

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY
Board of Governors Minutes
March 14, 2025
BSC Boardroom

The March 14, 2025, 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, Dr. Benjamin Rosenberg, Alison Hershewe, Michael Seibert, Rod Hendricks and Maddox Studdard. Anita Oplotnik attended via conference call.

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

Unable to attend was Mariann Morgan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Haley called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and welcomed everyone. Governor Haley mentioned how much he enjoyed having Governor Kehoe on campus recognizing the future our students will be able to take part in due to the new building, facilities, services and opportunities.

MINUTES

Chairman Haley asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the January 10, 2025 Board meeting; none were noted.

A motion was made by Benjamin Rosenberg and seconded by T. Mark Elliott to approve minutes of the January 10, 2025 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.

We are honored that Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe accepted our invitation to be part of the "Topping Out" ceremony for the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center.

Campus Activities

Last weekend, our Division of Theatre presented multiple performances of Oscar Wilde's play: *The Importance of Being Earnest* in the Bud Walton Black Box Theatre. Under the direction of NaTasha O'Brian, our students delivered a brilliant performance that was enjoyed by many. Interestingly, the cast represented students from across campus, with main characters being played by students majoring in Marketing, Finance, Radiologic Technology, and Criminal Justice—as well as Theatre Performance.

The Spring Career Fair was held on campus on Wednesday. Over 100 businesses and organizations were in attendance to connect with our talented students and alumni. Thanks to Alex Gandy and colleagues in the Student Success Center for hosting a great event.

President (continued):

Last night, the Missouri Southern Foundation's annual Scholarship Dinner connected supporters of some of the 357 scholarship funds with their student recipients. This event exemplifies so well the impact that philanthropy has in providing opportunities for Missouri Southern students. One example of this impact is shown in the photo on page two of the Board report. Pictured is Mikala Berry, a secondary education English major from Riverton, Kansas. I first met Mikayla almost three years ago when she received the Golden Lion Scholarship. During her time at MSSU she has excelled, and most recently received the Henry Morgan Award. Charitable giving to support student scholarships is the greatest area of interest among donors in our current Lions Forward Campaign. The updated Campaign report finalized last week shows that \$13.9 million has now been committed in current and planned gifts to student scholarships.

Update on State Relations

The House Budget Committee, chaired by Representative Dirk Deaton, is engaged in shaping the House's FY2026 state budget. When we have more certainty on the state budget and projected enrollment for next year, we will begin to develop a budget proposal for the Board of Governors to consider at its June meeting.

We are seeking a concurrent resolution in the Missouri House and Senate to expand our current statewide mission of international education to also include immersive learning experiences and health and life sciences. The Senate approved SCR 3 on February 12, and last week the House Speaker referred HCR 6 to the Higher Education Committee. We are grateful for the support of our legislative delegation, especially Senator Jill Carter and Representative Cathy Jo Loy, in helping to move these efforts forward.

Willcoxon Innovation in Health Sciences Summit

The last item in my written report highlights the upcoming second annual Willcoxon Innovation in Health Sciences Summit, made possible by the generosity of Dr. Bob and Dot Willcoxon. This year's theme is Precision Health with the keynote speaker being Dr. Marilyn J. Heine, an accomplished physician and member of the American Medical Association Board of Trustees. A complete schedule is provided on page four of the Board report. The Summit, which is free and open to the public, is an amazing opportunity to learn about health innovations and the future of healthcare and health science.

Congratulations

Finally, I want to take the opportunity to congratulate Dr. Brad Hodson on his appointment to serve as the next President of Southeast Missouri State University effective July 1st. There will be other opportunities to thank Brad for his service and to wish him well, but for today I want to acknowledge this milestone in his career.

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.

Blunt Health Science Innovation Center

We've celebrated the Health Science Innovation Center today and hope you feel as if you have a thorough update on progress towards successfully completing that facility July of 2026.

