

**MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Board of Governors Minutes**  
**November 8, 2024**  
**BSC Boardroom**

The November 8, 2024, meeting of the Missouri Southern State University Board of Governors was called to order by Chairman Carlos Haley. Governors in attendance were Carlos Haley, T. Mark Elliott, Anita Oplotnik, Dr. Benjamin Rosenberg, Mariann Morgan, Alison Hershewe, Michael Seibert, Rod Hendricks and Maddox Studdard.

Others in attendance were Dr. Michael Beilfuss, Leona Belk, Rob Mallory, Dr. Brad Hodson, Dr. Lisa Toms, Dr. Dean Van Galen, Dr. Shellie Hewitt, Linda Eis, and Jeanie Nice.

Peter Edwards was not in attendance. Andrea Knoblock attended in his stead as the Attorney representative.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Haley called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and welcomed everyone. Governor Haley mentioned that the Board had received a Thank You card from New Height schools thanking the Board for the modular classrooms that we donated to the school. Governor Haley also congratulated Maddox Studdard on his recent trip to the State Capital to receive the NextGen Under 30 Missouri award which recognized his service, leadership and high potential. Governor Haley asked if there were any other announcements. None were mentioned.

**MINUTES**

Chairman Haley asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the September 13, 2024 Board meeting; none were noted.

*A motion was made by Benjamin Rosenberg and seconded by Rod Hendricks to approve minutes of the September 13, 2024 Board meeting as submitted. Motion passed unanimously. (Minutes are archived in the permanent record book).*

**President (Dr. Dean Van Galen):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Van Galen's report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

I also want to congratulate Governor Studdard on his "NextGen Under 30 Missouri" award. Maddox certainly exemplifies the best of our students—the way they develop and grow here at Missouri Southern—and is a great example on how we are fulfilling our mission...to educate and graduate knowledgeable, responsible, successful global citizens.

**Cragin Art Gallery**

We recently honored the Missouri Southern legacy of the Spiva and Cragin families by rededicating the university's art gallery, formally the Spiva Art Gallery, as the Cragin Art Gallery. The Gallery continues to host important exhibitions, ranging from local to global, and is an asset to the Joplin region. The four

## **President (continued):**

grandchildren of Mr. George A. Spiva (children of John Cragin and Joy Spiva-Cragin) supported the renaming of the Gallery and generously established a new endowment fund as part of the *Lions Forward* Campaign. Proceeds from the endowment will be used to produce and promote exhibitions and care for the Cragin Art Gallery space in perpetuity.

## **Hall of Fame Induction of 1974 Women's Basketball Team**

Also highlighted in my report is the induction of the 1974 Women's Basketball team into the MSSU Athletics Hall of Fame. This is in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's athletics at Missouri Southern. We are grateful to the 1974 team, coached by Sallie Beard, for paving the way for future opportunities for women student-athletes at Missouri Southern. The photo from the induction event in Young Gym includes members of the 1974 team along with members of our current women's basketball team. It's inspiring to think about how today's students have been impacted by the leadership and passion demonstrated 50 years ago.

## **Summary of Legislative Priorities for 2025 Session**

It's a time of transition in Jefferson City, as we look forward to Mike Kehoe's leadership as Missouri's 58<sup>th</sup> Governor, and to other changes at the executive level and in the state legislature. This includes welcoming a newly elected member of the state legislature, Cathy Jo Loy, who will be representing the 163<sup>rd</sup> House District which includes the MSSU campus. I have had the opportunity to meet with Ms. Loy and she has a strong interest in the success of Missouri Southern.

Highlighted in my report is a set of priorities for working with Governor Kehoe and legislative leaders. As you see, the CBHE has requested a 3% core increase, funding for MoExcels projects, and maintenance and repair funds. We have identified two critical projects that could be addressed if these maintenance and repair funds are provided: repair of the Criminal Justice Gym Floor, and phase 1 of the repair of the plumbing original to Robert Ellis Young Gymnasium.

In the coming days, we will be meeting with our region's legislative delegation to reinforce the CBHE request and to seek their guidance and support of specific MSSU priorities including a joint resolution on our expanded statewide mission, continued funding for the Science-to-Jobs program, and funding of facilities projects aimed to repair and modernize our campus.

## **Going Above and Beyond**

The success of our university is because of its people, and you may have noticed in my report a rather amazing photo of our Mechanical Maintenance Supervisor, Robert Frossard. He is high atop a 100 foot lift, repairing the cable system used to hoist the American flag in front of the Billingsly Student Center. Robert has worked at Missouri Southern for 30 years and is known for his helpfulness and his passion for MSSU. Thank you, Robert. It's a reminder that although we all have unique skills, the work of all of our staff and faculty matters.

