READY. Set. Gold!

A GUIDE FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI®

Office for DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

USM.EDU/ODA
BOND HALL, 1ST FLOOR
601.266.5024

The Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) is Southern Miss' designated office to verify students' eligibility for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ODA works with eligible registered students on an individual basis to provide classroom and housing accommodations that are specific to their disabilities. ODA works with faculty and staff on campus to ensure that students with disabilities have full access and the encouragement to participate in all university activities. ODA strives to create a positive campus environment where students with disabilities are supported in their pursuit of careers on the basis of their personal interest and ability

EAGLE DINING Meal Plans

EAGLEDINING.COM
THAD COCHRAN CENTER, GROUND FLOOR
601.266.5376

Eagle Dining has a variety of meal plans that allow you to regularly dine at our all-you-care-to-eat facility, the Fresh Food Company, and at favorites across campus like Chick-Fil-A, Freshens, Subway and Starbucks. Additional Dining Dollars can be purchased to add more spending power to your plan. Meal plans are available for both on-campus (residential) and off-campus (commuter) students. Students who live on campus are automatically assigned a meal plan. If students want to make changes to their meal plans, they may do so during the first week of classes.

Housing AND Residence Life

USM.EDU/HOUSING
HICKMAN HALL, 1ST FLOOR
601.266.4783

Campus housing is assigned to students on a first-come, first-served basis. If you have not already applied for housing and/or paid the nonrefundable processing fee, then you should do that as soon as you're able.

HOUSING APPLICATION

Apply for campus housing online at **usm.edu/housing.**

Processing Fee | A housing application is considered complete when you have paid the nonrefundable processing fee. Students applying by February 15 can pay the early rate of $75; after February 15, the processing fee is $150. Acceptable payment methods are VISA, MasterCard or money order (with student's name and ID noted).

Housing Assignments | Students who apply for campus housing before February 15 will typically be notified by June 1. Students who apply after February 15 will receive their housing assignments by July 1. Students may submit room change requests from July 1-31. The room change request form can be found at usm.edu/housing.

Taking Care of BUSINESS

BEFORE CLASSES START

- ❑ **Student ID**
  Getting your ID makes it official: you're a Golden Eagle! Make sure you keep up with it - you'll need it every day.
- ❑ **SOAR Password**
  Memorize your SOAR username and password.
- ❑ **Financial Aid**
  Ensure you understand your financial aid package and scholarship package.
- ❑ **Campus Housing**
  If you haven't already done so, apply for housing and pay the housing processing fee.
- ❑ **Meal Plans**
  Students who live on campus are required to purchase a meal plan. Visit eagledining.com to discuss your meal plan options.
- ❑ **Parking Permit Registration**
  Connect with Parking and Transit Services at usm.edu/parking to register your vehicle and purchase a parking permit.

- ❑ **Email Account**
  Log into the CampusID password management site for account activation at campusid.usm.edu.
- ❑ **Textbooks**
  You can purchase your textbooks through Barnes and Noble at Southern Miss (usm.edu/bookstore). You will need to reference your class schedule for the fall semester while ordering.
- ❑ **Final Transcripts to Admissions**
  Recent high school graduates should send a final official transcript that reflects all grades earned during the senior year and date of graduation. New transfer students should send a final official transcript (with no work in progress) from the last community/junior college or university attended.
- ❑ **Immunizations to Admissions**
  State law requires that you submit proof that you have been immunized twice for measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).
- ❑ **AP, IB or CLEP Credit to Admissions**
  If you have earned scores through one of these tests that entitle you to college credit, you should send documentation of those test scores to Admissions for posting.

You've chosen Southern Miss, SO...NOW WHAT?

Choosing the right place for you was just the first step in this journey. And even though you're probably excited, you also have a lot of questions.

Who can help me with this? Where do I go for that? Did I make the right decision?

You are on your own now, but you're not alone. You'll find that people here want to help you. You'll carry this experience with you the rest of your life, and what you put into it is what you'll get out of it.

But first, you have to finish this journey.

1 FINISH IN FOUR

Graduating on time is possible, even if you end up changing your major. With all the things that can happen in life during college, there are sure to be some distractions along the way. Plan ahead and enroll in at least 15 hours every semester (and complete 30 every year). If you are unsure about your major, be sure to make up your mind during your sophomore year at the latest.

*"**It's okay to change your major a couple of times once you get in the swing of classes!** Just be sure to be in touch with your advisor to help you stay organized and focused on graduating on time. If you do not have a plan, your advisor is more than willing to help you and put into perspective what needs to be accomplished!"*

Maggie Morton
MAJOR: PSYCHOLOGY
LAPLACE, LA

*"**Have important dates noted down in your calendar!** It can be easy to get lost in the shuffle and miss deadlines, so make it a priority to be mindful of important dates. Finishing in four is possible as long as you stay on top of your work."*

Kenechukwu Sibeudu
MAJOR: FORENSIC SCIENCE (BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES)
UMUNZE, NIGERIA

2 BE PRESENT

Look up. Go to class. Be engaged. The only way to win the game, ace the test, or meet your new best friend is to show up! Create a schedule that works best for you so that you are set up for success. Enjoy your life in person just as much as the one you have on Facebook, Snapchat or Instagram.

