



# THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

*Office of the Provost*

118 College Drive #5002  
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001  
Tel: 601.266.5002  
Fax: 601.266.6322  
usm.edu/provost

July 25, 2017

Dr. Susan Lee  
Associate Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs  
Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning  
3825 Ridgewood Road  
Jackson, MS 39211-6453

Dear Dr. Lee:

The University of Southern Mississippi seeks approval to reorganize academic affairs to create a more efficient, nimble, and aspirational structure. We developed the plan for this reorganization through an iterative year-long process, driven by faculty proposals and guided by national best practices and institutional need. The proposed reorganization plan draws upon an extensive review of national models that have demonstrated significant administrative efficiencies coupled with growing student enrollment and strong research productivity. Throughout this year, the goal of the reorganization planning process has been to develop a new model for the institution that will leverage our strengths to increase visibility, cultivate research productivity, expand collaborative scholarship, and enhance recruitment of students.

In the proposed reorganization, the number of academic colleges is reduced from six to four, which will reduce administrative costs and promote additional efficiencies. The primary organizing units within each of these new colleges will be relatively large and diverse schools rather than smaller departments, resulting in a reduced number of administrative faculty across the institution. Each school will be led by a Director, and the departments and programs within the schools will be managed by faculty leadership teams of department chairs and program coordinators who will oversee academic and curricular matters.

This plan for academic reorganization is not a workforce reduction initiative; it is built on the principle of positioning people for maximum efficiency. By reducing the number of administrators and creating leadership teams of faculty, the reorganization will create a sustainable model for academic programming that allows us to adapt to challenges and opportunities as they arise. The particular configuration we propose emerged from the input of our faculty and our creative efforts to develop a unique model for the University of Southern Mississippi that highlights our opportunities for growth, cultivates multidisciplinary scholarship, and showcases our many academic assets.

We believe that this reorganization will strengthen the University of Southern Mississippi's role as a public, student centered, doctoral-granting research university, reflecting our diverse state, our commitment to excellence and creativity, and our responsiveness to the changing needs of higher education.

Sincerely,

Steven R. Moser, Ph.D.  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs