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## UM to Debut Flagship Constellations Nov. 17 at Ford Center

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### UM to Debut Flagship Constellations Nov. 17 at Ford Center

Community invited to learn about research initiatives seeking to solve pressing issues

MOVEVBER 9, 2017 BY CHRISTINA STEUBE





OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi** will unveil a new initiative, Flagship Constellations, at 4 p.m. Nov. 17 at the **Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts**.

Multidisciplinary teams, consisting of faculty, staff and students, are being created to search for meaningful solutions to complicated issues through collaborative thinking in four areas: big

data, brain wellness, community wellbeing and disaster resilience.

The idea for the Flagship Constellations was first announced during Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter's investiture in November 2016.

"This initiative brings creative people and ideas together in fresh and unique ways to tackle grand challenges," Vitter said. "The atmosphere of innovation at UM is exceptional and aligns perfectly with the Flagship Constellations' focus on high-impact multidisciplinary research and creative achievement.

"We recognize that our goals are lofty, but as a great public international research university and the state's flagship, we have a duty and leadership responsibility to tackle the pressing issues of our time. I am eager to see the innovations and societal contributions that will result from the success of our Flagship Constellations."

Provost Noel Wilkin will introduce representatives from each constellation, who will discuss details about their teams and goals.

In each of the four constellations, researchers and creative-minded faculty, staff, students, alumni and university partners will focus on a specific area to develop different points of view and practical responses.

"Many of our current challenges are very complex and require a multidisciplinary approach that draws on a broad range of expertise," said Richard Summers, associate vice chancellor for research and professor of medicine at the **University of Mississippi Medical Center**.

"The Flagship Constellations provide a natural gravitational platform for the collaboration of a diverse group of experts across the entirety of our academic enterprise that can focus on solving a central salient problem."

These Flagship Constellations will energize the research collaborations that will be occurring across all UM campuses, Wilkin predicted.

"This will take our institution and the research that we do to new levels and bring our intellectual creativity to bear in solving some of the world's greatest challenges," Wilkin said. "Our researchers have been creating knowledge and making discoveries that have benefitted society for a long time.

"This initiative will focus those efforts on solving some of the most pressing issues of today."

The event is free and open to all staff, students, faculty and alumni, as well as the general public. For those interested in attending the event, register at http://flagshipconstellations.olemiss.edu/.

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