

At the time, my name was Abby Nygaard, I was a student at UWEC from 2010-2014. As a student, I was the President of Campus Ambassadors and an intern in the Admissions Office – truly felt at home as a Blugold from day one. All of the other Admissions employees who resigned I had known since my freshman year. My trust and loyalty in them stems from years of having their mentorship and support. I worked as an Admissions Counselor from October 2015 – February 2019.

Statement:

I cannot serve as a direct witness to Albert Colom's behavior, but his mistreatment of our senior staff significantly impacted the culture of our admissions office. Admissions had always fostered an environment of meaningful relationships, trust, and positivity. In the final months of my time at UWEC, there was a heightened level of stress as our leadership became less available to support our team. Albert's unpredictable needs pulled them from involvement with admissions initiatives, often meaning they would miss internal meetings, which led to a lack of direction and communication. Physically, our senior staff were rarely in the office, and when they were, it was often for closed door meetings. It was clear that something was going on. Looking back, clearly leadership was trying to protect the rest of our team, but at the time it manifested a culture of frustration and distrust, a sharp contrast to who we authentically were as a group.

With the shift in culture, I decided to look for opportunities outside of the University. My search became more urgent as three members of senior staff individually stressed that I needed to "take care of myself" and began sharing information on Albert's behavior. The fear and sadness they expressed made me realize the seriousness of the situation. Many know that the Chancellor voiced his support for Albert in a campus wide email. In that same email, he announced my resignation before I was given the opportunity to share the decision with my own team. I am disappointed by the Chancellor's disrespect for me and my colleagues, especially when combined we spent 60+ years advocating for the Blugold community as students, professionals, and alumni.