Supporting Carnegie Community Engagement Classification and Campus-Community Partnerships

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Provost Faculty Fellow (Fall 2024)
The University of Southern Mississippi
6/23/2025

About the Project

1. Submission of Carnegie Community Engagement Classification Application

2. Support for Strategic Planning Goals Related to Community Engagement

3. Development and Dissemination of Recommendations and Methods to Strengthen Institutional Support for Community-based Teaching, Learning and Scholarship.

Section 1:

Carnegie Community Engagement Reclassification

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement describes **reciprocal partnerships** between campus and community members that are designed to **serve a public purpose** and to **build the capacity of individuals, groups, and organizations** involved to understand and collaboratively address issues of public concern.

Examples of community engagement:

- Service-learning
- Community-engaged (or community-based participatory) research; research conducted in collaboration with affected communities
- Community advisory councils
- Outreach activities that serve an authentic community-identified need
- Opportunities for students to engage with community and reflect on civic participation
- Free or low-cost services to the community

Elective Classification for Community Engagement 2015, 2020, and 2024

368 Currently Classified Institutions

CLASSIFICATION ATTAINMENT FROM 2024: All Institutions

Number of Public, Research 1, Community-Engaged Institutions

Reclassification:

The re-classification documentation framework is intended to facilitate an **evidence-based reflection process** that focuses on **what has changed** to improve community engagement since the classification.

It is designed to incorporate narrative replies indicating institutional commitment and excellence through deep, pervasive, and integrated processes and structures, as well as explanations of changes from the previous classification.

The narratives are designed to address:

1. What currently exists,
2. Changes since the last classification, and
3. Relevant supporting evidence

Framework and Committee:

Framework

- Section 1: Applicant's Contact Information
- Section 2: Campus, Community, and Community Engagement Context
- Section 3: Institutional Identity and Culture
- Section 4. Quality of Community Engagement Relationships and Academic Partnerships
- Section 5: Faculty and Staff
- Section 6: Curricular Engagement
- Section 7: Co-Curricular Engagement
- Section 8: Civic Learning and Life
- Section 9: Community Engagement and Other Institutional Initiatives
- Section 10: Reflection and Additional Information

Committee

- Chair - **Dr. Christy Kayser**
  - Director, Center for Community Engagement
- **Dr. Wei Wang**
  - Provost Fellow, Institutional Support for Campus-Community Engagement and Associate Professor, School of Marketing
- **Dr. Maria Wallace**
  - Associate Professor of Science Education, Center for STEM Education
- **Dr. Candice Salyers**
  - Associate Professor of Dance, School of Visual and Performance Arts
- **Dr. Charkarra Anderson-Lewis**
  - Professor of Public Health for The Dr. Lynn Cook Hartwig Public Health Program
- **Dr. Ann Marie Kinnell**
  - Director, School of Interdisciplinary Studies and Professional Development
- **Dr. Gallayanee Yaoyuneyong**
  - Professor, School of Marketing

Section 2:

Report on the 2026 Carnegie CE Classification Application Strengths

Strength 1: Strong Community Engagement Infrastructure and Partnerships

Infrastructures:

- Long history of community engagement
  - Office of Community Service-Learning: 1997
  - Center for Community and Civic Engagement: 2000
  - Center for Community Engagement (CCE): 2013

- Formal structures like CCE established to support:
  - Service-Learning Faculty Fellows Program
  - Conville Endowment for Community Engaged Teaching & Research
  - Citizen Scholars Program
    - 100+ service hours & community-engaged learning experiences

CCE's Service-learning Faculty Fellows

✓ 156 faculty members
✓ 46 designated service-learning courses
✓ All academic colleges

CCE's Condensed 3-day Faculty Seminar

✓ 28 faculty members
✓ Every December
✓ College level seminar (CBED)

CFD's Professional Workshops

✓ "Community Experiences as Career Pathways"
✓ "Getting Started with Community-Engaged Research"
✓ "Challenges and Solutions in Campus-Community Engagement"
✓ "Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning"

Strength 2: Regional Community Impact

Interdisciplinary, Multi-stakeholder Collaborations:

- **Health Disparities**: Obesity and cardiometabolic-related diseases in Mississippi: Dr. Holly Huye (CHES)
  MS INBRE Community Engagement and Training Core: Dr. Jennifer Lemacks (CNHP)
- **STEM Education (CAS)**: Hattiesburg High School science teachers: Drs. Kendrick Buford, Julie May, and Anna Wan
  State Science Olympiad competition and teacher training: Dr. Allison Downing
- **Arts (CAS)**: Festival South; Dr. Candice Salyers (CAS) accessible dance and place-based awareness

