STUDENT AFFAIRS

Vice President for Student Affairs
Darren Fullerton
417.625.9392

Mission
The Division of Student Affairs at Missouri Southern State University is committed to creating a positive campus community which values student success and life-long learning in a global society. The division provides students with a variety of programs, services, and facilities that enhance and support their academic experience and prepares them to meet life-long intellectual, ethical, personal and career challenges.

Purpose and Objectives
The division includes Admissions, Advising Counseling and Testing, Career Services,Dean of Students, Financial Aid, Food Service, International Admissions, Disability Services, Recreational Services and Wellness, Residence Life, Student Activities, Student Health Services, Student Government, Student Success Center, TRIO Programs (Project STAy, Upward Bound and Talent Search), and University Police.

With the goal of helping students to fully develop and achieve their educational goals, professional staff members are trained to support students by:

1. providing a campus climate in student residence and campus affairs that is conducive to academic achievement;
2. providing services which will assist in the self-development of all students and promote the understanding of their own purposes for being in college;
3. providing, through student government, student organizations and student activities, both an opportunity to practice democratic living, with both rights and responsibilities and a chance to learn to work effectively and cooperatively with others;
4. providing an opportunity for those individuals who are capable of profiting from higher education by providing financial assistance, when necessary, in the form of scholarships, grants, loans and employments;
5. helping each student develop a sense of individual responsibility and self-discipline;
6. interpreting college objectives, polices and rules to students and communicate student attitudes, opinions and activities to the faculty, administration and general public;
7. providing student health services that meet the emergency and temporary medical needs of all students;
8. providing an opportunity for students to gain information about the world of work and job opportunities; and
9. providing assistance and direction in matching student qualifications with job requirements.

ADVISING, COUNSELING & TESTING SERVICES (ACTS)

Kelly E. Wilson, Director
Hearnes Hall, 417.625.9324
Email: acts@mssu.edu

The primary goal of the Advising, Counseling and Testing Services (ACTS) department is to promote the student's academic and personal development. Services are provided for individuals with educational, academic, personal and social concerns. Experienced professional staff and clinical counselors provide individual counseling for academic, career and short-term personal concerns as well as offer a variety of tests, inventories and referral services. Such services are considered confidential.

Advising Services
MSSU Academic Advising Mission
The Academic Advising mission at Missouri Southern is an educational process that, by intention and design, facilitates students’ understanding of the meaning and purpose of higher education and fosters their intellectual and personal development toward academic success and lifelong learning.

Vision
At Missouri Southern State University, academic advising provides students with the opportunity to build a relationship with their adviser for the purpose of gaining assistance in planning their educational career, in learning the skills needed for academic success and in learning how to access the variety of resources and services available to them on the Missouri Southern campus.

Academic advising is an extension of teaching. Academic advising is a collaborative educational process whereby students and their advisers are partners in meeting the essential learning outcomes, facilitating student academic success and outlining the steps for achievement of the students’ personal, academic and career goals. This adviser/student partnership requires participation and involvement of both the adviser and the student as it is built over the student’s entire educational experience at Missouri Southern. Both the student and the adviser have clear responsibilities for ensuring the advising partnership is successful.
Missouri Southern State University adopts the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA, 2006) Core Values and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS, 2007).

Students with Declared Majors
Students who have declared an academic major, will be assigned to a faculty member in the department of their major. Adviser assignments for new freshman will take place during the UE 100 University Experience Class. Adviser assignments are made at the departmental level.

Undecided Students
Students who have not declared an academic major area of study will be assigned an adviser from the ACTS staff. Approximately 60 percent of the entering freshmen are undecided. At the beginning of each semester, the ACTS staff conducts group advising sessions for their undecided students. These sessions are then followed up with an individual appointment with the academic adviser to discuss an academic plan and preparation for enrollment into the next semester classes. Advisers work closely with students in exploring their educational and degree options. The responsibility for satisfying all requirements rests with the student. Advisers, faculty and administration assist in meeting this responsibility.

Career Exploring
Students who are uncertain of their major are encouraged to make an appointment with a counselor with ACTS or with the Career Services department to identify, understand and explore academic/career related concerns. Interest and personality inventories are available, as well as a career library to assist in the career decision-making process. Career and Life Planning classes are offered each semester for exploring students.

Do What You Are, a computer based career information system, is available and designed to assist students in clarifying values, assessing competencies and interests, making decisions, securing information on occupations, educational opportunities and selecting appropriate career development strategies.

Major Fair: The intent of this program is to provide a centralized opportunity for students to investigate various curricular and career options in one place at one time and allows academic departments showcase their majors and minors.

Counseling Services
Confidential, personal counseling is available to students who may be struggling with relationship issues, anxiety, stress, depression, adjustment issues, grief, trauma or problems with eating disorders or drug or alcohol abuse. Contact the ACTS department in person or by phone to set up an appointment. Clinical Counselors are licensed professionals. Referrals to additional resources may be given as appropriate.

