3.4.2 Continuing education/service programs

3.4.2 The institution’s continuing education, outreach, and service programs are consistent with the institution’s mission.

Judgment of Compliance

In Compliance

Narrative

The University of Alabama (UA) seeks “To advance the intellectual and social condition of the State, the nation and the world through the creation, translation and dissemination of knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research and service.” Continuing education, outreach, and service programs directly advance UA’s mission by providing continuing learning opportunities, applying research, and providing technical assistance to the constituencies served by the University. These programs and activities are designed to have a positive influence on the “intellectual and social condition of the State, the nation and the world.”

UA has a long history of service activities and partnerships with businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government across the institution, in academic units, dedicated service units, and student organizations. These efforts are connected to the University’s strategic vision to be “a student-centered research university and academic community united in our commitment to enhance the quality of life for all Alabamians.”

Beyond individual programmatic efforts, however, the University engaged in several institutional actions that demonstrate the strong connection between continuing education and service and the University mission: achieving the Carnegie Elective Community Engagement Classification, launching the Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship, joining the National Outreach Scholarship Conference (now the Engagement Scholarship Consortium), and hosting its 2012 conference.

In 2007 the University joined the Engagement Scholarship Consortium, a mix of public and private higher education member institutions that collaborate to build strong university/community partnerships. The University was the sixth institution to be invited to join the consortium and the first non-land grant institution, joining Penn State, Ohio State, University of Georgia, Michigan State, and the University of Wisconsin. The organization has grown to 28 institutions in the U.S., Canada and Africa. UA’s Vice President for Community Affairs will serve as president of the consortium board of directors beginning in 2015.

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The University hosted the 2012 annual conference of the consortium. The conference represented another opportunity for the University to demonstrate how it fulfills its mission to communities in the state and beyond. The 2012 agenda included a track focused on the work of community partners alongside faculty and student tracks (a first for the conference) to solidify the message on campus and with community partners of the University’s commitment to collaborative community engagement. Eighty-six community partners from 47 community organizations attended the conference. Of the 86 community partners in attendance, 35 community partners made presentations. A record 613 individuals from 39 states, Canada, Egypt, and Nigeria attended.
A special issue of the Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship was based on the research presentations and other activities of the conference. The University publishes the Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship to support faculty research in the area of community-engaged scholarship. The peer-reviewed journal also educates the campus on community-engaged scholarship and enhances the University’s academic reputation nationally and internationally with respect to this emerging area of scholarship.

In 2008 the University sought and achieved the Carnegie Elective Community Engagement Classification. The process of preparing the application served as a self-study, identifying ways to align engaged scholarship more closely with University mission. Additionally, the process strengthened the commitment of students and faculty to community partners and increased awareness of the values and strengths of engaged scholarship. In 2014, the University applied for renewal of the classification. Notice is expected in December 2014. [5]

Division of Community Affairs

The Division of Community Affairs helps the University fulfill its mission to “advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the State, the nation and the world” by providing programs that improve the quality of life for individuals and communities. [6] In creating the division in 2004, UA President Robert Witt charged Community Affairs with serving as a bridge between the campus community and the external community. [7] Thus, the philosophical foundation of the Division stipulates that needs are to be addressed through a partnership model that includes both institutional and community stakeholders.

The Division of Community Affairs also plays a coordinating role for the campus in key ways, providing leadership to initiatives that span the campus. For example, the Division established the Council on Community-Based Partnerships, which provides leadership to and support for faculty, student, and community partner engagement efforts campus-wide. The Council conducts both an Annual Awards program and Seed Grant process. To date, the awards program has recognized scores of deserving projects and individuals. More than 250 seed grants have been proposed, yielding some 50 funded projects totaling $225,000 and leading to almost $3,000,000 in additional funded research. [8]

The following centers and initiatives make up the Division. [9]

Center for Community Based Partnerships. The vision of the Center for Community Based Partnerships (CCBP) is of a University whose resources and strengths are made available through partnerships in communities throughout the state, nation, and world to help solve society’s critical problems. [10] The Center advances the University’s mission through projects that use knowledge to improve the well-being of families and communities. Major projects include:

- The Parent Teacher Leadership Academy [11] is a partnership between school districts, State Department of Education officials, principals, teachers, parents, and UA Colleges of Education and Human Environmental Sciences faculty and students. Its purpose is to empower parent leaders to support local schools and to improve students’ education. In 2013, the Parent Leadership Academy received a national Magna Award from the American School Board Journal and the National School Board Association for outstanding contributions to public education. More than 250 parents have graduated since the Parent Leadership Academy began in 2008. In 2013–2014, Academy graduates collectively contributed more than 1,000 hours of parent engagement work to their school communities. In the 2013–2014 academic year, the program was expanded and renamed the Parent Teacher Leadership Academy. The PTLA umbrella program now includes the Parent Leadership Academy, and the Teacher Leadership Academy, whose inaugural class graduated in 2014. The Teacher Leadership Academy (TLA) trains teachers to use family-school partnerships to increase students’ academic achievement.

- Saving Lives [12] is a faith-based health literacy and wellness partnership with congregations in rural and urban areas in the South. The partnership includes faith-based leaders and congregation members who promote greater understanding of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing among congregations, using a peer mentor model. New congregations join the partnership each year as they learn of its success. The program is in its third year and looks to expand to leaders and members of other congregations, including synagogues and mosques, in rural Alabama and across the nation. [13]
Students for Community Outreach, Partnership, and Engagement (SCOPE) [14] connects students interested in community-engaged scholarship with resources in order to bolster the production of community-based research by students. SCOPE members gain access to leading scholars, publications, meetings, and conferences that will advance their careers as engagement scholars. Its purpose is to increase the capacity of students to conduct community-based research and to facilitate their collaboration with faculty and community partners. Since SCOPE began in 2011, 25 students have made presentations at international conferences, published in major research journals, and recorded more than 550 hours of engaged scholarship research activities.

Swim to the Top is a fitness and enrichment program offered in collaboration with the YMCA and the Tuscaloosa County Park and Recreation Authority. African-American children drown at a rate nearly three times higher than their Caucasian peers. In the summer of 2014, swim instructors from UA provided instruction to more than 110 youth ages 4–14 years. Goals of the program include: to make children proficient recreational and survival swimmers; and to provide fitness, nutrition, and academic enrichment activities. [15]

Crossroads Community Center. Crossroads Community Center [16] brings students together to build relationships across cultures. The Center provides campus and community intercultural education by hosting a variety of cultural events and programs that build community. The Center advances the University’s mission by preparing students, staff, and community members for a global society and by serving as a resource for organizations on and off campus concerned with intercultural issues in the community. Through its diverse programs, Crossroads Community Center prepares students and staff for demographic shifts in a global society and contributes to a campus culture of inclusiveness. Key activities include the Interfaith Initiative, Community Conversations, and the Capstone Network.

The Better Together Interfaith Initiative [17] draws on the work of the Interfaith Youth Core, promoting respect for diverse religious and non-religious identities and joining them in common action for the common good. In spring 2014, UA students attended IFYC’s Interfaith Leadership Institute in Atlanta where they developed strategies to improve interfaith understanding on campus. As a result, the Center collaborated with UA’s Community Service Center to host “Serve Better Together.” More than 50 students with different religious and non-religious beliefs participated in this day of service, repairing and painting three homes in the Tuscaloosa community. After completing the service activities, the students concluded the day together with an interfaith dinner and dialogue at the Hillel Jewish Student Center. [18]

Through Community Conversations, Crossroads Community Center invites open, honest, and balanced talk about intercultural relationships and faith traditions at the University and in the Tuscaloosa community. Students find their voices in the discussion of sensitive topics about inclusion and belonging, engage new acquaintances in candid conversation, and learn directly from their neighbors about cultures and experiences. For example, Crossroads co-sponsored with New College and other campus partners a photography exhibit and lecture series at UA's Paul R. Jones Gallery of Art. The exhibit examined, through the photographs of Decatur photographer Fred Hiroshige, the second trial of Haywood Patterson, one of the nine men falsely accused of rape in Scottsboro, Alabama, in 1931. This interdisciplinary event invited students to learn more about the legacy of the Scottsboro Boys and the Southern experience of racism during the 20th century and today. Community Conversations facilitates discussions for the campus and the community about the meaning of culture, faith, and identity in our daily lives. [19]