Economic and Workforce Development:

- **Professional Licensure:** Address health care and teacher workforce shortage
- **Economic Development:** Gulf Blue Initiative, Trent Lott National Center for Excellence

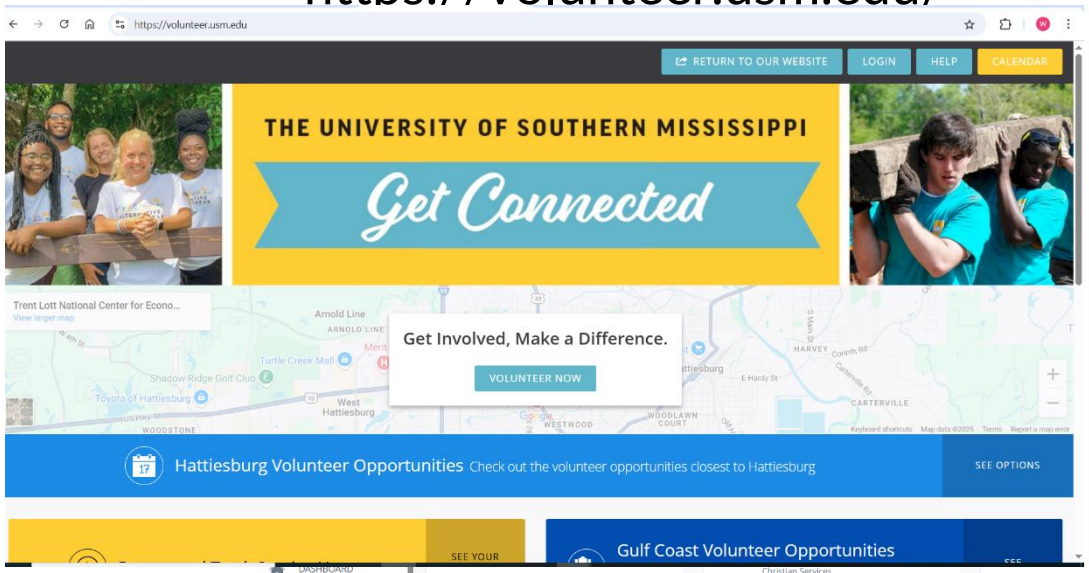
Community Services:

- **Mental Health**:
  - Early intervention and preschool therapy services: The Children's Center for Communication and Development
  - Children with significant speech, language, and hearing difficulties: Dubard School for Communication Disorders
  - Cost-effective intervention and assessment services: Speech Language and Pathology Clinic and Audiology Clinic
  - Community Engagement & Training Core: MS INBRE
- **Educational Services**:
  - 240,000 service hours/y through community internships to prepare teachers and school leaders (CEHS).