## **Upcoming Board Opportunities**

Finally, it's always nice to see members of the Board of Governors on campus, engaging with our campus community. A document has been distributed to the Board listing some upcoming opportunities. I would certainly highlight the Veteran's Day event this coming Monday in the BSC Ballroom at noon, as we recognize and honor those who have served and sacrificed for our freedoms. In fact, we have approximately 130 Students (Active Duty, Veteran, Reservist, National Guard and dependents) who are utilizing VA Education Benefits this semester. Several of our faculty and staff are also veterans,

## **President (continued):**

including Associate Vice President Dr. Shellie Hewitt.

A week from this Sunday afternoon, we will host our annual international student Thanksgiving event in the Ron Richard Athletic Center. We will invite our 182 international students, who represent 38 countries, to enjoy some traditional Thanksgiving food and traditions, and interact with members of our Board and other campus leaders. It's always a fun event.

## **Executive Vice President (Dr. Brad Hodson):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Hodson's report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

### **Blunt Health Science Innovation Center**

The structural masonry is coming out of the ground as construction begins on the stair towers and elevator shafts. By our next Board meeting, we should have concrete poured and steel erection started. We are still operating on a budget of \$48.2M and a June 2026 completion date.

### **Lions Forward Campaign**

At the end of October, we had documented commitments of \$35.1M. We are targeting \$37M, leaving a \$1.9M gap to raise in the next eight months.

### **Capital Construction Projects Completed**

A list of 14 projects the Facilities Services team has completed in the first four months of the year is provided in my report. Most were completed by external vendors and contractors but certainly coordinated by our Facility Services staff.

## **Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Dr. Lisa Toms):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Toms' report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

### **Inuit Art**

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, a collection of soapstone Inuit Art, provided by Dr. Melvyn Mosher, emeritus chemistry professor, and Mrs. Donna Mosher, was donated to the campus. The collection is now on display on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Webster Hall. The collection was dedicated with several government officials from Canada present.

### **Department of Performing Arts**

On October 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Performing Arts performed School House Rock Live for over 2,100 elementary school students and community members. This was a great outreach effort to our campus and community.

### **Breast Cancer Awareness**

Academic Affairs partnered with Student Senate to host a two-day event to raise awareness for breast cancer. Students sold pink ribbon lapel pins, luminaries, and t-shirts on October 24<sup>th</sup>–25<sup>th</sup> and had “minute to win it” games for students. Over \$600 was raised, and all proceeds will be donated to

## **Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (continued):**

Hope4You, our local breast cancer support group.

### **MOSO CAPS**

The Missouri Southern Center for Advanced Professional Studies (MOSO CAPS) began. We have seen steady growth in the program from the inaugural class of 43 student associates in August 2022. This year we have 67 student associates and recognize that we will reach our target goal of 90 students within the next few years. The retention rate for our student associates who begin as Juniors and continue with us as Seniors is 93%. The retention rate is reflective of the quality program that the MOSO CAPS team has built and the experiences the student associates get from the commitment of our 180+ industry partners. Furthermore, the matriculation of MOSO CAPS students to full-time first-time freshmen is a little more than 40%.

Each fall, first year MOSO CAPS student associates are placed at four different Industry Partner locations while second year MOSO CAPS Ambassador placements can range from one to four placements depending on the strand. Our program would not be successful without our amazing local industry partners in the fields of health sciences, business, and human services.

### **Business Gateway Competition**

The Plaster School of Business hosted its annual Business Gateway Competition yesterday. Over 600 students from 32 high schools were on campus and competed. Over 150 awards were given out.

## **Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer (Ms. Linda Eis):**

### **Audit FY 2024**

Our office, along with others, have been working on the final items for the FY24 audit. Final results will be presented later in the meeting.

### **Insurance Committee**

Open enrollment for annual insurance selections was done in the month of October. Over 400 employees made their selections for the 2025 calendar year.

### **Human Resources**

Now is the time of year we begin to work on the annual employee appreciation brunch. This is a time we come together to celebrate our employees who have impressive lengths of service (anywhere between 5 to 40 years). Everything they do makes a difference and is impactful to our students.

## **Presentation of the financial statements for the period ending October 31, 2024**

### **Cash Graph:**

Ms. Eis noted the cash balance for October 31, 2024 was \$22.8M. This was an increase of \$800k over the previous year.

### **Statement of Net Position:**

**Total Assets:** \$195M

**Total Liabilities:** \$130M

**Net Position:** \$65M

## **Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer (continued):**

### **Comparative Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position (difference column):**

- **Total Operating Revenues:** \$909k increase.
- **Total Operating Expenses:** \$3.6M increase. Scholarships increased \$1M. A portion of scholarships is Pell at \$390k. Pell reflects FAFSA changes that will allow additional students and/or greater awards to students.
- **Non-Operating Revenues:** \$1.3M increase. This reflects a \$294k base increase in appropriations and Science to Jobs appropriations of \$174k.
- **Income Before Other Revenues:**  
Current Year: \$2.8M  
Prior Year: \$4.2M  
This results in a decrease from the prior year: \$1.4M.
- **Other Revenues:** Reflects an increase of \$2.9M. This is for the Health Science Innovation Center.

