

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY
Board of Governors Minutes
September 13, 2024
BSC Boardroom

The September 13, 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 and Rod Hendricks.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Haley called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and welcomed everyone. Governor Haley acknowledged the generous gift provided by David and Debra Humphreys and the continued success of their student scholars. He also introduced the new members for Faculty Senate, Dr. Michael Beilfuss and for Staff Senate, Ms. Leona Belk. 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 June 13, 2024 Board meeting and the July 15, 2024 Special Board meeting; none were noted.

A motion was made by Rod Hendricks and seconded by Michael Seibert to approve minutes of the June 13, 2024 Board meeting and July 15, 2024 Special 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.

A Great Start to the 2024-2025 Academic Year

We have seen strong student engagement on campus, including in the Southern Welcome activities as we welcomed new students. One special event pictured in my report was the Spirit Tunnel. This is a relatively new high-energy tradition in which our campus staff and faculty, and many community members, "line the path" and make some noise for new students as they exit the Newman Road tunnel and make their way to the Pep Rally in TPAC. Traditions are important to a university, and this one is one many of our graduates will remember.

In addition to beginning the fall semester, we have been reminded of the power of philanthropy and the way it impacts Missouri Southern and its students. Today we recognized the generous \$1 million gift from David and Debra Humphreys to continue the Humphreys Excellence Awards program. Last month we celebrated a \$1 million gift from Freeman Health System dedicated to construction of the Roy Blunt

President (continued):

Health Science Center. Both charitable gifts—in different ways—will positively shape the future of our university and provide educational opportunities for thousands of future MSSU students.

We are deeply grateful for this generosity, and the vote of confidence in Missouri Southern these investments represent.

Coordinating Board for Higher Education Update

I want to provide a report from this Wednesday's meeting of the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education in Jefferson City. At the meeting, the Coordinating Board voted on approval of its budget request to the Governor for Fiscal Year 2026. Three key components are:

- A 3% inflationary increase for all colleges and universities. For MSSU that would equate to \$928,133.
- \$33 million request for the MoExcels program.
- A \$27.1 million one-time investment to help address maintenance and repair needs on the campuses. If approved, this would be approximately \$394,000 for MSSU.

These requests are just a starting point for the extended budget process that will conclude in approximately eight months. The Coordinating Board also received an update on legislative efforts to develop a new performance-based funding model for higher education in Missouri. This morning, our CFO Linda Eis provided the Budget and Audit Committee with an update on those efforts, and it's important to note that any new model would be tested for a year prior to implementation, which is projected for Fiscal Year 2028.

State Appropriation for Science to Jobs Initiative

As included in my written report, we have secured state funding through the "Science to Jobs" program. This is in partnership with the Missouri Biotechnology Association, or MOBio. The legislatively directed focus of this program is to increase collaboration and workforce opportunities and industry partnerships in precision health and agricultural sciences.

Campus initiatives that will be supported with approximately \$1.2 million in these earmarked state funds include expanding the summer Science to Jobs Academies for middle and high school students. The funding will also support outreach programs with industry partners, and investments in 3D printing and other technologies to support learning, research, and innovation in precision health and agricultural sciences.

Willcoxon Scholars

One of the joys of being on our campus is seeing students engaged in an immersive learning opportunity that they likely never thought possible. As an example, the photo shown on the screen behind me is from Monday afternoon at the kickoff meeting for the first group of Willcoxon Scholars. Thanks to the generosity of Dr. Bob and Dot Willcoxon, these five students and their faculty mentors will conduct research projects in areas related to health science. They will create new knowledge, learn of the joys and challenges of research, and be mentored by some of our many outstanding faculty across the campus.

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.

Lions Forward Campaign

As was announced in the press conference, the Lions Forward Campaign has received \$34.4 million. With the goal of reaching \$37 million by the end of the current fiscal year, we need \$2.6 million to hit our goal.

Facilities

The Board previously allocated funds for two special projects: HVAC remediation of our larger cooling towers, and the hot water system in the student apartments. They both are proceeding very well. The remediation of the HVAC system for Webster is complete. We are moving on to the Spiva chiller which is the largest chiller on campus serving seven buildings. Four of the eight student apartments buildings have the hot water system completed.

The list of the improvements that were completed over the summer from the three-year improvement plan are listed in my report. The Blaine Residence Hall punch list has been completed. We are in the process of cleaning and are very close to being able to turn it over to residents.

