

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
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Focused Report
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with participation of many
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Core Requirement 2.5	3
Core Requirement 2.8	6
Core Requirement 2.9	14
Core Requirement 2.11	20
Comprehensive Standard 3.2.2	24
Comprehensive Standard 3.2.4	27
Comprehensive Standard 3.2.6	30
Comprehensive Standard 3.2.13	34
Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1	36
Comprehensive Standard 3.4.1	40
Comprehensive Standard 3.4.7	41
Comprehensive Standard 3.4.8	42
Comprehensive Standard 3.4.13	43
Comprehensive Standard 3.4.14	47
Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1	52
Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1	56
Comprehensive Standard 3.7.3	76
Comprehensive Standard 3.10.4	79
Comprehensive Standard 3.10.5	80
Comprehensive Standard 3.10.7	82

**FOCUSED REPORT
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

Core Requirement 2.5

The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of programs and services that (a) results in continuing improvement, and (b) demonstrates that the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. **(Institutional Effectiveness)**

Comments:

The institution has initiated a well-integrated planning process with all academic and support units outlining goals in line with the institution's strategic plan. However, this process has only just begun and the evidence suggests that it has not yet been fully implemented, although a timeline for implementation was included in the report. Furthermore, assessment is sporadic and appears to consist primarily of successfully completing tactics related to the goals. For example, one of the College of Arts and Letters' goals is to improve access to undergraduate programs in Long Beach. An assessment of this goal would indicate ways in which the tactics actually improved access; i.e., were more students accommodated by these actions? With the exception of the Division of Student Affairs, there was no evidence that the other plans included relevant assessment measures. Finally, there was evidence of systematic reviews of academic program as discussed in CR 2.7.2, but no evidence of systematic reviews of administrative and support units.

The University of Southern Mississippi initiated a new, integrated assessment system in 2004-05. It was reviewed by the SACS Special Committee in August 2005 and the institution was removed from sanction during the December 2005 SACS annual meeting. The process has been fully implemented across campus.

As part of the assessment review process, all academic and administrative assessment plans are reviewed by the University Assessment Committee. In October 2005, the University Assessment Committee reviewed both academic and administrative assessment plans. Based on the Assessment Committee's review, 15% of the academic assessment plans needed modifications and approximately 27% of the administrative assessment plans needed modifications. Most modifications called for the clarification of targets within evaluation criteria. These modifications were made and updated assessment plans were submitted to the dean/vice president for final approval and then forwarded to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) to be posted on the Web site (www.usm.edu/ie).

Since the University's strategic plan was approved in spring 2005, vice presidents and deans completed a strategic plan for their divisions/colleges which linked to the overall University Strategic

Plan (<http://www.usm.edu/ie/finalbdapprovedplan.doc>). Midyear, each vice president completed an interim assessment report to reflect the current status of their goals and tactics (Appendices [A.1a](#), [A.1b](#), [A.2a](#), [A.2b](#), [A.3a](#), [A.3b](#), [A.4](#)). In addition, the administrators have provided an interim assessment report in narrative format describing results and use of results from assessments within their respective divisions/colleges (Appendix [A.5a](#), [A.5b](#), [A.6a](#), [A.6b](#), [A.7a](#), [A.7b](#), [A.8a](#), [A.8b](#), [A.9a](#), [A.9b](#), [A.10](#)). All areas have noted changes to assessments and the impact of Hurricane Katrina within their divisions.

Administrative assessment occurs in all administrative units. Administrative plans are reviewed by the University Assessment Committee during the fall semester. Assessment reports are reviewed by the appropriate upper level administrator during the annual review of the administrative unit during July and August. All 2004-2005 assessment reports (both academic and administrative) were reviewed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to verify that results and use of results were documented. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness also reviewed 2005-06 assessment plans to ensure appropriate assessment measures had been identified by the academic and administrative units.

In spring 2006, Southern Miss began converting its Word assessment tracking documents into a new system, WEAVEonline. WEAVEonline is a Web-based assessment management solution used to capture, manage, archive, and track academic and administrative assessment information for regional and disciplinary accreditation, program reviews, annual reporting and program improvement. The database will allow for more thorough analysis within programs, departments, and colleges as well as across the University.

Following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005, the strategic planning process was modified to direct special attention to the needs of students, especially on the Gulf Coast. In the short term, plans were developed and implemented to relocate services and academic offerings on the Gulf Park campus to a former hospital facility owned by the Southern Miss Research Foundation in Gulfport, MS. Classes resumed October 10 using a compressed format. Repairs were made to other Coast facilities (Stennis, Gulf Coast Research Lab, and Jackson County) and all services and classes resumed in October. Relative to longer range plans, recommendations regarding the future of the Gulf

Park campus are being deliberated by the Institutions of Higher Learning. While that decision is pending, the Executive Cabinet has reviewed and modified strategic goals as appropriate. Examples of modifications include an increased emphasis on enhancing access by developing more distance education programs, innovative scheduling of course offerings, and procurement of tuition support funds to better serve the needs of students, especially those directly affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Core Requirement 2.8

The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution. The institution has adequate faculty resources to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. In addition, upon application for candidacy, an applicant institution demonstrates that it meets the comprehensive standard for faculty qualifications. **(Faculty)**

Comments:

The institution provided information on the total headcount numbers of faculty and the student-faculty ratio, and a chart supporting a statement that “75 percent of all student credit hours are taught by full-time faculty.” The summary chart provided by the institution supports this statement and 75 percent seems sufficient and reasonable. However, another statement in the narrative conflicts with the chart, it says: The institution appears to have sufficient full-time faculty members to support the mission; however, the institution does not provide information by site. The institution should provide the same types of information to establish adequacy of the number of full time faculty for extended campuses or sites where a significant portion or all a whole degree program is offered.

The University of Southern Mississippi has sufficient faculty to support the University’s mission and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs.

Faculty are required to submit curriculum vitae when applying to the University. Upon appointment, they must submit original transcripts which are maintained in the Department of Human Resources. The Professional Education Council reviews the credentials of all professional education faculty and the Graduate Council reviews faculty credentials and recommends graduate faculty status, which is reviewed every five years. Additionally, faculty credentials are reviewed by external faculty highly qualified in their disciplines as part of the tenure and promotion process.

In fall 2005, Southern Miss employed 713 full-time research/instructional faculty, 691 of which were full-time instructional faculty (Table 1). Due to changes in Institutions of Higher Learning reporting requirements, librarians were excluded in the number of faculty for 2005. There was an increase of 4.85 percent full-time instructional faculty over fall 2004 ([Appendix B.1](#)). There has been a 9 percent increase over the past six years in the number of full-time research/instructional/librarian faculty ([Appendix B.2](#)).

**Table 1. Southern Miss Faculty
2003-2005**

	Year			2004 to 2005 % Increase
	2003	2004	2005	
Full-time Research/Instructional/Librarian Faculty	687	712	*713	0
Full-time Instructional Faculty	637	659	691	4.85

Note: Full-time Instructional Faculty is a subset of Full-time Research/Instructional/Librarian Faculty. Instructional Faculty excludes Research Faculty and Librarians

*Due to changes in IHL reporting requirements, librarians were excluded in 2005.

Faculty Load

For the academic year 2005-06, Southern Miss full-time faculty taught 76.8 percent of all student credit hours generated ([Appendix B.3](#)). Approximately 93 percent of the graduate level hours and 75 percent of undergraduate hours were generated by full-time faculty. Table 2 below details the breakdown by teaching location. As indicated in Section 4.4 of the *Faculty Handbook*, the expected undergraduate teaching load for full-time faculty is four courses or twelve credit hours per semester for the fall and spring. Three courses or nine credit hours are required to qualify for full-time status during the summer semester. Faculty load is reviewed by the deans and Provost each semester.

Table 2. Percent of Student Credit Hours Generated by Full-time Faculty	
Academic Year 2005-2006	
Location	% SCH
GCRL	90.37%
Gulf Park Student Center	77.54%
Hattiesburg	76.86%
Jackson County	59.68%
Keesler	48.28%
Meridian	96.38%
Stennis	89.92%
Tupelo	27.08%
*Study Abroad	99.77%
Total	76.79%
*Complete programs are not offered through Study Abroad	

Student Faculty Ratio

The ratio of student FTE to the number of full-time instructional faculty at Southern Miss is 20:1. When compared to the other 27 universities that are members of the Southern University Group (SUG), Southern Miss ranks 14th (Table 3). When faculty and FTE for the Gulf Coast are excluded from the calculation, the ratio is increased to 21 students per full-time instructional faculty. When compared to our seventeen peer institutions, Southern Miss has the third lowest student-faculty ratio (Table 4).

Unit ID	Institution Name	Total Full-Time Instructional Faculty	Full-time Equivalent Enrollment (FTE)	Student FTE / Full-Time Faculty (Ratio)	Without Gulf Coast
176080	Mississippi State University	1043	14153	13.57 : 1	
199193	North Carolina State University at Raleigh	1647	25386	15.41 : 1	
100663	University of Alabama at Birmingham	833	13022	15.63 : 1	
217882	Clemson University	952	15634	16.42 : 1	
221759	The University of Tennessee	1507	24853	16.49 : 1	
130943	University of Delaware	1116	19086	17.10 : 1	
106397	University of Arkansas Main Campus	792	14076	17.77 : 1	
100858	Auburn University Main Campus	1171	21271	18.16 : 1	
199120	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	1296	23588	18.20 : 1	
139959	University of Georgia	1690	30841	18.25 : 1	
139755	Georgia Institute of Technology -- Main Campus	852	15605	18.32 : 1	
157085	University of Kentucky	1209	22525	18.63 : 1	
234076	University of Virginia -- Main Campus	1095	20416	18.64 : 1	
176372	University of Southern Mississippi	637	12739	20.00 : 1	21.07 : 1
163286	University of Maryland -- College Park	1539	31722	20.61 : 1	
233921	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	1251	25902	20.71 : 1	
176017	University of Mississippi -- Main Campus	587	12613	21.49 : 1	
218663	University of South Carolina-Columbia	1011	21771	21.53 : 1	
100751	The University of Alabama	810	18302	22.60 : 1	
228723	Texas A & M University	1813	41555	22.92 : 1	
139940	Georgia State University	944	21748	23.04 : 1	
207500	University of Oklahoma Norman Campus	971	23013	23.70 : 1	
134130	University of Florida	1679	44382	26.43 : 1	
104151	Arizona State University at the Tempe Campus	1565	41617	26.59 : 1	
229115	Texas Tech University	979	26043	26.60 : 1	
238032	West Virginia University	778	22132	28.45 : 1	
134097	Florida State University	1116	33102	29.66 : 1	
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System					

Table 4					
Peer Comparison of Full-Time Instructional Faculty to Total Student FTE (Fall 2003)					
Unit ID	Institution Name	Total Full-Time Instructional Faculty	Full-time Equivalent Enrollment (FTE)	Student FTE / Full-Time Faculty (Ratio)	Without Gulf Coast
130943	University of Delaware	1116	19086	17.10 :1	
166629	University of Massachusetts-Amherst	1078	21378	19.83 :1	
176372	The University of Southern Mississippi	637	12739	20.00 :1	21.07 : 1
183044	University of New Hampshire-Main Campus	651	13433	20.63 :1	
186380	Rutgers University - New Brunswick	1486	31234	21.02 :1	
217484	University of Rhode Island	592	12473	21.07 :1	
163268	University of Maryland-Baltimore County	464	10106	21.78 :1	
188030	New Mexico State University - Main Campus	590	13712	23.24 :1	
110671	University of California-Riverside	681	16429	24.12 :1	
196060	SUNY at Albany	588	14534	24.72 :1	
161253	University of Maine	380	9510	25.03 :1	
172699	Western Michigan University	962	24223	25.18 :1	
196079	SUNY at Binghamton	491	12405	25.26 :1	
204857	Ohio University - Main Campus	746	19354	25.94 :1	
232982	Old Dominion University	566	14883	26.30 :1	
228769	The University of Texas at Arlington	743	19783	26.63 :1	
110714	University of California-Santa Cruz	533	14560	27.32 :1	
227216	University of North Texas	786	24980	31.78 :1	
Source: IPEDS Peer Analysis System					

The full-time and part-time faculty load study ([Appendix B.4](#) and [Appendix B.5](#)) has helped the University identify academic areas in which more full-time, tenured track faculty members need to be hired. The three high needs areas are Administration of Justice, English, and Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education. As part of future planning, the results of the faculty load study will be used by academic departments, the Office of the Provost, the Department of Human Resources, and the Budget Office to assist with the faculty hiring planning process. After reviewing the faculty load study, and upon recommendation of the Provost and Executive Cabinet, the Budget Office has incorporated new full-time faculty positions for high need areas into the budget request for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

Analysis of enrollment, FTE ([Appendix B.6](#)), and faculty load (Table 5) ([Appendix B.7](#) and [Appendix B.8](#)) in 2005-06 indicates (across all disciplines and across all teaching locations) 78 percent of the student credit hours within degree programs were generated by full-time faculty, an increase of 2

percent over 2004-2005. (This percentage excludes student credit hours generated by departments without degree programs: aerospace, general studies, honors college, military science, women's studies, and study abroad.) Over half (53%) of the teaching sites have 85 percent or more credit hours generated by full-time faculty.

Table 5
Percent of Student Credit Hours Generated by Full-time Faculty
By Teaching Site of Available Programs
Fall 2005 - Spring 2006

Department	GCRL	Gulf Park	Hattiesburg	Jackson Co.	Keesler	Meridian	Stennis	Tupelo
Accounting & Information Sys		94%	93%					
Administration of Justice		77%	46%					
American Studies Program		100%	53%					
Anthropology & Sociology			92%					
Art & Design			74%					
Biological Sciences		100%	84%					
Chemistry & Biochemistry			87%					
Child & Family Studies		19%	45%					
Coastal Sciences	90%							
Community Health Sciences		96%	74%					
Curriculum, Instr & Spec Ed		52%	64%					
Economic & Workforce Development		89%	100%					
Economics, Finance & Int'l Bus		76%	97%					
Education Leadership & Research		80%	72%					
English		52%	57%					
Foreign Language & Literatures			68%					
Geography		93%	100%					
Geology			98%					
History		94%	91%					
Human Performance & Recreation		40%	65%					
International Studies Program			100%					
Library & Information Science		42%	78%					
Management & Marketing		100%	100%	93%			100%	
Marine Science Department			93%				88%	
Mass Communication & Journal		49%	83%					
Mathematics		100%	67%					
Medical Technology			100%					
Music			84%					
Nursing Department		81%	91%			96%		
Nutrition & Food Systems			61%					
Philosophy & Religion			63%					
Physics & Astronomy			87%					
Political Sci, Intl Devl, I.A.		100%	95%	100%				
Polymers & High Performance Ma			100%					
Psychology		80%	79%					
School of Computing		74%	85%					

School of Construction			93%	88%				
Science & Mathematics Education			49%					
Science & Technology			100%					
Social Work		100%	86%					27%
Speech & Hearing Sciences			97%					
Speech Communication			40%					
Technology Education			73%		50%			
Theatre & Dance			73%					
Tourism Management		100%	89%					
Grand Total (78% overall)	90%	78%	78%	60%	48%	96%	90%	27%

Academic programs such as Social Work at the Tupelo site, Child and Family Studies and Library and Information Science at the Gulf Park site do not offer enough sections to support a full-time faculty member. New programs such as the Coaching and Sports Administration program in Human Performance and Recreation at the Gulf Park campus are utilizing adjunct faculty while the program enrollment develops. The program has been growing for the past year and a half suggesting enrollment will soon justify hiring more full-time faculty at Gulf Park. At this time, students can not complete the entire Coaching and Sports Administration program at Gulf Park. Some courses must be taken in Hattiesburg.

