

Mississippi State University
Strategy for Excellence, 2012-2017

VISION

Mississippi State University will be a leading public research university that is globally aware and involved, accessible and responsive to the many constituencies it serves, and fully integrated with the intellectual, social, and economic development of the state, while delivering excellent programs of teaching, research, and service.

MISSION

Mississippi State University is a public, land-grant university whose mission is to provide access and opportunity to students from all sectors of the state's diverse population, as well as from other states and countries, and to offer excellent programs of teaching, research, and service.

Enhancing its historic strengths in agriculture, natural resources, engineering, mathematics, and natural and physical sciences, Mississippi State offers a comprehensive range of undergraduate and graduate programs; these include architecture, the fine arts, business, education, the humanities, the social and behavioral sciences, and veterinary medicine.

The university embraces its role as a major contributor to the economic development of the state through targeted research and the transfer of ideas and technology to the public, supported by faculty and staff relationships with industry, community organizations, and government entities.

Building on its land-grant tradition, Mississippi State strategically extends its resources and expertise throughout the entire state for the benefit of Mississippi's citizens, offering access for working and place-bound adult learners through its Meridian Campus, Extension, and distance learning programs.

Mississippi State is committed to its tradition of instilling among its students and alumni ideals of diversity, citizenship, leadership, and service.

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY VALUES

- Access and Opportunity
- Excellence and Innovation
- Communication and Collaboration
- Integrity and Accountability
- Citizenship and Leadership
- Respect

OVERARCHING GOAL

To be consistently ranked among America's top public universities

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC GOALS

- Foster Teaching and Learning
- Promote Research and Creativity
- Expand Outreach and Engagement
- Encourage Globalization
- Enhance Institutional Culture and Environment

Foster Teaching and Learning

Providing a challenging and supportive educational experience that prepares students to be leaders in their professions and in the state and nation remains central to Mississippi State's mission, as it has throughout the university's history. This goal builds on our historic emphasis on access, academic excellence, and student success.

Priority: Attract a diverse population of high quality students to the undergraduate and graduate programs at MSU.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Provide relevant and viable academic programs and services for attracting a more diverse student body.	A-1. Increased student diversity with regard to factors including race/ethnicity.
B. Use undergraduate scholarships and graduate stipends to improve the academic profile of new students.	B-1. An average ACT composite score of 25 for incoming freshmen. B-2. Increased percentage of incoming freshmen in the top 10% of their high school class. B-3. Increased number of incoming freshmen who have won distinguished national awards.
C. Enhance the academic credentials of entering graduate students.	C-1. A 10% improvement in the GRE scores of entering graduate students.

Priority: Improve student success at MSU and beyond.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Promote academic rigor, teaching effectiveness, and academic integrity.	A-1. An 18:1 student-teacher ratio. A-2. A freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of 88%. A-3. A six-year graduation rate of 65%. A-4. Improved National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) scores relative to other institutions in our Carnegie classification. A-5. Improvement in freshman-to-senior-year Educational Testing Services (ETS) Proficiency Profile scores.

B. Provide national recognition of students' outstanding academic achievement.	B-1. Attainment of a Phi Beta Kappa chapter. B-2. Increased support of chapters of distinguished national honor societies already on campus.
C. Promote study abroad and valuable co-curricular activities.	C-1. Enhancement of study abroad or a formal co-curricular activity (possibilities for which could include other valuable international experiences, internships, coop assignments, and various service and leadership activities).
D. Maximize graduates' placement into employment, graduate school, or professional school.	D-1. Implementation of university-wide tracking of job placement and graduate school enrollment. D-2. Development of strategies for improved placement, based on improved tracking. D-3. A 15% increase in the number of doctoral degrees awarded.

