



**THIS IS NOT
AN ORDER**

REQUEST FOR BIDS/PROPOSALS COVERSHEET
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
Procurement and Contract Services
118 College Drive #5003, Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39406-0001

Date: March 27, 2026

RFP No. 26-32

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI is considering the purchase of the following item(s). We ask that you submit your bid and retain one copy for your files. Right is reserved to accept or reject any part of your bid. Your quotation will be given consideration if received in Bond Hall, Room 214 on or before:

2:00 p.m. CST

April 16, 2026

Buyer: Deidre Edwards

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

TERMS - Bidder should state terms of sale. Our terms are 2% ten days, net 45 days.

These terms will apply per Mississippi law.

AWARDING CONTRACT - Cash terms will not be used as a basis for awarding contracts; however, the University will accept cash discounts when earned.

ITEM	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL NET PRICE
		<p>DESCRIPTION</p> <p>RFP 26-32</p> <p>Hattiesburg Campus Student Housing Study/Student Housing Needs Assessment</p> <p>PROPOSAL MUST BE RETURNED TO THE UNIVERSITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPECIFICATIONS. RFP NUMBER AND DATE OF BID OPENING MUST BE SHOWN ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE IF USING THAT METHOD.</p>		

We quote you as above-F.O.B. The University of Southern Mississippi. Shipment can be made in _____ days from receipt of order. DATE _____ TERMS _____

Return quotation to Procurement Services at above address.

Signature Required _____

The University of Southern Mississippi
Request for Proposals # 26-32
Hattiesburg Campus Student Housing Study/Student Housing Needs
Assessment

1. Introduction

The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Hattiesburg Campus is seeking responses to a Request for Proposals (RFP) from student housing advisors and consultants to create a housing study/Student housing needs assessment for the future of housing at The University of Southern Mississippi. This will include examining both the on-campus inventory and the off-campus housing market.

2. USM Housing and Residence Life Background

USN Housing and Residence Life offers a home for more than 3,500 students to live, learn, grow, and connect while making the most of their collegiate experience. The department's mission is to provide a high quality physical, social, and cultural environment that encourages and supports the holistic development of the residential student and the virtual student at home. With students living in 12 residence halls, 10 sorority houses, 10 fraternity houses, 1 apartment complex, and dedicated Living-Learning environments, we are committed to providing a variety of housing opportunities to meet students' needs throughout their time at Southern Miss. For future planning, USM is nearing completion of its master planning process, and this information will be made available to the winning vendor. Additionally, building assessments have been done on several of the residence halls, and those assessments will be shared with the winning vendor.

3. Scope of Work

Project Initiation: SUCCESSFUL VENDOR will conduct administrator interviews to better understand the existing context within which the planning effort will take place. The session is intended to outline the University's culture, mission, and vision as they relate to on-campus housing and serve as a foundation from which the Plan's analyses will be performed and recommendations made.

Competitive Context Analysis (6 – 8 Institutions): SUCCESSFUL VENDOR will utilize lessons learned at comparable institutions regionally and nationally, as well as web searches, third-party reports, and phone interviews, to inform the Plan's final recommendations and provide context for future decisions by USM leadership. This peer benchmarking analysis will compare and synthesize the housing system offerings, costs, and other related indicators at targeted peer institutions.

Student Focus Groups (4 – 6 Sessions): SUCCESSFUL VENDOR will conduct focus groups with a cross-section of the student body to understand the general sentiment about housing at USM from a diversity of perspectives. The findings will be used to evaluate preferences, amenity

expectations, costs, and other critical issues, as well as to help inform the survey instrument development. Additionally, the focus groups are intended to help qualitatively assess and characterize the housing offerings that are available in the off-campus market.

Off-campus Market Analysis: The off-campus market analysis will include both primary and secondary research to understand market conditions, including local off-campus offerings, trends, and future plans for development. The information will be used to inform the Plan's findings and ultimate recommendations. The tool will be constructed in a way that allows the Department to regularly refresh the data after the planning effort is completed.

Survey Implementation and Analysis: SUCCESSFUL VENDOR will work with USM HRL to develop and implement an Internet-based survey to better understand students' current patterns and future preferences related to housing. This process will provide SUCCESSFUL VENDOR with enhanced clarity of the target market's decision-making process when it comes to housing, specifically with regard to the relative importance of facility configuration and available amenities. The results of this process will help inform the Department's future plans for how funds are allocated in an effort to elevate the overall housing experience on campus.

