

From: Lawrence Krauss <[REDACTED]>
To: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Cc: Lawrence Krauss <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Fwd: Letter--no wifi on plane, sorry for the delay
Date: Wed, 22 Aug 2018 20:55:56 +0000

This is from Manfred Laubichler.. who you met.. he was Assoc. Director of Origins for 7 years, and heavily involved. That OEI only had a 15-20 min phone call with him is strong evidence of bias, having had in person interviews with other staff that were much longer. Anyway, I think this establishes the tone of Origins, and our mentoring of even recalcitrant staff well..

LMK

Lawrence M. Krauss

Professor

School of Earth & Space Exploration and Physics Department

[REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

From: Manfred Laubichler <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Letter--no wifi on plane, sorry for the delay
Date: August 22, 2018 at 1:19:55 PM PDT
To: Lawrence Krauss <[REDACTED]>

To:

Lawrence Krauss

From:

Manfred Laubichler

President's Professor

Director, Global Biosocial Complexity Initiative

Associate Director, Origins Project 2011-2016

RE: My observations about the working climate at Origins

EFTA01007703

To whom it may concern:

I was briefly interviewed as part of the investigation into Lawrence Krauss conducted by ASU. I recently learned about the conclusion and the actions taken by ASU. As part of the appeal process I offer here again my observations about the working environment at Origins.

I was part of many planning meetings, workshops and public events organized by the Origin Project during my tenure as Associate director. I had less to do with the daily operations. My involvement with Origins started with the first big event in 2009 and continued until 2016. Due to other obligations, I gradually phased out starting in 2015, but still participated in meetings and events.

During all this time and all the meetings I attended, the working atmosphere was open, friendly and supportive. The nature of Origin's activities—organizing high profile events and scientific workshops—created a unique working environment. There would be open brainstorming sessions about themes and people to invite, followed by a high-pressure phase of getting everything organized, and finally a realization phase with often last minute trouble shooting. All of this resembled more the world of theater, putting on a show, rather than a straightforward academic environment. As far as I can tell, all of the staff enjoyed this excitement, even though it was sometimes exhausting. In the “low” phases after a big event the staff was soon looking forward to the next one.

Similar to a theater group, the atmosphere was one of trust that allowed for frank discussions and exchanges of ideas. In putting together these programs we often discussed themes and names in a creative free-for-all. This was a wonderfully non-hierarchical process that sometime involved expressive language (from all participants!). Some would label a possible invitee as “boring,” “not up to the big stage,” etc. I could not detect any discomfort with these discussions on part of the staff as they freely participated in these discussions and never held back what they thought about some possible invitees as well. And we all knew and joked about that in the weeks before an event chaos would, of course, set in, but that, as usual, we would get it done and it would work out again. And it always did.

As Origins grew and more people came on board the dynamics changed a bit and became more structured. And when one staff member (M██████ I██████) felt that it was time for her to move on, we all helped her. I was called by her new employer about a recommendation and in that conversation could emphasize what she contributed to and learned at Origins. I was then informed that it precisely because of these experiences that she got her new job. I consider this a case of successful career mentoring.

In all my interactions with staff and with Lawrence Krauss I never detected signs of overall discontent. Of course there were cases when people were upset about something—it would be abnormal if there were no of such cases—but those were all addressed right away and openly. Nobody ever complained to me that they could not speak up or were afraid to bring things up with Lawrence or me.

In considering the appeal I hope that this statement can shed some light on what it was like at Origins when we put up a number of very high-profile events. And while I don't know what was going on in the last two years, it seems to me highly unlikely that things would have changed dramatically. I still talked to people and attended events and could detect no change.

I hope that these observations are useful and am, of course, available for any further discussion of Origins.

Sincerely,

Manfred D Laubichler