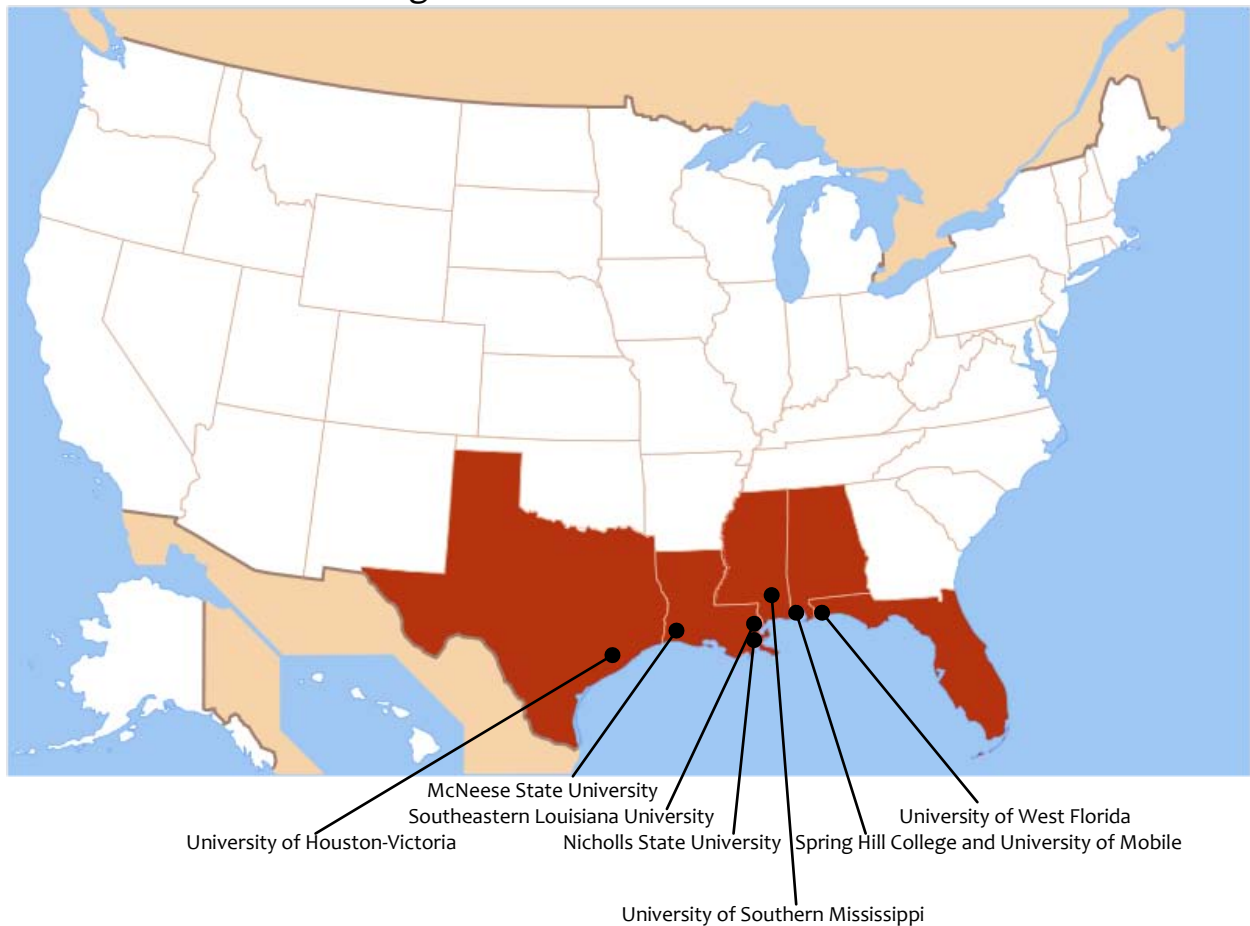


Through Saunders' Eyes

A Look at How the USM Prez Views the Gulf South

Much has been made of USM president Martha D. Saunders' proclamation that USM is the premier research university of the Gulf South. What sources refer to Saunders' erroneous claim perhaps emanates from how she sees "the Gulf South." Figure 1 below offers a take on how Saunders views the American Gulf South, at least in terms of the higher education landscape.