Recommendations, Socialization, and Documentation: SUCCESSFUL VENDOR will prepare and deliver a final presentation to the University's key stakeholders that is intended to summarize the results of the planning process and clearly define required next steps. SUCCESSFUL VENDOR will also develop a briefing memorandum, outlining findings and recommendations from the planning effort. SUCCESSFUL VENDOR's documentation will provide a written narrative of the planning effort, helping to memorialize the process and support the broad circulation of its recommended next steps. The document will be carefully reviewed by SUCCESSFUL VENDOR's Quality Control Officer.

USM HRL believes it is imperative to have a needs assessment that includes the following topics:

Student Demographics & Needs

Understand who lives in the residence and what they need.

- Year of study (first-year vs. upper-year)
- Domestic vs. international students
- Accessibility needs and accommodations
- Socioeconomic factors (affordability, financial aid impact)

Key question: Are different student groups being served with the current housing options?

Housing Capacity & Demand

Evaluate whether supply matches student demand.

- Occupancy rates by building and room type

- Waitlists and overflow housing
- First-year housing guarantees
- Retention rates of students who live on campus

Key question: Is there enough housing, and is it the right kind of housing?

Physical Facilities & Design

Assess the quality and functionality of the spaces.

- Room types (single, double, suite, apartment-style)
- Condition of buildings and maintenance response times
- Accessibility and universal design
- Study spaces, lounges, kitchens, laundry
- Safety features (lighting, secure access, emergency systems)

Key question: Do the facilities support living, learning, and safety?

Residential Experience & Community

Look at how residence life contributes to student engagement.

- Sense of belonging and community
- Roommate matching and conflict resolution
- Residence programming (social, academic, cultural)
- Living-learning communities or themed housing

Key question: Does housing foster connection?

Academic & Wellbeing Impact

Examine outcomes related to student success.

- Correlation with GPA, retention, and graduation rates
- Noise levels and study environment quality
- Mental health support and referral systems
- Staff presence (RAs, professional staff)

Key question: How does living in residence affect student success and wellbeing?

Cost, Affordability & Value

Analyze financial aspects from the student perspective.

- Housing and meal plan costs
- Cost comparison with off-campus housing
- Perceived value for money
- Financial transparency and flexibility

Key question: Is on-campus housing affordable and worth the cost?

Policies & Student Conduct

Review how rules affect residential life.

- Guest and visitation policies
- Quiet hours and enforcement
- Alcohol and substance policies
- Equity and bias response processes

Key question: Are policies fair, clear, and consistently applied?

Accessibility

ADA compliance and accommodations

Assessment Methods & Data Sources

Use multiple ways to gather information.

- Student surveys and focus groups
- Incident and maintenance data
- Benchmarking against peer institutions
- Retention and satisfaction metrics
- Feedback from residence staff

Key question: Are you using both quantitative and qualitative data?

4. Fee Proposal

The fees for furnishing services shall be based on the fee schedule proposed in **Exhibit A**.

5. Project Schedule

The proposed project timeline will be outlined in **Exhibit B**.

6. Point of Contact

For questions, contact the Buyer listed on the Bid Coversheet at:

bids@usm.edu

7. Submission Instructions to Bidders

One (1) signed original, two (2) copies, and one (1) portable virus/malware-free electronic version (USB jump drive) of the sealed bid response (if an electronic copy is not included, USM reserves the right to request an electronic copy of the exact bid response prior to review of the bid), subject to the conditions made a part hereof, will be received by **2:00 PM CDT on**

Thursday, April 16, 2026 in the USM Procurement and Contract Services office, as indicated in the General Terms, Conditions, and Instructions to Bidders described herein. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that the proposal package arrives in the Procurement and Contract Services Office.

Each bid **must** be submitted in a sealed envelope bearing on the outside the name "RFP # 26-32 Hattiesburg Campus Student Housing Study/Student Housing Needs Assessment, the name of the Vendor, and the opening date specified on the cover sheet.

