

CoB Dean on Mississippi's Budget Crisis

A Look Back at the "State of the CoB" Address

In his 18-Sept-09 "State of the CoB" address, CoB dean Lance Nail expounded upon Mississippi's budget crisis of 2008-present. Nail told CoB faculty assembled in JAG that Mississippi's new IHL Commissioner Hank Bounds expects to oversee a 10% cut in college/university funds in each of the next two fiscal years – 2011 and 2012. That would bring the total state funding cuts to USM and its brethren to somewhere between 25% and 30% over just three years. Currently, USM academic deans are working on providing the Martha Saunders administration of USM with a mid-year cut of 3.5%, which for the CoB will come to around \$350,000. Also, each of USM's colleges is expected to contribute a staff line to the cause. Sources are telling USMNEWS.net to expect hiring freezes throughout the university, and a suspension of university travel, etc.

Times are bleak in USM's CoB, and they promise to get darker as these projected budget cuts become a reality. By the time June of 2011 rolls around, the CoB will have been slashing its budget for three years, dating back to early fall of 2008. Some are saying that pressure will soon be mounting in favor of employee furloughs, just so the faculty terminations currently being faced in education technology, and that were almost forced upon the CoB's 9 tenured/tenure-track economics faculty, will not occur once again. Sources tell USMNEWS.net, however, that the Saunders administration is resistant to the furlough option for cost-cutting.

About the only bit of good news at USM these days comes via two sports programs. Larry Fedora's Golden Eagles football team is currently sitting at 3-0 on the season, thanks largely to a comeback win against the University of Virginia last Saturday in USM's M.M. Roberts Stadium. Not only is the 2009 version of the football team undefeated, the Eagles have now won 8 straight football games dating back to the 2008 season, which ended in a New Orleans Bowl victory over Troy University. According to officials, the team has not had such a winning streak in decades. Over on the hardwood, the USM volleyball team currently stands at 13-2 on the 2009 season. At this rate last year's 17-13 performance, the best in quite some time, should easily fall to second best over the past few years.

Most experts expect the football team to falter this Saturday at Kansas, and with the CUSA schedule heating up in volleyball, things should level off there some. Still, wins are flowing like beer in "the District" on Saturdays right now.