



CAMPUS COUNSEL

A legal blog written for administrators, HR professionals, in-house counsel, and deans at colleges and universities

Brigid Harrington Quoted in “How will the U. decide if gymnastics coach Tom Farden crossed the line?” in The Salt Lake Tribune

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Tom Farden, who became the sole head coach of the University of Utah’s gymnastics team in 2020, awaits the findings of an independent investigation into his coaching practices, which some of have described as toxic and abusive. In the wake of these allegations, however, some former athletes have come to his defense, calling him passionate and loud but not abusive. The results of the investigation, which is expected to be completed soon, will likely depend on the findings about the individual experiences of the athletes and the interpretations of the school’s policy regarding athlete wellness – a detailed policy that addresses appropriate coaching methods and behavior. Brigid Harrington spoke with *The Salt Lake Tribune* about the allegations.

Brigid noted that while the university’s policy is detailed, there is plenty of room for interpretation within its language and terms like “degrading” and “devalue” can be vague. When it comes to how Utah may interpret its own policy and use it to adjudicate the allegations against Farden, she said it’s all about context and the university’s expectations.

“You would consider that this is a sports environment,” said Brigid. “You might look at athletes’ experiences in high school and in other teams, and make a decision. Is this something that, in the athletic community that they’re in, people reasonably expect? Or is it beyond the pale?”

Continue reading “[How will the U. decide if gymnastics coach Tom Farden crossed the line?](#)” on *The Salt Lake Tribune* website (subscription required).

