January 2008

Dear Mississippi State University Community –

What does the future look like for research and scholarship at MSU? This question has been the focus of the last several months, as the Office of Research and Economic Development has worked with faculty and staff to develop a set of concise goals and objectives for research at MSU in 2013.

Our overall goal is simple, concise, and measurable: “Mississippi State University will rank in the Top 100 research universities nationally in all major research categories. Our recognition as a major research university will be reflected by our designation as a Research University – Very High Research Activity by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching”. Achieving this goal will place us among the elite research universities in the United States, which in turn helps us attract and retain stellar faculty members, results in increased opportunities for research, helps facilitate new job creation through spin-off companies, assists in student recruitment, and in general, opens up additional educational opportunities for the university community.

Given this as our overall goal, how do we move forward in reaching a Top 100 status?

In order to engage as many of the different constituent groups as possible, focus group meetings were held with representatives from academic colleges and major research centers who responded to two key questions:

1. As an institution, what do we need to do so that Mississippi State University will be classified as a Carnegie Research University - Very High Research Activity?

2. For our unit, what are the assets in place and barriers to overcome in order for us to become more involved in scholarly activities?

Notes were made from the discussions for each of the 17 different focus groups, which were then used as source materials by a larger group to come up with major strategic objectives. In December 2007, about 20 faculty members met in a retreat setting to develop 4 to 5 key strategic objectives, along with appropriate sub goals. The notes and information from all of these groups are listed under the Strategic Plan tab on the ORED webpage (http://www.research.msstate.edu/plan/).
I then worked with my senior staff members to formulate a concise, 2-page plan that provides some strategic goals and objectives for research and scholarly activity at Mississippi State over the next 5-year period.

We are now in the final phase of our strategic planning process, where we are engaging the campus research community in comment and feedback on the proposed strategic plan.

I welcome your comments and suggestions on our proposed plan, and look forward to continuing to grow our research efforts at Mississippi State.

Regards,

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