



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

---

Board of Governors Meeting

September 16, 2020



**President's Report**  
**September 16, 2020 Board of Governors Meeting**

I begin my report by expressing gratitude to the Board of Governors for their confidence in appointing me as the university's sixth president. Missouri Southern is a special place. I believe that despite the current obstacles, by working together, our university's future is very bright.

Mary and I are also grateful for the extraordinarily warm welcome to Missouri Southern that has been extended to us by so many. We look forward to continuing to build relationships both on campus and in the community in the days and years ahead.

## COVID-19 and the Fall Semester

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact higher education in unprecedented ways. This semester, our goal has been to provide our students with a degree of in-person instruction and engagement, with extensive safety measures in place to minimize risk to students, faculty, staff, and the larger community. Over the first five weeks of the semester, we have largely been successful in achieving our goal. I am extraordinarily grateful to our faculty and staff who continue to go above and beyond to provide our students with a quality experience during this challenging time.

I especially want to acknowledge the COVID-19 Task Force, with special thanks to Vice President Darren Fullerton and Director of the Willcoxon Health Center Julie Stamps for their amazing commitment, and to Board of Governor member Bill Gipson for his engagement and support. The Task Force has grappled with many complex questions for which there are no perfect answers. Our campus is safer because of their diligent work.

The actions we have taken in response to the virus are similar to those enacted at many universities. However, we have in addition placed a strong focus on *campus culture*. To collectively create a *culture of care* that leads to wise decisions—built on a commitment to protect not only ourselves, but also those around us, and people that may be impacted by our actions that we may never meet or know. I

believe that this has made a difference, and I am very proud of the Lion community, including the many students who have stepped up and done the right thing both on and off campus.

## University Budget



I am grateful to the Board of Governors for the prudent actions taken at the July 23 board meeting to address what is a serious, but at this point a manageable, budget challenge. State appropriations and anticipated tuition revenues are approximately \$6 million less than last year. For this fiscal year, we have reduced operating budgets across campus, and many open positions will not be filled.

Also, beginning August 2020 and through May 2021, we have implemented furloughs, with those having higher salaries taking more days of furlough or the equivalent. Employees earning less than \$30,000 per year are not required to take any furlough days. These were difficult decisions, and I want to thank our Faculty Senate and Staff Senate leaders who were engaged and provided perspective that actually impacted the budget proposal presented to the Board in July.

## External Relations

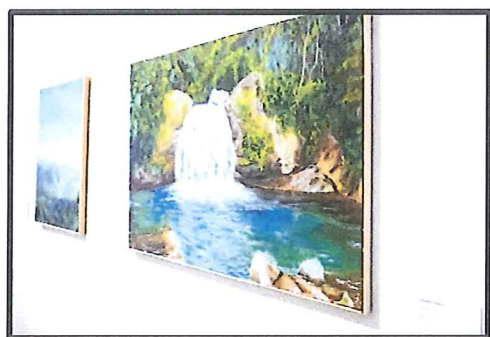


Over the past two months, I have had the opportunity to meet with Governor Parson and our legislative delegation, and have appreciated the support they have expressed for Missouri Southern. In meeting with business and community leaders, school superintendents, and educational partners, it is clear that there is strong support for Missouri Southern in the region. This includes interest in partnering to further

address the region's needs for talent and workforce. For example, internship programs across campus give our students the opportunity to put their classroom knowledge to work and gain invaluable experience, while giving potential employers a chance to guide and evaluate talent. Expanding these opportunities is one way we can continue to strengthening our bonds within the community.

The Missouri Southern Foundation also stands ready to support MSSU, and I have enjoyed a number of productive conversations with their board and leadership. They share my belief that the university must clearly identify its fundraising opportunities and priorities, and to take initial steps toward the university's first comprehensive fundraising campaign.

## Themed Semester



As Provost Carson will also mention, in support of the unique international aspect of the university's mission this fall's themed semester will focus on the Caribbean. Chad Stebbins and others have planned great opportunities—many virtual—for learning and fun. This includes the current Spiva Art Gallery exhibit of photography by Caribbean artist Nadia Huggins. Her works incorporate the stunning landscapes and sea – whether

it's the sunlight catching the waves or the silhouette of someone lost in thought while sitting cliffside above the water – in ways that capture the imagination.



## Wiss Scholarship



Last week, I had the pleasure of meeting with Floyd and Jane Wiss to surprise them with the news that an endowed scholarship has been created in their honor. Their daughter, Maria, and her husband, Peter, worked with the Foundation to establish the scholarship, which will benefit a junior or senior business major from the Four State Area. Floyd, who graduated from Joplin Junior College in 1966, and Jane owned and

managed the Thunderbird Motel on Range Line for many years. They were overwhelmed by the news of the new scholarship, which honors them and will support future Lions for generations to come.

## Looking to the Future



Communication and engagement at a university are always important, but even more so during a time of leadership transition and a global pandemic. The President's Cabinet and I will continue to host Town Hall meetings, including one this Friday morning, and I am scheduling a series of internal and external meetings to continue to learn about the university and community. Those will begin with meeting with our recently

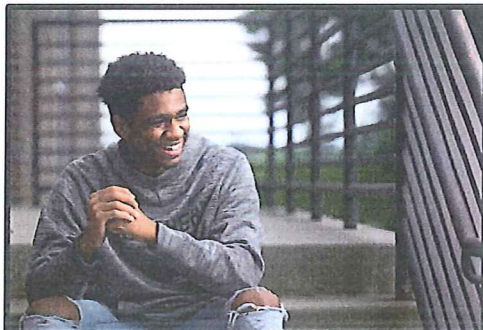
tenured faculty, and recent staff "Service Champ Award" recipients and, this evening, visiting the Women in Science Club.

During these times, there is so much "right in front of us" that it's difficult to look very far into the future. However, during this academic year, it is also important to take actions to shape our future. We must do this wisely, and do this together.

Obviously, I have much more to learn about Missouri Southern, but below are several questions — challenges, if you will – that I shared at the faculty and staff Welcome Back meeting on August 14, in areas that I believe need to be among our priorities:

- **Strategic Plan:** How can we utilize our plan as a roadmap, tracking progress, better connecting it to resource decisions, and celebrating success?
- **Student Experience and Success:** How can we build upon our commitment to the student experience, including more engagement in high-impact practices such as study abroad and undergraduate research?
- **Student Recruitment:** How can we strategically utilize scholarships? How can we identify new markets, and re-imagined or new academic areas? How can we make Missouri Southern an institution of choice for more students?
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** How can we, more than ever, be a beacon for valuing inclusion and diversity in people, and in thought, providing a welcoming campus where ALL are supported, and ALL can succeed?
- **Philanthropic Support:** How can the university clarify its fundraising priorities and work with the Missouri Southern Foundation to plan and launch a major campaign?
- **Supporting our Faculty and Staff:** Even through a challenging time in our history, how can all of us contribute to making this an even better place to invest our talents and energies?
- **Empowering U:** How can the powerful ideals of open-book management and employee engagement help address the university's most critical challenges and opportunities?

