

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Unit Strategic Plan and Annual Report -- Academic Year 2009-10

\_\_\_\_ Academic Unit    \_\_\_\_ Administrative/Support Unit

**I. Unit Title:                    Delta Center for Culture and Learning**

**School/College or University Division: Academic Affairs**

**Unit Administrator:** Dr. Luther Brown

**Program Mission:** To promote the understanding of the history and culture of the Mississippi Delta and its significance to the rest of the world.

**II. Educational Program Learning Outcome Assessment Plan (Academics)/User Outcomes Assessment Plan (Non-Academics)**  
Learner Outcomes identified for the major. For User Outcomes (primarily non-academic units) use TABLE II.

<b>TABLE I – Student Learning Outcomes</b>			
<b>A. Learner Outcome</b> <i>What should a graduate in the _____ (fill in major here) _____ major know, value, or be able to do at graduation and beyond?</i>	<b>B. Data Collection &amp; Analysis</b> <i>1. What assessment tools and/or methods will you use to determine achievement of the learning outcome? 2. Describe how the data from these tools and/or methods will be/have been collected. 3. Explain the procedure to analyze the data.</i>	<b>C. Results of Evaluation</b> <i>What were the findings of the analysis?</i>	<b>D. Use of Evaluation Results</b> <i>1. List any specific recommendations. 2. Describe changes in curriculum, courses, or procedures that are proposed or were made/ are being made as a result of the program learning outcome assessment process.</i>
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**TABLE II – User Outcomes**

<p align="center"><b>A. User Outcomes</b> <i>What practices, procedures, and efficiencies does the unit use to measure, track, and improve unit processes?</i></p>	<p align="center"><b>B. Data Collection &amp; Analysis</b> <i>1. What assessment tools and/or methods will you use to determine if user outcomes are met? 2. Describe how the data from these tools and/or methods will be/have been collected. 3.Explain the procedure to analyze the data.</i></p>	<p align="center"><b>C. Results of Evaluation</b> <i>What were the findings of the analysis?</i></p>	<p align="center"><b>D. Use of Evaluation Results</b> <i>1.List any specific recommendations. 2. Describe changes or procedures that are proposed or were made/ are being made as a result of the user outcome assessment process.</i></p>
<p>Grant renewals, Legislative support, evaluation questionnaires, portfolios</p>	<p>Many of our user outcomes are measured in terms of dollars received in support of the Center’s activities. We use questionnaires and evaluation forms in support of our requests for funding.</p>	<p>We are maintaining our budget despite the elimination of all of our salary lines by the university.</p>	<p>We have lost our service learning initiatives and our after school programs and summer programs for youth. We are now working more directly with tourism initiatives and grant funded workshops.</p>

**III. Goals**

**-- For the Current Year**

A. Goal # 1: Our NEH funded workshops, Levee Board workshops and Tishomingo workshops will be successful.

1. Institutional Goal which was supported by this goal:

SP Goal #   2   or QEP Goal #   1  : **SP 2:** Students will enroll in greater numbers and a larger percentage will persist to graduation. QEP 1. Delta State University will enhance student engagement through increased student-student interaction and faculty-student interaction. SP Goal #   4,5   or QEP Goal #   : **4:** Friends of Delta State University, along with the general public, will become more aware and more supportive of the institution. **5:** The citizens of the region will benefit from increases in university outreach, service, and partnership initiatives.

NB: Our NEH workshops and Tishomingo workshop generated a total of 278 graduate credit hours during this evaluation period, and enrolled an additional 58 graduate students in DSU's programs. Our Levee Board workshops do not enroll graduate students but do generate CEU's for the university. All workshops generate considerable PR for DSU through newspaper, radio, and TV coverage.

2. Evaluation Procedure(s): Portfolios will be submitted for each of the two NEH workshops upon their completion and the Levee Board workshop. Portfolios will also be published at [www.blueshighway.org](http://www.blueshighway.org). An early measure of success is the fact that we received 402 applications for 80 positions in the NEH workshop, and actually sent some of our alternative placements to workshops in the Northeast (Boston, Washington, DC, and New England), which failed to fill their 80 positions. Another measure of success is that the US State Department chose to send us three additional participants, coming from Brazil, Bangladesh, and Turkey.

