

Peyrefitte Named Interim CoB Dean

HATTIESBURG – The interim administration of Aubrey Lucas [announced on](#) 18-July-2012 that the CoB's senior associate dean Joseph Peyrefitte will assume the post of interim CoB dean at the beginning of the upcoming 2012-13 academic year. Peyrefitte, pictured below, will fill the hole left by the departure of Lance Nail, who is assuming the dean's post at Texas Tech University.



Joseph Peyrefitte

Joining Peyrefitte in the upward move are Gwen Pate and Michael Wittmann. Pate will step up to interim senior associate dean from her current position as associate dean of undergraduate programs and assessment, while Wittmann will take on the role of interim associate dean for external relations.



Pate

Wittmann

Sources advised USMNEWS.net of a few issues with these moves by the Lucas administration. First, Wittmann currently holds the Draughn Professorship of Healthcare Marketing, set up by USM alumnus Max Draughn's \$1 million contribution. Having the professor Draughn's money is supporting move into administration will not likely sit well with the Draughn family.

PATE, GWENDOLYN ANN, Associate Dean of the College of Business and Associate Professor of Accounting. B.M., M.P.A., The University of Southern Mississippi; Ph.D., University of Tennessee. C.P.A.

PEYREFITTE, JOSEPH, Senior Associate Dean of the College of Business and Associate Professor of Management. B.S., University of Florida; M.B.A., Ph.D., Florida Atlantic University. C.P.A.

WITTMAN, MIKE, Associate Professor of Marketing. B.S.B.A., The University of Southern Mississippi; M.B.A., University of Alabama; Ph.D., Texas Tech University.

Second, as noted by the entries above, which are taken from the *2012-13 USM Undergraduate Bulletin*, none of these three new interim CoB administrators holds a rank above *associate* professor. This means that there is not a single full professor-qualified faculty member atop the CoB. Pate's case appears to be that of a career associate, while older reports indicate that Peyrefitte had an unsuccessful tenure-track run at Mississippi State University. This last point is interesting, given USM provost Denis Wiesenburg's comments about having "someone with strong academic qualifications" leading the CoB post-Nail, as well as Peyrefitte's own comments about making the CoB "the leading business school in Mississippi."

The search for a permanent successor to Nail is expected to take most, if not all, of the 2012-13 academic year. Stay tuned to USMNEWS.net for more on this situation.