



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

CANDICE SALYERS | THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

PATHWAYS AS POTENTIAL: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE-LEARNING THROUGH KINESTHETIC EMPATHY WITH MARINE LIFE MIGRATION

ABSTRACT:

This interactive workshop uses writing and simple movement practices to explore how dance can play an important role in environmental care, marine education, and community action. By engaging participants in artistic practices utilized in a service-learning course, we will gain embodied experience with the concept of kinesthetic empathy which recognizes ways in which perceiving movement—specifically marine migration pathways in the Gulf—impacts the brain's capacity for developing connections with other people and other species.

THEMATIC FOCUS:

Blockage and Clearance: Physical, infrastructural, financial, or organizational barriers or portals to community engagement.

BIO:

Candice Salyers is Associate Professor of Dance and Director of the Center for Women & Leadership at The University of Southern Mississippi. Her work explores the arts in humanitarian service, and she has created 14 service-learning courses partnering with local, national, and international partners. She has been honored with an Alma Bucovaz Award for Urban Service, a Choreographic Fellowship from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Performance Fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission, and a grant from the Barbara Deming Memorial Fund. Her publications include contributions to *Tanz, Bewegung, und Spiritualität*, *The Journal of Environmental Philosophy*, and *Journal of Performance and Mindfulness*.

Houston, TX | March 26-28, 2026