3. Actual Results of Evaluation: As of this writing, NEH is satisfied with our workshops and the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee Board has pledged continuing funding.

4. Use of Evaluation Results: We will not reapply for the NEH workshop in 2011 since the continued funding of the Center is too uncertain to guarantee that we can complete them next July, which is outside of the next fiscal year. We may offer the Levee Board workshop again this year.

B. Goal #2. The National Endowment for the Arts will fund eight Mississippi Blues Trail markers outside the state of Mississippi.

1. Institutional Goal which was supported by this goal:

SP Goal # 4,5 or QEP Goal # 4: **4:** Friends of Delta State University, along with the general public, will become more aware and more supportive of the institution. **5:** The citizens of the region will benefit from increases in university outreach, service, and partnership initiatives.

2. Evaluation Procedure(s): Dollars received. Each marker must have a locally provided match of \$6,000.

3. Actual Results of Evaluation: Seven markers have been contracted for or installed as of this writing and the eighth marker is very likely to be contracted for soon.

4. Use of Evaluation Results: We expect to reapply for additional support.

**-- For Coming Year(s)**

A. Goal # 1: The Delta Center will continue to operate in an effective manner and provide services to the University and the people of the State of Mississippi.

1. Institutional Goal which was supported by this goal: SP Goal # \_4,5\_ or QEP Goal # \_\_: **4:** Friends of Delta State University, along with the general public, will become more aware and more supportive of the institution. **5:** The citizens of the region will benefit from increases in university outreach, service, and partnership initiatives.

2. Evaluation Procedure(s): The DSU Delta Center for Culture and Learning was told in May of 2008 that all staff lines were abolished. Over the course of the next six months, it was further told that its director's salary line was reduced by 50%, and abolished as a salary line, with 50% funding to continue in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, 25% funding in the 2011-2012 fiscal year and 0% funding thereafter. This would effectively close the Delta Center. In June of 2009, the State Legislature set aside \$150,000 to continue support for the Center as a line item in the annual budget. This support was renewed in the budget for 2010-2011, and insures the continued operation of the Center through June of 2011, with the exception of our service learning programs which were closed upon the resignation of their coordinator and our failure to re-hire due to budget cuts and hiring freezes.

3. Expected Results: (i.e. improvement percentages, increase/decrease in numbers, measurable data. ) Partnership initiatives will be developed and funding will be obtained to cover the director's salary line. "Measureable data" will be interpreted as dollars raised, as well as programs implemented and products generated.

4. Anticipated/Intended Uses of Evaluation Results: The Center's staff salaries for the next fiscal year will be paid with funds mandated by the Mississippi Legislature. If further funds are not found to pay the director, the Center will probably close. Alternatively, DSU will reconsider its decision and reinstate at least part of the Center's staff.

B. Goal #2: The Delta Center will become the Phase 1 Management Entity for the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area (MDNHA)

1. Institutional Goal which was supported by this goal:

SP Goal # 4,5 or QEP Goal # 4: **4:** Friends of Delta State University, along with the general public, will become more aware and more supportive of the institution. **5:** The citizens of the region will benefit from increases in university outreach, service, and partnership initiatives.

2. Evaluation Procedure(s): This is a competitive process. If we are successful, we will be the Phase 1 Management Entity. If we are not successful, we will not be. The decision will be made by the Board of the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area Partnership.

3. Expected Results: (i.e. improvement percentages, increase/decrease in numbers, measurable data. ) We expect to be chosen as the Phase 1 Management Entity.

4. Anticipated/Intended Uses of Evaluation Results: If we are successful, funds provided by the National Park Service to the MDNHA will make up for all lost funding from Delta State. The mission of the Center will remain the same and it will remain housed at DSU, but its daily activities will become completely focused on the daily operation of the National Heritage Area and the successful development of a formal Management Plan that will move the Area from Phase 1 to Phase 2. It will also serve at the will of the MDNHA governing Board (the MDNHA Partnership, as defined in the Federal Lands Management Act of 2009). This is expected to be a three year process. After the MDNHA becomes fully operational in Phase 2, it will likely have its own free-standing operation, which may or may not remain based at DSU depending on the development of the Management Plan and the will of its governing Board.