Crossroads’ Capstone Network engages faculty, staff, and students in collaborative activities that foster awareness and appreciation of diversity across the campus. The Network organizes interdisciplinary-planning meetings among departments and organizations, coordinates schedules of multicultural events, and publicizes heritage month events. Most prominent among these programs are: African American Heritage Month, Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month, International Education Week, and Native American Heritage Month. Many valuable intercultural conversations and professional relationships are created through the Capstone Network. It serves as a welcome group, an orientation network, and a supportive anchor for new faculty, staff, and students, thus contributing to a campus culture that embraces diversity.
Realizing the Dream [20] began in 1990 as a collaboration between UA, Stillman College, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. It was founded by UA President Roger Sayers together with President Cordell Wynn of Stillman College. Since that time, Shelton State Community College has joined the partnership. For the past 25 years, this initiative has created annual cultural and educational events in recognition of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Realizing the Dream collaboration advances the University’s mission by leveraging the commitment of all partners to promote equality and social justice. Realizing The Dream goes beyond the annual events themselves, by maintaining relationships that help West Alabama reach its potential as a community and expanding opportunity for society to work better.

Tuscaloosa Consortium for Higher Education. Tuscaloosa Consortium for Higher Education [21] began in 1972 when UA President David Mathews and Stillman College President Harold Stinson formalized an agreement to encourage collaboration between the two institutions. The relationship was reaffirmed in 1985. The purpose of the agreement was to “actively pursue expanded opportunities for cooperative efforts.” [22] Shelton State Community College was later added. Over the years, the relationship has been characterized by joint courses, study-abroad opportunities, and small grants to fund joint projects among the participating institutions. The agreement aligns with the University’s mission by linking a public flagship research university, a historically black college, and a community college in the same community in ways that result in “quality programs of teaching, research, and service” for all three institutions and that “improve the intellectual and social condition” of West Alabama.

Communication and Research. The purpose of the Communication and Research [23] section of Community Affairs is to raise awareness of specific partnership projects and of the values of engagement in general. In addition to numerous news releases and other forms of information sharing, a principal activity of Communication and Research is publication of the Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship. [24] The Journal is intended for professional scholars but also for undergraduate students, community partners, and the general public – in other words, to be both acceptable to the academic community and accessible to community partners. The Journal strengthens both the academic value of engagement scholarship, by providing a suitable channel for scholars to meet tenure requirements, and its practical value, by providing research-based information to practitioners. In this way, Communication and Research supports the goal of “dissemination” with an “emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research, and service” stated in the University’s mission.

College of Continuing Studies

The College of Continuing Studies (CCS) [25] delivers learning opportunities to individuals pursuing educational goals and career growth and to organizations building excellence in the workplace. In addition to providing degrees offered by the University’s colleges, CCS provides training and events that enhance skills and careers in the workforce and enrich communities from which the workforce comes. The following programs illustrate the alignment between CCS and the University’s mission “To advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the State, the nation, and the world…” with a particular focus on the people of Alabama and workforce development.

The following subunits and initiatives make up the College. [26]

Academic Outreach. Academic Outreach [27] supports the University’s mission by providing “quality programs of teaching, research, and service” to learners who cannot come to campus as full-time, residential students. The major activity of Academic Outreach is to provide bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees through flexible distance and online programs designed for adults, activities covered in detail under another standard. Two activities, however, fit here: Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators and Students Statewide and the Advanced Placement® Summer Institute.

- Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators and Students Statewide [28] is a statewide initiative of the Alabama State Department of Education using distance learning for Alabama high-school students. The University is one of three support centers in the State, along with Troy University and Madison County School District. During 2012–2013, the UA support center delivered just under 11,000 online enrollments in core, elective, credit recovery, and AP courses, trained 110 teachers and technical support staff, and made more than 200 school site visits. [29]
The Advanced Placement® Summer Institute [30] is offered through a long-standing partnership with The College Board and has been ongoing for 30 years. Sessions cover all AP subject areas and target both experienced and new AP teachers. In the most recent five-year period, 3,000 teachers enrolled in the 4-day sessions. [31]

Bama At Work. Bama At Work [32] reflects the University’s mission of knowledge dissemination with an “emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research, and service,” impacting workplace excellence throughout the state and region. Offerings serve diverse industry sectors, including manufacturing, services, financial, government, education, technology, and human resources. Bama At Work also serves military members and their families. [33] Programs are offered in multiple ways:

- Certificate programs: [34] traditional workshop/classroom activities
- Online: [35] initial career preparation, as well as updating
- Professional development conferences: [36] opportunities for skill development and maintaining credentials
- Customized consulting and services: [37] tailored to organization or employer needs

Curriculum for traditional classroom or workshop courses is established in collaboration with knowledgeable practitioners, then taught by individuals employed as independent contractors, chosen for their knowledge of the field and demonstrated effectiveness as an instructor. Courses are evaluated regularly to ensure quality in content and instruction. Most online training content is realized by contracting with external content providers, giving CCS the ability to minimize development costs and scale quickly.

For “off-the-shelf” content of this sort, a subject matter expert reviews content and instructor qualifications in advance of offering to the public. For example, UA SafeState colleagues recently vetted a potential online course on sustainability with special subject matter expertise before the course being offered for registration. When online content is created in-house, an industry advisory team works with an external course developer as content is created. [38]

Just under 58,000 people, or over 11,587 people per year, have taken advantage of the diverse offering through Bama At Work during the most recent five year period. [39] Each year more than 2,500 people attend conferences managed by the Bama At Work staff, enabling professionals in health, finance, engineering, government, and education sectors to maintain and increase credentials.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute [40] has grown to more than 1,300 members since its inception in 2006. The Bernard Osher Foundation [41] provided start-up funds and an endowment to create and support the Institute, a member-planned and member-managed organization that follows the Osher model. Each semester members of the group plan a robust schedule of courses, travel programs, and social events. The Institute advances the University’s mission by providing mature adults with opportunities for intellectual stimulation, cultural development, and social interaction. The UA group also started additional chapters around the State, including several in rural communities where adult learning opportunities are generally scarce. [42]

The Alabama Association of School Business Officials partners with the University for ongoing training, conferences, and organizational management. Almost 1,400 school business officials in the state maintain certifications and keep up-to-date on developments in school business management by enrolling in programs offered jointly by the Association and the University. [43]

The State of Alabama partners with the University to administer testing for initial license and license maintenance for 23,000 insurance agents statewide. [44] More than 5,800 exams were administered in different locations around the state in 2012–2013. [45]

UA SafeState. UA SafeState [46] is the State of Alabama’s center for environmental, safety, and industrial hygiene programs, services, and training. UA SafeState partners with state agencies, local governments, employers, schools, and the environmental health and safety professional community. UA SafeState provides consultation services, applied research, certification and accreditation, and professional development related to environmental health and safety, thus supporting the goal of “dissemination” with an “emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research, and service” stated in the University’s mission.

Specific functions of UA SafeState include:
Consultation – free and low-cost consultation services for small-to medium-size businesses in the areas of safety, health, and environmental management. [47] [48] UA SafeState provided 388 consultations in 2012–2013, leading to the identification and correction of 1,801 hazards benefitting 64,936 employees, resulting in avoidance of over $1,668,100 in fines and $22.5 million in workplace losses. As a result, UA SafeState creates a safety culture in Alabama organizations and provides environmental solutions with significant impact for Alabama businesses, and therefore the State economy. [49]

