

USM Could Lose 100 Faculty

HATTIESBURG – USM provost Robert Lyman told USM constituents that USM could lose 100 faculty in the coming months as the institution struggles to deal with what some believe will be a total budget cut of \$30-\$35 million from 2009 levels. This information comes via Ed Kemp's 3-March-10 *The Hattiesburg American* [report](#) entitled "Unparalleled fiscal challenges." According to Kemp, about 250 members of the USM family attended the recent town hall meeting on the USM budget wherein Lyman painted a bleak fiscal picture.



Martha Saunders, president of the University of Southern Mississippi, answers a question during a Southern Miss town hall meeting in which the University Priorities Committee fielded questions on potential budget reductions Tuesday afternoon at the Thad Cochran Center in Hattiesburg. The university is bracing for up to \$30 million-\$35 million in cuts for fiscal year 2012. (Matt Bush | Hattiesburg American)

Interestingly, Lyman was asked about shared sacrifice, and the possibility of USM administrators giving up some of their salaries while the institution is in crisis. Lyman responded calling the idea "short-sighted," indicating instead that USM is trying to do too much with its limited resources. Lyman then added, "We need to – and I don't mean this in a callous way – cut people, not . . . salaries."

There is little doubt that Lyman's comments further fueled discontent among USM faculty and students who see their administrators spending millions of dollars on luxuries like the university plane, which was leased by USM president Martha Saunders, shown in Matt Bush's photo above, in the midst of the current crisis.