

December 2007

Dear Faculty and Staff:

Well, we have just about made it through another semester, and what a semester it has been! For the first time since 2000, Mississippi State is “bowl bound”, with all of the positive publicity that comes from appearing on national television in a bowl game. My family will make the pilgrimage to Memphis, and will be proudly ringing our cowbells (which are allowed!) cheering on the Bulldogs to victory.

Since this is exam week - to keep us in the same mindset as our students, let’s do a short quiz – (answers at the end of the letter)

1. If I am traveling outside of the United States and have a problem during the hours when the university is closed, whom do I call at MSU?
 - a. Your boss at work because he or she might get upset that you didn’t tell them you had a problem.
 - b. The MSU Campus Police @ 662-325-2121.
 - c. The Vice President for Research and Economic Development, since I am sure he is not doing anything important anyway.

2. When traveling abroad, you should wear the following types of clothing –
 - a. Clothing with logos which proudly say, “I am an American” – if I am from the U.S., I want everyone to know it!
 - b. Comfortable clothing that is appropriate for the place being visited.
 - c. It shouldn’t make a difference what I wear when I travel – no one pays any attention to what people are wearing anyway.

During President Foglesong’s tenure, the university has put greater emphasis on international programs. Indeed, many of our faculty, staff, and students travel outside of the U.S. to attend research conferences, to serve on international committees, to go on sabbaticals, to facilitate partnerships with other universities, and to recruit students. It is absolutely critical that we do everything we can to ensure that all MSU personnel are as safe as possible when traveling abroad. For this reason, I am pleased to announce the initiation of a safe travel program for any MSU employee traveling abroad for business activities.

Why is this so important? We recently had one of our faculty members traveling in Spain who had his laptop stolen along with other travel documents. In order to minimize the risks when traveling abroad, we decided to put a program in place which will provide several components: a webpage on the ORED website that contains detailed information, a bi-monthly travel briefing given by Mr. Neil Lewis (Facility Security Officer at MSU) for anyone traveling outside of the U.S., and a laptop loaner program for any faculty member traveling outside of the US. I will describe each of these initiatives in greater detail below.

The safe travel webpage can be accessed from the main ORED webpage under the tab “Information”. If you click on the “International Safe Travel Program” link, it will connect you to the main webpage with posted information on the travel program (<http://www.research.msstate.edu/information/travelprogram.php>), including several PDF files which describe safe travel practices. I would encourage all faculty and staff to consult this site prior to traveling outside of the U.S.

Additionally, we are asking all faculty and staff members going on international travel to attend one Safe Travel briefing each year. These briefings will be given twice per month, so it should be easy to attend one. Currently, these talks will be given in the ICET conference room in the research park on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 2:30 p.m. If you cannot make one of these times, you can set up a briefing on an alternative time by contacting Neil Lewis at nelewis@fso.msstate.edu or calling 325-8682.

Many of us use laptops for a variety of purposes, and often have a significant amount of information on each one that we would hate to lose. Additionally, sometimes we have sensitive data files on our computers that would be difficult to replace. As such, ORED has put in place a laptop “loaner” program for faculty and staff members who are traveling abroad. You can check out the laptop from Neil Lewis (contact info given above) prior to your trip, load your needed files, encrypt your data, and then return the laptop to ORED upon your return. Each laptop will have encryption software on the computer, so that in the event the laptop is lost or stolen, any files or data you have on the laptop are protected. Other major research universities (like Georgia Tech) have programs like this, and I am pleased that we were able to set this up here at MSU. Detailed instructions are given on the International Safe Travel website.

The other major topic I want to discuss this month is our growing research park. Often, when we have visitors come to Mississippi State University, we drive them across Highway 182 into the Thad Cochran Research, Technology, and Economic Development Park (often termed research park). Mississippi State University has several key facilities in the research park, including the High Performance Computing Collaboratory Building (HPCC), the Center for Advanced Vehicular Systems (CAVS), the Ralph E. Powe Center for Innovative Technology, and the Institute for Clean Energy Technology (ICET). We also rent space in the Multitenant Building (owned by the Oktibbeha County Economic Development Authority – OCEDA) for several university centers and institutes.

Currently, there is no available unoccupied space in the research park, which hampers our efforts to provide office and laboratory space to interested tenants. The research park is designed to help accommodate a variety of different organizations including small spin-off companies derived from university-based research, new companies who desire to move into the area to make strategic use of our graduates and research capabilities, and MSU research centers and institutes which need additional space to accommodate growth. Without additional new space in the research park soon, we will start losing the ability to attract and retain key high technology industries into the Golden Triangle Area.

So, what are the future plans for the research park? In the event that a federal budget passes, we expect to receive about \$8M to construct an additional multi-tenant building in the park, with an

expected opening sometime early in 2009. The building will be constructed to be very flexible, and should have in excess of 30,0000 square feet of space that can be leased to companies wanting to locate in the research park. In addition to a new building, we hope to be able to start a Phase II of the research park in the near future, which will be located adjacent to the current park. We have funds allocated for the road that will feed into Phase II of the planned park, and we likewise expect to see this completed sometime in 2010 or 2011. I will keep everyone updated on progress on the park in upcoming newsletters.

Finally, back to our short quiz. The answers are 'b' to both questions. While these questions may seem obvious, it is these types of reminders that we will cover in the International Safe Travel briefings. I encourage everyone to be safe when traveling outside the country, and I hope that our new program will help.

Go Dawgs! Beat UCF Golden Knights @ the Liberty Bowl!

Kirk.