

Ms. Elizabeth Pierre, Chair
Board of Supervisors
University of Louisiana System

Dear Ms. Pierre:

I write to apply for the presidency of Southeastern Louisiana University (hereafter referred to as Southeastern or SLU). My interest in the position is a matter of **place**, a matter of **experience**, and a matter of **fit**.

I. A MATTER OF PLACE

Southeastern serves a student population with whom I share experiences.

I was born in Louisiana, and like many of SLU's students, I was a first-generation college student who greatly benefitted from the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS). In reviewing the data on Southeastern's student body, its academic profile matches mine from twenty plus years ago. As they are, I was blessed with a nurturing environment and a faculty and staff who were committed to seeing me reach my potential.

Having grown up in Louisiana, I experienced firsthand the transforming power of higher education in the life of a small-town kid whose parents did not possess a higher education. It has provided me a meaningful career of service at Mississippi College, Louisiana State University, and currently as the president of Southwestern Michigan College. After five plus years in Michigan, I am looking for an opportunity to return home and complete the circle.

Southeastern's academic programs are critical for regional sustainability.

Within the spectrum of institution types, the regional public university is most vital to its community. This is evidenced by the hundreds of millions of dollars in annual economic impact SLU makes on the Hammond area. The programs in education, nursing, the sciences, the business fields, human behavior, and communication are all vital to the region and beyond, both in terms of workforce development and economic development. The successful recruitment of students for these programs is critical for programmatic viability and regional sustainability. I would welcome the opportunity to foster relationships with business, industry, and the public sector to ensure that the university is at the forefront of regional discussions.

Hammond, Louisiana, is the quintessential setting for a regional public university.

Hammond serves as an important hub for commerce and culture between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. The city and the university are situated to provide a friendly and navigable setting for a master's-level university. It reminds me of Clinton, Mississippi, that I called home for nearly six years.

II. A MATTER OF EXPERIENCE

In reviewing the Desired Presidential Qualifications of the 15th President found within the Position Announcement, I find that my experience is a match for the university's needs at this critical juncture in its history. (I have included various press releases as footnotes for verification.)

Commitment to Recruiting and Retention Initiatives

Across three institutions (public, private, two- and four-year), I have served in roles directly involved in the recruitment and retention of students. For the sake of brevity, I will largely focus on the strategies we have employed at Southwestern Michigan College.

Ability to be Innovative and an Agent for Change:

When I became president of Southwestern Michigan College, we had never offered a fully online course. It was simply a modality we resisted because we have a fine residential campus. But with COVID-19 and various government mandates, we had to go online for a period of time. Early on, we set a goal to do so with high-quality and emerge from the crisis with a new revenue stream. We negotiated with our Faculty Association and incentivized faculty to complete Quality Matters training. Courses have to pass a rigorous review by both the Provost and the Distance Education Advisement Committee. With the Covid-19 Pandemic largely behind us, our online courses and programs are aiding our overall enrollment. They have healthy enrollments, and their success rates are within a point of our traditional face to face courses.¹

In addition to never having offered a single online course or program, we had not taken advantage of the Michigan Collaborative Programs Consortium. This program enables Michigan colleges to share the costs of high-demand/high-cost programs. These are largely allied health programs which tend to have significant upfront costs and expensive ongoing costs. Because of the advances in technology, a college can offer pre-requisites and clinical rotations locally, with some of the major courses offered in a remote, online, or hybrid format. Doing so not only saves an institution significant costs, it exposes students to peers and faculty at several other institutions, enhancing their learning experience and building a larger professional network. Since 2021, we have added three such programs, and now that we are a host site for one, we have preserved a faculty line while ensuring access to a workforce-critical program in three additional communities.

The increasing costs of delivering higher education require that we innovate and collaborate. In thinking about SLU, if I were to become its president, two of my first meetings would be with Chancellor Wainwright of Northshore Technical Community College and Chancellor Taylor of River Parishes Community College. The topic would be how we might support one another and our students by building healthier enrollments in our niche academic programs. Beyond those meetings, I am also interested in how other ULS member institutions might share costs and serve a broader segment of students. Business has mastered this through the proliferation of strategic partnerships. With the capable human capital, we have in higher education, we can as well.

