

Special Report

Seven Percent Additional Tuition Hikes at USM

Jeff Amy's 16-October-2013 [report for](#) *The Hattiesburg American* concerning the 7% tuition increase spread over two years facing in-state USM students beginning 2013-14 cut to the core of the issue "... increasing college costs are far outstripping stagnant family incomes. In-state tuition has gone up more than 50 percent since the fall of 2004, while household incomes have been flat in Mississippi. It now takes about 12 percent of the typical Mississippi family's income to pay for one year of college at a state university, not counting room, board or other costs."

Amy's reporting has members of the USM community fixated on what appears to be a never-ending stream of tuition increases coming out of the Mississippi IHL. The current hike, to which Amy refers, will take USM's annual in-state bill from \$6,336 to more than \$7,000 per year, further straining the pocket books and wallets of Mississippi families. USM's hike of 7% also falls, according to Amy's report, is slightly less than 10% over the next two years approved by the IHL for the University of Mississippi and Mississippi State in its October Board Book.

If 80% of USM's 15,000 students pay an additional \$700 each year in in-state tuition, USM's in-state tuition revenues will climb by a grand total of **\$10.5 million** across the two separate in-state tuition hikes.

Sources tell usmnews.net's reporters that of further concern to USM's student body is the claim that "if much more or much less money was appropriated, university presidents would probably revisit their proposals." Since no one expects "much more" money than requested to be appropriated by the Legislature, students should expect even more increases in tuition.

Only Jim Borsig, President of Mississippi University for Women, who intends to hold the line on tuition increases at his school, seems to get it: "[p]rice matters to our students."