*"**Getting enough sleep can often be difficult in college.** If you plan to take early classes for a semester, be sure to plan your week around getting enough sleep to wake up on time and be an active participant in class. If you plan to take later classes, try to get your homework done before class so that you have time to relax at night."*

Chipper Baudry
MAJOR: SPORT MANAGEMENT
NEW ORLEANS, LA

*"**Be in the moment and give everything you do the fullest version of yourself.** This way you will learn more from professors, develop great connections with the people you are around, and be a well-rounded individual by graduation. Time flies in college; make the most of it by making sure you are involved, engaged and invested."*

Sahil Patel
MAJOR: INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
CLINTON, MS

*"Be an active listener, engage in class discussions, and build a network with your classmates and professors. **Be present, not only in the classroom, but socially.** Be engaged on campus to know what it means to be a Southern Miss Golden Eagle."*

Kennedy Hanna
MAJOR: BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
MAGEE, MS

3 FIND YOUR PEOPLE

There are a lot of people here that are ready and willing to support you. We want you to know others and to be known. Be open to meeting new friends and find the ones you connect with most. Your people are here; you just need to find them!

*"**Seek out those who can help you succeed at college.** Your professors will be more than willing to answer any questions that you may have, so do not be scared to go to their office hours. Talking to professors and faculty can enhance not only your education, but also your entire college experience."*

Riley McGregor
MAJOR: KINESIOTHERAPY
BRANDON, MS

*"**It is important to surround yourself with people with the same ambitions as you.** Talk to your professors and peers in your classes. Don't let your professors intimidate you; they want to see you succeed. Having personal connections will help you stay focused and motivated throughout college."*

Payton Temple
MAJOR: CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT
SALTILLO, MS

PEOPLE WHO WANT TO HELP YOU

- Center for Student Success Staff
- Resident Assistants (RA) and Residence Life Coordinators (RLC)
- Academic Advisors
- Financial Aid Counselors
- Professors
- Career Counselors
- University Advisement Center Staff

PLACES THAT WANT TO HELP YOU

- Center for Student Success
- Student Counseling Services
- Student Health Services
- Career Services
- The Speaking Center
- The Writing Center
- University Advisement Center

4 STUDY

College is supposed to be challenging. You may have never had to study before, but we bet you will need to now. Set aside time every day to study, even if you don't have an upcoming test or project. Read through your notes after every class to make sure you understand your professor. Read your syllabus and ask questions when you need clarification. Make a friend or two in your classes so that you will have study partners, and figure out what study environment works best for you.

*"**Try out different study methods until you find the one that works best for you!** Make friends in your classes so that you have someone to ask questions and to bounce ideas off of. If you study well with other people, schedule times to study together and hold each other accountable."*

Felicity Gordon
MAJOR: HISTORY
GULFPORT, MS

*"Even if you have never had to study before, college is a different level, and assignments can pile up. **Find a study method that works best for you and use it every day.** Branch out and use different methods you may not have ever tried. Above all else, keep your class work organized and on time so you can be a successful student."*

Max Greenough
MAJOR: SPORT MANAGEMENT
HURLEY, MS

*"As someone who didn't have to study much in high school, I quickly learned freshman year that my habits needed to change. Studying doesn't have to mean cramming three weeks' worth of material in a single night. In fact, **setting aside smaller increments of time each day to review makes it easier to retain information without the added stress.**"*

Kayla Tweedy
MAJOR: MUSIC EDUCATION, CHORAL
PETAL, MS

5 IT'S OKAY NOT TO BE OKAY

A lot of life can happen in four years. Reach out to people around you when you need support. Needing help is normal, and asking for help is important. Familiarize yourself with people, offices and resources that can assist you along the way.

*"Reach out to friends, faculty and family when you are feeling down. It happens to everyone in college in different ways. T**ake a few minutes every day to reflect on how you are doing mentally and what you can improve.** College can be really overwhelming sometimes, but how you deal with the stress is important for your health and well-being."*

Baylie Busby
MAJOR: MARKETING
MOBILE, AL

*"While working toward your degree, it can be easy to let your mental health and well-being be put on the backburner. Don't forget that you're a person first and a student second, so your overall well-being should always be your first priority. If you're feeling overwhelmed or lost, don't be afraid to reach out to student leaders, campus resources, friends or other support systems! **College is a challenge, but it's not a challenge you have to go through alone."***

Billy Duley
MAJOR: APPLIED ECONOMICS
NEW ALBANY, MS

*"We all come from different backgrounds that dictate how we respond to specific situations. Some of us have a harder transition than others to college life, and that's completely okay. Southern Miss values the health and mental well-being of each and every current and prospective student, which is why they ensure incoming students have access to counseling if they need it. **Southern Miss is here to help you transition as smoothly as possible to college life."***

Klaria Holmes
MAJOR: PSYCHOLOGY
OXFORD, MS

6 BUDGET YOUR BUCKS

With more freedom comes the need for greater financial responsibility. Think about what you actually need to spend your money on, like gas, textbooks, medical expenses or emergencies, and budget accordingly. If you receive a refund, think carefully about what that money should go toward. Just because you can charge something to your student ID doesn't always mean that you should.