Executive Vice President (continued):

Leggett & Platt Athletic Center

We are on schedule with contract negotiations and are moving that project along towards demolition beginning right after spring commencement. We are still expecting completion very early in 2026 and did come in on budget at \$3.2 million.

Lions Forward Campaign

Our goal for the fiscal year was to reach the \$37 million mark. We accomplished that in February. We are well on our way to reaching the \$42.7 million overall goal well ahead of the end of the campaign.

Collaboration with Quapaw Nation

A cross-section of faculty and staff are working with the Quapaw Nation to see where their interests and our academic and cultural interests intersect. We visited their headquarters and several of their facilities in January. They are going to return that favor with a visit later this spring. This relationship is proceeding very nicely and it's nice to bring new folks to campus and have them understand how we can work together to benefit both organizations.

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.

NWACC MOU

On March 10, MSSU and Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will facilitate the transfer of their students to our campus. Several (37) of our academic programs have also developed 2+2 agreements that outline what courses students should take in Bentonville and what courses they will take to complete the bachelor's degree here. Some of those include health care administration, social work, biology, environmental health and safety, business, communication, and teacher education.

Spider Tortoise Host Institution

MSSU has been officially designated as a host institution for the care, conservation, and breeding of two subspecies of the critically endangered Spider Tortoise. These tortoises are among the most endangered reptiles on the planet and are one of the smallest, growing to just around five inches in length. This initiative is part of a collaborative effort with Zoo Knoxville, a leader in reptile conservation, and presents an incredible opportunity for both our university and students. Our congratulations to Dr. David Penning for his hard work in securing this opportunity. In his words, "Other universities teach about conservation of endangered species, MSSU students perform it."

Rod Anderson Sport and Recreation Management Symposium

On February 26, the second Rod Anderson Sport and Recreation Management Symposium was held. The focus was on current issues in NCAA sports, specifically Name, Image, and Likeness and the transfer portal. There was a panel discussion over lunch. Jude Killey provided the keynote address that evening.

International Women's Day

The League of Lions and the Green Bandana Project hosted the Third Annual International Women's Day on March 12. This year's International Women's Day at Missouri Southern recognized and highlighted

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (continued):

the contributions of multicultural women within our faculty, staff, and student body, showcasing their achievements and impact through a “lioness” panel. It was an opportunity to network and celebrate the advancement of women.

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

FY2025 Audit

In March and April of each year, we begin work on the internal control questionnaires. We continue to review monthly account balance reconciliations. The audit includes the compliance section which is a review of Financial Aid and federal grants and awards. As part of the compliance section, the federal ARPA funding from the state for the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center will be an additional review.

FY2026 Budget

We continue our work on the fiscal year 2026 budget. Tuition revenue is examined for changes in enrolled credit hours, delivery method and the various rates charged. Both the fall and spring semesters reflect a small percentage overall decrease in credit hours. We are mindful of the discussion at the state regarding state appropriations. Compensation and benefits are our largest expenditure that currently includes the annual MOSERS retirement increase and the increase from minimum wage. Operating expenses include general increases in costs including insurance, bond payments, residence hall food service, travel, and software as well as some savings in a few areas. We will continue to build that budget to bring forward at the June meeting.

YourU Finances

We will have two more YourU Finance sessions in April where we will revisit some of the foundational information but will add some new layers. We will discuss the different tuition rates, credit hours, how it applies, and that it is just not a straight calculation of credit hours times one rate. We want to continue to build on the foundation and help the campus understand how credit hours equate to revenue and how it impacts our students.

Financial Services

Financial Services is working on a project, along with the Information Technology team, to move away from paper checks to ACH payments. It will take some time, but we are making headway. It will be great for our vendors as they receive faster payments, and it will help with efficiency in our office. We all know that postage is not getting any cheaper, so we're excited about this project.

