



CENTENNIAL

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

TIMELINE

- **March 30, 1910**

Mississippi Normal College is founded by a legislative act as the state's first state-supported teacher training school. The school's original buildings were built on 120 acres of cutover timber land donated by Messrs. H.A. Camp, A.A. Montague and Dr. T.E. Ross. Joseph Anderson "Joe" Cook was appointed first president of MNC and guided the school during its formative years.

- **1912**

Mississippi Normal College opens for classes on September 18th, and was home to a total of 227 students and 17 faculty members during its first term. This year also marked the establishment of the first football team.

- **1922**

MNC authorized to confer baccalaureate degrees. Kathryn Swetman of Biloxi was awarded the first degree from MNC that May.

- **1924**

MNC's name changes to State Teachers College through a legislative act on March 7, 1924.

- **1928**

The Board of Trustees selects Supervisor of Rural Schools, Claude Bennett, to succeed Joe Cook as the second president of STC.

- **1929**

State Teachers College approved for membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (SACS).

- **1932**

The Great Depression creates a devastating economic downturn in the U.S. and marks the beginning of a very difficult time for State Teachers College. The State of Mississippi is forced to refuse funds to all public institutions, and for six months, faculty and staff members at STC received no pay.

- **1933**

Mississippi Normal College alumnus, Dr. Jennings Burton George, becomes the school's third president.

- **1937**

State Teachers College celebrates its 25th anniversary. The three-day "Silver Jubilee" celebration featured speeches, receptions, reunions, and a large parade through downtown Hattiesburg.

- **1940**

STC name changes to Mississippi Southern College.

- **1942**

The U.S. War Department establishes an army administration school to train staff for WWII military camps, bringing 1,000 male students to campus.

- **July 1, 1945**

Dr. Robert Cecil Cook becomes the fourth president of MSC.

- **1952**

Mississippi Southern College joins the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

- **1953**

The Dixie Darlings precision dance team is formed by band director Dr. Raymond Mannoni.

- **Jan. 1955**

MSC faculty member and dean, Dr. Richard Aubrey McLemore is named acting president.

- **Aug. 1955**

Former State Archivist for Mississippi, Dr. William David McCain, assumes the presidency. His main goal as president was to see the college achieve university status.

- **Feb. 27, 1962**

Governor Ross Barnett signs the bill that made Mississippi Southern College become The University of Southern Mississippi.



A Treasured Past.

CONTACT:

Jennifer Payne
Phone: 601.266.4095
Fax: 601.266.4214
Jennifer.L.Payne@usm.edu
www.usm.edu/centennial

—Continued on back

TIMELINE *continued from front*

- **Sept. 1965**
As Civil Rights movements and integration were sweeping college campuses throughout the nation, the first African American students, Raylawni Young Branch and Gwendolyn Elaine Armstrong, are admitted at USM.
- **1972**
“Golden Eagles” replaces “Southerners” as mascot for athletic teams.
- **1972**
The USM Gulf Park Campus is established at Long Beach. The campus was originally built at the Gulf Park College for Women.
- **July 1, 1975**
Former USM Registrar and Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Aubrey K. Lucas becomes the sixth president of Southern Miss. His 21 years of service made his the longest presidential tenure in the USM’s history.
- **1988**
The University implements a campus-wide reorganization. Key changes include the creation of the College of Health and Human Sciences, the renaming of the College of Arts, a new School of Public and International Affairs, and the combining of the School of Engineering Technology with the College of Science and Technology.
- **April 1995**
After 13 years in the Metro Conference, Southern Miss becomes a charter member of Conference USA.
- **July 1995**
Miss Oseola McCarty donates \$150,000 to Southern Miss. She was awarded USM’s first honorary doctorate in 1998 and died one year later on September 26, 1999.
- **Jan. 3, 1997**
Dr. Horace Weldon Fleming, Jr. becomes Southern Miss’ seventh president. Under his administration, the University introduces the public phase of its first \$100 million comprehensive campaign.
- **1998**
The University is classified as a dual-campus system, offering four-year programs at Southern Miss Gulf Park and Keesler Air Force Base.
- **2000**
Southern Miss graduates its 100,000th student and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching classifies Southern Miss as a Doctoral/Research Extensive Institution, placing it among the top 150 institutions in the nation.
- **May 1, 2002**
Dr. Shelby F. Thames becomes the eighth president of USM. Under his administration, a new academic structure is created for Southern Miss in which the nine academic colleges were consolidated to five.
- **2002**
The University of Southern Mississippi’s Gulf Park campus welcomes its first entering freshmen class as a four-year institution.
- **August 2005**
Hurricane Katrina hits the Gulf Coast. All of the USM Gulf Coast sites sustained substantial damage forcing classes on the coast to be cancelled for almost six weeks. With more than 120 faculty and staff displaced after the storm and campuses destroyed, Southern Miss came together to rebuild and rebound for the betterment of the coastal communities.
- **April 2007**
The State Board of Trustees for Institutions for Higher Learning announces that the Cross Creek Development, just north of Long Beach on I-10, would be the site of a new Southern Miss campus.
- **May 21, 2007**
Dr. Martha Saunders becomes the first female and the ninth president of The University of Southern Mississippi.
- **March 10, 2009**
Anonymous gift of \$6 million becomes the largest single cash gift ever received by the University.
- **March 30, 2010**
Southern Miss will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of its legislative founding.



A Golden Future.

CONTACT:

Jennifer Payne
Phone: 601.266.4095
Fax: 601.266.4214
Jennifer.L.Payne@usm.edu
www.usm.edu/centennial