



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

R E P O R T

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DR. DEAN VAN GALEN

PRESIDENT

UNIVERSITY SEES INCREASE IN SPRING ENROLLMENT

Based on the official spring 2024 census, Missouri Southern saw a modest increase in enrollment compared to the spring 2023 semester. Specifically, compared to last spring:

- Headcount enrollment increased 4.7%
- Credit hours generated increased 4.8%

Continued progress on enrollment reflects the commitment of our faculty and staff to student recruitment and to helping our current students succeed.



YOURU SERIES OFFERED FOR STAFF AND FACULTY

In a new initiative, faculty and staff were invited to participate in YourU—a series of informal meetings to inform and engage employees on key aspects of the university. A total of four sessions on the following two topics were offered in January and February:

- **YourU: Finances**—an opportunity to learn about the university's revenues and expenditures, the impact of current and projected enrollment, and how these factors impact employee compensation, funds for facilities, etc. Thanks go to Linda Eis and Dr. Shellie Hewitt for leading these sessions.
- **YourU: Facilities**—an opportunity to learn about Missouri Southern's current and planned facilities, plans to upgrade facilities and address deferred maintenance, and the role of Facilities Services. Thanks go to Jeff Bowman (Director of Facilities Services) and Dr. Brad Hodson for leading these sessions.



Attendance of faculty and staff at YourU sessions exceeded 200.

GRATITUDE FOR SUPPORT OF JASPER COUNTY

On February 6 the Jasper County Commission approved a request to utilize \$1 million of the County's ARPA funds to support the Roy Blunt Health Science Innovation Center. This investment will enable Missouri Southern to offer extraordinary educational experiences to its students and help MSSU address critical workforce shortages in health care professions in Jasper County and the region. The university is extraordinarily grateful for this investment and for the vote of confidence in the university that this action represents.

UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS

Here are some examples of exciting events that we look forward to later this semester:



**Roy Blunt Health Science
Innovation Center Groundbreaking**

Thursday, April 11



**Earth Day Sustainability
Conference**

Thursday, April 18



World Music and Cuisine Festival

Saturday, April 20



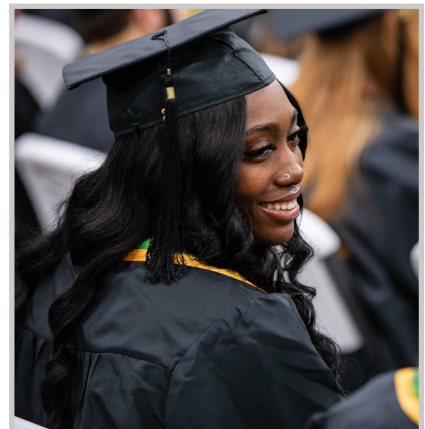
Student Research Symposium

Wednesday, April 24



**CAB Spring Concert
Plain White T's**

Friday, May 3



Spring Commencement

Saturday, May 11

DR. BRAD HODSON

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

HEARNES HALL



Work continues on 45,000 square-feet of office space on all three floors of Hearnese Hall to remediate water damage that occurred on the afternoon of Sunday, January 14, 2024. Facility Services staff were on site that evening to begin water removal with Blackmon Mooring of Tulsa, Okla. beginning work the next day to initiate moisture removal.

Eighty-five (85) staff with offices in Hearnese Hall relocated to new work spaces across campus on Wednesday, January 17. Once moisture was removed, furnishings from Hearnese Hall were relocated to storage in the Science Annex, completed by a moving company on January 31.

Repairs to the fire suppression system, the source of the water leak, were completed on February 6 and the sprinkler system brought back online that day.

Samples of the floor and ceiling tile on the second floor of Hearnese Hall, both original to building's 1967 construction, were sent off for testing soon after the water leak in anticipation of their removal and replacement. While the ceiling tile was found to NOT contain asbestos, the vinyl floor tile or VAT (vinyl asbestos tile) was found to contain the substance. As a result, on February 9, work on the building was suspended for almost two weeks while the VAT on the second floor was removed by an asbestos remediation vendor. This work was completed on February 21.

On February 21, installation of replacement insulation and wall repairs began. Larger sheetrock repairs continued through the end of February. The work now centers on replacement of floors and ceilings, which hinges on negotiations with the insurance company regarding the square-foot allowance for such materials.

The anticipated completion and move-in date for Hearnese Hall continues to be July 1, 2024.

Kudos to the Facility Services team, Information Technology, and University Police for facilitating the move-out of all staff and offices in just over 24 hours. We are also grateful to the impacted departments for their understanding and cooperation in the move and their patience as the university seeks to repair the damage done by this unforeseen accident. Special thanks also to Jeff Boman, director of Facility Services, for leading the remediation and renovation process in addition to his regular duties.

