

Special Report

Happiness is . . .

A Look at the **RATEMYPROFESSORS.com** Surveys

Much [has been made](#) about USM's top 20 placement using a *U.S. News & World Report* statistic that purports to indicate how "popular" a university or college is among prospective students. That statistic is the percentage of accepted applicants who ultimately enroll. While the Martha Saunders administration seems to want to tout "popularity," sources indicate that institutional quality is paramount. Any measure of institution's quality would endeavor to survey current or former students, not *future* ones.

Though not heretofore covered in reports/editorials at USMNEWS.net, the popular ratings website, **RATEMYPROFESSORS.com**, manages a survey of current and former students of U.S. colleges and universities. That survey gathers information on how students rate their institutions, as well as how happy they are/were with the school they chose, and how they score their school's reputation. The current data for Mississippi's eight public universities are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Students Rate Mississippi's 4-Year Universities

Rank	School	Overall Rating	Student Happiness	School Reputation
1	University of Mississippi	4.5	4.5 [1]	4.2 [2]
2	Mississippi State University	4.3	4.3 [2]	4.2 [2]
3	Jackson State University	3.9	3.7 [6]	3.7 [5]
4	Alcorn State University	3.8	4.0 [3]	4.2 [2]
5	University of Southern Mississippi	3.6	3.8 [5]	3.2 [6]
6	Mississippi University for Women	3.5	4.0 [3]	4.5 [1]
7	Mississippi Valley State University	3.0	3.0 [7]	3.0 [7]
8	Delta State University	2.0	3.0 [7]	2.0 [8]

Mississippi's two flagship schools, Ole Miss and Mississippi State, are clearly dominant when it comes to *both* overall rating and student happiness. This result fits conventional wisdom. USM, on the other hand, is bringing up the latter half, at 5th place using either measure. In terms of overall rating, USM trails both Jackson State and Alcorn State. With student happiness, USM lags behind both Alcorn State and Mississippi University for Women. Interestingly, MUW students rate their school highest on the "School Reputation" front. Coming in behind MUW's 4.5 are Ole Miss, Mississippi State, and Alcorn State, all at a commendable 4.2. Jackson State's 3.7 comes in ahead of USM's 3.2, meaning that USM ranks 6th using this measure. USM also comes in 6th (of eight) using a composite of all three measures. Clearly, there is work to be done in Hattiesburg.