



## Project Proposal Form 2019-2020 Academic Year

**As a flagship and anchor institution, the University of Mississippi is a force for community and economic development across the state.** In 2018, the university launched M Partner, a new community engagement effort that seeks to improve quality of life in Mississippi communities. M Partner offers a framework for community and university representatives to advance priority projects in partner cities across the state, and underpins institutional efforts to promote healthy and vibrant communities. The inaugural M Partner communities are Charleston (Tallahatchie County), Lexington (Holmes County), and New Albany (Union County).

**M Partner seeks to cultivate a multidisciplinary culture of engagement with faculty members while aligning university resources and expertise with community-identified goals and needs.** This initiative also holds the potential to enhance student learning, scholarly research, and community engagement. M Partner seeks to affiliate with credit-bearing courses, community service projects and organizations, and university programs and entities that can provide research and technical assistance to facilitate the partnership goals.

**M Partner has funds available to support faculty, staff, and students as they work to advance these community-driven projects.** The table of projects is available on the following page. To request funds through M Partner, please complete this form and return it to Laura Martin, M Partner Director, at [lemartin@olemiss.edu](mailto:lemartin@olemiss.edu).

Name: _____	Title/Department: _____
Phone: _____	E-mail: _____
M Partner Project <i>(please consult table)</i> : _____	
Semester: Summer 2019 I / II / Full	Fall 2019
	Spring 2020
Course Number and Title <i>(if applicable)</i> : _____	
Signature: _____	Date: _____
Chair's Signature: _____	Date: _____

Sponsored Class/Budget Line Item	Description	Budget
Travel		
Contractual Services		
Scholarships and Waivers		
Postage		
Telephone		
Commodities		
Office Supplies		
Research/Lab Supplies		
Other Than Equip (Library Books)		
Equipment (less than \$5,000)		
Subcontract Payments		
Tuition		
<b>Total</b>		



## M Partner Projects 2019-2020 Academic Year

The projects below are the product of community meetings and ongoing dialogue with stakeholders in each partner community. Additional details are available on the following pages.

Please note that projects highlighted in gray are **in progress**, meaning that a course taught in Spring 2019 was engaged in that particular effort. Faculty members are invited to build on these existing efforts and to initiate courses around the priority projects.

<b>Charleston</b>
Website and Calendar for City of Charleston
Branding and Marketing Campaign for the Main Street Association
Health Promotion and Data Collection around Youth Diabetes and Obesity
Research and Compile Best Practices on Complete Streets Initiatives
Apply for the 2019 Healthy Hometown Award
Prepare Materials for the USDA Summer Food Service Program Grant
Research Opportunities to Expand Telemedicine
Assessment of Tallahatchie County Library
<b>Lexington</b>
Branding and Marketing for City of Lexington
Marketing Plan for the Fall and/or Spring Festival
Expansion of Farmers Market
Apply for the 2019 Healthy Hometown Award
Improvements for Milton Olive Park
Research Best Practices and Programs around Third Grade Reading Gate
Financial Education Workshops
Neighborhood Revitalization
Feasibility Study to Preserve Holmes County Jail
<b>New Albany</b>
Branding and Marketing Plan for the City of New Albany
Beautification and Tree City USA Designation
Marketing Plan for Current Parks and Recreation Offerings
Recommendations for Future Growth and Development of Parks and Recreation System
Assessment of Union County Library
Pursue Grant Writing for Broadband Infrastructure
Establish Framework for a Leadership New Albany Program
Framework for Neighborhood Revitalization
Oral History of the North and Southside New Albany
Rebranding of Tv99



## CHARLESTON

### Website and Calendar for City of Charleston

The City of Charleston is interested in establishing an online presence through a website and social media channels, as well as a community calendar to serve as a single source of information for public events.

