



FALL 2017 - FALL 2022

STRATEGIC PLAN



College of Social Science
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

A photograph of a university campus walkway. On the left, a series of stone pillars are spaced along a brick and concrete path. Each pillar has a plaque or informational display on it. The path leads towards a large, multi-story brick building in the background, partially obscured by trees. To the right of the path, there are lush green bushes with small pink flowers. A large, white, stylized arrow points from the center of the image towards the right, indicating a transition to the text on the right side.

ABOUT THE PLAN

Our science transforms the human experience and inspires leaders. Whether at the cellular scale via brain scans or at the global scale like climate change, our science is aimed at people. Our scholars and students seek to understand and predict behavior and to develop effective policy and real-world solutions given those understandings.

This strategic plan advances our land-grant and world-grant legacy, and guides our investments to ensure that we lead in discovering and disseminating essential patterns of social interactions and decisions. This plan was developed via an extremely participatory process. Our Strategic Planning Steering Committee was chaired by Department Chair Walter Hawthorne (History) and School Director Mary Finn (Criminal Justice), who is now serving as our College's dean. This group included one tenure-system faculty from each Department and School, many of whom are also affiliated with Centers/Programs/Institutes, as well as two fixed-term faculty, one staff member, three alumni, one undergraduate student, one graduate student, and two representatives from MSU as a whole. The committee met monthly to debate, disagree, and eventually fight for consensus. The discussions were directly informed by a College-wide survey, ably synthesized by the Faculty Advisory Committee, regular consultation with Chairs and Directors, and a series of strategic questions explored by the Associate Chairs. In addition, we held two College-wide retreats, together drawing over 450 participants, to solicit feedback and guidance.

Special thanks to our facilitator, Dr. Alan Glassman. Dr. Glassman planned the meetings, kept the group on track, and continually challenged us to work together for the improvement of the College. Developing this plan involved making choices. Implementing it will involve even more choices. Our Vision, Values and Mission will guide us in these choices. Equally importantly, we commit to preserving the spirit of the Steering Committee in working together to realize our College-wide identity and to advance the common good.

VISION

Our science transforms the human experience and inspires leaders.

MISSION

We will be global leaders in top-tier research while advancing engaged learning and societal well-being.



VALUES

QUALITY

We hold ourselves to the highest standards to achieve lasting influence.

INCLUSIVENESS

We foster a culture in which all individuals are valued, respected and engaged so that diverse voices can enrich our work.

CONNECTIVITY

We link with campus and external communities to leverage our strengths and collectively realize our shared goals.

INTEGRITY

We are honest, transparent and courageous in our discovery and dissemination of knowledge.

CREATIVITY

We imagine innovative approaches to understand and improve the world.

EMPOWERMENT

We equip individuals and communities to make informed and just decisions.

STEERING COMMITTEE

FACULTY

Joe Cesario

Psychology

Mike Colaresi

Political Science

Carl Davidson

Economics

Jeff Ericksen

Human Resources and Labor Relations/Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Science

Eric Juenke

Political Science/
Chicano-Latino Studies

Jay Kennedy

Criminal Justice/
Anti-Counterfeiting and
Product Protection Center

Sheryl Kubiak

Social Work

Stephanie Nawyn

Sociology

Jiaguo Qi

Geography, Environment, &
Spatial Sciences/Center for Global
Change & Earth Observations

Mark Roehling

Human Resources and
Labor Relations

Mark Wilson

School of Planning,
Design and Construction

Andrea Wittenborn

Human Development
and Family Studies

Gabriel Wrobel

Anthropology

Jinhua Zhao

Economics

Sharon Zhong

Geography, Environment,
and Spatial Sciences

CHAIRS

Walter Hawthorne

CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Mary Finn

DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

STUDENTS

Demetrice Jordan

Graduate

Leigh Rauk

Undergraduate

MSU REPRESENTATIVES

Pero Dagbovie

Associate Dean,
The Graduate School (History)

Karen Klomprens

Special Assistant to the Provost
(Plant Biology)

ALUMNI

Joe Hollis

Mike Morrow

Ann Tomlanovich

SENIOR STAFF

Rachel Croson

Dean

Thomas Jeitschko

Associate Dean

Steve Kautz

Associate Dean

Joe Messina

Associate Dean

Neal Schmitt

Former Interim Dean

Pamela Gray

Chief of Staff

Nwando Achebe

Faculty Excellence Advocate

Nick McLaren

Senior Director of Advancement





GOAL AREA

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

MSU's Masako Fujita, PhD, and graduate student Sabrina Perlman working in the Biological Anthropology Biomarker Laboratory.