## Our Mission



Missouri Southern State University has a noble mission...to educate and graduate knowledgeable, responsible, successful global citizens. Every member of our campus community, and those Missouri Southern alumni and friends who support the university, are engaged in an endeavor that makes a



difference – we all positively impact the over 5,000 students who are part of the Lion family this fall. I am grateful for the support and engagement of the Board of Governors, and look forward to helping to achieve the great promise of Missouri Southern State University.

As always, Lions Together.

*“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.”*

*~ Nelson Mandela*

## Do What you Can

During the recent All-Employee Welcome Back meeting, I was looking for music to share during this unique time in history that would conclude the meeting on a positive note. If you Google songs that have been penned during the COVID-19 period, you’ll find that a number of artists have used music to channel our feelings of isolation during lockdown, of hope overcoming fear, and the ties that bind us together at a time when we’ve largely been apart.

For the purposes of the Welcome Back gathering, I went with “Do What You Can” – a track from Bon Jovi’s upcoming album “2020.”

During the initial days and weeks of the pandemic, Jon Bon Jovi spent time helping feed those in need at his restaurant in Red Bank, New Jersey. His wife shared an Instagram photo of him washing dishes in the kitchen, captioned “If you can’t do what you do ... do what you can.”

Jon, who – like other artists – had to cancel plans to tour the country this year, was inspired by that caption to write a song, “Do What You Can,” which he completed the following day.

The songwriter used social media to ask fans to write and share their own verse – one that embodied their own story – using the **#DoWhatYouCan** hashtag and was overwhelmed with fan-created lyrics.

*When you can't do what you do*

*You do what you can*

It's a simple message, but one that fits within the context of the challenges we all face today. This semester doesn't look like those before it. But our mission, our vision and our values remain unchanged. We will continue to educate and graduate knowledgeable, responsible, successful global citizens. We will innovate. We will offer support and empathy during a time when our students will need it more than ever. And, just as important, we will do what we can to support one another each step along the way.



# ADVANCING MSSU

Report of the Executive Vice President  
to the MSSU Board of Governors

*Wednesday, September 16, 2020*

## Admissions

- **Fall 2020 Freshmen and Transfer Students** – Staff in the Office of Admissions worked tirelessly over the summer to keep the University's new freshmen and transfer numbers in the black. On Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup> (census day), Missouri Southern reported an increase in first-time freshmen of 2% (744 students) and an increase in first-time transfer students of 3.6% (462 students). Comparing those numbers to Fall 2019, Missouri Southern is up 2.6% in first-time students. Congratulations to the entire Admissions team for a positive end to a very tough Fall 2020 admissions cycle!



- **Enrollment Across Missouri -**

The chart at right shows enrollment at Missouri's public universities on the first day of class Fall 2020. This information was collected from schools across the state who voluntarily shared their information with one another. Again, it reflects the first day of classes, not census data for the Fall semester.

|                     | NEW FRESH | NEW TRAN | CONT UNGR | CONT GRAD |
|---------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Central Missouri    | -12.8%    | -12.9%   | -8.5%     | -2.5%     |
| Missouri Southern   | +3%       | +4.3%    | -16%      | -1%       |
| Missouri State      | -4.8%     | +3.5%    | -5.2%     | +10.7%    |
| Missouri Western    |           |          |           |           |
| Northwest Missouri  | -7%       | -4%      | -4.5%     | +26%      |
| Southeast Missouri  | -0.6%     | -7.1%    | -4.8%     | -0.3%     |
| Truman              | -18%      |          |           |           |
| MU-Columbia         | -1.5%     | +12.9%   | +4.0%     | +3.8%     |
| MU-Kansas City      | -10.4%    | +2.8%    | -1.5%     | +2.2%     |
| MU-Science and Tech | -3%       | -7.7%    | -5.2%     | -5.2%     |
| MU-St. Louis        | -2.8%     | -2.5%    | -3.2%     | -0.2%     |

This snapshot shows that, on the first day of class, Missouri Southern was the only public university in the state to have an increase in new freshmen and transfer students. Continuing undergraduate students (column three) were down across the state with the exception of Mizzou. Continuing graduate students (column four) were a bright spot for institutions such as Missouri State and Northwest.

- **New Admissions Dean** – Dr. Shellie Hewitt joined Missouri Southern on September 1 as the dean of Admissions. For the last twelve years, Dr. Hewitt has worked in enrollment management at the University of Central Missouri, most recently as the Director of Graduate and International Student Services. Prior to her work in higher education, Dr. Hewitt served fourteen years in the United States Air Force. Welcome to the Lion Family, Shellie!



## Fundraising

- **Record Fundraising Year** – Fiscal Year 2020 was a record year for total giving to benefit the students and programs at Missouri Southern. For the period July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020, over \$4.8 million was raised from donors across the country. Congratulations to the Office of Development team for this great outcome in a difficult fundraising year!



- **Major Gifts** – The following gifts of \$10,000 or more were received since the last Board of Governor's meeting in June:
  - \$852,319 in pledge payments on student scholarships;
  - \$250,000 gift commitment for a new academic advising position in athletics;
  - \$65,000 pledge payment to athletics, specifically golf, baseball, and softball;
  - \$60,000 pledge payment on the football video board;
  - \$60,000 pledge payment to Reynolds Hall and the BKD Endowed Professorship;
  - \$33,000 new planned gift;
  - \$26,000 gift for Computer Information Systems;
  - \$25,000 pledge payment on the athletic academic advising center;
  - \$10,000 for Criminal Justice.
- **Scholarship Match** – At their May meeting, the Missouri Southern Foundation board committed \$200,000 to match new scholarship endowments. Donors who make a gift of at least \$25,000 for a new scholarship endowment will be matched \$10,000 from the Foundation. As of today, thirteen of the twenty matching endowment opportunities have been committed. The final seven are expected to be used quickly by new donors.

## University Relations and Marketing

- **COVID-19** – The university's response to COVID-19 has been tipping the scales in terms of hours spent by URM with media relations and internal communication. Staff in University Relations and Marketing have spent countless hours working to support the re-opening of campus with videos, signage, weekly newsletters, and a robust COVID web presence. Most notably, URM coordinated, designed, and is maintaining the *Return to Campus Guide* made available to all students, faculty, and staff.