Health Science Innovation Center Construction

Progress on the Blunt Health Science Innovation Center continues on schedule with the drilling of 81 piers. We have completed the negotiations with Crossland on the guaranteed maximum price and have a signed contract. We still have a completion target date of August 2026.

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.

Before I begin my update, I would like to introduce our newest academic dean. Dr. Crystal Lemmons began her work as Dean of the College of Health, Life Science, and Education on July 1 of this year. Dr. Lemmons is no stranger to any of us. She has been a faculty member in Biology and Environmental Health since 2001. She served as chair of that department for two different stints and served as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs from 2012-2015. Dr. Lemmons is a veterinarian by training and was in practice for several years. We are thrilled to have her on the Academic Affairs leadership team.

Second Nursing Cohort

The Missouri Southern Nursing program has received preliminary approval to offer a second cohort, beginning in January. The expansion would allow 20 additional students to be accepted each year. The Missouri State Board of Nursing will conduct an on-site visit in December, and this should be our final step in the approval process. Additionally, the May 2024 nursing graduates had a 100% pass rate on the NCLEX. I would like to thank Dr. Lisa Beals and her faculty and staff for all of their hard work.

Honors Program

For the third year in a row, the MSSU Honors Program won the award for the highest student engagement rate in the country at the annual Suitable Pathways Conference. The Honors Program accepted 38 new

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (continued):

students for this fall, with 33 as first-time freshmen. Twenty have a 4.0 GPA. Three were first in their high school class, and 10 were in the top 20%. Six are from out of state.

Literacy Summit

On Tuesday, September 17th, the Teacher Education Department will host a Literacy Summit that focuses on new methods, technologies, and training opportunities related to teaching and improving literacy. Dr. Carol Tolman will be the keynote speaker. Dr. Tolman is a nationally recognized expert and scholar on the Science of Reading. She is the co-author of LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling). Other sessions will address teaching digital literacy, teaching writing in the age of AI, and English Language Learners and literacy. This event was made possible by a generous donation by our own Dr. Benjamin Rosenberg.

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

Audit FY 2024

This is the time of year we are working hard and fast to meet the November presentation deadline. This year we had some expanded compliance reviews. Due to federal funding, additional compliance reviews that are specific and very detailed are required. We have federal dollars flowing in from the State of Missouri ARPA funding and federal HRSA dollars for the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center. Our TRIO grants are funded by federal dollars and are reviewed every two years. In addition, there are required procedures to close out the Perkins Loan Fund. This fall we are working with the Athletic Department on the NCAA agreed upon procedures that are due every three years.

Insurance Committee

We are moving towards open enrollment, which is October 16 – October 31. The Insurance Committee recommendation was approved for calendar year 2025. There are no plan design changes meaning no increase in deductible or out of pocket expense. In addition, dental plans have no cost increase while the vision plan provides for decreased rates with added benefit options.

Human Resources

Human Resources welcomes our new colleagues to our campus community. HR onboarded 66 faculty and nine staff members in the month of August.

Bookstore

Fall is an exciting time for the bookstore as students arrive on campus. The store provides students with assistance in purchasing books and supplies, issuance of their student Lion ID card and parking permit stickers. In addition, as we transition course material through digital media, the bookstore is a resource to provide assistance to both students and faculty to ensure they have the materials they need when classes begin. It's great to see all the students, parents and employees eagerly showing off their Southern pride.

Presentation of the financial statements for the period ending August 31, 2024

Cash Graph:

Ms. Eis noted the balance at the end of fiscal year 2024 was \$21.6M. This was an increase of \$1.4M over FY23. Cash balance for August 31, 2024 was \$21.7M.

Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer (continued):

Statement of Net Position:

Total Assets: \$206M

Total Liabilities: \$133M The semi-annual bond payment is due next week (\$2.5M).

Net Position: \$73M

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

- **Total Operating Revenues:** \$749k increase. A large portion is from our tuition and auxiliary revenue.
- **Total Operating Expenses:** \$402k increase. Compensation increased \$541k due to an additional bi-weekly payroll this year (timing), across-the-board raise and grant filled positions.
- **Non-Operating Revenues:** \$489k increase. Increases are from the State of Missouri to our base appropriations and additional funding from the Science to Jobs appropriations.
- **Other Revenues:** Reflects a decrease of \$7k.
- **Income Before Other Revenues:**
Current Year: \$14.4M
Prior Year: \$13.6M
This results in an increase from Prior Year: \$836k.

