

# THE UNIVERSITY

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## University of South Alabama

The University of South Alabama, the only major public institution of higher learning on the upper Gulf Coast, was created by act of the Alabama State Legislature in May, 1963. With Alabama's two older universities more than 200 miles distant, the University is strategically located in the greater Mobile area, which has a population of more than a million within a 100-mile radius.

## The Gulf Coast Region

Exploration in the Mobile River area began in 1519 when the Spanish Admiral Alonzo Alvarez de Pineda entered and charted the area now known as Mobile Bay. The old fort, now known as Fort Morgan, guarding Mobile Bay, was first fortified by the Spanish in 1559. Settled in 1711 by the French, the bay area has had a tradition rich in culture and vital in the affairs of the nation from its formative years to the present.

Trade and shipping are vital to the economy of the area. Millions of tons of shipping are handled annually through the Port of Mobile, which is rated among the top ports in the country. More than fifteen million tons of shipping are carried yearly on the Tombigbee-Black Warrior waterway system with its modern locks and dams. The intracoastal waterway, crossing the southern end of the state, is connected at Mobile Bay with both inland and ocean shipping. Railroads and airlines serve the Bay area. Diversified farming, woodland crops, and seafood and fisheries are major factors in the area's economy.