

# SCHOOL OF LIFELONG LEARNING

---

Dr. Deidre L. Wheaton  
Director

School of Lifelong Learning  
deidre.l.wheaton@jsums.edu (<https://jsums-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/college-education-human-development/school-lifelong-learning/deidre.l.wheaton@jsums.edu>)  
E.E. Thrash Universities Center  
3825 Ridgewood Road  
Jackson, MS  
601-979-8895

## Faculty of Department

M. Bingham, J. Ke, H. Lackey, G. Stamps-Smith, D. Wheaton, C. Wilson

## Mission of the School

The mission of the School of Lifelong Learning is to provide adult students quality learning opportunities for professional and personal development throughout their lifetime. The School's mission meets the urban and comprehensive education goals of the University. The School of Lifelong Learning addresses problems created by the alarming statistics of Mississippi's school "dropouts," worker layoffs, industry demands for skilled labor, and a shrinking economy.

## Goals

The goals of the School of Lifelong Learning are to:

1. Provide world class education for adults, 25 years-of-age and older, who desire to prepare themselves for handling personal and professional challenges throughout their lifetime.
2. Build and maintain students' high quality academic performance and scholarship by emphasizing quality academics, professionalism, high accreditation standards, and the acquisition of relevant knowledge and resources.
3. Increase the accessibility of adult learners to higher education and training.
4. Respond to the global demands for a quality workforce using a rigorous curriculum that is aligned with student educational needs and professional standards.
5. Promote and sustain quality teaching and learning through scholarship, service-learning projects, and research by utilizing high quality, diverse faculty for adult learners in a supportive, adult-friendly environment.
6. Ensure that the School remains dynamic and responsive to the changing needs, policies, and technologies of adult education.

## Purpose and Objectives

A primary purpose of the School is to meet the needs of the present-day workforce and adult learners across the state, region, nation, and world. The School allows participants to work with academic advisors to customize studies that meet their personal and professional needs, while taking into consideration their myriad family-life and employment responsibilities.

The objectives of the School of Lifelong Learning are to:

1. Offer academic degree programs and professional development training to non-traditional adult learners.
2. Recruit high quality non-traditional learners and offer training and classes during the evening, weekends, and at more convenient times through technological innovations.
3. Provide training products and services that meet the needs of individual schools, government, business and industry, and faith-based organizations.
4. Implement a comprehensive distance learning program that extends the accessibility of the School to distant populations of adult learners.
5. Provide comprehensive student support services including mentoring, tutoring, advisement and counseling that result in high quality academic performance outcomes.
6. Prepare adult learners for conducting, interpreting, and applying research to solve local, national, and global problems.
7. Implement a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum using best practice instructional strategies and alignment with the current market demands of the workforce.
8. Attract and obtain high quality faculty who consistently engage in scholarly activities.
9. Provide opportunities for students to complete a minimum of 60 service-learning project hours, in rural and urban communities, consistent with the service-learning mission of the University.

## Center for Professional Development

The Center for Professional Development offers non-academic credit courses for professional and personal development. The Center sponsors workshops, seminars, institutes, and conferences. These activities may be offered on-site at the business or agency, Universities Center, or online through innovative technologies and research-based strategies. Additionally, training activities may be offered at the Metro Classroom Sites to permit participants to receive needed on-site training; thus, removing the barrier of distance to make training cost-effective for the contracted agency.

The Center for Professional Development awards credit in the form of Continuing Education Units (CEUs), Certificates of Completion, and Certificates of Attendance. In collaboration with other units and agencies, the Center offers Social Work Units to licensed social workers, Orientation for School Leaders (OSL) credit to entry-level administrators, School Executive Management Institute (SEMI) credit to school administrators, and other non-academic credit units sponsored by professional associations.

The Center partners with a variety of agencies and organizations to deliver professional development training. Professional development is delivered to the members of the workforce through research-based strategies and innovative technologies. Participants of the Center include teachers, administrators, counselors, parent/teacher organization members, childcare administrators, pre-service educators, students, local, state, and government employees, entrepreneurs, and paraprofessionals. Local and national consultants are hired from local educational agencies, business, government, industry, and institutions of higher learning. The School of Lifelong Learning also sponsors professional and personal development activities and services through additional research and service units. These units are described below:

## Institute for Educational Renewal (INFER)

The Institute for Educational Renewal (INFER) is a continuing academic support unit designed to provide university support to public schools as they endeavor to meet the needs of all learners – prenatal through adulthood – and their families.

