

*Dear usmnews.net*

Dear Dr. DePree,

If you want to see something scary, take a look at enrollment in remedial English and math classes. Southern Miss is admitting far too many students who have no business in college, then trying – and failing -- to teach them to read, write and do basic math. It's not terribly surprising when they are not "retained" and do not "graduate". It's been all about numbers of students and tuition dollars. Now, it's about the IHL funding formula.

You can't imagine the pressure we are going to be under to hand out grades to keep students.

Name withheld

Dear Name Withheld,

The 2013 edition of *Best Colleges* from *U.S. News & World Report* reported a 22% 4-year graduation rate for USM. In the 2012 edition, USM's 4-year graduation rate was also 22%. After six years, USM can manage to graduate only 47% of its students. As noted in [yesterday's report](#), graduation rate is the ultimate statistic and USM is failing.

Take care. Some faculty are going to find themselves in a "Catch 22" situation. If one of your supervisors wants to find fault, too many passing grades will be used to prove lack of rigor. If you don't hand out enough grades to "retain" students, you are not a team player, contributing to the overall mission.

Students who are receiving degrees in the name of retention, may find themselves in for a rude awakening. Employers – whose primary goal is not retention -- will expect performance.