

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

**Empower Now:
Accelerating Discovery,
Growth & Success**

UM2227

Empower Now: Accelerating Discovery, Growth & Success

Priority Focus Areas, Strategic Goals, and Supporting Objectives



ENRICH

Instructional
Excellence
& Student
Success

Graduate
Education

ENGAGE

Community-Engaged
Partnerships

Athletics
Excellence

EXPLORE

Embrace New Areas
of Expertise &
Engagement

Impactful, Innovative
Research & Creative
Achievement

EMPOWER

Prepare Graduates
for Careers
of the Future

Economic Development
& Innovation

Organizational
Efficiency
& Effectiveness

PATHWAYS TO EQUITY

ENRICH

GOAL 1:

Instructional Excellence & Student Success

The University of Mississippi is committed to expanding its investment in a culture of continuous improvement that fuels an environment where all students succeed.

OBJECTIVES

- Expand efforts to provide equitable access to both curricular and co-curricular engaged learning opportunities throughout the student experience.
- Continue to prioritize resources for cohort and mentoring-based retention and persistence efforts.
- Leverage teaching & learning resource centers to elevate student learning through a continuous-improvement approach to teaching and faculty development.
- Enhance student health & wellness support.
- Increase the awareness and adoption of evidence-based teaching practices.
- Promote interdisciplinarity and community engagement into the student academic experience.

GOAL 2:

Graduate Education

A vital Graduate School provides advancement opportunities to existing students and attracts new kinds of students to the university. To support quality and growth for our graduate offerings, we will identify areas for growth and engagement within the Graduate School and dedicate resources to building those out.

OBJECTIVES

- Expand existing, high-quality graduate programs to meet student demand.
- Develop graduate programs in emerging and interdisciplinary fields of study.
- Expand online access to graduate education.
- Establish UM as an institution of choice for graduate education.
- Increase the role of graduate students in research, creative, and innovative activities.
- Establish an interdisciplinary emphasis on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in graduate enrollment and learning outcome strategies.



ENGAGE

GOAL 3:

Community-Engaged Partnerships

Community engagement advances the university's mission, while benefiting society through the discovery, development, and dissemination of knowledge that ultimately improves the lives of individuals and communities.

OBJECTIVES

- Establish a consistent methodology for tracking and evaluating community-engaged partnerships.
- Further integrate mutually beneficial, reciprocal partnerships between university and external partners to advance the learning, research, and engagement mission of the institution.
- Develop a functional framework for community-engaged partnerships at the university to ensure mutuality and reciprocity in partnerships.
- Establish institutional processes for appropriately recognizing the value of community-engaged partnerships in faculty reward, promotion, and tenure.

GOAL 4:

Athletics Excellence

Ole Miss Athletics fulfills its purpose of cultivating a vibrant athletics culture through community engagement and commitment to excellence. To be an effective agent of change and positive community impact, UM Athletics programming must be grounded in integrity, academic excellence, competitive success, and inclusion.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop an inclusive environment at athletic events that provide opportunities for students and community involvement.
- Ensure that all student athletes have access to resources and support they need to succeed academically and in their futures beyond the university.
- Enhance facilities to enable our student athletes to compete at the highest levels.



EXPLORE

INNOVATION & NEW KNOWLEDGE

GOAL 5:

Embrace New Areas of Expertise and Engagement

As an institution of higher learning, the university is tasked with preparing its graduates for challenges and opportunities that may not yet exist. To deliver on that promise, UM will commit resources to support new degree programs and make data-informed decisions on expansion in areas of study that are responsive to innovation and the advancement of knowledge, as well as the evolving needs of our students, our state, and the region.

OBJECTIVES

- Reward innovation in new and existing programming.
- Identify compensation strategies needed to be competitive in recruiting and retaining highly-skilled faculty and staff.
- Establish institutional data governance policies needed to synthesize information channels and connect information repositories, so that university decision making is based on accurate and timely information.
- Leverage real-time job market intelligence to empower data-informed programming decisions.¹

GOAL 6:

Impactful, Innovative Research and Creative Achievement

The University's academic reputation is founded upon the creativity and groundbreaking scholarship of our outstanding faculty and, increasingly, UM students. It is our obligation to commit resources to activities and endeavors that focus on empowering individual and collaborative scholarship and magnifying its impact.

OBJECTIVES

- Articulate a reward system and support infrastructure that facilitates meaningful scholarship across the institution.
- Invest in infrastructure and new areas of knowledge support that fuels broad-scale digital and interdisciplinary research projects/initiatives that:
 - Generate practical research to improve lives.



