

BREAKING NEWS

USM to Offer On-Site Instruction at Pearl River CC

POPLARVILLE – On 6-August-08, USM announced a new partnership with Pearl River Community College in Poplarville. In her [6-August-08 press release](#) entitled "Southern Miss Teams with PRCC to Offer Courses in Poplarville," USM PR official Jana Bryant reports that USM will begin bringing its courses to the PRCC campus this fall (2008). The initial course offerings include only business ethics, organizational communications and cultural systems, though USM Associate Provost Cynthia Easterling Moore told May that USM expects to expand the course menu by spring of 2009.

Moore also informed Bryant that "[t]he classes will be taught by Southern Miss professors onsite," and she added that the "target audiences" for these courses are "current PRCC and Southern Miss students in Poplarville and surrounding areas who wish to take university courses closer to home." Bryant's presser also indicates that "the two institutions have signed a Student Financial Aid Consortium Agreement that will make the process of qualifying for student aid seamless between the two institutions."

According to sources, this latest program is not likely to be good news (in the end) for some CoB professors. Though the current course listing does not include a CoB course, it does already include one or two courses that are central to the business curricula. Given the popularity of undergraduate and graduate business degree programs, the spring 2009 expansion will likely include a CoB course or two. For some CoB professors, this will mean a 45 minute drive, further expanding the array of possible drives and potentially detrimental teaching loads. Sources also add that it is not usual that a so-called research university builds a national or even regional reputation by expanding its partnerships with community and junior colleges. To sources, at least, this new partnership between USM and PRCC is simply another sign that the USM's downward slide continues. And in this case, the decision centers solely around an attempt to allow Poplarville residents to have a slice of USM in their own backyard.