having been researched and rehearsed during the previous year). The faculty complained that his GPA is too low to be involved in shows. This is true, according to the department policies. These policies have been consistently ignored since my arrival here in Fall 2007, despite multiple students' sub-per GPAs.

Sep 26

Tom C called me into his office to reprimand me for the tension I have been carrying around the department. He reprimands me for being disrespectful for stating that "I will fight you on this" in regard to the [redacted] show not happening this [redacted]

He said that he has made venn diagrams to look at conversations with tension in them in his department and that I am the common denominator in each event. This when every conversation for the past couple of weeks has been about readjusting student show systems.

Sep 27

Josh Perlestein arrives at work and leans into Tom C's office and states "It seems like you've got everything under control. There are a lot of closed door meetings happening in the last few days...(with a laugh)" I deduct this is about the student shows as meetings in the past two days have all surrounded this issue.

During Antigone rehearsals in November, there is an opening scene that is very chaotic and dangerous for the actors on stage. Three actors are hurt over several rehearsals in the same segment. The third student to be hurt is [redacted] who ends up [redacted]. On her return to campus, [redacted] is speaking with Josh and one other student in his office. Josh responds to a comment of [redacted] by imitating her sturred speech. The students are quiet in response and then Josh says, "you know I'm just kidding you".

In January, Thom Delventhal and I go to the Kennedy Center Festival together with 16 students from the department. While at the festival, Thom Delventhal tells me that I should be careful because Josh is "after the student shows" now. He says that Josh is going to go after the fact that student shows are overloading actors' schedules and harming their grades.

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It has long been a policy that no students are cast in two mainstage shows in one semester. This policy has been something we try to observe with every casting session (shared at the beginning of each semester for just that purpose) and have made several exceptions to every term.

When this first came up as a concern in the fall of 2009, Faculty member Ken Mooney agreed to help me in coordinating casting of the student shows in the same way. There would be an attempt to use non-cast students, and then when we ventured into the already cast population, we would look to the student being cast in a part of the semester in which the mainstage which they were already cast was not performing. Also, we worked to "share" cast members in the student shows so now one was being overworked. I have continued this practice to the present.

As the semester went on it did become a discussion in the faculty meetings, and faculty voted to mandate that students would not be allowed to be involved with student shows while cast in a mainstage in the same semester.

Faculty members argued that this has always been a policy, but ignored my point that exceptions are regularly made, with an eye toward the heart of the policy, which is not to overload students. I was aware that Josh was angling to mandate this so that no exceptions could be made to student shows and I therefore spent several meetings trying to get him to articulate that he was getting to that. He finally admitted that he thought it should be mandated at the end of the third meeting. Department Chair Tom Callery sent out emails on the subject and finally sent out an email with the subject heading indicating that he was restating an already existing policy. This new policy stated that all faculty members had to approve exceptions for "double-casting" which has never happened previously.

This effectively ends my student directed program. Students upon finding out they will not be able to direct and be in shows at the same time are unwilling to direct. Also, students (especially as they progress as directors) want to use actors that can already act, rather than students that were not cast, for the most part, because they were unable to effectively do so.

I maintain that the purpose of the student directed shows (and my running them as the Directing faculty member) will not be about directing if student actors have no craft whatsoever.

February of 2012 I became concerned that a longtime student of ours, [REDACTED] was getting into [REDACTED]. Students had been observing this in class and bringing it up. Student [REDACTED] leaned into my office to see if [REDACTED] was okay after he had a long session with me one afternoon (Indeed he was not and I called student counseling that day). She told me that she knew things were off in the fall when Josh showed her a "crazy" letter that [REDACTED] had written to him, explaining

how the universe worked and how he [REDACTED] had uncovered that secret. I asked her again if Josh had shown her the letter and she said yes. I find this to be an example Professor Perlstein's pattern of not observing appropriate professional boundaries.

In March Josh reraised the discussion of changes to the BA (see documentation on this subject in original HR document). He again framed it as if it was urgent at a moment when we had about a week and a half to get the paperwork into the Dean's office in order to get it on the curriculum agenda before semester's end.

The faculty agreed we should pursue it so we discussed changes and I prepared materials again and I submitted them by the deadline.

In one of the meetings, Josh brought up again that I had been at fault that they had not gone through initially and I spoke up immediately and defended myself and Tom Callery backed me up.

Thom Delventhal reported that he had several conversations with Josh after that meeting, trying to get him to understand how what he had said was attacking me and that Josh would not see it.

The changes went through in the curriculum committee in April after so much work and problem (see previous documentation) since November of 2010 and I emailed the entire department to let them know it had been passed.

April 19

(from Thom Delventhal)
Hooray!

From: Stragusa, Sheila (Theatre)
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 8:10 AM
To: Callery, Jr., Thomas (Theatre); Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre); Beaver, Cassandra (Theatre); Bartley, Scott L. (Theatre); Sheila Stragusa; Perlstein, Joshua (Theatre)
Subject: BA and TH 147

BA and TH147 have been passed

Neither the department chair, Tom Callery, nor Josh Perlstein responded to the email.

In February I receive notification that Josh is coming to observe my classes for the DEC. He attends and does not give me responses until after the DEC has written my

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evaluation letter. I put his responses in my book before sending it to the Dean, but no one else on the committee sees them.

In April several students were jokingly commenting that Josh was "up in arms" in his Acting class about the fact that we were discussing different settings of a particular play in my Script Analysis class. Student [redacted] reported that they tried to explain it to him and they just gave up. Students were not concerned about this, but I was very concerned that he was expressing judgment about something we were discussing in my class.

In May our office assistant Vanessa Clarke-Blighs reported that she overheard Josh talking to students about how he didn't understand what I was talking about in my Practice class when teaching about "stillness". She indicated that this was with a mocking tone. Again, I object to the situation of my students having to defend what I am teaching to another Professor.

On April 2, I receive the evaluation letter and send a response letter to Dean Pease on April 19th.

ON May, I receive a letter from the Dean stating that she is recommending o the Provost that my tenure track be discontinued.

On Tuesday May 8th I call the Provost's office to request an appointment to speak with him and ask for fair consideration.

On May 10 I seek advice from Union representatives Caryl Grestorex, Jason Jones and Donna Sims. They advise me to write an addendum letter to the Provost and send remaining documentation to Anne Alling in Human Resources department.

May 11: I send an addendum letter to the Provost and this document to Human Resources.

Oct 9, 2012

Oct 9, 2012

Dear Lou Pisano,

I have been working with Anne Alling for a number of years concerning a complaint I filed at Human Resources in November of 2010 about my colleague, Professor Josh Perlestein and subsequent retaliation in response to that action.

I have been sending materials (at Anne's request) documenting further incidence of that retaliation.

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Some of what follows is continued threads from previous documents, which I assume Anne has passed on and detailed for you.

Events this fall:

August 31, 2012

At our first faculty meeting it is announced that Josh Perlstein had mentored a student directed show in the summer slot. Student directed pieces are normally my purview and, after much deliberation, the faculty abolished the summer slot out of the directing mentoring sequence, despite it's being the ultimate step in a cycle of shows a directing student completes.

When I questioned this action, I was told by Josh that it was different because the show didn't use any department resources and it was off-site (which was not part of the conversations in the last year). No one else questioned this action.

At this same meeting, discussion of my student directed shows for this semester (Fall 2012) was raised. I commented that, based on the policy that the faculty very strongly laid down last year in conversations about the student directed shows, there would only be two student shows this fall. Prof Perlstein and Professor Thom Delventhal raised questions about me allowing other student directors to direct this semester and I responded that they could not do so, under existing policies, unless they were not involved in other mainstage shows this semester. Both Thom and Josh then proceeded to work out with me how the student directors could use students not cast during the part of the semester that the student directors are rehearsing in. I raised objections, fearing repercussions from the chair, who was not in attendance at this meeting, and had been vehemently clear about the casting policy last spring (see previous documentation). All present faculty members dismissed my concerns as not understanding the policy.

I responded that I was happy to have restored opportunity for my directing students, and dropped the conversation.

Sep 3

The administrative assistant in our department, Jackie Colon, related to me that she had been cautioned by someone in the human resources office that I may not be returning as a faculty member this year. That human resources staff member reported to Jackie that Tom Callery, our department chair, had told her he was unsure if I was returning this year.

Oct 4

In addition, my DEC mentor indicated upon my return that he wasn't sure what would happen with my tenure process (after assuring me in the summer that I

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would get tenure easily if I followed his advice about documenting a project he attended in June). When I brought up his stated assurance from the summer, he said I should do those things, but that he didn't want to mislead me because he was unsure about what would happen.

Tom Callery began having meetings with the department management UA, Vanessa Clarice Bligh. I am in charge of Department Management, so these meetings the Chair was calling with her (and without me) were unprecedented. Because he is the chair, I did not comment.

Oct 5th

At a faculty meeting on Friday Oct 5th, an extremely upsetting and confusing tone was brought into the meeting by Professors Callery, Perlstein and Deventhal. The meeting proceeded from the start without anyone making eye contact with me, despite my attempted to make contact.

It was brought up that Vanessa would be leaving in the fall of 2013 (which I knew) and that we would need to replace her as UA and that we needed to start thinking about who we want to be in that position. There was no contact with me or acknowledgement of me in the room at all in the conversation, although Vanessa is my assistant, as were the previous UA's who have held her position.

Then Prof Perlstein brought up a discussion of prerequisites for my Directing class. A conversation ensued about how I shouldn't have students that have not taken higher levels of acting (Josh's classes). The existing prereqs are acting 1 and script analysis (all that is necessary for a prereq in my informed opinion). This conversation did not include or refer to me in any way and eye contact was avoided in a continued manner.

I brought up the casting policy and commented to the (now present) chair that we had not followed this but that it had been agreed by the members present not to do so. My suggestion was met by exaggerated exasperation by all the five faculty members there. In response, I read the casting policy that Tom Callery had sent me in the spring, which very clearly states that what I had just said was true. Two members of the faculty said that "It was inferred" that casting students in 2 different shows in different sections of the semester was okay. The policy is as follows:

CLARIFY EXISTING CASTING POLICIES

Students will be cast for main stage shows at combined auditions each semester. Students will be cast in only one show per semester. Exceptions to this policy for mainstage shows will only be granted with the approval of the entire faculty on an as needed basis. Student produced show casting will be cast from those students not cast in mainstage shows each semester following mainstage casting. Exceptions to this policy will only rarely be considered and granted with the approval of the entire faculty on an as needed basis. This is subject to all student

COPY

production proposal policies being followed and paperwork completed and only under extreme and extenuating circumstances. Technical support for student productions will follow existing policies. Exceptions will only be considered and granted at the discretion of the production faculty and with the approval of the entire faculty. Please vote YES or NO to this language, as soon as possible. Thanks you,
(above from Chair, Tom Callery)

Professor Callery then proceeded to raise his voice in anger toward me about my not turning in paperwork for the student shows, an issue he continues to go back to as a way to silence me about the student shows. The paperwork is purportedly required of any show that is happening in a department space that needs technical support or staff from the theatre department.

The student shows receive no technical support, staff, nor is it in a department space. Nevertheless, Tom Callery cites lack of paperwork as causing the main problems around the student shows. That paperwork consists of the following:

Student Directed Shows
(names of Student Directors in the opening)
Date
Devideon 123

I express that there is no info on that paperwork that is not on all of our calendars like all the other shows in the season, but Tom insists I need to submit it before anything can occur.

Josh picks up the ball and explains that communication is necessary in a department for harmony and smooth operations. I stopped him and asked if he was suggesting that I am remiss in my communications in the department and he doesn't respond. He continues to clarify Tom Callery's point in angrily insisting on the paperwork and I again stop him and ask if he sees me as a hindrance to communication in any way. He states that he won't say anymore and withdraws participation in the conversation.

Oct 8

In a rehearsal report (a document sent out by the stage manager after every rehearsal of the department mainstage show which is the hub of communication between director and the team that puts together the show, which includes faculty members and students)

Student [redacted] sends out a report with a question from me about when the turntable (a turning centerpiece of the stage) will be running.

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Faculty member Scott Bartley had informed me last week that it would be running by last Friday. This response went out from Professor Bartley to the whole Netserve (faculty and students):

The turn table will be ready when its ready. With out Peggy in the shop, I have not been able to attend to it. I am buried up to my neck with work in the shop trying to finish the set, and the progress in theatre seems to move backwards every day.

As far as the chairs, we would have to refer to Cassandra. We are also working with finishing a table of the same color.

I wrote to Scott Bartley immediately and requested that an apology be issued for the inappropriate tone of the response.

I received a note from the student [REDACTED] after that communication saying that she knew I had asked Scott for an apology and that I should give him a break because he is under a lot of stress.

I received no response from Prof Bartley.

That's it for now.

I'd love to meet with you when it is possible in your schedule.

Thanks so much for your time,

Shella Straguna

Dec 3, 2012

Dec 3, 2012

Dear Lou Pisano,

Have received no indication that you got my last letter, dated 10/9/2012. I am writing an update nonetheless.

Oct 9th

Approached Scott Bartley about his response to my request for an apology, having heard no word from him via email.

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He let me know that he had no reason to apologize and that the Chair of the Department, Tom Callery, had told him he did not need to apologize. I then asked Tom Callery if this was true and he responded that it was and said, "we never asked you when your actors will know their lines."

In the final document of the previous letter (Oct 9th) I have detailed the purpose of the correspondence in the daily rehearsal report. You will see there that that forum is for discussing and working around technical achievement of the show.

In October, [REDACTED] student [REDACTED] second stage shows for students was casting his show. As noted in previous documents, I let him know he was under no circumstances allowed to cast anyone that was in the second show of the semester (apropos to the latest adjustments). Josh Perlestein then told [REDACTED] that casting with students from his show that had small roles was fine and that they would work out a schedule.

Last week (Nov 28) [REDACTED] came to me asking for solutions around getting around Prof Perlestein's rehearsal schedule, as it was proving difficult to do so. I requested that [REDACTED] interact with Josh directly, as I could not handle it as his advising faculty member. This, again, puts me out of power in the directing program, a situation I claim has been set up in previous actions.

Dec 2nd

Chair Tom Callery called me into his office to "set some things up for the possible transition in the fall". I responded that I would have another year of employment even if I did not receive tenure. He said that I would "in case something else happened, like I got another job". Then he proceeded to inform me that he and professor Perlestein and Professor Deventhal had decided who would be taking over which of my duties (department management and a shared teaching class, Practicum) in the fall. He then showed me my teaching schedule (did not ask me for class times, as usually occurs), which was the same as it would have been (no adjustments in my courses). It seemed there was no need for this meeting.

Will send further updates as they occur.

Sincerely,

Sheila Stragusa

May 30, 2013

Human resources

COPY

Josh Peristein announced in the fall that he was doing a production of David Mamet's *Oleanna*, a two-person drama about a female student that accuses an older male professor of sexual harassment. Josh has been trying to do this show for several years with different students, and all plans previously have fallen through for one reason or another. This year he solidified plans to do the show with [REDACTED] a [REDACTED] theatre major. When I found out about the show, I immediately felt concerned, as Professor Peristein has had two reports of sexual harassment filed against him and female students are quite vocal about getting him "to look at and talk to them instead of their breasts". With all of the continuing hostility I have received from Josh, I was unwilling to be the one to bring this up to the Chair, who knew of the show and of Josh's history with students. More alarm went off for me when I heard from [REDACTED] that Josh was directing the show, which would mean that he would be unsupervised and alone with [REDACTED] for rehearsals. No one on the faculty stopped this or called any of it into question.

Jan 7 Josh emailed me about the dates of his production of *Oleanna* (not agreed upon or scheduled by the department) conflicting with my student show dates. He was apologetic and telling me in the spirit of communication.

He followed that email with one in which he questioned that my dates for the student shows were approved by the department. I let him know they had and he wrote back emails about looking for the minutes in which that was recorded.

Another professor concurred with me that the dates had been approved.

Jan 18 Josh apologized and blamed it on beginning of the semester confusion.

Week of Jan 28-Feb 3 in preparation for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (we go as a department every year) Josh made conference hotel reservations (after volunteering to take care of them so I didn't have to) I had for four years shared a room with Josh and Thom Delventhal at ACTF, as the department could not afford an additional room for faculty. This was not a problem, but I was pleased when I was offered a room by the SGA, who pays for a few student rooms at the conference. So SGA was paying for a single room for me and Josh and Scott Bartley (our Design Professor) were sharing a room paid for by the department.

When I arrived at the festival to check in, Josh had reserved a room for Scott Bartley and I sharing and a room for himself. Thankfully I was the first person there, so I simply informed the manager that it had been an error and had them correct it.

At the festival, one of the students I was coaching ([REDACTED]) made the final rounds of the competition. We worked tirelessly preparing his scenes and a monologue from the play *Othello* for the final round. The other students were quite invested in this process and we had been discussing the possibility of doing the play

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all year and [redacted] was having great success with the Othello (and Shakespeare is an area of expertise and scholarship in my work). Josh was complimentary, which is exceedingly rare, about the work. Other Professors from the conference were present when he lauded that praise.

First week of February few days before the faculty meeting Josh requested that casting policy be put on the agenda. This has been the ongoing conversation he has spearheaded to create confusion and discredit my student-directing program.

At the meeting on Feb 7th Josh brought up again that the casting would be conflicting for student shows and his solution included me moving my student shows out of the slot he wanted for Oleanna. The Chair nipped the conversation in the bud.

Josh wrote me an email that contained an outright request for me to change the dates for his show, Oleanna, because the student in the show preferred the weekend that we were scheduled to go. In the same email he asked if I would mind if her directed Othello in the fall. He said [redacted] would be perfect for it. He also mentioned that he had talked to students about it and they had informed him that I had been talking about doing it for a year. He simply said he didn't want me to think he'd stolen the idea.

In an effort to be cooperative, I changed the student show dates to a week earlier and told him to take Othello. He promptly told the students (and that I had okayed it) and even told them whom he was considering for casting. He talked to the student who'd been working on it and told him that if he got into the BFA this spring, he would cast him. The student did get into the BFA (admission to the BFA is Josh's decision) and said the show was a go. It was the talk of the department.

Another faculty meeting takes place in the beginning of March, at which discussions take place about my directing classes, the student directing program and hiring a new assistant for the professor who is doing department Management (this has been me since my second year here and still is my responsibility at the time of this meeting).

No one looked at me or acknowledged my presence in any way during these discussions, despite the fact that they are all my areas.

In addition, season show selections were being discussed, and I was never acknowledged or asked about my show selections for the fall. I ultimately just raised my hands and listed my choices. There were no comments at all in response to my selections.

On Mar 19 Josh came into my office and asked if we might get together and clear the air and talk things through so there was no residual hard feelings (presumably after

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I left). I told him that I would do that, but not until the tenure argument was decided. He said that he understood and didn't know why I wasn't getting tenure anyway. My materials reflected that I had MORE than meet expectations creatively. He suggested that I had received bad advice about my preparation (Thom Delventhal was my mentor). He then apologized three or four times, teary eyed, if he had contributed in any way to any of what is happening. On March 22, I received a text from Josh asking if I would consider casting him in one of two roles for a professional show that I have been hired to direct. He didn't ask if he could audition. He asked if I would consider casting him. I was quite surprised and didn't respond for a couple of days. When we returned to school on Monday, he approached me and apologized, saying it was just a whim and he didn't know what he'd been thinking. I told him he was very welcome to come to the auditions on the following weekend. This was a perfect solution, as those auditions were for the whole summer season and were a pre-screening call for me (since I was unable to attend the auditions), during which the artistic director of the show was going to tell me if he heard anyone I should see for the roles.

The artistic director did not give me his name to reread.

That following week I was told by another faculty member that I should be prepared for the upcoming faculty meeting because Josh was planning to take the student directed shows away from me because of supposed confusion around one of the students' directing shows. That student, [REDACTED] had gotten a primary role in one of the main stage shows. We had already discussed that (in accordance with the policy) he would have to give up his directing show if he got a big role. He was taken out of the evening of Student Shows.

He had approached me about wanting to do the show in another venue on campus. I told him that we couldn't stop him from doing that but that the policy was in place to protect students from overextension. I also told him that meant I could not mentor him in the directing process. He heard and agreed. Both Josh Perlestein and Tom Callery knew about this conversation and concurred.

He later scheduled a rehearsal in the building for his show. The faculty has no involvement in scheduling rehearsals and I certainly didn't have any knowledge of his rehearsals, having set him free of faculty and department support.

Josh went to Tom Callery and protested that I was mishandling my responsibilities by allowing him to rehearse in the building and that we should do away with the shows altogether.

The student reported to me that he had been called in several times by the chair and Josh to discuss this. He told me that he thought he should give me a heads up that they were continually leading him back to "trying to get him to throw me under the bus" about the whole thing. He would not and, ultimately, the Chair called me into his office and apologized for accusing me of complaining about the policy and

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creating confusion. He said that "I wasn't the one that was running into his office every five minutes complaining....in fact, I was the only one who was not"

At the March faculty meeting, the directing program was discussed despite the fact that I missed the meeting due to illness.

The following week Josh complained that I was not in my office during my posted office hours (this after a day that I had called in sick with the same bug). The Chair sent out an email and then a subsequent email apologizing for having to say it because he knew we spent our every waking moment there.

The April Faculty meeting: After hearing that the main P & T Committee recommended me for tenure, stating that I had exceeded expectations, Josh came to the meeting with the news that he did not want to direct Othello anymore because [redacted], who would play Othello, wasn't good enough to hold the show. He told [redacted] that as well and soon all the students in the department had the information.

I also learned in that meeting that Josh, who would be taking over the student directing projects, would be using my main stage slot for the second stage productions, and that I would not be directing. Tom Gallery, the chair told me that he had told me this in a conversation in December. He had not. Thankfully, I documented that conversation he referred to and sent it to HR at the time.

My mention of the shows I was proposing in the March meeting and the lack of any comment about me not directing next year reinforces evidence of this not being the truth.

Thom Delventhal, a professor in my department who had spoken truthfully at the HR investigation that Anne Ailing conducted, said he was angry because he was immediately approached by Josh the following week and confronted with everything he said (the which Anne revealed had been said by Thom). Thom expressed fear that the same thing would happen again if he spoke up and said, "I have to work here, Sheila. I'm not leaving this job".

In the final weeks of the semester, students were gossiping about [redacted] and Josh having an affair. Another faculty member confronted Josh and he denied the involvement.

On Thursday May 23, a colleague and friend of mine, who is a Professor in Massachusetts, ran into Josh's wife, Anna Dolan, who is an adjunct in CCSU's English Department. When asked how she was Anna replied that she was "terrible. My husband's having an affair with a student" There was another witness there for this conversation.

