

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK AND PRIORITIES

The USM Academic Affairs Academic Master Plan (AMP) is based on the work of the USM Strategic Planning Council (SPC), which met from the spring of 2014 through the spring of 2015. The SPC identified eight strategic priorities that serve as the foundation for the Academic Master Plan:

1. Support student success to foster retention, progression, and graduation.
2. Promote teaching, research, and creative excellence.
3. Strategically expand undergraduate and graduate enrollment.
4. Strengthen economic and community partnerships.
5. Invest in faculty and staff to maximize their potential.
6. Promote a culture of inclusiveness of people and ideas.
7. Enhance physical, technological, and financial infrastructure to support the University's mission, vision, and values.
8. Improve efficiency and effectiveness of institutional processes and systems.

Context

The USM Academic Master Plan development process has coincided with, and been influenced by, contextual events occurring campus-wide since 2013. These include:

- Decrease in enrollment since 2013
- Resulting budget reductions in 2014 – 2015 due to shortfall in tuition revenue
- Budget reductions in 2015 – 2016 due to declining state appropriations
- Additional reductions in state appropriations in fall 2016 due to projected shortfall in state revenues
- Increased IHL focus on program productivity

Development

- The Strategic Planning Council developed USM's strategic goals over a 12-month period with input from faculty, staff, alumni, and students
- The initial AMP draft was developed using information and data collected over the last 18 months
- The draft was authored by academic and governance leadership groups during mini-retreat sessions with collaborative input
- There is a crucial need to make academic affairs more efficient and to develop strategies to successfully operate within the current financial climate

Critical Questions facing Academic Affairs Leadership:

- How do we reduce costs without reducing quality?
- How do we increase efficiency across the division and the university?
- How do we develop long-term sustainable strategies while addressing short-term challenges?
- What is the most efficient and effective footprint for each academic program and their emphasis areas?
- What does a healthy operational plan look like – especially one that doesn't "live at the financial margins?"

Academic Master Plan Framework and Priorities

- How can we use strengths in each academic affairs unit to support the University more collaboratively? (The AMP provides an opportunity for each unit to define the support they can provide)

Academic Master Plan Development Process

- Established Academic Leadership Council comprised of the executive boards of all faculty governance groups (Faculty Senate, Gulf Coast Faculty Council, Academic Council, Graduate Council, and Council of Chairs)
- Developed initial framework to focus college and unit strategic initiatives
- Initial framework will be widely shared with constituent groups through listening sessions
- Incorporate constituent groups' feedback and recommendations in the master plan framework
- Colleges will utilize the AMP as the framework in college and academic unit strategic planning
- College strategic plans will be incorporated into the overall academic master plan
- Implement and conduct periodic assessments of progress. Adjustments will begin late spring 2017

STEPS TAKEN:

Immediate and short-term

1. Data reports and analysis coordination, including:

- KPI (Key Performance Indicator) Report – distributed, vetted and approved by deans and department chairs
- Unit Productivity review based upon metrics from IHL
 - Faculty productivity, research activity, cost of instruction
 - Effective utilization of classroom space and enrollment capacities
 - Use of peer data to provide context and explanation for programs identified for review.
 - Note: The peer data sets are determined at the department level in order to account for unique programs.*
 - Ongoing review of productivity in all programs and their emphasis areas to determine action plans for those areas that are at or below thresholds as defined by IHL and peer data.
- Enrollment reports by emphasis area and program area
- Identification of erroneous data or classifications

2. Academic Programs and Emphasis Area Evaluation

- Enrollment, headcount, graduation rates
 - Enrollments at or below 20/10 for UG/GR
 - Minimum number of graduates over a three-year period:
 - Baccalaureate Level – 15 students (soon to be 18 students)
 - Master's level – nine students
 - Special level – five students
 - Doctorate – five students
- Process to reduce overall number of emphasis areas by 25% (*Recommendations under review*)

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- Deans, department chairs, and directors reviewed reports and made preliminary recommendations on course of action:
 - Action A - Discontinue flagged emphasis/emphases. Either consolidate emphases or discontinue emphasis/emphases so that a student would graduate with a generic degree without an emphasis.
 - Action B: Transform/enhance/reorient/reinvent flagged emphasis/emphases to increase enrollments and graduates.
 - Describe the specific enhancements to meet IHL criteria
 - Action C: Leave the emphasis or group of emphases as is, unchanged in name(s) and substance.
 - Justify why it should be left as is: What is the relevance? What need does it fill? What would be lost if we discontinue it?
3. Unit Productivity review based upon metrics from IHL
- Faculty productivity, research activity, cost of instruction
 - Effective utilization of classroom space and enrollment capacities
 - Development, verification, and circulation of KPI reports (vetted and approved by deans and department chairs/directors).
 - Use of peer data to provide context and explanation for programs identified for review.
Note: The peer data sets are determined at the department level in order to account for unique programs.
 - Ongoing review of productivity in all programs and their emphasis areas to determine action plans for those areas that are at or below thresholds as defined by IHL and peer data.

