

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

October 5, 2022

Dear Board of Trustees:

I write today after learning that the Michigan State University Board of Trustees directed their outside counsel to depose faculty, executive administrators, and internal legal counsel regarding the resignation of Dr. Sanjay Gupta as dean of the Broad College of Business following an OIE finding of 'failure of mandatory reporting' and a leadership review of his activities associated with this matter. I most vigorously defend the rights of our faculty and staff to work independent of outside incursion and the right of the university to work through its rigorous processes for discipline without undue pressure on behalf of an individual. Your stated goals in the September 30, 2022, memo is 'to investigate the 2021 Title IX certification process, provide guidance to the Board in reviewing Title IX reports, identify shortfalls in the process, and make recommendations to improve the process'. The questions asked of executives in the Office of the Provost, MSU faculty, and the MSU legal counsel charged in this work are 'circumstances...including disputes as to whether Dr. Gupta failed to comply with mandatory reporting obligations and disputes concerning the voluntary or involuntary nature of Dr. Gupta's resignation.' The latter is a personnel matter on which you were fully briefed, and the seven individuals targeted by your law firm would have limited knowledge on the matter. The former matter is not in dispute. Dr. Gupta failed to comply with mandatory reporting obligations (see inset below). Importantly, the Board of Trustees declined direct engagement with me on these matters, asking me to leave a Zoom meeting wherein any questions you had could be addressed in a legitimate and timely manner, and you have sought no further input in the interregnum. Thus, it is my assessment that you are working in a manner that does not comport with ordinary fact finding and I therefore ask you to halt the manner of your investigation.



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"In the June 20 meeting that FASA convened with Dr. Gupta and various university leaders to discuss possible interim measures, Dr. Gupta himself indicated that during the week following the April 22 incident, faculty and students contacted him about the event to share information that aligned with the OIE notification about the event, which included alleged intoxication, inappropriate dancing, and touching. Dr. Gupta acknowledged that he did not report this information to OIE."

I also ask that you do not send inquiries of a legal matter directly to members of campus. The Board is in possession of specific knowledge about people in roles who are working on behalf of the university. These aggressive and unparalleled actions are causing harm to individuals and creating a chilling effect over work that is difficult. Staff are led to question whether the work they are doing is worth it; whether their work on behalf of the university is supported by Board members as university leaders; what other cases/individuals will be given 'special treatment' by the Board of Trustees; who is next to get a letter from the Board of Trustees' legal counsel. The protections of an orderly workplace must be restored.

These actions by the Board of Trustees are doing harm to the campus, harm to the reputation of MSU and harm to the process you seek to improve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa K. Woodruff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D.
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
MSU Foundation Professor
Michigan State University