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4. Letters sent to Provost Lovitt and Dean Pease

May 10, 2012

Dear Dr. Lovitt,

I am writing this addendum to my previous comments addressing my evaluation and recommendation for renewal after receiving Dean Pease's notification that she is recommending that my tenure track appointment be discontinued.

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This evaluation demonstrates a continuation of a well-known, well-documented pattern of harassment and bullying by Professor Josh Perlestein that I have experienced since January of 2009. As a result of this behavior I submitted information to Human Resources on several occasions documenting reports of bullying and harassment. In the winter of 2010-2011 there was an investigation of these allegations. In subsequent meetings with Professor Perlestein, Dean Pease, the Chair of the Theatre Department, Anne Alling and an AAUP union representative for Professor Perlestein, Professor Perlestein was reprimanded for his behavior and I was instructed by HR director Anne Alling to report further incidents to her. I subsequently reported further incidents of bullying and harassment.

Because of his history, I became uncomfortable with Professor Perlestein's presence on my DEC committee the following spring. I wrote to Anne Alling expressing concern about his participation and shortly thereafter he recused himself.

This year Professor Perlestein returned to the DEC committee and that committee produced this letter, which is clearly colored by his bias. Indeed, as reported by the chair of the Committee, the members, "argued with him (Professor Perlestein) for three hours" about all but one negative comment. The original letter the chair produced attributed the comments only to one member of the committee (Professor Perlestein), but ultimately changed it to "we" when pressured to demonstrate consensus. Please compare this letter with last year's submission.

I am outraged that the university has not affectively addressed Professor Perlestein's behavior toward me in over three years.

Please take these facts into consideration of your decision about the recommended discontinuation of my tenure track appointment.

Thanks you for your time.

Sincerely,
Shella Stragusa

Assistant Professor Acting/Directing
Department of Theatre.

MADSEN, PRESTLEY & PARENTEAU, LLC
Representing Individuals in Employment and Benefits Law and Litigation

COPY

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Jacques J. Parenteau
jparenteau@jacjparenteau.com

September 2012

Lou Plesano, Chief Human Resources Officer
Central Connecticut State University
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, CT 06050

Re: Sheila Stragusa

Dear Mr. Plesano:

Please be advised that Sheila Stragusa has retained the services of Madsen, Presley & Parenteau, LLC in order to address an ongoing the continuing harassment, bullying and retaliation from Josh Perlestein, which behavior has apparently been permitted to continue for the last three years. Ms. Stragusa has already been harmed in many different ways by Mr. Perlestein's conduct. Based on our review of the matter, the administration has not taken appropriate steps in compliance with state and federal law in order to prevent this conduct and protect Ms. Stragusa.

As you may know, in 2009, Ms. Stragusa made a complaint to your HR department regarding the bullying and harassment by a co-worker, Josh Perlestein. An investigation by HR of the complaint occurred in the winter of 2010 and 2011. Mr. Perlestein was reprimanded as a result of the findings of the investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, your then HR representative, Anne Alling advised Ms. Stragusa to report any further incidents to her. In fact, there have been other incidents. They were reported to Ms. Alling who assured Ms. Stragusa that she would investigate the matter. After the reprimand in 2011, Mr. Perlestein not only continued with the bullying, but, also began a campaign of retaliation that is severe and relentless.

The first issue that arose after the investigation occurred in connection with Mr. Perlestein serving as a member of Ms. Stragusa's DEC committee. Specifically, for obvious reasons, Ms. Stragusa was uncomfortable with Mr. Perlestein's participation and reported her concerns to Ms. Alling. As a result and based upon HR's urgings, Mr. Perlestein recused himself from the committee, but only with the exception that he would meet with the DEC committee members

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prior to Ms. Siragusa's meeting with them in order to express his opinions. In the end, Ms. Siragusa's meeting with the DEC committee focused entirely on the negative comments made by Mr. Perlestein to the DEC committee regarding Ms. Siragusa. Ultimately, it was Mr. Perlestein's input that dictated the discussion and commentary by the members of the DEC Committee.

After the investigation, Ms. Siragusa was forced to seek assistance from HR again to address the retaliation from Mr. Perlestein. The campaign includes, among other things, repeated efforts to pollute the relationship between the Chair of the Theatre Department, Tom Callery, and Ms. Siragusa. Mr. Perlestein regularly engages in discussions with others in and outside of the Theatre Department in order to cast Ms. Siragusa in a negative light and dilute her performance. The reprimand that Mr. Perlestein received did not deter the harassment and bullying toward Ms. Siragusa and HR took no other formal action in order to address Ms. Siragusa's concerns. In the last year, Mr. Perlestein has made it a habit to visit with the Chair of the department for the sole purpose of raising issues concerning Ms. Siragusa. It may interest you that during the time period covered herein, Mr. Perlestein has on more than one occasion stated he will do anything to cause the termination of Ms. Siragusa's employment.

Amazingly, and much to Ms. Siragusa's surprise, in the spring of 2012, Mr. Perlestein decided to put himself back on Ms. Siragusa's DEC committee. No one from HR or Ms. Siragusa's department objected and prevented his participation. As expected, his voice dominated the DEC committee process. The participation in the DEC Committee provided the perfect venue for the continuation of the retaliatory actions. The original evaluation letter the Chair produced attributed the negative comments therein only to one member of the committee, Josh Perlestein. The final letter reflects that the negative comments regarding Ms. Siragusa are shared by the other DEC committee members. In fact, the other committee members have stated that they agreed to the joint final letter because they were pressured to do so by Mr. Perlestein. In the end, Mr. Perlestein's views were imposed on the other committee members. Mr. Perlestein was permitted to impute a retaliatory review process upon Ms. Siragusa.

As a result of the final evaluation letter issued by the DEC Committee (as dictated by Mr. Perlestein), Dean Pesse recommended in writing on May 1, 2012 that Ms. Siragusa's tenure track be discontinued. At this time, the HR person handling this matter Anne Aling had retired. Ms. Siragusa brought her concerns to the Provost, Carl Lovitt, and he agreed to renew the appointment. However, in doing so, he also adopted Mr. Perlestein's retaliatory assessment. In Provost Lovitt's May 31, 2012 letter approving the renewal appointment, he gives credence to the negative comments in the DEC committee letter, which comments are entirely attributable to Mr. Perlestein. Ms. Siragusa had explained to the Provost that the other DEC committee members were pressured to join. Nonetheless, the negative findings were accepted by Provost Lovitt and were even relied upon by him to direct Ms. Siragusa in her performance.

As you may know, the tenure evaluation process for Ms. Siragusa will begin this October. One of the first steps in the process is an evaluation by the

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DEC committee. Based on the above described history, it is abundantly clear that the DEC committee members cannot provide an objective review of Ms. Siragusa, with or without the participation of Mr. Perlestein. He has harmed Ms. Siragusa's reputation, cast her in a negative light to all of the other DEC members and influenced them with respect to their evaluation of her performance. Under these circumstances, she cannot possibly obtain a fair and unbiased assessment with the current members who would necessarily make up her DEC committee.

The current situation exists because Ms. Siragusa's employer did not timely intervene with respect to Mr. Perlestein's illegal conduct and take appropriate remedial action. The damage is now done. With this backdrop, we are struggling to formulate options of a tenure assessment process for Ms. Siragusa that would be fair and impartial, and not tainted with Mr. Perlestein's retaliatory motives. As a starting point, the DEC committee approval process has to be eliminated, as there is now no chance that the committee can provide an objective review, with or without Mr. Perlestein's formal participation. This solution, of course, does not address the damage that Mr. Perlestein may have caused with respect to others outside of the theatre department who will also be involved in the tenure process. We are not in a position to evaluate that at this point and will leave it to you to do so and make the appropriate recommendations with the obvious goal that Ms. Siragusa receive a fair and objective review process.

Very truly yours,

Jacques J. Parenteau

cc: Dr. Jack Miller, President
Dr. Carl Lovitt, Provost

JJP/vaw

Dean Susan Pease
Office of the Dean
Ammon College of Arts and Sciences
DiLoreto Hall
Central Connecticut State University
New Britain, CT 06050

November 12, 2012

Dear Dean Pease,

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In rebuttal to the DEC recommendation, I would like to point out that my DEC evaluations are extremely inconsistent and, in many instances, express a clear pattern of significantly adjusted expectations that began after my filing a formal complaint against Professor Josh Perlestein in October of 2010. These inconsistencies and changes in expectation can be clearly observed starting in the April 2011 evaluation.

In April of 2009, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Sheila has taken on several new courses within the Theatre program and has revamped the American Theatre Today and Directing courses. Although Sheila has taught many courses in the Department, the DEC encourages her to focus on new courses and programs in her area of expertise and interest that will continue to invigorate the curriculum."

In the spring of that year (the time that the above was written) and in the fall of the following year I taught a new class exploring First Folio Shakespeare and Rhetorical devices.

In April of 2011, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Exceeds Expectations. In four years with the Theatre Department she has taught nine different classes, many of which had among the largest enrollments in the department. However, none of these has been a new class and the Theatre DEC would strongly encourage her to pioneer some new classes as soon as possible"

In the spring of 2012, I taught another new course, entitled *Practices*. This course was quite successful (I have included specific student responses in my tenure book). In response to a suggestion by Professor Thom Delventhal that *Practices* be included in our new curriculum changes as regular offering, Professor Josh Perlestein commented that he didn't see the value of the class, characterizing it as, "nothing more than a long warm-up".

In April of 2012, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Meets Expectations. Professor Singura responded to the advice given in the DEC's evaluation letter of last year that she create a new class. However, no syllabus was handed out at the beginning of the semester, raising concerns about the application of specific academic research and a coherent educational plan. In addition the DEC would like to see more concrete and varying teaching strategies employed. The committee believes that, while Professor Singura's classroom teaching is strong, there is a concern she has plateaued."

This November, 2012, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

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"Meets Expectations," (with a paragraph of consistently positive comments related as a caveat to their statement of non-support)

In my tenure book I have provided several letters that address my teaching record and have also been nominated for an excellence in teaching award her at CCSU this semester.

In April of 2009, in relation to my Directing work, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"In the fall semester, Sheila directed an original production, "Water", which she wrote, choreographed and directed. The production conveyed through movement, not dialogue, her powerful original manuscript's message. The production was well received by the public that recognized the relevancy in a challenging piece of work. Inspired by the public performance. Inspired by the performance, Sheila was invited to speak at the local Rotary Club, which has dedicated its efforts to the problem of accessibility of clean water in the world. The visibility of her production and its impact on local groups led to significant University outreach to the New Britain community. The designers who collaborated on the production of "Water" with Sheila agree that she was a pleasure with whom to work, attentive to details, and concise in her concept while allowing the designers the freedom to collaborate. She was open and excited by the contributions of faculty and student designers. The student performers were infused with enthusiasm about the process and their contribution to it."

In April of 2010, in relation to my Directing work, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Sheila is currently directing a mainstage production of "As You Like It". At this time she is in the middle of this process. The early stages of creation, including the vital interaction with faculty designers, have once again been enormously satisfying. The DEC is confident that the overwhelmingly positive response she inspired in her Shakespeare class this fall, making daunting Shakespearean language not only understandable but enjoyable, will make its way into the rehearsal process. The original production of "The Human Museum" which she wrote and directed this fall was exquisitely staged, deeply moving and thought provoking."

In April of 2011, in relation to my Directing work, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"As a director (3 credits during the review period), Professor Siragusa leads students through a rigorous process that results in meaningful and provocative performances with great clarity of language. Her creative discussion with the design and production team is professional, but sometimes there is not enough substantive interaction at critical moments; since "The Grapes of Wrath",

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Professor Singua hasn't pulled all the elements together with the same sense of artistry demonstrated in that production. The committee would like to see her attack projects earlier."

In April of 2012, in relation to my Directing work, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"In terms of Professor Singua's work as a director, the DEC expressed in last year's evaluation letter that she had not yet achieved the same level of consistent artistic accomplishment demonstrated in "The Gasps of Wrath"; this is still true. Her work with designers on "The Last Days of Judas Iscariot" demonstrated conceptual confusion. While Professor Singua is extremely accomplished at communicating actions to the actors, more attention to the scene-to-scene transitions and staging would improve her productions."

In response to this I have provided several letters from peers in the profession, in many of which professional designers, producers, educators and directors refer to the quality of my work, both artistically and with design collaborators.

This November 2012, about my Directing, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"(Her) plays have been fine experiences for the actors' growth and self-esteem and well-received by audiences, but there has been some question, in the past two years, as to Professor Singua's management of the necessary collaborative work with designers and technical staff."

In April of 2010, in relation to my department management work, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Sheila has done an excellent job in the new area of management. Her articles and press releases are seen with regularity in local newspapers and she has managed to crack the longstanding omissions of the Hartford Courant. The DEC would like her to be a little more hands-on in the area of House Management to assure that the Box Office and seating of audience run smoothly"

In April of 2011, in relation to my department management work, in the area of *Lead Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Professor Singua's work as Managing Director of the Theatre Department has increased significantly this year. Her influence in the area of House Management has been tremendous. She oversaw (and executed a large percentage of) the transformation of our lobby, instilled a sense of professionalism among the ushers and generated excitement for all our performances. She wrote several press releases and articles that were published in area newspapers. Anyone in Central

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Connecticut that doesn't know that CCSU Theatre offers a thoughtfully aggressive program of performances hasn't been paying attention."

In April of 2012, in relation to my department management work, in the area of *Load Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Professor Singusa's work as Managing Director has been steady. Specific assignments she has been given have been fulfilled. However, there have been fewer articles published this year than last, and the committee would like to see more initiative taken by Professor Singusa."

In response to this I provided more articles in my reappointment book.

In April of 2010 my department management work, in the area of *Load Credit Activity* was not mentioned.

This November 2012, in relation to my department management work, in the area of *Load Credit Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"The final piece of Professor Singusa's load credit is her work as the theatre's Managing Director. While she fulfills the specific assignments she's been given and last year she began having students go to high schools in a fifty mile radius and deliver flyers and posters to guidance counselors, the DEC would, once again, have liked to see more initiative taken by Professor Singusa."

In response to this, it is unclear to me what the committee sees as "taking initiative". It states in the evaluation that I am fulfilling the specific assignments as managing director but have not taken enough initiative. In the several years that I have done this job, I have added an initiative to get CCSU Theatre Department materials hand-delivered to guidance counselors at the high schools within a fifty-mile radius of CCSU, done press releases, invited guests to speak on production related topics, written articles, organized panels and invited video artists, interviewers and articles writers to the department to respond to and promote our work. I receive one load credit hour for this shabby job in the department. I agree that an expectation that I more fully realize this position is both unrealistic and not a good use of the skills for which I have been hired. It is a job for which most theatre departments employ a full time staff member. We employ a UA for fifteen hours a week to assist in these tasks, who does none of the aforementioned work. She does programs, posters, donor outreach and budget keeping and website maintenance. I made a request of Professor Tom Callery, our department chair, in the spring of 2012 to take the load credit away from me and let it be completely taken by the UA assistant. He rejected my proposal for reasons that he did not state.

In April of 2009, in the area of *Creative Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

COPY

"Sheila's professional work includes the direction of "Blackbird" at the Massachusetts Chester Theatre last summer and plans to direct "The Taming of the Shrew" this summer. She states that she is eager for her professional outside work and work at CCSU to be integrated and feed into each other."

In April of 2010, in the area of *Creative Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Outside of school, Sheila has put significant energy into building the August Theatre Company in Western Massachusetts. As the DEC has observed this process we are hopeful that this company will continue to take steps toward being a fully operational professional company. The opportunities offered would be a tremendous asset for her, our students as well as colleagues."

During the summer of 2010, The August Company housed and paid five interns in Massachusetts to work on our summer Shakespeare production. Throughout that year we doubled the number of shows the company produced. This amounted to 4 shows produced by the August Company, during which time I directed a show for CCSU and a professional production for the Chester Theatre Company.

In April of 2011, in the area of *Creative Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Does Not Meet Expectations. Professor Singues has been very active in the field for the last decade. She has directed for a number of theatres, both educational and professional, and those productions have been acknowledged by newspapers in Western Massachusetts as some of the best work in the area. She is already contracted to return next summer to the Chester Theatre Company (a small, union-affiliated, summer theatre in the Berkshires). But for the year of this review, most of Sheila's work has been focused on moving forward *The August Company* (the theatre company she founded with other artists in western Ma). She hopes to complete 501c3 progress and be recognized as an official non-profit within 2 years and sees the company eventually becoming a member of the League of Regional Theatres.

The Theatre DEC commends these efforts and would very much like to see continued progress in the company's number of performances, general visibility and professional reputation.

We are also pleased that Professor Singues has been re-engaged at the Chester Theatre Company for the upcoming summer. Nevertheless, greater visibility and scholarly acknowledgement of her work must be pursued. The DEC therefore echoes the Provost's letter from May 2010 urging activities that are juried, adjudicated or peer reviewed. The DEC, of course, recognizes the difficulty of staying current in the field while maintaining the academic calendar. Since Professor Singues stated in her meeting with the DEC that she is working on a book on her study of Shakespeare's First Folio, the DEC strongly recommends that she publish parts of it as articles as soon as possible. Her pursuit of grants to produce special projects using Shakespeare is an excellent beginning."

COPY

In response to this, I began work on a body of work that would both perform and educate about first folio, around which I could base this work to eventually publish. Within the year, I had landed the residency in Northampton's A.P.R. Museum (for June of 2012), where I made an art installation (that included live performance and rehearsal with which the audience could interact) and a finished performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

During that summer I directed a production of *Crime and Punishment* that received a shining Boston Globe review (and later received mention in the year in theatre article in the Globe). I was thrilled that this clear sign of the professional scope of my work could be brought back to the DEC table. It was the peer review that Dr. Lovitt and the DEC wanted.

In the coming year, the August Company achieved three projects, all of which had significantly larger scope than previous projects in terms of funding and work output (and ticket sales, incidentally). For our *Sansho* project, we drew a 600 strong audience for our single performance. And, company member Rich McKeown composed and produced an album for the show (that has sold quite well internationally) on which the August Company sings backup.

In April of 2012, in the area of *Creative Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Even with the challenges of the teaching load, Professor Singue's creative work since arriving at CCSU has been impressive but inconsistent. The DEC is extremely pleased to see the review of *Crime and Punishment*, (the production Professor Singue directed this past summer for the Chester Theatre Company) in the Boston Globe and the *Berkshire Eagle*. Her continued work at Chester Theatre Company speaks well of her accomplishment as a professional. However, in last year's DEC evaluation the DEC specifically asked to see evidence that the work with the August Company was expanding, but the only reviews of August Company's work is by the same writer, whose reputation is not one of a discerning critic.

Likewise, it is disappointing that Professor Singue is not further along on her book project. She was advised at her last evaluation to pursue publication of some facet of her work with Shakespeare's First Folio or her original script, *Water*, (which she wrote and directed as part of the Theatre's mainstage season three years ago). More specifically, she was advised to publish individual chapters as articles in recognized journals. These were not just the opinions of the Theatre DEC, but also those of the Provost expressed in two evaluations letters previous to this year. But Professor Singue has only recently within the last month submitted anything to potential publishers. That submission was a book proposal to Applause Books; no individual articles have been sent out to any journals. It is very unlikely that, having waited this long, there will be any publication activity by the time of her tenure review. Based upon what is included in her file, Professor Singue's scholarly progress has been minimal."

COPY

To address these comments, since my DEC evaluation in April of 2012 I have:

- Presented a workshop on devised theatre to College/University level directing professors at the Association of Theatre in Higher Education, the most respected and highly attended national conference for theatre educators.
- Continued work in the Directing area for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Regional Festival. I have been invited to be one of five of the members College/University Directing Professors, chosen from the New England and New York area.
- Written an article and an accompanying interview about the work of Ervin Staub and Lucie Ann Peardman on radio dramas in Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo that will be published in the spring issue of *Economist Journal of Theatre and Performance*, a peer reviewed theatre journal.
- Submitted my original plays *Water and Human Manure* to Dramatists Publishers and the Humana Festival at the Actors Theatre of Louisville (respectively).
- Was chosen as one of three theatre makers in Western Massachusetts to be in residence at the A.P.E. Gallery in Northampton, Massachusetts, at which I created an installation and performance on the play *Twelfth Night* as part of a continuing project (intended to eventually be a book) on First Folio Shakespeare accessibility in performance. This has been responded to and addressed in a letter of support by Professor and playwright Julian Olf.
- Have continued work on the August Company, which performed two shows in the Take Two Fringe Festival in Greenfield, Massachusetts.
- Have gathered letters of support from many nationally recognized peers with whom I have worked/continue to work.

This November 2012, in the area of *Creative Activity* my DEC evaluation states,

"Does Not Meet Expectations. (It references August company successes) While according to Professor Singuea, the company is gaining a solid reputation in the region, she admits it's not as far along its path to becoming a year-round theatre as she and her collaborators would have liked. Since building a theatre company is never an easy task in the best of times, much less in the economic situation of the past five years, the DEC applauds the energy and commitment Professor Singuea has devoted to the August Company. Given the clear mandate that she has received from the DEC, the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Provost in the past several years, the DEC would like to have seen more concrete, peer-reviewed, published results of her work. These past recommendations included a) seeking performances and/or publication of her plays and b) the publishing, in appropriate outlets, excerpts of her planned book length treatment of Shakespeare's First Folio as performance guide. She has done neither to any significant degree. For example, Professor Singuea has submitted both of her original plays, *The Human*

COPY

Minions and Water, for publication and/or performance elsewhere, but, disappointingly, the file suggests she took no action until October 20, 2012. Similarly, on April 3, 2012, she sent via email a brief general proposal for a book-length treatment on the First Folio to Applause Books, part of Hial Leonard Publishing, with a reference to a "more detailed proposal with chapters in the near future." As evidenced in the file, no further action on writing the book has occurred. The only tangible development of the Shakespeare Project was the *Twelfth Night* performance and installation in June 2012 at Northampton's A.P.E. Gallery mentioned above (a DVD about which is included in her file). Once again, as an ancillary to her research, this is excellent, but it simply does not address the Provost, the Dean's or the DEC's specific recommendations. The sole publication that Professor Singum has had is a brief article and interview, forthcoming in the Spring 2013 issue of *Banister: A Journal of Theatre and Performance*, with psychologists Ervin Strub and Laurie Anne Peckman, creators of an exceedingly popular social radio drama aimed at healing and reconciliation in post-genocidal Rwanda. As important and interesting as this work may be, this may not have been the time for Professor Singum to redirect her energies toward a new project.

Despite the aforementioned achievement, the committee notes that they would like to see more peer-reviewed, published results of my work.

Since publishing in the world of the theatre, both traditionally and in our own P & T, university approved guidelines, include professional activity that is considered the equivalent of publication, I argue that I have succeeded in achieving the recommendation of the DEC, the Dean and the Provost quite fully.