The English department utilizes adjuncts and graduate assistants to teach the courses within the general education core. Many majors require a lower level speech communication course. Forty-three percent of the Speech Communication credit hours are represented by this course. The department utilizes adjuncts and graduate assistants to teach this course. In addition, three of the full time faculty within the Speech Communication department have administrative duties (Dean of College of Arts and Letters, Coordinator of Graduate Studies, and Faculty-Liaison for Service Learning). As of February 10, 2006, there were seven full-time English faculty positions and one full-time Speech Communication faculty position posted (Table 6) on the University employment Web site.

The Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education (CISE) department has displaced faculty and decreased enrollment numbers on the Coast due to Hurricane Katrina. Both CISE and Library and

Information Science have had trouble filling empty tenure-track lines. Filling full-time positions on the Coast is challenging due to lack of housing due to damage from Hurricane Katrina.

Table 6	
Full-time Faculty Positions Available 2/10/06	
(Posted on Human Resources Web site)	
Department	# of Positions
Administration of Justice	3
Art & Design	1
Biological Sciences	4
Chemistry & Biochemistry	2
Child and Family Studies	1
Coastal Sciences	1
Community Health Science	5
Economic & Workforce Development	2
Economics, Finance, & Intl. Business	1
Education Leadership & Research	3
English	7
History	4
Human Performance & Recreation	1
Library and Information Science	2
Marketing and Management	1
Mass Communications & Journalism	1
Mathematics	1
Music	7
Nutrition and Food Systems	1
Physics	2
Political Science	1
Psychology	1
School of Computing	1
School of Construction	1
Social Work	1
Speech Communication	1

Due to Hurricane Katrina the first week of the fall 2005 semester, Southern Miss suffered a drop in enrollment after many years of continuous growth. Enrollment decreased in 2005-06 to 16,050 (duplicated) and 15,030 (unduplicated). Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment decreased from 13,294 in fall 2004 to 13,179 in fall 2005. Eighty-six percent of fall 2005 undergraduate level students and fifty-two percent of graduate level students are full-time students, based on unduplicated headcount. Each teaching site experienced a decrease in enrollment for spring 2006. Table 7 below shows the decrease in

percentage of enrolled student by site. [Appendix B.9](#) provides a comparison of enrollment by teaching site.

Table 7
Decrease in Enrollment by Location
Spring 2005 compared to Spring 2006

Location	Percentage Decrease
Hattiesburg	-3%
Meridian	-13%
Gulf Park (now Gulf Coast Student Service Center)	-28%
Stennis	-24%
Jackson County	-11%
Gulf Coast Research Laboratory	-17%
OVERALL	-7%

Faculty Credentials

The official SACS Commission rosters for all instructional staff ([Appendix B.10](#), [Appendix B.11](#), [Appendix B12](#), and [Appendix B13](#)) demonstrate Southern Miss is committed to securing faculty with credentials necessary for quality academic programs. When academic credentials are unclear, written justifications must detail comparable professional qualifications. The department chair and college dean must endorse the faculty credentials form at the time of employment. The Graduate Council reviews and approves faculty for graduate faculty status. There are three levels of graduate faculty status to which a faculty member can be assigned. These levels are assigned according to degree level and experience.

Core Requirement 2.9

The institution, through ownership or formal arrangements or agreements, provides and supports student and faculty access and user privileges to adequate library collections as well as to other learning/information resources consistent with the degrees offered. These collections and resources are sufficient to support all its educational, research, and public service programs. **(Learning Resources and Services)**

Comments:

The institution's primary library and learning resource centers include the central library, special collections and archives, and a facility on the Long Beach campus. In addition, the instructional programs at Jackson County, Keesler Air Force Base, the Stennis Space Center, and Meridian Community College are supported through agreements with libraries located on or near those teaching sites. On the whole, the descriptions of the library services, collections, and facilities make a persuasive case that the institution's degree programs are sufficiently supported. However, while the university documents patron satisfaction surveys conducted on the main and Long Beach campuses regarding the effectiveness of collections, services, staffing and policies, no information was given as to whether students at the other teaching sites were included in any of the assessments. Therefore, while the main campus' programs appear to be adequately supported, the committee is unable to determine whether that is the case at the distance education campuses.

The University of Southern Mississippi Libraries provides access to library materials, resources and services for *all* University students and faculty through: 1) physical access to libraries and 2) virtual access to an increasing number of holdings 24/7, worldwide. The library continues to focus on electronic resources to meet curricular and research needs of the university community through the purchase of electronic databases, electronic journals, and electronic books. The 2003-04 Association of College and Research Library (ACRL) statistics indicate University of Southern Mississippi Libraries provided 118 electronic databases, 15,321 electronic full text journals, 17,717 electronic books, and 6,068 digitized original items from special collections. Electronic databases were queried nearly one million times during the year, and the library Web site experienced over 78 million hits. In 2003-04, library expenditures were just under \$475,000 and in the following year increased to over \$500,000 with \$750,000 in expenditures predicted for 2005-06. In 2005, the library converted 60 print journal titles held at only one library site to nearly 600 electronic titles available to any currently enrolled student, regardless of teaching site. This was accomplished by a cooperative agreement with Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi.

Other important virtual access for the university community, regardless of location, is provided through Web-based tutorials and library user guides, telephone and e-mail reference services, document delivery and interlibrary loan, and the campus2campus delivery system.

Physical access to resources and services is provided through the University's libraries (Hattiesburg and Long Beach/Gulf Coast Student Services Center) and also through cooperative agreements with local libraries associated with the University's remote teaching sites.

Garnering feedback about library services and resources for continuous quality improvement has been accomplished with both paper and electronic survey tools. The electronic tools, such as LibQual+, may be completed by any and all members of the university community, including those students who are taking classes at remote sites. Other electronic surveys, including a Web-based survey on usability of the library's Web site, can be completed by anyone who visits the library homepage (www.lib.usm.edu). Respondents include students, faculty and Web visitors from around the world.

Regarding paper survey instruments, The University of Southern Mississippi Libraries conducted three separate library surveys in 2005 using the Library User Survey originally developed in 1994. In February 2005, Cook Library (Hattiesburg campus) and Gulf Coast Library were surveyed. In December 2005, the remote sites were surveyed, with fifty-seven people responding.

In each 2005 survey, the majority of respondents visited the library two to three times per week, with more than 47 percent of the respondents for Cook Library visiting four or more times per week. Most of those surveyed indicated library use centered around (1) class assignments, (2) study, and (3) research. Other uses were access to computers and e-mail in the library.

As in previous surveys, service desks and services offered received high ratings. The results from remote sites indicate a higher level of satisfaction for databases and electronic resources than those for Hattiesburg and Gulf Park.

**Table 8 – Results from Library Surveys
2005**

Question	Cook Library	Gulf Coast Library	Remote Sites
Library Hours	4.05	4.34	4.5
Circulation Desk	4.33	4.52	4.35
Information Services Desk	4.28	4.54	4.39
Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery	4.18	4.26	4.11
Library Web site	4.19	4.3	4.35
Reading Room	4.25	4.37	NA
Instructional Workshops	4.24	4.41	4.3
Arrangement of Building and Services	4.22	4.52	NA
Library Atmosphere for Study and Research	4.27	4.67	NA
Databases and Internet Resources	4.3	4.52	4.36
Anna, the Library Catalog	4.22	4.41	4.37
Curriculum Materials Center	4.24	4.27	NA
Music Resources Center	4.2	NA	NA
Book Collection for Class Assignments	4.03	4.03	4.05
Book Collection for Research Purposes	3.9	4.03	4.16
Print Journal Collection for Class Assignments	3.96	4.02	4.37
Print Journal collection for Research Purposes	3.96	4.04	4.29
Electronic Journal collection for Research Purposes	4.08	4.21	4.19
Electronic Journal collection for Class Assignments	4.09	4.25	4.2
iTech Computer Lab	4.2	4.6	NA
Starbucks	4.26	NA	NA

Average Responses, by Library 2005: 1=don't know; 2=Poor; 3=Fair; 4=Good; 5=Excellent

The University of Southern Mississippi Library regularly communicates with the university community through presentations, Web news updates, campus-wide e-mail notifications, and newsletters. (<http://www.lib.usm.edu/libraryfocus>). The University Librarian Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives from each college on the Hattiesburg campus, provides input regarding library operations, services, and planning. The Southern Miss Gulf Coast Library and Gunter Library at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory have similar advisory committees who work with directors of the respective libraries. The library receives communication and user feedback through surveys, customer service cards, telephone calls, personal visits, focus groups, and the electronic suggestion box. Library personnel regularly read and respond to comments collected via these mechanisms.

On October 31, 2005, the University of Southern Mississippi Libraries conducted its first Library Summit, inviting forty-five students and faculty from all sites to share their experiences and offer comments for improvement of library services. The Summit obtained information from the university community in the following four areas: (1) Affect of Service, (2) Personal Control, (3) Access to Information, and (4) The Library as Place. Issues highlighted in the Summit include a need for a presentation practice room, additional library hours, and the desire for cultural activities at the library. The libraries have begun resolving many of the issues highlighted at the conference. For example, the presentation room concept is included in the Speaking Center as part of the Quality Enhancement Plan. For the full list of issues, recommendations, and timeline, refer to the Report on Library Summit ([Appendix C.1](#)).

On a continual basis, the University of Southern Mississippi Libraries provides opportunities for feedback from all students and faculty at all sites. The electronic suggestion box (<http://www.lib.usm.edu/contact/suggbox.php>) is on the library's homepage and therefore available to students at remote teaching sites. In addition, the Ask-A-Librarian Internet reference service may be used by students and faculty from any teaching site (<http://www.lib.usm.edu/research/askalibrarian/index.php>).

Impact of Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane Katrina impacted ([Appendix C.2](#)) the University of Southern Mississippi Libraries, and resulted in many changes in the original plans for academic year 2005-06.

Hattiesburg campus library operations

There was minor damage to Cook and McCain Libraries on the Hattiesburg campus, and all library services were restored and operational Thursday, September 8, 2005. Regular library hours were reinstated when classes began September 12, 2005. Library employees on the Hattiesburg campus who serve as members of the Disaster Response Action Team (DRAT) assisted the Gulf Coast sites in recovery and collection rehabilitation.

Plans for the Library Summit were postponed until October 31, and other planning materials delayed for three weeks as recovery efforts dominated library operations.

Southern Miss Gulf Coast Library, Gulf Park, and Long Beach operations

While the Gulf Coast Library did not receive the amount of damage other buildings sustained at Gulf Park, floodwaters in the building and lack of climate control damaged the first floor. Over 1900 individual issues of serials were destroyed as well as 310 books and 82,312 microforms items. With standing water, damp carpet and no climate control, mold and mildew ruined the first floor.

All library operations were relocated to the Southern Miss Gulf Coast Student Services Center (GCSSC). Library employees provide all library services from the GCSSC, and items are retrieved as requested from the Gulf Park facility while it remains closed. The Hattiesburg campus provided use of its cargo van to facilitate the retrieval process and 12 dehumidifiers were delivered for use in the library until full power was restored.

Southern Miss Gunter Library, Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, Ocean Springs operations

Similar damage occurred in the Gunter Library, with floodwaters destroying nearly 1300 books, part of 134 serials titles, and 2966 reprints in the collection. Recovery efforts began early, with power restored within one week. The restoration of climate control resulted in less damage to the facility, and the Hattiesburg campus provided book trucks, Hollinger boxes, plastic crates, and dehumidifiers to help stabilize the situation.

McBride Library, Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi operations

McBride Library sustained similar damage to carpet and shelving, but there was no loss of library materials. The Library was closed from August 29 through September 6, 2005 while the facility was cleaned. All library services were restored when the Library reopened.

Southern Miss Jackson County Center Library Services

The University of Southern Mississippi students are extended library use privileges through two local libraries: The Gautier Public Library and the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Library, Jackson County branch.

Gautier Public Library. The Gautier Public Library had roof damage, resulting in leaks. The Library reopened one week after the storm, and all library services were restored at that time.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Library. Water and wind caused considerable damage to the Jackson County Campus Library of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. Extensive leakage occurred in the east stacks area because 1/3 or more of the roof blew off. Two hundred fifty-six books of the open collection in those areas were destroyed. Areas affected were classes D, HD, PQ, PR, PS, Q, and QA. Additionally, approximately 404 reference books were also affected by humidity. Library services are being provided in other areas of the building due to restricted access to certain areas.

The University Librarian conducted a site visit on January 27, 2006, to the Gulf Coast Student Services Center and to the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory to assess the current situation.

As a result of Hurricane Katrina, the Libqual+ library survey schedule has been altered to include administration in both November 2005 and February 2006. Each survey period, while not excluding respondents from either group, concentrates on a different survey group. The fall survey targeted Hattiesburg campus students, and the February 2006 survey will target the remote teaching sites.

The University Libraries continuously updates its assessment plan and has provided an interim assessment report ([Appendix C.3](#)).

Core Requirement 2.11

The institution has a sound financial base and demonstrated financial stability, and adequate physical resources to support the mission of the institution and the scope of its programs and services.

The member institution provides the following financial statements: (a) an institutional audit (*or Standard Review Report issued in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the AICPA for those institutions audited as part of a systemwide or statewide audit*) and written institutional management letter for the most recent fiscal year prepared by an independent certified public accountant and/or an appropriate governmental auditing agency employing the appropriate audit (*or Standard Review Report*) guide; (b) a statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, which represents the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year; and, (c) an annual budget that is preceded by sound planning, is subject to sound fiscal procedures, and is approved by the governing board. Audit requirements for applicant institutions may be found in the Commission policy entitled “Accreditation Procedures for Applicant Institutions. **(Resources)**

Comments:

The institution provided audited consolidated financial statements for the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning for fiscal years 2002, 2003 and 2004. No statement was provided for the most recently completed fiscal year. The statements provided were audited by an appropriate governmental audit agency, Mississippi Office of State Auditor, and the audits were conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards. Part (a) of the standard requires an institutional audit and a written institutional management letter prepared by the auditors for the most recent fiscal year, FY2005, which was not provided.

The institution provided a link to the Policies and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, Institutions of Higher Learning, State of Mississippi that clearly define the budgeting process for the institutions. These policies also require the Board of Trustees to submit proposed budgets to the Mississippi state legislature for action. The Board of IHL has adopted the Adequate Funding Model for institutional budgeting that uses a variety of analytical tools and includes a budget process that generates planning and budget priorities to be addressed. Additional components of the model include funding for the operation of new facilities, salary adjustments, and continuation funding to cover the effects of inflation, depreciation, new policies and mandates, and contractual price changes.