Ability to be Entrepreneurial, Progressive, and Holistic:

As a vice president, I oversaw the creation of a new student orientation program and the re-inclusion of an educational exploratory course for all first-year students. Since I became president, we have augmented these human support systems by investing in the technology necessary to serve today's students. We have fully integrated customer relationship management and academic advising systems. After years of steady progress and navigating the Covid-19 Pandemic, the fall of 2022 was a

¹ <https://www.swmich.edu/news/smc-board-of-trustees-reviews-metrics-that-matter.html>

banner year for enrollment.² We experienced a **15%** increase in new traditional students, and we **filled our residence halls** for the first time in five years. It was also the best year for returning students in more than a decade.³ I am especially proud of our course success rate, which was at the 90th percentile among the participants in our cohort.

With orientation, our goal was an excellent and unmatched student experience among our peer institutions. The orientation program, while it has an online component, requires students and family to spend the better part of a day with us. This is critical because we know, from studying the data, that students who connect with faculty and staff early on persist. Our students, like many at Southeastern, are more likely to be first-generation students and thus it is imperative that we onboard them well. We are four years into the orientation model, and the numbers tell the story. **94%** of those who attended a new student orientation session last summer paid their fee bills by the due date and were not dropped from their courses. This enabled them to be in class on day one of the fall semester.

During our earliest strategic discussions here, a theme that emerged over and over again was the lack of intercollegiate athletics and the enrollment we were missing out on by not having sports. They were eliminated in 1997, even though we claimed ten national titles in less than thirty years. So, just as the worst part of the Covid-19 Pandemic was ending, several of our administrators and our Board of Trustees Chair traveled to peer campuses, both within and outside the state of Michigan, and met with their leadership to discuss bringing back athletics. We began with cross country in the fall of 2021, and then added four additional teams for 2022: men and women's basketball, men's wrestling, and women's volleyball. We also formed club teams: dance, bass fishing, and e-sports.

With athletics, we made the decision to invest in new facilities and hire full-time experienced coaches for the inaugural seasons a year in advance to get a head start on recruiting. This meant we had to raise a significant, if not a record, amount of money in a short period of time, and that we had to convince coaches to take a chance on us. By last January, our coaching staff was in place, including two former Big-10 champions, a former SEC runner, and two local and very successful high school head coaches. By summer's end, we had raised the necessary funds and signed more than 100 student-athletes. Their success has surpassed even our own lofty expectations. Our cross-country teams competed in the national championship in their second year, finishing in the top-20. Our women's volleyball team competed in post-season play. Our men's wrestling team won the conference title, and I accompanied them to the National Championship. Both our basketball teams competed in the post-season. Not to leave anyone out, our men's bass fishing team, which generated more than **\$50K** to pay its expenses, qualified to compete for a national championship this spring. Moreover, the student-athletes are succeeding in the classroom. Many of the teams have GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Southeastern has a rich athletic tradition. In examining the website, it appears that there is strong community and corporate support for the programs. With the right attitude and appropriate investment, athletics can change the overall trajectory of the university's enrollment. Intercollegiate

² <https://www.swmich.edu/news/smc-stabilizes-enrollment-retains-aa-rating.html>

³ <https://www.swmich.edu/news/smc-board-of-trustees-reviews-metrics-that-matter.html>

athletics is far more than those directly on the floor or field. It is the band, the dance team, the communication students, the athletic training students, and many others who have enriched experiences, too.

Strength in Philanthropy

This was a growth area for me as a new president. We took the opportunity to create the Office of Institutional Advancement, to merge the efforts of the Southwestern Michigan College Foundation and our Public Relations and Marketing functions. The staff and I took courses from Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. The strategy resulted in an increase in gifts from FY21 to FY22 by a **factor of 3.76**. More than **\$750K** was given or pledged for the campaign for re-introducing intercollegiate athletics after a 25-year hiatus. **\$650K** was dedicated toward facility renovations. The largest gift was a **\$400K** commitment from 1stSource Bank for the fieldhouse naming rights.⁴ The project was completed last summer, and it was also supported by major gifts from family foundations and local businesses. We have grown the overall number of donors the past several years by rebuilding the giving database and re-engaging with our alumni and friends.