Consultation and Referral: Clinical Counselors are available, upon request, to provide consultation to the administration, faculty, staff and students. The staff also will facilitate referrals to outside agencies and to licensed professionals as needed.

Emergency
Crisis intervention is provided to deal with situations requiring immediate attention. Call MSSU Department of Public Safety after hours—24/7 at 417-626-2222 or a police department at 911.

Non-Traditional Student Program
Students who have been out of school for several years often have unique concerns about returning to college. Workshops to ease the transition to college are offered periodically.

Prevention Outreach
Missouri Southern actively participates in the statewide coalition Partners in Prevention (PIP). PIP’s mission is to create a campus, city and state environment that supports responsible decision making in regards to alcohol by the college students who attend the public higher education institutions in the state of Missouri. PIP’s focus is on decreasing at-risk drinking by students on Missouri’s college and university campuses. Nationally recognized Missouri Partners in Prevention has been selected as a recipient of CADCA’s 2009 Got Outcomes! For more information about these efforts visit http://pip.missouri.edu/

Prevention Programming includes:
- Wellapalooza, Connect 2U (Mental Health Week), Healthy Relationship Week, Gambling Awareness, Safe Spring Break Week and Final Madness. During these events we educate students in a variety of ways and activities.

Other Services
Outreach: Special programs and workshops designed to define and/or to prevent problems and to improve the quality of college life are presented. These offerings provide information, techniques and skills relevant to specific topics of interest such as: stress management, test anxiety, self-esteem and building successful relationships.

Testing Services
Missouri Southern is a national testing center for the following examinations:

1. ACT (Placement test for college entrance)
2. Praxis Series (National Teachers Exam)
3. GED (General Education Development high school equivalency test)
4. MAT (Miller’s Analogy Test for graduate school)
5. CLEP (College Level Examinations Program)
6. Michigan Test (English Language Proficiency)
7. LSAT (Placement test for law school)

The CLEP (College Level Examination Program) is administered by appointment. The student must contact the ACTS department to register prior to the testing time/day. This program is designed to allow students to receive, upon attaining a passing grade, proficiency credit for General Education Requirements. In order to receive credit for a CLEP examination, a student must have the following qualifications:

(a) not have taken an examination over the course within the preceding six months;
(b) not have credit in a more advanced course in the same field;
(c) be working toward a degree at Missouri Southern State University;
(d) not use the examination to replace a previously earned grade.

Proctoring Tests
The ACTS department also provides proctors and a testing room for students taking correspondence courses from other accredited institutions. Appointments must be made prior to taking the test. A fee will be charged for each test administered.

TOEFL: All students whose native language is not English, who wish to transfer with 24 hours are required to have either the TOEFL or the Michigan College English Test. For more information on the TOEFL exam visit Educational Testing Services at www.ets.org.

Minimum TOEFL scores are:
- Score of 520 + for TOEFL paper based plus TOEFL writing 4.0 +
- Score of 190 + for TOEFL computer-based plus TOEFL writing 4.0 +
- Score of 88 + for TOEFL internet based plus TOEFL writing 4.0 +
The Michigan College English Test (Melicet): This exam is administered and scored on campus. A passing grade on the Michigan Test is a composite score of 75 with a minimum score of 10 in reading and 4.0 in writing. If proficiency on the Michigan Test is not achieved, the applicant must wait 60 days to retake the test. There is a fee for this test and a passport or green card is required for identification.

GED: The ACTS department also provides the GED (General Education Development) High School Equivalency Test as a service to the people of Southwest Missouri who were unable to complete their high school education. The person making an acceptable score on the GED test will receive a high school equivalency certificate from the Missouri State Department of Education. Applications for GED testing are available from the ACTS department.

Student Success Initiatives
Lion Alert
Lion Alert was developed as part of our Student Success Initiatives to provide support and interventions for students who have been identified as academically at-risk. The focus of the Lion Alert efforts are on actions taken by the student and on behalf of students early in their semester and early in their college studies. Early referral and early response allows for resources to be provided before any prolonged struggle. Referrals are made online through Missouri Southern’s Lionet portal.

Mid-Term Grades
In order to support Missouri Southern State University’s commitment to student success, mid-term grades were adopted. Midterm grades are indicators of a student’s progress. They are equally important to the potential Dean’s List student, the student on probation and the marginal student. In each case, the student’s efforts can be directed to achieve his or her goals. Midterm grades are not recorded on official student transcripts and as such, will only be changed in the event of a data entry or calculation error.

A student will be considered academically at-risk if his/her midterm grade point average (average based on that term’s midterm grades) falls below 2.0. A student at-risk (in this situation) will be encouraged, by letter, to meet with his/her faculty advisor to discuss options and implement a course of action to improve the student’s academic performance. Mid-term grades are reported to students through the university’s Lionet portal.

Path to Academic Success (PASS)
PASS is an early warning program designed to assist freshman students who are academically at-risk. The program aims at enhancing academic success through a variety of academic success services including personalized academic success plans, individual academic coaching, strategic workshops and periodic progress checks. This program is not a class; it is an academic support system.