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To: Michael Malone, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement
From: Sally Powers, CNS Associate Dean for Faculty & Research 
CC: Jennifer Donais, AVC Research and Engagement, Research Compliance
Date: December 1, 2015
Re: Preliminary Review of Allegation of Misconduct by Professor Jeffrey Podos

Vice Chancellor Mike Malone requested on November 12, 2015 that I provide a Preliminary Review of Dr. Donald Kroodsmas' November 2, 2015 allegation of misconduct by Professor Jeffrey Podos. Dr. Kroodsmas' allegation included a memo to VC Malone detailing his rationale for the allegation and five additional documents listed below:

1. "No teams of rivals or coalitions in territorial sparrows": A summary of objections to Goodwin and Podos' (2014) scientific conclusions.
2. "The evidence for criminal harassment: My emails to 'UMass Biology' (Podos or Goodwin): Nine emails sent from Kroodsmas to Podos or Goodwin with commentary from Kroodsmas, and a transcript between UMass police and Kroodsmas.
3. Zollinger, Podos et al., 2012. Publication
4. "Podos and Performance Studies": a summary of objections to Podos, Peter, & Nowicki's (2004) conclusions.
5. "Honest Signaling and the Motor Constraints Hypothesis": a manuscript by Kroodsmas detailing his objections to Podos' research.

I reviewed all of Dr. Kroodsmas' materials, interviewed Dr. Podos, Dr. Elizabeth Connor, current Chair of Biology, and Dr. Rolf Karlstom, past Chair of Biology.

Dr. Kroodsmas alleges that Dr. Podos has intentionally deceived the scientific community by a) not including facts and references in his publications that Dr. Kroodsmas believes are relevant, b) incorrect use of a statistical test, and c) not including non-significant results in publications. Additionally, Dr. Kroodsmas alleges that Dr. Podos has acted unethically by not responding to his emails. Upon full review of the materials, I believe that allegations a, b, and c are simply disputes about the interpretation of results and the appropriateness of methodologies, and do not rise to the level of misconduct. Dr. Podos has not responded to emails of Dr. Kroodsmas since 2003-2004 because Dr. Podos believes the emails constitute harassment. Dr. Podos has responded professionally to earlier critiques through normal academic channels by replying to a letter to the editor in the scientific journal where his work was published.

It is important to note that Dr. Kroodsmas's affiliation with UMass Amherst has not given him any special access to or knowledge of Dr. Podos' research or lab. Dr. Kroodsmas has not been directly involved with the UMass Biology department or Dr. Podos' research group since Dr. Kroodsmas's retirement over a decade ago.

I find that there is insufficient substance to these allegations of misconduct to proceed with any additional investigation.