

THE DRAWL

**THE HISTORY AND TRADITIONS HANDBOOK OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**



Congratulations!

You are now part of a history and tradition that is known as The University of Southern Mississippi. With more than 100 years of educating students, approximately 14,500 current students, 2,100 full-time faculty and staff, and 130,000 alumni from campuses in Hattiesburg and on the Gulf Coast, the University is something more than special.

You are responsible for carrying on this tradition. The purpose of this manual is to give you the opportunity to learn about Southern Miss' history and traditions so you can be aware of our proud past and play a significant role in helping take Southern Miss to the Top!

The defining characteristics of Southern Miss are her Southern charm and friendliness. In the 1963-64 edition of *The Drawl*, the student handbook of the time, Dr. William D. McCain, fifth president of The University of Southern Mississippi, wrote the following:

The warmth of the friendly spirit on the campus of The University of Southern Mississippi rivals that of the September sun. This warmth of friendliness grows out of the fact that here at Southern, we all "belong," and you will feel it because now that you have joined us, you "belong" too. It grows also out of the individual friendliness that you will see and hear in the friendly smiles and pert "hellos" you exchange as you go about the campus. Among Southerners, introductions are not necessary—everybody speaks!

It was true in the 1960s, and it is true today. We hope you already know this and are living it in your life as a Golden Eagle.

This is your manual. Make good use of it. We encourage you to regularly practice the Southern Miss traditions included for many years to come. Good luck in your journey as a Golden Eagle, and make the best of it.

Southern Miss to the Top!



Jerry B. DeFatta Jr.

Executive Director



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History

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Champions of Mississippi Normal College began their fight for the creation of a normal college in 1877. Finally, in 1906, the first normal college bill was introduced but died in the hostile House Education Committee. After a second normal college bill died in 1908, State Superintendent of Education J.N. Powers turned to T.P. Scott, then head of Brookhaven city schools and an active member of the Mississippi Teachers Association (MTA), to organize a campaign in support of a third bill, House Bill 204, which Rep. Marshall McCullough intended to introduce in 1910. The ensuing battle for Mississippi Normal College was described by the *Jackson Daily News* as "one of the greatest legislative fights of the decade."

Since 1901, Scott had been sending an endless stream of mimeographed letters to county superintendents of education and newspaper editors throughout the state, asking for their support of the MTA and for the general interest of education in Mississippi. In 1908, he focused his efforts on the enemies of Bill 203, who soon found themselves besieged with letters, phone calls, telegrams and editorials from all parts of Mississippi, urging establishment of the normal college. Eventually, the statewide interest caused by all of the publicity helped "crystallize sentiment in the membership of the House," Scott later wrote.

When the time came for the bill to be introduced to the House, Speaker H.M. Street asked the Honorable A.C. Anderson of Ripley, an enthusiastic supporter of the measure, to take his place while he smoked his afternoon cigar in the cloakroom. Anderson had no sooner taken the gavel when Rep. McCullough called up the normal college bill. After a number of pro and con speeches and the adoption of an amendment striking out the word "state" and the appropriation clause from the bill, the measure was passed by a vote of 59 yeas and 39 nays. The Senate promptly passed the bill for establishment of the college, and it was signed by Gov. Edmund Noel and became law on March 30, 1910.

SOUTHERN MISS: A THUMBNAIL SKETCH

Founded by Legislative Act on March 30, 1910, The University of Southern Mississippi was Mississippi's first state-supported teacher training school. Originally known as Mississippi Normal College, the school was built on 120 acres of cutover timber land donated by Messrs. H.A. Camp, A.A. Montague and Dr. T.E. Ross and funded by bonds issued by the City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County in the amount of \$250,000. The school's stated purpose was to "qualify teachers for the public schools of Mississippi." Mississippi Normal College opened for classes September 18, 1912, and hosted a total of 876 students during its initial session (506 in the regular session and 370 in the summer term).

Timeline of Names

Mississippi Normal College	1912-24
State Teachers College	1924-40
Mississippi Southern College	1940-62
The University of Southern Mississippi	1962-present



The first president, **Joseph Anderson "Joe" Cook**, oversaw construction of the original buildings and guided the school during its formative years. The school's five original buildings were College Hall (the academic building); Forrest County Hall (men's and married students' dormitory); Hattiesburg Hall (women's dormitory); the Industrial Cottage (training laboratory for home management); and the president's home (now the Ogletree House).

Prior to 1922, the school awarded certificates, which required at least two terms of attendance, and diplomas, which required at least six terms of attendance. In 1922, the school was authorized to confer the baccalaureate degree, the first of which was awarded in May 1922 to Kathryn Swetman of Biloxi.



In 1924, the school underwent the first of a series of name changes. On March 7, 1924, Mississippi Normal College became State Teachers College (STC). Many improvements were instituted following the name change, as STC pursued accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (SACS). One of the improvements was construction of the Demonstration School in 1927, which served as a training ground for student teachers. Sadly, on September 28, 1928, at the behest of Gov. Theodore G. Bilbo, President Cook was dismissed by the STC Board of Trustees.



The Board of Trustees selected Supervisor of Rural Schools **Claude Bennett** as second president of STC. Many of the faculty and staff remained loyal to the former president and viewed Bennett with suspicion. Nevertheless, it was during the Bennett administration that the school was approved for membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1929. Enrollment continued to increase, extension courses were offered in 25 Mississippi counties and a strong music program was set in motion. Unfortunately Gov.

Bilbo continued to meddle in the internal affairs of STC and other state-supported institutions of higher learning. As a result, SACS revoked the school's accreditation in 1930.

In 1932, due to the Great Depression, the state was unable to pay faculties' salaries. Fortunately, Hattiesburg banks arranged signature loans for hard-pressed faculty members, and grocery stores extended credit to those with good payment records. In 1932, a single Board of Trustees was created to oversee all of Mississippi's institutions of higher learning. Uppermost on the new board's agenda was removing political appointees of Gov. Bilbo, so in 1933, President Bennett was fired.



Dr. Jennings Burton George, a Mississippi Normal College alumnus, became the school's third president on July 1, 1933, and the first to hold a doctorate. The new chief executive inherited a huge debt, which he corrected by setting strict financial guidelines, cutting employees' salaries and freezing departmental budgets. His efforts not only resulted in a balanced budget, but each year of his administration ended with a small surplus in the treasury.

On February 13, 1940, the school's name was changed for the second time. Its new name, Mississippi Southern College (MSC), reflected the fact that it was no longer exclusively a teachers' college. During World War II, enrollment plummeted to around 300 as students and faculty members joined, or were drafted into, military service. Both head football coach Reed Green and his assistant Thad "Pie" Vann served in the armed forces. Looking ahead to the end of the war, President George established a \$35,000 trust fund to provide scholarships for returning veterans.



However, in January 1945, before any of his plans were implemented, the Board of Trustees declined to rehire Dr. George, giving no definitive reason for its action. The school is deeply indebted to President George, for it was his leadership that steered it safely through both the Great Depression and World War II.



Dr. Robert Cecil Cook (no relation to Joe Cook) became the institution's fourth president, following his discharge from the Army on July 6, 1945. During his tenure, the Graduate Students division, Reading Clinic, Latin American Institute and the Speech and Hearing Clinic were established. Greek presence on campus increased, the band program was expanded, the "Dixie Darlings" precision dance team was formed and enrollment soared to more than 2,000. The athletic program strengthened as coaches Reed Green and Pie Vann returned from military service and resumed

their former positions.

Over the next two decades, the combined efforts of these two outstanding coaches brought national recognition to the Southern Miss football program. In December 1954, Cook became the first president to leave the office voluntarily when he resigned to accept a position as vice president and general manager of the *Jackson State Times*, a new daily newspaper.

Dr. Richard Aubrey McLemore was named acting president, effective January 1, 1955, and served in that capacity until August 17, 1955. Dr. McLemore, known to the students as "Dr. Mac," had been a faculty member at MSC since 1938 and had served as professor of history, head of the Social Studies Division and dean of the college.



The Board of Trustees selected state archivist, **Dr. William David McCain**, as the school's fifth president, and he assumed the office August 18, 1955, promising to keep the campus "dusty or muddy with construction." At least 17 new buildings were erected during the McCain administration, including Reed Green Coliseum.

Dr. McCain's driving ambition, however, was to achieve university status for MSC. To that end, he reorganized the academic programs into colleges and schools. On February 27, 1962, Gov. Ross Barnett signed the bill that made Mississippi Southern College a university: The University of Southern Mississippi.

The second watershed event of the McCain administration occurred in September 1965 when, for the first time in the school's history, African American students were admitted. The first students were Raylawni Young Branch and Gwendolyn Elaine Armstrong.

Other noteworthy events of the McCain era included formation of the Oral History Program in 1971 and establishment of the Southern Miss Gulf Park campus in 1972. Also in 1972, the nickname of the athletic teams was changed from Southerners to Golden Eagles. Dr. McCain retired from the presidency June 30, 1975.



On July 1, 1975, **Dr. Aubrey Keith Lucas** became the sixth president of Southern Miss. Dr. Lucas had a long history at the University, having served as an instructor, director of admissions, registrar and dean of the Graduate School, in addition to holding both bachelor's and master's degrees from the school. Among the accomplishments that punctuated the Lucas years were the formation of the Teaching and Learning Resource Center; creation of the Faculty Senate; establishment of the Center for International Education; replacement of the quarter system with the semester system; creation of the Polymer Science Institute; reorganization of the University's 10 schools into six colleges;



formation of the Institute for Learning in Retirement; and affiliation with the new athletic conference, Conference USA. After 21 years, Dr. Lucas stepped down from the presidency December 31, 1996, saying it was time for someone new.



Dr. Horace Weldon Fleming Jr. assumed his duties as Southern Miss' seventh president January 3, 1997. During his tenure, the School of Nursing became the College of Nursing; the Office of Technology Resources was created; a master's program in hydrographic science was added in the Department of Marine Science; a master's program in workforce training and development was added in the School of Engineering and Technology; and online classes were instituted. In addition, Southern Miss unveiled its "Strategic Plan for the Future." Designed

to plot the University's course over the next three to five years, the plan envisioned Southern Miss as "a national university for the Gulf South." Dr. Fleming resigned the presidency in July 2001, and President Emeritus Aubrey Keith Lucas was selected to serve until the Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning hired a new president.

On May 1, 2002, **Dr. Shelby Freland Thames** became The University of Southern Mississippi's eighth president. Dr. Thames had been with the University for nearly four decades, serving as professor, department chair, dean and vice president. Under Dr. Thames' leadership, the University received a record number of research dollars, topping \$100 million in a single year for the first time. Additionally, the number of Presidential Scholars tripled, and other scholarship programs were created. During the Thames administration, the University demonstrated consistent growth in its doctoral programs and was the only Class I university in the state as designated by the Southern Regional Education Board. The Thad Cochran Center, the Innovation and Commercialization Park, The Village residence halls, athletic facilities expansion and recovery from Hurricane Katrina are also hallmarks of his administration. Dr. Thames' tenure as president ended in May 2007, and he returned to faculty ranks as a noted polymer scientist.



May 21, 2007, was the first day of the presidency of **Dr. Martha Dunagin Saunders**. A Hattiesburg native, Saunders returned to her Mississippi roots to take the helm of her alma mater as the first female president.