Priority: Improve the visibility and resources of MSU Libraries.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Provide library funding for collection development, programs, and services to meet the needs of faculty, staff, and students, while promoting the campus community's awareness of those holdings, programs, and services.	A-1. Improved scores on the Association of Research Libraries' (ARL's) LibQUAL+ survey.
B. Promote awareness and recognition (throughout the nation) of the holdings, programs, and services of MSU Libraries.	B-1. Attainment of membership in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL).

Promote Research and Creativity

Mississippi State’s emphasis on discovery and creativity, which is reflected in its classification by the Carnegie Foundation as a Research University (very high research activity), contributes significantly and directly to the economic development of the state, supports major national priorities, and complements and enhances undergraduate and graduate instruction. This goal helps focus resources on areas of endeavor that promise the greatest opportunities and benefits while emphasizing an interdisciplinary approach that provides avenues for involvement by faculty and students across the university.

Priority: Develop, promote, and recognize faculty research to enhance the national/international reputation of the university.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Across the university, hire highly qualified research-intensive faculty	<p>A-1. All tenure-track faculty, and non-tenure track faculty with significant research appointments, have research credentials that will enable their success.</p> <p>A-2. Instructional faculty hired to allow tenure-track faculty to maximize their focus on research.</p>
B. Clearly articulate scholarship expectations of all faculty with a research appointment.	B-1. Scholarly works increased by 25%, particularly in high-impact outlets.
C. Provide rigorous mentoring program for new faculty.	C-1. Every junior faculty member involved in a formal mentoring program.
D. Develop innovative incentive programs to reward and retain exceptional faculty.	D-1. A suite of programs developed for faculty financial incentives.
E. Increase the number of endowed professorships and chairs across the university.	E1. A 50% increase in the number of endowed professorships and chairs.
F. Increase the number of faculty receiving nationally-recognized awards for research.	F-1. Number of MSU faculty receiving prestigious national achievement awards each year, such as NIH or NSF career awards, increased by 50%.

Priority: Identify and promote select research focus areas that capitalize on existing strengths and future opportunities.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Identify cross-cutting areas, and leadership for these, that capitalize on MSU's mission and areas of expertise and that are of regional/national/international significance now and in the future.	A-1. Identification of 6-10 focus areas. A-2. 40% of new tenure-track faculty hires are in MSU research priority areas.
B. Seek infrastructure support for the select focus areas from competitive grant opportunities and targeted funding.	B-1 Increase of 25% in facilities, instrumentation, training opportunities and staffing, with emphasis on relevance to the focus areas, but accessible to all faculty researchers and their staff and students.

Priority: Enhance the university's culture and structure for interdisciplinary research.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Develop an institutional process that identifies, supports, and invests in interdisciplinary research areas of strategic importance.	A-1. At least 25% increase in the number of interdisciplinary research teams and interdisciplinary submissions/awards resulting in higher rates of funding.
B. Institute evaluation and reward systems at the professorial, departmental, center and college levels that encourage and reward interdisciplinary efforts.	B-1. Interdisciplinary research efforts become a valued component of faculty evaluation, promotion and tenure, and unit resource allocation.

Priority: Recognize the unique education that students can receive at a research-intensive university by increasing the quality and extent of student research experiences.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Encourage colleges and departments to develop formal mechanisms to more effectively involve students in research at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.	A-1. At least 25% of undergraduates, 50% of master's students, and 100% of doctoral students involved in some form of research during their degree program.
B. Maximize the focus on research and inquiry in all courses	B-2. Research-based courses offered by all academic departments.

Priority: Expand external funding for research.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Enhance the expectation for externally-funded research across all colleges.	A-1. Extramural funding increased to \$250 million.
B. Provide targeted faculty development programs to promote increased faculty participation in research.	B-1. Increased number of tenure-track and non-tenure track research faculty participating in externally funded research.
C. Provide optimum administrative support for research.	C-1. Sufficient departmental, college, center, and/or university administrative support is provided for effective conduct of research.

Priority: Use the research program as a catalyst for economic development.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Recognize the importance of a balanced approach for intellectual property capture.	A-1. Intellectual property development and economic development activities included in annual performance reviews and promotion and tenure decisions.
B. Strategically partner with industries.	B-2. An enhanced funding profile through industry partnerships.
C. Foster an environment of entrepreneurship.	C-1. A 25% increase in the number of startup companies from MSU intellectual property.
D. Enhance the effectiveness of the Thad Cochran Research and Economic Development Park.	D-1. Expand employment base by 50 new jobs per year. D-2. Increase square footage by 20,000 square feet per year. D-3. Increase capital investment by \$10 million per year.

Expand Outreach and Engagement

Land-grant universities have a long tradition and a particular responsibility to engage with communities and businesses to enhance economic growth and assist citizens in their homes and workplaces. With a physical presence in every county of the state, the university has for more than a century been directly involved in bringing informal education and technical assistance to Mississippians, and some of that work by faculty, staff and students is reflected in the university's Community Engagement Classification awarded by the Carnegie Foundation. This goal represents a commitment to build on and expand that tradition of service by expanding opportunities for outreach and engagement by all members of the university community.

Priority: Expand outreach and engagement opportunities and participation by students, faculty, and staff in academic, professional, civic, educational, or humanitarian activities.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Determine the range of service and engagement opportunities currently available and the rate of participation.	A-1. Retention of the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll designation by the Corporation for National and Community Service. A-2. A 20% increase in the number of student volunteers and the number of volunteer hours worked as tracked by Student Leadership and Community Engagement Programs. A-3. A 20% increase in faculty participation in outreach and engagement activities.

Priority: Enhance educational and outreach programs that address critical issues such as agriculture, economic and community development, education, youth and family health and well-being, the environment, industry, and technology

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Integrate outreach into the teaching and research programs of the university when appropriate	A-1. Retention of the Community Engagement Classification by the Carnegie Foundation.

Priority: Provide expanded needs-based Extension outreach in agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H/Youth development, and enterprise and community development.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Assess community and individual needs for Extension based outreach and respond with appropriate outreach and engagement	A-1. A 20% increase in the scientifically proven impact of Extension programs.

Priority: Develop a body of knowledge related to the scholarship of outreach and engagement

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Increase participation of faculty in outreach and engagement activities and establish appropriate indicators for use in annual performance evaluations	A-1. A 10% increase in scholarly output related to outreach and engagement.

Encourage Globalization

In an increasingly inter-connected world, land-grant universities must apply their academic, scientific, and extension capabilities to global challenges while providing our students with an international perspective that expands their future opportunities. Mississippi State has a long history of international involvement. This goal builds on that history by providing students and faculty with global experiences that will contribute to national and international economic sustainability, ecosystem sustainability, and socioeconomic well-being.

Priority: Develop, support, and coordinate infrastructure to enhance global outreach and Extension, research, and academic programs.

Strategy	Measure of Success
<p>A. Develop and maintain an infrastructure that coordinates international research, outreach and Extension, and academic opportunities for faculty, staff, and students.</p>	<p>A-1. Improved administrative structure of the International Institute for consolidation of international services.</p> <p>A-2. Housing and transportation services that foster a welcoming environment for international faculty, students and other visitors.</p>
<p>B. Attract and nurture new international opportunities so that an effective and relevant portfolio of programs is established at MSU.</p>	<p>B-1. Identification of five priority nations/geographic regions and up to ten universities/institutions consistent with MSU’s capabilities for international partnerships.</p> <p>B-2. Identification of external funding opportunities that match MSU’s capabilities and priorities.</p> <p>B-3. A 20% increase in the number of grants and contracts for international activities.</p>

Priority: Under the leadership of the International Institute, define MSU’s global humanitarian, environmental, scientific and socioeconomic initiatives and respond through research and outreach and Extension.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Increase research and outreach and Extension activities and collaborations that address key global issues.	<p>A-1. A 10% increase in the number of multidisciplinary and collaborative grants and contracts addressing MSU’s global initiatives.</p> <p>A-2. A 10% increase in the number of peer-reviewed journal publications with international partners or having an international scope.</p> <p>A-3. A 10% increase in the number of outreach and Extension activities related to MSU’s global initiatives.</p>

Priority: Enrich the academic and cultural experiences of the faculty, staff, and students through global engagement.