*"College comes with a lot of freedom, but it also comes with a lot of responsibility. It can be hard not to spend all your money because you never know when you may need it. **Be conscious of how you use your money and keep a record of what you spend in order to manage your finances well."***

Spencer Castilla
MAJOR: POLITICAL SCIENCE
RIDGELAND, MS

*"Make smart financial decisions by prioritizing needs over wants. As tempting as it will be to spend money on food dining out at the many restaurant options in Hattiesburg, remember that it adds up quickly. Textbooks and course fees are a need, while a coffee from Starbucks every day is a want! **You will thank yourself in the future if you start adopting smart spending habits now."***

Janie Cromer
MAJOR: SPEECH PATHOLOGY
BILOXI, MS

*"Prioritizing what you spend your money on can truly save you during your college career. Southern Miss offers so many different dining options that can help you save money, which in the end will allow you to be more financially successful in the future. **Always make sure you are asking yourself if it is something you really need before buying it!"***

Taylor Perry
MAJOR: THEATRE
GULFPORT, MS

REFUNDS AND FINES

Students whose scholarships and financial aid exceed semester expenses will receive a refund. While many students rely on refunds for various expenses, it is important that you understand that most expenses (such as textbooks, bookstore or clinic charges) may be billed to your student account after your refund has been issued. If you are billed for any expenses after a refund has been issued, you will not have any scholarship or financial aid funds to apply toward those charges and will have to pay those expenses out-of-pocket.

You want to be careful that you are not charged expensive and usually avoidable fines throughout the school year. Typically, most fines are issued to students for parking and library violations. These fines will be billed to your student account.

CHARGING TO YOUR STUDENT ID

You can use your student ID to charge certain student expenses (textbooks, bookstore, clinic visits, etc.). While charging is convenient, it is important that you understand the following:

- Many campus units will allow you to charge expenses well after the point that you have received your refund (if you are eligible to receive one). These charges may be billed to your student account after your refund has been issued. If you are billed for any expenses after a refund has been issued, you will not have any scholarship or financial aid to apply toward those charges and will have to pay those expenses out-of-pocket.
- These expenses must be paid by the end of the semester to avoid your classes being dropped for the upcoming semester.

7 PLUG IN

We want you to get connected. Make sure you can get in touch with others, and be sure they can get in touch with you. Keep your contact information up-to-date in SOAR, and regularly check your university email account. Remember to check your on-campus post office box, and sign up for Eagle Alert to receive emergency notifications.

"It is nothing new to constantly check your phone for notifications from Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, etc. Use those skills of constantly being up to date when approaching your academic endeavors. ***Check SOAR, your Southern Miss email, and Canvas regularly for important updates and announcements!"***

Noell Prince
MAJOR: THEATRE (DANCE MINOR)
MOBILE, AL

"In order to stay on top of your responsibilities, you may need some reminders! *Make sure your notifications are on for all USM platforms. Make a habit to check each of these at least once a day since this is the university's primary way to communicate with you!"*

Clancy Slay
MAJOR: HEALTHCARE MARKETING
QUITMAN, MS

STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNT

Your Southern Miss student email address is the primary way you will receive communication from the university. This is the email address that your professors and campus departments will use. It is extremely important that you activate this email and check it regularly.

- Activate your student email address online at **campusid.usm.edu.**

CAMPUS ADDRESS AND POST OFFICE BOX

All students living on campus are assigned and charged for a post office box. (Off-campus students can rent one, too.) In order to get your post office box number and lock combination, you must visit the campus Post Office on the ground floor of the Thad Cochran Center. Be sure to bring your student ID with you.

Mail can be addressed to you at Southern Miss this way:
Your Name
118 College Drive #XXXX *(your post office box number)*
Hattiesburg, MS 39406

8 GET IN WHERE YOU FIT IN

There are so many ways to get involved on campus. Decide to engage in the community around you and go do it! Get connected to organizations on campus, in your academic college and throughout the Hattiesburg community. If you don't know how to get started, just ask. We want you to find your place on campus.