Early in her tenure, Dr. Saunders instituted planning efforts to establish strategic university priorities. With these priorities as a solid foundation, Dr. Saunders led the University to new heights

with record enrollment, new facilities, campus improvements and an enhanced university presence on the national stage. Dr. Saunders stepped down from the presidency July 1, 2012. Returning to familiar territory, Dr. Aubrey K. Lucas was selected to serve as the interim president for the University.



On April 1, 2013, **Dr. Rodney D. Bennett** became the University's 10th president and the first African American president to hold this position. The start of his presidency was marked by a catastrophic EF-4 tornado, which caused significant damage on the Hattiesburg campus. In addition to restoring the front porch of the Hattiesburg campus under his leadership, Dr. Bennett stabilized the University's financial position and led the University in achieving Carnegie R1 status. Dr. Bennett stepped down from presidency July 15, 2022.

Dr. Joseph S. Paul began his service as the 11th president of The University of Southern Mississippi on November 1, 2022, after having served in the interim role since July 16. A well-known Southern Miss alumnus who previously dedicated 40 years of service to his alma mater as a student affairs administrator, Dr. Paul's priorities include advancing student recruitment, continuing to re-invigorate student life in a post-pandemic environment, aggressively sharing the Southern Miss story, supporting intercollegiate athletics as a new member of the Sun Belt Conference and helping to push the University's \$150 million capital campaign over the top.



Dr. Paul holds a Ph.D. in administration of higher education from the University of Alabama and was named the university's Most Outstanding Doctoral Student in the field in 1985. The Bay St. Louis native earned a bachelor's degree in communication and political science from USM in 1975, graduating *magna cum laude* from the University Honors College, and received a master's degree in communication and management from Southern Miss in 1978. He was inducted into the University of Southern Mississippi Alumni Hall of Fame in 2000.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HISTORY

On May 4, 1917, the Alumni Association was organized under T.A. Sewell, a graduate of Mississippi Normal College. At this time, the Association mainly served as a placement service and worked to become a more established organization on campus.

In the early years of its establishment, the Alumni Association initiated a movement to change the school's name to State Teacher's College and began their own publication called *Alumni News*. Additionally, the Association announced a plan to raise \$300,000 for a student union to be built. This project was successful, and in 1956, the R.C. Cook College Union was completed.

While the Alumni Association was successful in their early years, the Association as it is known today didn't truly begin until 1953 when Powell G. Ogletree started his work as the Alumni Association's first executive director.

Today, all Alumni Association operations are housed in the Ogletree House, a campus landmark that is named after Powell Ogletree and that formerly served as the University presidents' home.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HISTORICAL TIMELINE

May 4, 1917: The Alumni Association was organized.

1922: The Association initiated a movement to change the school's name to State Teachers College.

1945: The first issue of *Alumni News*, the Association's alumni magazine, was published.

1951: The Association announced a plan to raise \$300,000 for a student union building, which was completed in 1956 and named The R.C. Cook College Union.

1953: Powell G. Ogletree '48, '51 became the Association's first full-time executive secretary.

1955: The Association inaugurated observance of March 30 as Mississippi Southern College Day, which is now known as Founders' Day.

1962: Governor Ross Barnett signed the bill changing the name of Mississippi Southern College to The University of Southern Mississippi. Powell Ogletree re-wrote the words of the "Alma Mater" to reflect the name change, and the Association began working to establish a doctoral program at USM.

1971: The Student Alumni Association was launched and students from each of Mississippi's 82 counties were selected as members.

1975: The former USM President's Home was turned over to the Alumni Association to be used as its headquarters. Shortly after, the Association initiated a campaign to raise funds for a new President's Home, which was completed in 1979 on Jamestown Road in Hattiesburg.



1987: Powell Ogletree retired after 34 years of service. The Alumni House was officially named the Ogletree House in his honor.

1990: The Association recorded 19,000 paid members. The Student Alumni Association boasted 785 members, which was purported to be the largest in the nation.

1999: The Legacy Scholarship Endowment was created to provide one-time \$1,000 scholarships to children and grandchildren of Southern Miss alumni.

2009: A full restoration and renovation of the Ogletree House was completed.

2010: Active Association members reached more than 21,000 in conjunction with the University's Centennial Celebration.

2013: In conjunction with the Student Government Association and the USM Foundation, the Alumni Association initiated the effort to bring a golden eagle to Hattiesburg. Together, the groups contributed \$70,000 to fund the construction of a habitat at the Hattiesburg Zoo, which now houses two eagles – Nugget and Talon. Additionally, the Association launched the Buy a Brick, Leave a Legacy campaign.

February 2013: The University was hit by an EF-4 tornado, and the Ogletree House was significantly damaged. The Association also presented \$100,000 to the University's campus beautification campaign.

2014: The Ogletree House was once again restored following the 2013 tornado.

2017: A record number of 100 Pierce Legacy Scholarships were awarded to commemorate the Association's 100th anniversary.

2021: The Alumni Association proudly presented Southern Station, a multi-use entertainment venue located in Spirit Park, as the final component of the Association's centennial celebrations. Southern Station served as the Association's gift to the University in appreciation of its support throughout the last century.



SOUTHERN MISS COASTAL OPERATIONS

The University's presence on the Mississippi Gulf Coast began in 1947 when then Mississippi Southern College first organized classes at Van Hook Hall, Methodist Camp Grounds, in Biloxi. In 1958, classroom space and facilities moved to Mary L. Michel Junior High School in Biloxi. To meet the educational needs of various occupational fields and interests along the Gulf Coast, the University relocated to Keesler Air Force Base in 1964. Classroom facilities were obtained for night classes from the Jefferson Davis campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC); the addition was called the USM Harrison County Resident Center.

In September 1966, Southern Miss extended its offerings by adding the Jackson County Resident Center, located on the Jackson County campus of MGCCC in Gautier. The Jackson County Resident Center was built for the University by the Jackson County Board of Supervisors, largely through the efforts of Dr. Shelby Thames when he was executive vice president of Southern Miss. The center was constructed with the hope that a number of four-year degree programs would be located in Jackson County through Southern Miss and MGCCC.

In March 1972, the USM Harrison County Resident Center program was moved from the Jefferson Davis campus of MGCCC to the campus of the former Gulf Park College for Women on Highway 90 in Long Beach. Gulf Park was a two-year private school founded by Col. J.C. Hardy, who also founded the Gulf Coast Military Academy. The school opened for classes September 10, 1921, and held its final commencement May 29, 1971. The school's closing was attributed to the sagging economy, damage from Hurricane Camille in 1969 and the increasing ability of community colleges to provide quality education at a low cost.

In July 1972, the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning established USM Gulf Park and Keesler Air Force Base Center as an upper-level, degree completion regional campus of the University, offering programs leading to degrees at the baccalaureate and graduate levels. In 1998, the University was classified as a dual-campus system, and in 2002, the Mississippi Supreme Court cleared the way for freshman and sophomore courses. Today,



Friendship Oak

On the Gulf Park campus of The University of Southern Mississippi, lives the Friendship Oak, a 500-year-old live oak tree loved by former students, revered by many and remembered fondly by those whose relationships began underneath its branches.

◀ QUICK FACTS ▶

HEIGHT - 59 feet
CROWN SPREAD - 155 feet
TRUNK DIAMETER - 6 feet, 2.75 in.
TRUNK CIRCUMFERENCE - 19 feet, 9.5 inches

Southern Miss students on the Gulf Coast have access to bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs in more than 50 distinct academic fields.

The 52-acre beachfront Gulf Park campus in Long Beach features all four of the University's academic colleges. In addition, multiple teaching and research sites provide quality education and research opportunities on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

In 2016, the University announced the establishment of the School of Ocean Science and Technology, positioning the University as a regionally, nationally and internationally recognized leader in marine science. Since named the School of Ocean Science and Engineering, the school brings together marine-related research and education programs and harnesses elements from key areas of the University, including the Department of Marine Science (DMS) based at the John C. Stennis Space Center in Hancock County, the USM Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) in Ocean Springs and the University's fleet of five research vessels.

The largest vessel in the University's fleet is the 135-foot R/V *Point Sur*, acquired in February 2015. The R/V *Point Sur* is the largest oceanographic class research vessel homeported in the northern Gulf of Mexico east of the Mississippi River.

In 1988, the Mississippi Board of Trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning placed the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) under the administrative oversight of The University of Southern Mississippi. GCRL is engaged in teaching, research, community outreach and programming. GCRL's operations include the Department of Coastal Sciences, Marine Education Center, Thad Cochran Marine Aquaculture Center at Cedar Point, Point Cadet and the Center for Fisheries Research and Development.

The Stennis Space Center teaching and research site at the John C. Stennis Space Center in Hancock County houses the University's Department of Marine Science. The Center for Gulf Studies (CGS) and the Hydrographic Science Research Center (HSRC) are both located within DMS and provide support for oceanographic research conducted in the Gulf of Mexico.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

In September 1965, Southern Miss enrolled its first African American students, Raylawni Branch and Gwendolyn Elaine Armstrong. Since that time, the school has seen a significant increase in African American enrollment and takes great pride in the diversity of its student body. In 1969, Dr. Walter Washington was the first African American to earn a doctoral degree from Southern Miss or from any Mississippi institution of higher learning. In 1974, Fred Cook was selected as the University's first African American Mr. USM, and in 1980, Jacqueline Redd became the University's first African American Homecoming Queen.

In February 1993, Southern Miss held "A Celebration of Diversity," during which time the contributions of African American faculty, staff and students were honored. At that time, the Student Services Building was renamed Kennard-Washington Hall in honor of Dr. Walter Washington (then president of Alcorn State University in Lorman, Miss.) and Clyde Kennard, an African American who was denied admission to Mississippi Southern College during the 1950s. The February University Forum lecture was also named the Armstrong-Branch Distinguished Lecture Series.

In recent years, an effort to clear the name of Kennard mounted, as it became apparent that he had served prison time on false charges of theft. African American students from the University joined the fight for Kennard, who died in 1963, collecting more than 1,500 signatures in support of a governor's pardon. A pardon was not required, however, as Forrest County Circuit Judge Bob Helfrich threw out Kennard's original burglary conviction, stating, "To me, this is not a black and white issue; it's a right and wrong issue. To correct that wrong, I am compelled to do the right thing."



In February 2018, a Mississippi Freedom Trail marker was unveiled in front of Kennard-Washington Hall memorializing Kennard, who was also awarded a posthumous Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, during the Spring 2018 Commencement ceremony by University President Rodney D. Bennett.

On September 6, 2013, Gwendolyn Armstrong and Raylawni Branch were honored for their important place in Southern Miss' history with the dedication of Armstrong-Branch Plaza, located on the Hattiesburg campus.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1968

First African American Student Organization, the Afro-American Cultural Society is formed.

Basketball player Wilbert Jordan becomes the University's first African American student-athlete.

1974

Fred Cook is selected as the University's first African American Mr. USM.

February 1993

At a University celebration honoring the contributions of African American students, faculty and staff, the Student Services Building is renamed Kennard-Washington Hall in honor of Dr. Walter Washington and Clyde Kennard.



September 2015

September 2015 marked the 50th anniversary of desegregation at USM.

The University commemorated the history by "Celebrating 50 Years of Progress: Desegregation of The University of Southern Mississippi."

September 1965

Southern Miss enrolls its first African American students, Raylawni Branch and Gwendolyn Elaine Armstrong.

1969

Dr. Walter Washington becomes the first African American to earn a doctoral degree from Southern Miss, also making him the first from any Mississippi institution of higher learning.



