



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

COLLEGE OF HEALTH

2005-2008 STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction

The University of Southern Mississippi recently completed its Strategic Plan for 2005-2008. As part of that planning process, the College of Health reviewed and updated its Strategic Plan for the same time period. The following outlines the major goals the College of Health that faculty, students, and staff will work to achieve, and provides a brief overview of the comprehensive tactics to achieve those goals. The College of Health's Strategic Plan's specific integration with University goals and objectives – in tabular format – can be reviewed in the attached appendix.

The College of Health has aligned its long-term goals and its tactics for the 2005-2008 planning period under those selected by the University, and has tailored those tactics to the unique challenges and opportunities present within the academic programs of the College. Those strategies are:

1. improve access to education,
2. ensure quality learning opportunities,
3. promote research, innovation, and scholarship,
4. enhance the economic condition of Mississippi and beyond, and
5. enrich quality of life.

GOAL 1: IMPROVE ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The College of Health will work to improve access to education by increasing opportunities to expand delivery of programs, seeking additional funding for scholarships and assistantships, and creating an environment conducive to learning.

To expand delivery of programs, the College of Health will conduct conferences, clinics, or workshops on the Hattiesburg and/or Gulf Coast campuses, expand at least one graduate and one undergraduate program on the Gulf Coast campuses, increase courses offered online and through alternate delivery systems by at least 10%, and conduct feasibility studies for at least new two degree certificate programs.

The College of Health Foundation Officer will work with each individual academic unit within the College to increase funding for scholarships and assistantships by 10% and to endow at least one unfunded scholarship. Southern Miss and the College of Health support research opportunities for

faculty and students and – where appropriate – 100% of grant proposals will include a request for assistantships.

Learning environments include appropriate physical facilities, a supportive atmosphere for students and faculty, and a well-planned and well-communicated curriculum. To foster such an environment, the College of Health will work to meet the physical needs to increase funding for technology (with a target of \$14,000) and to increase by 20% funding of renovations to the Speech and Hearing Sciences building of the Children's Center for Communication Development. Faculty members are encouraged to participate in learning enhancement workshops offered on campus, with a goal of 25% of faculty participating in those workshops. The staff will also work to obtain external funding for the College of Health Lecture Series (the David J. Fine Distinguished Lecturer Series and the College of Health Scholars Series) to benefit students, faculty, and staff. The College of Health's Curriculum Committee has pledged to include an evaluation program to assess the environmental learning impact of 100% of proposed curriculum changes. Finally, at least one opportunity will be created for College of Health students addressing the benefit of obtaining Latin honors.

Goal 2: Ensure quality learning opportunities

The College of Health will ensure quality learning opportunities through a program designed to pursue and maintain accreditation for all eligible programs through assessment and development programs and through aggressive recruitment, retention, and recognition of faculty and staff.

In addition to maintaining accreditation of 100% of all currently discipline specific-accredited programs, the Department of Community Health plans to apply for accreditation of the undergraduate program in Community Health Sciences during the 2005-2006 academic year.

The College of Health will maintain the accreditation through a series of assessment and development programs. Staff will assess all College of Health programs using ongoing, collaborative methods. One planned strategy is to conduct an Exit Questionnaire for graduating students and to share those results with the respective units. Further, accreditation activities will be supported with appropriate financial and workforce needs to assure success.

The College of Health faculty and staff will develop programs to attract and retain high-ability students, with a goal of increasing new student enrollment by 10%. Recruitment plans include development of two new scholarships annually for high-quality students, development and distribution of recruitment materials from all units/programs within the college, and full implementation of

the College of Health student recruitment and retention plan. To aid in retention of students, the College of Health will work to double the number of student professional organizations, continue the College Ambassadors program, and provide career counseling to 100% of College of Health students.

Southern Miss is committed to helping students succeed, and the College of Health will further develop programs to help students achieve their goals. The strategies include continuation of the Student Resource Center and expansion of the Center's availability to five days a week. The College Council within the College of Health will assess and modify as needed the advisement, tutorial, and counseling process to assure students receive assistance that is tailored to their needs. In addition to providing access to the campus career services to all students, the College of Health will establish a database to track the number of students using the Southern Miss Writing Lab, available tutorial services, Career Services, and other university resources. Staff will use these baseline numbers to establish goals and provide direction to further programs.

In recognition that talented and productive faculty and staff are indispensable to providing a top-quality educational experience, the College of Health will strengthen plans to recruit and retain the best persons available and to recognize their value to the University. Recruitment strategies will include developing specialized materials for each unit and advertisement of all regular faculty positions in national journals and publications. The struggle to retain the best faculty will be addressed through several programs. First, the College of Health has pledged to provide 20% of faculty startup packages to all approved proposals and provide summer salary funding from the Dean's Office for at least two junior faculty members per year. As a means to encourage an open exchange of information, the Dean's Office will present an annual informational workshop for new faculty regarding Tenure and Promotion procedures, as well as an annual informational workshop on procedures and advantages of utilizing sabbatical leaves for professional growth. As a further encouragement to professional growth, the College of Health will provide support by adjusting teaching schedules when possible to allow master-educated faculty to pursue doctoral degrees and provide financial support – within budget constraints – to 85% of faculty for attendance and presentations at regional, national, and international professional scientific meetings. The College of Health will also continue the recent practice of providing College level monetary awards to recognize outstanding faculty members.

