

## ***Same Old Song***

In an April 2014 *Hattiesburg American* article entitled "[Bennett's first year at USM a busy one](#)," Ed Kemp reported,

Rodney Bennett says he's had to bring the surgeon's clamp to his first year as president of the University of Southern Mississippi.

"I think this was a year when we just had to stop the bleeding," he said. "We haven't done the surgery yet." Apparently, Bennett decided to postpone the "surgery" until faced with yet another drop in student population.

Now, barely six months later, USM is announcing the [need for a 4.5% reduction in spending](#). Curiously, in [Mary Lett's](#) October 26, 2014, *Hattiesburg American* presser, Bennett's name does not appear. Provost Denis Weisenberg and Vice President for Finance Douglas Vinzant are left to tell us that the various departments have to come up with a way to cut spending. What are they talking about? If they leave us to guess, the Bennett administration may be following in Martha Saunders' footsteps handing pink slips to scores of faculty. But the truth is, given the vague, meaningless words, we can only guess.

Whose blood will be spilled? Who's getting cut? We all know it isn't the "monumental" and "magnificent" [construction](#) that is springing up across campus, built with borrowed money. The last we heard, Bennett is still enjoying the benefits of a private plane funded with taxpayer and student money. Bennett retains and continues to expand the [administrative bloat](#). Southern Miss has seen explosive growth in the number of [administrators](#). As of 2009, the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#), reported that USM had one of the "biggest increases" in the nation in "growth in managers and support personnel relative to enrollment.": 84%.