



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

XINYU MILLS | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

BUILDING A BRIDGE BETWEEN SERVICE-LEARNING AND CLASSROOM LEARNING IN A MORE TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD

ABSTRACT:

This study explores gaps between teaching a graduate service-learning course and building students' skills with cultural heritage organizations in the context of changing technology, especially with Artificial Intelligence (AI). Data are collected from a total of 32 graduate students who have enrolled in a library and information science digital preservation course in Fall 2025. Their service-learning assignments and their community partners' evaluations will be analyzed to find gaps to improve both teaching and learning.

THEMATIC FOCUS:

Shifting Foundations: Modern fundamental changes in how communities form, change, and represent themselves.

Convergence and Intersections: How increasing or decreasing hyperconnectivity can impact community engagement.

BIO:

Xinyu Mills, Associate professor and faculty member at the School of Library and Information Science, the University of Southern Mississippi, teaches one service-learning course, LIS 645 Digital Preservation. In 2024 she received the service-learning training fellowship through the University's Center for Community Engagement and turned LIS645 into an academic service-learning course.

From 2024, every fall semester, she teaches this service-learning course. Her students have chances to participate in various service-learning projects in cultural heritage and civic organizations. At the same time, she writes and presents research in service-learning.