Southern Summit

Yesterday, we celebrated Southern Summit, a professional development event. We had over 20 sessions ranging from student support leadership to new initiatives on campus. These sessions were offered by our university employees, peers and local experts. The keynote speaker was Alissa Owsley, and her topic was Curiosity as a Superpower. You may recall she was the commencement speaker last year at the May commencement ceremony. She did a great job, very engaging, very funny and made you think.

Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer (continued):

Presentation of the financial statements for the period ending February 28, 2025

Cash Graph:

Ms. Eis noted the cash balance for February 28, 2025 was \$25.8M. This was an increase of \$526k over the previous year.

Statement of Net Position:

Total Assets: \$206M

Total Liabilities: \$132M

Net Position: \$74M

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

- **Total Operating Revenues:** \$1.2M increase. This includes a \$1.4M increase in tuition offset by a decrease of \$705k from timing of state awards.
- **Total Operating Expenses:** \$4.6M increase. Compensation is up \$1.1M reflecting current year compensation adjustments and MOSERS increase of \$380k.
- **Non-Operating Revenues:** \$1.6M increase. This reflects a \$589k base increase in appropriations and Science to Jobs appropriations.
- **Income Before Other Revenues:**
Current Year: \$4.5M
Prior Year: \$6.3M
This results in a decrease from the prior year: \$1.8M.
- **Other Revenues:** Reflects an increase of \$10.4M that includes the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center appropriations and capital gifts.

A motion was made by T. Mark Elliott and seconded by Rod Hendricks to approve the February 28, 2025 financial statements as presented. Motion passed unanimously (a copy of the financial statements for February 2025 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.

Spring 2025 Enrollment Highlights

This spring we were slightly up in headcount compared to last year. Growth was observed in new freshman, transfer, and graduate student enrollments. Both resident and non-resident student numbers have grown, with non-resident students coming from 13+ states across the U.S. We also see continued growth in dual credit student enrollment.

Fall 2025 Recruitment Update

We continue to be active with on-campus and off-campus recruitment efforts, with faculty and staff engaging directly with prospective students and families. We've seen an increase in requests for group tours, including a visit from Classen SAS High School (Oklahoma City) highlighting STEM program interest and recently received a request from Neosho High School to bring 350+ sophomore students to campus on April 8th to learn more about MSSU. We've completed our Green and Gold Tour at Riverton High School, generating strong scholarship interest.

Assoc. VP of Admissions and Enrollment (continued):

International student recruitment is thriving. We continue to pursue new partnerships with institutions around the world including China and renewed agreements with existing partners like H. Lavity Stout (British Virgin Islands). Our first cohort of international graduate students admitted for the fall semester are enrolling in MS in Data Analytics, Justice Studies, and Sports & Recreation Management programs. The graduate students are from Ghana, Bangladesh, and Brazil. Undergraduate international admits are continuing as well and are from Kenya, Cameroon, Nepal, India, Canada, Vietnam, and more.

Strategic Enrollment Council (SEC) Update

The Strategic Enrollment Council launched our strategic enrollment plan for 2025 through 2028. This is a collaborative effort across the campus to align recruitment, marketing, enrollment, and advising. This plan aims to enhance enrollment growth through best practices and data driven decision making. It will focus on ensuring student success with resources and quality education.

New Student Emergency Grant Initiative

Finally, I just wanted to share that we launched a student emergency grant initiative this spring which is funded by the Lion Fee. The grant provides financial support to students facing unexpected hardships. It covers essential expenses such as housing, utility needs, foods, medical expenses, transportation issues, and childcare. It aims to remove financial barriers that might prevent students from continuing their education. From the day it was launched, we received an overwhelming response. We had 99 requests, and we were able to provide 56 students with grant funding.

Director of Athletics (Mr. Rob Mallory):

Note: Highlights of Mr. Mallory'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.