Collegiality and Shared Decision-Making

My philosophy is that leadership must be preceded by listening and learning. Upon being named president of the college in 2019, I re-organized our committee structure to include a President's Council, composed of deans, directors, and faculty members from each of our schools. Some of the membership changes annually. This is a committee that advises me, in addition to the Cabinet. I meet with President's Council monthly, and the members serve as the primary sounding board for issues and strategies. Any member can submit an agenda item for discussion and consideration. During the height of the Covid-19 Pandemic, this body was essential in providing diverse thought on the various competing issues we were managing. The group is currently working with a third-party facilitator on the college's next strategic plan.

Regional Development and Partnerships

Since we arrived in Dowagiac in 2017, Laura, my wife, and I have become a part of the community and built strong relations between the college and the business community. Laura has served on the economic board, and is a member of the Dowagiac Area Chamber of Commerce. As a vice president, I worked with local businesses to create a "Student Perks" program to get our students to frequent the downtown district. We have hosted a number of college events downtown, including our annual charity cross country race. The efforts were recognized in 2019, when I received the "Partnership Award" on the college's behalf.⁵ I was also delighted to serve as keynote speaker for the regional chamber dinner this past fall.⁶

I am grateful that our administration has worked with local organizations and institutions to garner **\$4M** in grants for workforce development, career services for current students, and career

⁴ <https://smcroadrunners.com/general/2021-22/releases/20211202l01d6c>

⁵ <https://www.leaderpub.com/2019/11/01/greater-dowagiac-chamber-of-commerce-honors-members-at-annual-dinner/>

⁶ <https://www.swmich.edu/news/dr-joe-addresses-chamber-of-commerce-annual-meeting.html>

exploration for junior high and high school students.⁷ These efforts involved Lake Michigan College, our four local K-12 districts, and Michigan Works. They culminated in our hosting a “Futures Fair” this past fall at which business, industry, faculty, and students considered the workforce needs of tomorrow.

Commitment to the Overall Well-Being of Students

Across the three institutions, each quite different and with varying needs, I have worked with others to improve the student experience. When I was at LSU’s College of Engineering, we were the fifth-fastest growing college of engineering in the United States. Due to university-wide financial constraints, we were unable to hire additional student support staff for a population that had grown by fifty-three percent. We were also undergoing a multi-year construction project with the eleven academic departments relocated to various buildings on the LSU A&M campus. Through the implementation of rather inexpensive software we were able to streamline several services and provide them without students needing an appointment or even having to stop by the dean’s office. This eradicated wait times for seeing advisors and counselors. It also enabled us to survey students on their satisfaction with our services and set annual benchmarks for individuals and the unit. Soon, the other nine colleges and schools were following our lead and adopting our practices.

Upon arriving here as a vice president, one of my first actions was to host a series of townhall meetings in each of our residence halls. Over dinner, I listened to our students share their positive experiences and also cite areas where we could improve student life. The students wanted to be more involved and gain experience in leadership, and they wanted to have a more traditional campus life experience. We created the Council of Clubs, to give our student organizations some self-government. In preparing for our inaugural welcome week, we recruited welcome week leaders. Just before the students left for the summer, we took them off campus for an overnight Leadership Summit. The weekend was spent on teambuilding and planning for fall 2018. In 2019, when we added New Student Orientation, we recruited student orientation leaders. That summer, we offered a leadership course, titled Leadership SMC.⁸ Each week, students listened to community leaders share their experiences. They also spent a day at the Michigan State Capitol, and we wrapped up the course with a day spent with the South Bend Cubs organization. We are now completing our fifth year of this student-led campus life model. Each year, the bar has been raised in terms of quality. In addition to the other strategies I previously noted, using data we have collected over several years, we can point to the student experience enhancements as having had an impact upon our retention. I am directing a doctoral dissertation for our Executive Director of Campus Life that explores which of the strategies have been most effective.

SLU has a rich set of campus traditions upon which to build. For me, another of the first steps would be to meet with the student leaders immediately, focusing on every facet of campus to ensure a diverse perspective. Given I began my career in student affairs, I have always had an open-door policy to students. If I am fortunate enough to land at SLU, my policy will be the same. As I tell my peers, students are our most important constituency.