Ongoing Initiatives

1. University-wide coordination of student success initiatives
2. *Finish in Four* (IHL Initiative)
 - Meet goal of graduation requirements of 120 credits (except where accreditation requires an exception)
 - Move towards 15 credit hour minimum enrollment, 30 credit hours per academic year
 - Summer School Initiative
 - Intercessions
3. Program expansion in key areas
4. Expansion of the Corps of Instruction
5. Assessment and redesign of academic advising
6. Expanded faculty development initiatives
7. Improved and expanded online learning offerings

Academic Master Plan Framework and Priorities

Academic and Governance Leadership Group Members:

Name	Group	Name	Group
Maureen Ryan	Dean, CoAL	Linda Ginn	Academic Council
Faye Gilbert	Dean, CoB	Luis Iglesias	Academic Council
Ann Blackwell	Dean, CoEP	Kelly Lester	Academic Council
Mike Forster	Dean, CoH	Ann Marie Kinnell	Council of Chairs
Katherine Nugent	Dean, CoN	Tim Rehner	Council of Chairs
David Hayhurst	Dean, CoST	Stacy Reischman Fletcher	Council of Chairs
Karen Coats	Dean, GS	Mac Alford	Faculty Senate
Ellen Weinauer	Dean, HC	David Holt	Faculty Senate
John Eye	Dean, UL	Jeanie Butts	Graduate Council
Amy Miller	Vice Provost	Leisa Flynn	Graduate Council
Casey Maugh-Funderburk	Vice Provost	Trent Gould	Assoc. Dean Health
Michelle Arrington	Associate Provost	Heidi Lyn	Gulf Coast Faculty Council
William Powell	Associate Provost	Ken Zantow	Gulf Coast Faculty Council

Academic Master Plan Framework and Priorities

Preamble

The University of Southern Mississippi's Division of Academic Affairs is inspired by the vision of creating a model public university - a powerful, positive force in the development of a new Mississippi. We apply our creative talents, generous spirit and innovative energies through instruction that nurtures student potential, research that builds knowledge and service that enhances quality of life. Its faculty and staff forge new paths of knowledge, achievement, and access to opportunity, and strive ceaselessly to raise the bar of inclusiveness, reciprocity, and civility. Interactions between students, faculty and staff are essential to creating our transformative university community.

Submitted by:

Dr. Leisa Flynn, Chair, Department of Marketing and Merchandising

Dr. Tim Rehner, Chair, School of Social Work

Approved by Academic Leadership Council: November 21, 2016

The University of Southern Mississippi Academic Affairs Academic Master Plan

Strategic Planning Priorities	Academic Master Plan
1. Support student success to foster retention, progression and graduation.	1a. Implement comprehensive student recruitment, success, and retention efforts.
	1b. Provide deliberate interventions for underprepared and/or underperforming students.
	1c. Promote opportunities to further enhance the quality of students' educational experiences.
2. Promote teaching, research, and creative excellence.	2a. Develop, promote, and support teaching and campus citizenship.
	2b. Develop, promote, and support scholarly research, creative output, and professional engagement.
	2c. Expand the depth and breadth of funded research and creative programs.
3. Strategically expand undergraduate and graduate enrollment.	3a. Support current and new high-interest degree programs with growth potential.
	3b. Implement intentional, targeted marketing and recruitment strategies.
	3c. Explore and support alternative course delivery options for and programmatic flexibility.
	3d. Coordinate enrollment and admissions initiatives across academic affairs.
4. Strengthen economic and community partnerships.	4a. Grow commercialization activities that move research initiatives from the laboratory to the business incubator and ultimately to new businesses in the marketplace.
	4b. Utilize faculty and staff expertise to promote external partnerships.
	4c. Promote strategic economic development that will attract businesses to the region and utilize academic research to bolster the local and state economy.
	4d. Highlight and promote the university's significant role in improving and enhancing quality of life in Mississippi and beyond.
	4e. Leverage partnerships to enrich student learning opportunities (internships, job shadowing, etc.)
5. Invest in faculty and staff to maximize their potential.	5a. Identify, invest in, honor and celebrate our academic program strengths and accomplishments.
	5b. Reward excellence in teaching, research and service.
	5c. Build compensation, opportunities, and infrastructure to develop and retain faculty and staff.
	5d. Provide and sustain competitive packages to recruit high quality faculty and staff.
6. Promote a culture of inclusiveness of people and ideas	6a. Hire, retain, and develop strong, diverse faculty and staff whose talents align with institutional priorities.
	6b. Utilize and support faculty and staff expertise, foster collaboration, and enhance shared government.
	6c. Promote diversity and encourage inclusiveness in the student body.
	6d. Promote diversity and encourage inclusiveness across curricula and in all educational programming.

***The University of Southern Mississippi
Academic Affairs Academic Master Plan***

7. Enhance physical, technological, and financial infrastructure to support our mission, vision, and values.	7a. Focus on enhancing learning environments and modalities when renovating or modifying existing and adding new academic facilities.
	7b. Develop technology, processes, and procedures to facilitate continuous improvement in academic affairs.
	7c. Incentivize revenue-generating initiatives.
	7d. Facilitate and improve communication within academic affairs and with other units to guide and inform infrastructural changes, procedures, and policy changes.
8. Improve efficiency and effectiveness of institutional processes and systems.	8a. Identify practices, procedures, and systems to review for effectiveness.
	8b. Evaluate policies to reduce duplication and improve consistency.
	8c. Provide technology and training to enable effectiveness at all levels.