HEALTH SCIENCE INNOVATION CENTER

Work continues to design and construct a \$42 million, 65,000 square-foot campus facility to add immersive learning spaces in the health and life sciences and a welcome center. As of Monday, March 4, Corner-Greer Architects have completed the design development phase of the project that focused on floor plans, door locations, cabinetry, teaching resources, landscaping, etc. Just as with previous phases, “design development” included multiple opportunities for faculty and staff users of the completed building to provide input. The project now moves into the construction document phase with a milestone target of April 2024 for pier testing to begin. In mid-March, the university will receive another cost estimate from Crossland Construction that will help inform the project’s overall budget. Also in March, the university will issue an RFP for an “owner’s representative” to monitor construction through the building’s completion in summer 2026.

THREE-YEAR FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Multiple projects are ongoing in spring 2024 as part of the university’s Three-Year Facilities Improvement Plan. These include:

Young Gym Roof

The university has accepted a bid of \$263,000 for the repair of Young Gym roof. This is far below the \$625,000 allocated from reserves by the Board of Governors for this project. This lower bid price is because Jeff Boman recommended we engage a roofing consultant to help the university determine the scope of work. The initial estimate of \$625,000 was based on a complete tear-off of the roof, including the decking. The consultant indicated this was unnecessary, thus the savings in the scope of work.

Instructional Spaces

Bids have been accepted on two classroom spaces to be renovated this spring (*sculpture studio in Art 105 and tiered classroom in Reynolds 232*). A third project (*zoology lab in Reynold 119*) was put on hold because of budget concerns with the three projects. Construction begins soon with a target completion date of this summer.

Billingsly Restrooms

Initial design conversations have occurred with the university’s on-call architect regarding a complete demolition and renovation of the men’s and women’s restrooms on the third floor of Billingsly Student Center near the ballroom. This work will occur this summer after the event season of April and May has concluded in BSC.

Science Annex Trailers

Negotiations continue with a local entity on acquisition of the trailers MSSU used as science labs during the renovation of Reynolds Hall. The university will convey ownership of the trailers to that entity for \$1 and they would bear the cost of relocation this summer, if the deal goes through. Given Missouri Southern is using those trailers as storage for furnishings from Hearnest Hall, we’ll work carefully with our partner to ensure both organizations’ needs are met in the transition.

DR. LISA TOMS

PROVOST / VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

HONORS PROGRAM

- In November, Dr. Howarth and Dr. Jensen gave a presentation at the National Collegiate Honors Conference titled “Teaching the Margins in the Honors Classroom.”
- The Honors Program welcomed 10 Honors students from NEO to our campus to learn more about our program.
- In February, Dr. Howarth delivered a presentation titled “MSSU Honors: The Honors Experience” at the Suitable Honors Mini-Con, during which he shared how the Honors Program is getting students engaged on our campus.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH, LIFE SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

- On February 14, Melinda Brown, the Director of the Gipson Center for Healthcare Leadership, and Abby Bishop, a Regional Admissions Counselor, addressed a group of over 100 students from Joplin High School’s business classes. During this session they discussed the Admissions process and provided insights about pursuing a bachelor’s degree in healthcare administration.



- On February 23, the Respiratory Care Program received a V/N500 Ventilator. This device was donated to the program from Draeger- a company known for their role in the healthcare device industry. Devices like this one typically cost \$30,000 and is outfitted to serve both adults and neonates. We are very grateful!

- On February 16, the Allied Health programs, including Healthcare Administration, Radiology, EMS, Respiratory, and Dental Hygiene, were present at the Carthage Technical Fair. The event drew over 800 students. Melinda Brown, the Director of Healthcare Leadership, participated in conducting Mock Interviews for the students.



- In January, Dr. Beals was a keynote speaker in the nationally syndicated podcast “Raise the Line” from Osmosis/Elsevier. She was introduced as a pioneer in the field of Virtual Reality use in Nursing Education.
- The application period for the Fall 2025 **Nursing** cohort is ongoing. At present, there are 31 qualified applicants.
- The Department of Nursing recently met with CoxHealth-Barton County,

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Mercy-Joplin, and Freeman Health System Nursing administration and received letters of full support for the proposal to implement a spring cohort admission.

- The Rural Citizens Access to Telehealth (RCAT) grant is a \$409,928.00 grant that is funded through MoHealth Net. The grant provides dental screenings, sealants, oral hygiene instructions and fluoride treatments to local elementary schools with diverse populations of children with higher economical needs and less access to dental care. We are currently serving the Avilla, Jasper, Neosho, and Sarcoxie districts but hope to spread in the future. The Dental Hygiene grant was received on February 1. It is a three-year grant. This grant provides MSSU **Dental Hygiene** students immersive learning opportunities. It gives them experience with community involvement by providing services to elementary students. They look forward to creating a sustainable program for years to come and providing care to our community.



