

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Board of Governors

Special Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 15, 2024 3:00 PM

BSC Boardroom or via teleconference 872-240-8988 Conference ID 211 762 209 #

A special meeting of the Board of Governors took place on Monday, July 15, 2024 for the purpose of a sole agenda item: late payment charge for non-payment of student account balances. No other items were discussed or brought forward for Board consideration and/or approval during the meeting.

The meeting began at 3:00 pm via a conference call with Chairman Carlos Haley welcoming all in attendance in person and via phone and thanking them for their participation. Roll call was taken with the following in attendance:

- Carlos Haley – present
- Dr. Rosenberg - present
- Mariann Morgan – present, via conference call
- Mike Seibert – present, via conference call
- Rod Hendricks – present
- Alison Hershewe - present
- Peter Edwards- present, via conference call

Others in attendance were Dr. Van Galen, Dr. Lisa Toms, Alicia Hughes, Becca Diskin, Faustina Abrahams, Dr. Shellie Hewitt, Linda Eis, and Jeanie Nice. Unable to participate in the meeting were T. Mark Elliott and Anita Oplotnik.

Governor Haley asked Dr. Shellie Hewitt and Linda Eis to explain the situation and how we got to the point of requesting a late payment charge. Dr. Shellie Hewitt stated the request to implement a late payment charge for non-payment of student account balances came about due to some federal transcript withholding regulations that are changing. She introduced the university's Registrar, Faustina Abrahams, to provide background information and the university's Bursar, Alicia Hughes, to provide the research we did regarding how other institutions are handling this and how that compares to what Missouri Southern is proposing.

Faustina Abrahams explained that the federal government developed a regulation requiring institutions to remove transcripts holds for students who receive Title IV aid. Our process was, if a student had an outstanding balance, we withheld their transcript until they paid in full or set up a payment plan. After several meetings at the state and federal levels, we concluded that we had to comply with the federal regulation and strengthen the way we collect outstanding balances. Alicia Hughes explained the investigation into what other schools do, and it appears a late fee may be the most appropriate action. It appears that most universities our size, within the state and across the region, have or will implement late fees. Our proposal is a \$100 one-time fee per semester for students who have not met the payment deadline (with a 10-day grace period). Becca Diskin, Executive Director of Enrollment Services, provided additional information about

what is being done to increase the likelihood of on-time payments. We plan to accelerate our collection process and will continue to reach out to students on a regular basis with monthly billing statements.

It was clarified that the \$100 late fee would be for all students with an outstanding balance, not just those with Title IV aid. The new federal requirement did not impact registration holds. Our process has not changed. Students with unpaid balances are not able to register for additional classes at MSSU, but we cannot put a hold on their transcripts.

There were questions from the Board and discussion related to charging a percentage of the unpaid balance rather than a flat fee, concerns about an increase in transfer students owing balances from other institutions, and the idea of removing the grades for the semester not paid.

Looking at Fall '23 data, there would have been 1,556 students who would have received the late payment fee. By the end of the semester, there were still around 500 students who had not paid. Adding the late fee would be an automated process through our ERP system.

This restriction only applies to those students who receive Title IV funds, which is about 75%-80% of our students. We can hold the transcripts for those students not receiving Title IV funding with an outstanding balance.

A request was made by Governor Haley for a report to see if there was an increase in the request for transcripts since the regulation went into effect on July 1st. Faustina stated that information was available and could provide it to the Board.

A motion was made by Benjiman Rosenberg and seconded by Rod Hendricks to implement a \$100 late fee for all students with an unpaid balance, with a 10-day grace period. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Van Galen thanked the Board for their consideration of the matter. He also thanked the leaders and staff who have done a great deal of research on this new federal law.

Next Board of Governors meeting is set for Friday, September 13th at 1:00 pm in the BSC Boardroom.

A motion was made by Alison Hershewe and seconded by Dr. Rosenberg to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Chair

Board Secretary