

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Building the Next Generation of Business Leaders by Giving Students the Competitive Edge

The University of Southern Mississippi Implements Innovative Full-Immersion Business Education, Enabling New Grads to Hit the Ground Running

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When you think of top business schools, the names that probably come to mind are Wharton, Harvard, and Stanford, but there's one up-and-coming school in the Southeast that might surprise you. Under the leadership of dean Lance Nail, PhD, CFA, the College of Business at the University of Southern Mississippi recently earned a spot in the prestigious U.S. News & World Report rankings for the first time in the school's history. In the 2010 U.S. News report, Southern Miss ranked 215 out of approximately 500 eligible universities.

Southern Miss has earned this distinction by following through on its vision for the College of Business: to become the leading agent for career development in Mississippi and along the gulf coast. The college offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees across a broad range of business areas, including accounting, business administration, economics, fashion merchandising, finance, international business, marketing, management, management information systems and tourism management.

Dean Lance Nail, with support from University President Dr. Martha Saunders, has recognized the competitive economy that today's graduates face upon entering the workforce and has set out to give the university's business students the best possible edge. Southern Miss is equipping students to compete against graduates from top-tier business schools by providing engaged and proactive career training that builds the skills students need to hit the ground running.

Newly established in 2009, the College of Business Honors House has proven to be a key part of Southern Miss's strategy. Honors House is a fully-immersive living-learning community where 24 top business students live together under one roof. The students benefit from extracurricular educational opportunities such as book discussions, dedicated mentors, and weekly seminars by faculty and corporate executives/entrepreneurs, all designed to further the students' business acumen. Dr. Nail explains that the Honors House puts Southern Miss on par with elite universities such as Texas and Ohio State in offering this unique kind of living-learning opportunity.

Honors House students range from sophomores to graduate students and must maintain a minimum of 30 semester hours with a 3.5 grade point average or have shown great leadership capability to be eligible for residence. In addition to expanded business training opportunities, residents also receive scholarship assistance ranging from \$2,500 to \$8,000 per semester and collect three semester hours of credit in the fall and spring sessions.

With continued investments in innovative educational programs like the Business Honors House, Southern Miss is making professional preparedness for the next generation of business leaders a strategic priority.

About Dr. Lance Nail

Lance Nail, PhD, CFA has served as dean of the College of Business at The University of Southern Mississippi since July, 2008. Prior to his appointment as Southern Miss, Dr. Nail served as chair of the Department of Finance, Economics and Quantitative Methods for five years at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Business. As a faculty member at UAB for more than a decade, Dr. Nail's research interests spanned the areas of corporate governance, insider trading and international investing. His research findings have been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals, including the Journal of Financial Economics, Journal of Applied Corporate Finance and Journal of Banking and Finance, and he is currently managing co-editor for the International Review of Financial Analysis. During his tenure as department chair at UAB, he spearheaded several external relations initiatives, including the development of a UAB School of Business Finance Advisory Board and creation of the award-winning Green and Gold Student Investment Fund, and also received teaching honors as recipient of the President's Excellence in Teaching Award and the Beta Gamma Sigma Professor of the Year Award as a faculty member at UAB. Prior to beginning his doctoral studies, Dr. Nail was a senior consultant with Ernst & Young LLP national consulting group. He received a doctorate in finance with a minor in economics from the University of Georgia in 1996 and graduated first in his class at the University of Alabama, where in 1989 he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in finance with a minor in economics.

To learn more about Dr. Nail and the College of Business at Southern Miss, visit <http://www.usm.edu/business>

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