## 🏠 MOSO Theatre: *Nevermore*

Dark and dazzling, bizarre and beautiful, *Nevermore* – The Imaginary Life and Mysterious Death of Edgar Allan Poe is a unique and wildly theatrical musical play combining haunting music, underscored verse, poetic storytelling, and stunning stagecraft to tell the fascinating and moving life story of iconic American writer Edgar Allan Poe. A literary rock star in his day, Poe struggled with tragedy and addiction, poverty and loss, yet produced some of the world's most original, visionary and enduring literature before dying under unexplained circumstances at the age of 40. At once gorgeous and grotesque, *Nevermore* blurs the line between fact and fiction, exploring the events that shaped Poe's character and career and giving powerful expression to Poe's words "all that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream."

*Nevermore* blends reality and imagination to create a fascinating and moving theatrical experience that is difficult to describe, but impossible to forget. MSSU's production brings the story to life with 10 actors, a live orchestra, and projected imagery inside the Bud Walton Black Box Theatre October 29-November 1. **Thursday-Saturday shows are at 7:30pm, and Sunday, Nov 1, show time is 2:30pm.** Seating is limited to 55 per show.



## 🏠 Honors Program Update

The Honors Program at MSSU continues to be a specially-designed academic path exclusively for high-achieving students providing unique challenges and opportunities. In March 2019, the MSSU Honors Program signed an articulation agreement with the Honors Program at *Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College*. This agreement creates a pathway for students who have successfully completed the NEO Honors Program to become members of the MSSU Honors Program once they transfer. The MSSU Honors Program also has articulation agreements with Crowder College, Ozarks Technical Community College, Northwest Arkansas Community College, and is in the process of developing one with Coffeyville Community College.

This year, the Honors Program welcomed thirty-two new students. Eight of those students ranked first in their class; fifteen students were one of the top-ten students in their graduating class; fifteen students had a 4.0 GPA, and the lowest GPA accepted was a 3.7; sixteen students had a 30 or higher on the ACT, with one student having a 33; and eight of those students are from out-of-state, representing New Jersey, California, Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma.

The Honors Lecture Series continues to be successful. Victoria Price, daughter of legendary actor Vincent Price visited Joplin in November 2019 as part of this series. She delivered one presentation, *Vincent Price: Master of Menace, Lover of Life*, in Joplin Public Library's Community Room; she delivered another presentation, *Three Unexpected Words to Transform Your Life*, in the North End Zone facility on the MSSU campus. Both presentations were well-attended and well-received, including the Q&A sessions afterward and the book signings. Due to COVID, the Honors Program has rescheduled this year's speaker, but we are proud to announce that in November 2021, author Andrew Geyer will be the guest speaker for the Honors Lecture Series. He has published numerous novels and short story collections, including *Dixie Fish*, *Meeting the Dead*, and *Whispers in Dust and Bone*, which won several awards and was a finalist for the John Gardner Fiction Book Award. While visiting MSSU, Dr. Geyer will give a craft talk to students, as well as deliver a public reading from his new book *Lesser Mountains*.

Recently, several Honors graduates have shared their accomplishments. These include the following:

- Kelsey Hayes is studying at the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Smith
- Gil Salgado is studying in the Missouri State Social Work Grad Program
- Riley Rickman is enrolled in the Pittsburg State Grad Program for Masters in Clinical Psychology, and she is also a grad assistant in the Center for Research, Evaluation, and Awareness for Dyslexia
- Ashley Bluemel was accepted into the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Pharmacy School
- Savannah West accepted a position as a Registered Nurse Circulator in OR at St. John Medical Center in Tulsa
- Jordan Banker completed her MCAT and has interviews scheduled with Baylor Medical School, University of South Florida School of Medicine, and University of Colorado School of Medicine.



Finally, the Honors Program is in the process of completing its five-year program review. In addition to an internal review team, the Honors Directors from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock visited MSSU for the day to speak with Honors students and faculty, as well as administration. They were impressed with our community of scholars and the pathways we have created to ensure student success. Likewise, the Program Review Advisory Committee here at MSSU responded favorably, writing, "Faculty, staff, and administrators are congratulated for creating a program that exemplifies the meaning of pluralism in higher education. The Honors Program also provides services and benefits that encourage scholarship including an excellent student resource center, a variety of events and meetings to support student engagement and success, as well as organized recruitment activities, open access to educational resources, and an annual symposium to showcase their work. Overall, the Honors Program is a valuable asset to the University and to students interested in continuing their education after graduation."

## 🏰 Fall 2020 International Themed Semester: The Caribbean

This is the third year in a row that we have selected a region rather than a particular country (Nordic in 2018 and Oceania in 2019). The Caribbean region includes 13 countries (including Bahamas, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic) and numerous territories (Cayman Islands, Aruba, British Virgin Islands, etc.) The Caribbean Semester is featuring 31 events and 9 films.

We have presentations on:

- Caribbean rum
- the real pirates of the Caribbean
- the Haitian Revolution
- Cuban baseball
- voodoo (is it a cult or a religion?)
- Bob Marley
- the steel band movement of Trinidad and Tobago



The Art Department has two exhibitions, including one by Nadia Huggins, a visual artist from the Caribbean who works primarily with photography. The exhibition runs through October 15th.

The Music Department has two concerts, including a three-song arrangement specifically written for the MSSU steel band and trombone quartet, "Caribbean Rhapsody in Brass and Steel."

The English Department has a book club that will be reading *Claire of the Sea Light*, by Edwidge Danticat, who was born in Haiti and raised in New York.

19 of the events are Zoom presentations

Faculty can use the Caribbean Semester events in four different ways:

1. Bring their classes to the event
2. Watch the event live in their classrooms, on Zoom
3. Ask their classes to view the recorded presentations, on Zoom
4. Offer their students extra credit for attending or viewing a presentation

## 🏰 Intensive English Program Community Service Project: Congregation of the Mother of the Redeemer

The Congregation of the Mother of the Redeemer (CMR) is a Catholic Congregation based in Vietnam. After the Fall of Saigon in 1975, roughly half of the members of CMR fled to the USA, where they soon established a monastery in Carthage, Missouri, on the campus of what had been previously Our Lady of the Ozarks College. The purpose of the monastery is to train Vietnamese Catholics to become priests serving in communities all across the US. Because many of the men in training at CMR in Carthage are recent immigrants from Vietnam, there is an immediate need for English instruction. New arrivals at CMR anticipate completing coursework at MSSU before eventually pursuing degrees in theology.