A motion was made by T. Mark Elliott and seconded by Mariann Morgan to approve the August 2024 financial statements as presented. Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the financial statements for August 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 Enrollment Highlights

Census reporting will begin later this evening, however as of this morning I am happy to report several highlights. New first-time freshman enrollment is up. Overall graduate enrollment is up. Dual credit has the highest enrollment numbers we've ever had, and we continue to have more high schools interested in MSSU.

International Student Highlights

This is the third consecutive semester we've seen an increase in new international student enrollment, but more importantly, most of them are degree-seeking students. Overall international student enrollment is up 25%. Many of these students come from India, Nepal, Mexico, Nigeria, Japan, Sweden and Vietnam.

Global Leaders Update

We have a new director leading the Global Leaders program, his name is Ben Cooper, and he has hit the ground running this summer. This program is one more reason why a new freshman chooses Missouri Southern. Ben has been attending many of our recruitment events and talking about the leadership focused opportunities students have here at MSSU.

Assoc. VP of Admissions and Enrollment (continued)

Enrollment Services Update

We have many initiatives taking place in enrollment services to support student success and retention. The Registrar's Office has implemented the new student educational planner that can be used by students and advisors to provide a roadmap for degree completion from a student's first semester to graduation. The implementation of the late fee has proven successful by creating a sense of urgency for students to pay their bills. We are very grateful to the Board for their support. The Financial Aid team worked tirelessly over the summer packaging federal and state aid during the rollout of the new FAFSA. We saw a small decline in FAFSA's however Financial Aid ran a texting/email campaign to connect with students to close that gap. Two of our TRIO programs are out in the high schools educating students of the importance of going to college and helping them navigate the process of selecting a school. They also bring students to Missouri Southern's campus to get a better understanding of what college is all about.

Strategic Enrollment Council (SEC)

Finally, I want to share with you that Missouri Southern has established a strategic enrollment council that is charged with monitoring all aspects of the student journey and will work closely with president's cabinet to establish a strategic enrollment plan and tackle enrollment issues.

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.

Rajindra Cambell Wins Bronze in Paris

Missouri Southern graduate Rajindra Campbell took home the bronze medal in the shot put at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. Rajindra transferred to MSSU from Cloud County Community College in 2018. He competed for the Lions during the 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 seasons, specializing in the discus thrown and shot put. He capped an outstanding career at MSSU by being named the 2021 USTFCCCA National Field Athlete of the Year for Men's Outdoor Track & Field. He entered the Paris Olympics ranked 16th in the world. He qualified for the Olympic final with a 10th place finish in the qualifying rounds. In the final, Campbell tied for the second-best throw of the event but was awarded the bronze medal based on the tiebreaker (next best attempt). Rajindra resides in Joplin and has continued to train with his MSSU coach, Brian Allen. He has continued to compete internationally following the Olympics but will be back in Joplin for Homecoming weekend and will participate in the MSSU Homecoming Parade.

50 Years of Women Athletes

The 2024-25 academic year marks the 50th anniversary of women's athletics at Missouri Southern. We will be celebrating this with a year-long series of events. The centerpiece event of this celebration will be a reunion event for all former female student-athletes and coaches January 24-25, 2025 with a special recognition ceremony at the halftime of the women's basketball game vs. Pittsburg State. Other opportunities to celebrate throughout the year include the Homecoming parade, the Athletics Hall of Fame this fall, and a number of sport-specific reunions and events.

MSSU Finishes 30th in Learfield Directors Cup

Missouri Southern placed 30th in the final Division II Learfield Directors Cup standings for the 2023-24 academic year. That Directors Cup is a ranking of all Division II institutions across the country based on competitive success in the post season. This is our second consecutive top 30 finish. There are just over 300 schools in Division II, so this puts us in the top 10%.

Director of Athletics (Mr. Rob Mallory):

Griffith Named New Head Coach - Golf

Over the summer, Taylor Griffith was announced as the new head coach of the men's and women's golf programs. Griffith is a 2010 Missouri Southern graduate and a teaching professional for the PGA of America.

Faculty Senate President (Dr. Michael Beilfuss):

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

Fall semester has kicked off rather well. We had an excellent slate of welcome back meetings. All the faculty are settling into their routines and getting to know the new students and the ones we've had before. We have a full Faculty Senate and executive committee for Faculty Senate.

We are aware of the Great College to Work For results and are looking forward to working with the administration and the rest of the faculty to improve communications and make sure everyone knows what is happening.