50 Years of Women's Athletics

We discussed previously that this year is the 50th anniversary of women's athletics at Missouri Southern. On the weekend of January 24th and 25th, we celebrated that milestone in grand fashion with more than 350 former female student athletes returning to campus. There were multiple events throughout that weekend including a dinner and social, a brunch event, recognition during our basketball games that Saturday, and a brunch on Saturday morning with the reading of a Missouri Senate proclamation from Senator Jill Carter. It was a great weekend, and we've gotten tremendously positive feedback about it. Undoubtedly, the highlight was seeing these women come back to campus to reunite, share memories, tell stories and have fun being back here at Missouri Southern.

Winter Sports Recap

This week we are wrapping up winter sports with our men's and women's indoor track and field teams participating in the Division II National Championship meet in Indianapolis. Those teams both finished fourth at the MIAA championships, highlighted by nine All-MIAA performances. Ten student athletes qualified for the indoor national championship meet, which is part of the Division II Winter Sports Championship Festival.

Udo-Gabriel Rewrites NCAA and MSSU Record Books

The standout performance was undoubtedly Joy Udo-Gabriel who, at the MIAA championship meet, shattered the all-time NCAA Division II record in the 60-meter dash. Joy is a sophomore sociology major from Nigeria who ran a blistering 7.13 seconds in the 60-meter dash. Actually, the fifth fastest time across

Director of Athletics (continued):

all levels of college athletics this year. She will compete in the finals tomorrow at 1:45 p.m. in Indianapolis.

Lion Pride Giving Challenge

The athletic department wrapped up our second annual Lion Pride Giving Challenge, an online campaign designed to generate philanthropic support for our athletic programs for specific projects and to allow us to provide the best student athlete experience possible. This was once again another successful campaign with more than 250 donors raising over \$100,000. Over the two years of this campaign, more than 500 gifts have been received and more than \$220,000 was raised for our student athletes.

Faculty Senate President (Dr. Michael Beilfuss):

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

Rob Mallory visited faculty senate where he very graciously answer many questions and withstood a mild grilling from a number of members. We're looking forward to continuing increased communication between faculty and athletics as I think it was productive. Thank you for visiting and sharing with us.

I'm anticipating some requests from faculty senate regarding compensation. One being clarity, a little more clarity in the handbook about some of the policies would be helpful. Second would be some recommendations from the welfare committee as far as prioritizing any potential raises. There's been a couple of categories that feel like they've been lacking for a while.

The other thing the faculty senate is working on, mentioned at the bottom of my report, is the emergency employee fund we're trying to restart. It exists already and is like the student emergency fund that you heard about earlier today, where funds are available to employees if they encounter an emergency that's not covered by anything else. Apparently, there is a fund that exists, but it has been forgotten about. We're trying to restart that committee and make it available again.

Staff Senate President (Ms. Leona Belk):

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

The MSSU Swag Swap shop, that I have mentioned in previous reports as being open, is ready with t-shirts, polo shirts, jackets, backpacks, jewelry, and bow ties. We are going to host an open house in April and with that open house, we're going to do a food drive for the co-op. The last time we were there, we noticed those shelves were a little bare. We want to make sure we're still providing for our students.

We started doing Points of Pride Pop-Ins two years ago, and since then have changed a few things. We were doing them every single month, but decided that it was a little much, so we cut back, and it's now recommended at least once a semester. Some staff senate members love them so much they still go out every month and visit with other staff members across campus. They like being able to get out to see if there's anything going on that we may not know about but also have a chance to have face-to-face interaction with staff members to see if there are any issues they may want to discuss with us. Thankfully that doesn't happen very often.

Staff Senate President (continued):

I want to end my report with some images I found of some of our staff, not just helping students, but also helping others across campus. One example you can see is a physical plant worker during the ice and snowstorm putting some rock salt out. We are very appreciative of everything that our faculty and staff do on campus.

Student Representative (Mr. Maddox Studdard):

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

The last few weeks have been crucial in preparing students for their future careers. With graduation coming sooner than expected for most, MSSU has been on top of getting students ready for life after college.

