

Former USM President Shelby Thames Retires

HATTIESBURG – A brief 5-July-2012 [report from](#) *The Hattiesburg American* states that former USM president Shelby Thames has retired from the university. According to most accounts, Thames’ presidency (2002-07) [was disastrous for](#) the 100 year old institution, which is now dealing with the recent retirement of Thames’ successor, Martha Saunders. In recent months, controversy over “sweetheart contract deals” at USM has revived debate about Thames’ presidency. When contacted by *THA* about these alleged deals, Thames denied any untoward actions, using profanity with a *THA* reporter in the process.



The brief *THA* report linked above promises a more complete accounting of Thames’ decision to retire for the newspaper’s 6-July-2012 edition. Of course, USMNEWS.net will follow this and any other developments in the story.



In the meantime, sources tell USMNEWS.net that the retirement could easily be linked to events at USM in recent months. These events include the retirements of Saunders and USM AD Richard Giannini, the selection of Jeff Hammond as Giannini’s permanent replacement, and the investigative reporting on the sweetheart contract deals.