

Finances? Really? Enough with the lies.

By the "Save Logsdon Seminary" Facebook Group Admins

For Immediate Release:

It is with deep sadness, but also anger, that we continue to witness the unraveling of Logsdon Seminary, and now Logsdon School of Theology. In the two communications from President Bruntmyer, finances have been consistently lifted up as the sole reason for the seminary's closure. In fact, the administration went so far as to say the funds from the Logsdon family endowment would be diverted solely to undergraduate studies at Logsdon School of Theology, and gave assurances that those professors would retain full employment.

Late yesterday afternoon, forcing Logsdon's beloved Dean to act as a surrogate, the administration effectively fired the only female professor in the undergraduate Logsdon School of Theology - Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, Dr. Susan Pigott.

Dr. Pigott has served on HSU's faculty since 1993, and chaired the university's Rank and Tenure Committee. The dismissal of Dr. Pigott shows an outright dismissal, not only of a loyal and senior faculty member, but in our view, communicates disdain for women in theological teaching positions.

This leaves us with little doubt that the closure of Logsdon was in large part, theologically motivated. Many of us have emailed, called, or personally visited with President Bruntmyer since Monday. By meeting with us, or taking our phone calls, he gives the veneer of transparency, but has failed to answer a single meaningful question regarding Logsdon's financials, or the actual state of the Logsdon endowment.

The numbers the administration has released do not add up and leave out many critical facts regarding the nature of the Logsdon endowment, which supported graduate level education long before the launch of Logsdon Seminary. The administration's response to such facts and to tough questions has thus far been two pronged: either outright silence or total vagary.

The lack of transparency makes the closure of Logsdon even more hurtful. The administration's actions betray all that Hardin Simmons and Logsdon taught us about Christian leadership, including that God may call women and men equally at every level of ministry and scholarship.

Beginning February 29th, the Save Logsdon Seminary Group invites all who share concern for how this is unfolding to join us for an initiative called, *LEAP INTO ACTION: 32 Days of Prayer and Advocacy*. Beginning on February 29, alums will host a prayer vigil, and invite everyone who is heartbroken over this situation to join us as we raise our voices and witness in prayer. We pray God would bring justice out of injustice, and that light will be shed where there is darkness. We hope to host simultaneous vigils both in Abilene and San Antonio.

Between February 29 and March 31st, we will provide a daily prayer calendar and encourage people to lift up professors, students, staff, and the HSU administration and trustees in prayer. We also plan to launch a letter writing and phone campaign to personally reach trustees.

On March 31st, the Alumni Council already has a scheduled meeting with the administration. We will continue to share our deep concerns, not only about the insensitive manner in which Logsdon's closure has been handled, but regarding what we find to be a lack of transparency potentially hiding other agendas and outside actors. Our primary concern at this point is the care of professors, students and staff, and our secondary concern is accountability and transparency.

We ask that all people join us in prayer and in action, expressing not only our deep grief and anger to God, but lifting up those whose lives are most impacted by this situation.

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The authors of this press release are admins of the Save Logsdon Seminary Facebook group, which is now has over 400 members from around the world.