For regular mail:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Attn: Deidre Edwards, Buyer
118 College Drive, Box 5003
Hattiesburg, MS 39406
RFP 26-32

For FedEx, UPS, or other express couriers:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Attn: Deidre Edwards, Buyer
2609 W. 4th Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
RFP 26-32

Hand-carried responses should be brought to:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Attn: Deidre Edwards, Buyer
214 Bond Hall
Hattiesburg, MS 39406
RFP 26-32

As an alternative to traditional sealed proposals in envelopes, the University of Southern Mississippi is capable of receiving electronic bid responses. While this option is available, it is not required and we ask that all potential respondents keep in mind that with any electronic system, there could be delays or glitches with the submission process; therefore the University *highly encourages traditional sealed responses* which are either mailed or submitted in person. Additionally, the University will not be responsible for issues with attempted submissions of bids using the electronic method.

Should a vendor choose to submit their response electronically, please follow the instructions below using the following website:

https://www.ms.gov/dfa/contract_bid_search/Home/Sell.

On this site you will find helpful links to procurement opportunities, as well as a link to supplier registration. If not already registered in this system, potential bidders will first need to click on 'Supplier Registration' and follow the steps outlined (a one-time process). Once registered, suppliers can return to the original website and click on 'Procurement Opportunities' where they can either search by keyword for the bid they desire to respond to or leave the search box blank and click 'Search' for a listing of all current bids and proposals for the various State of Mississippi offices.

Please note that emailed bids will not be accepted.

Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of bids or authorized postponement thereof. Any bid received after the time and date specified will not be considered.

The University of Southern Mississippi reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive any formalities.

Vendors are responsible for examining all specifications, terms, conditions, and instructions of this request. Failure to do so will be at the Vendor's risk.

In order to ensure all interested bidders receive any addenda that may be issued, proposers must email their intent to propose using the Intent to Bid link on the USM Bid Listing under RFP 26-32 prior to the deadline to submit:

<https://www.usm.edu/procurement-contract-services/current-bids-and-sole-source-notices.php>

8. USM General Terms, Conditions, and Instructions for Bids/Proposals

- 1.) Failure to examine any drawings, specifications, and instructions will be at bidder's risk.
- 2.) Samples of items when called for must be furnished free of expense and if not destroyed in testing, will, upon request, be returned at the bidder's expense. Request for the return of samples must be made within ten (10) days following opening bids. Each individual sample must be labeled with bidder's name and manufacturer's brand name and number.
- 3.) As a public entity of the state, we use sealed bidding to ensure "fair and open competition" to ensure no one in the buying organization can influence the bidding process or steer the selection of a particular company by sharing competitive bid information during the solicitation process. Generally, all bids must remain sealed until they are opened publicly at the time stated in the notice—advance disclosure of the terms of a bid may be cause for rejection of said bid. Bidders should never send advanced copies of a sealed bid via email or screenshots of electronic bids. Bidders

must submit sealed bids to be opened at the time and place stated in the solicitation for the public opening of bids and must not be revealed to the buyer before that time. Bids must be signed and sealed with bidder's name and address on the outside of the envelope, and the date and time of the bid opening and the bid file number shown in the lower-left corner of the packages, envelopes, express mailing labels, boxes, etc.

- 4.) In order for your bid to be considered, it must be received and time stamped in our office by 2:00 P.M. of the bid opening date. It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure their bid is received within the appointed time. If your bid package is not received in Bond Hall, Room 214, by 2:00 P.M. of the bid opening date, it will not be considered.

If you are delivering your bid, you need to hand carry the bid package to:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Procurement Dept. (Bid)
Bond Hall, Room 214
Hattiesburg, Mississippi
RFP # 26-32

If you are mailing your bid package via U.S. Postal Service, mail to:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Procurement Dept. (Bid)
118 College Drive #5003
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
RFP # 26-32

If you are express mailing your bid package via Federal Express or UPS, or any other delivery service which requires the use of a physical address, deliver to:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Procurement Dept. (Bid)
2609 West 4th Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
RFP # 26-32

- 5.) Bids or proposals shall not be modified, corrected, altered, or amended after the specified closing time and the opening of such bids, unless otherwise noted in the request for bids or proposals.
- 6.) The University of Southern Mississippi reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any informality in bids, and unless otherwise specified by the bidders, to accept any items on the bid. If the bidder fails to state the time within which bids must be

accepted, it is understood and agreed that The University of Southern Mississippi shall have 60 days to accept. The University of Southern Mississippi reserves the right to make an award to this bid on an all or none basis, or on a line by line basis, whichever serves the best interest of The University of Southern Mississippi.