Although parts (a) and (b) are non-compliant, part (c) is in compliance.

The State Department of Audit conducts an annual system-wide audit of financial statements for the Board of Trustees of Mississippi’s State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL). The audit report for the year ended June 30, 2005 has not yet been issued. According to the State Auditor’s Office, the target date for issuance is March 31, 2006.

At this time, the State Auditor's Office has not officially notified the institution of reportable audit findings. The institution has received unofficial notification of the *possibility* of three reportable findings. The findings are listed below and include tentative corrective action plans.

2005-USM-1. Finding

Program: Research and Development Cluster; CFDA #43.002; Coastal Zone Application of Remote Sensing

Compliance Requirement: Equipment and Real Property Management

Examination of equipment and real property management controls for the Grant revealed the following internal control weakness:

In several instances we noted equipment purchased with grant funds was not recorded on the university inventory.

Recommendation

The institution should implement policies and procedures to insure that detail listings of all equipment are maintained that record the complete description of equipment.

Tentative Corrective Action Plan:

- a. Name(s) of Contact Person(s) Responsible for Corrective Action:
Jennifer Spring, Manager of Procurement Services at GCRL,
(228) 872-4245
- b. Corrective Action Planned: Effective October 1, 2005 all equipment purchased is notated in the comments section of the purchase order notifying the receiving/property clerk. When equipment is received, it is immediately tagged by the receiving/property clerk and reported to the property officer. The property officer runs a monthly report for all paid equipment and adds it to the State report. For equipment which is not received through the receiving department, one of two processes will occur. The buyer will notify the property officer that there is equipment to be tagged that will not be received through the receiving department and if missed by the receiving/property clerk, the property officer will find it on the monthly report, go out locate it, tag it and report it. Monthly inventory lists are now distributed to each department within GCRL.
- c. Anticipated Completion date: Implemented

2005-USM-2. Finding

Program: Research and Development Cluster; CFDA #43.002; Coastal Zone Application of Remote Sensing

Compliance Requirement: Allowable Costs/Cost Principles

Questioned cost: \$27,077

Indirect costs charged to the federal program exceeded the amount allowed by \$27,077.

Recommendation

Policies and procedures should be implemented to insure that the indirect cost rate is applied to the appropriate bases and that the amounts claimed are the product of applying the rate to the applicable base.

Tentative Corrective Action Plan:

- a. Name(s) of Contact Person(s) Responsible for Corrective Action:
Douglas Hancock, Cost Accountant Manager, (601) 266-5086
- b. Corrective Action Planned: The error was caused by inability of the University's previous Facilities and Administrative (F&A) system to process F&A credits for negative expenditures in a month. Effective April 2005, the University uses the PeopleSoft Grants Module automated F&A process that bases the monthly F&A expenditure on actual monthly direct grant charges including any negative expenditures. The correct F&A expenditure amount has been included in the total costs reported on the final SF272 for this project.
- c. Anticipated Completion date: Implemented

2005-USM-3. Finding

Program: Other Programs; CFDA #16.580; Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Discretionary Grants Program

Compliance Requirement: Equipment and Real Property Management

Examination of equipment and real property management controls for the Grant revealed the following internal control weaknesses: (1) In several instances written documentation of transfer of ownership of the equipment was not completed and (2) a complete inventory listing could not be obtained.

Recommendation

The institution should implement policies and procedures to insure that detail listings of equipment are maintained that record the complete description of equipment. Also, all documentation supporting the transfer of ownership of equipment should be complete and maintained.

Tentative Corrective Action Plan:

- a. Name(s) of Contact Person(s) Responsible for Corrective Action:
Dr. Julian Allen, Executive Director, (228) 865-4595
- b. Corrective Action Planned: The University has hired a fulltime employee whose sole job duty is to monitor and maintain equipment inventory for this project. Also, the inventory system has been automated to ensure all equipment and software purchased on this project are properly accounted for in a timely manner.
- c. Anticipated Completion date: Implemented

The institution fully expects to receive an unqualified opinion.

Since the system-wide audit usually is not complete until spring of the following year, the institution engaged Wright CPA Group, PLLC, to prepare a Standard Review Report ([Appendix D.1](#)) to comply with 2.11a. Based on the reviews, no material modifications were noted in the report.

A statement of financial position of unrestricted net assets, exclusive of plant assets and plant-related debt, representing the change in unrestricted net assets attributable to operations for the most recent year is presented in [Appendix D.2](#).

Other Supporting Documentation:

[Annual Financial Report 2005](#)
[2006 Management Letters](#)

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.2

The legal authority and operating control of the institution are clearly defined for the following areas within the institution's governance structure:

3.2.2.1 the institution's mission;

3.2.2.2 the fiscal stability of the institution;

3.2.2.3 institutional policy, including policies concerning related and affiliated corporate entities and all auxiliary services;

3.2.2.4 related foundations (athletic, research, etc.) and other corporate entities whose primary purpose is to support the institution and/or its programs.

Comments:

Section 102.03 of IHL Policies and Bylaws requires each institution to develop a distinct mission to be performed within the context of the Board and System missions. Section 102.04 requires a concise institutional statement of its core mission to be submitted to the Board for approval. A revised mission statement for the institution was approved by the Board in June 2005.

The Mississippi Constitution, Section 213 A, defines the duties and authority of the Board of Trustees including fiscal oversight. Section 37-101-15 gives authority to the Board to exercise control over the use, distribution, and disbursement of all funds, appropriations, and taxes for the operation and capital expenditures of state higher educational institutions including USM. IHL policies in sections 201 and 711 provide directions as to institutional financial reports, auditing procedure and requirements, and a uniform system of recording and accounting approved by the State Auditor. Section 301.0801 of IHL Policies and Bylaws, Duties of the Institutional Executive Officers, identifies fiscal management as a responsibility of the President.

IHL policies 708.01 and 901.4 authorize student charges for auxiliary services and facility reserve funds and detail the processes for maintenance of those facilities.

*Four not-for-profit foundations support the academic, research, and athletic activities of the institution. IHL Policy 301.0806 defines the purpose of private foundations, the importance of public confidence, provisions for a public, written agreement between the institution and the foundation, and the Board's authority over the agents of the organizations. Operating agreements between the institution and the USM Foundation, the USM Research Foundation, the USM Foundation for Southern Miss Athletics, and the USM Alumni Association have **not been approved by the Board of Trustees**. (The agreements were to be submitted to the Board for approval at the September meeting. If approved, the institution will be in compliance with this standard.) Each foundation has its own mission statement, bylaws, and governing board. However, the directors/executive directors of the 4 foundations are employees of the institution and under the administrative authority of the university President.*

The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation is a private, not-for-profit fundraising arm of the University. The Executive Director of The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation answers directly to the President of the University. The Foundation has its own mission statement and bylaws and is governed by a Board of Directors. (<http://www.usm.edu/foundation/board.html>) A written operating agreement ([Appendix E.1](#)) between The University of Southern Mississippi and The University of

Southern Mississippi Foundation has been approved by University Counsel. The agreement was approved by IHL on October 20, 2005 ([Appendix E.2](#)).

The University of Southern Mississippi Research Foundation is a private, not-for-profit research arm of the University. Its director is also the Vice President for Research and Economic Development of The University of Southern Mississippi and answers to the President of the University. The Research Foundation has its own mission statement and bylaws and is governed by a Board of Directors. A written operating agreement ([Appendix E.3](#)) between The University of Southern Mississippi and The University of Southern Mississippi Research Foundation has been approved by the Research Foundation's Board. The agreement was removed from the IHL October agenda for further review and modifications. The agreement was reviewed and approved at the IHL meeting on February 15, 2006. A letter from Commissioner Tom Meridith is available in [Appendix E.4](#). The minutes of the February IHL meeting will be approved in March and available on site in April.

The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation for Southern Miss Athletics (Athletic Foundation) is a private, not-for-profit fundraising arm of the University for athletics. Its director is the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics for The University of Southern Mississippi and answers to the President. The Athletics Foundation has its own mission statement and bylaws and is governed by a Board of Directors. The President of the University and the Faculty Athletic Representative (University faculty member) along with the Director of Athletics are members of the Athletic Foundation Board and Executive Committee. A written operating agreement ([Appendix E.5](#)) between The University of Southern Mississippi and the Athletic Foundation has been approved by University Counsel. The agreement was approved by IHL on October 20, 2005 ([Appendix E.2](#)).

The University of Southern Mississippi Alumni Association is a private, not-for-profit arm of the University. The mission of The University of Southern Mississippi Alumni Association is to build a feeling of pride and loyalty among the alumni of the institution while strengthening participation in alumni and University programs; to coordinate the efforts of alumni on behalf of the University as a whole; and to provide a unified voice for all alumni in the affairs of the University. Its director is the

Executive Director of Alumni Relations for The University of Southern Mississippi and answers directly to the President of the University. The Alumni Association has its own mission statement and bylaws and is governed by a Board of Directors. A written operating agreement ([Appendix E.6](#)) between The University of Southern Mississippi and The University of Southern Mississippi Alumni Association has been approved by University Counsel. It was removed from the IHL October agenda for further review and modifications. The agreement was reviewed and approved at the IHL meeting on February 15, 2006. A letter from Commissioner Tom Meridith is available in [Appendix E.4](#). The minutes of the February IHL meeting will be approved in March and available on site in April.

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.4

The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies, and protects the institution from such influence.

Comments:

The institution presented no documentation regarding protection of the governing board from external influence of a political, religious, or economic nature. Thus, the off-site committee could not determine compliance.

The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) is an independent constitutional entity. The Supreme Court of Mississippi has recognized (and a general history of the Institutions of Higher Learning reveals) that for many years these institutions had been vulnerable to the politicians then in power

By 1944, the people of the state and members of the Legislature were ready to cure previous political diseases as evidenced in *Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning v. Mississippi Publishers Corp.*, 478 So.2d, 269,273 (Miss. 1985); *State ex rel. Allain v. Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning*, 387 So.2d, 89, 91 (Miss. 1980). These cases addressed accreditation problems stemming from use of political rather than educational goals in management and control of colleges and universities.

By amending the constitution via legislative vote in 1942 (as ratified by the citizens of Mississippi in 1943), the people of Mississippi gave IHL wide latitude and discretion in decisions concerning management and control of the colleges and universities. *Board of Trustees of State Institutions*, *id.* 478 So.2d, 273,74. Pursuant to Article 8, Section 213-A of the Mississippi Constitution and Mississippi Code Annotated Section 37-101-1 and Section 37-101-15, IHL is empowered with the management and control of Mississippi's eight institutions of higher learning and any others of like kind. The powers of the Board of Trustees set out in Mississippi Code Annotated, Section 37-101-15, such as management and control over various institutional funds and power to hire, are evidence of insulation from external influences of a political, religious or economic nature. Furthermore, the lengthy terms of IHL Board members, as provided in Article 8, Section 213-A of the Mississippi Constitution, and the fact

that such Board members cannot be removed by the legislative, executive, or judicial branches of state government evidence the Board's insulation from external political, religious, and economic influences.

When the new constitutional Board of Trustees met for the first time on May 18, 1944, a politically independent board was created. The purpose of this board was to search for a structure of governance that would make the institutions responsive to the genuine educational needs of the state and at the same time protect them from factional politics, and to alleviate the failure of the various governing boards to coordinate the institutions into a state system of higher education with a minimum of unnecessary duplication. The critical factor in governance of public universities is the independence and integrity of the governing board.

The strength of the constitutional nature and powers of the Board were reaffirmed as recently as May of 2002 in *Board of Trustees v. Ray*, So. 2d, 627. This case held that a particular state statute infringed on the constitutionally vested managerial powers of the Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning; therefore, the statute was held unconstitutional and repealed. Once again, this is further conclusive evidence of the insulation of the governing board from external political influences and also shows the board's ability to protect the institution.

Article 8, Section 213-A of the Mississippi Constitution provides the general grant of power found in other autonomous boards by stating in the first sentence that the institutions of higher learning shall be under the management and control of a board of trustees (emphasis added). The other provision in Section 213-A of the Mississippi Constitution dealing with the power of the Board is found in the third paragraph, which specifically grants power and authority to the Board to elect the heads of the various institutions of higher learning, and to contract with all deans, faculty and administrative employees of the institutions for a term not exceeding four years. Under this paragraph, the Board is empowered to terminate any such contract for malfeasance, inefficiency or contumacious conduct, but never for political reasons. There is no indication of a reservation on the power of the Board to manage and control the institutions other than the limitation to contract for four years and the prohibition against discharge of employees for political reasons.

The mission statement for the Board is set out in policy in *Section 102.02 Board of Trustees*, which was adopted in 2002, as follows:

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to manage and control Mississippi's eight institutions of higher learning in accordance with the Constitution and to see that the IHL System mission is accomplished. To do so, the Board will operate a coordinated system of higher education, establish prudent governance policies, employ capable chief executives, and require legal, fiscal and programmatic accountability. The Board will annually report to the Legislature and the citizenry on the needs and accomplishments of the IHL System.

In order for the Board of Trustees to function as a governing rather than administrative board, it has further removed itself from operational decisions by establishing an operational officer, the Commissioner of Higher Education, who carries out the Board's policies and decisions.

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.6

There is a clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and practice, between the policymaking functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy.

Comments:

IHL policies in Section 201 (including .0603 and .0604 not cited in the study) grant an inordinate amount of authority to the Board in the “supervision” and “control” of institutional resources and operations. These policies do not appear to support a balance between the policy and administrative dimensions of the institution. IHL policy 301.0801 defines the duties of the institutional executive officer but grants little discretion in the administration of the institution. Although the USM Faculty Handbook describes the responsibilities of the President and other administrators and advisory committees but documentation supporting the practice of these responsibilities was not provided.

The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) is responsible for the management and control of the Mississippi public institutions of higher learning ([Appendix F.1](#)). Based on that authority, IHL has established bylaws and policies ([Appendix F.2](#)). The bylaws and policies promulgated by the board show a clear distinction in the policymaking function of the Board of Trustees versus the responsibility of university administration and faculty to administer and implement policy. IHL has the sole authority to modify, alter, amend or otherwise change its policies ([Appendix F.3](#)). IHL has established policies for control of institutional finances and financial reporting ([Appendix F.4](#) and [Appendix F.5](#)). IHL elects the institutional executive officers (IEO) of each institution of higher learning and contracts with all deans, faculty, and administrative staff ([Appendix F.6](#)). IHL has established search policies and procedures to fill the positions of institution executive officer and requires that a campus advisory committee participate in the process ([Appendix F.7](#)). IHL has the authority to approve and regulate all campuses of the Institutions of Higher Learning ([Appendix F.8](#)). Even so, the Board’s policies and bylaws clearly support a balance of authority retained by the Board and that delegated to the IEOs which, in turn, support a balance between the policy and the administrative dimensions of the institution.

IHL has delegated to the institution executive officer authority to nominate all subordinate employees of the institution ([Appendix F.6](#)). IHL requires each institution of higher learning be under management and control of the institution executive officer. That institution executive officer is required

by the IHL to act in accordance with IHL policies and bylaws ([Appendix F.6](#)). The institutional institution executive officer shall be responsible for administration of the institution ([Appendix F.9](#)).