The Promotion and Tenure Guidelines for the Department of Theatre states in section III. Creative Activity (4.11.9.2) that, for tenure,

"Candidates should be professionally active. Their activities should result in some of the following: peer-reviewed productions, (performances, acting, directing, designs, technical productions, dramaturgy and/or research, etc.), awards, presentations, publications (print and electronic) and/or other forms of professional recognition that demonstrate regional success with some national recognition."

In response to the DEC recommendation, I had provided more press response and material about *Twelfth Night*, and have provided several peer-review statements about the success of the company in the letters, the DEC still states, "according to Professor Singum the company is gaining a solid reputation".

COPY

In addition, in my DEC meeting, members made comments that I should put *Summit* *Journal of Theatre and Performance* into context as to its reputation and level of peer review, to make the distinction between it and some self published pamphlet that someone threw together. IN subsequent conversations, a committee member commented that the journal I published the article in is a religious studies journal. I replied that it was a peer-reviewed Theatre and performance journal, to which he replied that he had not really gotten a chance to get a good look at it. This conversation took place after the DEC evaluation was written and signed by the committee.

To my knowledge, the tenured professors in my department do not have a single publication among them. For four of the five tenured professors, professional work is limited to teaching and giving workshops to universities or non-professional productions. One other tenured professor (who has since left the department) and myself have consistent professional production work. To my knowledge the only exception to that statement is the two professional productions that Professor Josh Perlestein has acted in in the past two seasons. While I understand a growing department might aim higher in their standards to improve both reputation and the level of work in the classroom, and I have met the majority of these rising standards, I consider it unfair that I am being held to differing standards in such extreme that failure to publish a book or article on a single topic is the reasoning for rejecting my body of work in their department.

In summary, the following points seem clear:

- That the standards have changed since my filing of the complaint against Professor Josh Perlestein in October of 2010.
- That my fulfillment of these various standards has been increasingly ignored to the exclusion of the single standard that the committee is holding up about not just peer-reviewed work, but print publication of work on a single topic, and
- That my colleagues in the department are holding me to a very different and much higher standard than they have achieved in their own work.

I ask that you consider this in your review of my materials and in your decision about recommendation of my tenure here at CCSU.

I thank you for your continued consideration.

Sincerely,

Sheila Siragusa
Department of Theatre

MADSEN, PRESTLEY & PARENTEAU, LLC
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Jacques J. Parenteau
jparenteau@madjustice.com

CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT COMMUNICATION

October 16, 2012

VIA FAX: 860-832-2224
Dr. Carl Lovitt, Provost
Central Connecticut State University
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, CT 06050

Re: Sheila Siragusa

Dear Dr. Lovitt:

Please be advised that Sheila Siragusa has retained the services of Madsen, Prestley & Parenteau, LLC in order to address the continuing harassment, bullying and retaliation by Josh Perlestein, and the influence of that behavior in the upcoming tenure review process. As you know, Ms. Siragusa has been a victim of Mr. Perlestein's conduct since 2010. Based on our review of the matter, the Central Connecticut State University ("CCSU") administration has not taken appropriate steps in compliance with state and federal law in order to prevent this conduct and protect Ms. Siragusa.

Background

In 2010, Ms. Siragusa made a complaint to CCSU's HR department regarding the bullying and harassment by Mr. Perlestein. An investigation of the complaint by HR occurred in the winter of 2010 and 2011. Mr. Perlestein was reprimanded as a result of

the findings of the investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, CCSU's then HR representative, Anne Alling, advised Ms. Siragusa to report any further incidents to her. After the reprimand in 2011, Mr. Peristein not only continued with the bullying and harassment, but, also, began a relentless campaign of retaliation. Ultimately, Ms. Siragusa was forced to make further complaints to Ms. Alling, who assured Ms. Siragusa that said complaints would be investigated. While HR intervened in the immediate events following the reprimand, thereafter there was, unfortunately, no follow up.

The first issue after the investigation arose in the spring of 2011 when Mr. Peristein became a member of Ms. Siragusa's DEC committee. For obvious reasons, Ms. Siragusa had serious concerns about Mr. Peristein's participation. After Ms. Siragusa reported her concerns to HR and HR urged Mr. Peristein to recuse himself, he withdrew as a DEC committee member, but only with the proviso that he would meet with the DEC committee members prior to Ms. Siragusa's meeting with them in order to express his opinions. In the end, Ms. Siragusa's meeting with the DEC committee focused entirely on the negative comments made by Mr. Peristein to the DEC committee regarding Ms. Siragusa. Ultimately, it was Mr. Peristein's input that dictated the discussion and commentary by the members of the DEC Committee.

The retaliatory campaign includes, among other things, repeated efforts to pollute Ms. Siragusa's relationship with the Chair of the Theatre Department, Tom Callery. Mr. Peristein also regularly engages in discussions with others in the Theatre Department in order to cast Ms. Siragusa in a negative light and dilute her performance. The reprimand that Mr. Peristein received did not deter the harassment and bullying toward Ms. Siragusa and HR took no other formal action in order to address Ms. Siragusa's concerns. In the last year, Mr. Peristein has made it a habit to visit with the Chair of the department for the sole purpose of raising issues concerning Ms. Siragusa. It may interest you that during the time period covered herein, Mr. Peristein has on more than one occasion stated he will do anything to cause the termination of Ms. Siragusa's employment. He has now successfully made Ms. Siragusa an outsider in her own department and influenced the opinions of the Dean, as discussed more fully below.

Amazingly, and much to Ms. Siragusa's surprise, in the spring of 2012, Mr. Peristein decided to put himself back on Ms. Siragusa's DEC committee. No one from HR or Ms. Siragusa's department objected and prevented his participation. As expected, his voice and opinions dominated the entire DEC committee process. His participation in the DEC committee provided the perfect venue for the continuation of the retaliatory actions. Mr. Peristein's negative comments regarding Ms. Siragusa are all reflected in the DEC committee evaluation letter. Interestingly, the original evaluation

letter the Chair produced accurately attributed those negative comments solely to Josh Perlestein. However, after Mr. Perlestein pressured the other committee members, they agreed to modify the evaluation letter so that it reflected that the negative comments were shared by the other DEC committee members. The other committee members have stated that they agreed to the joint final letter because they were pressured to do so by Mr. Perlestein. In the end, Mr. Perlestein's views were imposed on the other committee members. Mr. Perlestein was permitted to impose a retaliatory review process upon Ms. Siragusa.

As a result of the final evaluation letter issued by the DEC committee (as dictated by Mr. Perlestein), Dean Pease recommended in writing on May 1, 2012 that Ms. Siragusa's tenure track be discontinued. It should be noted that when Dean Pease learned of Ms. Siragusa's initial complaint to HR, she stated "I should have known she would be trouble." As of May of 2012, the HR person handling this matter, Anne Alling, had retired. As you know, Ms. Siragusa brought to you her concerns regarding Mr. Perlestein's continued bullying, harassment and retaliation, and the fact that Mr. Perlestein had pressured the other DEC committee members to adopt his negative viewpoint. In response, you agreed to renew her appointment but in so doing you also adopted Mr. Perlestein's retaliatory assessment. In your May 31, 2012 letter approving the renewal appointment, you give credence to the negative comments in the DEC committee letter, which comments are entirely attributable to Mr. Perlestein. When Ms. Siragusa expressed her concerns to you regarding Mr. Perlestein's influence on the other DEC members, you responded that she should "trust" the process and further stated that Mr. Perlestein will not participate in this upcoming review. Unfortunately, Ms. Siragusa cannot trust a process that has already demonstrated a failure to eliminate illegal bias.

The Bias In The Tenure Process

As you know, the tenure evaluation process for Ms. Siragusa will begin this October. One of the first steps in the process is an evaluation by the DEC committee. Based on the above described history, it is abundantly clear that the DEC committee members cannot provide an objective review of Ms. Siragusa, with or without the participation of Mr. Perlestein. He has harmed Ms. Siragusa's reputation, cast her in a negative light to all of the other DEC members and influenced them with respect to their evaluation of her performance. Mr. Perlestein's conduct also resulted in the Dean's decision (see May 1, 2012 letter) not to reappoint Ms. Siragusa. The Dean also has a role in the tenure process. Due to Mr. Perlestein's conduct, it appears fairly certain that the Dean also cannot provide an unbiased review of Ms. Siragusa's application for tenure, particularly given that the Dean did not even approve of Ms. Siragusa seeking assistance from HR, as noted above. You also have a role in the tenure review process.

Having adopted Mr. Perlestein's negative comments in your reappointment letter, we are concerned that he has also successfully influenced your opinions regarding Ms. Siragusa, but we are encouraged by your recognition of potential bias by excluding Mr. Perlestein.

The current situation exists because CCSU did not timely intervene with respect to Mr. Perlestein's illegal conduct, take appropriate remedial action and address Ms. Siragusa's complaints in accordance with state and federal law, as discussed more fully below.

CCSU's Legal Obligations

Under Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §. 2000 *et. seq.*, and the Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act, Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-60 *et seq.*, in response to a complaint of discrimination, hostile work environment or retaliation, such as the complaints made by Ms. Siragusa, an employer has an obligation to take immediate steps to address the complaint. These steps include a reasonable investigation of the complaint, as well as prompt and effective remedial action. *Belligillo-Martley v. Waterford Country School, Inc.*, 2012-wi 1597004 (D. Conn., 2012) (a jury could find that not doing an investigation for three months is not sufficiently remedial or prompt). The remedial action can take on different forms depending on the situation. In this case, while CCSU investigated the initial complaint and took some remedial action, CCSU's remedial action was ineffective and CCSU failed to investigate and address all future complaints. There can be no question that the reprimand in early 2011 failed to deter Mr. Perlestein from harassing and retaliating against Ms. Siragusa. *Whidbee v. Garzarelli Food Specialties, Inc.*, 223 F.3d 62, 72 (2d Cir.2000) ("If harassment continues after complaints are made, reasonable jurors may disagree about whether an employer's response was adequate."); *Carter v. Chrysler Corp.*, 173 F.3d 693, 702 (8th Cir.1999) ("Factors in assessing the reasonableness of remedial measures may include ... whether or not the measures ended the harassment").

Shortly after the reprimand in the spring of 2011, Mr. Perlestein became a member of Ms. Siragusa's DEC committee, as noted above. No representative of CCSU had instructed him that his participation would be improper. Ms. Siragusa was forced to request that HR intervene. During the year following that incident, Ms. Siragusa complained to HR on a number of occasions to express her concerns that Mr. Perlestein had embarked on a campaign of retaliation against her. CCSU chose, for some reason, to ignore those complaints. There was no further investigation or remedial action. CCSU was aware throughout 2011 and 2012 that the reprimand had not deterred Mr. Perlestein from harassing and retaliating against Ms. Siragusa. As you may recall, Ms.

Siragusa brought her concerns directly to you in May of 2012. You also chose not to address the concerns of retaliation in your discussions with Ms. Siragusa. You did advise her to "trust" the system, but that hardly qualifies as an investigation or prompt and effective remedial action. In assessing whether an employer's response to a complaint is reasonable, courts will consider the gravamen of the harm being inflicted upon the employee. *Distasio v. Perkin Elmer*, 157 F.3d 55, 65 (2d. Cir. 1998). As a result of Mr. Perlestein's conduct, Ms. Siragusa nearly lost her appointment in May of 2012 and her tenure process has been injected with bias. The harm to Ms. Siragusa is clearly significant and ongoing.

You should also know that under the Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act and Title VII it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an employee because he or she has opposed a practice that is unlawful under the acts. The Dean expressed hostility toward Ms. Siragusa because she complained to HR, and then, relying on the negative remarks of Mr. Perlestein, the Dean recommended that Ms. Siragusa not be reappointed. Mr. Perlestein's response to the initial complaint was that he would do whatever was necessary to effectuate Ms. Siragusa's termination of employment. He then embarked on a relentless and committed campaign of retaliation. Clearly, Ms. Siragusa experienced discrimination because of her complaints to HR.

As noted above, the current situation exists because CCSU failed to take effective remedial action in the first place and chose to ignore the complaints made by Ms. Siragusa thereafter, knowing the significant and irreversible damage that non action could cause. She is part of a small department. Mr. Perlestein is apparently a strong personality who has the ability to influence others in and outside of the Ms. Siragusa's department. CCSU should have anticipated the harm and taken effective remedial action to prevent that harm from occurring.

Conclusion

Mr. Perlestein has been permitted to carry on with his retaliatory campaign for the better part of two years. CCSU has an obligation to provide Ms. Siragusa with a fair and impartial review process and a work environment that is free of discrimination, harassment, bullying and retaliation. The sequence of events that began in 2010 has been harmful to Ms. Siragusa. The damage to Ms. Siragusa, with the result of a tainted tenure review process, cannot be undone by simply hoping for the best. The stakes for Ms. Siragusa and her academic career could not be higher. It is time for CCSU to fulfill its obligations under the law by taking effective remedial steps that will provide for a tenure review process that is free of illegal bias or influence.

Please contact me upon receipt of this letter to advise what steps CCSU will take to protect Ms. Siragusa as her tenure case proceeds to decision.

Very truly yours,


Jacques J. Parenteau

JJP/vaw

cc: Dr. Jack Miller, President

HR document May 11, 2012

I failed to document an event in May 2011. Student [REDACTED] came to me with a report that she had transferred to another college because she had been targeted by Josh Perlestein throughout the year. She gave me several examples of these events and I recommended that she talk to her parents about approaching Anne Alling about these events. It is important to note that [REDACTED] had no knowledge of my documentation of the event involving her and had not heard any information about my conflicts with Josh from me (nor did other students in the department) As far as I know they did not know from any faculty member.

Please see final pages of the previous document to HR dated 9/25/11 for context for these following comments.

Soon thereafter, the faculty begins to discuss forbidding my directing student [REDACTED] to do his final project in the directing cycle (scheduled to go up in December and already having been researched and rehearsed during the previous year). The faculty complained that his GPA is too low to be involved in shows. This is true, according to the department policies. These policies have been consistently ignored since my arrival here in Fall 2007, despite multiple students' sub-par GPAs.

Sep 26

Tom C called me into his office to reprimand me for the tension I have been carrying around the department. He reprimands me for being disrespectful for stating that "I will fight you on this" in regard to the [REDACTED] show not happening this December.

He said that he has made venn diagrams to look at conversations with tension in them in his department and that I am the common denominator in each event. This when every conversation for the past couple of weeks has been about readjusting student show systems.

Sep 27

Josh Perlestein arrives at work and leans into Tom C's office and state "it seems like you've got everything under control. There are a lot of closed door meetings happening in the last few days...(with a laugh)" I deduct this is about the student shows as meetings in the past two days have all surrounded this issue.

During Antigone rehearsals in November, there is an opening scene that is very chaotic and dangerous for the actors on stage. Three actors are hurt over several rehearsals in the same segment. The third student to be hurt is [REDACTED] who ends up in the [REDACTED] and subsequently has difficulty with [REDACTED] for a couple of weeks. On her return to campus, [REDACTED] is speaking with

Josh and one other student in his office. Josh responds to a comment of [REDACTED] by imitating her slurred speech. The students are quiet in response and then Josh says, "you know I'm just kidding you".

In January, Thom Delventhal and I go to the Kennedy Center Festival together with 16 students from the department. While at the festival, Thom Delventhal tells me that I should be careful because Josh is "after the student shows" now. He says that Josh is going to go after the fact that student shows are overloading actors' schedules and harming their grades.

It has long been a policy that no students are cast in two mainstage shows in one semester. This policy has been something we try to observe with every casting session (shared at the beginning of each semester for just that purpose) and have made several exceptions to every term.

When this first came up as a concern in the fall of 2009, Faculty member Ken Mooney agreed to help me in coordinating casting of the student shows in the same way. There would be an attempt to use non-cast students, and then when we ventured into the already cast population, we would look to the student being cast in a part of the semester in which the mainstage which they were already cast was not performing. Also, we worked to "share" cast members in the student shows so now one was being overworked. I have continued this practice to the present.

As the semester went on it did become a discussion in the faculty meetings, and faculty voted to mandate that students would not be allowed to be involved with student shows while cast in a mainstage in the same semester.

Faculty members argued that this has always been a policy, but ignored my point that exceptions are regularly made, with an eye toward the heart of the policy, which is not to overload students. I was aware that Josh was angling to mandate this so that no exceptions could be made to student shows and I therefore spent several meetings trying to get him to articulate that he was getting to that. He finally admitted that he thought it should be mandated at the end of the third meeting. Department Chair Tom Callery sent out emails on the subject and finally sent out an email with the subject heading indicating that he was restating an already existing policy. This new policy stated that all faculty members had to approve exceptions for "double-casting" which has never happened previously.

This effectively ends my student directed program. Students upon finding out they will not be able to direct and be in shows at the same time are unwilling to direct. Also, students (especially as they progress as directors) want to use actors that can already act, rather than students that were not cast, for the most part, because they were unable to effectively do so.

I maintain that the purpose of the student directed shows (and my running them as the Directing faculty member) will not be about directing if student actors have no craft whatsoever.

February of 2012 I became concerned that a longtime student of ours, [REDACTED] was getting into [REDACTED]. Students had been observing this in class and bringing it up. Student [REDACTED] leaned into my office to see if [REDACTED] was okay after he had a long session with me one afternoon (indeed he was not and I called student counseling that day). She told me that she knew things were off in the fall when Josh showed her a "crazy" letter that [REDACTED] had written to him, explaining how [REDACTED] and how he [REDACTED] had uncovered that secret. I asked her again if Josh had shown her the letter and she said yes. I find this to be an example Professor Perlestein's pattern of not observing appropriate professional boundaries.

In March Josh reraised the discussion of changes to the BA (see documentation on this subject in original HR document). He again framed it as if it was urgent at a moment when we had about a week and a half to get the paperwork into the Dean's office in order to get it on the curriculum agenda before semester's end.

The faculty agreed we should pursue it so we discussed changes and I prepared materials again and I submitted them by the deadline.

In one of the meetings, Josh brought up again that I had been at fault that they had not gone through initially and I spoke up immediately and defended myself and Tom Callery backed me up.

Thom Delventhal reported that he had several conversations with Josh after that meeting, trying to get him to understand how what he had said was attacking me and that Josh would not see it.

The changes went through in the curriculum committee in April after so much work and problem (see previous documentation) since November of 2010 and I emailed the entire department to let them know it had been passed.

April 19

(from Thom Delventhal)
Hooray!

From: Siragusa, Sheila (Theatre)
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 8:10 AM

To: Callery, Jr., Thomas (Theatre); Delventhal, Thomas (Theatre);
Beaver, Cassandra (Theatre); Bartley, Scott L. (Theatre); Sheila
Siragusa; Perlstein, Joshua (Theatre)
Subject: BA and TH 147

BA and TH147 have been passed

Neither the department chair, Tom Callery, nor Josh Perlstein responded to the email.

In February I receive notification that Josh is coming to observe my classes for the DEC. He attends and does not give me responses until after the DEC has written my evaluation letter. I put his responses in my book before sending it to the Dean, but no one else on the committee sees them.

In April several students were jokingly commenting that Josh was "up in arms" in his Acting class about the fact that we were discussing different settings of a particular play in my Script Analysis class. Student [REDACTED] reported that they tried to explain it to him and they just gave up. Students were not concerned about this, but I was very concerned that he was expressing judgment about something we were discussing in my class.

In May our office assistant Vanessa Clarke-Blighe reported that she overheard Josh talking to students about how he didn't understand what I was talking about in my Practice class when teaching about "stillness". She indicated that this was with a mocking tone. Again, I object to the situation of my students having to defend what I am teaching to another Professor.

On April 2, I receive the evaluation letter and send a response letter to Dean Pease on April 19th.

ON May, I receive a letter from the Dean stating that she is recommending to the Provost that my tenure track be discontinued.

On Tuesday May 8th I call the Provost's office to request an appointment to speak with him and ask for fair consideration.

On May 10 I seek advise from Union representatives Caryl Greateorex, Jason Jones and Donna Sims. They advise me to write an addendum letter to the Provost and send remaining documentation to Anne Alling in Human Resources department.

May 11: I send an addendum letter to the Provost and this document to Human Resources.

Ailing, Anne (Chief Human Resources Officer)

From: Sheila Stragusa [sstragusa@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2011 4:58 PM
To: Ailing, Anne (Chief Human Resources Officer)
Subject: documentation

Dear Anne,

Just want to request that I be informed about any conversations that you may have with members of my department about my email to you. It would really add to my feeling of safety if I knew that I could get a head's up so I could prepare myself for possible strong reactions.

This morning had a fruitful conversation with Thom Delventhal reminding me to keep clear-eyed and non-defensive during this time. I think its good advice and am making an honest effort to do so.

Thanks again,
Sheila

We're a few weeks into the new semester, and with renewed negative attention from Josh Peristein, I'd like to fill you in on details from the Spring semester to present day. Josh's relentless hostile attitude toward me in the workplace continues to cause me great hardship. Again, I request that you do anything possible to alleviate the effects of this on my work situation.

Spring Semester 2011

First day back, Jan 24th Josh slammed his door pretty much as loud as one possibly could while Thom and I were laughing and chatting in the office hallway.

Jan 25th Kennedy Center conference. I walked up to several students in a circle with Josh to congratulate them on their work in the acting competition. Josh obviously and abruptly left the conversation and walked away. This was particularly bothersome to me, because the entire faculty has worked so hard to keep faculty conflicts separate from the students.

On the first day of the conference (Tuesday), Josh told me that he would only be there only some of Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, because there was no money for another hotel room as he'd used up his travel funding. The conference was Tuesday-Saturday and I stayed there with all of the students (22 students) the entire time, after thinking I was chaperoning with Josh the whole week.

Early Feb Thom Delventhal reports to me that Josh said he is so hurt by what I have done that he will not stop until I am terminated.

I then brought that up (not that Thom said it) to Josh and he didn't deny that he'd said it.

Feb 15

See previous documentation about a November faculty meeting in which Josh proposed large changes to the degree program very close to the semester's final deadline for curriculum changes. Over January break, I had prepared and submitted the changes to the Dean's office and the curriculum committee by the earliest spring deadline (Jan 28). The changes were rejected by the Dean's office on the grounds that vast programmatic changes required a longer discussion and process.

I was feeling nervous about going to the our 2/15 faculty meeting, suspecting that Josh might suggest I was at fault for the changes being rejected and I was exhausted from fending him off in the fall. He did indeed suggest that it was my fault. I very powerfully and clearly defended myself, and suggested he'd set me up for this event by proposing changes so close to the deadline and that I'd expected he would blame me. I was very strong in my response, and as Josh argued, people got more

impatient with him until Tom Callery finally said that it was clearly not my fault and asked him to stop.

