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## School of Accountancy Jumps in National Rankings

**Undergraduate, master's and doctoral programs all rise**

JUNE 21, 2013 BY [REBECCA LAUCK CLEARY](#)

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**Mark Wilder, dean of the Patterson School of Accountancy.**

OXFORD, Miss. – Once again, the University of Mississippi's undergraduate and graduate programs in accountancy have achieved all-time highs in the annual Public Accounting Report national rankings.

This year, all three degree programs are among the nation's top 10. The undergraduate and master's program are both ranked No. 9 nationally, and the doctoral program comes in at No. 8. Both the master's and doctoral programs lead the Southeastern Conference in the

rankings, with the undergraduate program No. 2 in the SEC.

Dean Mark Wilder attributes numerous factors to the rankings success, including outstanding faculty and students and a loyal alumni base.

"We have an outstanding group of faculty who are committed to working together to achieve the common goal of having one of the top accounting programs in the nation," Wilder said. "Our faculty are all CPAs, and there is a long-standing commitment in the [Ole Miss School of Accountancy](#) to teaching excellence and helping students. Wilder also noted that the high quality of the students and loyal and generous alumni play key roles in the school's successes.

"Our student body gets stronger every year," he said. "Our students work very hard academically but are also well-rounded and extremely active on campus. In addition, we have such a strong alumni base. These folks are proud to be Ole Miss accountancy graduates, and I continue to be amazed at their loyalty and generosity. They are extremely involved, help us place our students all over the country and generously support our students, faculty and programs."

The Public Accounting Report has ranked schools for the past 31 years, and the rankings are based on a survey of accounting professors. The Patterson School of Accountancy has been ranked for eight consecutive years in the top 30 and in the top 20 for the past five years.

UM Provost Morris Stocks said he feels that Wilder's strategic leadership during the past seven years has been beneficial.

"The School of Accountancy has a long history of outstanding faculty who take a strong interest in the academic and professional success of their students," Stocks said.

For more than a decade, the [J.D. Williams Library](#) at UM has been home to the former American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Library, which was previously located in New York. It is three times larger than the second-largest accounting library. Housing this "National Library of the Accounting Profession" at Ole Miss is a key reason for high national rankings, Wilder said.

"Having the library here has been a great source of national visibility, which has brought lots of visitors to campus," said Wilder, who is also the KPMG professor of accountancy. "Many of these visitors are accounting professors who are voting in the rankings, and I'm certain that after visiting us, they are highly impressed with our program and students."

The School of Accountancy's formal vision statement, to affirm UM as one of the leading institutions in accounting education in the nation, gets its strength from a number of sources, said Dale Flesher, the school's associate dean.

"We have long placed our graduates in top positions in CPA firms and industry," Flesher said. "In some respects, this success comes from the caring attitude of the faculty. Some have described the School of Accountancy as a closely-knit family. Virtually every student has at least one or two professors that they can go to with either accounting problems or personal problems."

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## Campus Briefs

### Civil Engineering Professor Receives Most-Cited Paper Award

OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation's capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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### Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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## Ole Miss In the News

### Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to

At graduation time, if a student is approaching the end of the semester without a job offer, faculty members often help the student get interviews, and UM is one of the few campuses in America where a CPA teaches every accounting course.

"Because all of the faculty are CPAs, the students want to become successful in the same way, so they work harder to prove that the faith the faculty had in them was warranted," Flesher said. "Fortunately, our alumni are willing to support our students, again making it easier to place our students."

Wilder credits the success of the program to a decades-long commitment to students and teaching.

"We have four professors currently teaching for us who have won the universitywide Elsie M. Hood Outstanding Teacher award," Wilder said. "Only one faculty member campuswide wins this award with 600 or more faculty eligible. The fact that we have nearly a third of our tenure-track faculty who have won the award is a testament to the commitment we have for teaching and students. I am confident that others currently on our faculty will also win this award."

Flesher said that although he can't fully explain why the school keeps moving up in the rankings, he knows that a visit to campus is often helpful.

"Anytime we have visitors in the form of guest speakers, or when we have hosted conferences, the visitors always leave with a high opinion of the School of Accountancy," Flesher said. "It is difficult not to like Oxford and Ole Miss, so the School of Accountancy shares in the richness of life that our local environment offers."

Wilder agreed, noting "over the past three years we have brought faculty to campus from some of the top accounting programs nationally to present their research and spend a couple of days with us. Invariably, they leave highly impressed with our school and Ole Miss."

The School of Accountancy has had a consistent and active doctoral program, enabling Ole Miss to be third nationally in the number of accountancy doctorates granted over the past 20 years.

"We bring in two to four new students each year and get most of them graduated on a timely basis," Wilder said. "These doctoral students had good experiences while at Ole Miss, and we stay in touch with them. They are now accounting professors around the country."

Stocks agreed, saying he believes every aspect of the program has improved in recent years.

"The school has always had a strong and productive undergraduate and master's program," Stocks said. "In recent years, the school has been able to attract some of very bright, productive scholars as new faculty. Those new hires have strengthened the quality and recognition of the doctoral program."

About 500 of the schools in the United States that offer accounting programs, including UM, are accredited by the **Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business**, or AACSB International, as being among "the best accountancy and business programs in the world."

For undergraduate programs, the University of Texas-Austin ranked first, with the University of Illinois in second and Brigham Young University third. For master's programs, those same schools placed in the top three. For doctoral programs, the University of Texas, University of Chicago and University of Illinois took the top three places. UM was the top-ranked SEC school in the master's and doctoral rankings, while the University of Florida was the top-ranked SEC school at the undergraduate level at No. 8, one spot ahead of UM.



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