- The first Rod Anderson Sport and Recreation Management Symposium was hosted on Friday, February 23. Over 50 people from the campus community and the Joplin region attended the inaugural symposium and gained valuable information from the two keynote speakers: Dr. Jay Coakley and Mr. Jared Bruggeman. Dr. Jay Coakley started the event with a lecture regarding the power of sports in the community and how sports programs must be intentionally designed to promote community development. Following the Q & A for Dr. Coakley, Mr. Jared Bruggeman presented a case study on how to rebrand an organization and the steps that he and the Joplin Sports Authority took to rebrand the organization in the community.

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

- Spiva Art Gallery hosted the “In We Buy Houses” exhibit by JSTN CLMN January 23-February 21. The exhibit investigates housing insecurity and issues of gentrification through a selective assessment of material and visual language of a neighborhood in transition, in economic flux, and tension of decline and development.



- League of Lions Social Work students volunteered at the 24th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on February 5.



- Dr. Hannah Dow and five creative writing students attended the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) conference in Kansas City, MO in early February. During this conference, they attended various panels where they listened to writers discuss their motivations, writing process and techniques, and themes they tackle in their writing.

- On Thursday, February 22, the Social Work program celebrated students in the top 33% of their cohort for academics and who committed to service leadership. These students were inducted into Phi Alpha Honor Society. Current officers and members led the ceremony and shared the history and mission of this nationally recognized Social Work Honor Society.

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- Concert Band held their Winter Concert “Fracas” on Thursday, February 22. They performed with Music faculty, alumni, and future Lions.
- On March 1, the Division of Theatre hosted its 1st Annual Spring High School Theatre Workshop. Seventy-five students from area high schools took part in workshops focused on auditions, performance, and technical theatre. After the workshops, students enjoyed a performance of “The Great Gatsby.”
- The Division of Theatre performed “The Great Gatsby” February 29 - March 2. The performances were well attended.



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

- On February 7, the PSB hosted the FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) district contest. About 450 high school students participated. FBLA is the largest business career & technical student organization in the world, dedicated to preparing students for careers in business.
- Plaster School of Business students were invited to hear two recent graduates talk about the good, bad, and ugly of applying, interviewing, and networking for full-time careers on February 24.
- On February 24, the Missouri SBDC at MSSU in collaboration with the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce, hosted a training called “AI Mythbusting Panel Discussion.” Dr. Sarah Holtzen, Assistant Professor of Management was one of the panelists.
 - Throughout the event, participants had the opportunity to engage with industry experts and gain valuable insights into the practical applications of AI in businesses and personal use.
 - The event was attended by a diverse audience, including entrepreneurs, business owners, students, academics, and tech enthusiasts. Their enthusiasm and curiosity about the future of business made the event truly dynamic and engaging.
- The MSSU Math department continued a 56-year tradition: six times a year, high school students are invited to campus for a math competition. The idea is to give strong math students a challenge that they might not get at school. Our last meeting is an awards banquet to recognize the leading schools and individuals. Attendance is the highest it’s ever been at approximately 300 students.



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- The Plaster School of Business Dean’s Student Advisory Council met on February 28. The meeting included discussions about an end-of-semester event to foster a sense of community and camaraderie in the PSB.



- Mrs. Lisa Green Olliges attended CTC College & Career Fair and represented the Department of Communication.
- Mrs. Claudia Wilson, interim chair of Technology, attended the Carl Junction High School Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee meeting to provide insight into preparing students for careers in Engineering.

- Ethan Hoover, a Communication Major, received the \$3,000 MBA (Missouri Broadcaster Association) Foundation Scholarship. He has served as a videographer for Tupelo Honey during NCAA productions. After graduation, Ethan plans to pursue a video production job at a television station.

- The Communication Department had seven entries and won two prizes at the 2024 American Advertising Awards from the American Advertising Federation. This is an annual regional advertising award that many regional universities participate in, such as Missouri State University, Pittsburg State University, Drury University, Evangel University, and Ozark Technical Community College. The first award was an audio public service announcement (PSA), entitled ‘Golden Paw’ created by student Shawnda Casner. The second was a social media campaign project, ‘One Joplin’ created by Makenzie Puriton, Haylee Smith, Corbin Beal, Oscar Campa, and Chad Anderson. The ADDY Award Ceremony took place on March 2 at Downstream Casino. The awards ceremony is a wonderful opportunity to network with professionals.



LINDA EIS

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

SOUTHERN SUMMIT



Southern Summit, a Missouri Southern Human Resource professional development event, was held on Friday, March 1. We had 18 informative sessions from campus experts with over 190 participants. The sessions highlighted academic programs, campus vibrancy, cybersecurity, international student engagement, student support and other engaging topics. Our keynote speaker over the lunch session spoke about the power of Positive Leadership and how as leaders we set the tone and have a tremendous impact on our team. Leaders empower their team to succeed as a whole but also individually. Congratulations to the Human Resource team, Information Technology, Facility Services and room volunteers for their contributions to this great event. A special thank you goes to Laura Switzer for organizing and planning the event.