Strategy	Measure of Success
<p>A. Expand and coordinate on-campus academic offerings to provide students the opportunity for a global perspective in every discipline.</p>	<p>A-1. Establishment of courses within each college that internationalize available offerings, including cross-disciplinary and extra-curricular opportunities.</p> <p>A-2. A 50% increase in number of students participating in international education.</p> <p>A-3. A 20% increase in funding from external grants and contracts to support graduate students working on projects relevant to MSU’s global initiatives.</p>
<p>B. Expand other international scholarly opportunities for students and faculty</p>	<p>B-1. Incorporation of international scholarly activities in the faculty evaluation process.</p> <p>B-2. A 20% increase in both the number of student and faculty Fulbright recipients and Study Abroad participants.</p>
<p>C. Enhance the internationalization of the MSU campus</p>	<p>C-1. A 20% increase in the number of international students.</p> <p>C-2. A 20% increase in the number of visiting scholars and exchanges.</p>

Enhance Institutional Culture and Environment

The university's greatest asset is its people, and the attainment of all other university goals is predicated on the ability to continue to recruit and retain high quality faculty and staff and attract capable and qualified students. This goal represents a commitment to provide all members of the university community with the tools, rewards, and resources to achieve their professional and personal goals in an environment that reflects Mississippi State University values.

Priority: Encourage and support the holistic development and well-being of the faculty, staff, and students.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Provide programs that support personal and professional growth and success, including mentoring and health and work-life balance initiatives.	A-1. Maintain/lower annual turnover rate of faculty (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor). A-2. Maintain/lower annual turnover rate of professional staff.
B. Recognize and reward performance by faculty and staff.	B-1. Faculty salaries equal to peer group averages. B-2. Average staff salaries consistent with average market levels. B-3. Increase of 25% in the number of university-level faculty awards for excellence in teaching, research and service. B-4. Increase of 25% in the number of university-level staff awards for recognition of excellence in contribution to the university's mission.
C. Ensure a transparent shared governance environment on campus.	C-1. Active and viable Faculty Senate, Staff Council, Student Association, and Graduate Student Association.
D. Promote ethical behavior of students, staff and faculty.	D-1. Honor Code awareness programming for students and faculty provided each semester.

D-2. Information regarding the “Whistleblower” Policy and Ethics Line provided on a semi-annual basis.

Priority: Enhance diversity at MSU.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Seek to attract diverse, high quality faculty and staff to the university	A-1. Increase the percentage of African-American faculty and female faculty. A-2. Identification and provision of institutional programs and services necessary to recruit and maintain more diverse faculty and staff.

Priority: Improve infrastructure to accommodate enrollment growth.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Ensure orderly growth of the campus according to the Campus Master Plan.	A-1. An active and vital Campus Master Plan Advisory Committee. A-2. Classroom space to meet academic objectives provided and optimized. A-3. Synchronized development and improvement of campus/community infrastructure to match growth and demand of all areas of campus services. A-4. An adequate supply of student housing proportional to demand, both on campus and in the community.

Priority: Enhance campus sustainability.

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Continue the commitment of being a signatory of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment by implementing the Mississippi State University Climate Action Plan (CAP) according to the Climate Commitment objectives.	A-1. Annual reporting of documented and projected greenhouse gas emissions as set forth in the Climate Action Plan.

Priority: Expand private giving to MSU

Strategy	Measure of Success
A. Maintain strong relations with current and prospective donors and alumni.	A-1. An endowment of \$500 million. A-2. A 50% increase in the number of endowed professorships and chairs. A-3. Successful completion of the StatePride Initiative.