In addition to Section 301.0801, the following policies address the authority of the Institutional Executive Officers and further evidence balance between the policy and administrative dimensions of the institution:

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to manage and control Mississippi's eight institutions of higher learning in accordance with the Constitution and to see that the IHL System mission is accomplished. To do so, the Board will operate a coordinated system of higher education, establish prudent governance policies, employ capable chief executives, and require legal, fiscal and programmatic accountability ([Appendix F.10](#)).

Campus Locations and Programs

Whenever one institution desires or is requested to offer programs or courses in close proximity to another senior institution, such instruction may be offered providing an agreement is made with the closest institution. Any exceptions shall be mediated by the Institutional Executive Officers and reported to the Commissioner. Any remaining conflicts the Commissioner shall mediate and make recommendations as to a resolution to the Board for approval ([Appendix F.7](#)).

Delegation of Authority

- A. The authority delegated by the Board to the Commissioner may be further delegated by the Commissioner in writing to appropriate and responsible officials of the System Office.
- B. The authority delegated by the Board to the Institutional Executive Officers may be further delegated by the Institutional Executive Officers in writing to appropriate and responsible officials of the universities.
- C. The Institutional Executive Officers and the Commissioner shall identify by position the persons authorized to act in their place in the event of absence from the office of more than a week or other unavailability. Each Institutional Executive Officer shall notify the Commissioner in writing of such delegation of authority by the Institutional Executive Officer, and the Commissioner shall notify the Board in writing of such delegation of authority by the Commissioner ([Appendix F.10](#)).

Tenure

Tenure is defined as continuing employment that may be granted to a faculty member after a probationary period upon nomination by the Institutional Executive Officer for election by the Board ([Appendix F.11](#)).

Other Faculty Grievances and Appeals

A grievance is defined as the claim of an individual employee that there has been a violation, misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule, policy or procedure in relation to personnel policies, including working hours, working conditions, leaves, promotions and other conditions of employment ([Appendix F.12](#)). Grievances are not appealable to the Board. The decision of the Institutional Executive Officer is final and binding ([Appendix F.13](#)).

Appeals (Grievance Procedure for Non-faculty)

If all previous steps have not led to a satisfactory settlement of a problem, the Chief Personnel Officer will place it before the university grievance committee. The committee's purpose is to review the problem thoroughly and make a decision which is appealable to the Institutional Executive Officer. Upon

completion of the hearing, the committee will have five (5) working days in which to make a decision. The decision will be promptly communicated within five (5) working days to the employee and the administration in writing. The decision of the committee will be subject to review by the Institutional Executive Officer. The decision of the Institutional Executive Officer shall be final ([Appendix F.14](#)).

General Policy (Student Appeals)

The Board delegates to the various Institutional Executive Officers full authority in all matters concerning student affairs. The decision of the Institutional Executive Officer shall be final so far as the institution is concerned. Upon rendering of a final decision, the aggrieved student will be notified. The Institutional Executive Officer may request the legal assistance of the Attorney General's office through the Commissioner ([Appendix F.15](#)).

Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships

Each institution is authorized at the discretion of the Institutional Executive Officer to award Assistantships, and Fellowships to students enrolled full-time in graduate degree programs ([Appendix F.16](#)).

Athletic Revenue and Expenditures

Institutional Executive Officers are authorized each fiscal year to transfer or use up to the following amounts from Unrestricted Educational and General (E&G) funds for athletic expenditures:

University of Mississippi, Mississippi State, University of Southern Mississippi \$1,000,000
Delta State, Jackson State, Alcorn State, Mississippi Valley State \$1,300,000 ([Appendix F.17](#)).

Land, Property, and Service Contracts

Board approval prior to execution of the purchase contract is required for all land acquisitions that exceed \$100,000. An institution acquiring real property shall receive two appraisals prior to purchase, and the purchase price of the property shall not exceed the average of the two appraisals. Board approval prior to execution of the contract is required for all other land, personal property, and service contracts that require an aggregate total expenditure of more than \$250,000. Board approval prior to execution of the contract is required for any bookstore, food service, or athletic concession contract projected to generate aggregate total revenues for a university of more than \$250,000 or if the term of such contract exceeds four years. Board approval prior to execution of an easement is required. **Approval by the Board is not required for the following purchases: natural gas, utility services, entertainment services paid for with student fees and/or ticket sales receipts. Institutional Executive Officers and the Commissioner are authorized and empowered to approve and execute on behalf of their respective institutions all other land, personal property and service contracts.** All such contracts shall be executed in accordance with state law and board policy ([Appendix F.18](#)).

Employment Contracts

Acting under appropriate statutory authority and Board policy, the Board of Trustees hereby empowers the Institutional Executive Officers of the several institutions the authority to approve and execute contracts only with deans, professors, other members of the teaching staff and such categories of administrative employees as designated by the Commissioner in accordance with state law and Board Policy ([Appendix F.19](#)).

Other Official Documents

The Institutional Executive Officer of each institution, or a designee as evidenced in writing, is authorized to sign all other official documents for and on behalf of the institution for which he or she is responsible ([Appendix F.20](#)).

Sales and Solicitations

The Institutional Executive Officers are authorized to adopt rules and regulations controlling sales and solicitations on campuses and grounds of the institutions ([Appendix F.21](#)).

Procedures (Audits)

The Institutional Executive Officers, at their discretion, may contract with independent auditors to conduct specific agreed upon procedures ([Appendix F.22](#)).

Outside Employment

Members of the faculty and staff are permitted to engage in outside employment, provided permission is first obtained from the executive officer of the institution concerned and, provided further, that the executive officer of the institution concerned shall grant permission to engage in outside employment only after having first determined that the said outside employment will interfere in no way with institutional duties of the individual requesting such permission ([Appendix F.23](#)).

Resignations

The Institutional Executive Officer of each institution of higher learning is authorized to accept resignations of employees and to determine the effective date of termination of employment ([Appendix F.24](#)).

Leave Without Pay

Leave without pay for attending to personal business may be arranged with the department head, subject to approval by the Institutional Executive Officer ([Appendix F.25](#)).

Official Holidays

Unless otherwise approved by the Board, all offices are closed on the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Other days may be designated as holidays by the Institutional Executive Officer, not to exceed a total of 15 days a year ([Appendix F.26](#)).

Facilities Maintenance

Institutional responsibility for the successful implementation of the facilities maintenance policy shall rest with the institutional executive officer. The institutional executive officers are responsible for insuring that institutional facilities are properly maintained ([Appendix F.27](#)).

Use of Facilities

In general it shall be the policy of the several institutions not to make available the buildings and other facilities of the institutions to outside organizations. Exceptions to this policy may be approved by the Institutional Executive Officer ([Appendix F.28](#)).

Appearances in Legislature

The Commissioner, and/or his designee, shall coordinate official Board-related contact with state officials and members of the Legislature. No subordinate official representing any of the several institutions shall appear before the legislature or any committee, except upon authority of the Institutional Executive Officer ([Appendix F.29](#)).

The University of Southern Mississippi *Faculty Handbook* also describes the responsibilities of the President and all subordinate administrative officers and defines the role and responsibilities of university advisory committees relative to academic matters ([Appendix F.30](#)).

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.13

Any institution-related foundation not controlled by the institution has a contractual or other formal agreement that (a) accurately describes the relationship between the institution and the foundation, and (b) describes any liability associated with that relationship. In all cases, the institution ensures that the relationship is consistent with its mission.

Comments:

The Policies and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees Institutions of Higher Learning State of Mississippi require the institution to have a formal agreement describing the nature of the relationship between the parties and require that an affiliated organization's mission be consistent with the mission of the parent organization. The institution, which has four affiliated organizations, provided operating agreements for each organization. Although these agreements are complete in every respect, they have not been adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning. The institution will be in compliance when the Board approves the documents.

The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation is a private, not-for-profit fundraising arm of the University. The Executive Director of The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation answers directly to the President of the University. The Foundation has its own mission statement and bylaws and is governed by a Board of Directors (<http://www.usm.edu/foundation/board.html>). A written operating agreement ([Appendix E.1](#)) between The University of Southern Mississippi and The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation has been approved by University Counsel. The agreement was approved by IHL on October 20, 2005 ([Appendix E.2](#)).

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Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1

The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.

Comments:

The institution has recently embraced outcomes assessment, led by a newly-created Institutional Effectiveness department. The process includes annual student learning outcomes assessment for each program and outcomes assessments for each administrative support unit, as evidenced by the Academic Assessment reports and Administrative Assessment reports. Because this effort has only just been initiated, there is no evidence of improvement based on the analysis of the results, but there are plans in place for the use of the results. Academic program review has also been initiated as the result of a directive from the IHL. Accreditation reviews are used for programs where appropriate and internal reviews are conducted of all academic programs not subject to accreditation. There is no evidence that a similar review process is in place for administrative and support units. However, it appears that the annual assessment report is used for this purpose.

Southern Miss initiated an integrated, new assessment system in spring 2005. It was reviewed by a Special Committee during 2005 and the University was removed from sanction during the December 2005 SACS annual meeting. The assessment process has been fully implemented throughout campus.

As part of the assessment review process, *all* academic and administrative assessment plans are reviewed by the University Assessment Committee. In October 2005, the University Assessment Committee reviewed both academic and administrative assessment plans for 2005-06. Some assessment plans required modifications. These modifications were made by the departments and updated assessment plans were submitted to the dean/vice president and then forwarded to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) to be posted on the Web site (www.usm.edu/ie).

Administrative assessment reports are submitted by all departments and reviewed by the appropriate upper level administrator annually during July and August. The annual assessment report is used to assist vice presidents in the annual review process for their departments.

Since the University's strategic plan was approved in spring 2005, vice presidents and deans completed a strategic plan for their divisions/colleges which links to the overall University Strategic Plan (<http://www.usm.edu/ie/finalbdapprovedplan.doc>). The vice presidents, provost, and deans have

completed an interim assessment report to reflect the current status of their goals and tactics. These updates are provided in Appendix [A.1a](#), [A.1b](#), [A.2a](#), [A.2b](#), [A.3a](#), [A.3b](#), [A.4](#). In addition, the administrators have provided an interim assessment report in a narrative describing results and use of results from assessments within their respective divisions/colleges (Appendix [A.5a](#), [A.5b](#), [A.6a](#), [A.6b](#), [A.7a](#), [A.7b](#), [A.8a](#), [A.8b](#), [A.9a](#), [A.9b](#), [A.10](#)). All areas have noted changes to assessments and the impact of Hurricane Katrina within their particular units.

All academic and administrative assessment plans are posted on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness Web site (http://www.usm.edu/ie/assess_resources05-06.htm). The institution has fully embraced outcomes assessment and structured review of all academic and administrative units.

In spring 2006, Southern Miss began converting its Word assessment tracking documents into a new system, WEAVEonline. WEAVEonline is a Web-based assessment management solution used to capture, manage, archive, and track academic and administrative assessment information for regional and disciplinary accreditation, program reviews, annual reporting, and program improvement. The database will allow for more thorough analysis within programs, departments, and colleges as well as across the University.

Following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005, the strategic planning process was modified to direct special attention to the needs of students, especially on the Gulf Coast. In the short term, plans were developed and implemented to relocate the services and academic offerings on the Gulf Park campus to a former hospital facility owned by the Southern Miss Research Foundation in Gulfport, Mississippi. Classes resumed October 10 using a compressed format. Repairs were made to other Coast facilities (Stennis, Gulf Coast Research Lab, and Jackson County) and all services and classes resumed in October. Relative to longer range plans, recommendations regarding the future of the Gulf Park campus are being deliberated by the Institutions of Higher Learning. While that decision is pending, the Executive Cabinet has reviewed and modified strategic goals as appropriate. Examples of modifications include an increased emphasis on enhancing access by developing more distance education

programs, innovative scheduling of course offerings, and procurement of tuition support funds to better serve the needs of our students, especially those directly affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.1

The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded (a) is approved by the faculty and the administration, and (b) establishes and evaluates program and learning outcomes.

Comments:

The institution has a clearly defined process for approving educational programs that involves a series of reviews and approvals by relevant faculty and administrative constituencies. There is also a clearly defined process for establishing and assessing program and learning outcomes. However, these two processes are not linked, and there is no evidence that program and learning outcomes are considered in the approval of educational programs or courses. The institution needs to acknowledge through its formal approval processes the ways in which program and learning outcomes inform and justify curricular change.

The institution has formalized the review of assessment data when approving, modifying or deleting courses in academic programs. The Form for Course Proposals ([Appendix G.1](#)) has been updated to require departments to document assessment findings to either Academic Council or Graduate Council when course additions, modifications, or deletions are needed. Use of the modified forms with linkages to assessment results will be used for all changes submitted to Academic Council and Graduate Council beginning March 1, 2006.

In addition, Academic and Graduate Councils have adopted “Guidelines for Program Review” ([Appendix G.2](#)). The review process targets programs not eligible for program-specific accreditation and is primarily a mechanism by which programs at The University of Southern Mississippi can reflect on performance over the past several years and, with the help of external consultants and administration, plan for growth and development in the future. The program reviews include program assessment and use of results. Examples of program review self studies will be available on site.

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.7

The institution ensures the quality of educational programs/courses offered through consortia relationships or contractual agreements, ensures ongoing compliance with the comprehensive requirements, and evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the purpose of the institution.

Comments:

As part of its mission the University has numerous agreements with other institutions to facilitate transfer of credit and comparable quality. It has four types of consortia agreements. Type one consists of acceptance of specified blocks of courses through articulation agreement with community colleges, USAFI/DANITES, and ORUA. A second type involves the acceptance of blocks of courses from other universities, with quality verified through university guidelines. The study abroad agreements could not be accessed via the web or on the disk so they could not be examined. The institution has agreements with regionally accredited institutions for graduate degrees in nursing, special education, and social work.

A third type relates to internships, clinicals, and field experiences. These are reviewed by USM faculty. The faculty jointly supervise these experiences as well as serving as instructors of record.

The fourth type involves transfer of credit from the University to institutions in selected consortia with missions similar to its own mission. The university has a complete list of consortial and contractual agreements, initially reviews them according to university guidelines for consortia and international agreements as well as state mandates and statutory limitations, verifies accreditation of participating institutions, and mentions reviewing the key components when the agreement is drawn up. The originals and a comprehensive data base are maintained in the provost's office.

However, the date of last review is not evident. There is a notation in the chart available to Committee members that the information exists elsewhere. It is not evident whether these agreements are ever evaluated after the initial review. The university should provide the review dates and evidence of the review process and outcomes.

Based on concern of the off-site review team, the University reviewed all consortial/contractual agreements. A Contract/Consortia Agreement Review Form ([Appendix H.1](#)) was developed to assist in tracking the reviews. The chart has been updated with dates for evaluation and renewal of contracts. All contracts and consortia agreements were reviewed by the departments, with reviews sent to the respective dean and Provost for approval. The Consortial Agreement Summary Chart is maintained in the Provost's office ([Appendix H.2](#)). This process will be monitored annually by the Office of the Assistant to the President for Accreditation, Planning and Articulation.

