

Public Affairs Theme suggestions for the 2016-2017 academic year are now being accepted. As is the case with this year's theme of *The Ethical Citizen: Can you make a difference?* and the 2015-2016 theme of *Building Healthy Communities: Body, mind and spirit*, the intent is to identify and adopt a theme that can permeate the campus community for the academic year. While public affairs themes generally focus on challenges in public policy or issues confronting our world, you are encouraged to submit any and all ideas. Ultimately, the theme will be developed in a collaborative manner involving representatives of the university and Springfield communities; these individuals will look for a concept that can engage and excite the campus through a broad topic and provide meaningful opportunities for learning.

The intent is for the annual public affairs theme to be selected a minimum of two years in advance so that the theme may be incorporated into SOAR materials for new students in the 2016-17 academic year. This time frame also allows for careful planning of a multitude of public affairs activities that will occur that year.

In addition to serving as the focal point of the annual Public Affairs Conference, the theme should be broad enough to be used in a wide variety of both curricular and co-curricular activities, yet focused enough to be illustrative of our public affairs components: community engagement, cultural competence, and ethical leadership.

Proposals should include a brief (1 page) description of the theme and how it would fulfill the above criteria (including specific examples of curricular and co-curricular activities that could take place). Because the Associate Provost for Student Development and Public Affairs will select a Provost Fellow to coordinate the year-long activities, and in particular, to serve as the coordinator of the 2017 Public Affairs Conference, proposals including the name(s) of potential Provost Fellows for Public Affairs are encouraged.

Send all proposals to Dr. Rachelle Darabi, Associate Provost for Student Development and Public Affairs by Friday, October 17, 5 pm. We hope to have the theme selected by December 1.