*A motion was made by Anita Oplotnik and seconded by Mariann Morgan to approve the October 2024 financial statements as presented. Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the financial statements for October 2024 is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

## **Assoc. VP of Admissions and Enrollment (Dr. Shellie Hewitt):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Hewitt's report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

### **Fall Recruitment Events**

Last week we hosted our final Lion Pride Visit Day for the fall semester. This semester we saw prospective students and families from

- Lawton, Grove, and Tulsa Oklahoma,
- Springdale and Bentonville Arkansas,
- Chicago, IL, St. Louis, O'Fallon,
- Kansas City, Harrisonville, Springfield MO,
- Parsons, Galena, Riverton and Lawrence KS,
- and closer to campus, Joplin, Webb City, Carl Junction, Carthage, and Seneca.

We've also seen new interest in Missouri Southern across the globe with applications coming in from Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Ethiopia, Turkey, Zimbabwe, Vietnam, Peru, and India.

### **Dual Credit Update**

We are excited to see that Missouri Southern is becoming a more popular choice for dual credit. We are adding approved instructors from various schools. This has been a key factor in the 10% enrollment growth we saw this fall.

### **University Marketing Update**

I'd like to introduce you to the newest member of our URM team. Abby Morris has accepted the role of Director of Marketing, and this is her third week on the job. Abby has a background in higher education marketing, coming to us from Cowley College in Kansas. I am looking forward to working closely with Abby and her team to tell our story and grow enrollment.

## **Assoc. VP of Admissions and Enrollment (continued):**

### **TRIO Programs**

Talent Search and Upward Bound have completed recruiting for their next cohort of students. In my report you will see these two programs are growing and providing great support to students in our communities, opening doors, and providing opportunities for students to have the knowledge and confidence to pursue a college degree after high school.

### **Enrollment Services**

All other areas under enrollment services such as Registrar, Financial Aid, Bursar, and Global Leaders are working diligently to meet the needs of our students. The Strategic Enrollment Council is working on the Strategic Enrollment Plan. We have three sub committees focusing marketing and recruitment, retention and student success, and data and technology.

### **Director of Athletics (Mr. Rob Mallory):**

*Note: Highlights of Rob's report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

### **MSSU Athletics Hall of Fame Celebrates Class of 2024**

On Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> we celebrated the Class of 2024 inductions into the Missouri Southern Athletics Hall of Fame. New members include Larry Barnes (Football), Arley Smith (Track & Field), the 2009 Women's Cross Country Team, and the 1974-75 Women's Basketball Team.

### **Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat**

Student-athletes recently completed the 16<sup>th</sup> annual "Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat" food drive campaign to benefit Souls Harbor. This year's event was very successful, bringing in 8,618 items for donation, the largest number on record for the event. The donation came at a critical time for Souls Harbor, as they announced in mid-October that they were temporarily closing their food pantry due to a lack of inventory.

### **MSSU to Host NCAA Cross Country Regional**

For the sixth consecutive year, Missouri Southern will host the NCAA Division II Central Region Men's and Women's Cross-Country Championship on campus. Races will take place tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. (Men) and 11:15 a.m. (Women). This marks the eighth time Missouri Southern has hosted this event in the 13 seasons, and we are slated to host it again in 2025. Additionally, in the most recent NCAA Championships bid cycle, MSSU was awarded the Central Region Championship again in 2027.

### **Faculty Senate President (Dr. Michael Beilfuss):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Beilfuss's report are as follows.*

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee had been discussing the possibility of adding a special transcript designation for academic integrity violations.

The Faculty Welfare Committee is assessing the tri-annual pay equity review, promotion compensation, and adjunct and overload pay.

The last thing I want to highlight from my report are examples of day-to-day activities our instructors

**Faculty Senate President (continued):**

participate in, and the interactions between students and their instructors. To share this information, I was given permission to review the nominations for the Outstanding Teacher Award. I pulled a few out and added them to my report. These comments give you an understanding of what students are going through and what they encounter on a day-to-day basis. I will continue to include student comments in future reports.

**Staff Senate President (Ms. Leona Belk):**

*Note: Highlights of Ms. Belk's report are as follows:*

We recently wrapped up our third quarter Service Champ Awards. We had a total of 18 nominations, the largest group of nominations we have seen in recent years. Winners are in the report but will be announced at our next Staff Senate meeting.