In addition, the institution has provided two sample study abroad contracts for the on site review team's reference ([Appendix H.3](#) and [Appendix H.4](#)).

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.8

The institution awards academic credit for course work taken on a noncredit basis only when there is documentation that the noncredit course work is equivalent to a designated credit experience.

Comments:

The institution listed two instances where credit is awarded for non-credit course work or work experience: nontraditional credits awarded by another institution and military educational experience. The synopsis of the policies concerning awarding credit for course work taken on a non-credit basis in each of these areas was provided.

The narrative concerning military experience gave an explanation of the process for determining that non-credit course work is equivalent to a designated credit experience. In this case, the institution follows the Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services.

In the case of non-credit coursework, however, there was no description of the process for determining that non-credit course work is equivalent to a designated credit experience.

The off-site review noted this policy lacked clarity regarding the award of academic credit for coursework taken on a noncredit basis. Southern Miss has not awarded credit for noncredit coursework, other than military courses and educational experiences, in the last decade. The institution has clarified the policy to more accurately reflect acceptance only of military credit for noncredit courses. The clarified policy is as follows:

The University of Southern Mississippi only awards undergraduate credit for noncredit military courses and educational experiences, and for performance on three standardized tests: *College Level Examination Program (CLEP)*, *Advanced Placement Test (AP)*, and *International Baccalaureate Test (IB)*. A maximum of sixty-four (64) semester hours of credit may be earned by a combination of independent study and military experience and then applied toward an undergraduate degree. The process for evaluating and accepting such credit is outlined below. Graduate students may not receive credit for any noncredit courses and educational experiences, or test credit ([Appendix I.1](#))

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.13

For each major in a degree program, the institution assigns responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, this requirement applies to a curricular area or concentration.

Comments:

The University provided a list of all individuals responsible for program coordination, curriculum development, and review. Most of the faculty members listed are clearly qualified to assume responsibility for the duties. However, several do not have degrees or terminal degrees in the fields for which they have responsibility. The University should provide further documentation on the qualifications of the seventeen faculty members included on the list attached to this study in order to demonstrate compliance.

The faculty within each department/school at The University of Southern Mississippi are responsible for program coordination, curriculum development, and review. Department chairs, school directors, and faculty coordinators responsible for each major in a degree program are academically qualified in their fields. At the time of application, faculty submit a curriculum vita and upon appointment, all faculty submit official transcripts which are maintained in the Department of Human Resources. Professional Education Council reviews credentials of all professional education faculty. Graduate Council reviews faculty credentials and recommends graduate faculty status, which is reviewed every five years. Additionally, faculty credentials are reviewed by external faculty highly qualified in their disciplines as part of the tenure and promotion process.

The list provided by the off-site review team identified seven program coordinators rather than seventeen. The institution has prepared full portfolios for the seven program coordinators on the list.

Name: Mabel Jane Hudson

Department or Courses Taught: Medical Technology

Reason for Non-Compliance: No evidence of 18 hours beyond master's; Ph.D. not related to area taught

Response: Dr. Hudson received her MS in Medical Technology and a PhD in Educational Administration. Dr. Hudson has received the "Excellence in Teaching Award" at Southern Miss on three separate occasions and recently (2004) won the "American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

Theriot Award” for the development of Significant Materials in the Area of Media and Equipment (for book). She has over 30 publications in the field of medical technology spanning 30 years. Dr. Hudson is involved with professional organizations within the field of Medical Technology including their National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences CLS/MT Program Review Committee, American Society for Medical Technology (now American Society for Clinical Laboratory Sciences, including past president and Board of Directors of the Mississippi Society for Clinical Laboratory Sciences). Dr. Hudson is certified by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists as a Medical Technologist and Specialist in Microbiology as well as by the National Credentialing Agency for Laboratory Personnel as a Clinical Laboratory Scientist. Under Dr. Hudson’s leadership, students in the program have received numerous awards including: 100% passed either ASCP or NCA exam in 2005, Sigma Xi international research grant awarded on first attempt, and a student scored the highest score in nation on ASCP exam during spring 2004. The Department was awarded continuing accreditation for seven years in spring 2005 by The National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences. (Seven years is the maximum cycle awarded.) The institution believes Dr. Hudson to be highly qualified as the program coordinator for Medical Technology. A portfolio is available for on site review. ([Appendix J.1](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Lisa Nored

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Not qualified to teach Graduate Courses, except law

Response: Lisa Nored was previously identified as the program coordinator for the MA/MS Administration of Justice: Juvenile degree program. Dr. Donald Cabana, Department Chair, is now the program coordinator for this degree program. Portfolios for both Ms. Nored and Dr. Cabana have been prepared for the review team. ([Appendix J.2](#) and [Appendix J.3](#) contain selected components of the portfolios.)

Name: Dean Bertram

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Not qualified to teach graduate courses,OK for undergraduate courses

Response: Dean Bertram was previously identified as the program coordinator for the BA/BS Administration of Justice degree program. Dr. Donald Cabana, Department Chair, is now the program coordinator for this degree program. Portfolios for both Mr. Bertram and Dr. Cabana have been prepared for the on-site review team. ([Appendix J.4](#) and [Appendix J.3](#) contain selected components of the portfolios.)

Name: Randy Buchanan

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Document qualifications for these courses; annual report not sufficient to represent department justification

Response: Randy Buchanan is no longer the coordinator for the BS Electronics Engineering Technology program. Dr. Zhaoxin Zhou is the current program coordinator for BS Electronics Engineering Technology. Portfolios for both Mr. Buchanan and Dr. Zhou are available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix J.5](#) and [Appendix J.6](#) contain selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Shelton Houston

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Document qualifications for graduate courses taught

Response: Dr. Houston is no longer coordinator for the BS Computer Engineering Technology program nor the BS Information Technology program. Dr. Todd Adams is the current program coordinator for Computer Engineering Technology. Dr. Steve Blesse is the current coordinator for Information Technology. Portfolios for Mr. Houston, Dr. Adams and Dr. Blesse are available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix J.7](#), [Appendix J.8](#), and [Appendix J.9](#) contain selected components of the portfolios.)

Name: Desmond Fletcher

Department or Courses Taught: Construction

Reason for Non-Compliance: OK for Undergraduate courses, not qualified for graduate courses based on documentation

Response: Mr. Desmond Fletcher is the program coordinator for the BS Construction Engineering Technology and BS Architectural Engineering Technology degree programs. Mr. Fletcher holds a master's degree in Architecture from the University of Texas at Austin with 36 hours of master's level courses in architecture. Within the field of engineering technology, a master's degree is considered the terminal degree. Mr. Fletcher has been awarded over \$5,000,000 in research and instructional grants and has published over 30 publications, abstracts or reports. The institution believes Mr. Fletcher is qualified as the program coordinator for these two engineering technology programs. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix J.10](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Cynthia Gaudet

Department or Courses Taught: Economic Development & Planning

Reason for Non-Compliance: Linkage of credentials to course unclear

Response: The Workforce Training and Development degree program is housed in the Economic Development and Planning department. The department recently changed its name to better reflect the two different areas housed in it. It is now The Department of Economic and Workforce Development. Dr. Cynthia Gaudet is the program coordinator for the MS Workforce Training Development degree program. Dr. Gaudet received her PhD in Vocational Education with emphasis in Workforce Training and Development. Dr. Gaudet provides an excellent example of a broadly-based research human resource education and workforce development perspective. She has been successful obtaining grants and contracts, publishing research, creating new and innovative graduate programs, teaching graduate and undergraduate students, presenting at conferences, mentoring junior faculty, guiding doctoral students

through the dissertation process as advisor and committee member, and serving on university, college-wide and departmental-level committees. Her outreach efforts have resulted in national recognition for her expertise and the Workplace Learning and Performance Institute, which she established. The institution believes Dr. Gaudet is highly qualified as the program coordinator for the MS Workforce Training and Development degree program. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix J.11](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Comprehensive Standard 3.4.14

The institution's use of technology enhances student learning, is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs, and ensures that students have access to and training in the use of technology.

Comments:

The institution has developed a wide array of technology resources and training opportunities for students and faculty and has provided an appropriate technology infrastructure for its programs. The technology infrastructure includes course tools, a Learning Enhancement Center, support and training staff, 40 technology-enhanced classrooms, open computer labs, digital library resources, and assistance to faculty on developing e-learning tools. The institution has devoted particular attention to the technology education of future teachers. Therefore, it is the judgment of the off-site review team that the institution's use of technology is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs and ensures that students have access to and training in the use of technology.

However, the institution has only provided evidence that technology enhances student learning for teacher education candidates, but not for the rest of the student body, and therefore has not demonstrated compliance with this portion of CS 3.4.14. The institution lists the courses that are expected to incorporate computer competency for the rest of its student body, but presents no evidence that such incorporation enhances student learning.

During spring 2005, the General Education Committee of Academic Council requested course syllabi, specific learning objectives, and student outcomes for the general education courses in category II (math, science, and computer competency). The General Education Curriculum does not require one specific course to ensure technology positively impacts student learning. Rather it allows for departments to develop curriculum to best utilize technology resources within their chosen field to enhance students' learning. The Bulletin states that students will be able to "...demonstrate basic computer skill, including electronic collaboration, creation of structured electronic documents, and online research and evaluation. Additionally, each department requires that its students demonstrate competency in the operation of computers." All majors were asked to provide 2004-05 computer competency assessment reports in the standard university assessment plan format for 2004-05 ([Appendix K.1](#)). [Appendix K.2](#) provides the listing of computer courses by major. Table 9 illustrates how several of the computer competency courses have identified and assessed additional, more detailed learning outcomes. The columns 2c, 2d, 2e, and 2f refer to the outcomes defined in the Bulletin.

Table 9 Core Learning Outcomes for Computer Competency 04-05					
Course	2c	2d	2e	2f	Additional Outcomes
ART 311		x	x	x	
ART 361	x	x	x	x	
ART 431	x	x	x	x	
BTE 361/363	x	x	x	x	
BTLE	x	x			
CSC 100	x	x	x	x	
CSC 101	x		x	x	2h
CSC 101L	x		x	x	2g,2h
CSC 102	x		x	x	
CSC 211					2j,2k,2l,2m
CSC 309	x	x	x	x	
CSC 330	x	x		x	
CSC 331	x		x	x	2i
CSC 333				x	2o,2p,2q,2r
CSC 334				x	2s,2t,2u,2v
CSC 404	x	x	x	x	
CSS 240	x	x	x	x	
IS 491	x	x	x	x	
IT 365	x	x	x	x	
LIS 201	x	x	x	x	
NSG 305 NSG 306 NSG 315	x	x	x	x	
PHI 480		x	x	x	
PLS 385	x	x	x	x	
PSY 361		x		x	
PSY 418		x		x	
SOC 460	x	x	x	x	
SOC 462	x	x	x	x	

A summary report ([Appendix K.3](#)) identifies 230 computer competency assessments conducted throughout the University during 2004-05. Of these, 154 (67%) of the identified targets were met. When the assessment criteria are categorized, 72% of the achieved targets are linked to the Bulletin's computer competencies in the General Education Curriculum.

As part of the preparation for the on-site review, all majors have prepared an assessment plan with their computer competency learning outcomes and assessment measures identified for 2005-06.

[Appendix K.4](#) provides the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for 2005-06. Data collection for these assessment criteria will be provided at the end of spring semester.

All majors have learning outcomes identified that relate to computer competency and students are assessed based on these outcomes.

Beginning in 2001, Southern Miss redesigned its English 203 World Literature course using technology to eliminate variation across sections and inconsistent learning experiences. The redesign was supported through the Center for Academic Transformation (<http://www.center.rpi.edu/>) and funded through a Pew grant. All students were placed in a single online section and the passive lecture environment was replaced with media-enriched presentations requiring active student engagement. In the redesign, a course coordinator directed the team teaching of four faculty members and four graduate assistant graders. Each faculty member taught his or her area of expertise for four weeks. The faculty team offered course content through a combination of live lectures (optional attendance) and required Web-delivered, enhanced presentations. Full implementation began in fall 2002. After assessment, curriculum changes to English 203 included:

Low-stakes mastery quizzes. Automated quizzing allowed students to self-assess how carefully they were reading, with options to review, retest, and possibly earn a higher score – all the while gaining a greater mastery over course content. Because the faculty began their presentations only after the testing window closed each week, faculty were also able to gauge how well students performed on quizzes and, when necessary, adjust their presentations to focus on areas with which students were having the greatest difficulty. When faculty were confident that students had mastered factual content, they could move more quickly to analysis and synthesis of information, helping students advance to higher orders of learning. Mastery quizzing was thus an important formative tool for both students and faculty.

Individualized, on-demand assistance. A new division of labor allowed faculty, graduate assistants, and technology to collaboratively improve student learning outcomes. Faculty

concentrated on explaining course content, graduate assistants worked one-on-one with students to improve writing skills, and technology was used to manage aspects of the course that could be automated. Significant improvements resulted in both reading and writing skills for students in the redesigned course. These results call into question the commonly held notion that the "best" course is always a small one taught by a single instructor working alone. Instructional tasks can be divided and students can benefit from the division.

Accommodation of different learning styles. The redesigned course is more consistent than ever before (all students are in a single section, with a single syllabus, taught and graded by a single team with shared responsibilities) and potentially more flexible than it has ever been. Students can choose to attend live presentations or watch them online (or both), take quizzes until they demonstrate content mastery, view a large array of optional complementary media linked to course content, explore recommended Web sites to deepen their understanding of literature, and consult with graduate assistants to get help with their essays. Survey results indicate although students engaged in the course differently, their satisfaction levels were quite high, and most agreed they had learned the required materials. So, is the redesigned course one section with hundreds of students or hundreds of sections, each tailored by and to an individual student's needs? The answer is both, the former from the standpoint of faculty and the latter from the standpoint of students.

Other English 203 Results

- Increased time-on-task through the use of repeatable, automated mastery quizzing.
- More than half of students reported using at least one-quarter of the optional resources offered, suggesting a deeper engagement with course content through technology.
- More than half of students reported the technological dimensions of the course had a positive impact on their learning experience, while another 37 percent were neutral.

- One-quarter of students said the redesigned course, more than others in their college careers, caused them to join online and traditional study groups and learning communities.
- Overall student satisfaction levels were higher in the redesigned course than they were under the traditional course – slightly better in six measured areas, behind in one area (opportunities for questioning), and far ahead in two other areas (grading fairness and timely return of graded work).

Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1

The institution identifies college-level competencies within the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those competencies.

Comments:

The institution revised its General Education Curriculum (GEC) and established a new set of outcomes for students, beginning in 2003. The GEC identified five broad principles and 14 core student learning outcomes. However, the core outcome statements are vague and very broad and do not appear to identify attainable and measurable outcomes appropriate for college students. Thus, the Off-Site Committee could not determine that the institution has identified college-level competencies within its general education core.

Furthermore, the institution presents no evidence of the alignment between these broad and somewhat vague outcome statements and the test it has chosen to administer, the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP). The University discusses standardized testing of math, science, critical thinking, social science, reading and writing through the CAAP and its relationship to ACT, but does not indicate how these areas specifically relate to each of the student learning outcomes. Furthermore, while the comparison of the scores of USM graduates to those of students at other institutions demonstrates a general achievement of college-level learning, the lack of any demonstrated alignment renders such results almost meaningless in terms of indicating the achievement of the institution's stated general education outcomes.