1980

Jacqueline Redd is selected as the University's first African American Homecoming Queen.

April 1, 2013

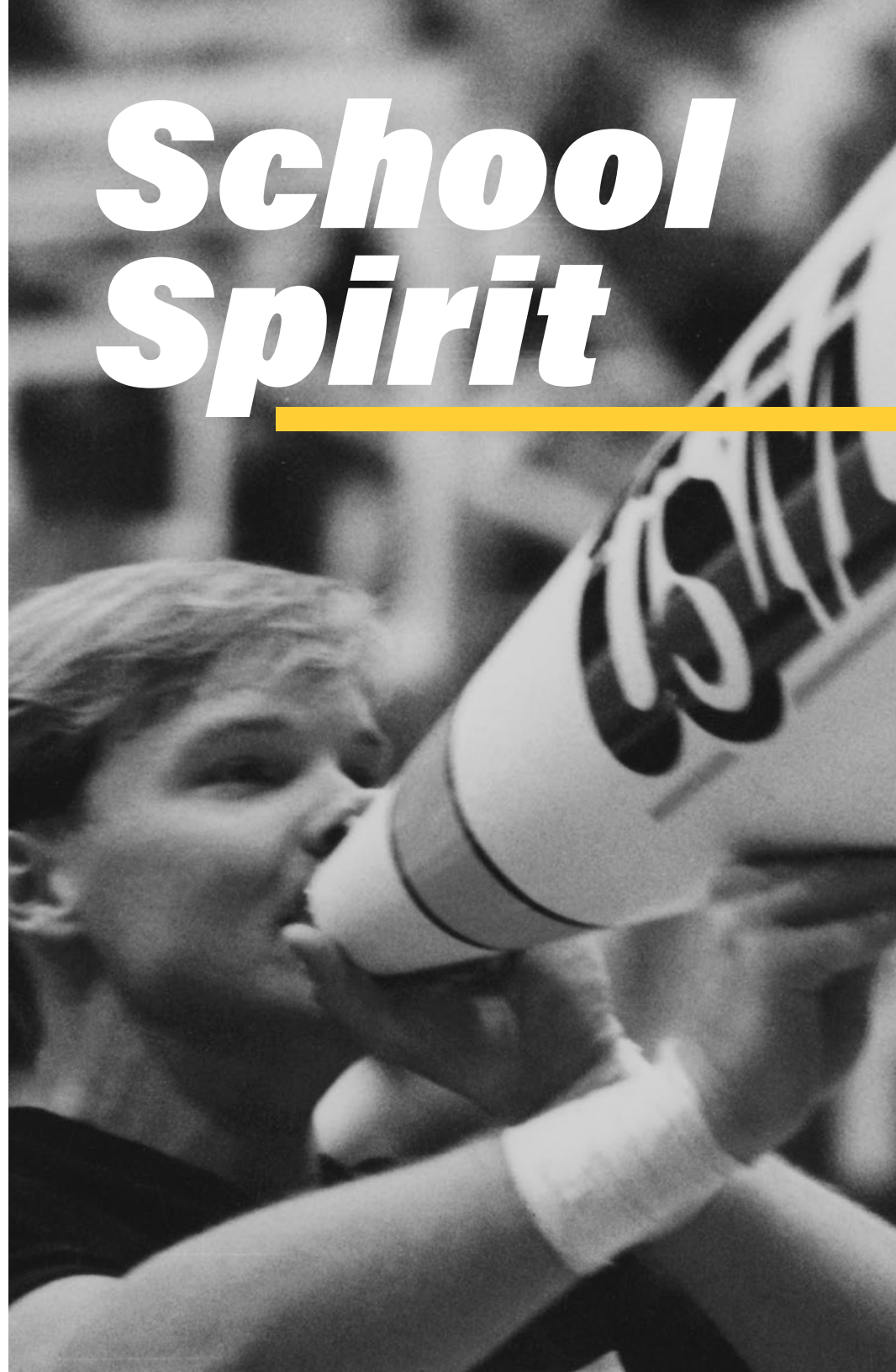
Dr. Rodney D. Bennett becomes the University's 10th president and first African American president of any predominantly white university in the state of Mississippi.

September 2013

The Armstrong-Branch Plaza is named and dedicated to honor the courage of the first African American students, Raylawni Branch and Gwendolyn Elaine Armstrong.



School Spirit



"ALMA MATER"

In 1941, when The University of Southern Mississippi was known as Mississippi Southern College, Yvonne Hamilton '43 and Clara Davenport '42 wrote the lyrics for the school's "Alma Mater," and Mary Leila Gardner arranged the conductor's score. In 1953, changes were made to the first verse of the "Alma Mater," and Luigi Zaninelli arranged the score for this retooled version. The "Alma Mater" is played before every Southern Miss academic and athletic event. The "Alma Mater" is as follows:

*We sing to thee our alma mater,
USM thy praises be:
Southern mem'ries we shall cherish,
Loyalty we pledge to thee.*

*Spacious skies and land of sunshine,
Verdant trees and shelt'ring walls,
Now our hearts lift ever to thee,
As we praise thy hallowed halls.*

MOTTO

The University's motto "**Southern Miss To The Top!**" represents a common sentiment among the Southern Miss faithful. The phrase represents our desire for the best for the University constituency, whether in the classroom, on the playing field or in the community.



CREED

The Southern Miss creed is a set of beliefs that all Golden Eagles cherish. The original creed was adopted by the Student Government Association on May 12, 1958, and according to the minutes of that meeting, it was Senate Bill #9-S-58: A Bill to Establish a Creed for Mississippi Southern College. The only bill on the calendar that day, it was passed by a unanimous vote. The creed debuted in the May 16, 1958, issue of *The Student Printz*, where it was printed in its entirety. The current creed is as follows:

*I belong to a community of scholars at
The University of Southern Mississippi.*

*I will demonstrate integrity and
determination in all academic pursuits.*

*I will appreciate the value of differences among people,
customs and viewpoints and oppose hatred,
bigotry and bias toward others.*

*I will exhibit behavior and choose
language that demonstrates respect
for fellow members of the Southern Miss community.*

*I will respect others by honoring their
rights, privacy and belongings.*

*I will value human dignity in my academic,
social and employment settings.*

*I commit to exhibiting civil behavior, demonstrating responsible
citizenry and doing my part to achieve a positive and
secure living and learning environment for all!*

UNIVERSITY SEAL

Existing records indicate the University's first seal was created shortly after the school's name was changed from Mississippi Normal College to Mississippi State Teachers College (ca. 1924-26). The seal was modeled after the seal of the state of Mississippi, featuring an eagle with wings outspread, holding a palm branch in the right talon and a bundle of arrows in the left.



When the school's name changed to Mississippi Southern College in 1940, the seal was modified to reflect the new name, and the image of the eagle was altered as well.

Changing the school's name to The University of Southern Mississippi in 1962 necessitated yet another change in the seal, and again, the eagle's image was altered. This seal remained in use until January 1997 when an entirely new seal was implemented.

The current University seal features an image of the Dome of the Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building with the date 1910 (the year our University was founded) inscribed below it. The image is surrounded by a circle containing the words "The University of Southern Mississippi."

FIGHT SONG

Originally called "Southern to the Top!" the University's fight song was penned in 1955 by Robert Hays, assistant director of The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band. Hays wrote the song as a closer for the first act of *Hey Daze*, a three-act musical based on student life at Mississippi Southern College. The song became so popular that it has been echoed at athletic contests for more than six decades.

The University's fight song was eventually renamed "Southern Miss To The Top!" to reflect the University's popular nickname, Southern Miss. "Southern Miss To The Top!" is played each time Southern Miss scores a touchdown in football. It is also an instrumental aspect of any Southern Miss athletic or academic event.

*Southern Mississippi to the top! to the top,
So lift your voices high, show them the reason why,
That Southern spirit never will stop.
Fight! Fight! Fight!
Southern Mississippi all the way, banners high,
And we will Fight! Fight! Fight! to victory,
Hear our battle cry!*

CHEERS

SOUTHERN MISS TO THE TOP! RESPONSE CHEER

SIGNAL - "Southern Miss!"

RESPONSE - "To The Top!"

The Southern Miss response cheer is used among Southern Miss alumni, students and supporters. The initiator of the cheer says, "Southern Miss!" The responder says, "To The Top!" Hand signals accompany the cheer, which are two gestures upward with the index finger, done by both the initiator and responder.

The Southern Miss response cheer is specifically used during Southern Miss football games when the Golden Eagles make a first down. The cheer is also encouraged as a greeting to celebrate or recognize Southern Miss accomplishments and is an opener and closer in Southern Miss events.

SOUTHERN MISS SHOUT OUT

"S-OU-THERN - Southern Mississippi - USM!"

The Southern Miss shout out is perhaps the most recognized cheer associated with the University. It is with little doubt the most effective "social gathering" cheer and is used to intimidate opposing fans and to drum out cheers of other universities. There is never an inappropriate time or place to let loose, "S-OU-THERN - Southern Mississippi - USM!"



NASTY BUNCH

"Nasty Bunch! Nasty Bunch! Nasty Bunch!"

The Nasty Bunch is the name of the football team's defense, and it is also the team's defensive cheer. It is used each time Southern Miss holds an opposing offense on third down or when the Nasty Bunch makes a significant defensive play.

"ARE YOU FROM DIXIE?"

"Are You from Dixie?" is played after every extra point scored during a Southern Miss football game. It is also the official song of the Dixie Darlings.

Are you from Dixie? I said from Dixie!

Where the fields of cotton beckon to me.

I'm glad to see you, tell me how be you

and the friends I'm longing to see.

If you're from Alabama, Tennessee or Caroline

any place below the Mason Dixon Line,

then you're from Dixie, hurray for Dixie!

'Cause I'm from Dixie too!



SOUTHERN MISS CALLS TO ACTION

FOOTBALL

Southern Miss Pregame: Crowd is instructed to stand and sing the Southern Miss "Alma Mater" and fight song and to participate in pregame cheers led by The Pride of Mississippi.

Southern Miss Kickoff: Crowd is instructed to stand to participate in the kickoff cheer, "Go Eagles! USM!"

Southern Miss Touchdown: Crowd is instructed to stand and sing "Southern Miss To The Top!"

Southern Miss Defensive Stop: Crowd is instructed to stand and participate in the "Nasty Bunch" cheer.

Southern Miss First Down: Crowd is to participate in the "Southern Miss To The Top!" response cheer, which will be led by The Pride of Mississippi, Southern Miss cheerleaders and the Southern Miss announcer.

Southern Miss Shout Out: Initiated by The Pride of Mississippi; when started, crowd is instructed to stand and participate in the cheer.

Fifth Quarter Concert: Crowd is invited to stay immediately after the game to show appreciation to the Southern Miss football team while The Pride of Mississippi gives its end-of-game performance. The football team and the cheerleaders locate to the South End Zone while the "Alma Mater" is played.

BASKETBALL

First Shot: Crowd is instructed to stand until the first Southern Miss shot is made.

Free Throws: Crowd is instructed to raise their hands above their heads, and when the free throw is made, the hands drop and the crowd makes a "whoosh" sound.

Southern Miss Shout Out: Initiated by the Southern Miss pep band; when started, crowd is instructed to stand and participate in the cheer.

BASEBALL, SOFTBALL AND OLYMPIC SPORTS

Southern Miss Shout Out: Initiated by any Southern Miss fan during games; when started, crowd is instructed to stand and participate in the cheer.