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Institutional Goal</b>	<b>Baseline (AY 2007-08)</b>	<b>Year 1 (08-09)</b>	<b>Year 2 (09-10)</b>	<b>Year 3 (10-11)</b>	<b>Year 4 (11-12)</b>
A. to retain Legislative support	SP 4-5	\$0	\$150K	\$200K	\$200K	\$250K
B. support from the MDNHA	SP 4-5	\$0	\$0	\$50K	\$75K	\$100K

#### IV. Data and information for department:

Brief Description and/or Narrative of programmatic scope: : The Delta Center for Culture and Learning is an interdisciplinary Center that *promotes the history and culture of the Mississippi Delta and its significance to the rest of the world.* The Center staff includes:

Luther Brown, Director

Heather Kovarcik, Administrative Assistant

Lee Aylward, Program Associate for Education and Community Outreach

LaKendra Jones, Program Associate for Service Learning (through December 2009)

Teretha Lewis (VISTA/AmeriCorps) (through August 2009)

Henry Outlaw, unpaid volunteer

Comparative Data (enrollment, CHP, majors, graduation rates, etc): **Delta Center workshops generated 278 graduate credit hours during this period.**

Grants, Contracts, Partnerships, Other Accomplishments:

2010- The Mississippi Grammy Celebration, co-sponsored by Governor Haley Barbour and Hartley Peavey. \$300,000.

2009- The Mississippi Grammy Celebration, co-sponsored by Governor Haley Barbour and Hartley Peavey. \$208,669.

2009- Place as Text in the Most Southern Place on Earth. National Endowment for the Humanities. \$159,985.

Economic Development initiatives and/or impact: The Delta Center provided assistance for student groups visiting the Delta. This assistance typically involved planning itineraries and developing class curriculum. Classes stayed in the Delta between one day and two months, generally in hotels, eating meals in restaurants. During this time period, we supported classes or student research teams from the DSU College of Education, Columbia College Chicago (8), Robertson Scholars (Duke and UNC) (11), Teach for America (110), Columbus High School honors program (25), St. Louis Gear Up (25), Berklee College of Music (7), St. Louis Northwest Academy of Law (28), Harvard Law School class (15), Harvard University alternative spring break (15), Robertson Scholars alternative spring break (7), US Farm Bureau (50), University of Mississippi Delta Literary tour (20), AL/MS Sociological Society (20), Phi Theta Kappa honors society tour in Indianola (30), Boston College and Rutgers University (41 total), University of

Mississippi and U. Vermont class (40 total), University of Mississippi College of Journalism (20), Mississippi Center for Justice (60), DSU School of Nursing (45), University of Mississippi (20), Leadership Mississippi (), Sam Houston State University (12), DSU Educational Leadership (17), Brooklyn Teach for America trip (30). We also presented workshops that drew teachers to Mississippi from across the country: 7/12 through 18/09 NEH Most Southern Place on Earth workshop. 40 US participants, one State Department participant from Lesotho. 24 registered for RRS 592@ 5 semester hours. 6/20-6/26/10 NEH Most Southern Place workshop. 40 participants. 28 registered for RRS 592@ 5 semester hours. 6/3-6/6/2010 Freedom Hills Seminar (Tishomingo). 12 participants, 6 registered for RRS 592 @3 semester hours. Each of these programs is grant funded and pays faculty and staff salaries through the grant. Most workshop participants stay in local hotels. We provided educational tours and curricula for many diverse groups visiting the region. In most cases, these groups pay resource people, and in many cases, they eat in restaurants. Some also rent hotel rooms. Groups we worked with during this evaluation period include (with group size): Country Living Magazine, Betty Musselwhite (6), George Schimmel (2), Traveling Women from Oregon (20), Beverly McWilliams (3), Donatella Blues Tours (8), Tunica CVB (3), William Anderson (2), Mimi Dossett(10).