Goal 3: Promote research, innovation, and scholarship

The College of Health will work to promote research, innovation, and scholarship among faculty, staff and students through development of policies and infrastructures, identifying and pursuing new funding, and through educating internal and external partners regarding the role of the College.

The College of Health will work during this academic year to strengthen the scholarly infrastructure through refining the framework for annual evaluations, so that each academic unit – with due regard for differences among disciplines – operates similarly. The staff will also work to track and establish a baseline of the number of grant funding opportunities identified by SPA (Sponsored Programs Administration).

The College of Health plans to support grant writing activities through additional staff, training, and mentorship programs. Two forums for the presentation of scholarship and at least two annual specialized workshops on project management, grant writing, and other topics related to fostering grant writing among faculty, staff, and students will be held this academic year. Experienced faculty and staff will be encouraged to act as research mentors for new faculty. The College of Health has re-structured its research center (CREATeS – The Center for Research, Evaluation, Assessment, and Training Services) and through the center's staff provides a college-wide grant writer to assist in the development of research proposals and in support of grants management. The College of Health will work with faculty and staff to achieve a 10% increase in the number of grant applications, a 20% increase in the number of multidisciplinary grant proposals, and a 20% increase in the number of College of Health grants that use CREATeS as a College research infrastructure.

The College of Health is committed to recognizing those who put forth the extra effort to earn grants, to educate the public and government at all levels as to the critical role of College of Health research, and to create opportunities for partnerships. To meet those goals, the College of Health will work with the University's Public Relations department to publicize appropriate activities to both internal and external partners. A departmental public relations representative in each academic unit will work with the university's assigned College public relations liaison to highlight research, scholarly activities, and philanthropic activities in public presentations and in appropriate media outlets. To reach internal and key external partners, the College of Health will also develop a quarterly College e-newsletter to emphasize research contributions. College level awards will also be given to recognize research activities.

Goal 4: Enhance the economic condition of Mississippi and beyond

The University of Southern Mississippi and the College of Health are committed to improving the economic condition of Mississippi and beyond through thorough preparation of graduates to meet the needs of a changing and diverse global economy. The College of Health will strengthen its determination to provide programs, practica, and intern experiences for all students to allow exposure and experience “real world” situations prior to graduation. To meet the ever-increasing demands of working in a global economy, the College of Health will also provide for the students a course, workshop or session on diversity issues, and will increase international learning opportunities by 20%.

The College of Health is further committed to provide support and leadership in identifying economic development initiatives related to the mission of the College. To achieve this goal, an evaluation of the impact of the College on economic development in Mississippi will be conducted, and the results of that evaluation will help identify two new economic development opportunities within the health care arena. The College of Health will also begin including “economic development” as a regular agenda item at College Council meetings, and provide two workshops to inform college faculty how to identify economic development initiatives related to the college.

Similarly, the College of Health will work to further develop programs and services that lead to entrepreneurship and foster economic development. The plans include two faculty workshops on entrepreneurship development and a formal plan regarding entrepreneurship and economic development.

As a responsible “citizen” of the community it serves, the College of Health will work to foster synergy between the College and its communities by increasing service learning activities, increasing professional services to the communities, and increasing the number and diversity of the members of the Dean’s Council to accurately reflect the population served.

Goal 5: Enrich quality of life

In addition to the academic achievement and opportunities for students, the College of Health recognizes the role of the overall university experience in guiding and graduating well-rounded students capable of adding value to the communities in which they reside. To enhance and enrich the quality of life on campus and in the community it serves, the CoH goals include celebrating students’ academic, athletic, and social achievements; encouraging greater community participation in College activities; fostering responsible citizenship and community engagement by faculty and staff; communicating College of Health cultural opportunities

throughout related communities; enhance access to the College's facilities; and promoting health and well-being of the university communities.

To enhance the quality of life in the community, the College of Health proposes to hold at least two community services (e.g. health fairs), promote service learning activities, and provide College of Health-related professional service to the community. The College will work with community leaders to include local professionals, where appropriate, in classes, workshops, etc., for students, staff, and faculty.

The College of Health will seek to enhance the quality of the student experience through continuation of College Awards Day and other ceremonies targeted toward providing recognition for student achievement. Students will be encouraged to participate in service learning activities and services to aid in their professional growth and provide more "real world" experience. The University is committed to their students beyond graduation, and in support of that commitment the College will host alumni functions as appropriate to maintain and enhance the professional and personal relationships between university, student, and community.

As a final strategy to enrich the quality of life for the College of Health family, the College proposes a coordinated communication campaign to highlight and recognize accomplishments and activities. Working with the Southern Miss public relations department, the College of Health will provide to appropriate media markets a series of press releases on outstanding students, information on student achievement, and targeted promotion campaigns around College of Health-sponsored events (Fairchild Lecture Series, health fairs, etc.). The College of Health will also host – and heavily promote – an annual "open house" for faculty, staff, and the surrounding community to help foster professional and personal relationships, and conduct tours and special day events where appropriate. This coordinated communication campaign will work toward the goal of positioning the College of Health as "the" repository of health-related expertise in the area, and will include developing an "expert speakers bureau" at no cost to university community members.

The College of Health at The University of Southern Mississippi, through implementation of this Strategic Plan, seeks to enhance its role as a responsible and active member of the university and the community by fostering personal and professional development for students, faculty, and staff; providing the highest quality academic programs; promoting a strong commitment to research activities; and serving the community as a responsible and active partner in promoting and increasing the quality of life through improved health information and services.