

# Designing our Future...Together

Strategies for the University of Southern Mississippi

## Our Mission

Our primary mission is to cultivate intellectual development and creativity through the generation, dissemination, application and preservation of knowledge.

## Our Vision

Southern Miss will emerge as the premier research university of the Gulf South – engaging and empowering individuals to transform lives and communities.

## Our Plan

Four priorities guide the University of Southern Mississippi, each helping to support our vision. These priorities, identified through a strategic planning process in 2007-08, provide a solid foundation for progress.

- A Climate for Academic Success
- Image Development
- Connections with Community
- Healthy Minds, Bodies and Campuses

### **A Climate for Academic Success**

Our vision for a climate of academic success includes a unified environment that minimizes barriers for prospective and enrolled students; attracts and retains quality faculty and staff; embraces and reflects diversity; and produces graduates who are truly competitive in the global marketplace.

Students, faculty and staff at Southern Miss, along with the larger community, benefit from a wide range of cultural, social and educational experiences that yield informed, responsible, and productive citizens with a standard of lifelong learning.

University experiences are supported by quality facilities and up-to-date technology accessible to the entire university community. Educational programs adhere to rigorous standards in terms of student advisement, engagement, and mentoring; curriculum development and delivery; and the exploration and generation of scholarly and creative work.

Students admitted to Southern Miss have every opportunity to earn a degree and acquire a comprehensive educational foundation that expands their perspectives, enhances their opportunities, and enriches our society.

Supporting Measures: Baccalaureate degrees awarded/Six-year graduation rates/Student return rates/Square footage of new or substantially renovated facilities/Accreditation for eligible programs/Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory results (Instructional Effectiveness Scale

Report)/Percentage of graduates employed in relevant field or admitted to graduate school within one year of graduation/ Peer-reviewed publications & presentations/External research funding.

### **Image Development**

Image development promotes the internal and external reputation of the university and supports the vision of Southern Miss. Image development must be linked to what we do and how well we do it.

Supporting Measures: Results on Chronicle/Gallup Branding Index/Scores in U.S. News & Forbes University rankings/Positive national media coverage/Surveys of prospective and current students.

### **Connections with Community**

We envision engaged citizens of Southern Miss (students, staff, faculty and alumni) who genuinely invest in their university community and their host communities (locally, regionally, nationally and globally). Our engaged citizens intentionally build community through learning and working together inside and outside the university in order to create and sustain a culture of respect and civility. We do this through hosting, serving, and sharing.

- *Hosting* refers to the importance of every contact made on campus – from the first to the last.
- *Serving* allows university citizens to invest in people, agencies/businesses, and organizations through volunteering, service learning, internships, applied scholarship and university/community partnerships.
- *Sharing* focuses on how we build relationships and engagement inside the university and with our host communities.

Supporting Measures: Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory results/Student volunteer hours/Sq. ft of sharing (social/learning) space/Attendance at university-sponsored events/Externally funded applied initiatives/Total endowment.

### **Healthy Minds, Bodies, & Campuses**

A culture that emphasizes a multidimensional healthy environment at Southern Miss is deemed central to attain the goals of this strategic plan. An emphasis on healthy lifestyles will enhance the quality of the Southern Miss experience and beyond. Appropriate efforts in campus sustainability and environmental education will contribute to an improved environmental impact and an informed perspective on resource use. Continuous efforts to maintain and safety and security of all at Southern Miss will increase the potential to attain individual and community goals.

Supporting Measures: Participation in university-sponsored wellness/fitness activities/Employee absenteeism/Utility Costs/LEED certified buildings & renovations/Solid waste reduction/recycling/Sustainability within curricula/Noel-Levitz SSI response data in Safety and Security Scale grouping.