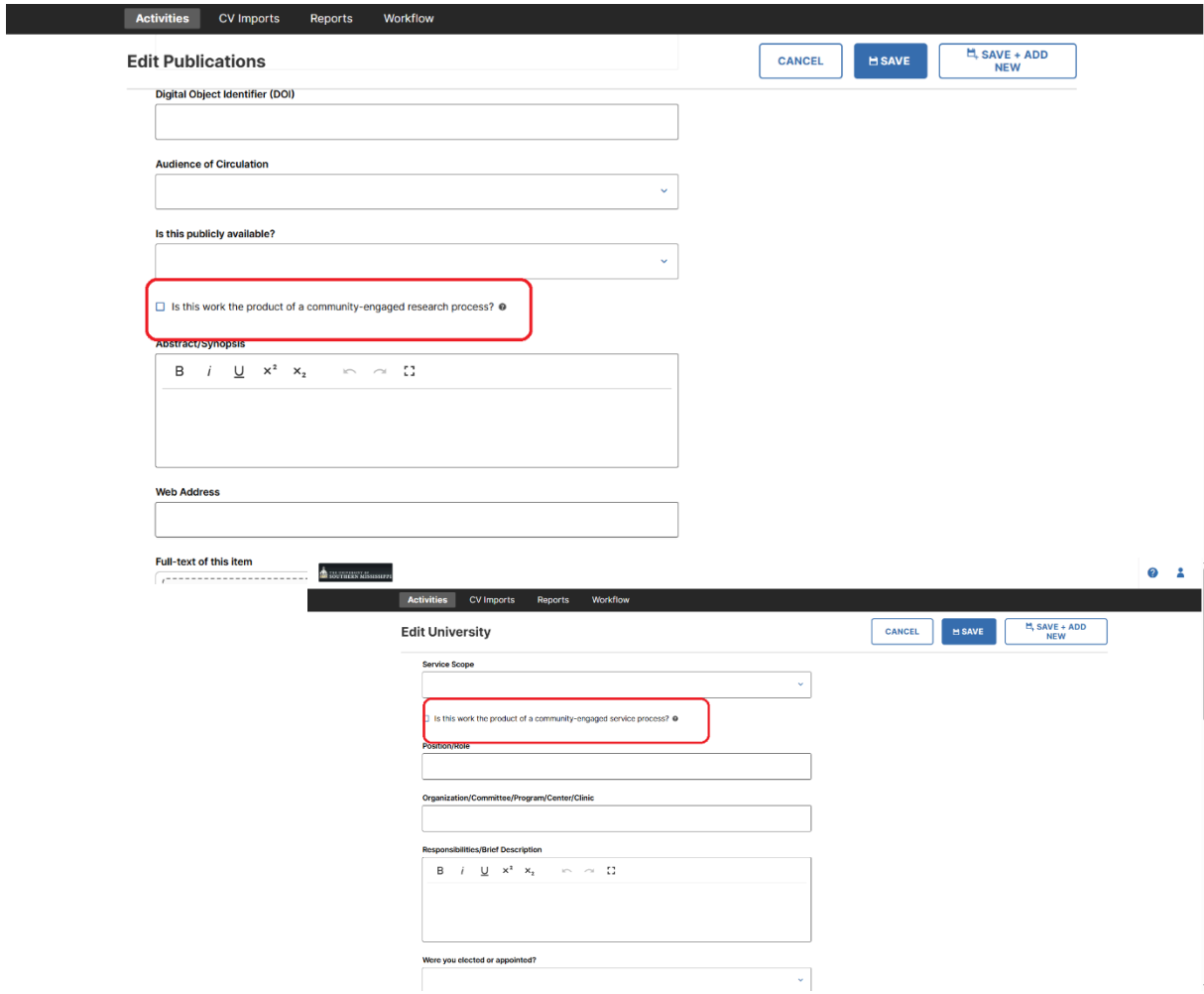
Strength 3: Comprehensive Tracking and Internal Assessment