"The best way to find your people and community in college is through getting involved! *Whether that is representing your college as an SGA senator, joining a fraternity or sorority, or starting your own organization, there is a place for you on this campus. You will find your people, and they will be ready to welcome you!"*

Joe Lee Flynt
MAJOR: MARKETING
TAYLORSVILLE, MS

"Everyone can find their home at Southern Miss. *There are so many opportunities for you to find your people and thrive! Each organization offers a community for its members, and this is what makes Southern Miss feel like home. The connections you make from these organizations can last a lifetime."*

Sherrice Wright
MAJOR: POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS
OLIVE BRANCH, MS

OFFICIAL SOUTHERN MISS

The University of Southern Mississippi
@SouthernMiss
@OfficialSouthernMiss

CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Southern Miss – The Center for Student Success
@Success_USM
Success_USM

SOUTHERN MISS ATHLETICS

Southern Miss Athletics
@USMGoldenEagles
@SouthernMissAthletics

ORIENTATION AND TRANSITION PROGRAMS

Office of Orientation and Transition Programs
@SouthernMissOTP
@SouthernMissOTP

9 STAY CURIOUS

College is all about growth in every way possible. Try new foods, strike up a conversation with someone completely different than you, and ask a lot of questions. The more you learn about the world around you, the more you will learn about yourself. Embrace this time in your life and expand your horizons.

*"**Be open and willing to meet new people!** Do something that is way outside of your comfort zone that will allow you to grow as a person. You never know who will become a lifelong friend or what may become your new favorite hobby."*

Kyla Bolton
MAJOR: PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING
BRANDON, MS

*"Step out of your comfort zone; be open to meeting people who are the complete opposite of you. You never know what new interests you may find from being around others. **Exploration is the gateway to growing in every aspect."***

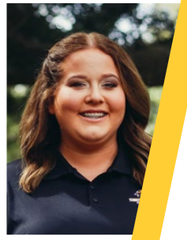
Cynahmon Lee
MAJOR: COMMUNICATION STUDIES
MAGEE, MS

10 TAKE FLIGHT

You're a Golden Eagle now, and it's your turn to get going. There are people to meet, organizations to join, and a lot to learn. Soak up every minute of your four years here. Southern Miss...To The Top!

*"Now that you have the best guide possible to make your mark, put one foot in front of the other and make it count. Remember that college is the foundation for the rest of your life, so live with no regrets because this experience is what YOU make it. **Now that you're a Golden Eagle, here is your first welcome to your home away from home! Southern Miss... To The Top!"***

McKenzie McDavid
MAJOR: ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY
GREENVILLE,MS



*"Your undergraduate student life experience is one that will write the path for the rest of your life! **Don't be afraid to stand out, make noise, and impact those around you!** Develop a plan and highlight where and how you see yourself leaving Southern Miss better than you found it!"*

Krijn Paetow
MAJOR: SOCIAL WORK
VANCLEAVE, MS

*"If you haven't heard it before, I will be the first to tell you that the old cliché is true. Indeed, college flies by! Before you know it, you'll be planning who to invite to your commencement and looking to start your career. With that in mind, **have fun and make the most of every experience because these memories will be remembered in the years to come!"***

Raven Harris
MAJOR: NURSING
GULFPORT, MS

After Orientation, WHAT'S NEXT?

Move-In
Saturday-Sunday, August 14-15

Golden Eagle Welcome Week *(GEWW)*
Sunday-Sunday, August 15-22

First Day of Classes
Monday, August 23

First Home Football Game
Saturday, September 11
Southern Miss vs. Grambling State

Parent and Family Weekend
Friday-Sunday, November 5-7

GEWW golden eagle WELCOME WEEK

Golden Eagle Welcome Week is how we officially welcome you to the Golden Eagle family!

GEWW will take place August 15 - 22. Our student leaders will lead small groups of first-year students. During GEWW, you will learn about Southern Miss spirit and traditions, campus life and student resources. You will have the opportunity to learn more about student organizations that interest you. Your small group leader will check in with you throughout the fall semester to be sure you are adjusting well to life at Southern Miss.

UNV 100 | ORIENTATION

UNV 100 is a required, one-hour online course for all new students at Southern Miss. You will be registered for this course during Orientation. The Office of Orientation and Transition Programs administers the course.

In UNV 100, you will learn more about campus resources that will help you adjust to life as a student at Southern Miss. Here are more things you need to know about this course:

- If you have questions or concerns about UNV 100, you should contact the Office of Orientation and Transition Programs. Feel free to visit the office on the first floor of Kennard-Washington Hall or contact the office at 601.266.4950 or orientation@usm.edu.
- You will access the course through Canvas.
- The Office of Orientation and Transition Programs will communicate with you as needed about the course through Canvas.

Center for STUDENT Success

The Center for Student Success assists students and families with their transition into the university community and supports students on their journey to graduation. Our office is home to first-year programs like ACES Living-Learning Communities, Jump Scholars, Academic Coaching and more. We also provide support through success meetings and access to resources designed to help you develop stronger academic skills so you can be successful on your first day of class until your graduation day. You will hear from us often, and we hope you will take the time to visit us early in your college career.

CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS
MCLEMORE HALL 214
OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8 A.M.-5 P.M.
601.266.6405 | SUCCESS@USM.EDU

WHO CAN HELP

Leadership and Student Involvement	usm.edu/lsi	601.266.4403	The Hub
Fraternity and Sorority Life	usm.edu/fraternity-sorority-life	601.266.4823	R.C. Cook Union
Inclusion and Multicultural Engagement	usm.edu/student-affairs/office-inclusion-multicultural-engagement	601.266.6037	The Hub
Dean of Students	usm.edu/student-affairs/about-dean-students-office	601.266.6401	R.C. Cook Union
Career Services	usm.edu/career-services	601.266.4153	McLemore Hall
University Police Department	usm.edu/police	601.266.4986	Bond Hall
Financial Aid	usm.edu/financial-aid	601.266.4774	Kennard-Washington Hall
Housing and Residence Life	usm.edu/housing	601.266.4783	Hickman Hall
iTech	usm.edu/itech	601.266.4357	Cook Library
Business Services	usm.edu/business-services	601.266.4137	Forrest County Hall
Admissions	usm.edu/admissions	601.266.5000	Kennard-Washington Hall
Registrar	usm.edu/registrar	601.266.5006	Kennard-Washington Hall
Moffitt Health Center	usm.edu/student-health-services	601.266.5390	Century Park South
Counseling Center	usm.edu/student-counseling-services	601.266.4829	Bond Hall
Eagle Dining	eagledining.com	601.266.5376	Thad Cochran Center
Parking and Transit Services	usm.edu/parking	601.266.4943	McLemore Hall
Student Support Services/TRIO	usm.edu/federal-trio-programs	601.266.6910	McLemore Hall
The Writing Center	usm.edu/writing-center	601.266.4821	Cook Library
The Speaking Center	usm.edu/speaking-center	601.266.4965	Cook Library
Office of Undergraduate Scholarships	usm.edu/scholarships	601.266.4540	Kennard-Washington Hall
Center for Military Veterans, Service Members and Families	usm.edu/military-veterans	601.264.4629	3503 Morningside Drive Hattiesburg, Miss.

College Lingo

Academic Advisor | A faculty or staff member in your academic area who is assigned to help you with your academic planning is your advisor.

Academic Calendar | Found on the Registrar's website, this calendar highlights all of the important academic deadlines and campus holidays.

Academic College | Academic colleges are clusters of courses of study available to students at Southern Miss.

Advisement | Advisement occurs when you meet with your academic advisor each semester to discuss how you are progressing toward your degree, to finalize your class schedule for the upcoming term, and to talk about your plans after graduation.

Canvas | Canvas is a website that you will log into using your SOAR ID and password to access online classes and supplemental material for your courses.

Commencement | Also known as graduation, Commencement is the ceremony that honors the completion of your degree.

Credit Hour | A credit hour is equivalent to one hour of class time per week. Courses are usually measured in credit hours, with the average being three or four. Students may refer to how many credit hours or credits they are carrying for a particular semester. Graduation requirements are usually measured in credit hours, e.g. "120 credit hours required for graduation."

Dean | A dean is an administrator in charge of an academic college or other major area of student life.

Degree Progress Report | This is a report that shows the progress a student has made toward degree completion.

Disburse | When funds (like your financial aid and/or a scholarship) have been applied to your account in Business Services, this is referred to as a disbursement.

The Dome | The Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building, referred to as "The Dome," is the focal point of campus and houses the offices of the university president and vice presidents.

FAFSA | The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required to be considered for federal student loans, grants and some scholarships.

FERPA | The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the confidentiality of your educational records. You must waive your FERPA rights in order for your parents or guardians to have access to your Southern Miss records.

The Fresh | The Fresh is the nickname for the Fresh Food Company, the main cafeteria-style eatery on campus, and is located on the first floor of the Thad Cochran Center.

Full-Time Status | This status refers to enrollment in 12 or more credit hours for the fall/spring semester and nine or more credit hours for the summer semester. Mississippi residents receiving some forms of state aid and many scholarship students, however, must enroll in 15 credit hours.

General Education Curriculum | General Education Curriculum (GEC) refers to course requirements designed to help you have a general background in several areas outside of your major area of study.

GEWW | GEWW is an abbreviation for Golden Eagle Welcome Week, a week-long extended orientation program for all new students.

GPA | GPA is an abbreviation for grade point average.

Intersession | Intersession is a mini-term between the traditional, standard academic terms.

Major | A subject or career field that serves as the focus of study in a degree plan is called a major.

Meal Plan | A prepaid meal plan is selected at the beginning of each semester through Eagle Dining.

Minor | A secondary concentration in a specific subject or career field is called a minor.

OTP | OTP is the abbreviation for the Office of Orientation and Transition Programs.