"Southern Miss To The Top!" Response Cheer: Initiated by any Southern Miss fan during games; when started, crowd is instructed to stand and participate in the cheer.

ORIGIN OF SCHOOL COLORS

Black and gold have been Southern Miss' colors since the beginning, thanks to Florence Burrow Pope who, with her husband Moran, was in the school's first class in 1912. In an oral history recorded by former University President William D. McCain in 1965, Mrs. Pope told of being the senior class sponsor at Carson School during the 1910-11 school year when her classmates were arguing about selection of the class colors.

"On a trip home, I saw great masses of Black-Eyed Susans in the pine forests. I decided to encourage my senior class to gather Black-Eyed Susans to spell out the name of the class on sheets to be displayed during exercises on Class Day. I then suggested black and gold as class colors, and my suggestion was adopted.

"One of the teachers at Carson, Miss Edna Burns, then bought black and gold hatbands in Jackson for the two boys in the senior class, Charlie Laird and Moran M. Pope."

On August 4, 1912, Florence Burrow and Moran M. Pope were married, and the next month they entered Mississippi Normal College in its first class. She recalled that Pope "wore his straw hat to Mississippi Normal College, and students laughed at his black and gold hatband."

Soon after school opened, a committee was appointed to make recommendations concerning school colors. Florence was on the committee: "We were charged with selecting colors, which no other college in Mississippi had adopted," she said. "Marye Miller suggested that the colors be maroon and gray. I suggested that they be black and gold. The two suggestions were submitted to the student body, and the student body voted to have black and gold as the school colors."

Since that day, mascots, names, customs and the campus have changed, but black and gold have remained the school's colors.



EVOLUTION OF THE SOUTHERN MISS MASCOT

Over the years, Southern Miss has experienced an evolution of mascots. The earliest nickname for the University's athletic teams was Tigers, but early teams were also referred to as Normalites. Then, in 1924, our teams' name was changed to Yellow Jackets.

When the school was renamed Mississippi Southern College in 1940, a name change for the athletic teams was fitting. In April 1940, the student body voted to name the teams Confederates. The teams were called the Confederates during fall 1940 and spring 1941. In September 1941, Confederates was dropped, and the teams were named Southerners.

Several years later, in 1953, General Nat (for Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest) was approved as the Southerners' mascot. The first General Nat was Archie Hughes, and Nat's horse was named Son of Dixie.



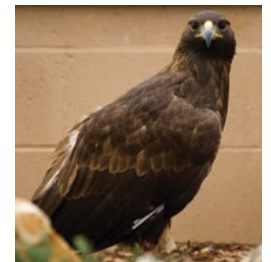
In 1972, alumni, faculty, students and staff were asked to submit new names for the athletic teams, and an ad hoc committee appointed by the Alumni Association voted on the submissions. Our present mascot, the Golden Eagles, was chosen as the athletic teams' name, and the new mascot was Seymour, an individual in a Golden Eagle costume. Several students usually share the responsibility of portraying Seymour. Seymour's full name is Seymour d'Campus. The name was inspired by the 1984 World's Fair mascot, Seymour d'Fair, who was played by former Southern Miss mascot Jeff Davis '83.

Golden Eagles was chosen over Raiders, War Lords, Timber Wolves and Southerners.

The first live Golden Eagle mascot, Nugget, was obtained in 1980 and was succeeded by Nugget II in 1986. Though Nugget II died in 1992, Seymour continues to entertain fans at Golden Eagles athletic events.

NUGGET AND TALON

An effort to bring a golden eagle back to Hattiesburg was initiated by the Southern Miss Alumni Association and was supported by the Student Government Association and USM Foundation. Together, the groups contributed approximately \$70,000 in 2013 to fund the construction of a habitat at the Hattiesburg Zoo for the golden eagle. The bird, named Nugget by the zoo's staff, was permitted to the zoo after a rigorous application process through the U.S. Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Less than three months after unveiling the golden eagle exhibit, the Hattiesburg Zoo welcomed Talon, a second golden eagle on loan from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services. The exhibit at the Hattiesburg Zoo will continue to provide future Southern Miss alumni, students and legacies with an opportunity to learn about golden eagles.



THE PRIDE OF MISSISSIPPI MARCHING BAND

Since its founding in 1920 as a 20-piece brass ensemble, The Pride of Mississippi has evolved into an impressive and highly respected marching band. Having marched for such events as the FDR Inaugural Parade, the Chicago World's Fair, the Senior Bowl Classic football games, the Blue and Gray game, and professional football games, The Pride was one of the most televised bands in the South during the 1970s and '80s.

Unlike most bands of previous days, The Pride was not limited to a common instrumentation of brasses and woodwinds. The band was disbanded in 1942 because of the war, but it reassembled in 1946. In the 1950s, the band was accompanied by a bag pipe ensemble, along with the Southern Belles dance/drill team, who became the Dixie Darlings in 1954.

Regarded throughout the nation as one of the finest university marching bands, The Pride has received invitations to perform in Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Green Bay, Wisc., and Mississippi for competitive band concerts, festivals and professional football games.

In 2010, with more than 3.5 million television viewers worldwide, The Pride, along with the Dixie Darlings, made their debut appearance in New York City at the 84th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Most recently, The Pride marched in an international performance in Dublin, Ireland, for the Saint Patrick's Day celebration in 2015.

Though many years have passed since the first performance in 1923, the same excitement and tradition of musical excellence has been upheld today.



Fast Fact

Did you know throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band wore red uniforms? Selected by band director, Dr. Raymond Mannoni, the red uniforms were selected to honor the Scottish heritage of University President William McCain.



DIXIE DARLINGS

In 1952, President R.C. Cook recruited Raymond Mannoni from the University of Topeka as band director and told him to build a good band with lots of majorettes. As a result, the band increased in size, and the precision dance twirl team, the Dixie Darlings, was formed. In January 1954, Dr. Mannoni observed a young woman named Joyce Scimeca (now Joyce McHenry) performing at the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala. Joyce was a member of the Rangerettes, a precision dance team at Kilgore College in Kilgore, Texas. In June 1954, Dr. Mannoni contacted Joyce and asked if she would like to come to then Mississippi Southern College and help begin a dance team similar to the Rangerettes. After auditioning for Dr. Mannoni, Joyce was offered a full scholarship.

Shortly after practice sessions for the group began, Dr. Mannoni called the girls together and asked them to suggest a name for the new group. Dixie Dancers was suggested by one member, and Joyce Scimeca suggested Dixie Darlings. Their original uniform was a black velvet top and shorts. The top featured a gold braid over a scooped neck, and a gold tassel adorned each side of the shorts. The girls wore white gloves and white boots with black fringe.

SOUTHERN MISS CHEERLEADERS

For decades, the Southern Miss cheerleaders have been one of the most recognizable campus organizations. The squad consists of about 40 men and women who act as ambassadors for their University locally and nationally. Throughout the years, the cheerleaders have qualified to compete at the national competition, placing as high as ninth in the nation in 2007 and fourth in the nation in 2016.

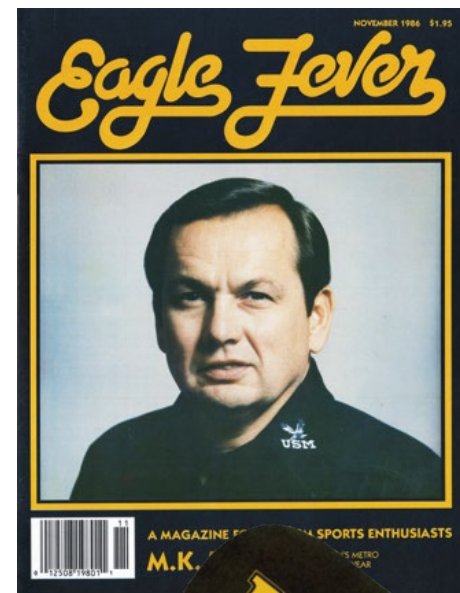


SOUTHERN MISSES

The Southern Misses dance team, formerly the Pom Pom Girls, generate excitement at men's and women's basketball games. This ensemble of talented women perform at every home basketball game, including performing a choreographed dance routine for fans' halftime entertainment. At home or on the road, at competitions or athletic events, the Southern Misses proudly represent the University and its athletic traditions.

EAGLE FEVER

In the early 1980s, Southern Miss standout Reggie Collier helped lead the nationally ranked Golden Eagles football team to unparalleled heights. Victories over in-state opponents, University of Mississippi and Mississippi State, were commonplace, and wins over such squads as Florida State and Alabama helped spread the school's name across the country, but no place felt the energy more than the City of Hattiesburg. There was a heightened sense of excitement around town and on campus, and to take the excitement a step further, University Relations staff members, Bud Kirkpatrick, Terry Bethea and Sissy Myrick, labeled the community's spirit "Eagle Fever." They created a logo and set about promoting the phenomenon. Yards and yards of Eagle Fever posters were printed, and on game days, these posters could be found on everything from campus buildings to bridge trusses.



SOUTHERN MISS ATHLETICS

Sports have been an important part of Southern Miss from the day the institution opened its doors to students in 1912. In the University's first year of existence, football, men's and women's basketball, track and baseball were instituted. By 1915, a tennis team had been added.

The Department of Athletics has worked to become one of the premier athletic programs in the nation. A member of the Sun Belt Conference, Southern Miss fields successful teams in 17 varsity athletic sports. More information on Southern Miss Athletics teams can be found on page 52.



TRADITIONS RESOLUTION

The traditions of The University of Southern Mississippi are deeply treasured. The Alumni Association, in conjunction with the Student Alumni Association, take a lead role in promoting and advancing these customs, ceremonies and celebrations of Southern Miss.

The University's traditions are protected by a resolution, signed in 2007 by University President Martha Saunders and Alumni Association President Lou Ann Poynter. The resolution establishes the Association's Traditions Committee as a clearinghouse for proposed additions, deletions or alterations to the University's recognized traditions and can be found online at SouthernMissAlumni.com.

Traditions are meant to be as celebrated and cherished as our beloved institution itself. The Alumni Association and the Student Alumni Association invite alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff and fans of the Golden Eagles to regularly take part in the traditions of the University.

FOUNDERS' DAY

March 30, 1910, is the institution's official birthday, and in 1955, the Alumni Association designated March 30 as Mississippi Southern College Day. The day was to be observed wherever former students resided, and its purpose was "to build up a little more custom and tradition concerning the college." The day, since renamed Founders' Day, has been observed with celebration ever since.



RIGHT FIELD ROOST

During baseball season, gameday festivities take place in Pete Taylor Park's Right Field Roost. This tailgating area is along the right side of the field and extends into right field. Fans enjoy the excitement that only watching the game from "The Roost" can bring.



HOMECOMING

Homecoming festivities begin as early as Monday and continue through Saturday evening. The Southern Miss Alumni Annual Golf Tournament, Alumni Hall of Fame Banquet, Homecoming Parade, the Association's Annual Awards Ceremony and Business Meeting, concerts, reunions, tailgating and a pep rally are just some of the events scheduled around the Saturday football game. Additional student-focused events including the Fountain Sit, Bring It On Eagle style and more, are hosted by the Student Government Association.

EAGLE FEST

Eagle Fest is an annual event held each spring as a second homecoming for past, present and prospective Golden Eagles alike. The weekend may include events such as campus tours, student organization fairs, a baseball weekend series and a spring football game.