We also organized multiple musical events and stage productions, the largest of which received funding from the Mississippi Development Authority. This “Thanksgiving Day Blues Bash” employed Nellie Travis, Billy Smiley, DJ Super Jock, Jerry Fair and the Delta Blues Crew, the Pearl Street Jumpers, the Ol’ Skool Review and others.

The Delta Center continued to assist with the establishment of The Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area. The director of the Center plays a major role in the MDNHA, acting as Secretary to the Board, and also as fiscal agent and member of the Steering Committee.

The Director of the Delta Center is appointed to the Mississippi Blues Commission in its enabling legislation, and regularly attends Commission meetings and participates in Commission decision making. The Delta Center is the fiscal agent for the Commission, and will be managing a new contract with MDOT totaling \$1M, beginning in fiscal year 2010-2011.

Diversity Compliance Initiatives and Progress: LaKendra Jones resigned her position to accompany her Marine Corps husband to North Carolina, thus reducing our African American staff to zero.

Committees reporting to unit (Committee records archived in \_\_\_\_\_): DNA.

## **V. Personnel:**

Noteworthy activities and accomplishments:

## **Luther Brown**

8/21 Op Ed editorial for Cleveland Current  
8- guest column for the Delta Business Journal September issue  
8/21 Op Ed editorial for Cleveland Current  
9/11/09 Mississippi Geographic Alliance meeting and talk at the University of Mississippi  
9/18/09 Delta Dialogue (MACE) presentation on the Delta National Heritage Area  
9/28/09 Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce speech for annual banquet  
10/4/09 Talk about Blues Trail at Wright Gallery opening  
11/17- 11/18/09 recruiting visit to Duke and UNC for Robertson's Program  
11/20/09 Lunchtime presentation to the BB King Museum on heritage as an economic development tool  
11/25/09 marker unveiling in Tutwiler with Robert Plant  
11/26/09 Senator Simmons/Delta Center Blues Festival at the Cleveland Expo Center  
12/4/09 marker unveilings in Winstonville and Shelby, with presentations  
12/8/09 First meeting of the Ms Delta National Heritage Area in Vicksburg  
12/9/09 Heritage presentation to the Cleveland Rotary  
12/15/09 editorial for Delta Magazine January/February issue  
12/17/09 visit to UNA to meet with the Muscle shoals National Heritage Area staff  
1/14/10 presentation on the River to Alan Barton's class  
1/14/10 presentation on the Great Flood of 1927 to Civil Rights class (Michelle Johanson and Ben Sperry)  
1/21/10 presentation on Delta Heritage to Mark Bonta's class  
2/13/10 DSU Civil Rights class tour of Mound Bayou  
2/16/10 MDNHA meeting with Congressman Thompson at MVSU  
2/17/10 MDA interview with North Star Tours consulting group  
2/18/10 AL/MS Sociological Society night at Po' Monkey's Lounge (20 people)  
2/19/10 AL/MS Sociological Society presentation on the Mississippi Blues Trail  
3/9/10- Heritage presentation to Greenville Kiwanis  
3/23/10- speech on the Mississippi Blues Trail to the MDOT awards luncheon  
4/7/10- Archives and History presentation on the Flood of 1927 (History is Lunch series)  
4/14/10- Cleveland Women's Club presentation on heritage  
4/17/10- presentation to the Colonial Dames Society on heritage  
5/3/10- Docent training at the B.B. King Museum  
5/6/10- Steering Committee of the MDNHA retreat  
5/7/10- MDA Railroad tourism event with Muddy Water's two sons

5/27/10- Governor's Grammy Event at the Hard Rock Casino in Biloxi  
 5/28/10-Delta Council Day, introduction to Heritage film on main stage  
 6/9/10- Cleveland Rotary talk  
 6/10/1-Advisory meeting for Rolando Herts. I serve on his PhD committee through Rutgers University  
 6/14/10- Delta heritage discussion for Teach For America recruits  
 6/16/10- Presenter at Senator Willie Simmons' Delta Summit Meeting