Get Connected

https://volunteer.usm.edu/

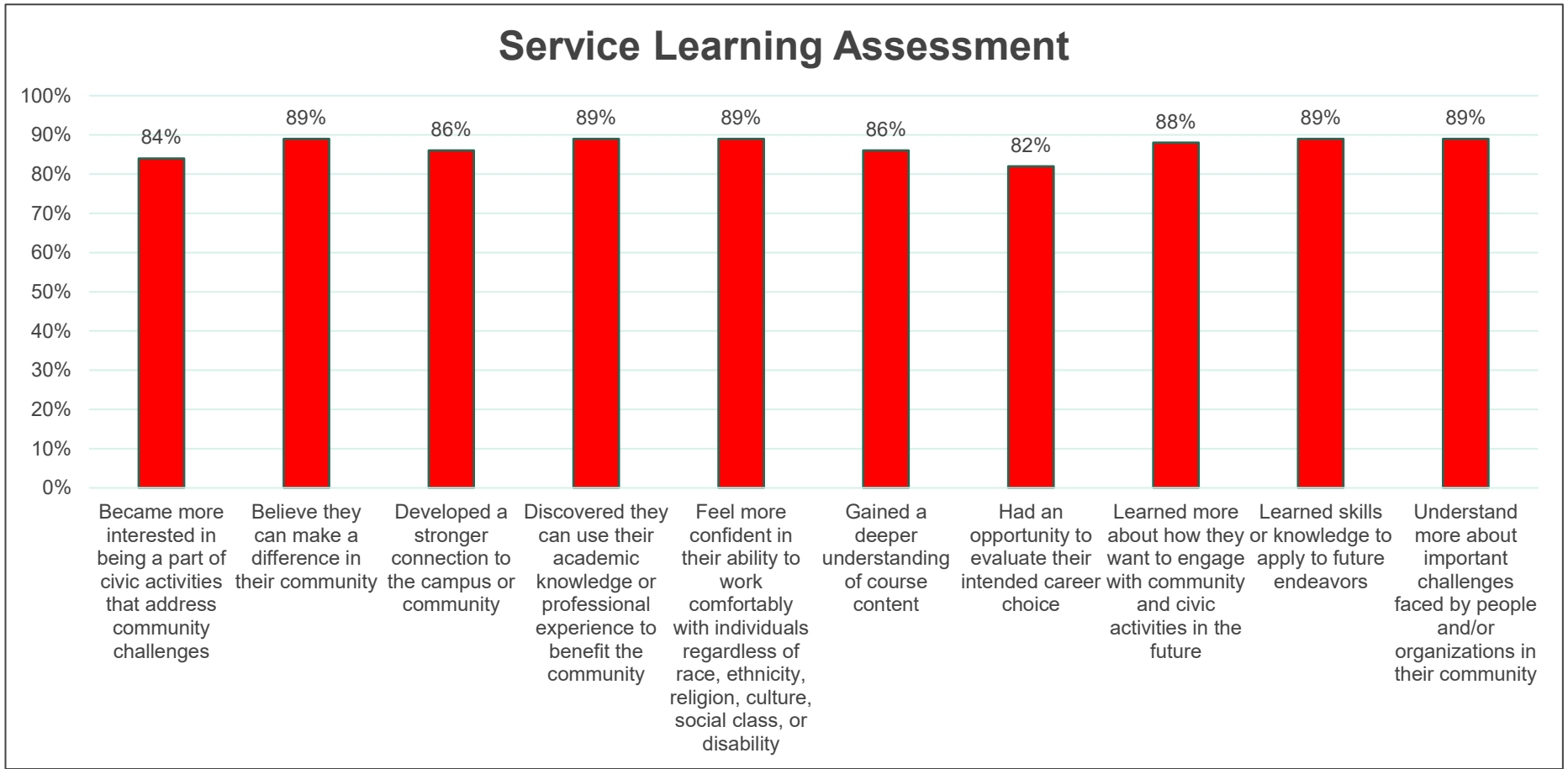


Watermark Faculty Success



Strength 3: Comprehensive Tracking and Internal Assessment

- In fall 2024, service-learning students **(n=178)** reported the following impacts from their service-learning experiences:



Section 3:

Report on the 2026 Carnegie CE Classification Application Weaknesses

Weakness 1: Lack of Co-Curricular Community Engagement Activities, Learning Outcomes, and Assessment (Section 7)

- Students do not have ample opportunities to learn and engage through co-curricular community engagement activities

- Unknown whether co-curricular community engagement is making a difference for students and community partners

Strategic Plan 2025-2029

- **Goal 1, Objective 3** Guide students to be ready for all aspects of life
  - **KPI16: At least half** of Division of Student Affairs-sponsored student-facing events will include educational components inspired by the Ready for Life messaging.
  - **KPI19:** Increase number of students completing service immersion experience, community-engaged honors theses, service-learning classes and/or approved nonprofit internship, job or practicum **by 20% over five years.**

Weakness 2: Limited Support from Academic Programs/Schools for Community-Engaged Teaching, Research, and Service (Section 5)

- Only a small number of schools formally recognize community-engaged teaching and research in their promotion and tenure policies.
  - **20/30 for community-engaged teaching**
  - **5/30 for community-engaged research**
- Lack of resource allocation to incentivize community-engaged teaching and research
- Impacts:
  - Only **6.7%** of students have access to the experiences and benefits of service-learning
  - SL classes are offered in 14/30 schools by **3%** of faculty
  - No SL classes in the **GEC curriculum**
- Community-engaged scholarship is often evaluated through non-supportive policies
- Lack of reporting and intentionality of community-engaged research

Strategic Plan 2025-2029

- **Goal 2**
- **Goal 3, Objective 2**: Develop and implement new incentives that encourage and reward research and increase visibility of innovation, community engagement, creative activities, and scholarly accomplishments.
- **Goal 3, Objective 5**: Collaborate across the institution to enhance and augment the University's status as a Carnegie Community-Engaged Institution.
  - **KPI51:** Increase participation in **community-engaged research, creative activity and teaching partnerships** by 15% over 5 years.
  - **KPI52:** Increase participation of **students in community-engaged learning opportunities** by 15% over 5 years.