SCREAMING EAGLES

Started in fall of 2021, Screaming Eagles is the youngest tradition at Southern Miss. Hosted by the student organizations of the Alumni Association and Southern Miss Athletics, Screaming Eagles is designed to instill a sense of gameday tradition in the current USM student body. Students enjoy a first flight experience of running onto the field while The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band debuts their pregame show.



TAILGATING

Tailgating is an opportunity for alumni and friends—both new and old—to gather before and after a Southern Miss athletic event. On Friday night, fans flock to The District, Shoemaker Square, Centennial Green and Spirit Park with black and gold flags, tents, barbecue grills and music.

Two hours before kickoff, a blast from a cannon signals the beginning of Eagle Walk. Fans line the streets surrounding the stadium as Seymour, The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band, Dixie Darlings, cheerleaders and the football team march from the Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building to The Rock.

THE DISTRICT

Located in front of the Ogletree Alumni House, the campus historical District has acted as a gathering place for Southern Miss students and alumni since the founding of the University.

More than a tailgating spot, the area also offers visitors an opportunity to take a walk in the All-American Rose Garden during the day, to see the illuminated Dome at night and to enjoy the Black-Eyed Susans in the spring.



FRIDAY NIGHT AT SPIRIT PARK

On select home game Friday nights, students, fans and alumni are called to Spirit Park for live music, food trucks and a pre-gameday pep rally. All in attendance are encouraged to bring chairs, blankets and refreshments to sit and enjoy the energy on campus. The festivities include performances by The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band, the Dixie Darlings, the Southern Miss Cheerleaders, the Southern Misses and Seymour.

SEYMOUR'S SIDEKICKS SPIRIT LINE

The Seymour's Sidekicks Spirit Line is one of the many exciting activities for children and families associated with Southern Miss football games. The activity encourages children, specifically members of Seymour's Sidekicks, to form a human tunnel of spirit and support that welcomes the Golden Eagles football team back to the playing field for the start of the second half. This activity is an important tradition to Southern Miss football and is a very rewarding experience for children and student-athletes alike.

FIFTH QUARTER CONCERT

Immediately following each home football game, The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band performs a mini-concert featuring the University's "Alma Mater" while fans congregate on the field to briefly visit with players and socialize with one another.

"AMAZING GRACE"

A hallmark of Southern Miss' final home game of the football season is a stirring rendition of "Amazing Grace" performed by The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band. What started as a song in the band's repertoire has now become a beloved Southern Miss tradition.

OFFICIAL RING

The official ring is one of the most important traditions at Southern Miss. Adorned with images from both the Hattiesburg and Gulf Park campuses, it is not only a piece of jewelry but a piece of history.

The ring is treated much like a diploma and is awarded each year at the Official Ring Ceremony, which is hosted by the Southern Miss Alumni Association. Students who receive their rings wear them with the signet-style top of the ring facing them. Once they graduate, they turn the rings and wear them with The Dome facing away, signifying that they are no longer students but alumni.



THE PAINTING OF THE LITTLE ROCK

Located in The District, The Little Rock is painted in an effort to increase enthusiasm throughout the campus. The rock is a popular place for student organizations to promote events and other important dates.



DOCTORAL REGALIA

The University honors the excellence of its doctoral graduates with custom regalia. In a stately color of antique gold, with black and white accents and a uniquely Southern Miss design, the regalia were designed by Southern Miss alumnus Dr. Reginald M. Houze '00.

The robe boasts custom features with the most distinctive being the University seal, featuring the Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building Dome embroidered in gold at chest level on both velvet panels. The hood adds meaning and dimension to the academic garment, with its color indicating the source of the degree. The Southern Miss doctoral regalia is finished with a six-corner black velvet tam with a gold metallic center button and tassel that are sewn in place.



THE UNIVERSITY MACE AND PRESIDENTIAL MEDALLION

The mace, a symbol of academic prestige, is carried at the head of ceremonial occasions. It features an eagle that points with uplifted wings to a crown of laurel and is encased in an open orb of sterling silver. With "Southern Mississippi" embossed at its base, the orb adorns a 36-inch ebony staff, banded and tipped with silver.

The medallion, which symbolizes the Office of the President, is suspended on a ribbon of black velvet.

Like the mace, the sterling silver medallion also

features an eagle with uplifted wings to a crown of laurel, signifying honor and distinction. Engraved on the reverse side of the medallion are the names of past Southern Miss presidents and the dates of their administrations.

The mace and medallion, designed by Southern Miss alumnus Ronlin Foreman '76, were first used for the inauguration of Dr. Aubrey K. Lucas as University president in 1976 and continue to be used today.

THE EAGLE WALK

THE PLACE

The Eagle Walk, located under the east side of The Rock (M.M. Roberts Stadium) on Eagle Walk Drive, displays the memories of Southern Miss' past and the promise of its future. It recognizes the greatness of all those who have had the privilege of going to battle for the Black and Gold.



THE PAINTING

Each year during Golden Eagle Welcome Week, the Student Alumni Association—the student chapter of the Alumni Association—sponsors the Painting of the Eagle Walk. This event is where the incoming class gathers to leave its signature on the University by giving the Eagle Walk a fresh coat of gold paint. This time-honored tradition began in 1997 and transforms Eagle Walk Drive into a street of gold. The painting of the Eagle Walk is often one's first memory, significant mark and contribution to the University.

THE EVENT

An unrivaled parade, Eagle Walk is a celebration of the spirit of Southern Miss football. On game day at Southern Miss, a cannon is fired and participants march from the Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building to The Rock. The Pride of Mississippi Marching Band strikes up "Southern Miss To The Top!" as thousands cheer their Golden Eagles to victory.





LIGHTING THE WAY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Holiday cheer overflows during the annual Lighting the Way for the Holidays celebration. This campus celebration includes holiday music, hot chocolate and photos with Seymour, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus. The University's live Christmas tree, hand-picked each year from a local Christmas tree farm, sits on the south lawn of the Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building.

Campus



NOTABLE BUILDINGS

The original buildings on the Hattiesburg campus of USM were all designed by architect R.H. Hunt of Chattanooga, Tenn., and built in 1912.

College Hall: College Hall was the original school building. It housed all classrooms, administrative offices, a library and the auditorium. Its current use is for classrooms and offices.

Forrest County Hall: Built as a residence hall for men and married students, the building is named for Forrest County, which, in conjunction with the City of Hattiesburg, provided funds for building the school. It currently houses business offices.

Hattiesburg Hall: Built as a residence hall for women, the building was named for the City of Hattiesburg in honor of its role in providing funds to build the school. The building continues to function as a residence hall.

The Honor House: Originally called the Industrial Cottage, this building was used to provide a laboratory for girls to "learn practical home-keeping in all its phases." Since then, the two-story brick structure has served as the campus clinic, a dormitory, faculty housing, the USM Foundation and now the Honors College. The name Honor House came about in 1957 when the building housed upper-class and graduate female students who lived there "on their honor." This meant there were no house matrons, and residents made their own rules and regulations, abiding by them with the guidance and direction of the dean of women. Currently, the Honor House is used for the Honors College.

The Ogletree House: The Ogletree House served as the president's home until 1975 when it was donated to the Alumni Association for use as its headquarters. The building is named for Powell G. Ogletree, the first full-time executive secretary of the Alumni Association, who served from 1953 to 1987. An extensive restoration and expansion project completed in 2009 returned the structure to its original glory with a significant increase in its size.



BUILDINGS NAMED FOR SOUTHERN MISS PRESIDENTS

Joseph Anderson Cook Memorial Library: Named for the school's first president, Joseph Anderson "Joe" Cook (1911-28), the original Joe Cook Memorial Library was completed in 1940 and is now Kennard-Washington Hall. The first increment of the current Cook Library was built in 1960 with additions in 1966 and 1995. It houses the University Libraries' primary collection of books, periodicals, media resources, music resources and other related collections.

Bennett Auditorium: Named for the school's second president, Claude Bennett (1928-33), it was completed in 1930 and named in 1972. The building was designed in keeping with the architecture of the school's original structures and is used for a variety of purposes, including concerts and forums.

J.B. George Building: The former Speech and Hearing Building at The University of Southern Mississippi was officially renamed the J.B. George Building in honor of the University's third president during a ceremony held June 14, 2012, on the Hattiesburg campus. George's name previously graced the University's longtime cafeteria known as The Commons. That building was torn down in 2009 and replaced with a beautifully landscaped area called Centennial Green. The current J.B. George Building houses the Speech and Hearing programs as it was intended to be.



R.C. Cook Union: Named for the school's fourth president, Dr. Robert Cecil "R.C." Cook (1945-54), the University Union was completed in 1976. Use of the building is primarily for student-related activities. Housed in the building are Seymour's, a convenience store, a game room and meeting rooms.

Richard Aubrey McLemore Hall: Named for the school's first interim president (January-August 1955), McLemore Hall was completed in 1956 and was the original home of the R.C. Cook Union. The union housed Nat's Nook, an on-campus eatery where Jimmy Buffett, a Southern Miss student, often performed. The building's current use is for classrooms and offices.

William David McCain Library and Archives: Named for the school's fifth president, Dr. William D. McCain (1955-75), this building houses several offices and programs, along with the Special Collections components of the University Libraries, including the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection.

Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building: Named for the school's sixth president, Dr. Aubrey Keith Lucas (1975-96), it currently houses the offices of the University's president and vice presidents. Affectionately referred to as "The Dome," this building is the focal point of the campus with its patina top and distinctive architecture.

Horace W. Fleming Jr. Education Center: Named for the school's seventh president, Dr. Horace Weldon Fleming Jr. (1997-2001), this building on the Gulf Park campus features 20 regular classrooms, three computer laboratories, two interactive video network rooms, a conference room and a 500-seat auditorium.



Shelby Freeland Thames Polymer Science Research Center: Named for the school's eighth president, Dr. Shelby F. Thames (2002-07), it currently houses the School of Polymer Science and Engineering and the Polymer Science Center.

ICONS

All-American Rose Garden: Planted in 1973 by the Hattiesburg Area Rose Society, the Rose Garden is maintained by the Southern Miss Physical Plant. In 1975, the garden was approved as an accredited Public Rose Garden by All-American Rose Selections Inc. It was featured in the September 1992 issue of *American Rose* magazine. Located near the front entrance of the campus, the semicircular garden consists of 32 separate beds, each containing its own unique hybrid of roses. It has become an unofficial campus tradition to have one's photo taken here in cap and gown on graduation day.



Fast Fact

The All-American Rose Garden has produced lush, brightly colored flowers that have enticed countless Southern Miss students to pick the blossoms for their significant others. Adding to the blooms' allure is a widely held concern that the University fines those caught picking flowers with a hefty price ranging between \$50 and \$500 per rose.



Centennial Gateway: The Centennial Gateway serves as an impressive and dignified entrance to The University of Southern Mississippi. In 2009, the Ed Langton family of Hattiesburg donated \$200,000 to fund the construction of the gateway, in addition to a \$17,777.77 contribution from The Gold Leaf Society, a secret society that has helped support a number of Southern Miss projects in recent years. The 125-foot-wide brick and cast stone welcoming structure at the main entrance to the Hattiesburg campus on Hardy Street was completed and dedicated on March 30, 2010, as part of the University's 100th anniversary celebration.