INFER's interdisciplinary, multifaceted program is dedicated to focusing its attention on outreach, collaboration, and staff development for school and daycare personnel; mentoring, and technical assistance to schools; and sharing diverse learning to communities around the world. INFER enlists federal, state, and private funding sources to assist in achieving its goals.

INFER is the home of the Southwest Mississippi Education Consortium (SMEC) and the Regional Education Service Center. SMEC serves 24 school districts, in 18 counties across Mississippi. The Southern Regional Education Service Center provides professional development and other support services for public schools primarily in the central Mississippi area.

## Regional Education Service Center for Central Mississippi

The Regional Education Service Center, also known as the Southwest Mississippi Education Consortium (SMEC), represents one of the six regional education service centers that provide professional development and community services to diverse educational entities across Mississippi. Since 1997, the Center has formed partnerships with public and private education providers for the following purposes: to supplement, enhance, and expand the capacity of member agencies toward improving the quality of student performance in schools. The Center serves 24 school districts across 18 counties in Mississippi as a facilitator or sponsor of these activities and services. All professional development activities are delivered through workshops, conferences, seminars, institutes, interactive video, and online training. The offerings of the Service Center are designed and developed with input from district superintendents, principals, professional development coordinators, and teachers. Some of the training themes include but are not limited to the following: technology, curriculum and instruction, evaluation, research, leadership, literacy, classroom management, safety, cultural diversity, and others. Completion of training usually results in the awarding of Continuing Education Units (CEUs), Certificate of Attendance, Certificate of Participation, Orientation for School Leaders (OSL) credit to entry-level administrators, or School Executive Management Institute (SEMI) Credits.

## Southwest Mississippi World-Class Teaching Initiative (SMWCTI) for National Board Certification

The Southwest Mississippi World-Class Teaching Initiative (SMWCTI) was established by legislation in 1999 for Jackson State University as one of the six World-Class Teaching Programs to support Mississippi teachers as they seek National Board certification. The SMWCTI Mentoring Program pairs groups of selected National Board candidates with experienced, devoted, knowledgeable, and caring mentors who are National Board-Certified teachers. During the mentoring sessions, the mentors guide and support candidates through the National Board process. The mentors work with the candidates through a series of performance-based assessments, including teaching portfolios, student work samples, videotapes, and thorough analysis of classroom teaching

and students' learning. The candidates also complete written exercises that probe the depth of their subject-matter knowledge.

## Continuing Education Learning Center (CELC)

The Continuing Education Learning Center (CELC) consists of the following programs:

1. General Education Development (GED)
2. Basic Skills Training, and
3. Parenting Skills.

The Learning Center provides self-paced, individualized, computer-based instruction on an on-going basis. Students can choose from a wealth of subjects including intermediate reading, GED preparation, pre-employment skills, parenting classes, job centered ethics, computer skills, and various enrichment workshops conducted by community leaders. The Learning Center collaborates with various non-profit agencies and city, state, and federal programs.

Jackson State University continues to have both urban and traditional missions. The CELC is central to the urban thrust of the University. It is one of three critical strategies used by the School of Lifelong Learning to help Jackson State University address its urban responsibilities. The CELC along with the School of Lifelong Learning's academic and non-academic credit units act in concert to provide substantive development programs for e-City and other community development projects in literacy, workforce, and health.

## Student Support Services Unit

The Student Support Services Unit provides students with assistance in the areas of admissions, transcript evaluation, academic and financial aid counseling, advisement, and registration. Also, mentoring, tutoring, and other student support services are provided for students pursuing both academic and non-academic credit coursework and training activities. These services are offered weekdays and weekends at selected hours. The services are provided on-site, in the student's communities, and at the Universities Center location. Additionally, the School of Lifelong Learning works in concert with the Division of Student Life to coordinate student involvement in the community through volunteerism or community service opportunities that engage students in service at various community-based sites.

- Department of Professional Interdisciplinary Studies (<https://jsums-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/college-education-human-development/school-lifelong-learning/department-professional-interdisciplinary-studies/>)