Well, I was working on a grant application and stumbled across the website [www.stateuniversity.com](http://www.stateuniversity.com). I was looking for the enrollment numbers at Gadsden State. I found it, but I also found a lot of other interesting information. For instance, this site ranks JSU at 16th in the State of Alabama. (Gadsden State ranks 43rd!) Below is a bar graph with the top twenty universities and Gadsden State. The blue bar shows the total score (you can visit the website to see what comprises this score).

### Alabama Universities Ranking and Total Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Auburn University Main Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Samford University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The University of Alabama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Spring Hill College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>University of Alabama at Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>University of Alabama in Huntsville</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Birmingham Southern College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Talladega College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>University of South Alabama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Virginia College-Technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Alabama A &amp; M University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>University of Montevallo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>University of Mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tuskegee University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Marion Military Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Jacksonville State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Auburn University-Montgomery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Troy University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Huntingdon College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>University of West Alabama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Gadsden State Community College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of course, I was interested in a bit more than just ranking. I know that JSU tries very hard to maintain the lowest tuition possible with “no hidden fees.” So, I looked at what this site estimated it costs to say at each university. JSU is clearly not at the bottom, but it is a lot cheaper than some of the private schools. Actually, I like looking at the top ten universities and see how we compare. (It would be great to move JSU up to the "top ten.") They all have total costs of $15k or more. It seems that the price tag for a good education does have a minimum value. Which brings up the question, are we really serving our students the best by trying to offer education “on the cheap?” (You can ignore the private schools.)
Alabama Universities with Ranking and Total Cost (in thousands of dollars) to attend each year. Cost includes Tuition, Fees, Books, Room and Board.

I also looked at the ACT scores and the student to faculty ratio for each of the universities. The top ten schools nearly all have ACT scores at 27. JSU down in the “noise” with a value of 22, although we are not at bottom! On the same graph is the student to faculty ratio. Again, the top ten universities nearly all cluster around 14. If JSU wants to move into the top ten, we are going to have to increase our ACT scores and hire more faculty (or decrease the number of students we accept).

Finally, I looked at the average full-time faculty salary for this group of Alabama universities. Although the average salary at JSU is below most of the top ten universities, the salaries are near the top for the universities in the 11-20 ranking.
Alabama Universities with Ranking and Average Full-time Faculty Salary in thousands.

1. Auburn University Main Campus
2. Samford University
3. The University of Alabama
4. Spring Hill College
5. University of Alabama at Birmingham
6. University of Alabama in Huntsville
7. Birmingham Southern College
8. Talladega College
9. University of South Alabama
10. Virginia College-Technical
11. Alabama A & M University
12. University of Montevallo
13. University of Mobile
14. Tuskegee University
15. Marion Military Institute
16. Jacksonville State University
17. Auburn University-Montgomery
18. Troy University
19. Huntingdon College
20. University of West Alabama
43. Gadsden State Community College

I am certain that everyone is going to question particular details. That is okay. However, if we focus on the trends, then we can see the directions for us to move forward. Let’s hope Dr. Meehan also sees the trend to increase the salaries!

Have an enjoyable Easter weekend.
--Lou

Department News

Choice of dates for FAR for 2010!
This year you have a choice of dates for your FAR. You can chose to have the Faculty Annual Review document to me by Friday, 16 April and the review meeting will be the week of 19-23 April, or you can delay and turn in the FAR on Friday, 11 June and have the review meeting 14-25 June. (Obviously, you must plan on being in Jacksonville in June if you turn your far in by the later deadline.) While you should be careful to include details in your report, I do not need to see the supporting documents. You might want to assemble the supporting documents for your personal files, you do not have to submit the supporting documents with your FAR. I am concerned with both your past and the future. I want you to think about personal goals for the next academic year.

Spring Graduation 30 April, 6:30 PM
Please let Tracy Casey know if you are planning to attend Spring Commencement exercises held in the Paul Snow Stadium on Friday, April 30, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. A reception honoring the speaker will be held in the Gamecock Center preceding Commencement. Also, “loaner” regalia is available on a first-come, first-serve basis through the Office of Academic Affairs. Contact Cathy Rose at 782-5284 or email crose@jsu.edu no later than two weeks prior to commencement to make a reservation for loaner regalia.
Science Olympiad, 10 April 2010
Details are available on the Department web-site.

NSF - Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)
Full Proposal Deadline Date: August 25, 2010
Expected Number of Awards: 1800
Estimated Total Program Funding: $57,000,000
Award Ceiling: $400,000
Award Floor: $5,000

Purpose: The Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program supports active research participation by undergraduate students in any of the areas of research funded by the National Science Foundation. REU projects involve students in meaningful ways in ongoing research programs or in research projects specifically designed for the REU program. This solicitation features two mechanisms for support of student research: (1) REU Sites are based on independent proposals to initiate and conduct projects that engage a number of students in research. REU Sites may be based in a single discipline or academic department, or on interdisciplinary or multi-department research opportunities with a coherent intellectual theme. Proposals with an international dimension are welcome. A partnership with the Department of Defense supports REU Sites in DoD-relevant research areas. (2) REU Supplements may be requested for ongoing NSF-funded research projects or may be included as a component of proposals for new or renewal NSF grants or cooperative agreements.

http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5517

University News

International Week Activities Announced
The week of March 29 - April 3 is International Week at JSU. Check out the remaining activities: Friday, April 2 International Game Day International House 2 pm - 10 pm
Saturday, April 3 International Taster’s Fair Leone Cole Auditorium 5 pm - 8 pm

Turning Point Software (Clickers for the Classroom) Demonstration April 13
Mr. Brandon Keck from Turning Technologies will demonstrate the capabilities of the Turning Point Software and student response devices (clickers) on April 13 at 2 p.m. in 309 Ramona Wood Hall. In the demonstration, participants learn how TurningPoint® interactive software can provide the necessary tools to engage and assess your students. The demonstration is free.

JSU Drama Presents Last Night of Ballyhoo, April 8-11
THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO, A comedy by Alfred Uhry at the Ernest Stone Performing Arts Center, Mainstage of Jacksonville State University, Corner of Church and 11th St. on April 8, 9, 10 at 7:00 p.m. and April 11 at 2:00 p.m. All tickets - $5.00
BRIEF SYNOPSIS: It’s December, 1939, in Atlanta, Georgia. “Gone With the Wind” is having its world premier, Hitler is invading Poland, and Atlanta's social even of the season is about to occur. Atlanta's elitist Jews are much more concerned with Ballyhoo! It's very important to see and be seen. No one is more concerned with appearances than
the Freitag family. Will prejudices get in the way of romance? Will everyone get to attend Ballyhoo? Situations take unexpected twists and turns that force characters to realize who they truly are.

Degenerate States

Ten Best Things to Say if You Get Caught Sleeping at Your Desk
10) "They told me at the blood bank this might happen."
9) "This is just a 15 minute power-nap like they raved about in that time management course you sent me to."
8) "Whew! Guess I left the top off the White-out. You probably got here just in time!"
7) "I wasn’t sleeping! I was meditating on our mission statement and envisioning a new paradigm."
6) "I was testing my keyboard for drool resistance."
5) "I was doing a highly specific Yoga exercise to relieve work-related stress. Are you prejudice against people who practice Yoga?"
4) "Why did you interrupt me? I had almost figured out a solution to our biggest problem."
3) "The coffee machine is broken..."
2) "Someone must’ve put decaf in the wrong pot..."
1) "... in Jesus’ name. Amen."

Contact Details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences newsletter, then contact Tracy Casey before noon on Thursdays at: tscasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.