After the meeting, Josh told Tom Callery that he was feeling marginalized by the department. Tom attempted to close the door and Josh said not to as he didn't want to be accused of anything. He continued to talk about how my behavior had marginalized him and that everyone was silencing him as a result. I responded from my office and said that I had been frustrated throughout the entire process with him because so few people would stand up for me in the arguments. He said he was having a private conversation. I asked him why then didn't he close the door? He then began to engage with me. Josh and I fought back and forth for over an hour. Tom Callery interjected periodically that it wasn't true that he was treating Josh unfairly. I spent considerable time keeping Josh from attacking Tom.

Josh told me that they (HR and the folks who'd been reviewing my complaints about him) thought that I might be derailing any possibility that Josh could get in the way of my moving forward in my job. He said he had criticism about me before we got into conflict. This is certainly untrue and heavily documented with Human Resources. He said that he, the AAUP and the people over in HR couldn't understand (after going over and going over the document) what I wanted, that my documentation was all unclear.

Josh said that in the fall I refused to have a mediated conversation with him. I reminded him of my reasons (that I had had 4 conversations trying to resolve differences, with other faculty members present, and rather than improving things, his behavior worsened) At this time, I offered to set up a mediated conversation. Tom Callery asked Josh several times if he'd be willing to have a mediating conversation with me. Josh didn't answer our direct questions, and changed the subject, finally saying he wanted to get back to his work.

After the argument ended and Tom C had left, Josh came to my office door and said he felt like he'd just taken a big crap and that it felt great. He went back to his office, and returned a few moments later and said he hoped I didn't take that the wrong way.

The following morning he came into my office again and repeated the same crap comment.

In March sometime Tom C asked me to come and talk to him and when I went into his office he asked me, "what is wrong in our family?" I didn't know what he meant and so asked him to clarify and he said communication was at an all time low in the department. I agreed, saying (as I had so many times before and have since) that we should all commit to having open conversations rather than busting around and talking about things behind closed doors. He agreed. Then after an awkward pause he said, "so what should we do about it?" I suggested that we have a meeting devoted to the issue and then have an agreement to proceed with new commitment

and meet more regularly. He said he didn't think we could find time for more meetings. I was totally confused and said, "then why are you asking me what we should do?" He responded that he needed me and Scott Bartley to "get along". I was totally confused, as I'd had absolutely no conflict with Scott since his arrival at CCSU. Worried, I asked him if Scott had been reporting that we had conflict and he said no. I told him I thought we were fine and pressed him and he said he just knows we don't get along. I told him that I had no knowledge of that and that I would certainly go to Scott and clear it up. He again said that Scott hadn't told him anything.

That day I went to Scott and related the story and he said he hadn't complained about it and thought, as did I, that we had a fine working relationship. I stressed to Scott that I was very open to criticism and conversation about work styles if he ever found our communication strained or unsatisfactory in any way. We agreed that we thought our work relationship was characterized by open communication. We are both very vocal and deal with any disagreement we run into right on the spot with one another. I really thought Tom was having some weird, misguided father moment and forgot about it.

A few days later, Thom D told me that Josh had said to him and Tom Callery that Scott and I couldn't stand to work together and were so polarized in our opinions about work that "one of us would have to go" because there was no way we could work together.

Throughout the entire spring, I had been trying to arrange a retirement event to honor Lani Johnson before she left us in May. I have email documentation of several exchanges. The only ones who responded were Thom Delventhal and Catherine Fellows. Thom and I finally arranged a dinner on the night she was being honored at a ceremony at the Hole In The Wall Theatre in New Britain (Thursday May 5) and a ceremony and a gift presentation at the closing day of a show that weekend (Saturday May 7). Catherine, Thom, Tom C and I collected money for a gift. Josh did not contribute. We'd scheduled a four o'clock dinner on Thursday night before her award because Tom Callery was going to another show that evening and couldn't make a later gathering.

A few days before hand, I suggested we have a more relaxed dinner after Lani's award ceremony since Tom C would be at the weekend event and it seemed unfortunate to have an early and rushed dinner on the night of her award presentation. Tom C said he didn't mind and so we moved the dinner to after the ceremony on Thursday night. Josh was quite upset (I heard from Thom D.) because I had moved the event to after dinner and that he couldn't go. This was the first communication I'd had from him about anything regarding Lani's retirement. Josh hadn't responded to a single email or suggestion. He didn't come to the dinner or the ceremony. And, as far as I know, he never had any intention of doing so.

In the May 6th faculty meeting, we decided on production dates for the 2011-12 academic year. We agreed for Dec 8th and 9th for student shows [redacted] to be directed by [redacted], and *Beast* to be directed by [redacted]. Both of these are final

directing projects for students that I have mentored in my directing progression for 4 years.

In addition, in May we finalized conversations that had happened all throughout the spring to go forward with [REDACTED] as the director of the coveted summer slot for the coming summer (2011) with his production of children's theatre production *The [REDACTED]*. The summer slot is the slot that goes to the director that has risen to the top in the directing sequence and it has been supported for the past four years by the department as a participating show in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. This means that an adjudicator will attend the show and nominate students for various levels of further participation in the regional festival (acting, directing, design, stage management, the show itself competing at the festival). It is out of this summer slot that my directing mentees have been nominated to compete at the regional festival for three consecutive years (of which two students were sent to compete against all eight regions in the nation and then won the single national college student directing award at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, a first for CCSU).

This practice of the department supporting the summer slot began with a student created show, *Suicide King and the One Eyed Jack*, which was unconnected to my student directed sequence and was of such quality that the faculty wanted to support it for ACTF participation. In subsequent years, the summer slot was filled by only students in the directing sequence and the first year after [REDACTED] for which [REDACTED] won the [REDACTED] ACTF support was discussed after the show was staged and the faculty voted to support it. At that point, there was discussion in faculty meetings that the summer slot be the directing sequence "prize" and that we support the student show that earns the slot. Josh contests that I remember that inaccurately and that the agreement never took place. I cannot find documentation in the minutes of the conversation but still maintain that it, indeed, occurred. I present as evidence the fact that for the following two summers we supported the summer slot without renewed discussion or reconsideration. The following summer's [REDACTED] (which was invited as one of eight shows out of 42 faculty and student directed shows to go to compete at the regional festival and for which [REDACTED] won the [REDACTED] was supported without discussion. In the summer of 2010, [REDACTED] (for which [REDACTED] was invited to compete for the [REDACTED] was supported without discussion.

[REDACTED] had directed a production of [REDACTED] in the spring at [REDACTED] (Connecticut) with a group of students there as part of his continuing work toward his MFA in General Theatre Education at CCSU (working with Thom Delventhal as his mentor). There had been discussion about whether or not he should receive the summer slot because I had not worked with [REDACTED] in my own student directing progression and felt that giving it to him might cause resentment in the students with whom I had been working. Knowing that Thom's mentorship would have a similar directing focus (which it certainly had) we

agreed that [redacted] deserved the slot, having done the [redacted] slot (for Educational MFA student's work) for the past three years. The other students who were in line for the summer slot were happy and supportive of [redacted] receiving the slot.

The TD (Scott Bartley) and Tom Callery were unhappy with the choice, as [redacted] had, while directing the department's [redacted] show the [redacted] year, built a set piece with department materials without their permission. They both thought it was a bad message to support someone who had committed that transgression. The choice went forward, as it had traditionally been my choice to select the work. And this year, the choice was a joint one between Thom Delventhal and me.

[redacted] and Tom Callery and I met in May and got deadlines to [redacted] for his build. He was asked to have build plans to Scott by June 16th and it was agreed that the build would take place, with Scott and Tom C and their student's help on Friday Aug 26th and Monday Aug 29. I asked at that time if it would be enough time and Tom C and Scott Bartley confirmed that it was.

Thursday May 19 I came to you to thank you for your help and wrap up. I said Josh seemed to be backing off as much as he was able and that I would keep a continuing record of anything and let you know how it was going.

I head into a time that is free of interaction, as the semester ends and the summer break began.

Mid July I received word from Tom Callery that [redacted] had not turned in his build plans for [redacted] by the deadline. I immediately called [redacted] and told him to send the plans right away. I told him I would have zero tolerance for missing deadlines and any other lack of responsibility with the tech faculty. He apologized and promised that it would be the last time I would have to talk to him. It was a long and very serious conversation, and I felt fully confident that [redacted] understood the seriousness of his missing a deadline. I was determined to make this a hassle free event for everyone since Tom C and Scott had initially resisted our choice of [redacted] show.

In July, Josh emailed the following:

*(July 22) Hey [redacted] (and Sheila and Thom who I am including in this conversation)
This is what I had talked about with Sheila (you working in the summer) but since it was the end of the semester I don't think I had thought it through completely. The plan discussed was what you describe. Essentially Rehearse up until the time of my show, pause and then go full tilt until the week before. Now thinking about it this does not make for a very coherent process for you.
How do you think you and your cast would feel about the 2 options you describe. I*

neither want to promise people anything in casting. In other words they may think that if we are opening things up again it is because I definitely want to cast them... after auditions it could be that you could just proceed as planned because I decide not to use any of you) nor force them to choose or anything like that.

My vote would be to do it as Winterstock but that may have already been assigned....that way noone would have to be recast and Fall Faculty could have an open slate for casting

Shella? Thom? What you think>>>Josh

On 22 July 2011 12:46, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hey Josh, I had cast my show in May because I had intended to work on things for a little during the summer. I haven't done anything yet with them considering I'm also trying to work around [REDACTED] show. I wanted to go into the semester with already doing some work in the summer so we wouldn't need more rehearsal time during school. I agree with you, though. I don't want anyone, including myself, to be overwhelmed and the mainstage is the priority but we can work this out. Now I have a couple ideas... The first is that I hold off on rehearsals until you cast your show. If any of the four are cast in yours, I recast. Or the second option being I hold off on mine until the spring semester... I can work during winter break if need be. I would prefer the second option because not only do I not want to recast, but I want a shot at your show. So you let me know what you think about these ideas.

Also on July 22 I responded as follows I just want to say how great this conversation is: everyone so clear about needs and assuming they will get met because they are being expressed. Way to go Josh and [REDACTED].

I think we should go with your idea [REDACTED] and bump you to the spring. We'll place it wherever it doesn't compromise Dream Play energy or casting. Maybe winterstock as Josh suggests. I think we should revisit that when we return with Tom C in conversation.

Sound good to all?

Hope summer is good.

Sent from my iPhone

As far as I am aware, the only students that know about anything that has happened with Josh and me are the two students who were called last year about the conflict. Nonetheless, I have suspected that students have sensed tension between Josh and I. I deduct this from the frequent incidence of students making negative comments about Josh and his teaching around me. Students don't make this character of comment to me about other faculty members, and I suspect they are trying to get me to comment. For the record, I consistently ask them to be upfront with Josh about

problems they have with him and defend him in general ways that re-establish their respect and decorum.

When we returned for the beginning of the semester, I was determined to begin anew with Josh. I wanted very much to talk about strength of community and practicing interaction and behavior that is respectful and honoring of one another. I planned to make it clear in the community of students and faculty that Josh and I were in positive communication, thinking that starting with the relationships of the leaders as a model would go a long way in setting positive community mindfulness.

I am in charge of the department practicum this semester, which is a requirement for most of our students and ends up being department gathering meeting, especially around special speakers and the beginnings of semesters. Announcement and welcoming of new members happens there. I welcomed all and introduced faculty members and they came up and spoke and then I gathered everyone into a circle. I asked all to hold hands and then made a joke about not wanting to hold Josh's hand, and both of us made pained faces holding each other's hands and all fell into howls of laughter. This was an intentional attempt on my part to alleviate tension publicly. I then proceeded to talk about how much we value the community of our department and that our efforts to respect and listen and show up for one another is what creates that community. I stressed that it is our actions that create this and not some stroke of luck and asked for a sharing commitment to mindfulness with all the new members. Then I had everyone choose a partner and I chose Josh. I asked everyone to talk about the most difficult moment and then the funniest moment that happened to them over the past few months. Then I asked people to share one thing they learned about themselves in the same period. Josh and I laughed so hard and really listened to one another. It was the best interaction we'd had in years.

I include the following account about the student directed shows to illustrate a pattern that Josh Perlestein is finding an opportunity to derail my areas of involvement in the department (reference documentation Jan 21, 2011 in which I detailed that Josh's curriculum change proposals directly affect the areas that I teach)

There is a history of discomfort and annoyance on the part of the technical faculty around student projects that predates my arrival at CCSU. Student directed shows have gotten significantly more mentored, systematic and regulated since I was handed the projects upon my arrival in the fall 2007. Since those changes have occurred, there has been a détente of sorts. All seem to agree about the positive experiences students glean and the national exposure that the program has brought the department, and the technical faculty have made room to include the program in our season schedule and allowed for their students' participation in the projects.

This fall has been markedly different, and the account I set down as follows illustrates what is Josh Perlestein's new and unprecedented involvement in the student directed shows.

The next day after the practicum meeting, Friday, September 2, we had a faculty meeting and the subject of student shows came up and Josh led an argument to not support [redacted] show for ACTF because his communication had been poor with Scott and Tom over the summer. Tom and Scott were very vocal about this (which generated the conversation) and I responded by writing [redacted] an email and reaming him for not returning phone calls to Scott and generally being a poor communicator. [redacted] was extremely upset and said that since our phone call in the summer he had been extremely conscientious about communication and had not had any mis-steps. He had not received a single phone call from Scott, as I had suggested, and felt upset that I had reprimanded him.

I called Scott right away and Scott said that he had emailed him. I pointed out that I was under the impression he had called and he said no. Since [redacted] doesn't have internet at his house, his stage manager had sent an email to all of us (including Scott) to contact her with anything that needed a response and she would let [redacted] know. I reminded Scott of this and he said he didn't have [redacted] phone number. After looking into the accusation that [redacted] had not been communicating, it seemed quite clear that both Scott and Tom had been in full communication with the stage manager almost daily and for some reason (seeing her daily by this time) didn't tell her what they needed to know or even that they were trying to contact [redacted]. When I addressed this directly they both maintained that [redacted] should have been in contact with them. It was clearly totally baseless.

It was agreed at the end of the next faculty meeting that we would have a vote (after seeing [redacted] show) about whether or not we should support him to go to ACTF. It was understood in that meeting that failing faculty support, the students could raise the money themselves if they wanted to go. Proof of this is that Thom Delventhal went to [redacted] and told him that we would vote as a faculty after seeing the show and that they would have to raise the money themselves if we voted not to support.

We met as a faculty on the following Tuesday (Sep 13). Before the meeting, I asked Josh about something in his office and he had made the comment "I think we are going to have a fight on our hands" referring to Tom C and Scott about the performance area of the department. I responded, saying that it seemed like there was resistance, but hopefully we can all be upfront and positive about going forward. He then agreed and said we should just continue with a positive focus.

A moment later he went in to Tom Callery's office and closed the door. I didn't even notice until Thom Delventhal came by and mentioned it with a grimace. He said that Josh wasn't going to the meeting but that he was making his vote about [redacted] show clear. When Josh opened the door, he said, "good luck" and laughed to Tom Callery.

At the meeting shortly thereafter, the faculty voted to not support [redacted] show. Josh did show up and was the primary generator of the vote. Nonetheless, the whole

faculty voted for non-support for ACTF, except for me. The motion was made by Josh and was (verbatim) "motion to not support [redacted] show for ACTF entering and use his show for [redacted]".

Thom Delventhal told [redacted] that we were not going to support his show. A couple of days later, Thom told [redacted] that he and the cast could not raise the money themselves because we did not want the show representing the department and that was inferred in the vote. It had indeed been discussed that way as a reason we shouldn't support him, but faculty members (including me) had forgotten that Thom had already told [redacted] about our vote and that [redacted] was planning to raise the money with his cast if we didn't support him.

When Thom remembered this he discussed it with Tom C and Josh, and they both said that it was inferred in the original vote. I did not agree and wanted another opportunity to oppose. SO I requested another vote and Tom C was quite angry and said there was no way we were going to let the show go. I said I knew that was so but I wanted to go on record opposing. He said I already had and I countered that we had not voted against them raising their own money. Knowing that this was a second harsh blow for the students, I really wanted a chance to vote against it. It was not inferred in the first vote. Josh started adding to the conversation from his office and said that if I had been following rules all along, none of this confusion would've happened. Then Tom C said we should get together to vote about whether or not [redacted] should be allowed to do his show, because his GPA is down.

This has been a rule in the department as long as I have been here and has never once been observed or enforced. Tom C then added that he didn't know shows had been moved in December and how that was another example of my miscommunication. We had discussed the changes Josh talked about over the summer right when we returned and had even found a new date together for [redacted] show in the spring (with Tom). Josh agreed and I commented that he was the one who changed the show's date. Josh said that he shouldn't have to be the bad guy about moving shows because I'm not following rules and making sure everyone knows everything. Josh said he doesn't think [redacted] should be able to do his show but that he didn't think he could make it to the meeting to vote on it and that he didn't think he should be inconvenienced by my lack of communication and adherence to the rules. I was shocked and Tom C made reference to voting on the new policy document for student directed shows. I didn't know what he was talking about and he said it was in my email.

There I found the following:

IN THE WORDS OF THE GREAT BILLMAHER WITHOUT THE SARCASIM
"NEW RULES"

- 1) All class related Student shows will be performed in A123 using only the portable light board and rehearsal cubes. Students will provide their own props, and costumes, etc.
- 2) Non class related student shows will be performed in A123 or the Torp Theatre using the portable light board in A123 or existing equipment (in the torp) and rehearsal cubes with students providing props, costumes, etc. No student show will be auditioned, cast, rights secured or dates set without proposal paperwork approved by the faculty. No Budget available student director must have a GPA of at least 2.5.
- 3) Non class related student shows to be performed elsewhere (Welts, Blackbox, or Torp Theatre) with any type of departmental or technical support will require prior approval of the faculty the academic year before the performance. No student show will be auditioned, cast, rights secured or dates scheduled until proposal paperwork has been approved by the faculty. Any budget is subject to faculty and/or chair approval. Student director must have a GPA of at least 2.75.
- 4) Any mainstage student directed show will be treated as such as part of the season and require unanimous faculty approval and support. Proposals to be approved in the academic year prior to performance. Student director must have a GPA of at least 3.0.
- 5) Any student directed show to be entered in ACTF will require faculty and chair approval in the academic year prior to the performance. The faculty and/or chair reserve the right to rescind entry due to substandard production or performance values or budgetary considerations.
- 6) Any show, performances, invited guest artist, event, etc. will be subject to faculty and/or chair approval and will not be scheduled or supported without proposal paperwork approved prior to booking and scheduling. Budget subject to faculty and/or chair approval.
- 7) To be included in any student production proposal; student director with GPA, show name, cast size, dates, times, rehearsal schedule, personnel / staff needs if applicable, budget if applicable, all technical needs if applicable, complete production team must be identified if applicable. Venue secured if applicable.

- 8) No Student show will interfere with a mainstage show with cast, crew, time or rehearsal conflicts without expressed written consent of the parties involved and the approval of the faculty and/or chair.

There had been no incidence of me not communicating or breaching these understandings before the argument we were having just a that moment, so it had clearly been a previous conversation with Tom C and Josh.

Thom Delvethal, who was in the argument about the vote when the document was brought up, said that he read the document and that I hadn't broken any of those rules.

At that point, I realized that, in fact, while things seemed to have calmed down in the spring semester, with the return to school is a return to deep conflict and hostility. Then I decided it was time to send you the new document.

This document includes things from the spring that I had written down before my meeting with you in May. I had held onto them, rather than sending, as things seemed to have calmed down significantly.

Write a concluding paragraph that sums up how you feel you are being treated by Josh (and perhaps Tom C?) using key words like uncomfortable and unsafe

Hi Anna!

I'm so sorry I didn't call you to give you an update about the practicum rehearsal. Josh said you were wondering why I didn't call and tell you so you could prepare for the Dec 2nd class. I'm so sorry about that, but I didn't even know you were waiting on that.

So every group chose a play and it sounded like they were quite happy with them (based on their animation in rehearsing). There were lots of questions about whether they could use other class members for chorus in their scene. I wasn't sure what to respond, so I said I thought that would be possible, but that they should be prepared with some choice to do it with fewer people (those just in their group).

Think that's it! Let me know if you need/want more.

Best,

Sheila

And then I right away called the house and left a message saying the same thing.

The next day I received this from Josh:

Sheila
It would be better if you contact Anna by email.
Josh

I received a response from Anna right away that she hadn't been confused at all and everything was fine.

December 3

On Dec 3rd, we had a full faculty meeting and I took the following notes:

Josh says he has (in his hand) the adjusted documents about what the department requires for Reappointment (Anne-see original document about 3rd rehire meeting).

I asked if he and Ken and Lani had done that together and he said yes. A moment later Lani said she hadn't seen or adjusted the document in years. Josh did not comment.

Josh suggests that my going to Kennedy Center Conferences really isn't sufficient because of the nature of the conference (not sure why and I didn't ask).

Josh begins to discuss curriculum changes and again is going very quickly in the conversation. I stop him to clarify that we are talking about the applied theater thing again (from the 11/23 meeting) and he says, "applied theatre?" (looking completely confused). I respond by barking back to the other meeting and he says that he is talking more about Boal and social justice theater (looking at me like I'm totally stupid). I just drop the subject.

I mention the deadline for the curriculum changes and remind everyone that our changes need to be done by the 16th. People indicate feeling nervous about the time crunch and Josh laughs and pauses. Everyone is quietly looking at him to see if he's going to explain his laughter and he says, "the person who is doing the presentation (me) has to do some work looking at other schools and seeing what their programs are." To me, he is describing the work of the whole department, specifically the person who is spearheading the changes (him), not the faculty member that represents the department at the curriculum committee.

We begin to talk about the musical next season and Josh comments that we should just hire a director because the main reason the SGA give us money is to hire someone that is an expert in the field in to direct. (Anne-see notes in original document re last semesters musical) Everyone looks at him surprised (based on the long argument in the summer) and Tom Callery says, "Well Ken directed for years" and Josh responds that he had experience and so that's different. He said if you're going to direct this you should give students someone with expertise.

Josh makes a big announcement about the problem of the department needing to get an additional room at the Kennedy Center conference because Josh and I can't share a room (the four of us had previously always shared a room and this year its just Josh and I) this year for obvious reasons. Everyone brushed it off and said we'd find the money. He then said we couldn't meet as a department and plan for the festival/rehearse the scenes for one another because he and I couldn't be alone in the same room together. Astonished, I said, "with students?"

and he said, "yes"

No one seemed to know what to say so it was dropped.