YOURU (YOUR UNIVERSITY)



As the President mentioned in his report, employees had an opportunity to engage in a series of presentations to learn more about our university. The finance sessions included information on our sources of revenue and how those resources are expended. We shared factors such as enrollment fluctuations and how legislative decisions on state support impact the budget. We discussed rising costs in insurance, MOSERS and utilities and how those increases along with other variables are incorporated in to the budget. The sessions included a presentation but most importantly allowed for extended time to have informal questions and discussion.

FY2024 AUDIT

The audit preparation is a year-round process with account reconciliations prepared on a monthly basis. This work gives us a good foundation for our prompt year-end close and to prepare for the annual audit. In March, we will work on internal control questionnaires and begin to outline the timeline for the compliance and finance reviews. The compliance section will examine Financial Aid and federal grants and awards. The finance portion will include review of all general ledger activity and the management of those transactions.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET

We continue working on the fiscal year 2025 budget. Tuition revenue will be examined for changes in enrolled credit hours, delivery method and the various rates charged. Both the fall and spring semesters reflect a positive change with an increase in credit hours. We continue to be mindful of the discussion at the state regarding state appropriations. As we move through fiscal year 2024, we monitor expenditures for increased costs as well as possible savings.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Presentation of the financial statements for the period ending February 29, 2024.

Lions **Forward**. Lions **Together**.



DR. SHELLIE HEWITT

DEAN OF ADMISSIONS

TELLING OUR STORY

University Marketing is telling Missouri Southern's story with organic social media campaigns, updated billboards, digital marketing, and biweekly stories. Several points of emphasis include:

- **New Scholarship Offerings** – MOSO Merit and new transfer scholarships paired with our immersive learning opportunities make us a first-choice institution.
- **Student Life** – a growing vibrant campus with strong student life.
- **Health Sciences** – We are the go-to in the region for health science offerings and our department should be known for it.
- **Graduate Programs** – New graduate programs in Data Analytics and Healthcare Administration will help create a new reputation as a first-choice destination for graduate education.



BACHELORS OR MASTERS IN
HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION



MASTERS IN
DATA ANALYTICS



BACHELORS IN
PERFORMING ARTS

FIND YOUR **PURPOSE**

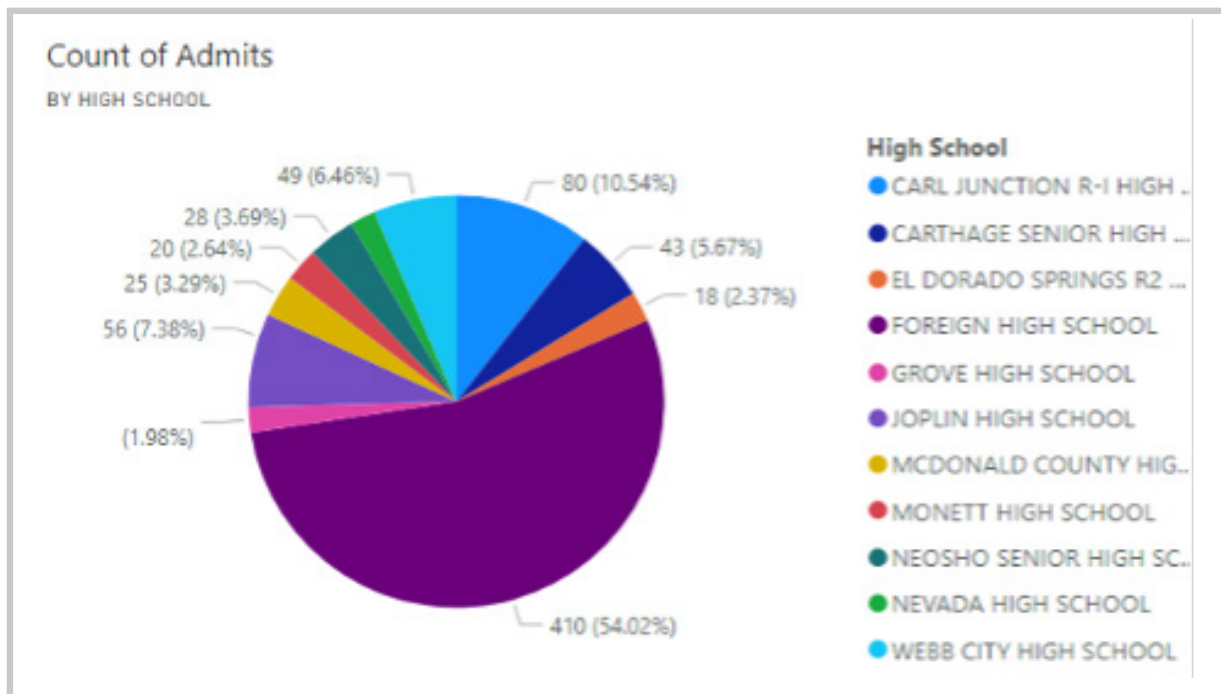
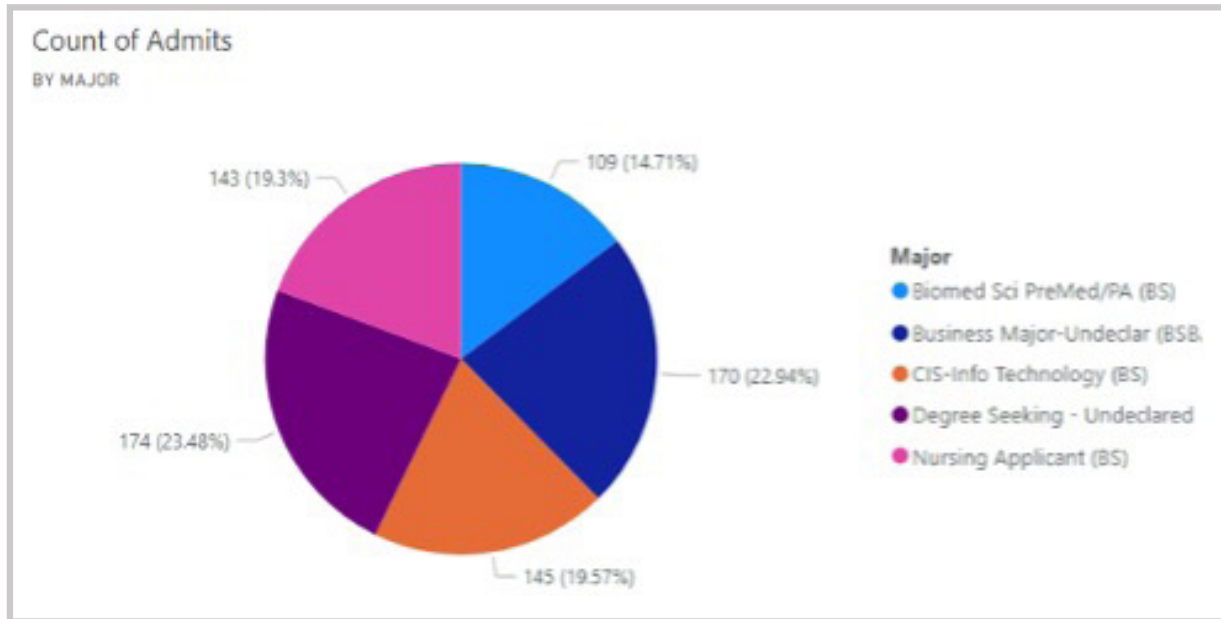