There are currently around 60 men on the CMR campus in Carthage, but this is a revolving population. New 'priests in training' arrive each year as others head off to serve in parishes around the country.

In our efforts to expand the pool of potential students for the IEP, and with an eye toward making connections of service in the community, we reached out to CMR this past summer with the hopes of establishing a formal ESL course that could be offered to their students at their campus in Carthage. They responded very enthusiastically to this proposal, but ultimately, the number of students available to enroll in a formal course was just too low at this time. I still believe there is potential for this in the future, but in the meantime, we recently began offering a weekly (informal) English course to assist students wishing to improve their practical and conversational abilities in English. We currently have 3-4 men in attendance. The class is hosted on the CMR campus each Thursday morning from 9:30-10:30am. Dr. Stebbins joined us for the first day of class on August 27<sup>th</sup>, and Mr. Keller and I have coordinated with an alternating schedule to provide instruction going forward. We're only a few weeks in, but so far, it's been fun!

Some of the potential I see in this program:

- Eventually, a formal course with students enrolled in MSSU hours, provided on the CMR campus in Carthage. With CMR's blessing, this could even be opened up to other students in the Carthage area who are not affiliated with CMR. Carthage has a very large Hispanic population, with many recent arrivals from Central and South America.
- Recruiting opportunities for MSSU. Again, with CMR's blessing, we might be allowed a presence at the annual Marian Days Festival, maybe an MSSU booth with recruitment materials, etc. With 70,000 Marian Days attendees, many of them high school students or the parents of high school students, this could be a great recruitment tool.
- "Wildcard Potential" - Right now it's a simple volunteer English class offered on a weekly basis to a fairly small group of students, but I think there may be opportunities that come from this that are currently impossible to predict.

## 💡 Student Project Spotlight: The Penning Lab (Summer and Fall 2020)



**SUMMER:** During the summer of 2020, Dr. Penning led a group of dedicated MSSU students on a volunteer project to rediscover elusive species of reptiles and amphibians in Southwest Missouri. The group gained funding from the community and spent many days setting traps and capturing reptiles and amphibians at Kellogg Lake in Carthage, Missouri. They captured over 150 individuals from 13 species, several of which have not been reported in our region for over a century. Through this project, students are learning in-depth research methods, how to publish peer-reviewed work, and what it takes to create community interest in science.

**FALL:** This student-initiated project has as its goal to rebuild a historical trail on campus and to transform it an outdoor classroom, study space, and place to view native flora and fauna of Missouri. This project is led and built by undergraduates supervised by Dr. David Penning. Dating back to at least 1971, there has been a walking trail available to students and the Joplin community near the "Biology Pond" on the edge of campus at Missouri Southern State University. Over the years, the trail has filled in with invasive species, washed out from the surrounding swamps, and changed dramatically with development of campus. We are currently losing many of our trees to beavers and the forest floor is covered by multiflora rose, winter creeper, and poison ivy. Currently, only 50m of the 300m trail is walkable. The remainder is overgrown, sunken, or filled in with briar. The goal is to rebuild the area and to provide a unique walking trail alongside a spring-fed swamp. This rare ecosystem provides a unique opportunity to allow students and the public to access and view nature up close. To rebuild this trail, we have organized multiple volunteer events, a Go Fund Me site, and other ways to engage the community over the next 18 months.

## 💡 Departmental Spotlight SOCIAL SCIENCES: Constitution Day and Voting Participation Initiative

**CONSTITUTION DAY 2020, SPONSORED BY INTERNATIONAL & POLITICAL AFFAIRS:** The International & Political Affairs program is hosting Constitution Day 2020 on Thursday, September 17, from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM in Phelps Theater. To accommodate a reduced capacity due to social distancing requirements and to accommodate students, staff, faculty, and members of the community who are unable to be with us in person, we will also be live streaming the event on Zoom. For 2020 we will be focusing on the 200th Anniversary of the Missouri Compromise, which not only set the parameters for Missouri's admission to the Union as a slave state, but also touched off four decades of controversy by stipulating which future organized



territories would become free states and slave states. The Compromise ultimately contributed to a constitutional debate and the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision, which pitted the property rights of white Americans against the humanity of black Americans. Dr. Megan L. Bever (History) will be giving the keynote address, which will be followed by a Q&A and lively discussion with a panel to link this historic compromise with current events.

Join us for a riveting talk with MSSU historian, Dr. Megan L. Bever, followed by a lively discussion and Q&A linking this historic compromise with contemporary events.

- Thursday, Sept. 17, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
- Phelps Theater – RSVP for Phelps seating to [IPA@mssu.edu](mailto:IPA@mssu.edu)
- Live stream the event on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/99703395779?pwd=akgzem11ZE5yTW42WGhSmJ1R1poZz09>
- For more information, contact [IPA@mssu.edu](mailto:IPA@mssu.edu)

**VOTER REGISTRATION EFFORTS, ORGANIZED BY INTERNATIONAL & POLITICAL AFFAIRS:** The International & Political Affairs program, working alongside the Political Science Association student organization is hosting a series of 3 voter registration drives on campus. The first will coincide with the Constitution Day event on 9/17. The second will be on National Voter Registration Day, 9/22, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, and we will be coordinating with the library on this day to maximize our reach. Finally, we will hold a final registration event on 9/30 in Webster Hall. At each event we will have paper registration forms, computers/tablets to help those who are eligible to register online, as well as information from Secretaries of State about voting options (including absentee and mail-in options).

**GET-OUT THE VOTE PLANS, ORGANIZED BY INTERNATIONAL & POLITICAL AFFAIRS:** We plan to follow up these September voter registration events with a get-out-the-vote campaign in October. We want to encourage all members of the MSSU community to exercise their right to vote and we will provide information about absentee and mail-in voting options. We are identifying local notaries to see if they would be willing to donate some time to notarize ballots. There are a few notaries on campus we will reach out to, and we are working with the League of Women Voters and the Joplin Public Library to see if we can coordinate some times for notaries to be present at the library to process mail-in ballots. Finally, the Political Science Association traditionally organizes debate watching parties. We are looking into ways to organize these events this fall remotely or socially distanced. These efforts are in the early planning stages.