December 7:

I went out of my office to go to class in Davison and Josh was talking to three or four students in the hallway behind him (looked like he was stopped in mid-traverse through the door). He was leaning against the door, propping it open. As I went through, he interrupted his conversation with the students (also my students) to say, "wow. You're welcome". By the time he said that I was about 10 feet away from him, so I pretended to not hear him because I didn't know how to handle such obvious hostility in front of students. Then I heard him say to the students, "you open the door for someone, the least they could do is say thank you".

On Dec 6th I had decided (with Thom Delventhal) that we would cancel the practicum class for Thu Dec 9th because we were requiring those students to attend a performance parade earlier in that same day. The practicum was scheduled for a talkback session about the musical "The Spelling Bee", which had just closed. I checked with the stage manager of the show to see if the director had been informed about the talkback and would attend and she said no, so Thom and I considered whether or not the students that were in the show would mind. We talked about it briefly and decided that the show was so universally loved that the students had gotten enough feedback and there wouldn't be much for discussion.

I had sent out an email on the evening of Dec 6th saying the talkback was cancelled and the meeting was at 11:30 am for the performance parade.

Student directing pieces were scheduled for the evening of the same day, the 9th. In light of these schedule changes, we decided to rehearse the scene changes for the show during the practicum time. So we were scheduled to meet from 3-4:30 and to perform at 5PM. The dates of that performance had been published since September.

This same week I had agreed, at Josh's request, that we meet (in spite of his earlier concerns) from 2-4 PM on Tues Dec 14th for ACTF (the Kennedy Center Conference).

On Dec 7th I received the following email:

Shelia and Thom

Because our Performance faculty meeting did not happen I have a few announcements/requests

Please write an end of semester evaluation of all BFA students touching on class and performance work as well as goals. I would like to send these out as soon as possible

I recommend that [REDACTED] be admitted to the program based on his work in [REDACTED]

There will be an Informal talkback for Spelling Bee at 3:30 on December 9. This will be immediately followed by an Irene Ryan meeting. Candidates have all been registered and must submit scene choices by 12/20. Make sure your candidates know about this. It is for informational purposes. There will be 2 other meetings. One will be the week before 2nd semester and the other will be the Monday before we leave. I will be coaching my students over the break. This will be my last semester as coordinator for this festival. I will be happy to talk about what happens when with whomever decides they want to do this work.

Students will be participating in a new York showcase the last week in May. This will be underwritten by TU

That's all for now.

Josh

The "Irene Ryan" meeting he speaks of is ACTF.

So I went into Josh's office and asked him why he had rescheduled this without consulting me, and he said that students had been very upset that there was no talkback and so he reconvened it.

I told him that the ACTF meeting had already been called for Tues 14th and he said he didn't care that he wanted this one.

I expressed that all my students for directing were going to be in prep for the shows at that time and wouldn't be able to make either meeting (my directing students included all of the Spelling Bee performers and all of the ACTF competitors.

He said they have to be there.

I couldn't cancel the staging of the show and I told him so.

He responded by saying that this is what screws things up in the department. That I can't just go changing something in the schedule without consulting everyone else who is affected by that decision. I took that note and went and apologized to the three students who were in the Spelling Bee and scheduled the staging extremely tightly and scheduled a talkback for Spelling Bee (with just our directing class) at 4PM.

On Thursday I found out from a student that Josh had cancelled the practicum class again and the meeting for ACTF. No communication to Thom D or I.

December 8:

Josh walked by my office door and made pig snorting sounds again.

December 16:

As the semester drew to a close, a student () approached me about being her coach for the ACTF conference, saying that Josh had just waved her away in his office when she came in to ask him about it and said, "right now you're the least of my priorities"

She was angry when she approached me and I proceeded with extreme care, in order to not provoke Josh or give her the impression I was siding with her in criticism of his actions.

The way our preparations for this conference has happened since I arrived four years ago is as follows:

Three students are chosen from each show to compete in the competition.

We divide them up. If the students are chosen from a show we directed, we are automatically their coach. If there are other students out of that classification, we simply divide the numbers and are therefore the official coach of three students and are expected to help them prepare for the festival. We have always been extremely vocal with the students and with one another that the students don't need to take us up on our offer of coaching or can have their scene coached by another professor if that professor is willing, or even have all of us coach at separate sessions. If a student approaches us we make sure that they know they need to let their official coach know and get their okay.

With this in mind, I explained to () that she would have to ask Josh and that if he's okay with it she is welcome to my marathon rehearsal session with the students I have been assigned to.

She came back a couple of days later and said she will be there. Then I received the following email from Josh:

Sheila

I would have greatly appreciated it if you had asked me before talking with my Irene Ryan candidates. I told [redacted] that it was very confusing having, in a sense, two directors. So if she meets with you on 12/28 then please mentor her for the entire process. I had plans to work with them later in the process.

Josh

I told [redacted] that she would be choosing only my feedback if she came on that day and she came anyway.

January 14:

I spoke with Thom Delventhal, who seemed riddled with worry about being my DEC mentor. He said that Josh had been "at him every day" trying to persuade him that I should not be rehired. I asked him why he couldn't just ask him to stop (I mentioned to you, Anne, that I had asked him to do that in December when he reported the same thing). He said he was planning to. I again voiced my fears that the process would be about defending my record from Josh's attacks instead of a discussion about my achievements. Thom said he would try to achieve that and that's why there is someone else outside of the department on the committee. I don't feel confident about this Anne. It seems to me that part of Gil Gigliotti's job is to listen to a faculty member's concerns about me during this discussion. But what if Josh never stops talking long enough to allow anyone else to speak? This has been his MO in every meeting I've ever attended, and someone who doesn't know Josh is least likely to be able to handle his behavior and understand that it is the norm.

I continue to be quite concerned that the University is allowing Josh to sit on my re-hire committee, when he has been actively campaigning to stop by re-hire ever since I reported his behavior.

This is what I have right now. Thanks again for plodding through.

I hope your break was enjoyable and restful. More light in the sky every day!!!! Yay spring!

Sheila

Alling, Anne (Chief Human Resources Officer)

From: Sheila Siragusa [amsiragusa@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2011 5:03 PM
To: Alling, Anne (Chief Human Resources Officer)
Cc: amsiragusa@gmail.com
Subject: Missive from the Theatre Department

Hi Anne,

Sorry I didn't get this to you before the winter break. As I told you, it's a deep struggle for me to relive these incidents. I really focused on resting over the break, which was quite healing for me. Now I want to write this before we start the spring, in hopes that he's had time to reflect about his choices.

So here goes:

Nov 23:

Josh walks behind me in the hallway while I'm chatting with a student, who is sitting in the box office. He makes pig-snorting noises as he passes behind me. I turn and no one else is in the hallway.

Meeting that Josh has called to discuss curriculum issues further. Only Thom and Josh and I can attend. (Anne-This is a continuation of discussion of meeting that I sent you notes about in an email on 11/10)

Josh opens the meeting by talking about how we need to do a much better job on publicity. He is non-specific.

He comments that since Jarek (the professor I was hired to replace) wasn't teaching any advanced classes, that we all have to look to teaching more entry level classes, especially intro to theatre (Anne-see original documentation I sent you re this subject). He says that if there is a good teacher (inference—unlike Jarek) that those classes will siphon people into the department.

Thom Delventhal talks about education as a feeder, which was discussed in the last meeting, and Josh dismisses him and suddenly breaks off to tell me he's afraid that what he's saying is being written down. I immediately show him my notes and say that I am writing meeting notes. After that I did, indeed, start taking notes of what he was doing/saying for the remainder of the meeting.

Josh provides his notes and says he's created a new core curriculum for the BA. He tells us that Tom Callery is resisting because he doesn't want to let go of the BFA.

Thom D says that these changes might increase everyone's numbers.

Josh agrees and says that Scott Bartley warned him that Tom would resist.

Josh explains that there will be a core for the BA and then they can present a portfolio to be accepted into the BFA.

He mentions this makes some courses non-requirements for the BA students (Anne-again, this touches on my 11/10 notes)

We begin to talk about program changes and that we will have broad base introductory courses (theatre workshop 1) that will include education, playwriting, design, directing, acting, tech. Josh calls this applied theatre or practical theatre and when I ask about exactly what those things mean, he suggests that I educate myself about that (applied theatre and theatre education tracks) so I can present these things to the curriculum committee...but does not answer my questions, so I remain in the dark.

When I ask another question he squirms and sighs and says, "we'll type it up".

Josh explains that the word "applied" needs to go on students' transcripts.

Josh asks me to look up NYU's program for applied theatre.

I ask him for patience because he is going too fast even for Thom Delventhal to keep up with conversationally.

Despite the fact that the department has not agreed to proceed with Josh's proposal, Josh tells me that I will have to work on changing the curriculum daily. I said I couldn't spend much more time because I was working hard already as the semester approached the close. I asked him again to have more patience and he said (extremely sarcastically), "oh.....I have *infinite* patience"

Josh brings up needing to talk about things with this semester's practicum (we rotate semesters taking this class and I am in charge of the fall 2010 semester).

He said we needed more time for breaking into groups (we each have a group of students for particular focus, and historically have, when appropriate, put aside class time to attend to the tasks assigned to the groups. Most of the organization around these focus groups has historically happened outside of the practicum structure.) Thom D apologizes and says that he didn't do the prep work to merit breaking into groups and Josh corrected him and said it was only because I had not allotted time.

Then he said that Anna Dolan, Josh's wife, was upset because I had yet to contact her about what she has to do next in our collaboration (Anna and I had been working together on writing short plays in the practicum class). Anna and I had prepared in an extremely detailed manner about dates and what we would do together and separately on those dates (Anne-I have multiple emails to back this up). In addition, we had been talking as we went along with the sessions we were doing together.

I registered surprise and said I didn't know she expected a call because we had planned so specifically. He said it was my class and that I should've called. I asked him why she didn't call me to ask and he said it was my responsibility.

He then said that he had spoken to human resources about the marathon 24-hr rehearsal I had with students for our upcoming competition at the Kennedy Center Festival and they had said it wasn't okay to do that. (Anne-we spoke about that and I subsequently held the rehearsal at school).

At the meeting's end, I asked Josh for Anna's cell number so I could contact her right away and he said, "she doesn't have a cell phone". I asked if I should just call the home number and he said yes.

That night I wrote the following email (I have originals with dates of all of these emails saved):

Human resources

Josh Perlestein announced in the fall that he was doing a production of David Mamet's *Oleanna*, a two-person drama about a female student that accuses an older male professor of sexual harassment. Josh has been trying to do this shows for several years with different students, and all plans previously have fallen through for one reason or another. This year he solidified plans to do the show with [REDACTED] theatre major. When I found out about the show, I immediately felt concerned, as Professor Perlestein has had two reports of sexual harassment filed against him and female students are quite vocal about getting him "to look at and talk to them instead of their breasts". With all of the continuing hostility I have received from Josh, I was unwilling to be the one to bring this up to the Chair, who knew of the show and of Josh's history with students. More alarms went off for me when I heard from [REDACTED] that Josh was directing the show, which would mean that he would be unsupervised and alone with [REDACTED] for rehearsals. No one on the faculty stopped this or called any of it into question.

Jan 7 Josh emailed me about the dates of his production of *Oleanna* (not agreed upon or scheduled by the department) conflicting with my student show dates. He was apologetic and telling me in the spirit of communication.

He followed that email with one in which he questioned that my dates for the student shows were approved by the department. I let him know they had and he wrote back emails about looking for the minutes in which that was recorded.

Another professor concurred with me that the dates had been approved.

Jan 13 Josh apologized and blamed it on beginning of the semester confusion.

Week of Jan 28-Feb 3 In preparation for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (we go as a department every year) Josh made conference hotel reservations (after volunteering to take care of them so I didn't have to) I had for four years shared a room with Josh and Thom DeJventhal at ACTF, as the department could not afford an additional room for faculty. This was not a problem, but I was pleased when I was offered a room by the SGA, who pays for a few student rooms at the conference. So SGA was paying for a single room for me and Josh and Scott Bartley (our Design Professor) were sharing a room paid for by the department.

When I arrived at the festival to check in, Josh had reserved a room for Scott Bartley and I sharing and a room for himself. Thankfully I was the first person there, so I simply informed the manager that it had been an error and had them correct it.

At the festival, one of the students I was coaching ([REDACTED]) made the [REDACTED] competition. We worked tirelessly preparing his scenes and a monologue from the play *Othello* for the final round. The other students were quite

invested in this process and we had been discussing the possibility of doing the play all year and [redacted] was having great success with the Othello (and Shakespeare is an area of expertise and scholarship in my work). Josh was complimentary, which is exceedingly rare, about the work. Other Professors from the conference were present when he lauded that praise.

First week of February few days before the faculty meeting Josh requested that casting policy be put on the agenda. This has been the ongoing conversation he has spearheaded to create confusion and discredit my student-directing program.

At the meeting on Feb 7th Josh brought up again that the casting would be conflicting for student shows and his solution included me moving my student shows out of the slot he wanted for Oleanna. The Chair nipped the conversation in the bud.

Josh wrote me an email that contained an outright request for me to change the dates for his show, Oleanna, because the student in the show preferred the weekend that we were scheduled to go. In the same email he asked if I would mind if he directed Othello in the fall. He said [redacted] would be perfect for it. He also mentioned that he had talked to students about it and they had informed him that I had been talking about doing it for a year. He simply said he didn't want me to think he'd stolen the idea.

In an effort to be cooperative, I changed the student show dates to a week earlier and told him to take Othello. He promptly told the students (and that I had okayed it) and even told them whom he was considering for casting. He talked to the student who'd been working on it and told him that if he got into the BFA this spring, he would cast him. The student did get into the BFA (admission to the BFA is Josh's decision) and said the show was a go. It was the talk of the department.

Another faculty meeting takes place in the beginning of March, at which discussions take place about my directing classes, the student directing program and hiring a new assistant for the professor who is doing department Management (this has been me since my second year here and still is my responsibility at the time of this meeting.

No one looked at me or acknowledged my presence in any way during these discussions, despite the fact that they are all my areas.

In addition, season show selections were being discussed, and I was never acknowledged or asked about my show selections for the fall. I ultimately just raised my hands and listed my choices. There were no comments at all in response to my selections.

On Mar 19 Josh came into my office and asked if we might get together and clear the air and talk things through so there was no residual hard feelings (presumably after I left). I told him that I would do that, but not until the tenure argument was decided. He said that he understood and didn't know why I wasn't getting tenure anyway. My materials reflected that I had MORE than meet expectations creatively. He suggested that I had received bad advice about my preparation (Thom Delventhal was my mentor).. He then apologized three or four times, teary eyed, if he had contributed in any way to any of what is happening.

On March 22, I received a text from Josh asking if I would consider casting him in one of two roles for a professional show that I have been hired to direct. He didn't ask if he could audition. He asked if I would consider casting him. I was quite surprised and didn't respond for a couple of days. When we returned to school on Monday, he approached me and apologized, saying it was just a whim and he didn't know what he'd been thinking. I told him he was very welcome to come to the auditions on the following weekend. This was a perfect solution, as those auditions were for the whole summer season and were a pre-screening call for me (since I was unable to attend the auditions), during which the artistic director of the show was going to tell me if he heard anyone I should see for the roles.

The artistic director did not give me his name to reread.

That following week I was told by another faculty member that I should be prepared for the upcoming faculty meeting because Josh was planning to take the student directed shows away from me because of supposed confusion around one of the students' directing shows. That student, [REDACTED], had gotten a primary role in one of the main stage shows. We had already discussed that (in accordance with the policy) he would have to give up his directing show if he got a big role. He was taken out of the evening of Student Shows.

He had approached me about wanting to do the show in another venue on campus. I told him that we couldn't stop him from doing that but that the policy was in place to protect students from overextension. I also told him that meant I could not mentor him in the directing process. He heard and agreed. Both Josh Peristein and Tom Callery knew about this conversation and concurred.

He later scheduled a rehearsal in the building for his show. The faculty has no involvement in scheduling rehearsals and I certainly didn't have any knowledge of his rehearsals, having set him free of faculty and department support.

Josh went to Tom Callery and protested that I was mishandling my responsibilities by allowing him to rehearse in the building and that we should do away with the shows altogether.

The student reported to me that he had been called in several times by the chair and Josh to discuss this. He told me that he thought he should give me a heads up that they were continually leading him back to "trying to get him to throw me under the

bus" about the whole thing. He would not and, ultimately, the Chair called me into his office and apologized for accusing me of complaining about the policy and creating confusion. He said that "I wasn't the one that was running into his office every five minutes complaining....In fact, I was the only one who was not"

At the March faculty meeting, the directing program was discussed despite the fact that I missed the meeting due to illness.

The following week Josh complained that I was not in my office during my posted office hours (this after a day that I had called in sick with the same bug). The Chair sent out an email and then a subsequent email apologizing for having to say it because he knew we spent our every waking moment there.

The April Faculty meeting: After hearing that the main P & T Committee recommended me for tenure, stating that I had exceeded expectations, Josh came to the meeting with the news that he did not want to direct Othello anymore because [REDACTED], who would play Othello, wasn't good enough to hold the show. He told [REDACTED] that as well and soon all the students in the department had the information.

I also learned in that meeting that Josh, who would be taking over the student directing projects, would be using my main stage slot for the second stage productions, and that I would not be directing. Tom Callery, the chair told me that he had told me this in a conversation in December. He had not. Thankfully, I documented that conversation he referred to and sent it to HR at the time.

My mention of the shows I was proposing in the March meeting and the lack of any comment about me not directing next year reinforces evidence of this not being the truth.

Thom Delventhal, a professor in my department who had spoken truthfully at the HR investigation that Anne Alling conducted, said he was angry because he was immediately approached by Josh the following week and confronted with everything he said (the which Anne revealed had been said by Thom). Thom expressed fear that the same thing would happen again if he spoke up and said, "I have to work here, Sheila. I'm not leaving this job".

In the final weeks of the semester, students were gossiping about [REDACTED] and Josh having an affair. Another faculty member confronted Josh and he denied the involvement.

On Thursday May 23, a colleague and friend of mine, who is a Professor in Massachusetts, ran into Josh's wife, Anna Dolan, who is an adjunct in CCSU's English Department. When asked how she was Anna replied that she was "terrible. My

husband's having an affair with a student" There was another witness there for this conversation.

Report of Investigation

Report Date: October 3, 2013
Report prepared by: Rosa Rodríguez
Chief Diversity Officer, Central Connecticut State University

COPY

Nicholas D'Agostino
Associate in Diversity and Equity

Nature of Investigation: Alleged violation of Nondiscrimination in Education and Employment and Sexual Harassment policies.

Complainant: Sheila Siragusa, Former Assistant Professor of Theater

Subject (s) of Investigation: Mr. Josh Perlstein, Associate Professor of Theater

Introduction

Rosa Rodríguez, Chief Diversity Officer and Nicholas D'Agostino, Associate in Diversity and Equity conducted an investigation to examine an allegation of a violation of the University's Nondiscrimination in Education and Employment and Sexual Harassment policies filed by Sheila Siragusa, Assistant Professor in the Theater Department. Siragusa reported that she was subjected to disparate treatment based on her gender by Josh Perlstein, Associate Professor. Siragusa reported that she had filed a complaint in 2010 alleging that Perlstein had subjected her to unwelcome comments of a sexual nature. She further alleged that she was retaliated against by Perlstein as a result of the 2010 complaint. In August of 2013, Siragusa submitted a letter of resignation from her CCSU faculty position stating that she was taking this action due to disparate treatment based on her gender.

The investigators conducted seven (7) in-person interviews of current employees and one (1) telephone interview of a former faculty member.

Summary of Complaint and Complainant Interviews

1. Sheila Siragusa (Meeting on May 30, 2013 and complaint received on June 13, 2013)

Sheila Siragusa was an Assistant Professor in the Theater Department. She was hired in August 31, 2007 as an Assistant Professor. Siragusa made the following allegations in her June 2013 complaint:

1. She and other women in the department were subjected to inappropriate comments that were of a sexual nature. Additional comments were made against Professor Lani Johnson's age.
2. Perlstein made inappropriate comments about female acting students including but not limited to: referring to a female student as a sloth, students are too fat, while referring to a student Perlstein stated, "I don't want to fuck that."
3. Siragusa alleged continue harassment and retaliation as a result of her filing a complaint with Human Resources in 2010. Specifically, Siragusa alleged:
 - "I believe I have been harassed, retaliated against and treated unfairly based on my gender by Josh Perlstein.
 - Having reported Prof. Perlstein to Human Resources in Oct. of 2010, I have been victim to his consistent and daily efforts to discredit me, to hostile treatment, to his negative comments about me to other faculty members and students. He has made comments about me both in

and outside of the classroom and attempted to recruit students in his quest to interfere with my work here at CCSU.

- Professor Perlstein also deals with other faculty members and students in a way that I feel duty-bound to respond to in this document.
- In addition, my complaint of retaliation against those who adopted Professor Perlstein's position and retaliated against me by denying my reappointment (Dean Susan Pease) in Spring of 2012 and by denying me a positive recommendation for tenure this year (Theater Department Chair Professor Tom Callery, Professor Thom Delventhal, Professor Gil Gigliotti). Dean Susan Pease in particular has been heard to describe me as a "troublemaker" since my original complaint against Professor Perlstein. Despite the fact that I received a positive recommendation from the University P&T Committee, I have been denied tenure by Provost Carl Lovitt and President John Miller.
 - A. Professor Josh Perlstein making repeated comments about having to be careful about what he says in our department so he is not misrepresented have continued since October 2010.
 - B. Chair Professor Tom Callery making continued reference to events perpetrated by Professor Josh Perlstein as a personality conflict between Josh and me.
 - C. Professor Josh Perlstein actively pursuing other faculty members to "side with him" about my action and creating endless conversations with individuals and in groups about my work in the department and my value as a faculty member.
 - D. Professor Josh Perlstein suggesting more than once that my job could be terminated due to the current fiscal crisis.
 - E. Professor Josh Perlstein discussing my teaching style and content negatively in his classes (with our shared students).
 - F. Professor Josh Perlstein embroiling students in his conflict with me, through criticism of my actions to my students and compelling them to apologize to me for what they understand to be them causing conflict.
 - G. Professor Josh Perlstein twice commenting to other faculty members that he "will do anything to see me terminated."
 - H. Dean Susan Pease commenting that, "She should have known I'd be trouble" in reference to my submitting my complaint to HR after having already approached her about the problem with Professor Josh Perlstein.
 - I. Professor Josh Perlstein's presence on my Promotion and Tenure committee after my filing the complaint in fall 2010, despite my request for protection against that. He subsequently recused himself from the committee with the insistence that he meet with the committee to express his concerns before my meeting. My meeting was still dominated by his continued discourse about my performance.
 - J. His return to my committee in the spring of 2012 with the report of Chair, Professor Tom Callery dismissing discussion about the rightness of his presence on my committee.
 - K. His presence in my classes to review my teaching performance and the allowance of his documents about that review into my tenure materials after the committee reviewed them (other members did not see his reviews) and before it went to Dean Pease and Provost Lovitt.