MSSU

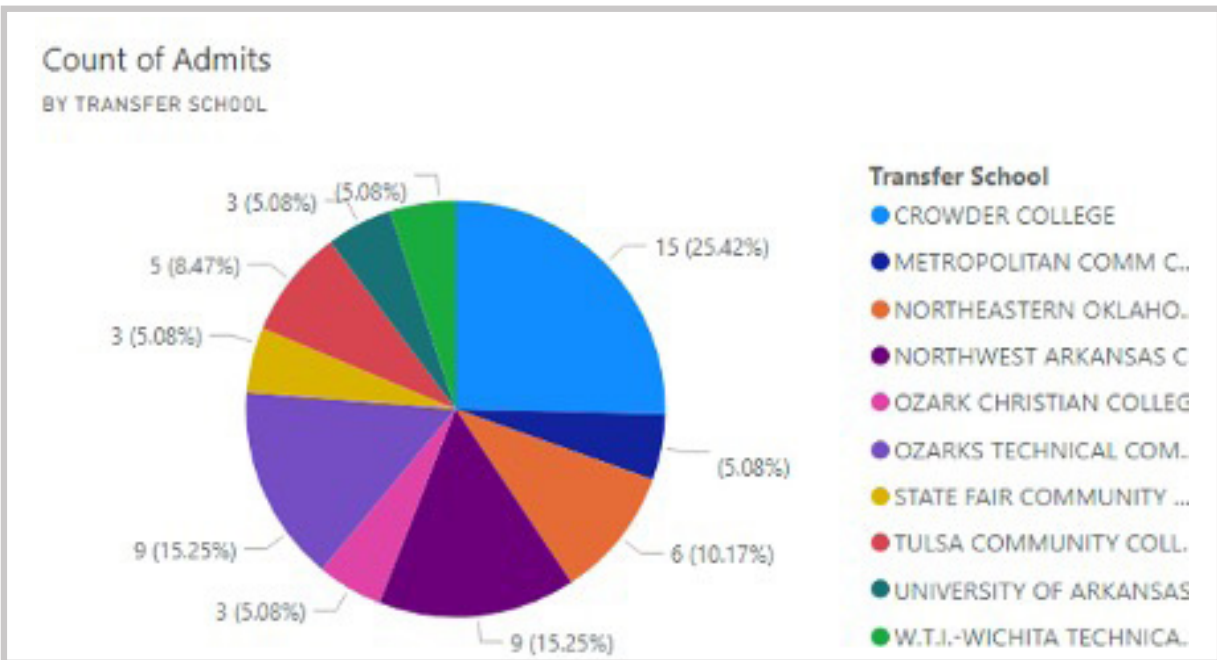
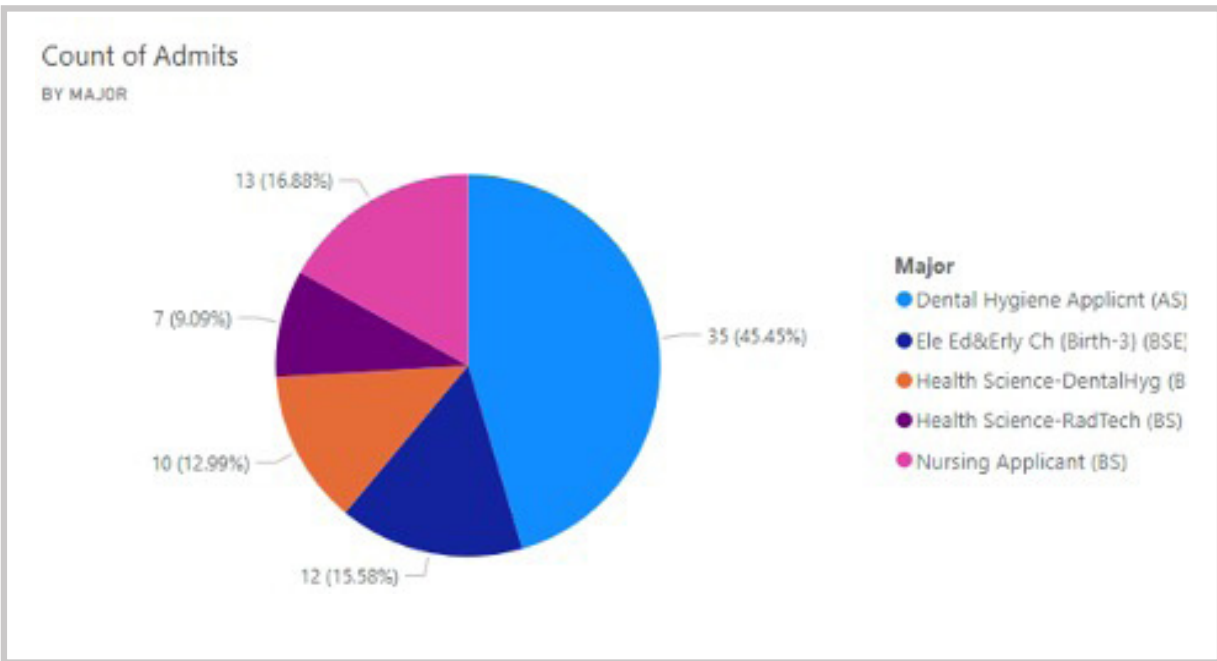
Additionally, we have expanded our online advertising by analyzing current initiatives and increasing our YouTube advertising, which was one of the strongest paid markets this past academic year. Furthermore, building off the success of last spring's transfer ad success, we're increasing our scholarship marketing initiatives.