- *Community Partner:* Office of the Mayor
- *Deliverables:*
  - Website design for the City of Charleston
  - Establish social media channel(s) for the City of Charleston; *this project component has an aligned course for Spring 2019.*
  - Create a calendar of events and ensure that it can be easily updated beyond the duration of the academic course
  - Research the cost of procuring a marquee to post community events; prepare summary of cost comparisons and maintenance expenses to present to city decision-makers

### Branding and Marketing Campaign for the Main Street Association

The Charleston Main Street Association is a newly created nonprofit organization that is seeking to boost tourism and economic development opportunities in Charleston. This project can incorporate local musicians, celebrities, landmarks, restaurants, and other attractions to drive tourism, including appealing to visitors traveling between the Blues Trail sites in Clarksdale and Indianola.

- *Community Partner:* Charleston Main Street Association
- *Deliverable:* Branding and marketing plan to increase tourism

### Health Promotion and Data Collection around Youth Diabetes and Obesity

The James C. Kennedy Wellness Center is working to improve health status by engaging young people to prevent diabetes and obesity. Currently the Wellness Center would like to enhance primary data collection efforts on diabetes and obesity among youth.

- *Community Partner:* James C. Kennedy Wellness Center
- *Deliverables:*
  - Data collection around youth diabetes and obesity; *this project component has an aligned course for Spring 2019.*
  - Health fair for middle and high school students with additional information on safe driving and mental health/suicide awareness; *this project component has an aligned course for Spring 2019.*

### Research and Compile Best Practices on Complete Streets Initiatives

In partnership with the Mayor's Health Council, students can provide research on best practices for complete streets initiatives, including model ordinances and similar programs that have been successful in Mississippi (such as in Greenwood).

- *Community Partner:* Office of the Mayor, Mayor's Health Council
- *Deliverable:* Best practices, model ordinance language, and resources from successful programs in Mississippi; *this project has an aligned course for Spring 2019.*

### Apply for the 2019 Healthy Hometown Award

The Healthy Hometown Award is given by the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation in recognition of communities across Mississippi that embody best practices in community health and wellness. Charleston has applied in the past and received feedback that it could strengthen its application through the inclusion of several policies, including complete streets.

- *Community Partner:* Office of the Mayor, Mayor's Health Council
- *Deliverable:* 2019 Healthy Hometown application



### **Prepare Materials for the USDA Summer Food Service Program Grant**

Currently, Charleston does not offer a summer feeding program funded through the USDA. The Summer Food Service Program ensures that nutritious meals are available to low-income students when school is not in session. Students can prepare background research, compile data, draft descriptive language, and collect letters of support to assist with grant preparation.

- *Community Partners:* School district officials
- *Deliverable:* Background research and supporting materials for the 2019 USDA Summer Food Service Program grant

### **Research Opportunities to Expand Telemedicine**

The James C. Kennedy Wellness Center and the Tallahatchie General Hospital are interested in utilizing telemedicine a way to increase access to health care services. The University of Mississippi Medical Center is a national leader in telemedicine, and affiliated students can identify barriers and opportunities around expanding the use of telemedicine in Charleston and Tallahatchie County.

- *Community Partner:* James C. Kennedy Wellness Center, Tallahatchie General Hospital
- *Deliverable:* Background research and recommendations around expanding telemedicine in Charleston and Tallahatchie County; *this project has an aligned course for Spring/Summer 2019.*

### **Assessment of Tallahatchie County Library**

Students will create a comprehensive plan for revitalizing the public library to meet the needs of Charleston and Tallahatchie County. Libraries are important cornerstones of a healthy community, as they provide the opportunity to find jobs, explore medical research, experience new ideas, and get lost in wonderful stories, while at the same time providing a sense of place for gathering. The Tallahatchie County Library is often the only readily available source of comprehensive information needed by people for personal, family and job-related purposes. Currently, the library is in need of a program evaluation to best determine how to serve the community.

- *Community Partner:* Tallahatchie County Library
- *Deliverable:* Conduct analysis of programming and facility

## **LEXINGTON**

### **Branding and Marketing for City of Lexington**

In an effort to promote its history and opportunities for tourism and economic development, the City of Lexington would like to enhance its branding and marketing efforts. Lexington has a rich Blues and music history, and features many historic houses and landmarks.