⁷ <https://www.moodyonthemarket.com/smc-accepts-more-than-4-million-in-grants/>

⁸ <https://www.leaderpub.com/2019/05/24/smc-seeks-to-expand-student-leadership-development/>

III. A MATTER OF FIT

I have broad experience in a variety of positions in higher education, including service, teaching, research, and leadership.

I trace my experience in higher education back to 2002, my sophomore year, when I began my first and perhaps my most rewarding job as a resident assistant in Tudor Hall at Louisiana College. The following year I was promoted to assistant hall director. Beyond LC, while earning a master's degree at Mississippi College, I was hired full-time as an assistant director for student development, overseeing student conduct, family relations, and the intramural athletic program. I completed internships in the assessment office and in the president's office. My mentors at MC pushed me toward a doctorate which I pursued at nights and on weekends at Southern Miss. I was ultimately promoted to associate dean of students at MC, before being hired as the assistant dean for academic affairs in LSU's College of Engineering. After nearly four years there, I became a vice president here at Southwestern Michigan College, overseeing the academic service units and student affairs. In late 2019, I was selected as the college's eighth president.

In addition to my administrative posts, I taught for seven years in MC's master's program in higher education administration, one course on leadership and the other on research methodologies. Though my career has largely been as a practitioner, I am proud to have published a few peer-reviewed articles and to have presented at several conferences, regionally and nationally.

I have honed the business skills to collectively and effectively lead strategic change.

The acumen required to navigate higher education is ever rising. In 2021, I confided in our board of trustees that I believed I needed to re-tool to better deal with the challenges, and for the past year I have been pursuing a master's degree in strategic management at Michigan State University. This program for active leaders has connected me with executives in government, industry, and the military.

As a president, I have successfully dealt with many of the same challenges facing SLU.

Due largely to the rapid demographic shifts and to a lesser degree the decline of public trust, higher education is a troubled sector. Much like Louisiana, the Midwest where I am currently serving is a place of rapid demographic decline. Michigan has lost one million people since the period of the Great Recession. Within our service area alone, we have seen graduating classes shrink from 200 to fewer than 100. This has had a precipitous impact upon our enrollment since the mid-2000s. But thanks to campus life initiatives, delivering higher education to hundreds of dual enrolled students, offering new in-demand programs, and expanding course and program modalities, we are beating the odds. As I mentioned previously, our mix of offerings has stabilized our enrollment and is resulting in enrollment increases. Last fall, we were up **3.3%** in overall headcount with all residence hall beds filled. This was second among all 28 Michigan public colleges. This spring, we are up **6.5%** in overall enrollment. This is the first increase in headcount of more than 5% in a regular semester since the fall of 2013. Our applications for fall 2023 are on par with last fall, and we are budgeting for a similar increase. The major concern for this fall is not having enough residence hall beds.

In spite of the novel challenges, I am proud that Southwestern Michigan College is more financially sound than when I became president. The Covid-19 Pandemic was a warning for me as a new president, and one of the first actions we took in light of how quickly we were shuttered was to

increase our budget stabilization fund by an additional **\$1M**. We reduced operational budgets during FY21 but gave directors a say in how they were administered, and we eliminated some positions (all but a few were by attrition). I was delighted when Standard and Poor's again granted us their AA Stable rating last summer, noting "stable general fund performance and solid reserves." I am grateful that we have been able to give pay raises across the board for all faculty, staff, and adjuncts in each of the past three years, totaling 2%, 3%, and 3%. We have also granted equity adjustments and bonuses on top of the raises the past two fiscal years. We have paid down scheduled debt, taken on no additional debt, and accumulated more in our building fund. It should top **\$7M** at the end of FY23. Since I became president, we have invested more than **\$4M** in building renovation projects without borrowing any money.

I am specifically interested in the Southeastern Presidency.

I am not in the market for any presidency, as I am already a college president. I have been blessed with a professional career in higher education that began in my home state. I have gained valuable experience elsewhere, and I am interested in coming back to close the circle of my career. SLU is a destination opportunity for me.