FALL 2024 ADMISSIONS HIGHLIGHTS

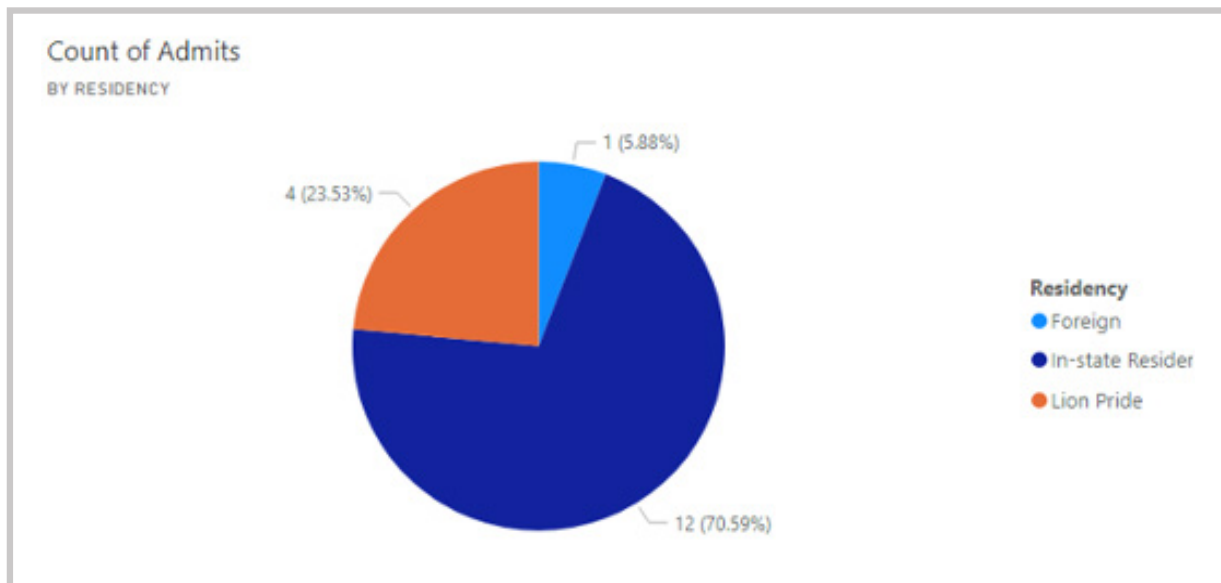
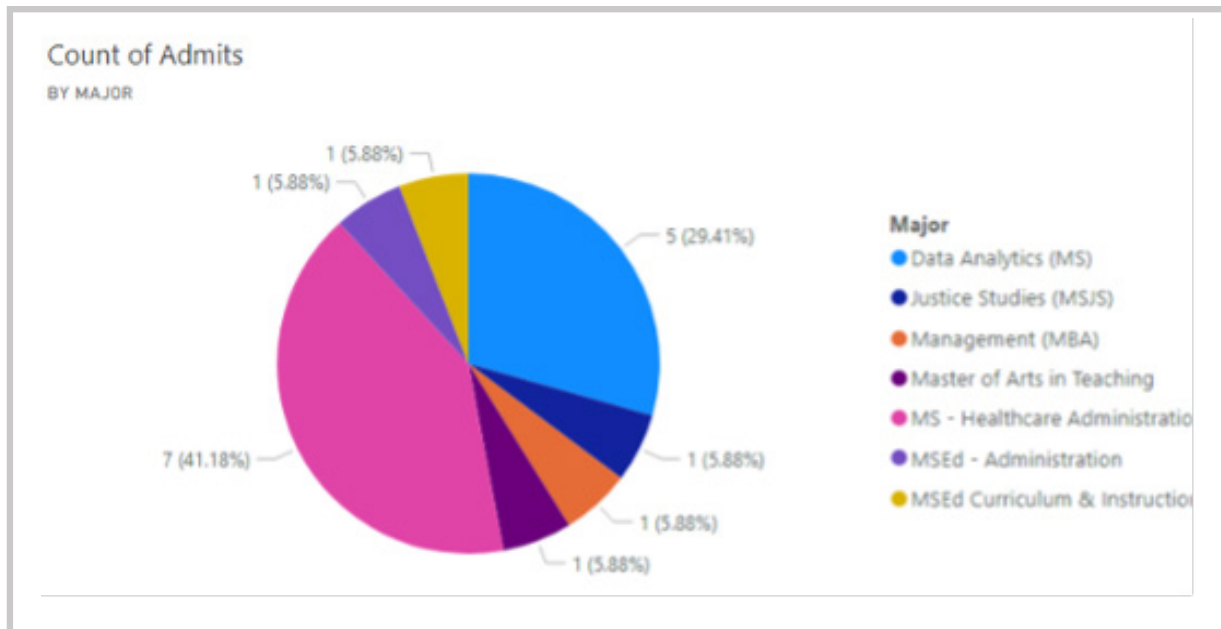
Recruitment initiatives are showing a positive upward trend for fall 2024. At present, first-time freshman admits are up 13%. Below you will see the top programs freshman are interested in and the top ten high schools our freshman hail from.



Likewise, our new transfer student admit data is also trending in the right direction. We are up 7% in new transfer admits. Below you will find the top transfer majors and the transfer schools our students are coming from.



Finally, new graduate student admits are up significantly compared to last year and the data showing students by major as well as residency is below.



ROB MALLORY

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

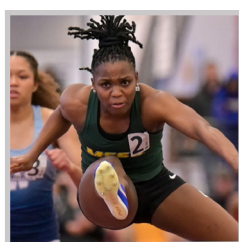
WINTER SPORTS SUCCESS

The winter sports season has been a successful one for Lion student-athletes in the sports of basketball and track & field.

