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## **Remaining CoB Academic Programs to be Spared?**

HATTIESBURG – According to a recent interview of USM provost Robert Lyman by *WDAM-TV*, USM's Academic Planning Group has recommended that, if USM's total budget cut rises from the recently-announced \$7.5-\$8.0 million total to the \$11 or \$12 million total that is expected by year's end, none of the additional cuts come from the academic side of the institution. The additional \$3-\$4 million would instead come from areas such as the music department, where there are USM personnel who work with the USM marching band that could be moved off of state E&G lines. Lyman also told *WDAM-TV* that he is recommending that the USM marching band and the Dixie Darlings dance/spirit team curtail some of their activities, such as attending football games away from Hattiesburg's M.M. Roberts Stadium.



USM provost Robert Lyman speaks to *WDAM-TV* news reporters about USM's \$12 million budget cut.

Of course, if Lyman's words ring prophetic then none of the CoB's other academic programs, those other than economics, would have to be eliminated. Thus, this word from Lyman may ease concerns in fashion merchandising and tourism management, two areas of the CoB that USMNEWS.net sources have speculated are on the chopping block. This move could also save any other CoB program that may have been considered in jeopardy by Lyman and the APG. Sources tell USMNEWS.net, however, that grounding the USM marching band and the Dixie Darlings will diminish USM's chances of being victorious in road (football) games against East Carolina, Houston, Kansas, and Louisville. The first two of these are critical to USM's chances of reaching the Liberty Bowl, which carries a payout of about \$2 million, while all four will impact USM's aspirations to something of the BCS bowl variety, which carries about a \$20 million payout.

Meanwhile, USM-Gulf Coast's academic dean, Tom Lansford, recently told *WLOX-TV* that other recommendations include closing USM's Jackson County teaching site. According to Lansford, escaping the facilities lease in Jackson County would save the institution more than \$200,000 each year. Lansford also told *WLOX-TV* reporters that USM officials are still expecting shortfalls in MS sales tax and other revenues, necessitating the additional cuts that will likely take the USM budget cuts total to \$11 or \$12 million.



USM-GC academic dean Tom Lansford speaks to WLOX-TV news reporters about USM's \$12 million budget cut.

Sources who spoke with USMNEWS.net indicated that cutting Jackson County will be a difficult sell on the still-Hurricane Katrina-ravaged Gulf Coast of Mississippi, and since doing so would save only the relatively modest sum of \$200,000 that it is not likely to occur any time this year (and possibly at all). They also point out that doing something as seemingly simple as curtailing the marching band's travel could be problematic, for the reasons listed above (and others). Difficulties like these only further cement the first-round cuts to economics, making an 11<sup>th</sup> hour (30-June-2010) reprieve for the economics faculty less and less likely.