

# Holding Class Outside?

## A LOOK AT TEACHING QUALITY ACROSS THE MAGNOLIA STATE

Once again USMNEWS.net contributors are on the trail of teaching quality at USM and other senior higher ed institutions in Mississippi. Table 1 below shows the Top 10 institutions, rated by instruction quality (using *RateMyProfessors*).

**Table 1 – Teaching Quality at MS Senior Institutions**

Rank	Institution	RMP Score
1	Millsaps College	3.82
2	Mississippi College	3.67
3	Alcorn State University	3.60
4	William Carey University	3.49
5	Mississippi University for Women	3.42
6	University of Southern Mississippi	3.35
7	University of Mississippi	3.27
8	Delta State University	3.20
9	Mississippi State University	3.12
10	Belhaven College	2.87

As Table 1 shows, the top school in MS in terms of instruction is Millsaps College, a private institution in Jackson. MC's RMP score is 3.82 (out of 5). In second is Mississippi College, a private institution in Clinton, with a score of 3.67. The top-rated public institution is Alcorn State University in Lorman, which comes in 3<sup>rd</sup> with a score of 3.60. ASU is followed by William Carey University, a private institution in Hattiesburg, and Mississippi University for Women, a public institution in Columbus.

USM falls just outside of the top five, with a score of 3.35. Though it falls behind cross-town rival WCU, USM does surpass Ole Miss (7<sup>th</sup>) and Mississippi State (9<sup>th</sup>), which produce scores of 3.27 and 3.12, respectively. Still, the fact that USM lags behind WCU by this metric is troubling for those in the "USM family" who see WCU making [vast strides](#) in recent years, while USM flounders in mediocrity.<sup>1</sup> WCU is developing a new [School of Osteopathic Medicine](#), which will produce primary care physicians. It is also [making](#) significant [capital improvements](#), and hiring away faculty from USM, including former CoB faculty [Michael Madaris](#) (FIN).<sup>2</sup>

With public institutions facing massive budget cuts in 2010 and beyond, USM, Delta State University and MUW may be the most negatively impacted on the instruction front. Look, then, for WCU and Belhaven College to perhaps make some moves on this front in the coming years, with BC possibly passing DSU and USM after some time. Even UM and MSU, with their more substantial [private support](#) and legislature connections, may supplant USM in the near future. With a potential loss of 100 faculty in the summer of 2010, remaining USM faculty and staff may simply be "hanging on" throughout the remainder of the Martha Saunders administration (2007-present) of the institution. At some point, the IHL may look to Frances Lucas, the new USM-GC leader and *former president of Millsaps*, to take the reins and point USM toward the top. One USMNEWS.net editorial has already [predicted](#) as much.

<sup>1</sup> Many stories in the USMNEWS.net Archives discuss metrics that show USM failing. For example, USM fell from Tier III to Tier IV in the 2010 edition of *U.S. News & World Report's* college rankings. The CoB battled with AACSB probation (6<sup>th</sup> Year Review) throughout 2007, its last recertification period for that international accrediting body.

<sup>2</sup> USMNEWS.net also [houses](#) reports (see Archives) on WCU's advancements in recent years.