Prerequisite | Prerequisites are courses that students are required to take prior to registering for an upper-level course.

RA | A resident assistant (RA) is someone who lives on your floor in your residence hall and is available to help you.

Registrar | The Office of the Registrar is responsible for the official records of all University students.

The Rock | The Rock is the nickname for M.M. Roberts Stadium.

SOAR | SOAR, the University's online records system, is a website where you can add/drop classes, view degree progress, accept/decline financial aid and view grades.

SGA | The Student Government Association (SGA) represents student concerns and serves as the voice for Southern Miss students.

SMTTT | The University's official motto is "Southern Miss To The Top" and is commonly abbreviated, SMTTT.

Syllabus | Each instructor distributes an outline or overview of the course at the beginning of each semester. The syllabus usually includes course expectations, exam and project dates, and the instructor's office hours.

Transcript | Your official academic record, also known as a transcript, can be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

Tuition | Tuition is the amount of money charged for classes. (This does not include residence hall or meal plan fees.)

Verification | Verification occurs when the Office of Financial Aid requires additional documentation from you in order to evaluate your eligibility for federal financial aid.

Withdrawal | The withdrawal process means to formally drop all of your courses so that you are no longer a student at the University.

MY ACADEMICS

Making Progress Toward Your Degree

Students make progress toward earning a degree by taking courses outlined in each major's degree plan. You must also maintain a 2.0 minimum cumulative GPA in order to graduate. (Some departments may require a higher GPA for graduation.)

- View your degree plan online at **catalog.usm.edu.**

Creating a Class Schedule Each Semester

At Orientation, you will create your first class schedule with assistance from Orientation staff and an academic advisor. After Orientation, it is your responsibility to take the necessary steps to create your class schedule each semester. Each academic unit has its own policies regarding advisement and course selection, but generally these are the steps that students should take to create a class schedule.

- **STEP 1 - IDENTIFY COURSES THAT WILL KEEP YOU ON TRACK.** Before you create your class schedule for the upcoming semester, familiarize yourself with the degree plan for your academic major so that you can stay on track with your degree progress to graduate on time.
- **STEP 2 - CREATE YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE IN SOAR FOR THE UPCOMING SEMESTER.** You will use your degree progress report and select courses in SOAR. You will then put them in your shopping cart prior to meeting with an advisor.
- **STEP 3 - SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR ADVISOR.** You must be advised by a faculty member or professional staff member within your academic area each semester. If you do not know the name of your academic advisor, log into your SOAR Student Center. In the right-hand blue box under "Advisor," your advisor's name and contact information will be listed. (If no advisor is listed, contact your academic area for further instructions.)
- **STEP 4 - ATTEND YOUR ADVISEMENT SESSION.** It should go without saying that you should attend your advisement appointment on its scheduled day and time. Be on time! It is important to build a good relationship with your advisor. Your advisor is there to make sure you are on track to graduate and earn a degree. Your advisement appointment is also a good opportunity to talk about your chosen field and to get professional guidance from faculty and staff on potential careers and graduate school.

MY SOAR

What is SOAR?

SOAR is the university's online record system. In SOAR, you will view and manage the academic and financial details of your enrollment, as well as maintain current information about your address and phone number for official communications from the university.

- **LOG INTO SOAR**
  soar.usm.edu
- **PASSWORD RESET**
  campusid.usm.edu

Parent and Family Access to Student SOAR Accounts

Students can grant access to any authorized person to view their student information inside our online student record system, SOAR. This portal is view-only access and does not allow the authorized person to perform any activity for his or her student, except to make payments. However, important information such as grades, financial aid and class schedules can also be accessed.

- Log on to SOAR and locate the Parent/Guardian Access tile.
- The student will create a family member account login and password. This password will not expire.
- Once activated, family members can log into SOAR using their newly created login and password to view their student's information.
- For further assistance related to SOAR family member portal access, contact the Office of the Registrar at registrar@usm.edu or 601.266.5006.

MY FINANCES

STUDENT TUITION AND FEE INVOICES

The first round of student tuition and fee invoices is generated in July. Major expenses, such as tuition and the fees for your residence hall and meal plan, will appear on this invoice. If you are receiving financial aid and/or scholarships, those funds will be anticipated toward the semester balance. Invoices are not mailed; you must log into SOAR to view your invoice. You will be emailed via your student email account any time a new invoice is ready for you to view. Invoices are generated each month a balance is due, and no paper bills will be mailed to you.

PAYMENT DEADLINE

Students who have a balance after their anticipated financial aid is calculated will be required to pay the balance in full or enroll in the installment payment plan by August 10, 2021, to avoid possible cancellation of their fall 2021 classes. Please note: In order for anticipated aid to be considered in your payment calculation, all documentation (including verification paperwork) must be received by Financial Aid no later than July 1, 2021.

HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT MY FINANCIAL AID IS READY?