## Strategic Plan Tracking and Progress Task Force

*Purpose:* The Strategic Plan Tracking and Progress Task Force will endeavor to provide the campus community and external stakeholders with an understanding of our institution's progress, accomplishments and challenges relating to attainment of our 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. Specifically, the task force is charged with *monitoring progress made on achieving the University's Strategic Plan, collecting evidence about and reviewing unit-level action plans, communicating these findings, helping inform the strategic budget allocation process, and providing advice and counsel to the President on attaining institutional priorities and goals.* This task force will be considered a subgroup of the University Council and will have a liaison from the PC to facilitate its work.

## Fall 2020 Concurrent Enrolment/Dual Credit

Last Year: Enrollment:542 and Credit Hours:2335

This Year: Enrollment:539 and Credit Hours: 2558

Difference: Enrollment: -.5% and Credit Hours: 8.23%

This semester MSSU is offering a record number of dual credit hours.

## Law Enforcement Academy

The Academy was recently awarded by the Missouri Department of Transportation Highway Safety and Traffic Division over \$71,000 in grant funds to conduct training on driving and traffic-related enforcement such as DWI detection.



**MISSOURI SOUTHERN**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

# Welcome

## NEW FACULTY

### COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

**Mr. Lawrence Alford**

Theatre Department, Master Instructor

- M.S. Theatre Studies, Southern Oregon University
- B.S.E. Education (Secondary, Speech/Theatre), Missouri Southern State University
- M.A. Theatre, Missouri Southern State University

**Dr. Christian Burr**

Biology & Environmental Health Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Genetics & Molecular Biology, Elizabethtown College
- M.S. Biology (Molecular Biology), Montclair State University
- B.S. Molecular Biology, Montclair State University

**Dr. Jana Thomas Coffman**

Modern Languages, Master Instructor (French & Spanish)

- Ph.D. Romance Languages & Linguistics, University of Alabama
- Graduate Certificate in TESOL, Missouri State University
- M.S.E. Secondary Education, Missouri State University
- B.S.E. Spanish Education, Missouri State University

**Dr. Hannah Dow**

English & Philosophy Department, Visiting Assistant Professor (Creative Writing)

- Ph.D. English (Creative Writing—Poetry), University of Southern Mississippi
- M.F.A. Poetry, University of California—Irvine
- M.A. English (Creative Writing—Poetry), Loyola Marymount University
- B.A. English (Creative Writing), University of Pennsylvania

*...Arts & Sciences continued on next page*

**Dr. Rachel Heth**

Biology & Environmental Health Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Biological Sciences (Plant, Insect/Microbial Sciences), University of Missouri-Columbia
- M.S. Biology, Missouri State University
- B.S. Biology, Missouri Southern State University

**Dr. Beike Jia**

Chemical & Physical Sciences Department, Associate Professor

- Ph.D. Chemistry, University of Nevada-Reno
- M.A. Chemistry, University of Nevada-Reno
- B.S. Chemistry, Beijing Normal University

**Dr. Jody Jensen**

English & Philosophy Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. English (Post-Colonial Literature & Theory), University of North Dakota
- M.A. English (African-American Literature & Theory and Native American Literature), University of St. Thomas
- B.A. English (American Literature), Minnesota State University-Moorhead

**Dr. Ildo Kim**

Communication Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Communication (Interpersonal), University of California – Davis
- M.A. Socio-Cultural Psychology, Korea University
- B.A. Spanish Language, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

**Dr. Jan Kircher**

Social Work Department, Associate Professor & Department Chair

- Ph.D. Sociology (Social Organization & Family Studies), South Dakota State University
- M.S.W. Social Work, University of South Dakota-Vermillion
- B.A. Social Work, University of South Dakota-Vermillion

**Ms. Melissah Perkins - January 2020 start**

Biology & Environmental Health Department, Master Instructor

- M.S. Occupational Safety Management, University of Central Missouri
- B.S. Biology, University of Central Missouri
- Associate Safety Professional
- Occupational Hygiene and Safety Technologist
- Registered Workers' Compensation Specialist

**Dr. Maureen Wieland**

Communication Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Communication (Public Relations), Purdue University
- Graduate Certificate in Environmental Policy, Purdue University
- M.A. Interpersonal, Organizational, and Persuasive Communication, Northern Illinois University
- B.A. Communication & Psychology, Concordia College



## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

### **Ms. Rebecca Burink**

Business Administration (Management), Visiting Assistant Professor

- A.B.D. Organizational Behavior, University of Oklahoma
- M.B.A. Business Administration: International Business, Washington State University
- B.A. Hospitality Business Management, Washington State University

### **Dr. Hassan Butt**

Business Administration (Economics & Finance), Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Economics, Texas Tech University
- M.S. Commerce & Finance, University of Punjab
- B.S. Commerce & Finance, University of Punjab

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

### **Dr. Tonya Heavin**

Teacher Education Department, Assistant Professor

- Ed.D. Instructional Leadership (Higher Education Administration), Lindenwood University
- M.Ed. Curriculum & Instruction, William Woods University
- B.S.E. Elementary Education, Southwest Baptist University

### **Dr. Chanel LoJacono**

Kinesiology Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Kinesiology (Applied Neuromechanics), University of North Carolina- Greensboro
- M.S. Kinesiology, University of North Carolina- Greensboro
- B.S. Sports Medicine, Pepperdine University

### **Dr. Christopher Odudu**

Psychology Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Developmental Psychology, University of Missouri-Columbia
- Graduate Certificate/Minor Integrative Neuroscience, University of Missouri-Columbia
- M.A. Developmental Psychology, University of Missouri-Columbia
- B.A. Psychology, California State University-Dominguez Hills

### **Dr. Ayla Schmick**

Psychology Department, Assistant Professor

- Ph.D. Psychology / Behavior Analysis, Southern Illinois University
- M.S. Behavior Analysis & Therapy, Southern Illinois University
- B.S. Kinesiology / Exercise Science, Pacific Lutheran University



## COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

**Ms. Darlene Bogenpohl - October 2019 start**

Dental Hygiene Department, Clinical Instructor and Department Chair

- M.S. Health Science Administration, University of South Dakota
- B.S. Dental Hygiene, University of South Dakota
- A.S. Dental Hygiene, University of South Dakota

**Ms. Kathleen Cowley**

Nursing Department, Clinical Instructor

- M.S. Health Services Administration, Central Michigan University
- B.S.N. Nursing, Missouri Southern State University
- A.D.N. Nursing, Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College

**Ms. Christina Floyd**

Nursing Department, Clinical Instructor

- M.S. Career & Technical Education (Teaching Leadership), University of Central Missouri
- B.S.N. Nursing, University of Missouri-Columbia
- A.A.S. Applied Science, North Central Missouri College
- L.P.N. Licensed Practical Nurse, North Central Missouri College