- L. His unquestioned opinion about my work outside of the university in consideration of my materials. These opinions were the basis of the bulk of the negative comments in my committee's letter to Dean Pease.
 - M. The lack of communication from anyone in my department; including Chair Tom Callery about Dean Pease's recommendation that my tenure track position be terminated and my ensuing rebuttal letters to both Dean Pease and Provost Lovitt.
 - N. Denial of tenure by the University, despite the University P&T Committee's recommendation granting such tenure."
- Siragusa further alleged that there is a "clear pattern of significantly adjusted expectations that began after my filing a formal complaint against expectation can be clearly observed starting in April 2011."

Letter of Resignation and Allegations of Gender Harassment—during 2013

According to Siragusa, Perlstein threatened her job, harassed her, created a hostile and intimidating environment in the department and during department meetings, sat on her tenure review committee in 2012, and influenced the tenure committee members to not renew her in 2013.

Siragusa further alleged in August 2013, due to the continued harassment and retaliation by Perlstein and the University's failure to address these issues, she resigned from her position at the university.

Siragusa Declined to Participate in Investigatory Process

Siragusa was asked to come for an interview and she declined. After she filed the complaint with the University, she was contacted by the Office of Diversity and Equity and she had a third party contact the office to inform us that Siragusa was working on a theater production and she would not be able to attend an in-person interview meeting. Siragusa later requested to be interviewed by phone or video.

Rodríguez informed her that interviews of this nature are conducted in-person and a meeting was scheduled for August 2, 2013. She was informed that her unavailability would result in a delay for the completion of the investigation within the ninety day (90) time frame. Siragusa did not show for the August 2nd appointment and later that day she contacted Rodríguez via email that she would not be coming to the University to meet with Rodríguez; however, she would respond to written questions. Siragusa was asked questions via email and she provided brief responses.

Resolution

No resolution or remedy has been identified by Siragusa.

Witnesses

Siragusa identified the following individuals as possible witnesses:

1. Thomas Delventhal, Professor in the CCSU Theater Department
2. Tom Callery, Associate Professor and Department Chair in the CCSU Theater Department

Witnesses

Investigators interviewed eight (8) witnesses. The investigator explained the provision of the policy related to retaliation to all witnesses. All witnesses indicated that their statements were truthful, complete and accurate.

Summary of Witness Interviews

1. Gil Gigliotti (Interviewed on September 9 and 19, 2013)

Gigliotti is a Professor of English at CCSU and has been with CCSU for over 20 years. For purposes of this matter, Gigliotti participated in the final three DEC reviews for Siragusa. Gigliotti reported the following:

Relationship with Josh Perlstein

- Gigliotti stated that he has known Perlstein the entire time he has been at the University. Specifically he stated, "We have worked together on projects. I would consider myself a friend of his." He went on to share that he is only friends with Perlstein on a university or professional level.

Relationship with Sheila Siragusa

- Gigliotti reported that he did not know her as well, but they got along very well. He got to know Siragusa by working with the Theater Department. He added that when she was working on the Kentucky Cycle, he would send Siragusa songs to use for her production.

DEC Recommendation for Siragusa

- Gigliotti stated that he was a member of the DEC for the Theater Department for three years. The first year he served, he was contacted by the dean [Susan Pease, Dean for the School of Arts and Sciences] asking him to serve on the DEC [for Siragusa] due to internal problems in the department.
- When asked by the ODE investigators what his role was on this DEC, Gigliotti reported he was there to be a third full professor on the DEC and to assist them to get their reports in line and standardized.
- Gigliotti stated that in terms of the DEC, Perlstein was not involved in the 2011 evaluation; however, in spring 2012, he was there. He said he didn't question Perlstein's presence as Thom Delventhal and Tom Callery were there. He added that for Siragusa's final evaluation Perlstein was not present.
- Gigliotti reported that when Perlstein participated, he was more negative about Siragusa than everybody else. He went on to state that the other members present did not contradict what Perlstein was stating, and they all agreed on what was in the final report. Also, he did not recall Siragusa expressing any concerns with Perlstein's presence on the DEC.
- In terms of her creative activity and the DEC's evaluation, Gigliotti stated that Siragusa never met the expectations in creative activity. He stated, "In the beginning, I made it clear in these [DEC] interviews what was lacking in her creative activity. She never addressed these in the subsequent two years. You can see it in the narrative. We were looking for publications; sending out what she was working on to publishers. The third year, she sent out a letter on a publication, but it was two weeks before the review. This was the thing that has struck me year after year. She is not doing what we specifically told her to do. I had limited knowledge on other things and no ability to comment on those other things but the creative activity was clearly lacking every year and she did not address it."
- Gigliotti indicated that Perlstein did not influence the DEC process for Siragusa's non-renewal, and specifically stated that he did not have any contact with Perlstein on the matter.
- Gigliotti reported that he has never heard Perlstein make disparaging remarks about female staff or students.
- When asked if Siragusa was subjected to disparate treatment based on her gender, Gigliotti stated, "Absolutely incorrect."

Closing Comments

Gigliotti identified any Theater Department faculty or staff who would have been around the department during production meetings or areas where faculty interact.

2. Louise "Lani" Johnson (Interviewed on September 12, 2013)

Johnson was a Professor in the Theater Department who retired in May 2011 and is currently teaching as an Adjunct Professor. She was with the University for over 40 years in the Theater Department. During this time, she served as the lead costumer for productions, served on the DEC committees and was the department chair for 22 years. Johnson reported the following:

Theater Department Climate

- When asked to explain the climate in the Theater Department Johnson stated, "There was concern about Ms. Siragusa, Sheila. Some of the things she was initially hired for were not being accomplished. She had come to fill a vacancy with a focus of going from literature to art; she said she was very interested in doing this." Johnson went on to state, "Her area of expertise was [in] Shakespeare. In spite of many DEC meetings, encouraging her to expand her professional work, which was required for tenure, [she] did not. They [the DEC] wanted her to attend conventions, present papers, and write papers. She was encouraged by all of us, including Gil [Gigliotti]."
- Johnson stated, "In 2010, there was the sexual harassment case that went to human resources, but it was not determined to be sexual harassment. It went to human resources and we were all interviewed there. I was almost retired. But this is hearsay. The tension in the department was palpable after the complaint. I did not see it before. I was not aware that there were problems between the faculty members."

Relationship with Perlstein

- Johnson stated that she got along with everybody in the department. She went on to explain that "Sometimes Josh would say things, we all do this, not out of malice and not think about how it may appear to someone else." Johnson felt Siragusa was beyond being super sensitive.

Relationship with Siragusa

- Johnson indicated that she and Siragusa got along fine; Siragusa would hug her when they saw each other. Johnson added that even after all this and her retirement, she thought Siragusa felt they were friends—they lent each other books. Johnson described their relationships as a very cordial relationship.
- When asked about what she meant by sensitive, Johnson indicated that Siragusa would listen to Perlstein's conversations with students and write them up and would say things in faculty meetings. Johnson did not realize Siragusa felt she was being attacked. Johnson added that Siragusa would document things in writing after every meeting trying to say that people were attacking each other.
- Johnson went on to say, "Everything I saw happen was constructive criticism and how to improve her [Siragusa's] work at the Theater Department. I didn't know she was keeping this file."

Allegations of Retaliation, Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate comments

- When asked how she got along with Perlstein, Johnson indicated that she never had a problem with Perlstein. She never felt there were any issues with her being a female and never felt Siragusa was treated differently for being a female.
- Johnson indicated that after Siragusa filed her complaint in 2010, Perlstein and Siragusa avoided each other and they wouldn't look at each other in the department.

- Johnson never heard Perlstein make age or sexual jokes about her or negative/offensive comments about students.
- Johnson stated that she does not believe gender or retaliation were factors of how Siragusa was treated by members of the department.

DEC Recommendation for Siragusa

- Johnson stated that the committee tried to have Siragusa improve so that she would be eligible for tenure. Johnson indicated the committee wanted Siragusa to do professional theater and Siragusa listed her work with a Massachusetts Theater, which was not a professional theater. Johnson said that Siragusa directed the same play she had directed at CCSU.
- Johnson stated that the DEC had encouraged Siragusa to attend conventions, write papers, and get professional credits.
- Johnson went on to share that her teaching reviews [student evaluations] were generally really good.

Closing Comments

Johnson identified the following as witnesses: Tom Callery, Thom Delventhal, Gil Gigliotti and Catherine Fellows.

3. Thomas Delventhal (Interviewed on September 9, 2013)

Delventhal is an Associate Professor and has been with the university for 16 years in the Theater Department. During this time, he has participated on DEC committees for the department and was a member of Siragusa's DEC. Delventhal reported the following:

Theater Department Climate

- Delventhal indicated the department has been struggling since Ken Mooney left. He indicated that he felt when Mooney was at CCSU the atmosphere was more creative and productive. He added that since Mooney left, there has been more tension.
- Delventhal went on to share that "communication has always been a little bit difficult. Everyone in the department is a creative artist. Everyone acts independently. Decisions are made without everyone knowing [without consultation]. Most [faculty members] are okay with this, but sometimes there is tension. When Ken was here he was a stronger personality in the department. He was brilliantly creative. Most people agreed with what he said. When he left everyone went on doing things on their own. The sense of focus when he was here hasn't been here since he left. There seems to be some level of mistrust. When Ken arrived, he gave us a distraction from that mistrust as he gave us something bright and pretty to look at."
- Delventhal stated that "the last three years have been completely dominated by Josh's and Sheila's differences and before Ken showed up, Josh drove a lot of people crazy because he's not good at meeting deadlines and following through." He continued that when Mooney was there, "everyone was striving to reach his [Ken's] level. That didn't bother Ken, because Ken was so much bigger creatively than that. Josh's not following through and meeting deadlines drives people crazy. He [Perlstein] has a lot of big ideas that two to three months down the road it's not there and would shrug his shoulders."
- Delventhal went on to describe Siragusa as a different type of person. He said, "She's very structured. They [Siragusa and Perlstein] clashed." Delventhal stated that he has always been a person that's able to work with everyone. He said he worked well with Perlstein and Siragusa. He concluded that he tried to be a middle person where they could come together, which never seemed to work. Delventhal stated, "It was exhausting with Ken leaving and trying to make peace between them."

Relationship with Perlstein

- Delventhal indicated that Perlstein pushes himself into people's personal space and can be disruptive in the department. He also stated that Perlstein is pushy, and pushes everyone around. He stated that Perlstein is pushy with him.
- Delventhal stated that he has heard Perlstein make age jokes about Lani Johnson. He also reported that he had heard Perlstein make comments about female students (their looks, being fat, and whether or not a student was sexually appealing). However, Delventhal indicated that these comments were not made to students and were within the context of Theater, casting and how students saw themselves.
- When asked if Perlstein has made similar comments to male students, Delventhal said, "No."

Relationship with Siragusa

- Delventhal described Siragusa as "open, warm and supportive." He described their relationship as "very close and intimate" meaning that they talked about things that went beyond the scope of work.
- Delventhal indicated that people felt Siragusa could be intimidating and that he could see why people would be put off by her.

DEC Recommendation for Siragusa

- In terms of his involvement with the DEC for Siragusa, Delventhal indicated that Perlstein did not influence his decision on Siragusa's tenure. In this process, Delventhal stated that he was under the impression that the DEC committee had to use a consensus approach to the final decision. He did not fully agree with the discussion about Siragusa's creative activity. He felt she had done a lot in this area, but the conversation focused on her publications and her writing a book with little progress.
- Delventhal did not believe Siragusa was subjected to disparate treatment based on her gender or retaliation for having filed her October 2010 complaint.

Allegations of Retaliation, Sexual Harassment and inappropriate comments

- When asked about Siragusa's 2010 complaint being based on her gender, he stated, "From where I was I never saw gender-based discrimination. But, I was more than willing to accept that her perspective inside herself had greater authority than mine on that subject."
- When asked about Perlstein making inappropriate jokes towards other faculty, Delventhal indicated that he has heard these things and referenced that these are jokes theater people would make to one another.
- When asked about sexual comments about female students, Delventhal indicated that he has heard him make these types of comments, but never to a student's face. These were in reference to performances, class work or auditions. He went on to state that "acting is a "type" driven industry and so sometimes the talk about a person can be you are not looking at the person inside you are looking at the person outside, this is the kind of role you are going to play."
- Delventhal indicated that similar comments were not made towards male students, but again referenced the Theater industry and how it has more flexibility with male actors. Specifically, he stated male actors were critiqued by Perlstein for being "too scattered, your concentration is not good, your energy is spastic, your stance — things about their person." He continued by stating, "It's definitely an industry that is more demanding on a woman's sexuality than a man's."
- When asked if Siragusa's tenure process and treatment by Perlstein were impacted by her gender and/or her filing the grievance in 2010, Delventhal did not think this was true.

Scheduling Meetings with Perlstein

- Formal meeting did not occur outside of faculty meetings. Delventhal indicated that they would connect in passing or drop in to Perlstein's office to meet.

Closing Comments

- Delventhal identified the following persons as possible witnesses: Callery, Bartley, Johnson and Ireland-Beaver.

4. Tom Callery (Interviewed on September 9, 2013)

Tom Callery is an Associate Professor in the Theater Department and has been employed as CCSU for 31 years. Currently he is serving as the chair of the department. Callery has served as a member of the DEC committees and participated in all of Siragusa's evaluations. Callery reported the following:

Theater Department Climate

- When asked about the climate of the department, Callery indicated that how people treat each other differs from day to day and can be fluid. He stated, "Like any family. We spend a lot more time together compared to other departments because of the nature of what we do. It's not like a math department that teaches classes and then occasionally meets in a faculty meeting. We work on different plays and some days we can spend 12 hours with each other."
- When explaining issues in the department, Callery indicated that tensions remained in the department after Siragusa filed her complaint against Perlstein (2010). Callery said, "It was as much her issue as his. You never knew which person you were going to get when she was in the room. One day it would be someone very nice then in other days it was like someone with smoke coming out of her ears."

Relationship with Perlstein

- Callery indicated that he got along with Perlstein and that they were colleagues.

Relationship with Siragusa

- When asked about his relationship with Siragusa, he indicated that they got along fine. However, he stated, "When becoming chair, she often didn't do what was asked of her by the department. She was often asked to follow department policies and often would not. She didn't like to be told she couldn't do something. There were times I told her not to do things and she would. There's a policy for student produced shows and you have to fill out the paperwork for proposal before anything is cast or advertised. She would have everything cast and announced to the students that were selected for the play and there was no paperwork." He continued, "She would do this every time. It puts us in the position in having to decide, do we cancel the show and make the students suffer or do we accept that the process was not followed. We were often over a barrel."

DEC Recommendation for Siragusa

- While describing Siragusa's DEC experiences, Callery stated that the first DEC, where he was chair, "She had come up with a statement that she was not willing to teach Intro to Theater [course] because that was not what she was hired for. We gave her a mild DEC, and gave her some bullet points on the side to work on. We gave her a separate set of bullet points. The first DEC we barely have gotten to know you. She wrote a rebuttal on the very first DEC to the Dean."
- In terms of the DEC process for Siragusa, Callery indicated that Perlstein expressed his opinions as a faculty member in the department when he was not on the DEC. However, Callery indicated that he did not listen to Perlstein's opinion and based his decisions on Siragusa's work. Callery

went on to state that Siragusa "didn't do as the DEC, provost and dean told her to do to get tenure. She did not meet the creative activity standards. In her creative endeavors, she did not meet an appropriate standard. Her work with the theaters she worked in was in the realm of just above community theater. She didn't publish anything, except one interview – that was not at a professional level – it was at the level of a college sophomore. She was supposed to be a Shakespearean expert. She was a director but didn't bring her work to a significant professional level. She directed a play in a small company."

- Callery did not believe Siragusa was subjected to disparate treatment based on her gender. He went on to explain that when Siragusa didn't like his point of view she became "caustic" and disrespectful. He described an instance where his daughter was present where he had a disagreement with Siragusa and she responded, "I will fight you tooth and nail!" He said that this embarrassed him because it was done in front of his daughter—a student in the department.

Allegations of Retaliation, Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate Comments:

- Callery did not recall Perlstein making sexual or age jokes about Lani Johnson.
- Callery said he did not witness Perlstein making derogatory or sexual comments towards female students.
- When asked about witnessing retaliation by Perlstein towards Siragusa, Callery stated, "No, what I think he was trying to do was distance himself so this didn't happen. Josh was trying to help her in her first years by telling her what she needed to do to succeed and make it."

Scheduling meetings with Perlstein

- Callery stated, "Faculty meetings are scheduled by the Dept. Sec. [Department Secretary] usually the first Fri. [Friday] of every month or as needed. Show Production meetings are scheduled by the student Stage Managers as needed. As for the rest, I'm afraid we're not very formal around her [here] as we are in such close proximity to one another; Josh is right across the hall from me for example. Due to our hectic schedules most meetings, such as they are, with all faculty are Hey, have you got a minute? Can you spare 10 mins. after class? How's noon tomorrow for the three of us?"

5. Scott Bartley (interviewed on September 20, 2013)

Scott Barley is an Assistant Professor in the Theater Department. He is a graduate of the CCSU Theater Program and was hired as a faculty member in fall of 2012. He was interviewed by Rosa Rodríguez, Chief Diversity Officer. Bartley reported the following:

Theater Department Climate

Bartley said there are days that the faculty members are cordial and friendly working together in a production and there are days when the climate is tense and they can barely talk to each other. He stated that faculty members intervene into other faculty member's creative work and that the level of professionalism is questionable because everyone is telling someone else how to do their job. He provided some examples:

Rehearsal Observations

- The first incident between Bartley and Siragusa occurred when a student observer was assigned to record his/her observations of rehearsals reported an issue involving Siragusa. After an incident when Siragusa did not give students a break in a three-hour rehearsal, the student observer recorded this situation in an email to the participants and the department, Siragusa told Bartley that the student did not have the right to send out the email without clearing it with the faculty involved in the production. Bartley stated that the student was only recording his/her

observations. Bartley stated that he felt Siragusa was concerned because she had not allowed students to take a break.

- Bartley stated that every time he was working with Siragusa on a production there would be an argument. When asked how issues were generally resolved between him and Siragusa, Bartley stated, "Conversation. Back and forth. She would tell me that this is how it's done by professionals and I would tell her that how it's done in a professional theater is very different than a community theater. I'm a production manager at a professional regional theater—Bay Street in Sag Harbor, New York."

Twelve Angry Men Production

- Bartley stated that the **second incident** between him and Siragusa occurred during the *Twelve Angry Men* production. Bartley stated that in a professional theater, rehearsals are held in a rehearsal hall because the theater will more than likely be hosting another production. Additionally, he stated that in professional theater, only water is permitted on stage until the last dress rehearsal or first performance to avoid damaging the floor and other props used in the productions.
- Bartley stated that he believes that most of Siragusa's theater experience has been at the community theater level. He said that working at a professional theater is different. In a professional theater, the actors and the crew are paid professionals and community theater is generally comprised of volunteer performers and normally an unpaid crew.
- Bartley stated that one day Siragusa became upset when she overheard a student stage manager telling him that one of the actors had been drinking a brown-colored drink on stage. Siragusa told Bartley that she did not appreciate that he and the student stage manager were accusing her actor of drinking alcohol on stage. Bartley stated that at that time, the stage manager was unaware of what was in the glass as the actor had finished the drink and hid the glass before the stage manager got to the stage. He added that later another student found the cup and it did smell like alcohol.
- Bartley reported the incident to Tom Callery, department chair and Callery stated that the issue would be handled at the next department meeting; however, the possible consumption of alcohol was not discussed. The drinking on stage issue was resolved at the department meeting when the chair told the faculty that only water was allowed on the stage. Bartley added that on a prior occasion someone had spilled a cup of coffee on the stage floor requiring a six foot area to be repainted. Bartley stated the issue was addressed without using any faculty members' names.
- The **third incident** between Bartley and Siragusa occurred during this same production. Bartley reported that he was responsible to construct a 20 foot circle (turn table) that would rotate the stage.
- In a professional theater, Bartley reported he would have a three day period to install the table without having to clean the theater daily to make it actor safe. He said "actor safe" means not allowing actors on stage until the installation is completed.
- Bartley was frustrated that he had limited time to work on and complete the turn table. When he was asked by a student stage manager, he told the manager to write on the email that the table would be "ready when it was ready." Siragusa told him that she was offended with this response because she felt that he knew that she was the one asking the question. Bartley stated that Siragusa told him that she wanted him to publicly apologize to her. Bartley stated that the status of the table was given at the production meeting and that Siragusa knew that he was still trying to work out some of the bugs on the table.

- Bartley said that he reported the incident to Callery and he was told to provide progress reports on the table to Callery. Bartley stated that for the rest of the production there was tension between him and Siragusa.
- When asked to describe his relationship with Siragusa, Bartley stated that the only time he and Siragusa did not experience tension with each other was when they worked together on the curriculum committee. He said the department expressed excitement with their work and direction on curricular issues.

Bartley's and Others Relationship with Josh Perlstein

- Bartley stated that he and Perlstein are colleagues and when he was a student at CCSU he had worked on several productions with Perlstein but reported that he had never taken a course with Perlstein.
- Bartley stated that from his observation, he thought everything was fine between Perlstein and the other women (Johnson, Ireland-Beaver and Colon) in the department. He stated that Colon had told Bartley that she felt uncomfortable with Perlstein due to issues related to his personal hygiene.
- Bartley stated that he had not heard Perlstein make offensive comments about women in the Theater Department or jokes about Johnson's age or appearance.
- Bartley stated that he has not heard Perlstein make offensive comments about women and men students. He added that he has heard him discuss with both male and female students their character type and what type of auditions they should seek based on their character type.

DEC Recommendations for Bartley

- Bartley reported that after his first year he was told that he needed to work on more hands-on class materials and to try to engage his students. Bartley reported that he told them that he would like to incorporate the use of a CNC machine to build scenery and that he has not done this to date. He said that Provost Carl Lovitt also advised him to develop this area before his next renewal. The DEC told him that it was important to move from a theorist to an actual practitioner. Based on these recommendations, he stated that he plans on seeking employment with a theater that has this type of technology.

DEC Recommendations for Siragusa

- Bartley stated that he has not been told the reasons that Siragusa was not recommended for tenure.
- Bartley stated that he did not know if Perlstein had given Siragusa's DEC feedback on her application. Bartley added that they are all encouraged to go see each other's professional work and that Perlstein has gone to see his and Delventhal's work at the Hartford Stage Theater and Siragusa's work at the community theater.