- Foster creative achievement through collaborative engagement.
- Reduce barriers that inhibit interdisciplinary research.²

- Develop policies and infrastructure that enables collaborations across the university, with other academic institutions, nonprofits, and strategic partners in the private sector.
- Make *engaged learning opportunities*, like undergraduate research opportunities, visible within the community and accessible to all students.

EMPOWER

HARNESS THE FUTURE NOW

GOAL 7:

Prepare Graduates for Careers of the Future

At the University of Mississippi, our students hone their career skill set inside and outside of the classroom. Through intentional design and organic learning community engagement, the entire UM experience becomes a dynamic incubator that invigorates exploration and prepares students for future success.

OBJECTIVES

- Infuse 21st-century skills—such as data analysis, information and technology literacy, language skills, critical thinking, and cultural competencies—into programs across the university to ensure students are *workforce-ready*³ upon graduation.
- Actively engage in institutional consortia committed to the integration of 21st-century skills, such as Artificial Intelligence and data analytics, into the instructional foundations of the student experience in higher education.
- Advance the development of students' critical thinking skills through [ThinkForward](#) and similar initiatives.
- Promote intersectional work that facilitates meaningful growth opportunities for all students.

GOAL 8:

Support Economic Development and Innovation through Industry Engagement and Community Partnership

Throughout its history, the University has produced leaders equipped with the skills to drive positive change and expand access to economic opportunities. We will continue to magnify ways in which the university supports economic opportunity in the state of Mississippi and beyond.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop and nurture strong partnerships with industry that will invigorate existing and future academic programming, high-impact practices, and research.



- Develop sustainable collaborations and reciprocal partnerships with communities and other external partners that will improve quality of life across Mississippi.
- Develop and fuel comprehensive innovation, research, and entrepreneurship programs for faculty, staff, students, and external partners.
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with local, state, and federal elected and appointed officials, with an emphasis on promoting community and economic development.



GOAL 9:

Alignment of Resources to Maximize Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness

In service of maintaining our institutional excellence over time, we must commit to alignment of organizational resources that will maximize our overall efficiency and effectiveness. This means clarifying and aligning existing roles and accountabilities to foster clear, effectual communication, boost efficiency, and minimize components of our infrastructure that impede collaboration and creativity.

OBJECTIVES

- Invest in career development for faculty and staff and further expand compelling career paths for university staff.⁴
- Take steps to ensure equitable compensation for roles that require similar skillsets.
- Recognize and appreciate long-term employees for steadfastness, accumulated knowledge, and dedication to the university and its mission.
- Establish a facilities and equipment investment strategy that prioritizes both timely maintenance of existing resources and expansion efforts in order to maximize the University's ability to pursue its Mission and Strategic Initiatives.
- Provide a data framework that will improve collaboration of informational elements captured across the various units on campus to standardize data elements, manage and secure data, increase data accuracy and provide timely information to institutional leaders.



FOUNDATIONAL COMMITMENT

PATHWAYS TO EQUITY

For more details on institutional and unit-level commitments, see the full Pathways to Equity plan at chancellor.olemiss.edu/pathways-to-equity.

The University of Mississippi embraces the transformative nature of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) across all levels of the institution, addressing challenges to DEI at every corner of our institution by combining contextual understanding with internal and external expertise. The following overarching goals represent the university's commitment to the advancement of DEI and represent interconnected priorities that are applicable to UM broadly, from our comprehensive divisions down to individual teams.

OVERARCHING GOALS

- Advance Institutional Capacity for Equity (Infrastructure, Information, Systems, Education, and Process)
- Cultivate a Diverse and Equitable Community (Recruiting, Retaining, Advancing, and Succeeding)
- Foster an Inclusive Campus Climate (Support, Value, and Belonging)

REFERENCES

- 1 Data from employment landscape for recent college graduates utilized at investment stage of new program decision process, not to dictate curriculum development.
- 2 Examples of existing knowledge support resources include library-provided research guides, databases, collections and content specialists, as well as OSRP resources, such as the [Interdisciplinary Research at The University of Mississippi \(IDRUM\)](#).
- 3 Work readiness skills include both foundational cognitive skills such as reading for information, applied mathematics, locating information, problem solving, and critical thinking and noncognitive skills, or soft skills, which are defined as personal characteristics and behavioral skills that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance, and career prospects such as adaptability, integrity, cooperation, and workplace discipline (ACT.Org).
- 4 Refers to staff-specific career paths and other professional incentive structures that recognize and appreciate long-term employees for steadfastness, accumulated knowledge, and dedication to the university and its mission.





THE UNIVERSITY of
MISSISSIPPI