Training [50] - covering a range of technical, regulatory, and management topics, including OSHA standards, lead-based paint, asbestos, and mold, electrical safety, construction safety, storm water, and health, safety, and environmental management systems. [51] UA SafeState is also home to the region’s only OSHA Training Institute Education Center, providing training and education training in occupational safety and health for federal and state compliance officers, state consultants, other federal agency personnel, and the private sector. OSHA does not fund the training, but does validate and maintain standards for entities designated as Centers. [52] Training also includes two conferences, the Alabama Governor’s Safety and Health Conference [53] and the Alabama Environmental Conference. [54] The Safety and Health Conference, in its 27th year, serves primarily Alabama employers and safety professionals, but also draws from nearby states that do not have similar programs. The agenda is planned by an external advisory board made up of representatives of state agencies, local governments, employers, schools and the environmental health and safety professional community and is therefore closely tied to needs in the field. The conference provides keynote speakers, vendor displays, and workshops to address pressing issues and policy developments, as well as meet professional training requirements of attendees. More than 400 people attend each year. The Alabama Environmental Conference is a new effort, patterned after the Governor’s Safety and Health Conference, emphasizing industry-driven content, practical solutions, and opportunities for networking with individuals, agencies, and employers with similar concerns.

Environmental Accreditation – UA SafeState is the Alabama state agency for accrediting lead-based paint and asbestos. Individuals and organizations offering abatement services for asbestos and abatement and renovation services for lead-based paint or providing training to others who provide abatement services in Alabama must meet State requirements and be certified through UA SafeState. [55] In 2012–2013, UA SafeState accredited 2,000 providers in the State. [56]

Bryant Conference Center. The Bryant Conference Center [57] provides meeting facilities and services. [58] Activities range from professional training to large conferences, up to 1,000 people. In 2012–2013, more than 84,000 people came to the Bryant Conference Center for a wide range of activities, including meetings of local and regional organizations, conferences and professional training, civic events, and social and fraternal activities. [59] The Center distinguishes itself by providing state-of-the-art technology and services that support quality instruction.

Organizations that use the Bryant Conference Center come from diverse sectors, including the University itself, state and local governments and civic organizations, corporations, social groups, military groups, educational groups, religious groups, fraternal groups, and associations. The Bryant Conference Center is a linchpin for community and professional groups, a gathering place for events that support the University mission of “dissemination” with an “emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research, and service.”

Other Outreach and Service Activities

Academic colleges and schools, administrative units, and student organizations also are active participants in outreach and service activities that serve the state, community, and region. A comprehensive website [60] centralizes information about service programs and demonstrates the breadth of campus units supporting the University’s mission through outreach and service. Programs are grouped in three categories: K–12 Outreach, Community Outreach, and Economic Outreach. Below are specific examples in each category, demonstrating how these activities support institutional mission.

Community Outreach and Service. The University actively engages in activities that address community needs through the following programs and services:
- The Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program [61] is the federally mandated, statewide protection and advocacy system for the state of Alabama. ADAP’s role is to provide quality legal services to Alabamians with disabilities and to expand understanding of disability rights. ADAP partners with state and federal health and human service agencies, voluntary membership organizations that pursue advocacy and protection priorities and organizations that provide client assistance. Specifically, ADAP provides education and training, technical assistance, individual and group advocacy, systemic issues and information sharing. Services are statewide and supported by federal grants. ADAP, the only such program housed in a higher education institution, is under the supervision of the Office for Academic Affairs. [62] ADAP priorities advance the “intellectual and social condition” of Alabamians with disabilities by protecting, promoting and expanding their rights, furthering UA’s mission through quality service programs, and knowledge dissemination.

- The Center for Sustainable Service and Volunteerism (formerly known as the Community Service Center) [63] engages students in service projects in West Alabama and beyond. The mission of the Community Service Center is based on the idea that service is transformative. By producing graduates who are committed and engaged citizens who understand their role in creating a better society, the Community Service Center connects with the University mission of improving the “intellectual and social condition of Alabama, the nation, and the world.” Current projects have immediate impact on community settings; the experience itself has lasting influence on students who worked the projects. As an example, Al’s Pals, a mentoring program for at-risk youth in the Tuscaloosa community, involves UA students who serve as mentors to elementary school students. They help with homework, reinforce reading and math skills, and assist during enrichment and recreational activities. Students lead the focus areas of the Center and are directly responsible for coordinating events, promoting awareness and soliciting volunteers for their focus area or event.