**Ms. Kimberly Herchenroeder**

Nursing Department, Clinical Instructor

- M.S.N. Nursing, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- B.S.N. Nursing, University of Missouri-Kansas City

**Ms. Erin Taber - January 2020 start**

Emergency Medical Services Department, Master Instructor

- B.S. Health Promotion & Wellness, Missouri Southern State University
- A.A. General Studies, Crowder College



MISSOURI SOUTHERN  
STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY YEARS OF SERVICE

*Recognition 2020*

15 YEARS

**Mr. Burt Bucher**  
Associate Professor  
Art

**Dr. Cheryl Cotter**  
Associate Professor  
Music

**Dr. Jill Greer**  
Professor  
Social Sciences  
(Anthropology)

**Dr. Donna Johnson**  
Professor  
Biology &  
Environmental  
Health

**Mr. Frank Pishkur**  
Professor  
Art

20 YEARS

**Dr. Joey Brown**  
Professor  
English

**Dr. William Huffman**  
Professor  
Business Administration  
(Accounting)

**Ms. Kimberly Rogers**  
Associate Professor  
Dental Hygiene

**Ms. Lorinda Hackett**  
Professor  
Teacher Education  
*Interim Dean, Colleges of Education &  
Health Sciences*

**Dr. Melissa Locher**  
Associate Professor  
Teacher Education

**Dr. Steve Wagner**  
Professor  
Social Sciences  
(History)

25 YEARS

**Dr. Sheri Beeler**  
Professor  
Kinesiology

**Dr. Phillip Wise**  
Professor  
Music

35 YEARS

**Mr. Dennis Herr**  
Professor  
Computer Information Science



# Student Affairs

## By the Numbers

Fall Enrollment:  
5,045

Fall Credit Hours:  
57,634

### Financial Aid Distributed:

Federal: \$11,330,990

Pell - \$4,575,957

SEOG - \$85,375

FWS - \$25,854

TEACH - \$44,169

Loans - \$6,599,545

**State Aid Distributed:**  
\$1,076,850

Access MO - \$1,032,750

Bright Flight - \$44,100

These numbers do not include scholarship, tuition waivers, VA, or third-party scholarships.

Refunds to students:  
**\$4,293,379**

Student Accounts - 3,308  
Fall '20 accounts are paid to less than \$50 balance.

## CARES Act Funding

MSSU has applied for funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. These dollars are separated into two separate funding opportunities:

**Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund - Student Aid:** grant application submitted 4/15/20 in the amount of **\$2,378,137**. MSSU has currently awarded all of this amount to our students.

## COVID-19 Fall Task Force

The University Covid-19 Task Force continues to meet weekly to discuss campus operations and plans for keeping our students, faculty and staff during the fall semester.

Members include:

Brenda Beasley, Academic Affairs  
Josh Doak, Residence Life  
Cheryl Dobson, Registrar  
Bryan Goodwin, Physical Plant  
Dr. Mikh Gunderman, Faculty Senate  
Evan Jewsbury, Human Resources  
Heather Lesmeister,

Univ. Relations/Marketing  
Don Mihulka, Chief Information Officer  
Dr. Nick Nicoletti, Empowering U  
Debra Schow-Smith, Staff Senate  
Scott Snell, Distance Learning  
Julie Stamps, Willcoxon Health Center  
Dr. Chad Stebbins,

International Studies  
Dr. Julie Wengert, Student Affairs  
Hayley Ward, Student Senate  
Bill Gipson, Board of Governors  
Rob Yust, Business Affairs  
Dr. Paula Carson, Academic Affairs  
Jared Bruggeman, Athletics  
Darren Fullerton, Student Affairs

## Modified Student Events

### First-Year Student Convocation

259 first-year MSSU students attended the Annual Student Convocation in August. All students were welcomed to the University, presented an MSSU medallion and learned the MSSU customs and traditions, while physically-distancing and wearing masks.

### Phi Eta Sigma

76 students were inducted in this first-year student honor society. Membership is open to first-year students with a GPA of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale at the end of a full academic year.

## Project Stay Receives Confirmation of Grant Approval

U.S. Department of Education (Department) has approved the Student Support Services (SSS) (Project Stay) Program grant application.

This grant will be in the amount of **\$294,701.00** for the first budget period (09/01/2020 through 08/31/2021). It is anticipated that the grant will be for a total of 5 year(s).

Total Award: **\$1,473,505** for the 5-year period.



## MSSU Athletics Report

### 1. Sport Program Reports

- a. **General** – The NCAA announced that all fall sports championships for the 2020 season would be cancelled due to Covid-19. The NCAA has also announced that all fall student-athletes will receive a blanket waiver giving them an extra season of eligibility.
- b. **MIAA Schedules** – The MIAA announced that all fall sports have been postponed. The MIAA will revisit the decision in October and will look to decide on options for the spring, as well as looking at the winter sports seasons viability.
- c. **Division II Athletic Directors Association** – The MSSU athletic department had 58 student-athletes earn the Division II Athletic Directors Association Academic Achievement Award. This is the second year in a row for 58 MSSU student-athletes to earn the honor. To be eligible, a SA must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in a 4.0 scale, have attended a minimum of two years, and be an active member of the team during this academic year.
- d. **Basketball Attendance** – The MSSU men's and women's indoor basketball teams ranked in the top-ten of all of Division II when it comes to home attendance this past season. The men ranked seventh nationally, while the women ranked ninth. The men averaged 1,809 fans per game, while the women averaged 1,284 each night inside the Leggett & Platt Athletic Center.

### 2. MIAA News:

- a. **COVID-19 Taskforce** –The Commissioner has created a taskforce to develop the MIAA COVID-19 Manual. A version with final updates will be reviewed by the group on Sept. 24 for approval. Additions are still needed for wrestling, indoor track & field, outdoor track & field, baseball and softball.
- b. **COVID-19 Monitoring Group** - In a similar fashion, the Commissioner had also created monitoring groups for the fall sports of football, soccer and volleyball to discuss current activities/practices and determine interest in organizing spring competition for MIAA schools. Recommendations from each group will be presented to the MIAA AAC for consideration.

### 3. NCAA News:

- a. **NCAA Reporting:**
  - i. The NCAA has established a new COVID-19 Medical Advisory Group that brings together professionals from all three divisions. The purpose of the group includes reviewing emerging COVID-9 research and data to provide guidance to the NCAA membership regarding training, practice and competition, specifically providing guidance regarding appropriate COVID-19 protocols applicable to winter and spring sports; providing guidance for conducting all sports competitions and championships; providing guidance as it relates to physiological, medical and mental health consequences of COVID-19; and assessing other emerging information such as vaccines and new medical treatments.