Further, the institution does not provide student learning outcome objective statements with targeted levels of accomplishment. It should be noted that the use of grades is not an effective method for measuring student learning outcomes.

Faculty and administrators have considered the comments of the off-site review team and appreciate the opportunity to summarize evidence of the University's compliance with item 3.5.1.

As the off-site team noted, the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) demonstrated a general achievement of college-level learning at Southern Miss. The Southern Miss report of CAAP results reveals senior-level students scored higher than the national average in most categories ([Appendix L.1](#)). This test was given in spring 2005 to students who had gone through the older general education curriculum (old core). In this report, we add the alignment of CAAP subtests with four of the old core's five learning categories ([Appendix L.2](#)) and five of the new core's 14 learning objectives ([Appendix L.3](#)). These alignments should help allay the off-site team's concerns about whether a connection exists between the CAAP and the measurement of core college-level learning outcomes. In spring 2006, the CAAP is being administered to assess student learning in the new core.

This is the first year students using the new core will have completed most of the lower-level core courses. Use of the CAAP is not, however, the sole assessment of the general education core.

The general education core has evolved from the old core with 137 possible courses to the new core with 40 courses at the lower level ([Appendix L.4](#)) and two additional courses, a senior-level capstone course and an upper-level second writing-intensive course. These changes make the core more manageable and assessable. The new core, which began with fall 2003 freshman, has 14 discrete learning objectives instead of the old core's five broad statements. The off-site team continued to be concerned about the broadness of some of these 14 learning objectives. We agree. However, in the core's evolution, the 14 learning objectives provided an important basis for formation of even more specific learning outcomes for assessment. The core, including the learning objectives, was developed over a three year period in 1999-2002 by Academic Council's general education committee after numerous committee meetings, faculty input, public hearings, and administration review. Since its implementation in 2003, the general education committee has continued to evaluate the core. The Council and the University are committed to continual review and assessment of the core.

The new core's 14 learning objectives have been further subdivided in 2005-06 into more specific and measurable learning outcomes by an expanded general education committee. The core's more specific learning outcomes and alignment with core courses ([Appendix L.5](#)) should lead to better assessment to ensure college-level competencies are acquired. There are at least two subdivisions of each of the 14 learning objectives. As an example, the core's learning objective 3 states "Graduates will have and demonstrate knowledge of the methods, basic data, ideas and explanation, and scope of the natural sciences." This has been subdivided into more specific, measurable learning outcomes. These are (a) students will have a good understanding of the scientific method, (b) students will have good knowledge of the basic concepts of at least one science discipline, (c) students will have a good understanding of the current areas of concern or emphasis within at least one science discipline, (d) students will be able to interpret scientific data and reach a plausible conclusion, and (e) students will have a good understanding

of the techniques used in science. These subdivisions into specific college-level competencies make the measurement of learning outcomes more meaningful.

Assessment data from primarily science core courses demonstrate achievement of core learning outcomes both for science and non-science objectives ([Appendix L.6](#)). Courses in the core align with multiple learning outcomes ([Appendix L.7](#)). This was a factor in deciding which courses would be in the core ([Appendix L.8](#)). Twenty-one of the 40 lower level core courses were assessed in 2004-05. At least 220 different assessments of core learning objectives were completed. Another 230 assessments of computer competency (part of objective 2) were done. For the five science learning outcomes, 62% of the 95 assessments met or exceeded their targets ([Appendix L.9](#)). For the non-science learning outcomes, 71% of 126 assessments met or exceeded their targets ([Appendix L.10](#)). For the computer competency in learning objective 67% of 230 assessments met their targets ([Appendix L.10](#) and [Appendix L.11](#)). The general education committee and individual departments will continue to evaluate achievement of target levels and the appropriate setting of target levels after the next rounds of assessments.

The assessment data proved valuable as departments made use of the results ([Appendix L.6](#)). As an example, in the core chemistry courses CHE 106 and CHE 107, the target for assessing student knowledge of basic concepts was that 50% would have good or fair knowledge. This target was slightly exceeded in both classes, but the department's used results to introduce a new teaching technology in class, personal response systems, with which the instructor can get immediate feedback from students to determine whether they understand a chemical concept. In some cases, the use of results led departments to reconsider how to communicate the learning objectives to students (see BSC 103, BSC 110 and BSC 111) and then re-assess these classes.

Assessments of all learning objectives in the core have been scheduled by departments for completion by the end of the spring 2006 semester. The subdivision of the 14 core learning objectives into more specific learning outcomes (measurable competencies) will help facilitate the departments' assessment of core courses. The checklist of courses and the learning objectives they will assess are shown in [Appendix L.7](#). The specific core learning outcomes, proposed method of evaluation, and targets

for results of assessment are shown in [Appendix L.12](#). The results of these assessments will be used by the departments and reviewed by Academic Council's general education committee for improvement of learning. This committee was reformulated this semester to provide continuity on next year's Academic Council. It has been given the task of continued evaluation of learning outcomes and assessment methods.

In summary, the University believes we have presented evidence of compliance with item 3.5.1. We have shown the CAAP aligns well with both the old core and many of the new core's learning objectives. The CAAP results demonstrated college-level learning. We have divided the core's 14 learning objectives into a more specific set of assessable learning outcomes. Over half of the freshman-and-sophomore-level core courses have been assessed for accomplishment of learning objectives with over 220 different assessments completed. The results of all assessments reveal an average of 68% of targets were met. Assessments of the core learning objectives continue with assessment of all courses planned for spring 2006.

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1

The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline in accordance with the guidelines listed below. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.

Comments:

Overall, the faculty at the University of Southern Mississippi is competent to accomplish its mission. Faculty credentials for both full time and part time faculty were provided in an extensive spreadsheet format, with information on exceptions. In general, the institution seemed to adhere to the guidelines of a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline for undergraduate programs, the terminal degree in the teaching discipline for graduate and post-graduate programs, and 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline for graduate teaching assistants. There is a process for exceptions to these faculty credential expectations.

Even so, in some instances, the Off-Site Committee could not ascertain whether the qualifications of individual faculty members were adequate. The names of these faculty members are included on the attached list

Faculty members at The University of Southern Mississippi are distinguished in all facets of university life including teaching, research, service, and economic development. The institution offers degrees in emerging disciplines including health, engineering technology, and administration of justice. When a faculty candidate in an emerging field does not have a terminal degree, the institution considers “competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experience in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes” as directed in 3.7.1. Within the field of engineering technology, industrial experience is highly valued. Within the health fields, licensure and certifications along with work experience are highly valued.

Within the field of administration of justice, work experience is invaluable, especially related to the many facets of criminal justice including law, law enforcement, corrections, juvenile justice, prosecutors and trial lawyers, and criminal investigations. In graduate-level programs, the program seeks

to employ faculty who have worked as institutional or agency managers within criminal justice organizations. Southern Miss is unique in that administration of justice is a stand-alone department. Many institutions house criminal justice programs within sociology or political science departments. The doctoral program in administration of justice at Southern Miss is one of thirty in the nation.

As part of the reaffirmation process, the institution developed CD online faculty rosters (www.usm.edu/sacs/faculty) which have been updated with current course assignments. The formatted rosters are available on the Focused Report CD for the on-site review team ([Appendix M.1](#)). The faculty identified by the off-site team have been carefully reviewed. Responses to the “reasons for non-compliance” follow:

Name: Carolyn Beck

Department or Courses Taught: Medical Technology

Reason for Non-Compliance: Not qualified to teach graduate courses based on documentation

Response: Dr. Beck received her MS in Medical Technology and a EdD in Allied Health Education and Administration. Medical Technology is an emerging field with only two institutions awarding doctoral level degrees. Dr. Beck is certified by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists Board of Registry as a Medical Technologist, the American Society of Clinical Pathologists Board of Registry together with the American Association of Blood Banks as a Specialist in Blood Bank Technology SBB, and as a Clinical Laboratory Specialist both CLS and CLSp-IH by the National Certification Agency. Dr. Beck has numerous publications and presentations. The institution believes Dr. Beck is qualified to teach graduate courses within the Department of Medical Technology. A portfolio is available to the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.2](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Sabrina Bryant

Department or Courses Taught: Medical Technology

Reason for Non-Compliance: No evidence of 18 hours at graduate level

Response: Ms. Bryant received her MS degree in Science Education (Biology Education) where 24 hours could be applied within the Medical Technology field. Ms. Bryant is currently working on a doctoral degree in Clinical Health Science. She has completed 24 graduate hours in this program. A copy of Ms. Bryant's transcripts is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.3](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Mabel Jane Hudson

Department or Courses Taught: Medical Technology

Reason for Non-Compliance: No evidence of 18 hours beyond master's; Ph.D. not related to area taught

Response: Dr. Hudson received her MS in Medical Technology and a PhD in Educational Administration. Dr. Hudson completed 37 hours related to medical technology in her doctoral degree program. Medical Technology is an emerging field with only two institutions awarding doctoral level degrees. Dr. Hudson has received the "Excellence in Teaching Award" at Southern Miss on three separate occasions and recently (2004) won the "American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science Theriot Award" for the development of Significant Materials in the Area of Media and Equipment (for book). She has over 30 publications in the field of medical technology spanning 30 years. Dr. Hudson is involved with professional organizations within the field of Medical Technology including their National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences CLS/MT Program Review Committee, American Society for Medical Technology (now American Society for Clinical Laboratory Sciences, including past president and Board of Directors of the Mississippi Society for Clinical Laboratory Sciences. Dr. Hudson is certified by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists as a Medical Technologist and Specialist in Microbiology as well as by the National Credentialing Agency for Laboratory Personnel as a Clinical Laboratory Scientist. The institution believes Dr. Hudson to be highly qualified to teach courses in the Medical Technology department. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.4](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Jane Montgomery

Department or Courses Taught: Nursing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Justification states shortage, not her qualifications

Response: Ms Montgomery is an adjunct faculty in the graduate nursing program. Her assignment is NSG 630 – Psycho-Bio Therapeutics. She is co-teaching with Dr. Faye Mitchell. This graduate course is specifically designed to address biological, psychological, and pharmacological theory and research concerned with diagnosing and treating individuals experiencing mental health problems. Ms. Montgomery is assigned to teach in the nursing program based upon her expertise in clinical practice as an Adult and Family Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. Ms. Montgomery’s practice consists of diagnosing and treating individuals with mental health problems, including pharmacological interventions. Ms Montgomery received her Master of Science in Nursing with a focus in Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Specialization. She is licensed as an Adult Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and board certified as a Family Psychiatric/Mental Nurse Practitioner and Adult Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner through the American Nurses Credentialing Center. The institution believes Ms Montgomery is highly qualified to teach this course. ([Appendix M.5](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Alicia Ann Powers

Department or Courses Taught: Nutrition & Food Systems

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show 18 SCH's in relevant field (GTA)

Response: Alicia Ann Powers is a doctoral-level graduate teaching assistant. She has a MS in Nutrition and Food Science with 10 hours in nutrition-related courses and 26 hours related to nutrition in her doctoral degree program. Ms. Powers is the instructor for the one-third of the COH 100 (Concepts of Wellness) that focuses on nutrition. The other two components are community health and human

performance. A copy of her transcripts is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.6](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Sara Doude

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show 18 SCH's in relevant field (GTA)

Response: Sara Doude is a doctoral-level graduate teaching assistant. She has a MS in Criminal Justice with 46 hours in criminal justice/administration of justice courses and 12 hours related to administration of justice in her doctoral degree program. A copy of her transcripts is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.7](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Vicki Lynn Lindsay

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show 18 SCH's in relevant field (GTA)

Response: Vicki Lindsay is a doctoral level graduate teaching assistant. She has a MS in Criminal Justice with 42 master's level hours in criminal justice/administration of justice courses and 18 hours related to administration of justice in her doctoral degree program. A copy of her transcripts is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.8](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Elizabeth McMullan

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show 18 SCH's in relevant field (GTA)

Response: Elizabeth McMullan is a doctoral-level graduate teaching assistant. She has a MS in Criminal Justice with 37 master's level hours in criminal justice/administration of justice courses and 28 hours related to administration of justice in her doctoral degree program. A copy of her transcripts will be available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.9](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Lisa Nored

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Not qualified to teach graduate courses, except law

Response: Ms. Lisa Nored received her MS in Criminal Justice with a minor in Counseling Psychology. Ms. Nored has also earned a JD. Her law school education provided her with a theoretical and practical understanding of the legal system as well as intensive instruction in legal research and writing. Ms. Nored has completed the coursework for her doctoral degree in the field of Public Policy and Administration. The courses Ms. Nored teaches are all related to law. She teaches criminal law, evidence and procedure, family law, juvenile corrections, child abuse law, family violence and legal research. Ms. Nored's background includes being a practicing attorney specializing in domestic relations, juvenile law, and criminal defense and serving as a law clerk to a Mississippi Supreme Court Justice. Her experience as a law clerk included many civil and criminal appeals, including many death penalty cases. In addition, Ms. Nored served as a law clerk in the Criminal Litigation Division, Office of the Attorney General, State of Mississippi. The institution believes Ms. Nored is highly qualified to teach law related courses in the Department of Administration of Justice. A full portfolio is available for on site review. ([Appendix M.10](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: James Roberts, Jr.

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: No direct link between courses and degree

Response: Mr. Roberts has been assigned to teach three Administration of Justice courses (AJ 582 Criminal Justice Ethics (previously CJ 582), CJ 630 Seminar in Civil Liberties, and AJ 640 Seminar in Police Administration) because of the unique professional qualifications and the experience he is able to bring to the subject matter. His work experience includes 35 years as a practicing attorney, 12 years as a county prosecuting attorney, 12 years as a youth court prosecutor, 4 years as the Commissioner for the

Mississippi Department of Public Safety, 4 years as a chancery court judge and 7 years as a Mississippi State Supreme Court Justice. During his tenure as the Commissioner, he supervised a state agency that included the Mississippi Highway Patrol, Mississippi State Crime Laboratory, Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy, Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, and the Mississippi Medical Examiner's Office. In his capacity as Commissioner of Public Safety, Mr. Roberts dealt with issues involving ethics, civil liberties, and police administration on a daily basis. As a sitting member of the governor's cabinet, Roberts was required to set policy, establish goals and objectives, and determine priorities for law enforcement agencies at all levels in Mississippi state government, including those dealing with ethics, and ethical conduct by law enforcement officers.