Weakness 3: Lack of Communication between Internal and External Stakeholders regarding Community-Engaged Teaching and Research (Sections 2 & 4)

- USM lacks a campus-wide, systematic mechanism for
  - **Gathering feedback from community partners**
    - Limits the university's ability to address community's needs
    - Limits interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder collaboration on societal issues.
  - **Publicizing community-engaged activities**

Strategic Plan 2025-2029

- **Goal 3, Objective 1**: Foster a culture that values the pursuit of high-impact research, innovation, scholarship, and creative activities that corresponds with a Carnegie R1 very high research doctoral university.
  - **KPI36**: Increase number of grants and creative works with interdisciplinary collaboration.
- **Goal 3, Objective 2**: Develop and implement new incentives that encourage and reward research and increase visibility of innovation, community engagement, creative activities, and scholarly accomplishments.
  - **KPI41**: Increase promotion of research and creative activities to the University's external audiences and media.

Section 4:

Overall Recommendations to Strengthen Campus-Community Engagement

Strategy 1&2: Increase Co-curricular Community Engagement Activities

Examples of co-curricular activities:

- Electoral education and participation (such as voter information, education, registration, polling site(s); meetings with elected officials)
- Meetings with community members, elders, and community leaders to learn about community issues; land-based learning
- Issue awareness and advocacy training
- Civic focused student organizations (e.g. Model UN)
- **Dialogues**
- **Community service projects - outside of and within campus**
- **Alternative break – domestic and international**
- Student leadership
- **Student internships/co-ops/career exploration**
- **Work-study placements**
- Living-learning communities/residence hall/floor
- Campus scholarship program
- Athletics
- Greek life

Potential learning outcomes could include:

- Critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning
- Development of digital data and media literacy
- **Ability to convey ideas across difference orally and in writing**
- Willingness to seek out and engage with multiple perspectives
- Ability to listen attentively and with patience
- Reflexive thinking
- **Collaborative problem solving**
- Knowledge of governance & community networks
- Ethical reasoning, critical inquiry
- Information literacy, empathy
- How to use policy for social change
- Compassion and communicating across differences
- Understanding the variety of ways to make change within a community (community organizing, etc.)
- Coalition building
- Leveraging passion for social change into actions
- Understanding the power of voice to make change and what limits voice for many
- **Creating a sense of belonging to community and responsibility for the greater good**

Strategy 3: Promotion & Tenure Guideline Revisions

Dr. Maria Wallace

Associate Professor, Center for STEM Education

MOU: NExUS2 (Nurturing Educators' Complex Understanding of Science and Society) and Hattiesburg Zoo

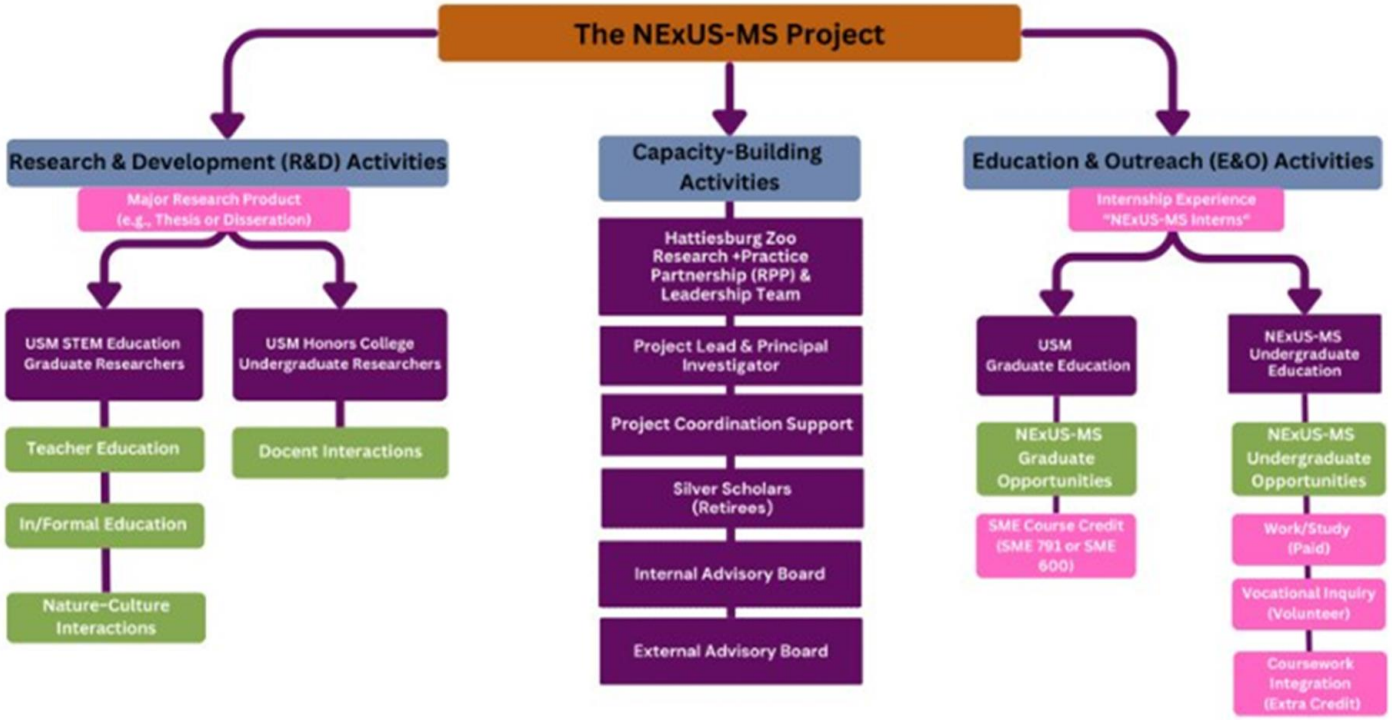
Grant Funding: Jimmy Payne Foundation ($56k), NASEM