IV. CONCLUSION

I appreciate the inclusion of effective communication in the Position Announcement. I used the term "chief storyteller" when I applied for the presidency here.¹⁰ It is the best way to describe a college or university presidency. Most of my days are spent telling the story of our alumni successes, of what our students are doing, and when I am in Lansing at the Legislature, what our students need. In my first year, I attended 28 public meetings in the region. I went to tell our story, and also to listen, because part of being an effective president is understanding the institution and what it has done for so many. This has made me a more effective lobbyist, fundraiser, and recruiter.

Laura and I love serving this community. It will be hard to leave when the time comes. The student leaders come over to our house for dinners and wiffleball games (we live near the main campus and are open to living on a campus). I introduced these Midwesterners to **Louisiana-raised catfish** in 2018, and we have a fry on campus every summer. They especially love the hushpuppies. Laura is the college's founding dance team (The Ladybirds¹¹) coach, an unpaid position, but one for which she volunteers countless hours for recruiting, practice, and performances. We can count on two hands the number of arts and athletic events we have missed since we arrived here in 2017. I will always remember what Dr. Aubrey Lucas, former president of Delta State University and The University of Southern Mississippi, taught me when I studied under him at Southern Miss, "There's no substitute for the presence of the president."

⁹ <https://www.swmich.edu/news/smc-stabilizes-enrollment-retains-aa-rating.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.leaderpub.com/2019/10/01/smc-hosts-candidate-interviews-for-future-president/>

¹¹ <https://www.leaderpub.com/2021/07/08/smc-announces-laura-odenwald-as-dance-team-volunteer-coach/>

I hope to be given the opportunity to discuss this position with you to determine if you would find me a good fit for Southeastern Louisiana University at this juncture.

Sincerely,

Joseph Learned Odenwald, Ed.D.

JOSEPH LEARNED ODENWALD, Ed.D.

EDUCATION

Master of Science, Management, Strategy, and Leadership (Complete in summer 2023) Concentration in Strategic Management

Michigan State University
Eli Broad Graduate School of Management
East Lansing, Michigan

Doctor of Education, Higher Education Administration

The University of Southern Mississippi
College of Education and Psychology
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Master of Science, Higher Education Administration

Mississippi College
Graduate School
Clinton, Mississippi

Bachelor of Arts, History

Louisiana College
Pineville, Louisiana

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Indiana University
Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
The Fundraising School
Indianapolis, Indiana

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE (November 2017-Present)

President (January 2020-Present)

- Report directly to a locally-elected, non-partisan board of trustees
- Lead four vice-presidents and an executive assistant
- Manage a Michigan college with two campuses and a \$24.5M operating budget and \$3M in auxiliary and restricted funds
- Represent the college to legislators, two-year and four-year partners, alumni, donors, business and industry
- Serve as Secretary for the Southwestern Michigan College Foundation
- Listen to various constituencies and balance competing interests in the implementation of strategy

SELECTED INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES

- Navigated the COVID-19 Pandemic, with minimal disruption to our core operations
- Devised the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan
- Passed three accreditation reaffirmation processes since April 2021, including one for online programs,

a new endeavor for the college

- Lauded by the United States Department of Education as an “exemplar” for use of various COVID-19 relief dollars in a call with First Lady Jill Biden
- Revived the intercollegiate athletic program after a 25-year hiatus
- Created the Office of Institutional Advancement
- Secured \$4M+ in grant funding for direct or indirect programming
- Retained “AA Stable” credit rating from Standard and Poor’s
- Doubled the budget-stabilization fund
- Initiated the Grady Scholars Program for developing minority student leaders with sponsorship from Indiana Michigan Power/American Electric Power
- Invested in integrated systems for the recruitment and retention of students, including a CRM and Degree Works
- Named “Best College” in Michiana by *Leader Publications* (2020, 2021)
- Received “Best Campaign Growth” award from The United Way of Southwestern Michigan
- Awarded Gold and Silver designations from Collegiate Advertising for our redesigned mascot and new alumni and friends’ magazine, *The Southwester*
- Generated gifts, grants, and pledges toward the \$3.5M renovation of our existing athletic facility, including the naming rights for the 1st Source Bank Fieldhouse and strategic partnerships with Midwest Energy and Communications, Pepsi/Gatorade/Aquafina, SpectrumHealth Lakeland, and Wolverine Mutual Insurance

