

# Miss. colleges preach safety, accountability

By Emma Scott  
news editor

## Is your future college safe?

Oxford High School students scouting around for a school where they can further their education after graduation should consider the safety of a college campus as well as the institution's academic offerings.

The colleges OHS students most often enroll in are the University of Mississippi (UM), Northwest Community College (NWCC), Itawamba Community College (ICC), Mississippi State University (MSU) and Delta State University (DSU), according to assistant principal Paul Ross.

Under the Clery Act, colleges are required to release an annual security report, which outlines reported crimes on campus within the last three years. All of these colleges' reports can be found on their respective websites.

Out of this handful of schools, the ones with the lowest number of reported crimes are ICC, NWCC and DSU, according to these annual security reports.

"While I cannot single out any program or reason for our lower rate, I would like to think this is a result of our college's commitment to improving safety and security on our campuses," said Dr. Buddy Collins, vice president of student services at ICC.

When it comes to lower incidents

of crime, size of enrollment and visibility of law enforcement are two important factors.

"We have a smaller student body. We have a very active police department," Zabron Davis, chief of police at NWCC said. "We make a point to get out there, get to know students and be seen as much as possible."

Though the annual report shows that UM had a higher number of reported crimes than some of the other schools, the university was ranked 39 on the list of "50 Safest Large Colleges and Universities in America" by CollegeChoice in September.

"Ole Miss is one of the safest in the SEC, if not the safest," UM Chief of Police Tim Potts said via email. "Doesn't mean crime doesn't happen, but we do a good job of reporting the crimes that take place and investigating them."

Chief Communications Officer at MSU Sid Salter suggests that even though the number of reported crimes are most likely higher at larger schools, the rate would not necessarily be higher because of the amount of students.

"The 'rate' of crime is based on the number of occurrences per thousand.

The 'number' of crimes is just that," Salter said. "So do large schools have a higher number of crimes? Likely. But is the rate higher because the number is higher? Not necessarily."

All colleges offer various means to protect their students, from escorts and crime prevention programs to self defense courses. In some cases, it is the setting that plays a role in campus safety.

"This somewhat rural setting contributes to the safe environment on the campus, along with local and university police being trained to respond to a wide array of emergencies, from active shooter to fire and disaster," DSU Chief of Police Jeffrey Johns said.

However, there are still methods that people can do to protect themselves when they are on campus, including accountability for personal safety.

All of the colleges suggested that it does not take just one person or group to keep the campuses safe, but the whole student body.

"It takes everyone to make a safe campus and that effort is certainly led by your campus safety department," Johns said.

### MISS. COLLEGE SAFETY GRADES

**A** Itawamba Community College 

 Northwest Community College **C**

**C-** University of Mississippi 

 Delta State University **C-**

**D** Mississippi State University 

Based on information from the Department of Education.  
<http://www.american-school-search.com>

# Seniors begin to wrap up college applications for fall semester

By Eric Maddigan  
staff writer

First semester is quickly coming to a close; however, the stress of college applications is still going strong for some seniors.

This includes student Nيتين Anketty, who is applying for enrollment to a total of 17 schools. Anketty said that there has been a great amount of stress associated with college applications.

"I usually work three to four hours per week," Anketty said regarding the

amount of time spent on applications.

Student Manuel Campos has a smaller list of schools, only applying to four, but agrees that the stress can be overwhelming at times.

"There are definitely times where the applications really stress me out," Campos said.

Student Quinn Harris said that she is also applying to four schools. She has not had too much stress regarding college applications, saying, "I knew I would be accepted into the schools I

applied for and get scholarships."

Maintaining a balance between college applications and schoolwork can be a challenge for some students.

To balance schoolwork and college applications, Anketty, "sets aside specific times to work on my applications and try to take advantage of weekends."

Harris took advantage of the high school counselors available to answer questions for students.

"Since I get out of school early, I went to the counselor

and had her help me with the application," she said.

Campos said that the opportunity of early dismissal has helped him maintain this balance, saying, "Getting out at 1:15 really helps."

Anketty offered a tip for students applying to colleges next year, saying: "Don't wait until the night before to turn in the application. It can become really stressful."

However, Anketty admitted that he didn't heed his own advice, saying that he won't wrap up his college applications until "December

31st, 11:59 p.m."

Harris agreed, saying, "Make sure you get applications done as soon as possible. You want to get the priority scholarships."

Campos reflected this, saying "Don't wait. Start on your applications as soon as possible."

"Also, try not to get lazy with them," Campos said. "It is tempting to just kind of slack off with the application, especially the essays. It's really important to put a lot of effort into the applications, especially the essays."

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