

# 31<sup>st</sup> & Pearl

## Say Anything

The message from the Lance Nail administration about the new “national ranking” for the CoB [shows](#) the lengths that 21<sup>st</sup> Century university administrators will go to convince the public that something positive is being done with their tax dollars. The idea that *U.S. News & World Report* has the CoB ranked at 215<sup>th</sup> among 368 U.S. b-schools is more humorous than noteworthy. The reality is – and one had to read the marginal comments provided by *THA*’s Ed Kemp to catch this – that *USN&WR* has the CoB in a **45-way tie for 215<sup>th</sup> (out of only 368 b-schools surveyed)**. This is certainly a far cry from the way Nail and CoB management chair David Duhon represented the situation, via their comments, to the Hattiesburg community.

A quick analysis reveals even more about the sketchy way in which the CoB made use of a local media outlet. That analysis shows that, at 215<sup>th</sup>, the CoB occupies only the 42<sup>nd</sup> percentile of those b-schools analyzed by the national periodical. If placed in the middle of those tied for 215<sup>th</sup>, instead of the top, then USM’s b-school would sit at only the 36<sup>th</sup> percentile of the larger bunch. If placed at the back end of the pack, then USM occupies the 29<sup>th</sup> percentile. All of this means that a reality check puts the CoB somewhere in the 29<sup>th</sup>-42<sup>nd</sup> percentile span.

While CoB dean from 2003-07, Harold Doty, now the dean at the University of Texas at Tyler, promised to put the CoB among the top 100 business colleges. Of course, Doty never delivered on that one. Still, though, one gets the idea that even Doty would not have attempted to spin this latest *USN&WR* analysis into local gold, as the Nail administration is attempting now. Even in a postscript, Nail attempts to place much of the credit for this so-called national acclaim on the doorstep of the CoB Honors House. Really . . . it’s as if he wants us to believe that top-shelf treatment of only 25-30 of its 2,500-3,000 students can vault a business college into the national limelight.

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*31st & Pearl is a series housed at [usmnews.net](http://usmnews.net) that features commentary on aspects of life in the CoB from a variety of columnists.*