Vice President of Student Services (November 2017-December 2019)

- Supervised nine managers and directors
- Provided oversight for nine functional areas, including Testing, Records, First Year Experience, Academic Advising and Resource Center, Residence Life, Student Activities Center, Institutional Research, Education Talent Search, and TRIO Student Support Services
- Co-Chaired the College Life and Student Engagement/Retention Committee
- Represented the College for state and regional bodies, including the Michigan Community College Student Services Association, serving as an officer at-large

SELECTED DIVISIONAL OUTCOMES

- Devised the “Student Services Strategic Plan, 2019-2021,” which provided strategic goals, objectives, and measures for enhancing student engagement, raising rates of student retention and persistence, and promoting student development
- Rebranded service units for clearer identification with their educational purpose, Housing became Residence Life, the Student Service Center became First Year Experience, and the Career Planning Center became the Academic Advising and Resource Center
- Expanded orientation and integrated high impact practices, including the use of the College Student Inventory for student success
- Integrated Welcome Week and Winter Welcome Back Week as initial student on-boarding activities
- Initiated three opportunities for student leader engagement at various points: Orientation; Welcome Week; and Leadership SMC
- Created a student governing body, the Council of Clubs, to provide student organizations a self-governing/funding structure
- Re-integrated CAPP (Curriculum, Advising, and Program Planning) as an auditing and advising tool

- Implemented Presence software for tracking student engagement with campus organizations and departments
- Utilized social media as a strategic tool for engaging students
- Established a weekly shuttle service with Cass County to transport students downtown
- Developed “Student Perks” program with the Dowagiac Chamber of Commerce, offering 10% discounts at 20 businesses
- Partnered with the United Way of Southwest Michigan, City of Dowagiac, local Catholic Church, and Registrar of Voters on civic engagement opportunities for students (Rake a Difference, Day of Service, Rock the Boat, Voter Registration)

MID-LEVEL MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY (February 2014-November 2017)

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services

- Supervised a staff of six counselors/advisors, three administrative coordinators, a career coach, and a host of student workers
- Provided oversight for academic administration and advisement of 6,200 students enrolled in the College of Engineering and those in University College pursuing an engineering, computer science, or construction management degree
- Served on university-wide committees, including the university hearing panel, academic intervention team, lighthouse program for victims of sexual violence, and the counsel of associate and assistant deans
- Decided appeals for students seeking to retake a failed course, looking for recourse for an academic drop, or asking for a retroactive resignation due to some medical and/or significant personal issue
- Developed, coordinated, and revised memorandums of understanding and articulation agreements
- Coordinated two graduations per year
- Attended recruiting events to promote student services
- Met with prospective students and provided information on majors and opportunities available in the College of Engineering
- Advised the College Council (SGA)

SELECTED DIVISIONAL OUTCOMES

- Advised and registered the largest number of freshmen and transfer students (1,700) in the history of the College of Engineering
- Integrated an online appointment scheduler, enabling students to make appointments with counselors at their convenience while reducing wait times
- Revised the senior check-out process to be more manageable for staff and students
- Advocated for an additional counselor/advisor to assist with student appointments
- Coordinated the development of nine articulation agreements and memorandums of understanding within a year, providing transfer student pathways for two- and four-year colleges
- Assisted in the development of curriculum for engineering programs in Jakarta, Indonesia
- Worked with various university personnel, including the registrar’s office, admissions, and information technology, to accommodate students taking courses in Jakarta, Indonesia
- Partnered with external relations office to develop a communication plan for the relocation of student services, as well as promotion of expanded services

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE (June 2008-February 2014)

Associate Dean of Students and Director of Student Life (May 2012-February 2014)

- Supervised four directors, six professional resident directors, and a host of graduate assistants, resident assistants, and student workers
- Provided intermediate oversight of housing/residence life, career services, student conduct, student activities, and intramural sports
- Developed and monitored a budget for the various areas, with insight from the directors
- Advised the Student Government Association
- Served as the College's Chief Judicial Officer
- Chaired the Student Issues Team (SIT)