- Alabama Public Radio [64] is a network of public radio stations broadcasting classical music, folk music, jazz, and nostalgic music programs, as well as news and feature programs from the National Public Radio, Public Radio International, and American Public Media networks. APR is housed in the College of Communication and Information Sciences. When it began in 1982, APR aimed to provide service to the immediate west Alabama area, but later expanded to other parts of the state that similarly lacked access to public radio. Today APR reaches nearly two-thirds of the state, offering public radio programming, plus locally produced news and music programming, supporting the largest public radio news department in Alabama. Alabama Public Radio aims specifically to provide regular, ongoing coverage of stories of special interest to minority and other diverse audiences. Examples of stories include military education, civil rights, small business development, food security, criminal justice, access for people with disabilities, Jewish culture in Alabama, racial equality, ongoing recovery efforts from the 2011 storms, and Hispanic culture in Alabama. [65]

- Community Music School [66] provides private and group instruction to more than 600 students of all ages and abilities. The Community has 40-plus faculty made up of University music faculty, selected graduate and undergraduate students, and students and professionals from the community who, between them, teach every instrument found in a traditional Western orchestra and musical theater. [67] Programs include a Kindermusik® program for ages birth to seven years, summer camps for children, an adult strings weekend, and the Tuscaloosa Youth orchestra. The Community Music School supports the University mission by dissemination of knowledge, which advances the “intellectual and social condition” of the west Alabama community.

Economic Outreach. The University actively engages in activities that address, build, and sustain economic capacity through the following programs and services.
• The Center for Business and Economic Research [68] in the Culverhouse College of Commerce conducts applied economic and business research, provides active economic forecasting, and develops publications to support economic development throughout Alabama. The Center responds to requests for information from state and local government agencies, chambers of commerce, public and private researchers, industrial organizations, news media, and private citizens. The Center houses the Alabama State Data Center, serving as the state’s lead agency in the U.S. Bureau of the Census State Data Center Program. The Center also publishes the quarterly Alabama Business Confidence Index, a forecast of how Alabama business executives think the nation, the state, and individual industries will perform during the upcoming quarter. A total of 248 business executives from across Alabama participated in the third quarter of 2014, the 51st consecutive quarterly issue. Each year for the last 27 years, the Center has sponsored an annual Economic Outlook Conference to review trends and discuss prospects for the future. Partners include the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama International Trade Center, and Alabama’s largest and most influential corporations. [69] Funded projects for the Center totaled $1,004,893 from May 2013 to April 2014, including $300,000 to fund a two-year follow-up study to analyze the state of the Alabama workforce. The workforce study presents workforce reports, including skills gap analysis, for each workforce development region and the state as a whole. By providing objective data and analysis, the Center advances the University’s mission of knowledge dissemination that has a positive impact on the economic condition of the State and the wellbeing of citizens.

• The University Center for Economic Development [70] provides technical assistance and applied research to increase economic sustainability in local communities in the state, particularly rural and economically distressed areas. The Center’s approach to economic development emphasizes community development processes. Programs are structured to build capacity at the local level by increasing the elected and civic leadership base, increasing tourism, recreation and entertainment, and providing for a well-educated and prepared workforce. In a typical year, the Center works with 25 rural communities or counties. UCED is the access point to University technical resources and the specializations of faculty and professional staff of the University, including other service programs described in this standard. [71] Beyond University services, the Center partners with a variety of regional planning commissions, state and federal organizations, other universities in the State, and private sector professionals to support each community’s request. UACED also provides information guides and toolkits to be used by communities as self-help tools.

• The International Trade Center, [72] established in 1979, provides export research, technical trade consulting services, training programs, and trade financing solutions to Alabama’s small business community. Partners include chambers of commerce, industrial and economic development authorities, the Alabama Small Business Development Center Network, and Alabama Department of Commerce-International Trade Division. Over the last three fiscal years (2011–2013), the Trade Center helped customers secure new export sales of $40 million and $15.65 million in export financing to support overseas sales activities. During this three-year period, the average number of customers assisted per year was 224 small firms located in 53 of Alabama’s 67 counties. [73] By working directly with Alabama businesses that seek to expand into global markets and by linking with other support organizations in the State with complementary aims, the Trade Center connects to the University mission to “advance the intellectual and social condition of the State.”

