

Dr. Saunders,

The movement to cut the University of Southern Mississippi's Economics Department due to budget cuts has deeply compromised many College of Business students' confidence in both their college's credibility and future. Make no mistake, we business students consider ourselves to be more aware of the current economic climate and its effect on fiscal policy more than students of other disciplines – we understand that a budget must be put into effect, and that sacrifices will have to be felt by everyone. So, please understand that we are not complaining about our being personally inconvenienced, nor is this a complaint against any individual or group responsible, it is simply students expressing their concern about a decision that we feel is not in the best interest of the university.

We, the students, feel that this is a delicate situation that should be handled with much deliberation. We feel that we, as well as the entire faculty of the College of Business, should have been involved in the decision since it directly affects us. We propose that the decision to cut the Economics Department be delayed until a joint forum of faculty members and students can be organized to discuss all of the budgeting possibilities to find a solution for this shortfall. Even if the same solution were reached, I am certain that the students and faculty members would be far more confident in the proposal knowing that all possible solutions had been considered.

As it stands, we do not have faith that all avenues have been explored and that this decision may undermine the university's goal of providing us with an exceptional education. The undersigned feel the proposal to remove the Economics program has been hasty and abrupt and that the students have been ill-informed about the matter in its entirety. We feel an open dialogue allowing students and faculty to discuss questions and alternatives would be to the advantage of everyone. We understand that the suggestions made by this letter are not in accord with protocol – the simple truth of the matter is that we feel we would be losing one of the core components of business and general education. Some worries have even been expressed that the value of our eventual business degrees will be diminished.

Wherever the best solution lies, the undersigned believe that it can be better reached and understood by way of an open forum. At the very least, those students present can glimpse the inner workings of budgetary planning. We students presume on your fairness and understanding, Ms. President, and that of our school's administration in granting our request.