Finally, I am happy to say we've had no complaints about the HVAC systems. Everything appears to be up and running.

Staff Senate President (Ms. Leona Belk):

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

When I filed our report, we were down one Senator. I am happy to report that we've filled that vacancy but have another vacancy, so we are still down one Senator. The list of the full senate is included in my report.

We've received the last of our shelving units so the Swag Swap Shop should be opening next week. Any faculty or staff member who wants to grab some swag for free is welcome to come. Donations of any MSSU items are always welcome.

We asked our governance committee to review our bylaws. It has been a few years since those have been updated. There have been changes over the last couple of years for staff on campus, as well as changes of the definition of professional vs. classified staff. We are going to see if the bylaws are still meeting the needs of the university, as well as the staff on campus.

Student Representative (Mr. Maddox Studdard):

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

We've heard a lot about the international students on our campus – which is great for our campus – but I also want to share some of the ways our students are able to learn through international experiences abroad. This semester, Missouri Southern has students studying in the United Kingdom, Spain, Austria, Japan and Germany through our Semester Abroad programs. I'm especially excited about a two-week immersion trip to China coming up in November. Several Missouri Southern students, including myself, will be traveling to Hangzhou, China to experience a global superpower on a personal level. Students

Student Representative (continued):

traveling to China are currently in a course preparing them for the trip, including learning basics of the Chinese language and pronunciation. These short trips mean little or no disruption to our classes, jobs, and families, while providing a once-in-a-lifetime chance to experience Chinese culture, history, food, business, technology, and education with other MSSU students and faculty. Dr. Brad Hodson has agreed to be our faculty sponsor for the trip, and we're looking forward to his experience and his leadership on the trip. The spring semester will bring other travel abroad opportunities for our students that you will be hearing more about in the coming weeks and months. Many students have traveled abroad to study during their time at Missouri Southern, which has helped provide a broader education outside of Joplin and prepare students to be successful in their careers after graduation.

I would also like to point out some small events that have happened around campus so far and some that are upcoming:

- The Student Senate election was just last week and the senators for this year have been chosen.
- With homecoming just a month away, we are excited for Third Thursday in October. This year's theme is "Wrangle Up the Pride," so get ready to see some wild-west themed floats and activities.
- And with this semester being centered around Canada, you will see events like Canadian trivia night and Canadian film nights happening every Tuesday in the Cornell Auditorium in Plaster Hall. Both are exciting ways to learn about Canadian history and entertainment.

I want to end by thanking the faculty and the university for making these study abroad and immersion trips possible. It really is a unique experience for most.

I would also like to remind students that tutoring is available for the fall semester. Student Success Center tutors are available for face-to-face or online tutoring. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are appreciated.

Board Committees:

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

Committee did not meet. There is no report.

Academic Affairs (Mariann Morgan, Chair):

Dr. Toms shared some awards the faculty has received in the 2023-2024 academic year. The Outstanding Teacher award went to Dr. Betsy Adelizzi, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice and Dr. David Penning, Associate Professor of Biology. The Outstanding Advisor award went to Dr. Teresa Boman, Professor of Environmental Health. The Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching went to Dr. Susan Craig. Dr. Toms also shared an update on the success of the adult degree completion program. The committee also received an update on the Canadian semester, some faculty data and a Title III grant update.

Budget Audit Committee (Michael Seibert, Chair):

We were updated on the compensation impact of FLFA and minimum wage that have gone into effect. We discussed the State performance funding model which Dr. Van Galen expanded upon in his update. Finally, we reviewed the contract for Fresh Ideas dining plan including the use of an app to pay expenses.

OLD BUSINESS –

None was mentioned.

NEW BUSINESS –

None was mentioned.

Future Meeting Date:

The next meetings of the Board are as scheduled:

- November 8, 2024
- January 10, 2025
- March 14, 2025
- June 12, 2025

Closed Executive Session:

Chairwoman Haley noted that the Board needed to go into closed Executive Session pertaining to the following state statutes:

RSMo 610.021 (1) Legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys; and


RSMo 610.021 (3) Hiring, firing, disciplining, or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded.

A motion was made by Anita Oplotnik and seconded by Alison Hershewe to move to executive closed session. A roll call was made by Secretary Jeanie Nice, with each attending Board member voting in favor of the closed Executive Session.

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, a motion was duly made and passed to adjourn the meeting.



Board Chair



Board Secretary