In addition, I continued to serve as a Board member of the Mississippi Humanities Council, and serve on their Grants Committee. I was elected to the Board of the Mississippi Historical Society and serve as Chair of the Annual Program Committee. I served on their Riley Prize Committee during this evaluation period, and chose the best PhD dissertation about Mississippi. I am a Board member and Secretary of the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Are Partnership, and serve on its Steering Committee. I was elected to the Steering Committee of the Southern Literary Trail. I am a statutory member of the Mississippi Blues Commission and serve on its Beneficent Committee and Trail Committee. I am Chair of the Mississippi Blues Commission.

**Lee Aylward**

July 7- Attended Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting  
 July 8- Coordinated Community dinner for Robertson scholars  
 July 11- Took Robertson scholars for a day in Memphis  
 July 12- Coordinated opening reception at Railroad Museum in Cleveland for the NEH workshop, The Most Southern Place on Earth  
 July 13- 18- Helped coordinate and facilitate the NEH workshop The Most Southern Place on Earth  
 July 28- Helped with a Delta Heritage tour for the Thad Cochran Leadership group the College of Education at DSU  
 July 31- Attended a workshop on Procurement

August 4- Attended a Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting  
 August 13- Helped with the Sam Huston State University Heritage Class Tour  
 August 14- Participated in the Chamber of Commerce Program of Work Retreat  
 August 20- Participated in the Leadership Mississippi Delta Heritage Tour  
 August 27- Attended a City of Cleveland City Beautification Meeting at the Chamber

September 1- Attended a Chamber of commerce Meeting  
 September 16- Worked with free-lance writer out of Atlanta who is working on a book on Delta dining  
 September 17- Attended a grants workshop on interdisciplinary travel

September 23- Attended ground breaking for new residence hall

October 6- Attended a Chamber of Commerce Board meeting

October 9- Participated in the School of Nursing Delta Heritage tour

October 17- Met the MS Center for Justice Delta Heritage tour

October 23- Led a Delta Heritage tour for St. Andrew's Episcopal School

October 24- Participated in a National Endowment for the Humanities program in Indianola

October 29- Attended a workshop on Blackboard

November 3- Attended a Chamber of Commerce Board meeting

January 6- Attended Legislative Luncheon in Jackson

January 11- Delta Heritage tour for Rutgers and Boston College

January 12- Attended Chamber of Commerce Board meeting

February 2- Attended Chamber of Commerce Board meeting

February 17- Delta Heritage tour for NorthStar

February 28- March 2- Attended Governor's Conference on Tourism

March 6- Conducted Delta Heritage tour for Farm Bureau Young Farmers Conference

March 12- Participated in Delta Heritage tour for Robertson Scholars

March 13- Met with USM Alternative Spring Break class

March 15- Toured Spring Break class from Harvard with a Delta Heritage tour

March 16- Toured law students from Harvard with a Delta Heritage tour

March 18- Met with tourism consulting firm

March 24- Helped with a Delta Heritage tour for Northwest Academy of Law in St. Louis

April 1, 2- Helped with Delta Heritage tour from Switzerland

April 5- Toured Charity Ball winners of silent auction

April 6- Chamber of Commerce meeting

April 10- Helped with a Delta Heritage tour for Capital City Consulting, a group from Oregon

April 16- Helped with a Delta Heritage tour for Berkley School of Music, Boston

June 1- Attended the board meeting of the Chamber of Commerce  
June 3-4- Helped organize and facilitate Yazoo Mississippi Delta Levee Board workshop  
June 12- Led Robertson Scholars from the University of North Carolina and Duke on a Delta Heritage tour of Clarksdale  
June 13- Helped with the registration of Teach for America coming into the Delta  
June 16- Participated in Senator Simmons' Delta Summit at Delta State  
June 17- Helped with Delta Heritage tour for Columbus High School AP students  
June 19- Helped lead a Delta Heritage tour for Teach for America  
June 20-26- Arranged all logistics for National Endowment for the Humanities workshop for forty teachers from all over the U.S.  
June 27- Took Robertson Scholars from the University of North Carolina and Duke on a heritage excursion to Memphis  
June 28- Participated in a Delta Heritage tour for superintendents from across Mississippi