At this point, you should have started and hopefully completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and requested that your information be sent to the Office of Financial Aid at Southern Miss. Representatives from the Office of Financial Aid are present during Orientation activities and can answer any questions you may have about how your financial aid will be applied to your tuition and fees. Here are a few important things to note:

- **VERIFICATION** | If you have been selected for verification, it is extremely important that you comply with requests for additional documentation. You cannot receive any federal financial aid until you have satisfied all requests for documentation in the verification process.
- **ENTRANCE LOAN COUNSELING** | If you have never received a Federal Direct Stafford Loan before, but plan to accept one for this academic year, you will need to complete entrance loan counseling online at StudentLoans.gov.
- **MASTER PROMISSORY NOTE** | By signing the Master Promissory Note, you indicate that you understand that you must pay back your student loans. You can sign your Master Promissory Note online at StudentLoans.gov.

WHAT IS A REFUND?

Students whose scholarships and financial aid exceed the student's semester expenses will receive a refund. Not all students receive a refund. While many students rely on refunds for various expenses, it is important that you understand that more expenses (such as textbooks, bookstore or clinic charges) may be billed to your student account after your refund has been issued. If you are billed for any expenses after a refund has been issued, you will not have any scholarship or financial aid funds to apply toward those charges and will have to pay those expenses out-of-pocket.

HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY REFUND?

If you are eligible for a refund, you will choose a refund preference using the Go Gold Card. This card will be mailed to you at the beginning of the semester. The Go Gold Card looks like a credit card, and it should not be thrown away. When you receive the card, you will need to go to gogoldcard.com and choose the method through which you will receive your refund (direct deposit, paper check or GoGold card). For more information about the refund process, please go to usm.edu/business-services.

CHARGING TO YOUR STUDENT ID

You can use your student ID card to charge certain student expenses to your account (textbooks, bookstore, clinic, etc.). While charging is convenient, it is important that you understand the following about charging to your ID:

- In order to charge expenses to your student account, you must pay a minimum payment (amount specified by Business Services).
- Many campus units will allow you to charge expenses well after the point that you have received your refund (if you are eligible to receive one). These charges may be billed to your student account after your refund has been issued. If you are billed for any expenses after a refund has been issued, you will not have any scholarship or financial aid funds to apply toward those charges and will have to pay those expenses out-of-pocket.
- All charges must be paid before you can register for classes for an upcoming semester.
- These expenses must be paid by the end of the semester to avoid your classes being dropped for the upcoming semester.

RECEIVING FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS EACH YEAR

You must renew your FAFSA and GO General Application each year. The GO General Scholarship Application for the 2022-23 academic year will open in October. You will use your 2020 tax information to complete the 2022-23 FAFSA, which will also open in October. There are some funds besides federal Pell Grant and federal student loans that you may qualify to receive; however, these funds are limited. By applying early, you may be considered for these additional limited funds. There are also federal and state regulations that govern your ability to continue receiving financial aid. It is important that you understand and comply with those regulations. Additionally, if you are receiving a merit-based scholarship from the Office of Undergraduate Scholarships, you should be aware that your academic performance and enrollment is monitored each semester. If you fall below 15 hours of enrollment or fail to make the GPA required to maintain your scholarship, it may be placed on probation. You may be required to meet additional conditions in order to maintain your scholarship. Southern Miss academic colleges and programs also offer scholarships throughout the year in the GO system. Don't forget to accept your scholarships and complete any post-acceptance steps inside of the system.

My Contact Information

EAGLE ALERT

Eagle Alert is the campus emergency notification system. Important messages regarding campus safety can be sent to you via text, email and phone. To update your contact information or to opt out of phone or text message notifications, visit usm.edu/safety/eagle-alert.

CAMPUS ADDRESS AND POST OFFICE BOX

All students living on campus are assigned and charged for a Post Office box. Off-campus students can rent one.

Mail can be addressed to you at Southern Miss this way:
Your Name
118 College Drive #XXXX *(your post office box number)*
Hattiesburg, MS 39406

In order to get your post office box number and lock combination, you must visit the campus post office on the ground floor of the Thad Cochran Center. Be sure to bring your student ID with you.

STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNT

Your Southern Miss student email address is the primary way that you will receive communication from the university. This is the email address that your professors and campus departments will use. It is extremely important that you activate this email and regularly check it.

- Activate your student email address online at campusid.usm.edu.

CONTACT INFORMATION IN SOAR

Your mailing, phone and email contact information is recorded in SOAR, and it is important that you remember to update this information any time it changes.

Update your address and phone number in your SOAR Student Center (under Personal Information).

STAY CONNECTED TO Southern Miss

WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS

There are no additional costs for you to connect to the wireless network on campus.

- To set up access to the USM wireless network, follow the instructions at usm.edu/itech/network-and-wireless-services.