Our Staff Welfare Committee is currently looking into benefits available to faculty and staff and will be developing a report showcasing all the non-compensation benefits we receive, i.e. use of the rec. center and subscriptions at the library.

It is Angel Tree time. We have 57 tags that were submitted for the angel tree with 17 still pending Pell eligibility. We love giving back to our students through this outreach program.

**Student Representative (Mr. Maddox Studdard):**

*Note: Highlights of Mr. Studdard's report are as follows:*

Yesterday was the biggest day for the Plaster School of Business this year. That was the Business Gateway event. Business Gateway is an FBLA-style event that brings approximately 40 schools and over 600 students to MSSU for a day of friendly business competition and workshops. This year, we had multiple-choice tests, and in-person events students could attend and participate in. Professors, along with other members of the university, were judges for the events. This year, Business Gateway was led by professors Dr. Dille and Dr. Burink and the students of the Planning and Management class. I attended a Business Gateway-style event back in 2023 and it was overwhelming at first with all the students in one building and I was worried about how our product would place in the competition. But as the day went on, I had increasingly more fun, and the Business Gateway event played a huge factor in my choosing MSSU. I would like to give a ton of credit and praise to MSSU students Jessica Chairez and Parker Erickson for their efforts in recruiting students to help with the event. It wouldn't have run smoothly without their help.

Missouri Southern is incredibly grateful for student organizations like Student Senate raising over \$600 for the Hope4You Fundraiser. Hope4You is an organization that shares breast cancer awareness while raising money for treatments.

The Campus Activities Board, also known as CAB, held a Safe-Halloween event for families in the BSC. The event had activities for adults and children that were paired with prizes and candy. It was a great turnout, and the Joplin community always loves looking forward to it. These student organizations are what really help bring students and families from the Joplin area together.

## **Student Representative (continued):**

The China Immersion Trip is next week! A handful of MSSU students being led by Dr. Hodson and Dr. Goswick will be leaving the country next weekend for Shanghai and Hangzhou to experience China on a first-hand basis. Other opportunities students can take part in for a short-term study abroad trip are Italy, Turkey, and Ghana. These will be available to students in the spring of 2025.

Thanksgiving break couldn't come any sooner. All the students are excited and ready for the time off to go home and see their families, some having not been home since the start of the semester. Thank you again for this amazing fall semester and I wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

## **Board Committees:**

### **Personnel/Compensation (T. Mark Elliott, Chair):**

Committee did not meet. There is no report.

### **Academic Affairs (Mariann Morgan, Chair):**

The committee approved two course program changes: a B.S. in Agriculture Business and an undergraduate certificate in Medical Humanities.

*A motion was made by Anita Oplotnik and seconded by Micheal Seibert to approve the B.S. Agriculture Business degree. Motion passed unanimously.*

*A motion was made by Benjiman Rosenberg and seconded by Alison Hershewe to approve the undergraduate Certificate in Medical Humanities. Motion passed unanimously.*

### **Budget Audit Committee (Michael Seibert, Chair):**

There were three main topics discussed in the committee meeting: FY24 audit, extend contract with Forvis Mazars an additional year, and residence housing and meal FY26 rates.

Allison Gardner, lead contact from Forvis Mazars, presented the FY24 audit results. Before providing results Allison thanked several people and departments for their assistance in conducting the audit. An unmodified audit opinion was issued by Forvis Mazars on the financial statements. No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control over financial reporting. There were four major programs audited this year: student financial assistance, TRIO, congressional directive (HRSA) and funds spent from the State of Missouri ARPA funds. No compliance findings were discovered in these four major programs.

Governor Seibert also thanked Linda and her team for a clean audit and noted that she has had a clean audit 11 years in a row.

*A motion was made by Rod Hendricks and seconded by T. Mark Elliott to approve the FY24 audit. Motion passed unanimously.*

*A motion was made by Mariann Morgan and seconded by Alison Hershewe to approve a one-year extension of the contract with Forvis Mazars. Motion passed unanimously.*



*A motion was made by Anita Oplotnik and seconded by Mariann Morgan to approve the rate increase for resident life housing of 3% and meals of 4%. Motion passed unanimously.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

None was mentioned.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None was mentioned.

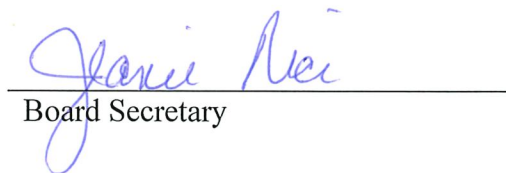
**FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The next meetings of the Board are as scheduled:

- January 10, 2025
- March 14, 2025
- June 12, 2025

*A motion was made by Benjamin Rosenberg and seconded by Michael Seibert to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.*

  
Board Chair

  
Board Secretary