

Does Southern Miss Need Another Vice President?



Dr. Rodney D. Bennett
President, University of Southern Mississippi

University of Southern Mississippi, according to President Bennett, must hire a “Vice President of Diversity” to meet “the urgency of this moment.” The “successful candidate” will help oversee course content, student life, and selection of the right kind of faculty. He doesn’t say what the vice president for diversity’s salary will be, but “[t]he average Vice President of Diversity and Inclusiveness’ [salary](#) in the United States is \$179,547 as of June 28, 2020, but the range typically falls between \$153,595 and \$233,683.” This is yet another burden for students and their families who face increasing tuition, fees and costs. Since 2000, the average tuition among Mississippi’s state supported schools has more than doubled. Using the average Vice President of Diversity and inclusiveness salary (\$179,547) and the published annual instate tuition at Southern Miss (\$8,624), the University could pay full tuition for approximately 21 students. We can’t help but wonder, what is more important, yet another administrator or affordable education for our students?

If you consider a report of USM diversity from “[College Factual](#),” you may have the same question. Does USM have any need to correct their ongoing diversity progress?

To understand the corrupt nature of what may at first blush sound like something positive, i.e., “Vice President of Diversity,” please read John W. Ellis “The Breakdown of Higher Education.” Once you read this book, you may wonder why Dr. Bennett isn’t more concerned about diversity of thought.