PERSONALIZE YOUR SOUTHERN MISS NEWS

This is a big place with a lot going on. Stay connected to the things you care about by utilizing the following:

- **SOCIAL MEDIA** Find Southern Miss in your favorite social media spots. Here are some accounts that will be great for you to like and follow during your first year.

OFFICIAL SOUTHERN MISS
- The University of Southern Mississippi
- @SouthernMiss
- @OfficialSouthernMiss

ORIENTATION AND TRANSITION PROGRAMS
- Office of Orientation and Transition Programs
- @SouthernMissOTP
- @SouthernMissOTP

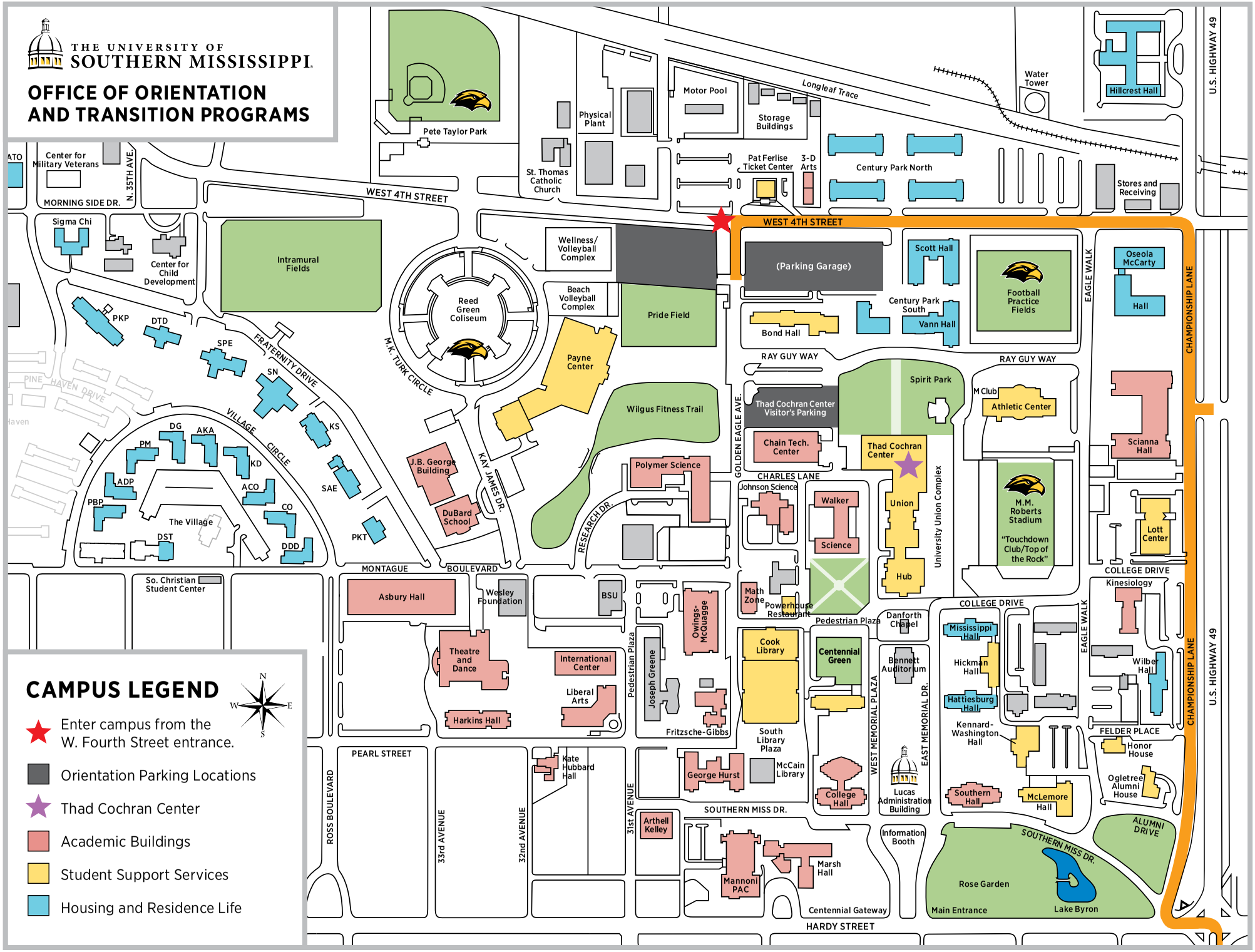
SOUTHERN MISS ATHLETICS
- Southern Miss Athletics
- @USMGoldenEagles
- @SouthernMissAthletics

CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS
- Southern Miss – The Center for Student Success
- @Success_USM
- Success_USM

EOE/F/M/VETS/DISABILITY UC82647

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

OFFICE OF ORIENTATION AND TRANSITION PROGRAMS



CAMPUS LEGEND

- Enter campus from the W. Fourth Street entrance.
- Orientation Parking Locations
- Thad Cochran Center
- Academic Buildings
- Student Support Services
- Housing and Residence Life