



Board Report
01-25-17

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Board Retreat – As we start the process of developing the next Strategic Plan for Missouri Southern, we should plan at least a half day Board Retreat to consider the Mission, Vision, and Values statements. I would suggest that we determine a nearby location... but somewhere off-campus to avoid the distractions of our busy offices. And, we should probably look for a mutually convenient time in March.

Mission Review – As I mentioned in November, Speaker of the House, Todd Richardson, charged the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) to conduct a “mission review” study of all public colleges and universities in the State. He also set a deadline of December 31 for the report to be delivered to his office. The staff at MDHE felt that a consulting group should be utilized and NCHEMS (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems) was selected to do the research, formulate recommendations, and write the report.

Accordingly, the report was delivered to the Speaker in late December with the concurrence of all university and community college presidents. As with all systematic reviews there were sections of the report that each member liked more than other sections, but for the most part the report served to lay out some fairly straightforward ground rules for program offerings by the members of the various sectors.

The common thread running through the report is a “preference” for collaboration rather than competition and/or duplication. A copy of the report is included in your packet, but there are a couple of items that I feel deserve special mention.

- 1) The Department should streamline the “academic program approval” process to improve responsiveness to workforce need;
- 2) All Ph.D. programs and first professional degrees (medicine, pharmacy, law, etc.) will only be offered by members of the University of Missouri System.
- 3) All other universities should only offer “non-research” doctoral degrees “only when doing so would not unnecessarily duplicate an existing program, collaboration is not feasible or a viable means of meeting the needs of students and employers, and the institution has the academic and financial capacity to offer the program in a high quality manner.”
- 4) While community colleges should focus on associate degree and certificate level programs... they can be “authorized to offer bachelor’s degrees only if the level of education required in a field for accreditation or licensure increases to that level or, in the case of applied bachelor’s degrees, the level of education required for employment in a field increased to that level, and when doing so would not unnecessarily duplicate an existing program, collaboration is not feasible or a viable means of meeting the needs of students and employers, and the institution has the academic and financial capacity to offer the program in a high-quality manner.”

The report also included some of the field work accomplished by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). One of the items submitted by NCHEMS was a draft “mission” for each college and university. We took the liberty of modifying ours to be more accurate and returned the draft to the Department. A copy of our NCHEMS mission document is included for your review also.

Legislative – As you know, we are working to find ways to effectively cope with the 8% reduction in appropriations recently applied by Governor Greitens. And, we are bracing for future cuts later this spring, but we are hopeful that state revenues will pick up and we can safely make it until June 30 without further withholdings.

But, next year looks fairly grim at the state level too... with estimated budget deficits of somewhere in the neighborhood of \$450 million. This could indicate another 4 or 5% cut in the 2018 budget. Again, we are hoping for the best but we should budget for the worst so next year’s budget will be approached very conservatively. The budget worksheets we have been provided indicate a projected increase in state revenue for next year, but also project expenditure growth at levels that will outstrip the growth in revenue (particularly in Non-discretionary areas).

Nonetheless, we are dedicated to working with our friends at UMKC School of Dentistry to restore the funds for the satellite campus at Missouri Southern. These funds were expected to be included in the core budget of each campus this year, but were left as “new decision items” when the higher education budget was passed. Accordingly, the funds were included in the withholdings, but the news could have been worse as in the case of the UMKC Pharmacy satellite program at Missouri State University... where the program has been in operation for three years... and still had its funding cut. That’s why it is critical that these funds be included in the core budgets of participating universities.

Great Game – The Great Game of Education continues to serve the campus well by providing new training modules, creating a portal for employee suggestions, and very directly helping ward off the sting of budget cuts by focusing the campus on revenue enhancements and cost controls. Additionally, a new campus wide mini game is being considered that will focus on health and wellness... to help ensure that optimal success is achieved in our move to self-insurance (partially self-insured, with umbrella coverage).