### 4. Departmental News:

- a. **NCAA Compliance:**
  - i. Compliance rules presentations presented to all student athletes through the Blackboard platform, due to inability to socially distance in a compliance meeting.

- ii. Code of Conduct rules presented through the Blackboard platform
- iii. In process of certifying all athletes for financial aid, practice and competition
- iv. Submitted NLI Institutional Commitment Form to MIAA
- v. Submitted scholarship equivalencies to MIAA
- vi. Confirmed certification of compliance for all athletic staff members
- vii. Submitted NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Demographic Report (Due August 1<sup>st</sup>)
- viii. Working on EADA to be submitted in October
- ix. Verifying full-time enrollment status of all athletes & monitoring daily

**b. Marketing:**

- i. Photos
  - 1. Continuing to take photos and editing headshots of all student-athletes.
  - 2. Continuing to take marketing shots and editing of photos of all student-athletes for use in social media.
  - 3. Once student-athletes are able to practice I will be taking some photos to post on sport specific social media platforms.
- ii. Updating sport specific social media platforms with new content as requested by coaches, or on our own Athletics platforms.
- iii. Working with our Athletics Videographer to come up with concepts and ideas for short hype videos and clips to post throughout the fall of all sports teams.
- iv. Working with the URM Videographer on creating an Athletics commercial that will come out this fall on local television stations.
- v. Brainstorming ideas of projects for post-eligibility students for this fall.
- vi. Researching new marketing initiatives and creating a plan for spring 2021 and 2021-2022.
- vii. Working on and learning new graphic design tips and tricks.

**c. SAAC:**

- i. The SAAC Officers for 2020-2021 are: President: Joe Kinder (Baseball), Vice President: Zac Shoemaker (Baseball), Secretary: Abby Atkin (Softball), Pride Promotor: Carina Calderon (Soccer). The SAAC Athletic Advisors are: Karesa Burr, Athletic Internal Operations/SWA, and Shonte Clay-Fulgham, Coordinator Athletic Sponsorships and Sales. The MIAA SAAC initiative is "WE CARE" which stands for Wellness, Education, Compassion, Athletics, Respect, and Engagement.

**d. Sponsorships:**

- i. Developing new sponsorship options and opportunities due to COVID-19 impacting Fall Sports.
- ii. Finalizing food and hotel trade agreements for 2020-2021
- iii. Contacting prospects for the two remaining Stadium Videoboard Anchor spots.

**e. Facilities:**

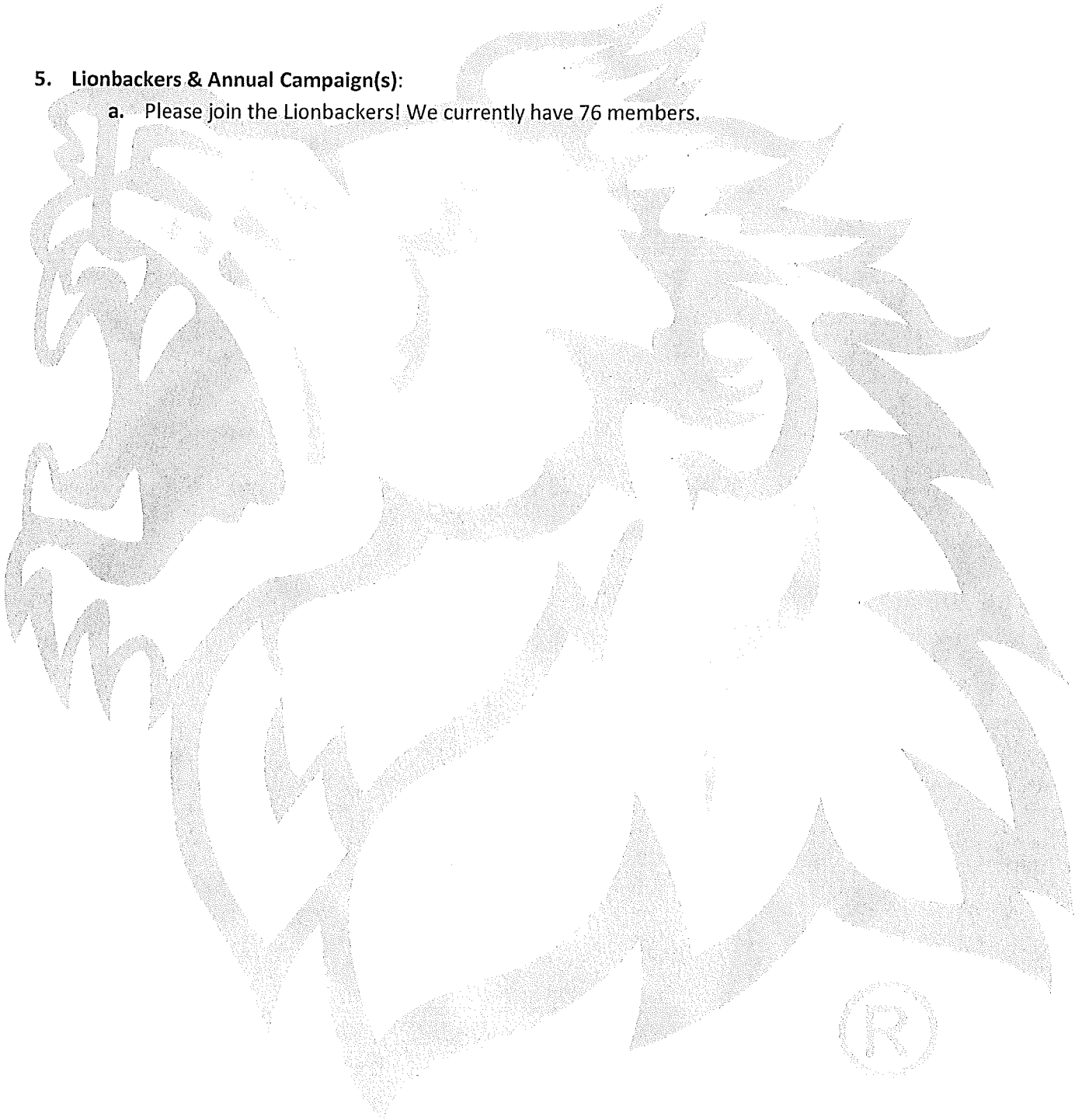
- i. The basketball court in the Leggett & Platt Athletic Center and the volleyball court in Young Gym were refinished by Lankford Flooring Inc. The new Men's basketball 3-point line was added and all logos and game lines were repainted in LPAC. Floor repairs were made in Young Gym.



