

Imagine USM with \$80 Million Less Funding

We'll return to a study of President Bennett's CV in the near future. Breaking news takes precedence. Fear not, curriculum vita play a role in today's usmnews.net's report, too.

In this report, we follow up on an April 6, 2013 story from Ed Kemp at the *Hattiesburg American*, "[USM faces \\$80M funding cut from state](#)." usmnews.net will provide some factual context and sources that were omitted by Mr. Kemp and HA.

From Kemp's/HA's report: "A new state College Board funding formula, still being revised by board's trustees, could cut Southern Miss's state appropriation – approximately \$80 million annually – by over 11 percent over time..."

IHL supports its prospective appropriations on the basis of performance measures in which USM falls below average. In academic terms USM has received a grade of D or F. According to the IHL, one measure of performance contributing to the below average evaluation was "sinking" enrollment growth during Martha Saunders' administration.

That's not the impression given in Martha Saunders' [CV](#) used to procure a job as provost at the University of West Florida. Among Saunders' boasts on her CV is that at USM she was responsible for "[Record enrollment](#) (past 4 years)."

So, what's going on here? The IHL's data shows "sinking" enrollment growth during the Saunders' administration. That "sinking" enrollment growth is responsible, in part, for poor performance that may result in reduced -- significantly reduced --state appropriations allocated to USM.

Is Saunders' lying? Saunders claim is true only if she takes a very restricted perspective of facts — distorts them to be frank. She must have you look at her performance in a vacuum. Ridiculous *per se*. What she is doing is public relations blather, commonly referred to as managing information.

In a factually accurate context with regard to enrollment -- the data the IHL is using -- Saunders' record is below average, a grade of D or F. In the context of the other IHL university institutions, USM/Saunders' performance was below average.

Enrollment Growth from 2001 - 2011

<u>IHL Institution</u>	<u>% Change # Students</u>	<u>Total # Students</u>
USM	11.2% (increase of 1,679)	16,604
UM	45.8% (increase of 6,546)	20,830
MVSU	-13.1% (decrease of 370)	2,452

MUW	14.6% (increase of 338)	2,661
MSU	21.3% (increase of 3,583)	20,424
JSU	25.4% (increase of 1,805)	8,903
DSU	21.7% (increase of 823)	4,624

See, IHL's "[Enrollment Fact Book](#)."

Ouch!

Lesson: Carefully assess administrators' representations: you can't understand a number in a vacuum. You must review them in context and carefully review representations for accuracy.

Stay tuned for more on the IHL's facts, Saunders' representations and USM's \$80 million predicament.