Editorial

Gwen Pate Is At It Again

Always be cautious about what University of Southern Mississippi administrators say about the University of Southern Mississippi -- particularly inflated claims about quality. Usmnews.net has reported many instances of misrepresentations. The recent bloviation by Gwen Pate, Director of School of Accountancy is instructive. She touted a report by "Accounting Degree Review," an unknown organization without credentials or affiliation.

Pate says, "To be number 10 out of these quality programs [rated by "Accounting Degree Review'] in affordability signals the value our students receive for their tuition dollars. This ranking further confirms what the School of Accountancy at Southern Miss has long known -- our graduates gain entry into a respected profession at a bargain price."

Pate slips the word "quality" into the discussion when in fact USM's School of Accountancy is clearly not "ranked" among the best -- even by "Accounting Degree Review" -- as a quality accounting program. To the contrary, Accounting Degree Review includes a list of the thirty best Accounting programs which "combines the three most influential accounting school rankings from US News & World Report, Blomberg (sic) BusinessWeek and Public Accounting Report". Significantly, USM appears nowhere on the list.

What Pate is left with is recognition of an accounting degree program as a comparatively inexpensive education of unknown quality. Also, be clear, Pate makes no mention of the number of graduates who actually become CPAs. The truth is, only a very, very small number of accounting graduates ever earn a CPA certificate. You can pay less for a USM accounting degree and not get a quality job. You can bet that the best accounting programs provide a quality education to its students and don't need an obscure rating agency like "Accounting Degree Review" saying so.

Readers of usmnews.net are familiar with Gwen Pate's inclination to be less -- sometimes a lot less -- than truthful.