• The Office of Archaeological Research (OAR) [74] provides archaeological and historical consulting services to assist government agencies and private industry in meeting obligations related to historic preservation law. OAR is one of the oldest and largest cultural resources research centers in the Southeast with a history that stems from the University’s earliest contributions to the study of the region’s heritage. It includes a repository for numerous federal agencies from across the country as well as state and private collections curated for future research. OAR also serves as the State’s archive for cultural resources reports and maintains both the Alabama Archaeological Site File and the Cultural Resources Surveyed Space Database; computerized inventories of all recorded historic and prehistoric sites and surveys conducted in the state. Since its inception, OAR has completed more than 3,000 projects with budgets ranging from a few hundred to well over a million dollars throughout the southeastern United States, Mexico, and the Caribbean. OAR advances the “intellectual and social condition of the State” by facilitating preservation of non-renewable cultural resources through heritage management strategies, research, and education for governmental, academic, and private organizations. Clients include federal, Native American tribe, state, and local governmental agencies, as well as private and commercial entities. The Office also provides materials that introduce archaeology into K–12 classrooms, including student materials, a teacher’s guide, and an interactive website.
Established in 1986, the Alabama Productivity Center [75] advances the University mission by using research and educational resources to stimulate economic development within the state of Alabama. Working together, faculty, full-time professional field staff, and graduate students provide technical assistance, problem-solving projects, and training. In 2013, the Productivity Center completed 48 projects resulting in $2.1 million in annual savings and $300,000 in new annual revenue. [76] The Productivity Center, housed in the Culverhouse College of Commerce, is also part of the Alabama Technology Network, Alabama’s affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

K–12 Activities. K–12 activities and programs range from local efforts in Tuscaloosa and West Alabama to statewide programs.

- CrossingPoints Transition Program is a collaborative transition program between the Special Education and Multiple Abilities Department in the College of Education, the Tuscaloosa City Schools, and Tuscaloosa County Schools. CrossingPoints provides transition education to young adults, ages 18 to 21 years, with intellectual disabilities. Students spend up to four hours a day, four days a week in real job settings on the campus, while receiving instruction in employment-related and independent living skills. The overarching purpose of CPP is to prepare program participants for the achievement of desired post-school/adult outcomes in the areas of employment, community access and participation, independent living, and participation in leisure and recreation within inclusive community sites. The CrossingPoints Transition model also helps employers better understand the realities and advantages of hiring people with disabilities. [77] Currently CrossingPoints has approximately 65% employment rate of program graduates, significantly above the national average of 17.8% reported by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Statistics in 2012.

- Established by the Alabama legislature in 1984–85, The UA/UWA In-Service Education Center [78] is one of 11 regional centers in the State whose purpose is to provide professional development to the K–12 educators in public school districts in its designated geographic region. The University of West Alabama was named as a cooperating partner. In addition to offering professional development programs and activities for the 120+ schools in its region, The UA In-Service Center administers several major projects, including the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative, Alabama Science in Motion, and Technology in Motion. The Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative is an initiative to improve math and science education. Science in Motion provides high-tech laboratory experiences for students and professional development for teachers. Technology in Motion enables teachers not yet using technology in their classes to learn basic skills needed to deliver technology-augmented instruction in classrooms.

- In support of UA’s mission and its College of Education, the Education Policy Center [79] works to improve the quality of life for all Alabamians through expanding access, strengthening equity, and advancing economic and community development. The Center disseminates the results of its research in many ways, through reports, articles, books and monographs, public presentations, conferences and seminars, and through the Superintendents Academy. The Academy is a partnership between the Education Policy Center and the Alabama State Department of Education and is building a diverse community of educators ready to become chief school officers and superintendents. Data show that over the 10 years of the program, Academy cohorts have included 50% minorities, and over 50% of both whites and blacks are women.