Lake Byron: In October 1933, members of the senior class voted to construct an artificial lake in a low, swampy plot of ground at the front of campus as their gift to the school. Dr. Byron E. Green, president of the Forrest County Board of Supervisors, assisted the class in its preparations and secured laborers from government relief agencies to dig the lake. Ground was broken on November 20, 1933, and plans called for the lake to be four feet deep (sufficient for canoeing), 500 feet long and 135 feet across at its widest part. In appreciation for his assistance on the project, the senior class voted to name the lake in honor of Dr. Byron Green. The lake was officially dedicated as Lake Byron on May 28, 1934.



Roberts Schoolhouse: Built in 1899 in Northeast Jackson County for \$80, the one-room Roberts Schoolhouse offers visitors a rare glimpse into the past. Now located in its original form on the patio of Owings-McQuagge Hall, the structure is complete with McGuffey's Readers, desks with inkwells, slate chalkboard, wood stove, individual lesson slates and many other items familiar to early learners.



Classes were held in the one-room schoolhouse until 1922 when consolidation forced its closure. Everything in the schoolhouse is original except for a few nails and several windowpanes. In 1981, the building was disassembled, and every part was numbered. The parts were then brought to Southern Miss, and the building was reassembled on the patio of Owings-McQuagge Hall.

The structure has special significance to Southern Miss. Dr. M.M. Roberts, a well-known local attorney, member of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and for whom the University's football stadium is named, received his early education in the building.

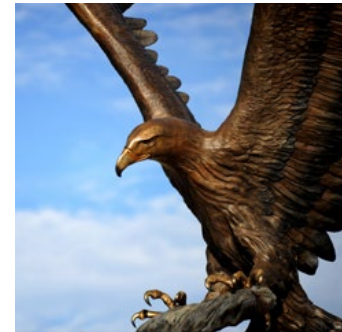


The Rock (M.M. Roberts Stadium) and Carlisle-Faulkner Field: Named in honor of local attorney M.M. Roberts, the east side of the stadium was completed in 1939 and also served as a men's dormitory. It was nicknamed The Rock by football players who helped with the construction of the stadium for scholarships and training purposes. The west side of the stadium

was later completed in 1953, and the upper decks were added in 1976. In 2008, a construction project was completed that enclosed the South End Zone of M.M. Roberts Stadium, which added 4,000 seats to the stadium.



In honor of one of the University's most generous supporters, Gene Carlisle, Faulkner Field underwent a name change in 2004 and became Carlisle-Faulkner Field.



Lofty Return: On October 24, 2013, two massive golden eagle statues were dedicated to the University by alumnus Chuck Scianna – one on the Hattiesburg campus and the other on the Gulf Park campus. Named *Lofty Return*, the sculptures symbolically tie the campuses together while welcoming alumni back to their alma mater. The Hattiesburg eagle is positioned at the apex of the Rose Garden that faces Hardy Street and now stands as a prominent campus icon.

OTHER BUILDINGS, FACILITIES AND FEATURES

Danforth Chapel: Built in 1957, the \$10,000 seed money for the chapel was donated by the Danforth family of St. Louis, Mo., owners of the Purina cereal and pet food company. Matching funds of \$25,000 were raised primarily through donations from faculty, staff and students. Dr. John F. Nau, professor of religion and philosophy and University chaplain, was largely responsible for raising funds needed for the chapel. The chapel's stained glass windows were added in 1987.



Pete Taylor Park: Home of the Golden Eagles baseball team, the facility is named for former coach and assistant athletic director C.J. "Pete" Taylor (1955-83). Opened in 1985 and renovated in 1990, the facility's nickname is The Pete. The Pete's field is named Hill Denson Field after former baseball head coach Hill Denson.

Petrified Log: Located beside Danforth Chapel, the 60-foot, 23-ton, 11 million-year-old tree was discovered in December 1986 by William Thomas Johnson, an Ovet, Miss., landowner. The tree was relocated to the Southern Miss campus on September 4, 1987.

Reed Green Coliseum: Home of the Golden Eagles basketball teams, it was completed in 1965 and is named for former head football coach and athletic director Bernard Reed Green. The facility's nickname is The Greenhouse.



Shoemaker Square: The bricked pedestrian plaza in front of The Hub was named in memory of former Dean of Students Tom Shoemaker, who died as the result of a 1997 traffic accident. The fountain in Shoemaker Square is a central location for many student activities. This campus

landmark is home to events such as the Fountain Sit during Homecoming Week, where student representatives from each Homecoming team sit in its cold water and attempt to answer trivia questions about Southern Miss history and traditions.

Stephen Lane Hatten Memorial Grove: Located directly behind the grandstands in Pete Taylor Park, the grove features benches, tables, a pavilion and trees. It also serves as a living memorial to former Golden Eagle catcher Stephen Hatten, who died of cancer on May 2, 1998.

Lake Thoreau Environmental Center: Located on Thoreau Road off of W. Fourth Street in Hattiesburg, the property was donated to the USM Foundation in 2000 by the Eubanks family with the intention that it be utilized as a nature preserve for scientific, educational and aesthetic purposes. It is managed by the Southern Miss School of Biological, Environmental and Earth Sciences. It serves as an invaluable resource for biology research, teaching and outreach for students at the University, as well as area high schools.

West Memorial Plaza: In 2003, West Memorial Drive was transformed into a pedestrian-only brick plaza. Located in the historic heart of campus and covered by a beautiful canopy of oak trees, the plaza connects Shoemaker Square to the University's main entrance. Since its creation, a number of engraved bricks have been installed along the plaza in honor of various individuals and campus groups. In 2012, the Southern Miss Alumni Association introduced the Buy a Brick, Leave a Legacy Brick Program that encourages the purchase of engraved bricks by Southern Miss alumni, friends and fans with the proceeds benefitting the Pierce Legacy Scholarship Program.

Centennial Green: Located on the former site of the J.B. George Commons, Centennial Green is a designated green space used for concerts, tailgating, outdoor events and relaxation by Southern Miss students.

The Hub: The Student Activities Hub serves as a one-stop shop for all information about student involvement on campus. With over 200 student organizations on campus, and more being created each year, The Hub is the best place for students to start their Southern Miss journey.

Spirit Park: This large green space has become the popular gathering place for alumni and fans on game day. Spirit Park has become the landmark for tailgates and student events on campus and is home to Southern Station, a space for students and alumni alike to experience many Southern Miss traditions.

Southern Station: This facility was gifted to the University by the Alumni Association in 2020. Southern Station is a multi-use entertainment venue which features an outdoor stage, a covered area where many can gather, and Spirit Park provides the perfect space for large gatherings of students and alumni.



Center for Military Veterans, Service Members and Families:

The center opened on Friday, Feb. 11, 2022. This space acknowledges the honor which our nearly 1,700 military students deserve by welcoming veterans, service members and their dependents each time they enter. Southern Miss is nationally recognized as

third in the nation for providing services and support to military students. The Center's staff provides counsel as military students move through the admission process, to graduation and then to their career placement. The goal is to support military students while they learn and grow in this specialized environment.

Oseola McCarty Statue: Hattiesburg native Oseola McCarty made global news in 1995 when she designated USM as the beneficiary of her \$150,000 trust. The woman behind the unexpected gift captured the hearts of all who heard her story of leaving school in the sixth grade to assume responsibility for her family while stashing her life savings to eventually help students from South Mississippi pursue their educations at USM. The Oseola McCarty Scholars Program honors her strong work ethic, giving heart and love for helping others. In honor of her legacy, a statue was placed in Shoemaker Square across from the fountain.



Armstrong-Branch Plaza: Armstrong-Branch Plaza was dedicated in honor of Gwendolyn Armstrong and Raylawni Branch on September 6, 2013, to commemorate these two women's bravery and determination in their choice to attend college. This brick area is located between the Liberal Arts Building and Joseph Greene Hall on the Hattiesburg campus.

RESILIENCE

Hurricane Katrina: On August 29, 2005, one of the most powerful natural disasters in the history of the United States, Hurricane Katrina, devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and The University of Southern Mississippi was not spared.

With Southern Miss facilities washed away on some coastal sites, and damage to the Hattiesburg campus, the historic Friendship Oak on the Gulf Park campus remained, overlooking the devastation of the three historic buildings on the 52-acre beachfront campus.



Fortunately, a renovated, former hospital facility in Gulfport opened as the Southern Miss Gulf Coast Student Service Center, and classes reopened in only six weeks. In all, the University suffered an estimated \$290 million in losses and damages from the storm.

Although more than 120 faculty and staff had completely lost their homes, the Southern Miss family came together to repair and rebuild – nothing became more important. The University of Southern Mississippi was determined to rebuild and restore for the betterment of the coastal communities. Despite the devastation, Southern Miss students, faculty, staff and alumni emerged from Katrina's wrath with their resolve intact. At the beginning of the spring 2006 semester, the University began offering classes on the reopened Gulf Park campus in Long Beach.

Repairs to the iconic Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building, among other facilities, were completed in 2010, while the Gulf Park campus in Long Beach embodies the spirit of renewal and rebirth from this devastating storm. By the 10-year anniversary of Katrina, the Gulf Park campus had repaired 270,000 square feet of classroom and office space lost during the storm, with plans for additional facilities and improvement projects well underway.

Hurricane Katrina destroyed more than 60,000 square feet of buildings at the University's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) in Ocean Springs. By the 10-year anniversary of Katrina in 2015, GCRL had replaced 13,227 square feet of space, with plans to replace an additional 30,000 square feet in the near future.

The future of the University's Coastal Operations is strong, and the entire University community remains firmly committed to providing high-quality education and research opportunities in the Gulf Coast region.

February 10, 2013, Tornado: On Sunday, February 10, 2013, an EF-4 tornado ripped through Hattiesburg, devastating more than 700 homes in Forrest and Lamar counties and causing significant damage to the southern edge of the Southern Miss campus.



One music building, the Jazz Station, was completely destroyed, while seven other structures received significant damage. One of the buildings that received heavy destruction was the Ogletree Alumni House, an iconic landmark at the front of campus that was built in 1912 to serve as the president's home. Most of the devastation to the facility occurred on its southeast side, where the roof and walls were blown away, and the front columns, bricks and windows at the front of the

building were also severely damaged. The Mannoni Performing Arts Center and Fine Arts Building had several broken windows, water damage in classrooms and roof destruction, while the newly renovated Marsh Hall experienced damage to its wood flooring.

Just three hours after the tornado ripped through the Pine Belt, a group of nearly 1,000 students came together on Facebook to discuss how they could help get Southern Miss back up and running. Because of a previously scheduled, two-day Mardi Gras holiday, many students were not on campus when the storm hit, but that did not stop hundreds of them from planning their recovery efforts from afar and returning to help.

The tornado presented Southern Miss with some difficult challenges, but the campus community stepped up to overcome each obstacle, proving that those associated with the University are resilient.

April 15, 2013, the USM Foundation announced a comprehensive landscaping plan to restore the southern edge of the University's Hattiesburg campus and a Campus Beautification Campaign to generate private funds to help address the cost of the plan. To kick-start the Campus Beautification Campaign, the Southern Miss Alumni Association provided a \$100,000 contribution, and on May 7, 2013, five mature oak trees, measuring 40-feet high by 40-feet wide, were planted to kick off the first phase of the landscaping plan.



PUBLICATIONS

OFFICIAL STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

School Newspaper: The first school newspaper was published on December 21, 1918, and its title was *Normal College News*. The paper was published every Saturday while school was in session. President Joe Cook sent a copy of the publication to Gov. Theodore G. Bilbo, whose response was, "The little thing looks puny." President Cook countered the governor's remark by reminding him that since both he and the governor were of modest stature, they should be "the last men in the world to condemn men or things because of lack of corporeal immensity." The governor relented and promised to "try to be satisfied with the infinitesimal creature."