Allegations of Retaliation, Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate Comments

- Bartley stated he did not think Siragusa was subjected to disparate treatment based on her gender.
- Bartley reported that he had not observed Perlstein acting in a disrespectful manner towards Ireland-Beaver or Johnson.
- Bartley stated that Siragusa is the only faculty member who has treated him in disrespectful manner. He alleged that students have told him that Siragusa has told students that he is unprofessional in his knowledge of theater.
- Bartley stated that he has not heard about or seen Perlstein treat students in an inappropriate manner.

Scheduling meetings with Perlstein

- Bartley stated, "For the most part, if we need to speak with someone we catch them in the hallways. We have scheduled faculty meetings set by the Department chair, and production meetings are emailed out by the stage manager (student). It's usually never a problem to ask someone if they have a few minutes to just talk, we didn't have formal meetings outside of the meetings I spoke of."

Closing Comments

- Bartley identified the following persons as possible witnesses: Delventhal, Ireland-Beaver, Johnson and Callery.
- Bartley stated that the above statements are truthful, complete and accurate and that his non-tenured status did not affect how he answered the questions.

6. Cassandra Ireland-Beaver (Interviewed on September 23, 2013)

Theater Department Climate

- Ireland-Beaver indicated that the climate depended on each faculty member. She got along with Thom Delventhal, Jacqueline Colon (administrative assistant) and the university assistants. She also indicated that she got along with Siragusa for the most part. She indicated that her worst relationship was with Perlstein because he was pushy. Ireland-Beaver continued by stating, "There was pushiness amongst male faculty except Thom Delventhal he was pleasant to work with. There was an underlying feeling of an old boys club."
- Also, Ireland-Beaver stated that faculty meetings were tense and several times a year faculty members would end up yelling at one another.

Relationship with Perlstein

- Ireland-Beaver described the relationship as tense and non-collaborative. She shared a specific instance where Perlstein did not want to work with the student designers she recommended for a show. She indicated that she knew the students and worked the most with them and Perlstein said something to the effect of, "You're not going to be here; it doesn't matter what you think; or your interactions with them."

Relationship with Siragusa

- When asked to describe her relationship with Siragusa, Ireland-Beaver stated, "I've been fortunate. I have good relationships that I enjoy the person I'm working with and I have some creative dialogue to create and achieve a terrific product using the ideas of everyone involved. I have had interactions with directors in particular where they will dictate exactly what they want and not care what others bring to the table. I would say she [Siragusa] was somewhere in the middle."
- Ireland-Beaver went on to state, "There was one instance where she [Siragusa] called me on the phone and she was yelling about something. I'm trying to remember. Something dealing with the costumes for the show or maybe props for the show, but I can't remember. She was yelling at the beginning of it, and by the end we were able to talk out a solution. We came to a solution that was reasonable for both of our parts. Overall we got along okay. Not the best professional relationship, but not the worst."

Allegations of Retaliation, Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate Comments

- Ireland-Beaver did not recall hearing Perlstein make inappropriate and sexually based comments about faculty members or students. When asked if she heard Perlstein make comments that she found offensive – she could not remember anything specific.

- When asked if Siragusa was subjected to disparate treatment based on gender, she stated, "I don't know if I have any direct proof that that occurred. Given the overall atmosphere of the department it wouldn't surprise me." Ireland-Beaver went on to state that she felt women were treated differently in the department. She explained that Callery would refer to her and the other female university assistants as "kiddo," but did not do the same to Scott Bartley who is male and younger than she. She also expressed that it was hard for her to get her opinion heard in the department. Ireland-Beaver wasn't sure if this was due to her being female or because she was in a non-tenure track position.

DEC Recommendation for Siragusa

- Ireland-Beaver was not a part of the DEC committee; however, she did recall a conversation with Scott Bartley (also not a part of the DEC committee) where he stated, "It [Siragusa's Tenure request] would never go through and if it did go through he would leave."

Scheduling Meetings with Perlstein

- Ireland-Beaver stated, "To get a meeting with him, rather than looking at everyone's calendar, he made us line up like we were his students. He didn't make us line up, but he would make us sign up for an appointment on his door, like he does with his students."
- When asked if Callery or Delventhal had to sign up the same way she stated, "I don't think they ever did, but that is something you would have to ask them to be certain."

Closing Comments

- Ireland-Beaver identified the following as possible witnesses: the Theater Faculty, Jackie Colon and Vanessa Clark.

7. Jacqueline Colon (Interviewed on September 24, 2013).

Jacqueline Colon is a full-time Secretary 2 for the Theater Department and she has held this position for two years. She has worked in a variety of offices including Admissions, Counseling and Wellness, Student Affairs, Art and Theater. Prior to her full-time assignment in the Theater Department, she was assigned to work for both Art and Theater Departments. Her primary work function is to provide administrative support to the Tom Callery, Theater Department Chair.

Theater Department Climate

- When asked to describe the climate Colon stated, "There is a lot of bickering and the students know what is going on...The relationships between them are not comfortable; it's a stressful environment."

Relationship with Perlstein

- Colon described Perlstein as arrogant and indicated that she tries to stay away from him. She further indicated that he makes her uncomfortable. This was in part due to his personal hygiene.
- She stated that on one occasion Perlstein told her that she could not speak Spanish in the office.

Relationship with Siragusa

- When asked to describe her relationship with Siragusa, Colon indicated that she worked a lot with and helped Siragusa's university assistant and the assistant would help her when she needed assistance. Siragusa treated Colon and the assistant out to secretary's day for lunch. Colon said, "She [Siragusa] was cool people."
- Colon described Siragusa, "She was very sweet. Always said good morning. I love the way she treated the kids. We had a few incidents where the kids might be in distress, and they would

wind up in her office. I came from counseling; I have that approach. If I saw someone in the bathroom crying, I would let her [Siragusa] know.

- Colon described some of the dynamic between Perlstein and Siragusa when she explained, "It almost seems like she has students that favor her, and Josh has students who favor him. Then their students don't like each other. They would say they don't like her or they don't like Josh. I would ask them why, and they didn't have an answer."

Allegations of Retaliation, Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate Comments

- Colon did not recall hearing Perlstein making inappropriate and/or sexually based comments towards faculty members or students (male or female).
- Colon indicated that Siragusa was treated differently, but she could not determine why she was treated differently. She did not believe it was because of her gender. When asked specifically how Siragusa was treated, she stated, "I saw a lot of her work being criticized for every show she did. Either by Josh or Scott Bartley; maybe Tom Callery. We had the same issue with Cassandra Ireland-Beaver, they didn't like her work."

DEC Recommendation for Siragusa

- Colon was not a part of the DEC or formal conversations on the subject, however indicated that people were talking about and indicating that Siragusa may not get tenure. She also indicated that the students were aware of this situation. She stated that the "students were doing a petition because they wanted her to stay. They did a big Facebook, or written petition. They wrote on their evaluations that they wanted her to get tenure."

Closing Comments

- Colon identified Vanessa Clark Bligh (university assistant) as a possible witness.
- Colon stated that after this interview she felt that she would need to seek employment elsewhere.

8. Susan Pease (Interviewed on September 30, 2013).

Susan Pease is the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. Pease has been at Central Connecticut State University for 25 years; Dean since 2002. She has a PhD in Criminology.

Theater Department Climate

- She was not aware of any issues within the Theater Department. She indicated that Siragusa never came to her directly about her concerns with Perlstein. Pease indicated that it was Anne Alling (former Chief Human Resources Officer) who informed her about the issues Siragusa had with Perlstein.

Relationship with Perlstein

- When asked to describe her relationship with Perlstein, Pease indicated, "I had no relationship with him before this. After this I had more of a relationship because of another issue that came up."

Relationship with Siragusa

- When asked to describe her relationship with Siragusa, Dean Pease indicated that she did not have a relationship with Siragusa. They only emailed each other regarding tickets to theater productions.

Allegations of Retaliation, Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate Comments

- Pease stated that she had no knowledge of Perlstein making inappropriate comments or engaging in sexual harassment towards other staff or faculty.
- She explained that there was one issue with a female student; however the student did not complain about the situation another CCSU staff person raised the concerns.

DEC Recommendation for Siragusa

- Pease indicated that Perlstein's involvement was limited to when he was on the DEC. He was then asked to step down, and he did so voluntarily.
- She also stated that the DEC believed that Siragusa did not meet the expectations for creative activity. Pease further indicated that the standard is publications and academic journals. She stated, "This is where the DEC needs to help me figure out what is considered peer reviewed for their discipline. I rely on the DEC."

Allegation that Dean Pease stated that she "should have known that Siragusa was going to be trouble"

- Pease denied making this statement and further indicated that she didn't know Siragusa.

Closing Comments

- Pease identified members of Theater Department and Dr. Gil Gigliotti as possible witnesses.

Summary of Respondent Interview

Joshua Perlstein (Interviewed on August 15, 2013)

Joshua Perlstein is an Associate Professor in the Theater Department. Perlstein was accompanied by Donna Sims, AAUP union representative. Perlstein reported the following:

- Perlstein stated that he and Siragusa lived near each other and during her first year at CCSU, they had commuted together, exchanged personal information about their lives and joked about things.
- Perlstein denied engaging in disparate treatment towards Siragusa based on her gender, making inappropriate and sexually based comments towards Lani Johnson, and engaging in retaliatory practices towards Siragusa as a result of her 2010 complaint.
- Perlstein admitted to having discussions related to budget cuts and jobs cuts with Siragusa, but this was more about the realities of departments being decreased across the country and how they could protect her position.
- Perlstein denied talking to students in the program about Siragusa and her teaching. He also denied stating to other faculty members that he would do anything to see Siragusa terminated.
- When asked about if he provided feedback on her performance he stated, "I didn't have a lot of criticism for her as she taught well, was well liked in the classroom. It was never personal. She would send her students to me. During a class on scenes, she would send students to me to help her find more plays with scenes she could use. I suggested that she should read and become familiar with plays."

Closing Comments

- When asked about possible witnesses, Perlstein stated, "No, I don't think anyone else should be involved in this."
- Perlstein stated that his statements are truthful, complete and accurate.

- Perlestein was advised of the non-retaliation policy...

Evidence Discovered during Investigation

- In December 2010, Perlestein received written notification from Human Resources (HR) as a result of the investigation launched due to Siragusa's 2010 complaint. HR made the following recommendations based on the complaint and investigation:
 1. Be sensitive to others' feelings and consider how they might react to something you say before you say it.
 2. Listen more than you talk.
 3. Consider the fact that others may be offended by something that you may not consider offensive.
 4. Do not make off-color jokes.
 5. Someone else in the department should be assigned as a mentor to Assistant Professor Siragusa and you should step back from being her "self-appointed" mentor. I have discussed this with Tom Callery and he plans to ask Thom Delventhal to serve as Sheila's mentor, in accordance with Faculty Senate Promotion and Tenure Policy and theatre Department Guidelines.
 6. Do not use e-mail to have a conversation with other faculty, including Sheila, about other faculty, students, or personal issues. E-mail should be used for routine departmental communications only.
 7. Do not invade others' personal space.

The letter further stated, "I trust that you have and will continue to take seriously the concerns raised by Professor Siragusa, some of which were corroborated by colleagues. It is incumbent upon you to do everything you can to modify the behaviors that are making her uncomfortable so that the department can move forward in a productive way."

- There was only one other person receiving DEC evaluations during the time Siragusa was at CCSU. The other faculty member in the department was Scott Bartley (male). According to his second DEC evaluation, he met or exceeded all categories noted on the evaluation report. However, both the Dean and Provost encouraged him to expand his work in scholarly and creative activity. The Dean, as written in her letter to the Provost, strongly encouraged "Professor Bartley to continue his work on an article related to computer-aided cutting and fabrication processes and on the text he hoped to complete with Tom Callery." Although Bartley exceeded expectations in this category for the review, it was still identified that he needed to expand his scholarly work.
- In May 2010, Provost Lovitt in his letter to Siragusa regarding her renewal stated, "As you plan your creative activities in the coming years, I encourage you to seek opportunities to participate in activities that are juried, adjudicated, or peer-reviewed."

Findings

Findings Regarding Issue 1: Allegation of Disparate Treatment Based on Gender and Tenure Decision

While one witness (Ireland Beaver) suggests that gender may have been a factor, the preponderance of the evidence suggests that gender was not a factor in the treatment of Siragusa.

- A. Siragusa stated she was subjected to disparate treatment by Perlstein because of her gender; Perlstein denied it.

— Siragusa complaint and Perlstein Interview

- B. The evidence suggests that the University's decision not to grant Siragusa tenure was based on not meeting creative activity expectations. Since May 2010, the DEC, Dean and Provost informed Siragusa that she needed to take steps to increase the standard of quality in the area of creative activity. There is no evidence that gender was a factor in this decision.

— DEC Evaluations, Callery, Delventhal, Gigliotti, and Pease Interviews

- C. It is important to note that most employees regardless of gender described the climate of the theater department as uncomfortable and often confrontational. Of the seven witnesses (four males, three females), only one female faculty member (Ireland-Beaver) indicated that gender may have been a factor in Siragusa's treatment. Ireland-Beaver did not have any direct proof of this, but indicated that she believed women were treated differently in the Theater Department by male faculty members with the exception of Delventhal; however, she said she was uncertain if this treatment was due to her non-tenure status or because she is a woman. Another female faculty member (Johnson) stated that she did not observe women faculty members being subjected to different treatment because of their gender. Additionally one male faculty member expressed concerns about Perlstein treatment towards him and described him as "pushy."

— Ireland-Beaver, Johnson, Callery, Bartley and Delventhal Interviews

- D. A female faculty member indicated concerns with the manner she was required to schedule meetings with Perlstein. She explained that she was required to schedule time using the schedule posted on Perlstein's door; similar to the way students would schedule time with him. When asked how they schedule appointments with Perlstein, the three male staff indicated that formal meetings are not common, and meeting would often occur in passing or on a drop-in basis.

— Ireland-Beaver, Bartley, Callery, Delventhal Witness Statements

- E. Another female witness indicated that the male staff (Perlstein, Bartley and Callery) would criticize Siragusa's work as a group; however, she did not believe it was due to her gender. This same witness indicated that the same three faculty members also did not like another female faculty work but she did not identify gender as the basis for the critique. In addition, a female faculty member indicated that she did not care for Siragusa's choices of productions. Based on these statements, it appears that the criticism was based on Siragusa's productions and not related to her gender.

— Colon and Johnson Interviews

- F. Although a male witness corroborated the allegation that Perlstein made comments about female students' appearance and sexual appeal, this was always related to acting and casting. No other witnesses reported hearing such comments.

— Delventhal Interview

- G. Lastly, the November 2010 investigation conducted by Anne Ailing, former Chief Human Resources Officer, to address Siragusa's concerns regarding Perlstein's alleged misconduct and inappropriate behavior did not discover evidence that Siragusa's concerns were based on her gender; however, some of the allegations investigated were corroborated by others in the department. At that time the university addressed these concerns with Perlstein.

Findings regarding Issue 2: Allegation of Retaliation for the 2010 Complaint

- A. All witnesses did not believe retaliation was a factor in Siragusa's experience; however, they stated that this complaint had an impact on the department as the tension among all of them increased.
- Witnesses Interviews
- B. There is no direct evidence that the DEC's decision was impacted by Siragusa's 2010 complaint or influenced by Perlstein. Siragusa was asked in the 2010, 2011 and 2012 evaluations by the Provost that she "participate in activities that are juried, adjudicated, or peer-reviewed in order to meet expectations in the area of creative activity [May 2010 and May 2011]; renewal of your appointment in the future will depend on your developing and successfully implementing a plan to increase your standard of quality in the area of creative activity. [May 2012]"
- Provost letters to Siragusa, and Callery, Gigliotti Delventhal Interviews
- C. There is no evidence to support the claim that the expectations of the DEC showed "a clear pattern significantly adjusting expectations" as a result of her fall 2010 complaint. Complainant was told of the expectation to expand creative activity in May 2010, prior to her complaint. This remained a constant area needing improvement through the remainder of her employment at CCSU. Additionally, another faculty (male) who exceeded expectations in the creative activity category was also strongly encouraged to pursue scholarly creative activity. The expectation of creative activity appears consistent for both Siragusa and a male colleague in the Theater Department.
- Provost letters to Siragusa and Bartley (regarding DEC evaluations), Siragusa's 2010 DEC evaluation.

Other Issues

Siragusa's concern regarding a possible violation of the Consensual Relationship Policy was referred to the Office of Human Resources. The issue was investigated and administrative action was taken.

Conclusion

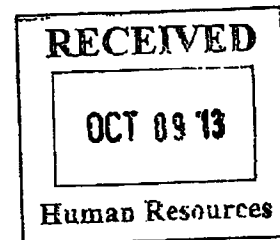
The investigation in this case is completed and is marked as closed.

This report will be provided to Lou Pisano, Chief Human Resources Officer to determine appropriate administrative action in this case.

All original statements and other documentary evidence in this case will remain in the custody and control of the Office of Diversity and Equity. Rodríguez can be reached at 860-832-0178.



October 8, 2013

Ms. Sheila Siragusa


Dear Ms. Siragusa:

This is to inform you that the investigation of your complaint alleging disparate treatment based on gender and retaliation based on previous opposition has been completed. After careful review of the information presented in your complaint, investigative interviews, documents gathered and CCSU's Non-discrimination in Employment and Education and Sexual Harassment Policies, I concluded that the Information of record does not rise to the level of a policy violation. Specifically, the findings are as follows:

Findings Regarding Issue 1: Allegation of Disparate Treatment Based on Gender and Tenure Decision

While one witness suggests that gender may have been a factor, the preponderance of the evidence suggests that gender was not a factor in the treatment of Siragusa.

- A. Siragusa stated she was subjected to disparate treatment by Perlstein because of her gender; Perlstein denied it.
- B. The evidence suggests that the University's decision not to grant Siragusa tenure was based on not meeting creative activity expectations. Since May 2010, the DEC, Dean and Provost informed Siragusa that she needed to take steps to increase the standard of quality in the area of creative activity. There is no evidence that gender was a factor in this decision.
- C. It is important to note that most employees regardless of gender described the climate of the theater department as uncomfortable and often confrontational. Of the seven witnesses (four males, three females), only one female faculty member (Ireland-Beaver) indicated that gender may have been a factor in Siragusa's treatment. Ireland-Beaver did not have any direct proof of this, but indicated that she believed women were treated differently in the Theater Department by male faculty members with the exception of Delventhal; however, she said she was uncertain if this treatment was due to her non-tenure status or because she is a woman. Another female faculty member (Johnson) stated that she did not observe women faculty members being subjected to different treatment because of their gender. Additionally one male faculty member expressed concerns about Perlstein treatment towards him and described him as "pushy."

- D. A female faculty member indicated concerns with the manner she was required to schedule meetings with Perlstein. She explained that she was required to schedule time using the schedule posted on Perlstein's door; similar to the way students would schedule time with him. When asked how they schedule appointments with Perlstein, the three male staff indicated that formal meetings are not common, and meeting would often occur in passing or on a drop-in basis.
- A. Another female witness indicated that the male staff (Perlstein, Bartley and Callery) would criticize Siragusa's work as a group; however, she did not believe it was due to her gender. This same witness indicated that the same three faculty members also did not like another female faculty work but she did not identify gender as the basis for the critique. In addition, a female faculty member indicated that she did not care for Siragusa's choices of productions. Based on these statements, it appears that the criticism was based on Siragusa's productions and not related to her gender.
- B. Although a male witness corroborated the allegation that Perlstein made comments about female students' appearance and sexual appeal, this was always related to acting and casting. No other witnesses reported hearing such comments.
- C. Lastly, the November 2010 investigation conducted by Anne Alling, former Chief Human Resources Officer, to address Siragusa's concerns regarding Perlstein's alleged misconduct and inappropriate behavior did not discover evidence that Siragusa's concerns were based on her gender; however, some of the allegations investigated were corroborated by others in the department. At that time the university addressed these concerns with Perlstein.

Findings regarding Issue 2: Allegation of Retaliation for the 2010 Complaint

- A. All witnesses did not believe retaliation was a factor in Siragusa's experience; however, they stated that this complaint had an impact on the department as the tension among all of them increased.
- B. There is no direct evidence that the DEC's decision was impacted by Siragusa's 2010 complaint or influenced by Perlstein. Siragusa was asked in the 2010, 2011 and 2012 evaluations by the Provost that she "participate in activities that are juried, adjudicated, or peer-reviewed in order to meet expectations in the area of creative activity [May 2010 and May 2011]; renewal of your appointment in the future will depend on your developing and successfully implementing a plan to increase your standard of quality in the area of creative activity. [May 2012]"
- C. There is no evidence to support the claim that the expectations of the DEC showed "a clear pattern significantly adjusting expectations" as a result of her fall 2010 complaint. Complainant was told of the expectation to expand creative activity in May 2010, prior to her complaint. This remained a constant area needing improvement through the remainder of her employment at CCSU. Additionally, another faculty (male) who exceeded expectations in the creative activity category was also strongly encouraged to pursue scholarly creative activity. The expectation of creative activity appears consistent for both Siragusa and a male colleague in the Theater Department.

Other Issues

Your concerns regarding a possible violation of the Consensual Relationship Policy were referred to the Office of Human Resources. The issue was investigated and administrative action was taken.

Conclusion

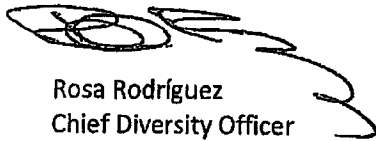
At this point, no further action will be taken by this office. This conclusion constitutes the formal institutional process decision of CCSU. Under the CCSU Procedures and Timetables for Processing Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Complaints, the complainants and the respondents have the right

to appeal this decision to the President within fifteen calendar days (by October 28, 2013) of the issuance of this determination. For further information, please see the attached procedure.

Please be advised of your legal options to file a discrimination complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and any other agencies, state, federal or local, that enforce laws concerning discrimination.

Should you have any additional concerns, please feel free to contact me at 860-832-0178.

Sincerely,



Rosa Rodríguez
Chief Diversity Officer

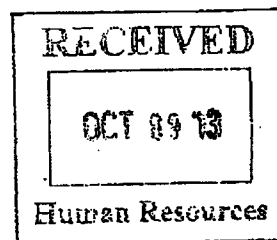
Enclosures

C: Lou Pisano, Chief Human Resources Officer
Dr. Jack Miller, President
File



Central Connecticut State University

October 8, 2013

Mr. Josh Perlstein


Dear Mr. Perlstein:

This letter is to notify you that I have completed the review of the complaint filed against you by Ms. Sheila Siragusa alleging a possible violation of the Nondiscrimination in Education and Employment and Sexual Harassment policies. After a thorough review of the allegations in the complaint and of the above mentioned policy, I find that the information of record does not rise to a violation of this policy. Specifically, the findings are as follows:

Findings Regarding Issue 1: Allegation of Disparate Treatment Based on Gender and Tenure Decision

While one witness suggests that gender may have been a factor, the preponderance of the evidence suggests that gender was not a factor in the treatment of Siragusa.