SELECTED DIVISIONAL OUTCOMES

- Integrated an online housing portal, StarRez, enabling 1,650 students to select their residence hall room and roommate
- Authored the Title IX policy and process for students to report incidents of sexual violence
- Achieved collaboration between internal student life departments (career services, residence life, intramural sports, and student activities) and external student service departments (campus ministries, counseling services, student success, and athletics) on calendar and programming
- Restructured student life office, promoting assistant directors of functional areas to directors
- Reconfigured residence life organizational chart to increase professional responsibility/compensation and include graduate assistants pursuing degrees in counseling or student affairs administration
- Improved relations between social student organizations and student affairs administration

Assistant Director of Student Life for Student Development (June 2008-May 2012)

- Supervised a graduate assistant and four student workers
- Administered the student judicial process
- Communicated with senior administration, parents, law enforcement, and attorneys on matters of student conduct
- Coordinated family weekend in the fall semester with an average attendance of 350 parents
- Provided oversight for 50 non-social student organizations
- Served as the advisor for Mortar Board and Alpha Lambda Delta

SELECTED DEPARTMENTAL OUTCOMES

- Led initiative to become a smoke-free campus
- Adapted the Student Code of Conduct to include minimum/maximum sanctions, improving consistency in decisions made by hearing panels
- Developed and measured learning outcomes for the Student Life division in preparation for SACS-COC review in April 2012

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

Adjunct Faculty, Higher Education Administration Program (June 2012-December 2019)

- Taught graduate courses in educational research and higher education leadership in the master's

program

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Odenwald, J. (2022, Spring). Louisiana College: factors in the initial survival of a later denominational college. *Journal of Curriculum Studies Research*.

O'Brien, T. & Odenwald, J. (2019, Spring). Promoting the "kingdom of God:" Louisiana College and G. Earl Guinn at dawn of the culture wars, 1951-1957. *Louisiana History*, 60, 46-82.

Odenwald, J. (2012, Fall). Hermeneutical shove: The righting of the SBC seminaries. *The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate School. Synergy: A Journal for Graduate Study Research*, 3, 19-26.

REFEREED CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Steele, A. & Odenwald, J. (2021, July 27). *Unanticipated Outcomes: Social and Academic Benefits for STEM Peer Mentors*. Paper presented at the American Society of Engineering Education annual conference, virtual.

Odenwald, J. & Hayes, S. (2017, June 6). *No Room in the Inn: The Challenges of Mid-Level Managers amid Competing and Conflicting Student and Administrative Pressures*. Paper presented at the Association of Christians in Student Development annual conference, Siloam Springs, AR.

Odenwald, J. & Song, X. (2017, March 10). *G. Earl Guinn: The Reluctant Progressive President of Louisiana College*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Southern History of Education Society, Athens, GA.

Odenwald, J. (2016, March 11). *Return to Holy Hill: Louisiana College, Academic Freedom, and the Southern Baptist Convention's Conservative Resurgence*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Southern History of Education Society, Long Beach, MS.

Odenwald, J. (2009, April 16). *To Search or Not to Search?: A Pertinent Question for Residence Hall Directors*. Paper presented at the annual graduate research forum at Mississippi College, Clinton, MS.

EXTERNAL INVOLVEMENT

Dowagiac Area Rotary Club (Corporate Member)

United Way of Southwest Michigan

YMCA of Greater Michiana, 2022 Celebrity Chef Contestant with YMCA Camp Eberhardt (raised \$6,500 for summer camp registrations)

Board Member, Michigan Community College Association

Past Officer at Large, Michigan Community College Student Services Association

Past Member, Louisiana College Board of Visitors

AWARDS

Partnership Award, Dowagiac Area Chamber of Commerce (2019)

Higher Education Administration Program Alumnus of the Year, Mississippi College (2015)

Seago Award for Excellence in Religious Studies, Louisiana College (2005)

Gala Honor Court, Louisiana College (2003)

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Niles Area Campus Chemistry Lab (\$550K)

Completed August 2021

1STSource Bank Fieldhouse (\$3.5M)
Completed and Dedicated August 2022