

# Saunders Administration Centralizes Fundraising

## *University Processes Becoming Less and Less Transparent*

With USM associate director for development Mike Bonnette's 16-March-2011 e-mail to the USM community – an e-mail that is inserted below – members of the USM community were informed that, back in May-2010, the Martha Saunders administration centralized all fundraising efforts on behalf of the institution. Under the new "Top Fundraising Initiatives" paradigm, the institution's academic colleges each lost its development officer(s) in favor of a centralized "initiative-based fundraising approach." As the e-mail below indicates, the new program involves a TFI list that is prioritized centrally, and those "targeted fundraising campaigns" on the list are supported by the full force of the Saunders administration – from the president all the way down to the lowest-ranking USM Foundation employees. For academic colleges and/or programs to reach to the TFI list, their representatives must complete a "TFI application" and submit it to Bonnette's office. The deadline for these applications is 30-March each year, and Saunders' cabinet will evaluate the applications each May.

From: all-facstaff-bounces@usm.edu [mailto:all-facstaff-bounces@usm.edu] On Behalf Of USM Mailout  
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2011 8:47 AM  
To: all-facstaff@usm.edu  
Subject: [All-facstaff] APPLICATION FOR TOP FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Application for Top Fundraising Initiative  
The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation

In May 2010, The University of Southern Mississippi's Executive Cabinet adopted a new fundraising model for the institution. With that decision, the University's traditional college-based development officers were centralized in favor of an initiative-based fundraising approach.

Under this new paradigm, the University's leadership would identify specific, targeted fundraising campaigns, or initiatives, for which the entire development staff would pursue private funding.

The Top Fundraising Initiatives (TFI) list is constantly evolving as individual campaigns mature through the typical fundraising life cycle of planning, a silent and public phase and a final phase wrap up and evaluation. To ensure that there are important and needed funding requests continuously in the queue for consideration by the Executive Cabinet, an application process was created for TFI status.

The first step to be considered for this status is to complete the TFI application, which can be downloaded by visiting [www.usmfoundation.com/initiatives](http://www.usmfoundation.com/initiatives). The application must be submitted to the USM Foundation, which coordinates the application process on behalf of the Executive Cabinet. The deadline for submission of the application each year is March 30, and the Executive Cabinet will consider the applications in May on an annual basis. Applicants are informed of the group's decision in June with the new initiatives becoming effective in the new fiscal year effective July 1.

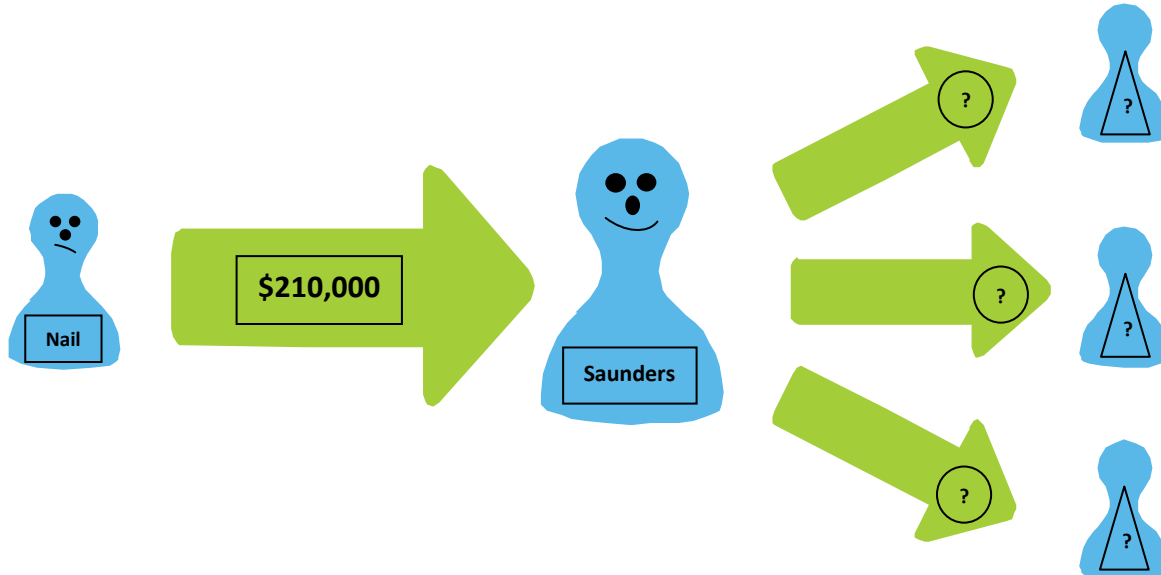
Questions regarding the process, as well as application submissions, can be made to the Foundation's Associate Director for Development using the following information:

Mike Bonnette  
Associate Director for Development  
The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation  
118 College Drive, #5210  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39406  
Phone: 601.266.5210  
E-Mail: [mike.bonnette@usm.edu](mailto:mike.bonnette@usm.edu)

University departments, programs and organizations are not to engage in major gift fundraising for specific campaigns or projects without first receiving the approval of the Executive Cabinet and the TFI designation. Once selected, the top funding priorities receive the full attention and support of the University's leadership, as well as that of the USM Foundation staff.

This policy adds even more opaqueness to that created by the recent Saunders administration decision to centralize all vacant faculty/staff lines at the university. That particular program [was discussed by USM faculty senators](#) at the 4-March-2011 faculty senate meeting. Since then, the USM b-school has learned that accounting professor Stanley Clark is departing USM for an accounting faculty position at Middle Tennessee State University. Word of Clark's departure

comes on the heels of that of assistant professor of finance Matthew Hood, who is leaving USM's CoB for a faculty position at Texas State University. Clark is currently paid a salary of \$112,125 (nine months), while Hood currently banks \$101,003 every nine months. Thus, these two combine to earn an incredible **\$213,128 in salary alone** over each 9-month academic cycle.



The diagram above shows just what USMNEWS.net sources say could happen to CoB dean Lance Nail and other USM deans under the new centralized vacancies policy. The (roughly) \$210,000 in salaries attached to Clark and Hood will soon move into the dome. There, this \$210,000 will perhaps join money from vacant lines originating from other USM colleges, yet the existence of these monetary flows will not be widely known absent coverage by *The Hattiesburg American*, USMNEWS.net, or others. Saunders may then chop the money up into separate amounts, directing them to separate colleges (other than the CoB). These amounts may, or may not, be equal, while the colleges may, or may not, be named publicly. If the deans/associate deans don't discuss these matters openly, or if these flows are not covered by outside organizations, each dean will know only whether or not one was a recipient of money from elsewhere. Each dean will ever know, absent discussion with other deans or outside coverage, the source (college) of the money. Of course, the diagram above assumes there is little discussion amongst deans, simply because, as sources point out, there is little incentive for some of them to engage in such. Some will feign ignorance regarding "the getting," so as not to incur the wrath of "the (involuntary) giver(s)." In their casual conversations with one another, each will play the victim of centralization. The net winners will secretly revel in their fortuity, while the net losers will work feverishly to find avenues to subvert the new program. Saunders, sitting above it all, will like the newfound power that "open lines centralization" provides her. Fundraising centralization, with more power for Saunders and less transparency for USM constituents, represents a "rinse and repeat" of the story told here regarding centralization of vacant faculty/staff lines.