- *Community Partners:* Office of the Mayor; Jane Smith, Historical Preservation Commission
- *Deliverables:*
  - Multi-page brochure featuring photography and copy highlighting history, cultural attractions, culture, and business
  - Website and social media for City Hall, as well as training to maintain digital presence.
  - Portfolio of photographs of the City of Lexington

### **Marketing Plan for the Fall and/or Spring Festival**

The City of Lexington Fall and Spring Festivals feature music, arts, food, health promotion activities, and retail. The Fall 2018 Festival will incorporate Blues and music tourism. Increasing visibility and attendance for the festival will provide tourism and economic development opportunities for the City of Lexington. Students can assist with marketing efforts, as well as make recommendations to enhance the program to increase tourism.

- *Community Partner:* Office of the Mayor; UMMC
- *Deliverables:*
  - Marketing plan, as well as analysis of previous events to increase engagement and tourism
  - Hold health fair in conjunction with festival; *this project component has an aligned course for Spring 2019*



### **Expansion of Farmers Market**

The City of Lexington recently received funding through the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi to hire a Farmers Market manager. Students can help the farmers market to create a plan for expansion and engagement, and assist with vendor recruitment.

- *Community Partner:* Algenia Adams, Farmers Market Manager; Paige Lawrence, UMMC Holmes County Hospital
- *Deliverable:* Research best practices and offer recommendations for market expansion

### **Apply for the 2019 Healthy Hometown Award**

The Healthy Hometown Award is given by the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation in recognition of communities across Mississippi that embody best practices in community health and wellness. Lexington has several policies and practices in place, and would like to expand on those credentials and submit an application for the 2019 award cycle.

- *Community Partner:* Office of the Mayor; Frances Bartee, Mayor's Health Council; UMMC
- *Deliverables:*
  - 2019 Healthy Hometown application; *this project component has an aligned course for Spring 2019.*
  - Enhance public awareness and utilization of walking trail

### **Improvements for Milton Olive Park**

The establishment of Milton Olive Park will be the first dedicated park space in Lexington. Currently the park offers a ½ mile walking trail. The park is situated in a low-lying area in a floodplain, and the City would like an assessment of how to manage drainage so that the park can be expanded with playground equipment, a pavilion, restrooms, signage, and a parking lot.

- *Community Partner:* Office of the Mayor
- *Deliverables:*
  - Design signage for Milton Olive Park, including an artistic rendering, graphic design, fonts, and inclusion of logos; list of materials needed; recommended size/base and placement; and cost estimate
  - Assess drainage and make recommendations to manage runoff, including a cost estimate
  - Assess lot and offer preliminary designs for play space, parking lot, restrooms, pavilion

### **Research Best Practices and Programs around Third Grade Reading Gate**

Conduct research and perform data analysis to identify trends in promotion and retention from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Identify best practices to ensure grade level reading by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

- *Community Partner:* Holmes County School District
- *Deliverable:* Research brief with recommendations for the schools and community groups working to promote educational attainment and grade level reading; *this project has an aligned research effort for Spring 2019.*

### **Financial Education Workshops**

Officials with the local Housing Authority have identified a need to provide workshops and seminars in financial education to prepare for homeownership and to increase financial literacy around student loans.

- *Community Partners:* Arnita Knight, Housing Authority; Beulah Greer, Community Student Learning Center
- *Deliverable:* Seminars on financial literacy (budgeting, credit, savings); *this project has an aligned co-curricular service effort for Spring 2019.*



### **Neighborhood Revitalization**

Students will meet with community stakeholders and organizations to identify opportunities for neighborhood revitalization in neighborhoods with an interest in exploring solutions to community concerns. This project may include background research and analysis to establish walking and bicycling infrastructure, as well as community programs to enhance quality of life.

- *Community Partners:* Neighborhood leaders; Jane Smith, Historical Preservation Commission
- *Deliverables:*
  - Conduct surveys and interviews to gather community input on engagement, sense of community pride, housing, and other quality of life issues to be identified by community leaders. Present findings and recommendations.
  - As appropriate, conduct research on the establishment of Neighborhood Associations and their scope of activities as pertains to these neighborhoods.
  - Research grants and other funding opportunities that would mitigate blighted properties.