### **Heather Kovarcik**

- Taught a Fall GST Class
- Banner Training
- Timekeeper Training
- Finished MBA, awarded diploma in December 2009.
- Awarded the Presidential Scholar's award
- Helped to prepare for all the summer 2010 Workshops.
- Managed budgets NEH Most Southern Place on Earth.
- Managing the budget for the MS Blues Trail grant, which are NEA 2, NEA 3, MDOT, NEH, NEH Cost Share, and the Operating Budget.
- Managed the day-to-day budgets in-house, our indirect and foundation funds.
- Keeping a scrapbook of press releases involving the Delta Center
- Reserving travel and processing paperwork for the many Delta Tours given thru out the year

### **LaKendra Jones**

The Lighthouse Arts & Heritage After-School Program seeks to make Cleveland youth aware of the influence their culture has on the world. Lighthouse students from D.M. Smith Middle School meet four days a week, during which time they receive arts instruction that correlates to Delta heritage lessons, tutoring, and enrichment; with these activities students are given an opportunity to interact with college student volunteers called Delta Volunteers from Delta State.

This year, students watched a mixture of movies and visited several museums. They went to Cottonlandia, where they got a chance to see art, make believe swamps, and artifacts donated to the museum. Hwy 61 Blues Museum gave students a history of the blues. They learned about musicians like Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and sat in on live blues. Later the students visited Ruleville, MS to learn about Fannie Lou Hamer. Mrs. Sibley, our tour guide, who is also a cousin of Hamer gave an oral history of her life events. Students also visited Emmitt Till landmarks and watched the story involving his death. Students went to Glendora and Money and visited the Money store where Till alleged whistled at a white lady.

The Lighthouse program ended on December 9, 2009. The Delta Center's former employee, Teretha Lewis, AmeriCorps VISTA, found employment earlier before her original VISTA term was to end.

LaKendra Jones-Elliott, Program Associate for Service Learning, gave her resignation in December, 2009 due to her moving out-of-state. Before leaving, LaKendra planned a fieldtrip for the Lighthouse students. The students, along with a couple Delta Volunteers as chaperons, made a field trip to Jackson, MS to the Smith-Robertson Museum and the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science. Students learn about different heritage sculptures, art, and antiques that existed before they were born. Students also had an opportunity to see deep sea creatures and animals from the past and present. The students finished the day with an all you can eat lunch buffet at Golden Corral. They last day of Lighthouse was a special day for the students. They voiced how they would miss the program, watched a movie, celebrated with cake and party food.

In its eighth year, the Lighthouse program will be ending, hopefully temporary. Due to budget cuts, the Delta Center could not rehire a new Program Associate for Service Learning therefore could not maintain the program.

New position(s) requested, with justification: DNA

Recommended change of status: Heather Kovarcik needs to have her position upgraded now that she has an MBA degree and has taken on bookkeeping for the new \$1M MDOT award.

## **VI. Degree Program Addition/Deletions and/or Major Curriculum Changes:**

Changes made in the past year: The Lighthouse Arts and Heritage Program, which had been so successful for the past eight years, was ended when we could no longer fill the coordinator's position (LeKendra Jones-Elliott). This resulted in ending the Delta Volunteers, a United Way Agency housed within the Lighthouse, an agency that regularly received funding in support of service activities. Since both of these entities regularly placed DSU students in service learning and volunteer positions, as well as supporting Alternative Spring Breaks, the demise of these programs seriously limits the choices available to DSU students. The coordinator of

the Lighthouse has also historically provided most of the evidence needed to have DSU added to the President's Honor Roll for Community Engagement. The future of that national recognition remains unclear.

Recommended changes for the coming year(s): The DSU Delta Center for Culture and Learning must find new sources of funding to stay in operation. One possibility is to become the Phase One Management Entity for the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area. Another possibility is that the University re-fund the Delta Center.