

Complaint questions Schmidt's degrees

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Staff says she has hours, if not parchment

WASHINGTON - A second elections complaint against Rep. Jean Schmidt was filed Friday, this time over allegations that she misrepresented her educational background.

According to the complaint, filed with the state elections commission, Schmidt claimed on candidate surveys, previous campaign Web sites and in official Ohio House literature that she earned two bachelor's degrees from the University of Cincinnati, one in political science in 1974 and one in "social studies-secondary education" in 1986.

But UC Registrar Douglas Burgess said the only degree on file for Schmidt is a bachelor of arts in political science.

The reason for the discrepancy, explained Schmidt's chief of staff Barry Bennett, is that the Miami Township Republican has completed the hours required to earn a second bachelor's degree, but she didn't collect it.

Bennett said Schmidt received a teaching certificate in 1984, after two years of coursework, but never completed the master's degree in secondary education that she was working toward. She has, however, completed enough coursework to qualify for the second bachelor's degree, he said.

Burgess confirmed Schmidt took classes in the school's College of Education in 1981 and 1992, but said he was not authorized to provide more information. A transcript provided by Schmidt's office shows she's earned 290 credit hours, including 186 credit hours for the first degree.

This is the second complaint that the Coalition Opposed to Additional Spending and Taxes has filed with the Ohio Elections Commission, which voted this week to investigate whether Schmidt claimed bogus endorsements on her campaign Web site, such as one from Rep. Steve Chabot, R-Westwood.

"She has an astounding pattern of dishonesty," COAST chairman Jim Urling said.

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