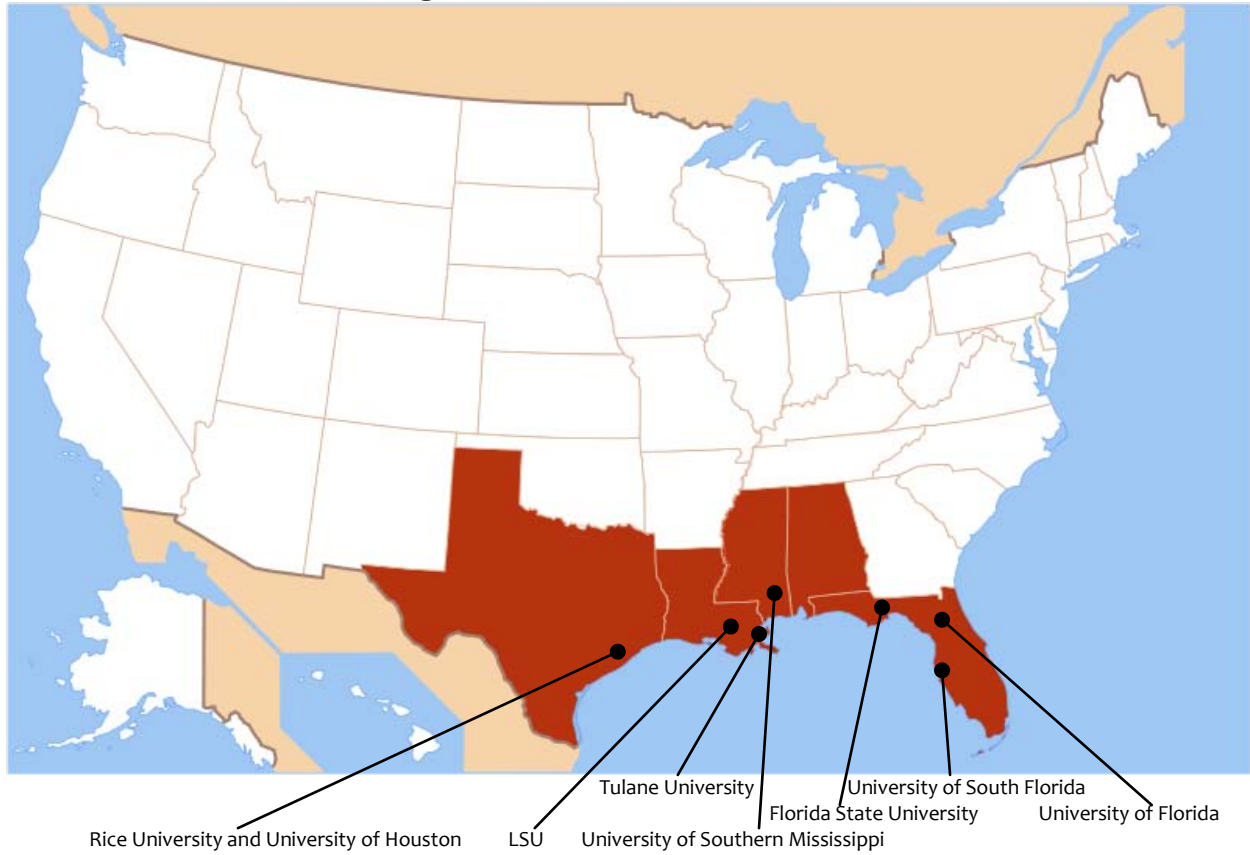
Figure 1 – Saunders' Gulf South



Based on the map above, any claim that USM is the premier research university of the Gulf South is at least an arguable one. Assuming Saunders is genuine in her statement/belief about USM, sources say that a map much like the one above must be what Saunders has in mind.

Sources also tell USMNEWS.net, however, that a map much like that depicted below in Figure 2 represents the “real” or “actual” Gulf South, at least in terms of research universities.

Figure 2 – The Real Gulf South



Both maps in Figures 1 and 2 depict only those universities that hug the Gulf coastline. In terms of Figure 2, schools like the University Texas, University of Alabama, and Ole Miss could be added to the mix. Still, the schools that *are* included in Figure 2 above are, for the most part, more than a cut above USM. The idea that USM is the premier research university from among this group is, according to sources, an impossible claim for someone with knowledge of U.S. higher education to make. Yet *Saunders* makes it anyway.