Our scholars engage in sustained research excellence that demonstrates thought leadership. We will increase national and international recognition for top-tier and impactful research that addresses societal challenges.

THEMATIC AREAS

The College will support 3-5 thematic areas of research that advance our ability to address societal issues and will achieve national and international recognition.

COLLABORATIONS

The College will facilitate and recognize collaborations within and across fields.

FACULTY EXPECTATIONS

The College will ensure that each unit defines, communicates, implements and supports high scholarship standards to increase our national and international reputation.

PHD SUPPORT

The College will prioritize and support successful and effective doctoral fields.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

50%
INCREASE

FACULTY RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY
to the top half of the AAU*

25%
INCREASE

FACULTY WITH NATIONAL AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

20%
INCREASE

PERCENTAGE OF FACULTY
as principal investigator on external grants

50%
INCREASE

PERCENTAGE OF PHD STUDENTS
with excellent placements

*Association of American Universities



GOAL AREA

LEARNING

College of Social
Science students
pose for a photo
during the Study
Away Program in
Flint, MI.

Our students acquire the communication and analytical skills needed to excel in complex and changing environments. We will enhance opportunities to develop these skills through engaged and experiential learning.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Our faculty will enhance our students' educational and career success by developing their practical and adaptive skills.

EXPERIENTIAL AND ENGAGED LEARNING

The College will facilitate and recognize collaborations within and across fields.

OPPORTUNITY GAPS

In order to reduce differential persistence, graduation and rates of academic good standing the College will develop and improve mechanisms to support at-risk students in our ISS and large-enrollment courses.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

50%
REDUCTION

DECREASE OPPORTUNITY GAPS
for underrepresented minority undergrads

5%
INCREASE

IMPROVE SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATE
meeting or exceeding the MSU target

10%
INCREASE

PLACEMENT RATES OF STUDENTS
in full-time employment or graduate or professional programs

GOAL AREA

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Carl S. Taylor,
PhD, Professor
of Sociology,
teaching a class.

Our college is open and welcoming, deriving strength from a plurality of identities and lived experiences. We will build a more diverse and inclusive environment to fulfill our mission, consistent with University policies and state and federal law.

INCLUSIVE CLIMATE

The College will ensure an inclusive and welcoming environment for its students, faculty, and staff.

FACULTY HIRING AND RETENTION

The College will increase the proportion of tenure-system under-represented faculty utilizing aggressive recruitment, outreach and retention strategies.

DEVELOP FUTURE FACULTY

The College and its units will develop programs to increase the proportion of under-represented individuals in the academic pipeline utilizing aggressive recruitment, outreach and retention strategies.

MEASURING OUTCOMES



INCREASE

PROPORTION OF
UNDER-REPRESENTED
TENURE-SYSTEM FACULTY



INCREASE

PROPORTION OF
UNDER-REPRESENTED
PHD STUDENTS



GOAL AREA

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

Alumnus Curtis
Mack speaks with
students during
Social Science
Week.

Our identity establishes us as a destination and a source of expertise. We will further connect with alumni and communities.

IDENTITY

In coordination with MSU's central communications team, the College will leverage MSU's brand to create a unified College identity.

OUTREACH

Our faculty will engage and include academic and external communities to co-create a more visible societal impact.

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

The College will engage alumni and friends to increase support for our mission.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

 **40%**
INCREASE GIFTS
TO THE
COLLEGE

 **10%**
INCREASE EXTERNAL PRESS
MENTIONS
of faculty research or
quotes by faculty as
experts



OUR SCIENCE **TRANSFORMS THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE**
AND INSPIRES LEADERS



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socialscience.msu.edu



#MSUSocialScience