- 7.) Contracts and purchases will be made or entered into with the lowest, responsible bidder meeting specifications.
- 8.) A written purchase order or contract award mailed or otherwise furnished to the successful bidder within the time of acceptance specified in the Invitation for Bid results in a binding contract without further action by either party. The contract shall not be assignable by the vendor in whole or in part without the written consent of The University of Southern Mississippi.
- 9.) Bid files may be examined during normal working hours by bid participants. Non-participants will be prohibited from obtaining any information relative to the bid until the official award has been made.
- 10.) If purchase orders or contracts are canceled because of the awarded vendor's failure to perform or request for price increase, that vendor shall be removed from our bidders' list for a period of 24 months.
- 11.) No addendum will be issued within a period of two (2) working days prior to the time and date set for the bid opening. Should it become necessary to issue an addendum within the two-day period prior to the bid opening, the bid date will be reset giving bidders ample time to answer the addendum.
- 12.) Alternate bids, unless specifically requested or allowed, will not be considered.
- 13.) Bid openings will be conducted open to the public. However, they will serve only to open the bids. No discussion will be entered into with any vendor as to the quality or provisions of the specifications, and no award will be made either stated or implied at the bid opening. After the close of the bid opening meeting, the bids will be considered to be in the evaluation process and will not be available for review by bidders. Proposal openings are not required to be open to the public; however, the resulting award is open for public inspection.
- 14.) Prices quoted shall be firm for the term of the contract or for the stated time of acceptance.
- 15.) The bidder understands that The University of Southern Mississippi is an equal opportunity employer and, therefore, maintains a policy which prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap, disability, or any other such discrimination; and the bidder, by signing this bid, agrees

during the term of agreement that the bidder will strictly adhere to this policy in its employment practices and provision of products or services.

- 16.) Bidders must upon request of The University of Southern Mississippi furnish satisfactory evidence of their ability to furnish products or services in accordance with the terms and conditions of these specifications. The University of Southern Mississippi reserves the right to make the final determination as to the bidder's ability.
- 17.) Questions or problems arising from bid procedures should be directed to the Buyer listed on the solicitation at:

The University of Southern Mississippi
118 College Drive #5003
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Phone: (601) 266-4131

- 18.) All items must equal or exceed the specifications listed. The absence of detail specifications or the omission of detail description shall be recognized as meaning that only the best commercial practices are to prevail and that only first quality materials and workmanship are to be used.
- 19.) It is the intent of the specifications to obtain a product that will adequately meet the needs of the user while promoting the greatest extent of competition that is practicable. It is the responsibility of the prospective bidder to review the entire Invitation to Bid packet and to notify The University of Southern Mississippi if the Specifications, Instructions, General, or Special Conditions are formulated in a manner which would unnecessarily restrict competition.
- 20.) It shall be incumbent upon the bidders to understand the specifications. Any requests for clarifications shall be in writing and shall be submitted to our Procurement Services office at least five (5) days prior to the time and date set for the bid opening, unless otherwise noted in the bid or proposal specifications.
- 21.) The minimum specifications are used to set a standard and in no case are used with the intention to discriminate against any manufacturer. Bidders should note the name and the manufacturer and model number of the product they propose to furnish and submit descriptive literature.
- 22.) Trade names, brand names, and/or manufacturer's information used in these specifications are for the purpose of establishing quality, unless otherwise noted. Bids on products of other qualified manufacturers are acceptable, provided they are demonstrated as equal to those specified in construction, design and suitability. Each bidder shall submit with his bid a complete brochure with pictures on each item and shall point out specifically any deviations from the specified items. Failure to do so may

disqualify any bid. Please bid as specified or an approved equal.

- 23.) A copy of the manufacturer's standard guarantee/warranty shall accompany and become a part of this bid.
- 24.) There are no federal or state laws that prohibit bidders from submitting a bid lower than a price or bid given to the U.S. Government. Bidders may bid lower than U.S. Government contract price without any liability as The University of Southern Mississippi is exempt from the provisions of the Robinson-Patman Act and other related laws. In addition, the U.S. Government has no provisions in any of its purchasing arrangements with bidders whereby a lower price to The University of Southern Mississippi must automatically be given to the U.S. Government.
- 25.) All invoices, unless noted otherwise, are to be billed to:

The University of Southern Mississippi
Accounts Payable
118 College Drive #5104
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
- 26.) All equipment bid shall be of current production and of the latest design and construction.
- 27.) Where all, or part(s), of the bid is requested on a unit price basis, both the unit prices and the extension of the unit prices constitute a basis of determining the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. In cases of error in the extension of price, the unit price will govern.
- 28.) All bidders/respondents are on notice that USM is a public agency of the State of Mississippi and is subject to the Mississippi Public Records Act, Miss. Code Ann. § 25-6-1, *et seq.* If a public records request is made for any information provided to the USM pursuant to this solicitation, USM shall promptly notify the Disclosing Party of such request. The Disclosing Party shall promptly institute appropriate legal proceedings to protect its information. No party to this agreement shall be liable to the other party for disclosures of information required by court order or required by law. For clarity, documents are not considered public record unless and until an award is made from such solicitation.
- 29.) Should the University of Southern Mississippi close due to inclement weather conditions, or any other unforeseen events on the bid opening date, sealed bids will open the following business day at the same time and location.
- 30.) As an alternative to traditional sealed bids in envelopes, the University of Southern Mississippi is capable of receiving electronic bid responses. While this option is

available, it is not required and we ask that all potential respondents keep in mind that with any electronic system there could be delays or glitches with the submission process; therefore the University highly encourages traditional sealed bids which are either mailed or submitted in person. Should a vendor choose to submit their response electronically, please follow the instructions below using the following website: https://www.ms.gov/dfa/contract_bid_search/Home/Sell. On this site you will find helpful links to procurement opportunities, as well as a link to supplier registration. If not already registered in this system, potential bidders will first need to click on 'Supplier Registration' and follow the steps outlined (a one-time process). Once registered, they can return to the original website and click on 'Procurement Opportunities' where they can either search by keyword for the bid they desire to respond to or leave the search box blank and click 'Search' for a listing of all current bids and proposals for the various State of Mississippi offices. Instructions on how to respond to an RFX in M.A.G.I.C. may be located at the following link:

<http://uperform.magic.ms.gov/gm/folder-1.11.9125?mode=EU&primaryCSH=RFX%2Cresponses>

NOTE: If you experience any problems with submitting your response through M.A.G.I.C. Please email the M.A.G.I.C. IT Helpdesk at mash@dfa.ms.gov.

****PLEASE NOTE: EMAILED BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED, AND IT MAY CAUSE YOUR BID TO BE REJECTED FOR EARLY DISCLOSURE. ****

With regard to construction bids, there is one additional step required during the bid submission process. Along with the bid response and other attachments, contractors will also need to attach their Certificate of Responsibility (COR), or a statement that the bid enclosed does not exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$ 50,000.00). If their COR or such statement is not attached, the bid will be invalid and not considered.

AA/EOE/ADA

The University of Southern Mississippi
Request for Proposals # 26-32
Hattiesburg Campus Student Housing Study/Student Housing Needs Assessment

Exhibit A: Scope and Fee Proposal

TASK CATEGORY	COST
<u>Project Initiation</u>	\$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Document & Data Materials • Tour of Existing Facilities & Campus (Campus Visit #1) • Conduct Administrator Interviews (Campus Visit #1) • Strategic Asset Value Analysis (Campus Visit #2) 	
Competitive Context Analysis	\$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Competitive and Aspirational Institutions (6-8 Institutions) • Web & Third-party Benchmark Research • Benchmark Phone Interviews • Data Analysis 	
Student Focus Groups (4 to 6 Sessions)	\$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Moderator's Guide • Conduct Focus Group Interviews (Campus Visit #1) • Conduct Intercept Interviews (Campus Visit #1) • Prepare Focus Group Report 	
Off-campus Market Analysis	\$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web & Third-party Research for Market Sample • Rental Agent and Broker Interviews (Campus Visit #1) • Tour of Relevant Neighborhoods and Developments (Campus Visit #1) 	
Survey Implementation and Analysis	\$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Survey Strategy • Development of Draft Survey • Field Test Survey • Coordination with Client • Statistical Analysis 	
Recommendations, Socialization, and Documentation	\$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management • Recommendations / Action Plan Development • Final Presentation (Campus Visit #3) • Briefing Memorandum 	
TOTAL - LUMP SUM NOT TO EXCEED	\$

**The University of Southern Mississippi
Request for Proposals # 26-32
Hattiesburg Campus Student Housing Study/Student Housing Needs Assessment**

Exhibit B: Preliminary Project Schedule

TASK CATEGORY

TIMELINE

Project Initiation
Competitive Context Analysis
Student Focus Groups
Off-Campus Market Analysis
Survey Implementation and Analysis
Recommendations, Socialization, and Documentation