To start, Dress to Impress was hosted on February 26, in the Billingsly Ballroom. Dress to Impress is an event that helps students grab whatever professional attire they need for their next job interview. Students can choose from small accessories like jewelry and ties, to three-piece suits. All of this is provided at no cost, with no limit to the number of items students can take.

Dress to Impress is one of the events on campus that prepares students for the Spring Career Fair. The Spring Career Fair took place in Leggett & Platt Athletic Center this Wednesday, and it brought in more than 100 different companies and organizations. The opportunities these companies are offering include part-time, full-time, and internship work. This event provides students with a valuable opportunity to explore career paths and establish professional connections.

Another great event that was hosted at the beginning of this month was the "College to Career / Marketing Analytics" Panel. Students were given the choice to visit in person or join via Zoom. Marketing Professor, Aaron Baker, hosted the panel with guest speakers who specialized in Consumer Insight Research, Data Analytics, and a recent graduate who works for a local CPA group as a staff accountant. Panels like this are important to students in their junior and senior years because they learn about transitioning to a career after college.

Looking ahead, spring break begins next week, and students are eager for a well-deserved break. Whether heading home to see family or on an annual vacation, many are looking forward to the downtime before the final stretch of the semester. With these events behind them and more opportunities ahead, MSSU students are well on their way to successful career paths.

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

The committee did not meet. There is no report.

Academic Affairs (Benjamin Rosenberg, Acting Chair):

The committee approved new programs in Child Studies Certificate, Basic Language Competency Certificate and a Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies. These were approved by the committee without any conflict.

A motion was made by Benjamin Rosenberg and seconded by Alison Hershewe to approve the three new academic programs. Motion passed unanimously.

We reviewed the intellectual property policy that was approved by this board on March the 15th, 2024 with a motion to review this on a three-year cycle.

A motion was made by Benjamin Rosenberg and seconded by Alison Hershewe to approve changing the review period of the policy to a three-year cycle. Motion passed unanimously.

The committee reviewed the strategic enrollment plan. No action was deemed necessary.

Budget Audit Committee (Michael Seibert, Chair):

One of the items discussed, and is coming before the full board, is to expand the Lion Pride in-state tuition to include additional states.

A motion was made by Mike Seibert and seconded by Rod Hendricks to authorize the administration to expand Lion Pride in-state tuition to include the following states: Arizona, California, Florida, and Nevada for the fall 2025-2026 school year. Motion passed unanimously.

The final item discussed during the committee meeting was an overview of the graduate Lion Fee investments. No votes were taken, just information was shared.

OLD BUSINESS

Governor Haley thanked Dr. Van Galen for the opportunity he gave the Board for the immersive learning experience and to learn the athletic side of things.

NEW BUSINESS

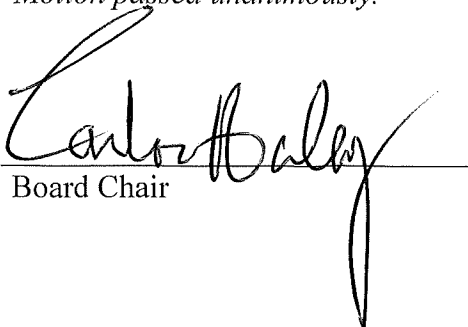
None was mentioned.

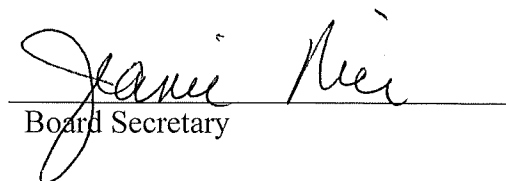
FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next meetings of the Board are as scheduled:

- June 12, 2025

A motion was made by Mike Seibert and seconded by Alison Hershewe to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.


Board Chair


Board Secretary