

Participating in the Athletics Facility “Arms Race”

From “Optimism to Shortfalls”

President Saunders or other USM officials from time to time announce the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars of capital construction for athletic facilities like the expansion of M.M. Roberts Stadium and Pete Taylor Park.

Example: <http://www.usm.edu/controllersoffice/newdocs/FinancialStatement07.pdf>. (If you don't want to wade through the entire report, [click here](#).)

They obligate USM students and Mississippi taxpayers to pay with borrowed money, bonds. They are in effect participating in the athletics construction “arms race” and hope, let me repeat, hope, that there will be a return on investment. The sad truth is that these very expensive debts are very risky and, for schools like USM, are big losers.

Listen to an audio report in the [*Chronicle of Higher Education*](#) by an expert on this issue who explains the ill-conceived nature of participating in the athletic facility “arms race.”

Listen to the audio at the bottom rightmost column introduced as follows: “**When Athletics Are Too Expensive:** Not every athletics program can be a juggernaut. John R. Thelin, professor of higher education at the University of Kentucky, explains how smaller athletics programs often incur significant debt trying to recruit and build like the hegemony of college athletics.”