

Board of Governors
09-18-15

Husch Blackwell

As you know, our contract with the Husch Blackwell law firm requires them to undertake one major campus initiative under their retainer with no additional charge to the university. Last year, they provided extraordinary guidance on the difficult task of re-writing the faculty handbook. This year we will ask them to help develop an “online policy library” that can be routinely examined and updated. We will be starting from scratch in some areas, but in many other areas the task will be to gather existing policies and check for overlap, conflicts, and relevance. Frankly, we have needed to do this for several years.

Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) – The Coordinating Board met on September 3rd and in addition to approving our new BA/BS in Geography, they determined by unanimous vote to request a 5% core increase plus a 2% increase for STEM programs for colleges and universities in next year’s budget. This request will go to the Governor for consideration and hopefully inclusion in his recommendation to the General Assembly next session.

Both the Council on Public Higher Education (COPHE) and the Missouri Community College Association (MCCA) endorse this request and jointly authored a letter of support. Having support from both groups strengthens the request significantly and hopefully it will serve as a model of cooperation that will be replicated in the future.

Also, as you know, Commissioner Russell announced his intention to retire at the end of the calendar year and we were assured the search for a replacement is well underway. However, Dr. Russell has agreed to remain on the job through spring 2016 if needed as the search got a relatively late start. The CBHE plans to have someone in place full-time by early 2016.

Legislative update – As stated earlier, we will be supporting the CBHE request for additional higher education funding this year and we are working with Senator Richard and Representative Flanigan on the potential for additional projects. However, I think it’s important to note that Senator Richard was recently elected President Pro Tem of the Senate, and as former Speaker of the House, he is the first person in Missouri history to hold the top spot in each Chamber of the General Assembly. And proudly, he is a Missouri Southern graduate!

Compliance – While I’m confident our athletic programs are operating in strict compliance with NCAA guidelines... these guidelines are fluid and changing rapidly. To stay current with our compliance efforts I have started meeting monthly with Rachel Burleson, our Compliance Officer. This will not only make sure we are staying current but it will meet one of the targets set forth in the “NCAA Blueprint Compliance Program” document.

MOCAP – As you will recall, the Missouri Center for Advanced Power was established on our campus as a joint venture with the University of Missouri, Missouri S & T, and Missouri State University. The goal was to create course work and conduct applied research geared toward “power and power storage.” Currently, all the coursework is in place and many pre-engineering and engineering students are finding it applicable (courses are online), but to date we have not been able to acquire grant funding for applied research. However, we were recently notified that two grant proposals have made second round review at the National Science Foundation (NSF). If funded, these grants would support research by post-doctoral students from MS&T and

provide operating funds for the dry room and lab space in the MOCAP facility (located in the Mills Anderson building on our campus). So, keep your fingers crossed.

Third Thursday – Missouri Southern again sponsored a bang up “Third Thursday” event yesterday and the whole campus deserves a thank you for their terrific participation, but we should single out the University Relations and Marketing group (URM) for the outstanding leadership they provided in putting the show together and the Physical Plant team for the detailed set up. They do a great job everyday but the effort that goes into events like Third Thursday are exceptional and deserve special recognition.

Great Game of Education – As Jeff Gibson and Scott Cragin continue to roll out the basic financial literacy training for campus, they took a couple of days to attend the Jack Stack’s “Great Gathering” in St. Louis and came back with a load of great information and new ideas, plus several contacts in the Great Game universe.

Also, Dr. Cragin submitted an overview of our Great Game approach to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) as a new model of shared governance and we are very interested to hear what they have to say in response.

University Council – In association with the Great Game, we now have established the University Council to take on some of the “campus wide policy and procedural” duties of the former President’s Council. The University Council will also serve as the “top huddle” in the Great Game reporting structure and will be responsible for monitoring progress via the university scoreboard.

However, to clarify duties, the University Council will not be dealing with private personnel issues, specific legal questions, or other day-to-day operations. Those activities will continue to run through our established reporting system utilizing the Department Chairs, Directors, Deans, and Vice-Presidents, and President. The University Committee charge is attached, along with a current membership list.