As a sitting justice on the Mississippi Supreme Court, Mr. Roberts rendered legal opinions and decisions in numerous cases involving ethics related issues, as well as civil liberty issues. His expertise as a former Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court, in teaching and conveying knowledge of civil liberty and due process issues is beyond question. As a former chief law enforcement officer of the state of Mississippi, his extensive hands-on, daily experience dealing with ethics and administrative issues make him uniquely qualified to teach these courses. ([Appendix M.11](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Julian Allen

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Qualifications for CJ 535 not evident

Response: Dr. Julian Allen completed 18 hours of his graduate courses in Administration of Justice while completing his PhD in Adult Education. Dr. Allen was assigned to teach AJ 535 (Organization and Management) in the summer 2005 term. In addition to his graduate work in the Administration of Justice field, Dr. Allen was particularly knowledgeable in the subject matter by virtue of his professional experience as Chief Deputy Sheriff in Harrison County and Executive Director of the Southern Mississippi Regional Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy. In both positions, Dr. Allen

functioned as a senior-level administrator, responsible for the daily operations of large criminal justice entities. Dr. Allen is no longer teaching this course. However, a portfolio is available for on site review. ([Appendix M.12](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: William Lofton

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Provide better evidence, none of his college education applies to field taught

Response: Dr. William Lofton was assigned as an adjunct instructor to teach FSC 440 (Drug Identification) and FSC 445/545, a combined undergraduate/graduate course in Crime Scene Documentation in the spring 2005 term and summer 2005 term. Dr. Lofton completed 16 hours of graduate forensic science coursework including: drug identification, crime scene documentation, and arson and explosives. Additionally, Dr. Lofton is presently an Assistant Chief of Police who conducts forensic and criminal investigations at field crime scenes. His professional knowledge and expertise, combined with his academic coursework in the forensic area contributed to his expertise in the area taught. Dr. Lofton no longer teaches these courses. However, a portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.13](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Stephen Mallory

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Not qualified to teach Graduate Courses based on documentation

Response: Dr. Stephen Mallory earned his MS in Administration of Justice and completed 30 graduate hours of administration of justice coursework. In spring 2005, Dr. Mallory was assigned to teach AJ 740 (Administration of Justice), AJ 625 (Seminar in Research and Planning), AJ 692 (Special Problems), and AJ 797 (Independent Study). Dr. Mallory has 25 years experience with the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics and Drug Enforcement Administration and served a number of years as Deputy Director of the

Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics. Dr. Mallory has authored a book and is contracted to publish a second book. He has published in reference journals and made numerous presentations to regional and national conferences. Dr. Mallory served as Chair of the Department of Administration of Justices for four years. Dr. Mallory no longer teaches at the University. However, a portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.14](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Diane Sollie

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Qualifications not evident, show SCH's

Response: Ms. Sollie was assigned to teach AJ 420 – Research and Planning during spring 2005 as an adjunct instructor. Ms. Sollie was pursuing a PhD in Sociology at the University of Alabama and had completed 15 hours of coursework in Research Methods and Statistics. She is also the Director of the Criminal Justice program at Meridian Community College. Ms. Sollie no longer teaches for the Department of Administration of Justice. ([Appendix M.15](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Jessica Taylor

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Why GTA w/ MS? Show 18 SCH's

Response: Jessica Taylor is a doctoral level graduate teaching assistant. She has a MS in Criminal Justice with 30 master-level hours in criminal justice/administration of justice courses and 18 hours related to administration of justice in her doctoral degree program. A copy of her transcripts is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.16](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Dean Bertram

Department or Courses Taught: Administration of Justice

Reason for Non-Compliance: Not qualified to teach graduate courses, OK for undergraduate courses

Response: Mr. Dean Bertram has earned a MS in Administration of Justice and has completed all coursework for his doctoral degree in Adult Education. Mr. Bertram has earned 18 hours of graduate credit in forensic science. Mr. Bertram consistently engages in research related to forensic science and in 2003 filed a patent for Tissue Rehydration for Decomposed Friction Skin Ridges. The patent was sold to Biocare Medical Company. Mr. Bertram has also received several honors and awards including Who's Who Among America's Teachers (2 years) and Distinguished Instructor for Mississippi Police Corp. Mr. Bertram no longer teaches graduate courses nor does he serve as the program coordinator for the BA/BS Administration of Justice programs. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.17](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Pamela Jones

Department or Courses Taught: Foreign Language

Reason for Non-Compliance: DMA in voice but teaching language

Response: Dr. Jones is no longer teaching courses in Foreign Language as of summer 2005. During fall 2005 she taught opera and vocal literature. She is not teaching courses this spring.

Name: James Walters

Department or Courses Taught: Foreign Language

Reason for Non-Compliance: DM teaches Latin

Response: Dr. Walters holds a DM in Theology. His transcript has been highlighted to show his relevant courses for Latin (18 hours). He is currently teaching Latin 101 and Latin 102 courses. ([Appendix M.18](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Christopher Dedual

Department or Courses Taught: Biological Sciences

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show SCH's in relevant field (GTA)

Response: Mr. Dedual has 22 graduate hours related to biological science courses. He is no longer teaching courses and has withdrawn from the University.

Name: Tracy Lynn Moore

Department or Courses Taught: Chemistry and Biochemistry

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show 18 SCH's in relevant field (GTA)

Response: Ms. Tracy Moore is a doctoral student in the Center for Science and Mathematics Education. Ms. Moore has earned a MS in Chemistry with 39 hours of chemistry. Ms. Moore has completed 54 hours of her doctoral program. Ms. Moore has taught general chemistry at the university level for several years in both Louisiana and Mississippi. Ms. Moore is teaching the lowest-level chemistry courses in the chemistry department, CHE 100 and CHE 104. CHE 100 is the preparatory course for the first general chemistry course and is designed for students who have not had high school chemistry. CHE 104 is the chemistry course for non-science majors. Ms. Moore's background in both chemistry and science education make her highly qualified to teach these courses. Ms. Moore is working under the supervision of Dr. Jeffrey Evans to ensure that appropriate content is covered in these courses. A portfolio (including transcripts) is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.19](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Edward Pinero, Jr.

Department or Courses Taught: Coastal Sciences

Reason for Non-Compliance: Document connection between degrees and courses

Response: Dr. Pinero teaches a course entitled Grantsmanship in Environmental Coastal Zone Management (COA 763). In the spring of 2000, Dr. Pinero took a course entitled Grantsmanship (IDV 720). His experience in the field of grantsmanship is evidenced by the number of projects (7 projects with over \$17,000,000) over the past 12 years. Statistical Methods in Environmental Coastal Zone Management (COA 762) and Applications of Environmental and Coastal Zone Management (COA 757) are also taught by Dr. Pinero. Since February 2001, Dr. Pinero has been the Associate Director of the Gulf Coast Geospatial Center. As such he provides GIS and remote sensing expertise to Department of Coastal Sciences faculty, students, staff, and the community in general. In addition, Dr. Pinero has delivered numerous presentations on GIS and research project management.

Dr. Pinero has completed a Geographical Information System Training program through the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), GIS, and Mapping Software Company and is a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) certified trainer in the areas of using GIS to access community vulnerability to hazards such as floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes. The institution believes Dr. Pinero has the necessary background, experience, and expertise to teach these courses. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.20](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Ralph Bisland

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Document qualification for graduate courses taught

Response: Even though Dr. Bisland does not have a degree in Computer Science, he earned a Doctor of Business Administration with a dissertation titled, “An Interactive Computer Assisted Instruction Simulation Model for Use by Plan Callers in Learning Strategies in Football.” Dr. Bisland has more than 30 years of teaching experience in the Department of Computer Science. Dr. Bisland teaches CSC 521 (Relational Database Management System) which is in his area of expertise. He is the author of the text book “Database Management: Developing Application Systems Using Oracle.” Dr. Bisland is also an

instructor for CSC 592 (Computer Science Problem I), a special project course that allows students to work with instructors to explore advanced topics within the instructor's area of expertise. Based on his academic experience within the field of computer science, the University believes Dr. Bisland is qualified to teach these courses. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.21](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Randy Buchanan

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Document qualifications for these courses; annual report not sufficient to represent department justification

Response: Mr. Buchanan holds a MS in Physics. According to the Criteria for Accrediting Programs in Engineering Technology, a master's degree in engineering or engineering technology is considered the appropriate terminal degree; a master's degree in a closely related field if the degree is primarily analytical and the subject clearly appropriate, e.g., a degree in physics for certain areas of electronics.

Mr. Buchanan teaches courses in the Electronics Engineering Technology program. This program is very analytical, with the forthcoming catalog requiring mathematics through differential equations. In addition, problem solving, mathematics, and physics are integrated throughout the curriculum.

Electronics is but a field of physics. With closely related field consideration, the School of Computing believes the physics degree qualifies as a pertinent degree and is acceptable as the terminal degree for Engineering Technology at Southern Miss. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team.

([Appendix M.22](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Shelton Houston

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Document qualifications for graduate courses taught

Response: Dr. Shelton Houston has been involved with personal computer systems since they were available in the early 1980's. He has over eight years of consulting experience as a private consultant for Mississippi public schools and small businesses regarding local computer network (LAN) applications. Dr. Houston has 13 years designing, planning, and managing network infrastructure improvements for eight multipurpose computer labs. Dr. Houston's academic background is aligned with the information technology and research components of the engineering technology degrees rather than to the engineering courses. The courses he teaches are related to his expertise. The institution believes Dr. Houston is qualified to teach these courses. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.23](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Nancy Howell

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Need more specific information

Response: Ms. Nancy Howell has been working in the computer industry for 17 years. Her emphasis is in software. She was Director of Implementation, Documentation, and Training for 8 years with Intelus/SunGard/Eclipsys. Throughout the course of her career, Ms. Howell was responsible for design, implementation, documentation and training regarding computer systems. She had in-depth exposure to all important ethical and social issues related to the design, implementation, and use of computer systems. The institution believes Ms Howell is qualified to teach computer science courses based on her work experience. A portfolio is available for the on-site review. ([Appendix M.24](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Hugh Garraway

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show qualifications for courses; justification too general

Response: Mr. Hugh Garraway retired in June 2005. He is no longer teaching courses at Southern Miss.

Name: Daniel Kohn

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Qualifications not evident for graduate courses

Response: Mr. Daniel Kohn no longer teaches computing courses at Southern Miss.

Name: Alan Spurgeon

Department or Courses Taught: Computing

Reason for Non-Compliance: Show 18 SCH's in relevant field (GTA

Response: Mr. Alan Spurgeon is a graduate student enrolled in the combined MS/PhD program in Computational Sciences with an emphasis in Computer Science. He has completed 36 graduate credit including 40 hours at the doctoral level. ([Appendix M.25](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Rita Endt

Department or Courses Taught: Construction

Reason for Non-Compliance: Not qualified for graduate courses based on evidence; further document why a masters in Industrial Engineering qualifies for master's teaching Engineering Technology

Response: Ms. Endt has a MS degree in Industrial Engineering and is working on a PhD in Engineering. Coursework in engineering technology is generally considered to be a subset of engineering - the application of the theory. Ms. Endt has 48 graduate credit hours in Industrial Engineering and has completed 25 hours in doctoral-level engineering courses. Ms. Endt has four years of experience teaching Industrial Engineering Technology and over 27 years industry experience in operations research, industrial engineering and data processing fields, encompassing the following areas: engineering analysis and design; automated system design, development, and implementation; logistics; project management; and financial management. The School of Construction believes Ms. Endt to be qualified to teach in their

programs. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.26](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Desmond Fletcher

Department or Courses Taught: Construction

Reason for Non-Compliance: OK for undergraduate courses, not qualified for graduate courses based on documentation

Response: Mr. Desmond Fletcher is the program coordinator for the BS Construction Engineering Technology and BS Architectural Engineering Technology degree programs. Mr. Fletcher's master's degree in Architecture from the University of Texas at Austin with 36 hours of master-level courses in architecture along with his industrial experience qualify him to teach master's level courses. Within the field of engineering technology, a master's degree is considered the terminal degree. Mr. Fletcher has been awarded over \$5,000,000 in research and instructional grants. Mr. Fletcher has published over 30 publications, abstracts or reports. The institution believes Mr. Fletcher is qualified to teach courses in the two engineering technology programs. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.27](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: John Hannon

Department or Courses Taught: Construction

Reason for Non-Compliance: Qualifications not evident for graduate courses

Response: Mr. Hannon has a MS in Construction Administration. He has over 20 years experience in the field with his most recent experience as a senior engineer/consulting services project manager. As a senior project manager, his responsibilities included: providing training, consulting, and implementation services to hundreds of heavy civil construction companies throughout the United States in state-of-the-art job estimating and project management, and providing corporate, executive and managerial diagnosis to increase client proficiencies and profit. According to ABET criteria, "a master's degree in engineering

or engineering technology,...is considered as the appropriate terminal degree.” Therefore, the department believes Mr. Hannon is qualified to teach both undergraduate and graduate courses. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.28](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Doris Kemp

Department or Courses Taught: Construction

Reason for Non-Compliance: Qualifications not evident for graduate courses

Response: Ms Kemp has a MS in Engineering Technology. In her work experience, she has developed and written company safety plans and performed job site safety audits. She received \$600,000 in funding related to *Effectiveness of Behavioral Highway Safety Countermeasures*. Ms. Kemp teaches Construction Safety at the graduate level. According to ABET criteria, “a master’s degree in engineering or engineering technology,...is considered as the appropriate terminal degree.” Therefore, the department believes Ms. Kemp is qualified to teach both undergraduate and graduate courses. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.29](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Robert Newsom, Jr.

Department or Courses Taught: Construction

Reason for Non-Compliance: Graduate degree doesn't relate to field

Response: Mr. Newsom has over 37 years of experience in the highway and bridge construction field. He spent 13 years as president of a highway bridge and construction company. He has managed and implemented numerous building projects for bridges and highways. Mr. Newsom received a BS in Civil Engineering and a MBA. According to the School of Construction, the MBA is highly valued in the construction management field. The crossover between business and construction technical knowledge is highly valued by employers, ACCE accreditation, and students. The department believes Mr. Newsome is qualified to teach in their programs. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix](#)

[M.30](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Cynthia Gaudet

Department or Courses Taught: Economic Development and Planning

Reason for Non-Compliance: Linkage of credentials to course unclear

Response: The Workforce Training and Development degree program is housed in the Economic Development and Planning department. The department recently changed its name to better reflect the housing of two different areas. It is now called Department of Economic and Workforce Development. Dr. Cynthia Gaudet is the program coordinator for the MS Workforce Training Development degree program. Dr. Gaudet received her PhD in Vocational Education with emphasis in Workforce Training and Development. Dr. Gaudet represents an excellent example of a broadly based research human resource education and workforce development perspective. She has been successful obtaining grants and contracts, publishing research, creating new and innovative graduate programs, teaching graduate and undergraduate students, presenting at conferences, mentoring junior faculty, guiding doctoral students through the dissertation process as advisor and committee member, and serving on university, college-wide and departmental-level committees. Her outreach efforts have resulted in national recognition for her expertise and the Workplace Learning and Performance Institute, which she established. The Workforce Training and Development master's program emphasizes both research and theory framework of workforce learning and performance as well as practical applications. The institution believes Dr. Gaudet is highly qualified as the program coordinator for the MS Workforce Training and Development degree program. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.31](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Margaret Lochhead

Department or Courses Taught: UNIV 1001

Reason for Non-Compliance: Only a BS degree; lack of documentation for related work experience

Response: UNV 101 (University 101) is a two-hour course that is an “Introduction to higher education and a general orientation to the functions and resources of the University. It encourages development of active learning skills and promotes responsible decision-making.” This student-success course is designed to facilitate the transition of beginning students to their new academic environment and is interdisciplinary in nature. Ms. Lochhead has taught numerous courses during her 10 year tenure at Southern Miss. Her courses are listed as part of the development education curriculum. Prior to teaching at Southern Miss, Ms. Lochhead has over a decade of experience teaching developmental math in Ohio’s two-year college system. Ms. Lochhead does not fit the traditional mold for a university instructor, however, she has a rich, diverse educational and professional background that more than qualifies her to teach transition courses for entering college students. A portfolio is available for the on-site review team. ([Appendix M.32](#) contains selected components of the portfolio)

Name: Charles Cartee

Department or Courses Taught: REI 330, REI 432, REI 434

Reason for Non-Compliance: Upper division courses: Ed.D. in Educational Administration

Response: Dr. Charles Cartee is an instructor for Real Estate and Insurance (REI) courses at Southern Miss. Dr. Cartee holds numerous certifications within the real estate industry including: State Certified General Real Estate Appraiser for the State of Mississippi, certified as a Real Estate Broker through the Mississippi Real Estate Commission, and certified as a SRPA Member of the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers and the Society of Real Estate Appraisers. Dr. Cartee has published in a number of academic journals. Dr. Cartee has served as President of Cartee Properties, Inc., a diversified real estate consulting firm specializing in commercial appraisals, real estate investment analysis, market feasibility studies, highest and best use research and commercial brokerage for over 20 years. Based on his experience and certification in the real estate industry, the institutions believes Dr. Cartee is highly qualified to teach REI 330 (Principles of Real Estate), REI 432 (Real Estate Finance and Investment Analysis), and REI 434 (Real Estate Appraisal). A portfolio is available for the on-site review team.