### **Feasibility Study to Preserve Holmes County Jail**

The Holmes County Jail was a Public Works Administration project completed in 1936, designed by architects A.H. Town and N.W. Overstreet. The building is owned by Holmes County but has not been used as a jail since a new facility was constructed in 2002. Currently the building is in a state of disrepair, but due to its architectural significance there is interest in studying the feasibility of preserving the exterior of the building.

- *Community Partner:* Office of the Mayor, Holmes County, Historical Preservation Commission
- *Deliverable:*
  - Feasibility study for historical preservation
  - Research grants and other funding opportunities that would facilitate the restoration and preservation of the building; prepare supporting research to complete grant application

## **NEW ALBANY**

### **Branding and Marketing Plan for the City of New Albany**

This is a two- fold assignment: students will develop a (1) City and (2) Tourism brand for the City of New Albany to capture the essence of the place. The project should identify consistent themes and elements to be used for various public projects ranging from signage to the development of public spaces. This plan should be used in cultivating downtown New Albany's identity to residents, visitors and investors.

- *Community Partner:* New Albany Main Street Association
- *Deliverables:* This is a Marketing Plan for New Albany that ranges from logo creation and design of signage to an actual marketing and tourism plan that includes social media engagement. This branding and marketing plan should attend to New Albany's housing, schools, healthcare, business and industry, recreation and location. Additionally, the tourism plan should include the following assets in New Albany and Union County:
  - a. Shopping
  - b. Food and lodging
  - c. Assets
    - a. Tanglefoot Trail and Interpretive Center
    - b. Tallahatchie River
    - c. Park Along the River Arboretum
    - d. Union County Heritage Museum
    - e. Faulkner Literary Garden
    - f. Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area
    - g. Holly Springs National Forest
    - h. Hell Creek Wildlife Management Area



- i. Native American Sites
    - i. Ingomar Mounds
    - ii. Museum
    - iii. Tanglefoot Trail
  - j. African American sites “Across the Tracks”
  - k. National Park Service Eastern Legacy Trail of Meriwether Lewis
  - l. Southern Literary Trail
  - m. Mississippi Blues Trail
  - n. Quilt Trail
  - o. Hallelujah Trail
  - p. River District Walking Trail (Historic Downtown)
  - q. Cultural Arts District (proposed/possibility)
  - r. Farmer’s Market
  - s. BNA Park
  - t. Tennis Complex
- d. Marketing - how do we pull from our surrounding areas?
    - a. Demographic area
    - b. Geographic areas

### **Beautification and Tree City USA Designation**

Entrances and exits in a community are essential. Visitors’ opinions are formed by first and last impressions. These portals to our community provide visitors with an unconscious message. Clean entranceways and exits indicate that the person is entering a community that has a sense of pride. Volunteers are invited to participate in community clean-up days alongside local residents.

- *Community Partner:* Frankie Roberts, Keep New Albany/Union County Beautiful
- *Deliverables:*
  - Clean-up days, including landscaping and beautification
  - Research best practices for codes and design plans that promote beautification
  - Pursue Tree City USA Designation; *the City of New Albany recently attained this designation.*

### **Marketing Plan for Current Parks and Recreation Offerings**

The City of New Albany has ample parks and recreation amenities that are not fully utilized. These assets could benefit from marketing and promotion so that residents of New Albany and neighboring communities can enjoy these resources.

- *Community Partner:* Parks and Recreation Department
- *Deliverable:* Marketing plan that takes these amenities into consideration:
  - Park Along the River Redevelopment - Master Plan
    - Passive Recreation
    - Family Recreation
    - Playground renovations/improvements
    - Amenities
  - Senior Citizens Center
  - Recreational Building
  - Community Pool
  - Neighborhood Parks
  - River Sports
  - RV Riverside Camping
  - Frisbee golf
  - Tanglefoot Trail and related races/events



### **Recommendations for Future Growth and Development of Parks and Recreation System**

Students will provide a guide for future growth and development of New Albany's parks and recreation system. The City is committed to a quality parks and recreation system that delivers high-quality parks, trails, recreation programs, facilities, and events for all residents, while contributing to the economic well-being of the City.