Research: Studies on effective informal science education interactions and impact of experiential learning in STEM fields

Teaching: SME432 Science Education practicum, SME492 Experiences in STEM, SME600 Dimensions of Science Communication, SME791 Directed Research

Impact: Increases science literacy among zoo visitors and enhances public engagement with environmental and animal conservation topics.

Community-Engaged Research/Creative Activity



Strategy 3: Promotion & Tenure Guideline Revisions

Dr. Kimberly Hogan

Assistant Professor, School of Social Work
Director, Center for Human Trafficking Research and Training

Community-Engaged Research/Creative Activity

Grant Funding/Service: **$497K from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration** for Children and Families over five years to equip professionals in clinical health and social services settings to identify, treat and respond to patients and clients impacted by human trafficking.

Research:

Hogan, K. A., & Roe-Sepowitz, D. (2023). Providing services to victims of human trafficking during the COVID-19 pandemic: A Social Service Agency state-wide survey. Journal of Social Service Research, 49(3), 357–376.

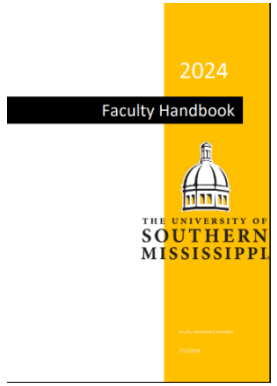
https://www.soapproject.org/

Strategy 3: Promotion & Tenure Guideline Revisions

- **Strengthen Community-Engaged Teaching & Learning:**
  - 3.4.Responsibilities Related to Teaching (p.17)
  - 5.3 Promotion (p.32)
  - Sample Annual Evaluation Rubric (p.55)
  - Sample Annual Evaluation Rating Criteria (p.60)

- **Strengthen Community-Engaged Research and Creative Activity:**
  - 3.3.Responsibilities Related to Research/ Creative Activities (p.15)
  - 5.3 Promotion (p.32)
  - Sample Annual Evaluation Rubric (p.56)
  - Sample Annual Evaluation Rating Criteria (p.60)

- **Strengthen Community-Engaged Service:**
  - 3.5.Responsibilities to the Institution as a Whole (p.19)
  - 5.3 Promotion (p.32)
  - Sample Annual Evaluation Rubric (p.57)
  - Sample Annual Evaluation Rating Criteria (p.60)



Strategy 4: Institutional Incentives and Resources

Example: QEP Pathway Experience Grants, $5,000-$10,000

- **Results:** SoMKT Tri-star Marketing Student Development Program

Example: Interdisciplinary Investigations Research Series funded by Southern Miss Fund for Academic Excellence

- Goals: address community-identified needs, enhance community capacity to solve pressing challenges, and to prepare the next generation of engaged scholars.
- Year 1: IDS 350 Topics in Interdisciplinary Studies
- Year 2: Data collection, analysis, and reporting.