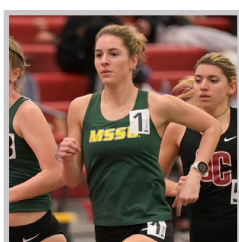
After being picked fifth and seventh in the preseason coaches and media polls, the **women's basketball** team finished the regular season tied for second in the MIAA standings with a 16-6 conference record, identical to last season. Against the toughest schedule in the country, the Lions finished the regular season with an overall record of 20-8 and entered the MIAA tournament as the #4 seed. This marks the third consecutive 20-win season for the program, a feat that had not been accomplished since a 1992-1996 run of four straight such seasons.

The **men's basketball** team ended their regular season with an overall record of 13-15 while going 11-11 in MIAA conference play. For the 26th consecutive season, the Lions qualified for the MIAA tournament and entered the event as the #4 seed.

The **men's and women's track & field** programs earned second and fifth place finishes, respectively, at the MIAA championships. Eight individuals earned All-MIAA honors at the meet, led by conference champions **Ashyiria Savage** (women's 60m hurdles), **Riley Vickrey** (women's 3,000m), **Jon Watts** (men's long jump), **Mallory Huber** (women's weight throw), and **Peyton Barton** (men's weight throw). Nine student-athletes qualified for the NCAA Indoor Track & Field National Championship meet, which will be held in Pittsburg, KS on March 8-9.



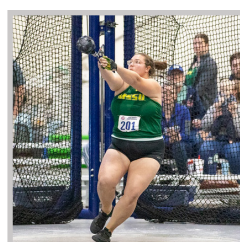
Ashyiria Savage



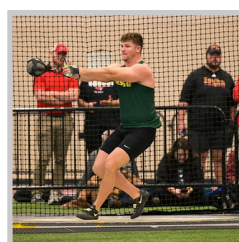
Riley Vickrey



Jon Watts



Mallory Huber



Peyton Barton

Peyton Barton has put together one of the more historic seasons in MSSU Indoor Track & Field history with his performance in the weight throw event. He was named MIAA Men's Field Athlete of the Week six consecutive weeks, which accounted for every week in which he was eligible to receive the honor. He broke the school record in the event on four occasions, including setting new MSSU and MIAA records in the conference championship meet. He currently ranks second in NCAA Division II history. Barton competed at the USA Track & Field Indoor National Championship meet in Albuquerque, NM, where he finished 4th competing against some of the best throwers in the country within and outside of the collegiate ranks.

INAUGURAL LION PRIDE GIVING CHALLENGE



The MSSU athletic department, in coordination with the development office and Missouri Southern Foundation, conducted our first ever “giving challenge” from February 26 – March 4. Each athletic program identified a goal and priority or project they sought to fund through the event. Driven largely by sharing on social media, these types of philanthropic initiatives have become commonplace in higher education and intercollegiate athletics. While not every program achieved their initial goal, the event was a big success for the department, generating \$120,917 in funding from 285 donors.

SPRING SPORTS OFF TO A FAST START

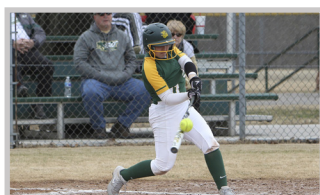


The spring sports season kicked off on February 1 when the **baseball** team defeated #17 Southern Arkansas in Hot Spring, AR. The **softball** team opened the next day, also in Hot Springs, with a 9-1 win over Southwestern Oklahoma State. With both programs coming off outstanding 2023 seasons, expectations are high as baseball was picked #2 and softball #3 in the MIAA preseason coaches polls. While early, it has been a busy and successful spring to date, as the two programs are a combined 32-8 as of this writing and have already hosted 16 games in Joplin at Warren Turner Field and the Pat Lipira Softball Complex. Baseball is currently 17-4 and ranked #8 by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association, while softball is off to a 15-4 start.

On March 3, the MSSU baseball program crowned a new all-time hits leader when Henry Kusiak hit a run-scoring single in the fourth inning vs. Newman. It was Kusiak’s 258th career hit, breaking the record previously held since 1992 by David Fisher. Kusiak is a senior shortstop from Round Lake, IL and will graduate in May with a degree in Biology.

NCAA CONVENTION RECAP

The NCAA Convention was held January 10-13 in Phoenix, AZ. During the Division II business session, the membership considered and took action on four legislative proposals. Of note, the membership approved a proposal that adds one week to the permissible football playing season and defeated a proposal that would have guaranteed every conference representation in the Division II football championship bracket. Football schools now have 12 weeks in which to play 11 games, and no changes have been made to the championship qualification and bracketing procedures.



Additionally, during their annual in-person meetings at the Convention, the Division II National Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) elected MSSU softball student-athlete and MIAA National SAAC representative **Kara Amos** as Vice-Chair for the 2024-25 academic year.