- The Alabama Scholastic Press Association [80] is housed in the College of Communication and Information Sciences and seeks to empower K–12 newspaper, yearbook, newsmagazine, literary magazine, and broadcast staffs throughout the state. Activities include a summer journalism camp, an annual convention, journalism workshops in cities across the state, annual critiques of publications and broadcasts, contests and competitions, and an awards program. In addition to working with 1,500 students each year, the Association provides teacher training. ASPA participates in JEA’s Mentoring program, pairing new Alabama media teachers with retired teachers. The director of the Alabama Scholastic Press Association also directs the National Elementary Schools Press Association, which helps elementary and middle schools start new and improve existing class and school newspapers.

Supporting Documents
1. Mission and Vision (PDF)
3. National Outreach Scholarship Conference 2012 Program Cover (PDF)
4. JCES, Vol. 6, No. 1 (PDF)
5. Carnegie Classifications (PDF)
6. Division of Community Affairs (PDF)
7. News Release June 15, 2004 (PDF)
8. Community Affairs Highlights: CCBP (PDF)
9. Community Affairs Organization Chart (PDF)
10. CCBP Mission and Vision (PDF)
11. Parent Teacher Leadership Academy (PDF)
12. Saving Lives (PDF)
13. Saving Lives Initiative (PDF)
14. SCOPE (PDF)
15. Swim to the Top Flyer (PDF)
16. Crossroads Community Center (PDF)
17. The Interfaith Initiative (PDF)
18. Serve Better Together (PDF)
19. Community Conversations (PDF)
20. Realizing the Dream (PDF)
21. Tuscaloosa Consortium for Higher Education (PDF)
22. Reaffirmation of Agreement – UA and Stillman (PDF)
23. Communication and Research (PDF)
24. Journal of CES (PDF)
25. College of Continuing Studies (PDF)
26. CCS Organizational Chart (PDF)
27. Online Degrees and Distance Programs (PDF)
28. ACCESS Distance Learning (PDF)
29. CCS Five-Year Enrollment – ACCESS Highlights (PDF)
30. Advanced Placement (PDF)
31. CCS Five-Year Enrollment – AP Highlights (PDF)
32. Bama At Work (PDF)
33. Discover New Career Success (PDF)
34. Certificate Programs (PDF)
35. Online Programs (PDF)
36. Conferences (PDF)
37. Custom Training, Projects, and Services (PDF)
38. Developing Content (PDF)
39. CCS Five-Year Enrollment-Bama At Work (PDF)
40. Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (PDF)
41. Bernard Osher Foundation (PDF)
42. Osher LLI Chapters (PDF)
43. Chief School Financial Officer Certificate Program (PDF)
44. State of Alabama Insurance Testing (PDF)
45. CCS Five-Year Enrollment – Insurance Highlights (PDF)
46. UA SafeState (PDF)
47. Environmental Consultation (PDF)
48. Safety and Health Consultation (PDF)
49. CCS Five-Year Enrollment – Consultation Highlights (PDF)
50. Education and Training (PDF)
51. CCS Five-Year Enrollment – Environmental Highlights (PDF)
52. OSHA Training Institute (PDF)
53. Governor’s Safety and Health Conference (PDF)
54. Environmental Conference (PDF)
55. Environmental Accreditation (PDF)
56. SafeState Accreditation (PDF)
57. Bryant Conference Center (PDF)
58. Bryant Meeting Facilities (PDF)
59. CCS Five-Year Enrollment – Bryant Center Highlights (PDF)
60. Outreach Webpage (PDF)
61. Disabilities Advocacy Program (PDF)
62. ADAP History (PDF)
63. Community Service Center (PDF)
64. Alabama Public Radio (PDF)
65. APR Annual Survey (PDF)
66. Community Music School (PDF)
67. Community Music in the News (PDF)
68. Center for Business and Economic Research (PDF)
69. CBER Annual Report 2014 (PDF)
70. Economic Development (PDF)
71. Economic Development Services (PDF)
72. Alabama International Trade Center (PDF)
73. Alabama International Trade Center Annual Report 2013 (PDF)
74. The Office of Archaeological Research (PDF)
75. Alabama Productivity Center (PDF)
76. APC Advisory Board Report (PDF)
77. School Life at Crossing Points (PDF)
78. UA-UWA Regional In-Service Center (PDF)
79. Education Policy Center (PDF)
80. Alabama Scholastic (PDF)