When the school's name was changed to State Teachers College in 1924, the newspaper became *Teachers College News*. In 1926, *Teachers College News* editor Olen Brewer initiated an effort to enlarge the paper and change its name.

Brewer smoked a pipe labeled "Student Prince" and suggested that name for the paper. His suggestion was not practical, however, because of the popular contemporary play by that name. Brewer then approached two Austrian professors who were on the faculty at that time and asked about a foreign word for "prince." One of the professors supplied the word "printz."

After much discussion and debate, the name *The Student Printz* was presented to the student body for a vote. The new name was approved, and the first issue of the *Printz* was published in January 1927.



The Drawl: The student handbook was called *The Drawl* from approximately 1954 to 1978. There are no existing records to indicate the reason for adopting *The Drawl* as the handbook's name, but an inference can be drawn from the fact that the school's name included the word "Southern," and what do Southerners do, if not drawl? The first student handbook was simply called *Normal College Hand Book*. When the school's name was changed to State Teachers College, the handbook was renamed the *Handbook of State Teachers College*. From 1936 to approximately 1940, the name *Freshlite* was used for the handbook. When the school underwent its second name change in 1940, the handbook was renamed the *Handbook of Mississippi Southern College*.

From about 1980 to 1988, the handbook was simply the *Student Handbook*, but in 1989, it was renamed *Southern Dawn* and remained so until 1994 when it reverted to the *Student*

Handbook. Over the years, the handbooks have been published by the school's chapters of the YMCA and YWCA, the Student Government Association and the Division of Student Affairs.

The Drawl was revived in 2002 by the Alumni Association to ensure the traditions and history of Southern Miss are passed on to all future Golden Eagles.



Athletics



Athletics began modestly at Mississippi Normal College. In September 1912, 150 students organized the Athletic Association and elected science professor R. J. Slay as athletics director. Football was the school's first sport and was new to many country boys in 1912. Only after much persuasion did 13 stalwart souls, two of them one-armed, volunteer for the school's first squad. The inaugural game was a 30-0 thrashing of the Hattiesburg Boy Scouts, coached, ironically, by future State Teachers College President Claude Bennett. Highlights of the early years included a 113-0 triumph over Mize and a 13-7 near miss against Ole Miss in 1913.

In addition to football, the early athletic program at MNC included tennis, track, women's volleyball, softball, basketball and indoor baseball. Over the last 100 years, the Southern Miss Athletics has grown to include 17 sport programs at the Division I level sponsored by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

ATHLETICS CONFERENCE

Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association: Mississippi Southern College (MSC) joined the SIAA in December 1930 and remained in the conference until 1947. Membership in SIAA ensured that only four-year institutions would appear on the football team's schedules.

Gulf States Conference: In 1948, MSC joined Spring Hill College of Mobile, Ala., and seven Louisiana institutions to form the Gulf States Conference. The football team found great success in the new conference, winning three championships before withdrawing from the GSC in 1952. The reason MSC withdrew is because Athletics Director Reed Green wanted to turn the Southerners into a major competitor in college football, and he believed independent status would free him to add more prominent names to the schedule. Also in 1952, MSC joined the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

Metro Conference: The Metro Conference, originally called the Metro Six, was formed July 13, 1975. Southern Miss was a member of the conference from 1982 until 1995 when Conference USA formed. Other members of the conference included Florida State University, University of South Carolina, University of North Carolina-Charlotte, Georgia Tech, Virginia Tech, University of South Florida, University of Louisville, Tulane University, University of Memphis, University of Cincinnati and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Men's sports included baseball, basketball, cross country, golf, swimming and diving, tennis, and track and field. Women participated in basketball, cross country, golf, swimming and diving, track and field, tennis and volleyball.

Conference USA: Conference USA unveiled its name, logo and Commissioner Mike Slive on April 24, 1995, in Chicago.

In April 1995, Southern Miss became one of the charter members of the new conference. C-USA began its inaugural season with basketball play; the football teams began conference play in 1996. With the establishment of the conference came a tremendous amount of national exposure, including a series of contracts with Fox Sports, CSTV, ESPN and ESPN's subsidiaries.

Sun Belt Conference: On July 1, 2022, Southern Miss officially joined the Sun Belt Conference.



Fast Fact

Did you know that the first football game was with the Hattiesburg Boy Scouts, coached by future Southern Miss President Claude Bennett?

Mississippi Normal College, led by L.S. Venable, who had been elected president of the Athletics Department, pounded the scouts 30-0 and went on to post a 3-1-1 season. Other early opponents included a local agricultural high school, Mississippi College, Southwestern Louisiana and Ole Miss.

Did you know that our first football team's beginnings could be traced back to 1912, the first year of the school's existence? Football games were played at Kamper Park, which had no seats; so spectators stood to watch the games. The first team consisted of 13 men, two of whom were one-armed.

FOOTBALL

Conference Championships

C-USA Champions – 1996, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2011

C-USA East Division Title – 2006

C-USA West Division Title – 2015

Gulf South Conference Champions – 1948, 1950, 1951

114
NFL Draft Picks

54 All-Americans

Division I

10 First Team / 9 Second Team / 13 Third Team / 4 Fourth Team

Small College*

12 First Team / 5 Second Team / 1 Third Team

* competed in the Small College Division until '71 or '72

27 Postseason Appearances

Titles

**UPI COLLEGE DIVISION
NATIONAL CHAMPIONS**
1958, 1962





MEN'S BASKETBALL

Conference Championships

Sun Belt Champions – 2023

Conference USA Champions – 2001, 2014

Metro Conference Champions - 1991

Gulf States Champions – 1950, 1952

13 All-Americans

14 Postseason Appearances

Titles

NIT CHAMPIONS 1987

10 NBA Draft Picks

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Conference Championships

Sun Belt Champions – 2023

Conference USA Champions – 1996 Red Division

Metro Conference Champions - 1989, 1994

Metro Tournament Champions – 1987, 1990, 1992, 1995

6 All-Americans

15 Postseason Appearances

Titles

GILLOM TROPHY

Jamiera Faulkner, 2013-14

17 Professional Players



BASEBALL

Conference Championships

6 C-USA Regular Season

6 Tournaments – 5 C-USA, 1 Sun Belt

93 **MLB Draft Picks**

(14 active across major leagues and minors)

23 **Postseason Appearances**

1 Regional | 2 Super Regionals

Players in the MLB

22

41 **All-Americans**



SOFTBALL

Conference Championships

C-USA Champions – 2000, 2004

6 **Postseason Appearances**

Titles

HONDA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR – Courtney Blades, 2000

8 **All-Americans**

WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

Conference Championships

19 Indoor Event Champions

Conference USA Indoor Champions – 2021

35 Outdoor Event Champions

Conference USA Outdoor Champions - 2018

25 **All-Americans**

6 Indoor | 19 Outdoor



Titles

2011 NCAA INDOOR LONG JUMP NATIONAL CHAMPION – Tori Bowie

2011 NCAA OUTDOOR LONG JUMP NATIONAL CHAMPION – Tori Bowie

2012 NCAA OUTDOOR TRIPLE JUMP NATIONAL CHAMPION – Ganna Demydova



MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

Conference Championships

23 Indoor Event Champions

38 Outdoor Event Champions

33 All-Americans
10 Indoor | 23 Outdoor

CROSS COUNTRY

Women's Conference Championships

Sun Belt Champions – 2022

Men's Conference Championships

Conference USA Champions – 1999

MEN'S TENNIS

Best Finishes

Top 100 Singles – 2

Top 100 Doubles – 2

Top 50 Regional – 2

Top 50 Team Ranking – 2

1 All-American
Jan Burmeister, 2011



MEN'S GOLF

28 Tournament Victories

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

1 Postseason Appearance

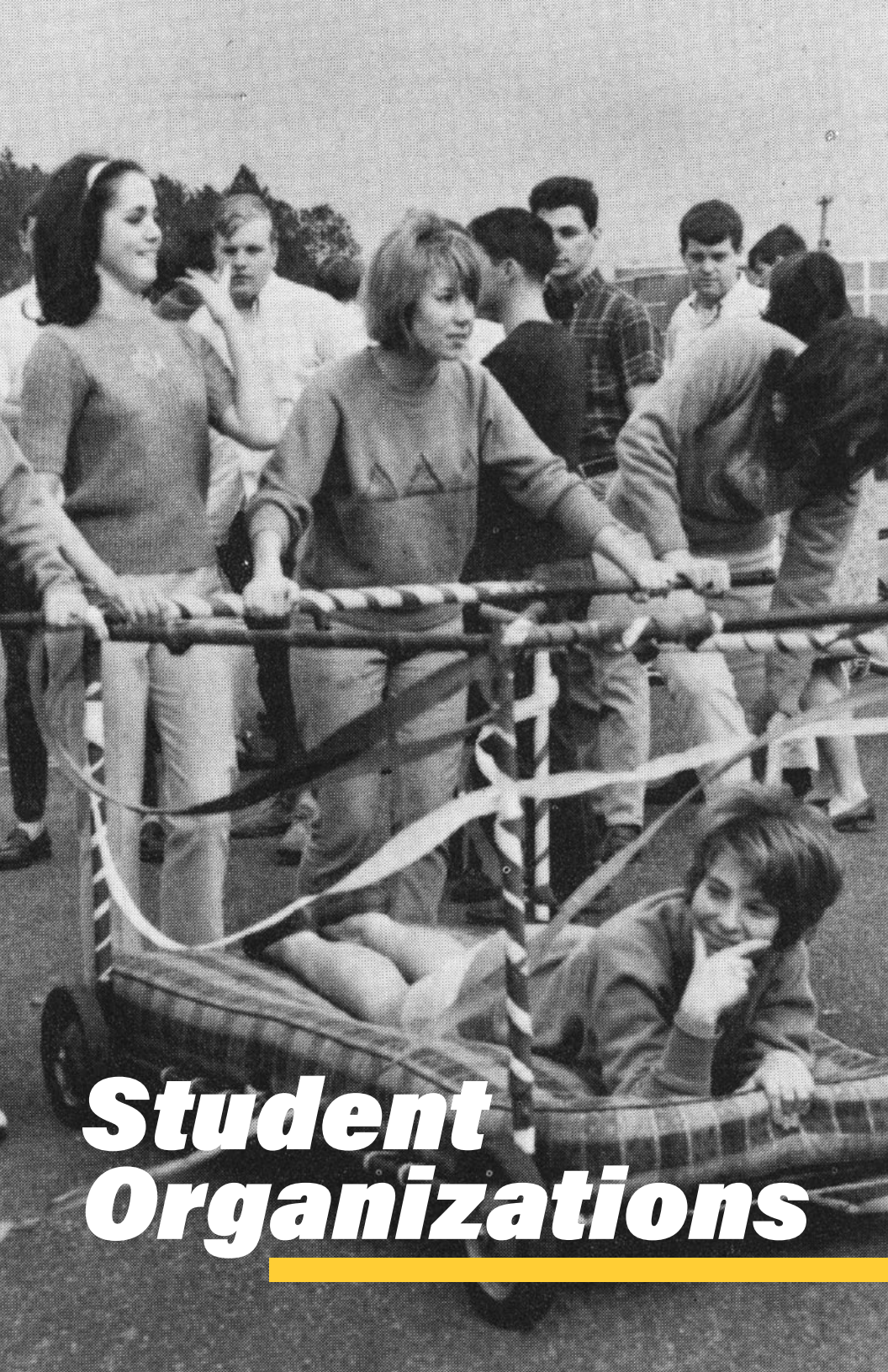
2023 Season

best season in terms of program history and wins, going 18 - 24

1 Pair made **AVCA Top-Flight** in 2019*

** equivalent of All-American*





Student Organizations

THE FOUNDATION OF STUDENT LIFE: EARLY STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student organizations have existed on campus for more than 100 years. Since the arrival of the first class in 1912, students have organized themselves into groups based on everything from academic interest to geographic origin. Among the first student organizations formed on campus were Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, founded to unite Mississippi Normal College's students and provide opportunity for Bible study and Christian service.

