

INTRODUCTION/RATIONALE

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI FACULTY, STAFF, students, and alumni have the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the state, the nation, and the world. The state and region have many needs that could and should benefit from the application of knowledge and talent available at the University. In turn, real-world applications of knowledge and talent can nurture active citizenship in the University and broader community, and teach valuable skills to our students, faculty, and staff. Through civic engagement and service, the University will purposefully apply its talent and knowledge so as to transform individuals, communities, and regions.

OBJECTIVES

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PURPOSE, OUR goals are to:

- **Create an infrastructure that facilitates and encourages community engagement**
Build an infrastructure that provides central guidance and assistance to facilitate meaningful and effective community engagement and service activities. Establish a center with dedicated staff to best support the infrastructure.
- **Develop partnerships to effectively facilitate transformation**
Form effective partnerships, which will be necessary to facilitate transformation, with K-12 institutions, other educational entities, businesses, and community organizations in order to fight poverty (and its related issues/factors) through education.
- **Establish a culture that celebrates, rewards, recognizes, and values community engagement**
Establish campus-wide awards and scholarships, support community-based research and teaching, integrate service learning into our programs and curricula, and encourage and facilitate the integration of service activities into our criteria for hiring, promotion, and tenure.
- **Identify and support target areas of community engagement**
Target specific areas in which we can maximize our impact, which will be important as we match needs with University talents and resources, and as we define and measure the

trail of impact that results from the University's activities, which will facilitate the development of measurement parameters that will enable assessment.

- **Develop a common service vernacular**
Develop and disseminate a common language to describe service, civic engagement, and community engagement, and to promote service and transformation.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE STRATEGIES/ TACTICS FOR SUCCESS

Immediate (Current–2-Year) Strategies/Tactics:

Create an infrastructure that facilitates and encourages community engagement

- Charge a civic engagement center implementation task force to:
 - › Visit other centers to learn best practices and consult with successful center directors
 - › Launch a search for a center or office director
 - › Outline resource needs
 - › Develop an organizational chart, and outline current units and resources that will align within the center
 - › Recommend development opportunities (e.g., donors, government agencies, foundations, grants, etc.)
 - › Appoint an advisory board that includes key community agency representatives
 - › Make recommendations about developing a Faculty Fellows program

Develop partnerships to effectively facilitate transformation

- Form a Center or Office of Civic Engagement (name to be finalized by the task force) to:
 - › Facilitate collaborative research and scholarship related to civic engagement
 - › Provide student scholarships that reward participation
 - › Facilitate and foster development of service-learning courses
 - › Host, nurture, and develop external partnerships and engagement

- › Facilitate, foster, and integrate diverse opportunities for civic engagement across multiple institutional levels (e.g., faculty, staff, students, and alumni)
- › Evaluate civic engagement to monitor its trail of impact
- › Develop a standard of measurement and tracking process of civic engagement to guide purposeful investments that maximize the opportunity to transform individuals, communities, and regions
- › Build and foster relationships with alumni, businesses, and community agencies to advance the mission of civic engagement and nurture the development of educational opportunities for students
- › Serve as a clearinghouse for knowledge and models of civic engagement
- › Develop a visual map that represents the key focus areas and establishes a bold vision for making a difference in the area of poverty and other key areas

2+ Years/As Funding Permits Strategies/Tactics:

Establish a culture that celebrates, rewards, recognizes, and values community engagement

- Promote and develop a civic-engagement component within degree programs relevant and appropriate to those programs.
- Expose all students to community engagement, involvement, or participation by the time they graduate. To do so, the University should:
 - › Explore ways to facilitate student involvement through our existing programs (e.g., degree programs, living/learning communities, residential colleges, Freshman Year Experience courses)