([Appendix M.33](#) contains selected components of the portfolio.)

Name: Diane Coleman

Department or Courses Taught: HPR 309

Reason for Non-Compliance: Upper division course: MS in Communication Studies

Response: HPR 309 – First Aid

Ms. Coleman has been certified as an instructor in First Aid/CPR/AED by the American Red Cross since April 2003. Based on her certification, the institution believes she is qualified to teach this course.

([Appendix M.34](#) contains a copy of her certification.)

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.3

The institution provides evidence of ongoing professional development of faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners.

Comments:
The institution identified the Faculty Activity Report as a tool to document the quantitative summary of the many professional activities of faculty members. However, the link provided did not contain any data. Thus the Off-Site Committee could not determine compliance.

Professional development is a key component in ensuring faculty members achieve and maintain excellence in their respective fields. The University of Southern Mississippi encourages and supports professional development of faculty members through a variety of ways including attendance and participation in professional conferences, professional development leave, sabbatical leave, internally funded grants for research projects, and on-campus training and development.

The Faculty Activity Report (FAR) is maintained in a database accessed through PeopleSoft. Faculty enter teaching, scholarly, and research activities on an annual basis. The specific question addressing professional development is T 27 -- Professional Development related to teaching (e.g., Expanding Excellence workshop; in-service; staff development, CEUs) [Appendix N.1](#) and [Appendix N.2](#) contain all professional development responses for 2004 and 2005.

In 2004, 692 full-time faculty (95%) responded to the FAR. Of those responding, 247 participated in 1,122 professional development activities.

Table 10
Quantitative Data from Faculty Responses to the Professional Development component of the FAR for 2004

Question		CoAL	CoB	CoEP	CoH	CoST	Dept Unknown	USM All
T27: Professional Development related to teaching (e.g., Expanding Excellence workshop; in-service; staff development, CEUs)	Number of Responses	188	73	133	110	180	8	692
	Sum of Responses	231	37	340	382	105	27	1,122

In 2005, of the 623 faculty completing the FAR, 251 faculty participated in 1,262 professional development activities. Examples of professional development activities in 2005 include:

- 2005 Symposium: A Celebration of African American Women Composers and Arrangers, University of Dayton
- Assessing Skeletal Trauma Workshop - Mercyhurst College (PA); Using Fordisc 3.0 Workshop - (Southeast Forensic Anthro Assn); Adobe Photoshop (Expanding Excellence); Excel II (Expanding Excellence); HVAC Training (Expanding Excellence)
- Popular Culture Association National Conference, American Conference on Irish Studies
- "Design out of the Box" and "Mold Making, Casting, Coating and Sculpting in Theatre" workshops at South Eastern Theatre Conference
- NIMH Psychopharmacology and Neuroscience Course (CEUs)
- Brain Entrainment Workshop (CEUs)
- National Council on Problem Gambling 19th Annual Conference, Critical Issues in the Problem Gambling Field
- Threat and Risk Assessment Certification, Department of Homeland Security, June, 2005
- National Interscholastic Athletic Administration Association, Leadership Training Certification, December, 2005
- Introduction to Geospatial Metadata, 16 March, 2005, NOAA/NCDDC, Ocean Springs, MS.

Due to security issues, the FAR database can not be accessed off-campus by non-USM faculty.

The complete 2004 and 2005 Faculty Activity Report is available on the Focused Report CD for the reviewers ([Appendix N.3](#) and [Appendix N.4](#)).

Maintaining a high level of competency is acknowledged in annual evaluations, third year review, tenure and promotion decisions, and salary increases based on merit. A synopsis of faculty development activities follows:

Professional Conferences Faculty members attend and present at a wide variety of professional conferences throughout the year. Faculty members, in consultation with the academic chair, determine what professional conferences will be attended throughout the academic year. Attendance and participation in professional conferences is documented in the faculty member's curriculum vita as well as in the university Faculty Activity Report. The Faculty Activity Report is a quantitative summary of many faculty accomplishments for that particular academic year.

Professional Development Leave In certain circumstances, the University will approve professional development leave for faculty members to pursue areas of education, research, and advanced training. Any professional leave must be justified as being in the best interest of the University and, therefore, be job and profession related. Examples of justifiable leave might include leave to pursue advanced degrees or to work for federal agencies such as the National Institute of Health and the National Science Foundation.

Sabbatical Leave The University grants sabbatical leave to faculty members to assist faculty members in achieving promotion in academic rank and to enhance professional development and scholarly reputation. Faculty members are eligible to apply for a one semester sabbatical leave at the completion

of six or more regular semesters of continuous, full-time University employment. Faculty members qualifying for a one-semester sabbatical are entitled to full pay. Faculty members are eligible to apply for a two-semester sabbatical at the completion of twelve or more regular semesters of continuous, full-time University employment. Faculty members qualifying for a two-semester sabbatical are entitled to 50 percent of annual salary. Since the 1999-00 academic year, 76 faculty members have been granted sabbatical leave to pursue scholarly research.

Aubrey K. Lucas and Ella Ginn Lucas Endowment for Faculty Excellence Tenure-track faculty members may apply for Lucas summer stipend awards to pursue scholarly research in the summer months. The grants are competitive and vary in amount.

Learning Enhancement Center The Learning Enhancement Center is an office on campus dedicated to training faculty, staff, and students in technology. There are a variety of training opportunities to teach faculty members how to incorporate technology in the classroom to enhance student learning.

Reassigned Time to Pursue Scholarly Activity The University may support research projects, programs, and other scholarly endeavors by reassigning members of academic staff from teaching and other contractual obligations. The amount and duration of the project are contingent on the nature of the project. The Office of Sponsored Program Administration will assist faculty members in preparation of proposals for external funding.

Comprehensive Standard 3.10.4

The institution exercises appropriate control over all its financial and physical resources.

Comments:

The institution provided links to policies concerning control of its financial and physical resources. These policies as written are adequate and appropriate and the institution's internal audit department reports directly to the president which further strengthens the control environment. The financial statement audit for the period ending June 30, 2004, conducted by the Office of State Auditor, identified immaterial internal control deficiencies at various system institutions which were separately reported to management. As no such communication was included with the institution's documentation, and the institution did not state that it did not receive a report of internal control deficiencies, the Committee could not determine compliance.

The institution did not receive a separate report to management identifying immaterial internal control deficiencies. A letter to the Chief Financial Officer identifying all audit findings for the institution for FY 2004 is provided in [Appendix O1](#).

Comprehensive Standard 3.10.5

The institution maintains financial control over externally funded or sponsored research and programs.

Comments:

The institution provided a link to the Office of Research and Economic Development and the Office of Contracts and Grant Accounting websites. The various policies and procedures presented, including their Policy for Compliance with Cost Accounting Standards, confirm that the institution understands the need for appropriate control over sponsored research expenditures.

Sponsored program activities at the University are audited annually by state auditors, and the FY2004 audit identified two immaterial internal control deficiencies directly related to sponsored programs: late financial reporting of two grants and inadequate control of equipment. The On-Site Review Committee is encouraged to review the FY2005 audit report to determine if the correction plans implemented satisfied the concerns of the Office of State Auditor.

The State Department of Audit conducts an annual system-wide audit of financial statements for the Board of Trustees of Mississippi's State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL). The audit report for the year ended June 30, 2005 has not yet been issued. According to the State Auditor's Office, the target date for issuance is March 31, 2006.

At this time, the State Auditor's Office has not officially notified the institution of reportable audit findings. The institution has received unofficial notification of the *possibility* of three reportable findings, one of which is a repeat finding from FY 2004. The repeated finding is as follows, including a tentative corrective action plan:

2005-USM-3. Finding

Program: Other Programs; CFDA #16.580; Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Discretionary Grants Program

Compliance Requirement: Equipment and Real Property Management

Examination of equipment and real property management controls for the Grant revealed the following internal control weaknesses:

- A. In several instances written documentation of transfer of ownership of the equipment was not completed.
- B. A complete inventory listing could not be obtained.

Recommendation

The institution should implement policies and procedures to insure that detail listings of equipment are maintained that record the complete description of equipment. Also, all documentation supporting the transfer of ownership of equipment should be complete and maintained.

Tentative Corrective Action Plan:

- a. Name(s) of Contact Person(s) Responsible for Corrective Action: Dr. Julian Allen, Executive Director, (228) 865-4595

- d. Corrective Action Planned: The University has hired a fulltime employee whose sole job duty is to monitor and maintain equipment inventory for this project. Also, the inventory system has been automated to ensure all equipment and software purchased on this project are properly accounted for in a timely manner.

- e. Anticipated Completion date: Implemented

The action plan for the other finding from FY 04 was implemented and satisfied the concerns of the Office of the State Auditor. The auditor's working papers have been provided in [Appendix P.1](#).

Comprehensive Standard 3.10.7

The institution operates and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, that are adequate to serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities.

Comments:

The institution provided the Gulf Coast Campus Master Plan, a comprehensive document completed in 2004, which identifies the facilities needed to serve that campus through 2009 taking into consideration the existing facilities, projected enrollment growth, anticipated growth in academic programs, and required increases in faculty and staff.

This report identifies specific areas that are deficient in quantity and quality, and recommends targeted property acquisitions as well as new construction to meet the defined needs. However, the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast campus was not addressed in the materials provided. Further, the information provided for the Hattiesburg campus was insufficient to determine compliance.

The Physical Plant Department is responsible for maintaining the facilities in a condition appropriate to their use. The department consists of the appropriate units and has established adequate policies and procedures to accomplish its mission.

The purpose of Physical Plant is to facilitate creation of a physical environment conducive to education and research, to operate and maintain the physical plant portion of this environment, and to provide services that enhance use of facilities. A director of Physical Plant on the Hattiesburg campus oversees the daily operations of the campus and reports directly to the Chief Financial Officer. A similar position exists on the Gulf Coast and reports directly to the Associate Provost for Southern Miss Gulf Coast with a dotted line organizational relationship to the Director of Physical Plant. Operations on the Coast include the Gulf Park campus, Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, Stennis, Jackson County, and Keesler.

A total of 190 full-time employees support the overall Physical Plant operation on the Hattiesburg campus. Employees provide services in the areas of administration, custodial services, maintenance of buildings, grounds, electrical and utilities, special projects, transportation services, environmental services, safety, and storeroom. At the Gulf Coast locations, 47 employees provide services in the areas of administration, custodial services, maintenance of buildings and grounds, security, and shipping,

receiving, and property accounting. Services for the majority of grounds maintenance work on the Gulf Park campus have been outsourced.

The Department of Facilities Planning and Construction on the Hattiesburg campus oversees a number of functions pertaining to management of the University's buildings and grounds. This department maintains a ten-year master plan for the Hattiesburg campus ([Appendix Q.1](#)) and Gulf Park campus ([Appendix Q.2](#)). The Department of Facilities Planning and Construction also maintains a five-year fixed capital budget request. The current report, "Project Request 2007-2011," is located in the Physical Plant administrative office ([Appendix Q.3](#)).

The Master Facility Plan for the Hattiesburg campus was scheduled to be updated in 2005. A committee was formed and the process for selecting a consultant was underway. However, severe budget constraints at the state level delayed release of the budget until late in the fiscal year. Another factor delaying an update to the master facility plan was Hurricane Katrina, which devastated south Mississippi in August 2005 and caused over one million dollars in damage to university property.

To continue the process, a master facility planning committee has been reappointed and charged with guiding the planning process and making a recommendation to the President for a master planning consultant. Committee members include representatives from the physical plant, planning, residence life, student affairs, academic affairs, information technology, athletics, staff council, faculty senate, alumni and the community. The planning process is designed to be participative and transparent. A request for proposal will be released by March 20, 2006 with the expectation of selecting a consultant by fall 2006.

Impact of Hurricane Katrina on Southern Miss

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina inflicted catastrophic damage to hundreds of square miles, including the Gulf Park Campus in Long Beach and the Gulf Coast Research Lab (GCRL) in Ocean Springs. Many were injured or died, thousands of people lost their homes, commerce was

disrupted, and the Mississippi economy was severely jolted. Campus destruction based on building value was over 31% on the Gulf Park campus and nearly 24% at the GCRL teaching site. The Marine Education Center and Aquarium was totally destroyed.

On September 7, the management team met to discuss options to temporarily relocate and restore operations. Fortunately, the Southern Miss Research Foundation had acquired a former hospital facility in Gulfport. To meet the needs of students and resume academic programs as quickly as possible, the Gulf Park operation was relocated to this facility. The University occupies 49,500 square feet within the building, now known as the Gulf Coast Student Service Center, and includes space for 29 classrooms, a library, a primary space for each of the 5 colleges, and office space for support operations staff. In addition, four modular units were acquired from FEMA. Two units are modular classrooms, each containing two classrooms, for a total of four additional classrooms. The classrooms seat 30 students. The two smaller units serve as a student center and faculty center. Both are equipped with tables, chairs, and food services.

Repairs were made to GCRL (with many research projects relocating to Cedar Pointe) and the Jackson County teaching site to allow classes to resume by October. Spring enrollment on the Gulf Coast campus dropped 25% and nearly 7% overall as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Although enrollment is projected to increase to over 3,500 students by 2009, current decreases in enrollment translate to lost tuition revenue.

The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) retained a consultant to conduct a feasibility study for relocation or rebuilding the Gulf Park campus. Deliberations are underway to determine how best to meet the needs of students, protect assets from future storms, ensure uninterrupted delivery of instruction and assist with redevelopment of Gulf Coast communities. A decision is pending.