Other social outlets included the literary societies: the Prestonian (named for former state Superintendent of Education John R. Preston), the Platonian, the Sherwood Bonner (named for a Holly Springs author of local color fiction) and the Mississippian, which involved women in programs of "music, readings, discussions, literary criticism, etc." After 1917, when the Smith-Hughes Act provided federal money for vocational education, the college began to train home economics teachers for public schools. Soon thereafter, agriculturally based clubs, including the tomato and corn clubs, along with the egg, poultry and pig clubs, and the cooperative dairy association, became popular among the student body. In the early years, there were also county clubs, a college quartet, tennis club, debate team, women's glee club, storytellers' league and Shakespeare club.

In the 1950s, student life experienced another burst of activity as President Cook placed a heavy emphasis on student organizations and campus involvement. Besides the national leadership organizations, Omicron Delta Kappa and Phi Delta Rho, there were honorary societies in biology, drama, chemistry, commerce, education, mathematics, home economics, literature, music, foreign languages, religion and speech.

New denominational clubs appeared for Catholics, Episcopalians, Methodists and Lutherans. Service organizations emerged, including the Pan American Student Association, Circle K and the Yellow Jackets, who would later evolve into the group known as Southern Style.



STUDENT GOVERNMENT HISTORY

On October 8, 1912, the students, at President Cook's urging, organized a Student Self-Government Association. Officers included a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and an elected council of eight men and seven women whose duty it was to hear cases of student misconduct and recommend punishment to the faculty. In the late 1950s, the Student

Government Association was reorganized to include a student senate as well as men's and women's affairs boards.



In 1991, Derek Hopson became the school's first black Associated Student Body president, and in 1994, Cindy Woods became the school's first female ASB president.

Student government has been in existence, in some form, for more than 100 years and holds the title as the institution's oldest student organization. Over the years, the

Student Government Association has passed legislation relative to student governance and conduct and has made numerous recommendations to the administration for changes in student life rules and regulations. Today, the Miss University of Southern Mississippi Pageant, Homecoming festivities, Lighting the Way for the Holidays, the Big Event and student elections are among the group's annual signature events.

FRATERNITY AND SORORITY LIFE

In 1934, another element of college life came to the school when seven male students organized the XXX club to "bring about closer fellowship among the fellow men of State Teachers College." In February of the following year, the club became Kappa Alpha Tau, the college's first social fraternity. Kappa Phi Sigma appeared in 1937, changing to Zeta Sigma four years later to become the first affiliate of a national fraternity on campus. By that time, the college had five sororities, two of them with national affiliation. Sigma Theta Kappa was the first local group, organized in November 1935, followed by Mu Omega in 1937. The third local group, Gamma Delta Tau, petitioned to join Sigma Sigma Sigma, and in May 1937, became State Teacher's College first national sorority. Alpha Sigma Alpha followed, accepting another local sorority into its national organization. The fifth women's group was a local sorority, Delta Sigma, founded in 1938. The College Panhellenic Council was established to unify on-campus sororities in 1937.

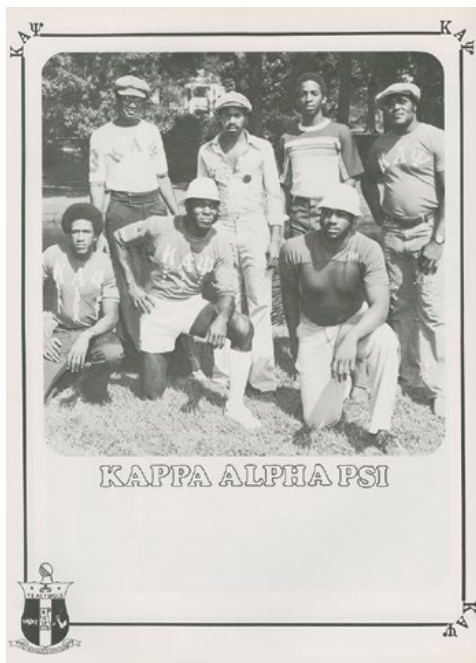
During his presidency, Dr. R.C. Cook made the expansion of fraternity and sorority life at Mississippi Southern College a major objective. Cook's secretary, Jane McInnis, had been a member of Chi Omega during her college days at the University of Alabama, and with her help, he lured this prestigious national social sorority to Mississippi Southern College in



1949. Kappa Delta came the same year, and Phi Mu followed in 1950. A year later, former Mississippi First Lady Corinne Johnson helped organize a Delta Delta Delta chapter, giving the school seven national sororities.

Attracting Greek-letter organizations for men to Mississippi Southern College proved more difficult, according to Cook, because “the national fraternities took a more standoffish look at schools which had formerly been teachers colleges.” However, several did come, including Phi Kappa Tau, Kappa Alpha Order and Kappa Sigma in 1948; Alpha Tau Omega and Pi Kappa Alpha the following year; and Sigma Phi Epsilon in 1953.

An Interfraternity Council appeared in 1948, and Delta Sigma Epsilon merged with Delta Zeta in 1956. A new sorority, Pi Beta Phi, appeared in 1961, as did another fraternity, Acacia. The pulse of campus life during the '60s also reflected the energy of a developing university as the Greek community continued to thrive. Acacia disappeared, but two new fraternities emerged: Sigma Alpha Epsilon in 1965 and Sigma Nu three years later. In 1971, another sorority, Delta Gamma, appeared.



Greek social organizations for African Americans appeared in 1975: two sororities, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., and one fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. In 1976-77, the arrival of African American fraternities, Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi and Phi Beta Sigma, attested to both the continued vitality and growing diversity of campus Greek life.

Over the next two decades, fraternity and sorority life continued to grow at Southern Miss. Two additional African American sororities were added, Sigma Gamma Rho (1978) and Zeta Phi Beta (1984). Sigma Chi Fraternity (1981), Alpha Delta Pi Sorority (1985)

and Delta Tau Delta Fraternity (1987) were established on campus. In 1993, the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) was founded to unify all historically African American Greek-letter organizations. In the 1990s, Kappa Alpha Theta (1998) and Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity (1998) were established on campus. Fraternity and sorority life continued to flourish, so much so, that a new sorority was sought to meet the growing sorority population, and in November of 2014, Alpha Chi Omega national sorority was recruited and established at Southern Miss.

FRATERNITY AND SORORITY HOUSING

In 1949, Alpha Tau Omega acquired the renovated college barn and turned it into the first fraternity house on campus. Five years later (1954), Phi Kappa Tau broke ground for a building, and a Fraternity Drive began to take shape. In 1965, a fire destroyed the Kappa Sigma and Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity houses, and the replacement houses, along with the new Sigma Alpha Epsilon house, would establish Fraternity Drive (where it still stands today) in 1968.

In 1963, Wilber Panhellenic Hall (residence hall facing Highway 49) would become home to Southern Miss' sorority women for more than 40 years. The Village, an \$18 million residential complex for sororities and upper-class female scholarship holders, opened in 2007.

STUDENT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Student Alumni Association is one of the largest student organizations on campus and has many fun activities that draw the interest of the entire student body. Established more than 25 years ago, and formerly known as The Legacy, the Student Alumni Association is the campus leader in promoting spirit and enthusiasm at Southern Miss. The group's focus is centered on the protection of the traditions and history of Southern Miss. A few of their signature events include Painting of the Eagle Walk, Screaming Eagles, Founders' Week and alumni networking events.



SECRET SOCIETIES

Sometime in the fall of 2005, then Vice President for Student Affairs Joe Paul received a mysterious letter requesting that he look underneath a water fountain on the seventh floor of a building honoring someone with seven letters in his last name. He compliantly went to the proper location in the Johnson Science Tower, where he found a check designated for a “deserving student affected by Hurricane Katrina.”

Equally mysterious was the appearance in November of a large decorative stone on the lawn of Danforth Chapel. The rock bore an emblem with a leaf surrounded by seven stars and the date 1877. Believing it to be a fraternity prank, then Union and Programs Director Barbara

Ross conducted a little detective work and discovered the existence of an organization calling itself The Gold Leaf. "A group of individuals," according to one of the society's letters, "has taken an oath to commit itself to the betterment of The University of Southern Mississippi."



Ross suggested that it would be fitting for the first named meeting room in the Thad Cochran Center to be The Gold Leaf Room, and on July 7, 2007 (07-07-07), she received a check (the first of seven totaling the \$25,000 required for the naming opportunity) designated, of course, for Room 227.



Other individuals and groups on campus also began to receive correspondence from The Gold Leaf, often accompanied by a check, usually for \$777.77. Apparently, the significance of the number seven derived from the 227 students and 17 faculty members present at the school's opening on September 18, 1912. The date 1877 possibly reflected the origin of the Mississippi Teachers Association, which played such a crucial role in the institution's founding.

Another of the society's letters stated, "Our mission is being accomplished through the making of financial and other gifts to individuals associated with the University whom we believe bring honor to the University through their work and lives. Membership in The Gold Leaf is and will always remain anonymous so that the focus of the gift will be on the recipient."

On the 100th anniversary of Founders' Day, March 30, 2010, the University dedicated a magnificent Centennial Gateway at the main entrance to the campus. That stately monument to the institution's first 100 years was made possible in part by The Gold Leaf Society's donation of \$17,777.77 toward its construction.

In January 2020, The Gold Leaf contributed \$57,777.77 to support the construction of Southern Station, a facility donated by the Southern Miss Alumni Association to create space for students and alumni alike to experience the rich traditions associated with the University. In grateful recognition of the generous gift, there is a stained-glass window on the northern wall of Southern Station spanning more than five feet in diameter.



A separate but apparently companion organization, The Society of 1910, also emerged. "As students past and present," said one of its statements, "we are driven by our overriding founding principle—to work in all things for the betterment of The University of Southern Mississippi."

In 2007, fall Commencement ceremonies included the unveiling of a portrait of the five original campus buildings, specially commissioned by the Society of 1910. Donated to the University, it remains on display in the Aubrey K. Lucas Administration Building.



In addition to the secret societies mentioned above, other secret societies continue to emerge, some of which include the Gilded Eagles and the Black Key Society.

The Blackbirds

The Blackbirds were a clandestine group of students who appeared on campus some time in 1926. Their favorite pastime was defacing sidewalks, walls and especially the water tower with their own peculiar brand of graffiti. The group once targeted three elderly professors by scrawling "The Walk of the Dead" on the walkway leading from the dining hall. Underneath the saying, the names of the professors were written, and the message was signed, "The Blackbirds."

On one occasion, the Blackbirds decorated the front of College Hall with the brightly painted message, "The Last Rose of Summer," in reference to a not-so-young female instructor. At the time, faculty members were startled to find notes in the pockets of their sweaters bearing the signature of the Blackbirds.



**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

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