- A. Siragusa stated she was subjected to disparate treatment by Perlstein because of her gender; Perlstein denied it.
- B. The evidence suggests that the University's decision not to grant Siragusa tenure was based on not meeting creative activity expectations. Since May 2010, the DEC, Dean and Provost informed Siragusa that she needed to take steps to increase the standard of quality in the area of creative activity. There is no evidence that gender was a factor in this decision.
- C. It is important to note that most employees regardless of gender described the climate of the theater department as uncomfortable and often confrontational. The Theater Department Of the seven witnesses (four males, three females), only one female faculty member (Ireland-Beaver) indicated that gender may have been a factor in Siragusa's treatment. Ireland-Beaver did not have any direct proof of this, but indicated that she believed women were treated differently in the Theater Department by male faculty members with the exception of Delventhal; however, she said she was uncertain if this treatment was due to her non-tenure status or because she is a woman. Another female faculty member (Johnson) stated that she did not observe women faculty members being subjected to different treatment because of their gender. Additionally one male faculty member expressed concerns about Perlstein treatment towards him and described him as "pushy."
- D. A female faculty member indicated concerns with the manner she was required to schedule meetings with Perlstein. She explained that she was required to schedule time using the schedule

posted on Perlstein's door; similar to the way students would schedule time with him. When asked how they schedule appointments with Perlstein, the three male staff indicated that formal meetings are not common, and meeting would often occur in passing or on a drop-in basis.

- E. Another female witness indicated that the male staff (Perlstein, Bartley and Callery) would criticize Siragusa's work as a group; however, she did not believe it was due to her gender. This same witness indicated that the same three faculty members also did not like another female faculty work but she did not identify gender as the basis for the critique. In addition, a female faculty member indicated that she did not care for Siragusa's choices of productions. Based on these statements, it appears that the criticism was based on Siragusa's productions and not related to her gender.
- F. Although a male witness corroborated the allegation that Perlstein made comments about female students' appearance and sexual appeal, this was always related to acting and casting. No other witnesses reported hearing such comments.
- G. Lastly, the November 2010 investigation conducted by Anne Alling, former Chief Human Resources Officer, to address Siragusa's concerns regarding Perlstein's alleged misconduct and inappropriate behavior did not discover evidence that Siragusa's concerns were based on her gender; however, some of the allegations investigated were corroborated by others in the department. At that time the university addressed these concerns with Perlstein.

Findings regarding Issue 2: Allegation of Retaliation for the 2010 Complaint

- A. All witnesses did not believe retaliation was a factor in Siragusa's experience; however, they stated that this complaint had an impact on the department as the tension among all of them increased.
- B. There is no direct evidence that the DEC's decision was impacted by Siragusa's 2010 complaint or influenced by Perlstein. Siragusa was asked in the 2010, 2011 and 2012 evaluations by the Provost that she "participate in activities that are juried, adjudicated, or peer-reviewed in order to meet expectations in the area of creative activity [May 2010 and May 2011]; renewal of your appointment in the future will depend on your developing and successfully implementing a plan to increase your standard of quality in the area of creative activity. [May 2012]"
- C. There is no evidence to support the claim that the expectations of the DEC showed "a clear pattern significantly adjusting expectations" as a result of her fall 2010 complaint. Complainant was told of the expectation to expand creative activity in May 2010, prior to her complaint. This remained a constant area needing improvement through the remainder of her employment at CCSU. Additionally, another faculty (male) who exceeded expectations in the creative activity category was also strongly encouraged to pursue scholarly creative activity. The expectation of creative activity appears consistent for both Siragusa and a male colleague in the Theater Department.

As we discussed, Ms. Siragusa expressed concerns on your treatment towards her. Although, some evidence was corroborated by witnesses' accounts, the evidence as a whole does not rise to a level of a policy violation. Please use this experience as a reminder to be cautious of what you say and how you treat others in the workplace. Sometimes the most benign statement can significantly impact on another person's experience.

At this point, based on the information gathered during the investigation, no further action will be taken by this office. Under the CCSU Procedures and Timetables for Processing Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Complaints, the complainants and the respondents have the right to appeal this decision to the President within fifteen calendar days (by October 28, 2013) of the issuance of this determination.

For further information, please see the attached procedure. Should you need additional information please feel free to contact me at 860-832-1652.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rosa Rodríguez', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Rosa Rodríguez
Chief Diversity Officer

Enclosures

C: ~~Lou Pisano, Chief Human Resources Officer~~
Dr. Jack Miller, President
File

2/10/14

V. Cabrera-

Started last term

problems w/ Josh Perlstein

canceling rehearsals -

demanding too much

stressing students + designers -

going thru divorce.

Nov 2013 - Costume shop. Students came to D - to tell
her about incident where Josh -
exploded at Tom Callery - yelling at him

Tom Callery - picked shows that are.

T. said PM wanted to do more ^{audience friendly} popular plays -
He has academic freedom

dark + Twisted - 3rd time he added
a rape scene that
doesn't have rape
scenes -

S. chose not to pursue theater -

actress wasn't happy w/ the rape scene.
Character was masochistic

tech rehearsal -

Josh was angry thought it had gone too slow

JD - do tech w/o the actors

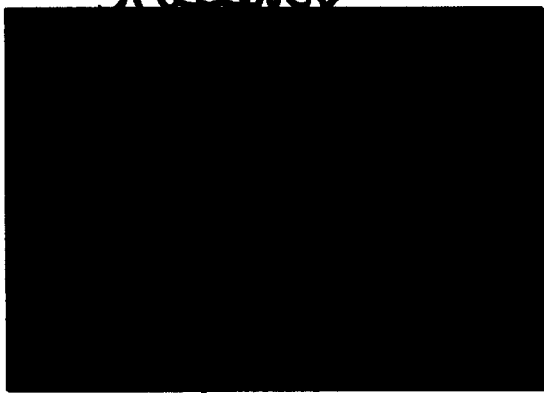
DC - can't do tech w/o actors -

JP - "I refuse to subject of our criticism."

He wouldn't let me speak - everytime I would try to speak - "don't interrupt me - Pause - I would try to speak."

Who was there?
Scott Barkley.
Tom Callery.

Students -



Yelling at me in front of these students.

12/4/14-

tech-

lighting & sound are added
Scene changes - 124 costume
changes-

■ Very uncomfortable VC. This is
an academic setting. This needs
to stop.

He left I burst into tears-

It was unprofessional - awful experience.

T.C. asked if I wanted to move forward.
w/ hostile environment -

is a group - something needed to be done -

S. Bartley

T. Polenthal

T. Culley.

They told ~~the~~ they were moving
forward w/ complaint of HWE.
He looked out against him -

Some students moving forward w/
complaint they changed their minds
b/c they still have classes/shops with him.

• T.C. talked to Dean Pease -
went to conference - what do I
have ~~use~~ grievance -

Student Designers- they don't want
to work with Josh D-
Don't want to leave ss to be alone.

Do you fear your Personal Safety

No-

I fear retaliation - Has in DEC.
w/ my dept.

Since then, he has been very
charming, engaging him as
a colleague - but I stay away

Has D.P. asked to talk to you.
No-

TD- went to the Dean as well -
we had other faculty from other
school - older, what was young.





Central Connecticut State University

Copy to
Dr. Ford

March 6, 2014

DeMara Cabrera



Dear DeMara:

When we met on February 10, 2014, you expressed concerns about the behavior of one of your colleagues. You stated that it has been very difficult to establish a healthy working relationship because of his aggressive behavior towards you, other colleagues and students in the theater department.

As I informed you, the Office of Diversity and Equity handles complaints that allege a violation of the Non-discrimination in Education and Employment and Sexual Harassment policies. If you believe that you have been subjected to different treatment based on a protected class (e.g., race, national origin, gender, etc.), you may file a complaint with my office. If you are uncertain if your complaint is based on a protected class, I would ask you to let us make that determination. Please take into consideration that you have only 90 days from the last incident of harassment or discrimination to file the complaint.

Be assured that the university takes your concerns very seriously. I have enclosed copies of the Non-discrimination in Education and Employment Policy and CCSU Procedures and Timetables for Processing of Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Complaints, and a complaint form.

If your concerns fall outside the scope of these policies, you may contact the Office of Human Resources at 860-832-1751 or Dr. Susan Pease, Dean of Arts Sciences. You also expressed a concern that Josh Perlstein may have continued a romantic relationship with one of the students in the department. I have informed Lou Pisano, Chief Human Resources Officer of this situation and he assured me that he is addressing it.

Should you have any questions about my role or the policy, please contact me at 860-832-1652.

Sincerely,

Rosa Rodríguez
Chief Diversity Officer

Enc.

Cc: File

D'Agostino, Nicholas (Diversity and Equity)

From: D'Agostino, Nicholas (Diversity and Equity)
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2014 8:52 AM
To: Cabrera, DeMara (Theatre)
Cc: Rodriguez, Rosa (Diversity and Equity)
Subject: Confidential

Dear. Ms. Cabrera,

This email is to follow up on a meeting you had with Ms. Rosa Rodriguez on February 10, 2014. During the meeting, you expressed concerns regarding a colleague's behaviors. After this meeting, Ms. Rodriguez sent you a letter regarding the scope of our office and to submit a complaint with our office if you believed you were subjected to different treatment based on a protected class (e.g. race, national origin, gender, etc.). To date, we have not received any response from you regarding this matter. If you still wish to pursue your concerns through our office, please contact us at your convenience. If we do not hear from you by May 30, 2014, we will consider this matter closed.

Thank you,
Nick

Nicholas D'Agostino
Associate
Office of Diversity and Equity
Central Connecticut State University
Davidson Hall, Room 102
1615 Stanley Street, New Britain CT 06050
860-832-1653
Nicholas.Dagostino@ccsu.edu

D'Agostino, Nicholas (Diversity and Equity)

From: Cabrera, DeMara (Theatre)
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2014 10:01 AM
To: D'Agostino, Nicholas (Diversity and Equity)
Cc: Rodriguez, Rosa (Diversity and Equity)
Subject: RE: Confidential

Hello,

After careful consideration I felt that I could not say that I was subjected to different treatment based on my gender. His objectionable behavior has also been directed at my male colleagues. We are pursuing disciplinary action through HR. I appreciate you following up with me.

Thanks,
DeMara Cabrera
Central Connecticut State University
Theatre Department

From: D'Agostino, Nicholas (Diversity and Equity)
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2014 8:52 AM
To: Cabrera, DeMara (Theatre)
Cc: Rodriguez, Rosa (Diversity and Equity)
Subject: Confidential

Dear. Ms. Cabrera,

This email is to follow up on a meeting you had with Ms. Rosa Rodriguez on February 10, 2014. During the meeting, you expressed concerns regarding a colleague's behaviors. After this meeting, Ms. Rodriguez sent you a letter regarding the scope of our office and to submit a complaint with our office if you believed you were subjected to different treatment based on a protected class (e.g. race, national origin, gender, etc.). To date, we have not received any response from you regarding this matter. If you still wish to pursue your concerns through our office, please contact us at your convenience. If we do not hear from you by May 30, 2014, we will consider this matter closed.

Thank you,
Nick

Nicholas D'Agostino
Associate
Office of Diversity and Equity
Central Connecticut State University
Davidson Hall, Room 102
1615 Stanley Street, New Britain CT 06050
860-832-1653
Nicholas.Dagostino@ccsu.edu<<mailto:Nicholas.Dagostino@ccsu.edu>>

Hi [REDACTED] I was forwarded your e-mail by Tom Callery and was wondering if you would have time to speak with me. Are nearby CCSU? Would you be able to come to my office in Davidson Hall (Room 101)? Thank you.

Best regards,

Lou

From: Callery, Jr., Thomas (Theatre)
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2014 4:09 PM
To: Pease, Susan (Dean Arts and Sciences); Pisano, Lou (Human Resources)
Subject: FW: Letter regarding incident

FYI

Tom Callery
Chair, Theatre Department
Room 101 Maloney Hall
1615 Stanley St
New Britain CT 06050
860-832-3153 Office
860-888-9663 Cell
860-832-3150 Theatre office
callery@ccsu.edu

—— Forwarded Message

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Thu, 13 Mar 2014 15:57:20 -0400
To: Thomas Callery <Callery@mail.ccsu.edu>
Subject: Letter regarding incident

Hi Tom,

Wishing you a much belated congratulations on becoming Department Chair! I hope all is well with you and your family.

I am writing you today to relate a few incidents that occurred while I was a student at CCSU. It involves an inappropriate sexual advance made towards me by Professor Josh Perlstein and inappropriate sexual conduct that I witnessed between him and another student.

I had been in the hallway, outside of the Theatre offices and the Black Box theatre when I heard Josh and a female student engaged in a brief struggle. To my recollection, Josh had grabbed this student and kissed her on the lips, which appeared to have been unwanted

by the female. I distinctly remember him stating that he "could do this now that [she was] no longer [his] student", for she had just completed her final semester and would be graduating. I do not recall exactly what she said to him but I remember her screaming angrily at him and slapping his face prior to storming out of the doors leading to the buildings entrance.

The incident involving myself occurred at the beginning of a semester, on the day of and time just prior to the first theatre practicum of that semester. I was in the same hallway with my back to the offices reading the call board for any new info about upcoming shows for the semester and was planning to go into the theatre as soon as I was finished. The Black Box theatre was full of students and other faculty and I was alone in the hallway when he approached me from behind. He came up close behind me and I turned my head towards my right to see who it was and he attempted to kiss my lips. I pulled back suddenly and moved slightly to the left but he was extremely close and I was very close to the call board in front of me. When I did this he quietly laughed and leaned even further towards me and quietly said into my ear "Don't pull away from me when I try to kiss you". I was totally shocked and did not know in that moment how to respond and ended up doing exactly what he commanded - for his tone, although softly spoken, was nothing short of threatening in nature - and he kissed me on the cheek. I was extremely upset by the encounter and more so after I realized that I was to be [REDACTED] for the show that he was directing that semester. That meant I would spend a great deal of time with him, some of that time would be alone and at night, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and he would be supervising that task. I would also have to leave the building with him and walk to my car. Needless to say, I did not feel safe in his presence under those circumstances so I declined the opportunity and someone else took over.

I declined to lodge a formal complaint at the time, despite being strongly urged to do so, because I felt that it could be easily dismissed by the university. I still needed to complete my degree and I am not sure that I would have felt able to do so if I was made out to be someone that was not being truthful. There were no witnesses to what happened with me and he was a tenured professor. I felt his word would have been believed over mine if he denied or contradicted my statement. I chose instead to confront him directly and

he did try to deny that he did anything wrong. I refused to accept anything less than an apology and insisted that he never conduct himself with anything other than professionalism with me.

I am not sure what good this information will do now that so much time has passed. Possibly shed some light on the fact that there is a repeated pattern to his behavior, perhaps? Please contact me if you have any questions.

I think of the Theatre Department at CCSU as part of my family. Many of the students, faculty and staff collaborate together on many different projects and productions and that fosters a great deal of trust with one another and a real sense of community. His actions tainted that sense of community and trust. He violated my trust and the trust of that other female student. There is no denying that fact.

Again, please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you would like further information.

Regards,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the sender's name and signature.

----- End of Forwarded Message

On Friday, November 11th Professor Thom Delventhal approached me and asked who I voted for. He was clear that he would understand if I didn't want to share this information. I told him I don't share this type of information especially in the workplace. I wished at the time that I had mentioned that this is how I was raised and my parents were very private with this as well. We did have a conversation where I told him that my daughter just turned 18 and called our home and spoke with my husband because she was having difficulties on making a decision on how she should cast her vote. They had a great supportive conversation where he explained what her options were including a write in vote. He was extremely careful not to sway her vote in any way. I admire him for doing this because voting is one of the greatest opportunities we are given as Americans. As I explained this to Thom, I told him that both my husband and I do not like to force beliefs on anyone; rather we like to do our research and make the best choices we can each and every election. I also explained to him that I have been registered for all parties. I do what is necessary. I explained to Thom that as a student at CCSU, I didn't care for how political views and beliefs were forced upon me not only at the undergraduate level many years ago, but also more recently when I was a graduate student. I told him about a book called "Women's Ways of Knowing." It was a great book that describes the women's development theory. "Despite the progress of the women's movement, many women still feel silenced in their families and schools. This moving and insightful bestseller, based on in-depth interviews of 135 women, explains why they feel this way..."¹ This is also why I believe so strongly in not sharing my views in the work place as I am around so many young minds and I do not want to force my beliefs on them. I only wish to provide a safe environment for them to grow and learn. As a University responsible for educating many young people, we should be teaching them to think, rather than telling them what to think. Developing their own identities is important to their sense of self and independence. Molding them into some sort of group think mentality is not in their best interests. As Thom and I continued to talk I also explained to him about the town in which I live and how we have been trying to pass a new garage. Over the years my husband I have attended many town meeting so we can be well informed. I mentioned how my husband recently spoke at a meeting and was misquoted by the media. He ended up following up his perspective with a letter to the Canton compass. In the letter he was informative stating many facts, but didn't dictate which side to vote for. It was basically a factual document to help the voters make their own decision. Finally, I asked Thom why he would ask me who I voted for and he said he had heard I voted for Trump. I told him I was shocked since I know for certain I do not tell anyone who I vote for, and the last time I checked, going into a voting booth was supposed to be secure and private. I also told him I was mad, hurt and very angry hearing this. I asked him who told him I voted this way and he said Josh. He then included that Josh said "I think she voted for Trump". Josh doesn't know whom I voted for; he is making an assumption. I want it to be clear that I have not shared this with him or anyone. I am beyond frustrated that he is spreading this to other employees. These actions that Josh has engaged in, are an infringement of my civil rights and he needs to stop. This is not appropriate behavior especially for the work place and I will not stand for it. He is destroying my work environment and I no longer feel safe. This is not acceptable when this man hardly even knows me. I will not put up with this type of behavior. His behavior has caused me great anxiety. On Josh's way out of the office on November 11th he said "Sarah, have a great weekend." I could tell by the tone of his voice he was not happy with me and he actually didn't mean it. I realized at that moment he knew I had reported his behavior. This would have been the appropriate time to apologize rather than waiting until Monday, November 14th. The apology I received on Monday, in my opinion, was forced. The more I think about this situation it is affecting me far more than I ever expected. In some respects I feel I should have kept this to myself. He makes my heart race when I see him and I'm extremely anxious. I don't like being alone in the office when he is here. On November 17th I had a doctor's appointment and they took my blood pressure and it was very high. They recommended I see my general physician so he could monitor it. I saw my general physician on the 18th and while it was still high he understood I'm clearly under

tremendous stress. He asked how I was sleeping and I told him not well. I'm up several hours during the night. I have a follow up appointment in a few weeks, but I'm angered that I even have to take time off from work, drive to the appointment and pay the co-payment each time. This is not a situation that I asked for.

11/21/16

Sarah Atkinson

1 https://www.amazon.com/dp/0465090990/?tag=mh0b-20&hvadid=7010998822&hvqmt=e&hvbmt=be&hvdev=c&ref=pd_sl_89u29kr3e1_e

I am beyond disappointed that I have to document the incidents that have been occurring over the last several months. I come to work daily trying to make this a peaceful and safe environment for all, especially our students who are at the stage in life where they are forming their own opinions. I myself try not to influence them. It's an important time in their lives to discover who they are. I would also like to be clear that by reporting this I do not wish for this incident to be used in a way that will make it difficult for me to come to work. It took every ounce of effort for me to drive myself to work this morning after being up all evening thinking about if I had done something wrong. I know I haven't, but this is causing extreme stress for me. I do not feel comfortable working under these conditions.

Several months ago Josh Perlstein googled my home address and discovered that my husband was registered as a Republican. I'm not sure why he felt it necessary to look up where I live or how much my home cost and looked like. While I know this is public information I found it disconcerting to have someone I work with look into my personal life. I do realize that he was trying to get a reaction out of me. At the time I just brushed it off. Over time he has continued to invade my personal life and personal space. He often touches me when he is reaching over me to either borrow a writing instrument or tape. All these items are provided to him in his office, but he finds it necessary to use mine. This happens on a regular basis. I was willing to once again overlook this behavior, but I'm getting to the point where I cannot do it anymore. Too many things have occurred where I no longer feel safe. Just last week he made a comment that went something like this "I hope your husband is not planning on voting for Trump." I have never once brought up politics with him and don't understand why he continues to bring my husband and his political affiliation into the workplace. Yesterday was the last straw when he abruptly came out of his office and rudely placed a piece of paper on my desk and proceeded to raise his voice and say "read this, read this, read this!" He continued to raise his voice while doing this. I reacted by saying "okay I will". He turned the paper around and began to read "If I were to run, I'd run as a Republican. They're the dumbest group of voters in the country. They believe anything on Fox News. I could lie and they'd still eat it up. I bet my numbers would be terrific." Then Josh stormed out of the office swearing and pinned the paper with the picture of Trump and this quote on our press bulletin board. As he entered the office he made another comment toward me "f**** voters". I am beyond angry and frustrated with the way I have been treated. I have not disclosed how I voted nor how my husband has voted during this election, and ironically my husband didn't support Trump during the primary nor during the election. I'm not sure why he continues to bring my husband into the workplace, but I do feel extremely uncomfortable with this situation.

Sarah Atkinson

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY & EQUITY

11/10/16

NOV 18 2016

RECEIVED

H.R. has the
original signed
copy.



Memorandum

To: File

From: Nicholas D'Agostino, Associate

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "N. D'Agostino".

Date: 12/20/2016

Re: Atkinson v. Perlstein GC2017.13

This memorandum documents the outcomes of the ODE review into concerns brought forward by Sarah Atkinson, Secretary in the Theatre department, against Joshua Perlstein, Associate Professor of Theatre.

Complaint/Investigatory Status: ODE received a formal complaint from Atkinson on 11/18/2016. This letter indicated several concerns regarding interactions with Perlstein. This matter was also presented to Human Resources. While Atkinson indicated that Perlstein has touched her (non-sexually or inappropriately) while reaching for a writing utensil, e.g., pen or pencil, the primary concern was based on Perlstein's assumption that Atkinson's husband was republican. Since political affiliation is not a protected class, the matter will remain with Human Resources for review.

Case Update: Atkinson was notified on 12/2/2016 that the matter would remain with Human Resources. She was also informed that if she believed this was a matter of protected class she could file with our office or an external agency, e.g., the CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. This matter is considered closed.