- *Community Partner:* Parks and Recreation Department
- *Deliverable:* The growth and development plan should be organized around the following themes:
  - Providing high-quality parks and recreational facilities
  - Trails that connect the community and connect the community to open space
  - Promoting community health through recreation programs
  - Sustainable maintenance practices
  - Partnerships and options for funding

*This project has an aligned course for Spring 2019.*

### **Assessment of Union County Library**

Students will create a comprehensive plan for revitalizing the public library to meet the changing dynamics of New Albany and Union County. Libraries are important cornerstones of a healthy community, as they provide the opportunity to find jobs, explore medical research, experience new ideas, and get lost in wonderful stories, while at the same time providing a sense of place for gathering. The Union County Library is often the only readily available source of comprehensive information needed by people for personal, family and job-related purposes. Currently, the library is in need of major renovation and rehabilitation for community use.

- *Community Partner:* Sissy Bullock, Union County Public Library
- *Deliverables:*
  - Initiate research for Long Range Plan additions and renovations
  - Conduct analysis of programming and facility; *this project component has an aligned course for Spring 2019.*

### **Pursue Grant Writing for Broadband Infrastructure**

The City of New Albany is interested in pursuing a USDA Community Connect grant, which funds broadband deployment into rural communities where it is not yet economically viable for private sector providers to deliver service. Students can conduct preliminary research and analysis to facilitate the grant writing process.

- *Community Partner:* City of New Albany, Main Street Association, Union County Public Library
- *Deliverable:* Community profile data and narrative language to advance the grant application process

### **Establish Framework for a Leadership New Albany Program**

Many community leaders in New Albany participated in leadership development programs through Dr. Vaughn Grisham, the founding director of the McLean Institute. There is interest in creating a similar leadership program for the next generation of diverse community leaders in New Albany and Union County. Students can research best practices and prepare a model program for the City to implement.

- *Community Partner:* City of New Albany, Main Street Association
- *Deliverable:* Framework for Leadership program, including recruitment materials, application process, program calendar, fee structure, potential speakers, and assessment criteria. The final deliverable should also attend to a community service component as well as a strategy for cultivating relationships among participants in the leadership class.





### **Framework for Neighborhood Revitalization**

Students will meet with community stakeholders and organizations to identify opportunities for neighborhood revitalization and preservation in the North and Southside areas of New Albany. This project may include background research and analysis to establish walking and bicycling infrastructure, as well as community programs to enhance quality of life.

- *Community Partner:* Marquel Conner, Boys and Girls Club
- *Deliverables:*
  - Conduct surveys and interviews to gather community input on walkability, preservation, beautification, and housing. Present findings and recommendations to community leaders.
  - As appropriate, conduct research on the establishment on Neighborhood Associations and their scope of activities as pertains to these neighborhoods.

### **Oral History of the North and Southside New Albany**

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the North and Southside neighborhoods of New Albany were home to thriving Black-owned business and cultural hubs. B.B King played at a café in New Albany, and Blues musician Sam Mosely traces his musical roots to this community. This history has largely been neglected, and community leaders are interested in collecting narratives to ensure that future generations are aware of this unique and compelling period. There is also a desire to tell this story in conjunction with marketing and tourism efforts for New Albany.

- *Community Partner:* Main Street Association, Union County Heritage Museum
- *Deliverables:*
  - Conduct oral history interviews with African American musicians and descendants of African American business owners; review archival material at Union County Heritage Museum. Prepare a report that tells the story of this vibrant era.
  - Create a tourism and marketing plan based on the findings from the oral history interviews and archival research. Offer recommendations around public and private partnerships that can strengthen these tourism and marketing efforts.

### **Rebranding of Tv99**

Tv99 is the main community channel for New Albany and surrounding communities. The parent production company, Proteus Media, is currently involved in a rebranding effort to elevate the platform of the channel and its affiliated programs. Students can support these efforts and create content for youth enrichment workshops in news and editing, business development, photography, music, and film.

- *Community Partner:* Jean Ashcraft, Proteus Media & Tv99
- *Deliverables:*
  - Support rebranding effort of Tv99
  - Develop content for youth engagement workshops in news and editing, business development, photography, music, and film.