

Breaking News

EFIB Hires Ranck as Associate Director of the BBER

Gautier – In a move that sources say will come as another surprise to EFIB (and CoB) faculty, EFIB Chairman George Carter has hired Dr. Edward Ranck as the Associate Director of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research. In a 20-July-2007 USM Press Release (see below), USM constituents learn that Ranck has been hired as the Associate Director of the BBER, which is now located at USM's Jackson County teaching site in Gautier. Ranck received a doctorate from the University of Kentucky in 1976, giving him a connection to the BBER's Director, professor William Gunther.

According to EFIB Chair Carter, the BBER is "very fortunate to have Dr. Ranck because he [Ranck] is a highly qualified and experienced individual." Carter goes on to say that Ranck's knowledge of "how the Mississippi and Gulf Coast economies work will be very beneficial" to USM. According to USM's Public Relations department, the BBER assists regional businesses and government entities by providing services and important information about the economy.

Ranck Named Associate Director of Southern Miss Bureau of Business and Economic Research

Gautier -- Dr. Edward Ranck has been named associate director for The University of Southern Mississippi's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, located at the university's Jackson County teaching site in Gautier.

After receiving his doctorate from the University of Kentucky in 1976, Dr. Ranck worked for Mississippi as a state economist in various high-level positions. With the establishment of the bureau on the Gulf Coast, Dr. Ranck said that "getting started is challenging, but it feels great creating things that didn't exist before."

"The bureau is very fortunate to have Dr. Ranck because he is a highly qualified and experienced individual," said Dr. George Carter, chairman of the Department of Economics, Finance and International Business. "His knowledge of how the Mississippi and Gulf Coast economies work will be very beneficial to the university."

The Bureau of Business and Economic Research, based in the Southern Miss College of Business on the university's Hattiesburg campus, assists regional businesses and government entities by providing services and important information about the economy.

For more information about the Gulf Coast division of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research, e-mail Dr. Ranck at edward.ranck@usm.edu.

Sources tell USMNEWS.NET that there are sure to be a number of concerns about this new development. First, many CoB faculty are (were) unaware of the existence of an Associate Director position within the BBER. Second, this search was not conducted in the open, as EFIB (and other CoB) sources we contacted did not indicate having any knowledge of the search process until hearing of the news released by USM officials just today. This appears to have been another hire made in secret by Carter, perhaps with the assistance of a small *ad hoc* search committee. Again, this would seem to have serious implications for Becky Woodrick's EEOC office at USM.

Ranck's Kentucky-PhD connection to Gunther is also interesting. While he was serving as Dean of USM's CBA, Gunther hired Phillip Jeffress, another Kentucky-contemporary, to serve in a similar capacity. Also, many reports now available at USMNEWS.NET have demonstrated that Gunther does little-to-nothing (as BBER Director) when it comes to assisting local businesses/governments and providing services, as the USM press release states.

Sources tell USMNEWS.NET that Ranck, the former Executive Director of the Department of Finance and Administration for the State of Mississippi, has a number of years in the Mississippi State Retirement System (PERS). As such, the evidence seems to be leaning toward the conclusion that the CoB's sinecure program for "PERS slaves" is alive and well. Although it is not now known what Ranck's salary will be, sources are predicting that \$50,000 per year is a solid ballpark guesstimate.

Finally, it is worth noting that the USM Press Release is confused about the location of USM's BBER. Early, the release informs Mississippi news agencies that the BBER is located in Gautier. Near the end, the same release states that the BBER is based in Hattiesburg. Mississippi taxpayers will likely want to know, at some point at least, how many BBER locations and officials – who apparently do little if anything – their hard-earned tax dollars are supporting.