- ii. Space in Young Gym, Leggett & Platt Athletic Center and the meeting rooms in North Endzone Building have been scheduled in conjunction with Academic Affairs to be used as classroom space for the Fall 2020 semester to allow classes to social distance.

**5. Lionbackers & Annual Campaign(s):**

- a. Please join the Lionbackers! We currently have 76 members.



# MISSOURI SOUTHERN

## STATE UNIVERSITY

### FACULTY SENATE

#### President's Report

September 16, 2020

Board of Governors,

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. COVID-19 and the budget still remain important concerns for faculty, but overall the semester has been progressing as well could be hoped for given the totality of the circumstances.

We had our first Faculty Senate meeting on Monday 9/14. During the meeting we discussed a number of important issues to the University, and the faculty specifically. First on our agenda, was the ongoing discussion surrounding the Intellectual Property Agreement. I have created an ad hoc committee to rewrite the agreement incorporating feedback from the faculty, administration, and legal counsel. Next, we solicited feedback from the senators regarding faculty load and compensation, as well as the faculty grievance procedure. After the collection of data, and appointment of chairs to the necessary committees, formal charges will be made to the respective committees. Additionally, we had our first read of the proposed Master Instructor Language.

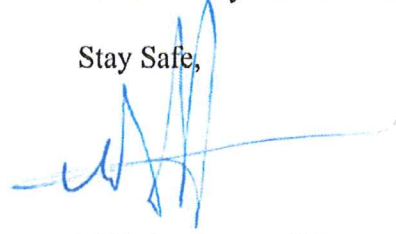
Lastly, although we have been reassured that there are no planned faculty or program eliminations for this academic year. Dr. Van Galen and Dr. Carson, in the spirit of shared governance, requested that Faculty Senate and Empowering U collaborate with Academic Affairs to create a task force to present suggestions for enhancing the intellectual, operational, and financial efficacy in academic programs, with a focus on programs that a review of data may suggest deserve deeper consideration. That this task force provide analysis, perspective and recommendations in the event that any discontinuation of academic programs be seriously contemplated. In response to this charge, Faculty Senate leadership, in collaboration with Empowering U leadership, drafted the following proposal, including broad representation across disciplines, and the following charge to the Strategic Academic Task Force:

The Strategic Academic Task Force (SATF) is an ad hoc administrative committee, formed in consultation with Faculty Senate and Empowering U. The Committee's charge is to develop a set of guidelines from which to examine academic units for the purpose of enhancing the intellectual, operational, and financial capabilities of those units. In support of the University's mission to educate and graduate knowledgeable, responsible, successful global citizens, the SATF will facilitate a systematic appraisal of the criteria used for self-assessment and future planning regarding enrollment, graduation, budgetary allocation, educational demand, and requirements needed for a fully functioning Liberal Arts University. The Committee's conclusions will assist academic units with improving their processes, both academic and operational. Additionally, the SATF will provide analysis, perspective, and recommendations in the event that any discontinuation of academic program is seriously contemplated by the university administration. The Committee reports to the President's Council, in collaboration with Faculty Senate and Empowering U.



Uncertainty still weighs heavy on many faculty members, but their commitment to student safety and success is as strong as ever. Thank you all for your work and commitment the wellbeing of the university and its faculty.

Stay Safe,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mikh Gunderman', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mikh Gunderman, PhD

Faculty Senate President

Assistant Professor, Criminal Justice

Missouri Southern State University

# MISSOURI SOUTHERN

---

## STATE UNIVERSITY

---

### STAFF SENATE

#### **Board of Governors Staff Senate Report**

September 16, 2020

#### **I. Staff Senate Goals**

During the 2020-21 academic year the Staff Senate has agreed to pursue the following goals:

1. Improve communication
2. Enhance staff morale and engagement
3. Review and update Staff Senate Bylaws

#### **II. Staff Conversations**

In an effort to improve communication, “Staff Conversations” was added to our monthly meeting agenda between the Staff Senate Executive Committee and President’s Cabinet. During this portion of the meeting, we discuss topics brought forward to Senators by fellow staff. Recent topics included staff appreciation ideas, voluntary retirement incentive program details, and COVID-19 procedures.

#### **III. Staff Senate Campus Beautification Day**

Thanks to the efforts of some hardworking staff, faculty, administration and student volunteers, Staff Senate was able to host the first-ever Campus Beautification Day just days before the start of the Fall semester. Two projects were completed and included the painting of Lion paws on campus roadways and assembling of Welcome Back signs which were placed at all campus entrances the first week of classes.

#### **IV. Quarterly Service Champs**

Staff Senate seeks to bring recognition to outstanding staff members through the Southern Service Champ Award. Awardees are nominated by peers and must meet one of the five pads of the Lion Paw. Second Quarter recipients included:

Martha Freeman, Administrative Assistant – Academic Outreach  
Jim Hartje, Support Specialist – Information Technology  
Jeff Pooley, Manager of Procurements – Information Technology

#### **V. Staff Senate Parliamentarian to Executive Committee**

The Staff Senate body voted to include the Parliamentarian as part of the Staff Senate Executive Committee. The Governance Committee is working to adjust the bylaws to make this a permanent addition.



# MISSOURI SOUTHERN

---

## STATE UNIVERSITY

---

### STAFF SENATE

#### 2020-2021 Staff Senate Executive Committee

**Debra Schow-Smith** (*President*), HR Training Specialist – Human Resources

**Michael Opfer** (*President-Elect*), Evening Custodian Supervisor – Custodial

**Ashley Brownfield** (*Secretary*), Coordinator of Project Management –  
Information Technology

**Craig Thompson** (*Parliamentarian*), Academic Skills Specialist – Student  
Success Center

#### 2020-2021 Staff Senate

**Denice Brown**, Academic Records Specialist – Registrar's Office

**Melinda Brown**, Director – Gipson Center

**Martha Freeman**, Administrative Assistant – Academic Outreach

**Laura Gullett**, Green Dot Program Coordinator – Student

**Christina Hamilton**, Administrative Assistant – Academic Affairs VP

**Talbott Harrison**, IT Support Tech – Information Technology

**Stephanie Hopkins**, Director – Student Success Center

**Heather Lesmeister**, Director – University Relations and Marketing

**Amber Lewis**, Counselor – Financial Aid

**Mike Olmstead**, Director of News Services & Messaging – University Relations  
and Marketing

**Shakira Rhoads**, Assistant Director – Career Services

**Teresa Shufflin**, Database & Prospect Research Director – Foundation