

## **Here comes yet another whopper tuition increase for Ol' Miss, MSU, and Southern Miss**

**Look on the bright side:** "We continue to find the balance between fairness to our students and their families and the resources the university needs to provide a quality educational experience," said Ole Miss Chancellor Dan Jones.

**But where does the money come from?** You, dear students and parents. However, it might be nice if more details about costs were forthcoming instead of blather about "fairness," "resources the university needs," and "quality educational experience."

**Look on the bright side:** "Higher Education Commissioner Hank Bounds implemented the two-year schedule to reduce uncertainty. 'The real value of this is planning, whether it's for campuses or students or prospective students,' he said."

**But where does the money come from?** You, dear students and parents. And I'm sure you are grateful to Hank for giving you advance notice. Of course, he has to in order to collect from you.

**Look on the bright side:** "The College Board got a modest increase in legislative appropriations as part of a new funding formula aimed at rewarding universities where students complete more classes. The board is seeking an additional \$20 million for the 2015 budget, which the Legislature will write early next year."

**But where does the money come from?** You, dear taxpayers, who may also be students and, most certainly, parents of students. However, why mention rewarding "universities where students complete more classes"? What good are completed courses without graduating? Ah, by the way, how y'all doing with graduation rates? The reports are downright depressing. For Southern, it is less than 50% after 6 years of trying. And trying at higher costs.

**Look on the bright side:** "Most students don't pay the sticker price, thanks to federal, state and college-based aid."

**But where does the money come from?** Taxpayers pay! Furthermore, "As costs outstrip family incomes, more students are borrowing to pay for school. More than half of

students at the state's eight public universities had federally financed student debt in 2011, with the average student borrowing more than \$6,000." Please note that the "average students borrowing" was for just one year, 2011. Multiply that by 4 to 6 years and the student is strapped with \$24,000 to \$36,000 of debt. What a way to start life! And you can bet that s/he will be charged a handsome interest rate, too. Not what parents are earning at the local bank, very close to zero percent. When all's said and done, students may graduate. But don't bet on it. Six year graduation rate for Southern Miss, for example, is less than an even bet. The 2013 edition of *Best Colleges* from *U.S. News & World Report* reported a 22% 4-year graduation rate for Southern Miss. In the 2012 edition, Southern Miss' 4-year graduation rate was also 22%. After six years, Southern Miss manages to graduate only 47% of its students.

Gee wiz, thanks, Hank Bounds, IHL members, President Bennett, *et al.* You're doing a swell job explaining why costs of going to college are skyrocketing.

(The statements in quotes are taken from "[Big Mississippi universities propose tuition increases](#)," Hattiesburgamerican.com, Oct 16, 2013, by Jeff Amy.)