- **Results:**
  - **Dr. Candice Salyers and Dr. Katrin Pesch**
    - Environmental humanities, faculty publications and student videos used in Land Trust
  - **Dr. Laura Gulledge and Dr. Nora Charles**
    - Research in juvenile justice, faculty publication and UGS presentations

Example: Conville Endowment ($2,000)

- **Results:** 16 applications per year
- **Purposes**:
  - Conducting or developing community-engaged research or service-learning research
  - **Implementing and planning a new, significant, and sustainable community engagement initiative**
  - Advancing and promoting service-learning or community engagement at USM
  - **Integrating service-learning or community engagement into a college or department degree plan**
  - Developing or re-designing a service-learning class
  - Collaborating across disciplines or institutions on community engagement initiatives

Strategy 5: Public-Facing Database

Collaboratory:

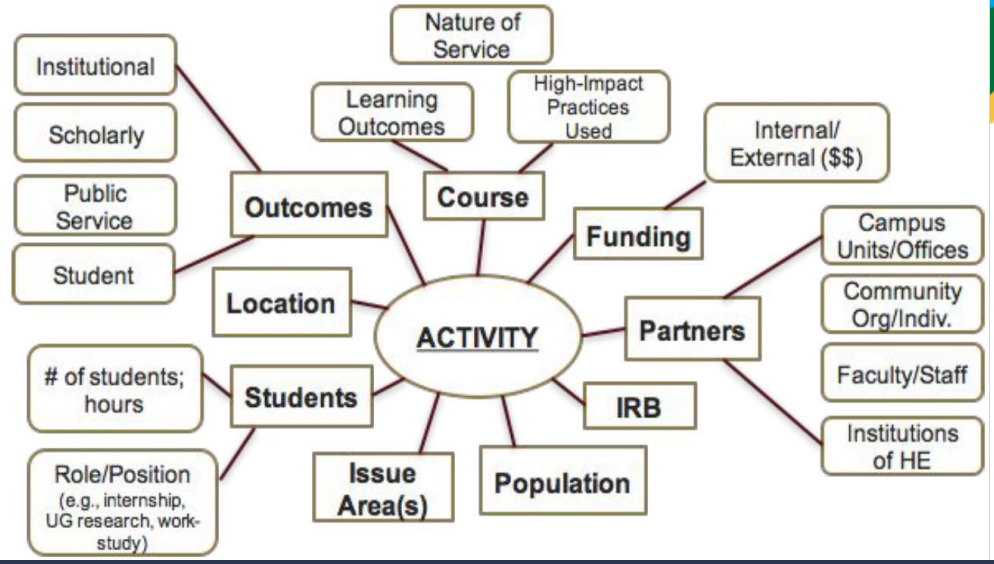
- A database tool for tracking, reporting, connecting, and planning community engagement efforts (e.g., UMB, CWRU)
- Offers institutional research, accreditation, & assessment
- Supports advancement & development, faculty & staff, communications & marketing, presidents & provosts, community members, and alumni relations

GivePulse:

- Can also track student service hours

Custom:

- iTech, ORA, e.g. create our **own website** to showcase collaborations within and across the institution



Strategy 6: Communication with the Public

Implications for Return on Investment (ROI):

External funding:

- $6.4 million in community-engaged research external funding tha has been received since ‘21
- Philanthropic foundations seeking societal impact

Student retention:

- 86% of service-learning students developed a stronger connectio to the campus or community
- “I hid in my room at first … volunteering was what opened me up to other people at USM.” Zeani Furdge, Media and Entertainment Arts

Student development:

- 86% of students gained a deeper understanding of course conten
- 82% had an opportunity to evaluate their intended career choice.
- “I learned how to manage my time, work as a team to reach a common goal, and how to ensure I am providing the best results as possible.” MaryKatherine Wilkerson, Forensics

Public perception & 2032 reclassification

Acknowledgements

- **USM Office of the Provost:** Dr. Lance Neil and Dr. Kelly Lester
- **USM Center for Community Engagement:** Dr. Christy Kayser
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- **Other Carnegie Committee Members:** Drs. Maria Wallace, Candice Salyers, Charkarra Anderson-Lewis, Ann Marie Kinnell, and Gallayanee Yaoyuneyong
- **University Hatchery, Honors College, Center for Pathway Experiences**
- **Council of Directors:** Drs. Jacob Breland, Julie Cwikla, Stacy Creel
- **USM Faculty across All Colleges**
- **Community Partners**

Questions?

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