

MISSOURI SOUTHERN

STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE

August 25, 2026

Dear Members of the Board of Governors,

The Faculty Senate is pleased to provide the following update at the start of what is going to be another great year at Missouri Southern!

First Faculty Senate Meeting of 2026-2027

At the time of writing this, we are approaching the first Faculty Senate meeting of the 2026-2027 Academic Year. Although we will have already hosted that meeting at the time of the BOG Meeting, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee is preparing for what will surely be another great year marked by collaboration, engagement, and communication across colleges, departments, and disciplines.

Updated Syllabi Shared via Blackboard

At the previous BOG Meeting, it was shared that Faculty Senate had been working alongside Digital Learning to implement a system within Blackboard that would allow all University policies to be included automatically in the Blackboard site for each course. This transition has been well-received by faculty, and Faculty Senate is grateful to Scott Snell and his team in Digital Learning for making this such a seamless transition for all.

New Faculty Service Award

Last year, Faculty Senate approached Dr. Van Galen and Dr. Toms about the possibility of offering a new Faculty award in addition to those awards already recognizing Outstanding Teachers and Outstanding Advisors. Dr. Van Galen and Dr. Toms were both supportive and interested in recognizing those faculty members whose contributions to Missouri Southern are great, despite many of those contributions not falling in the specific categories of advising or teaching. At the All-Faculty Welcome Back Meeting in August, Dr. Toms announced that Mr. Brian Mehrens, Communication Department, was the deserving recipient of this award in its inaugural year.

Upcoming Faculty Senate Initiatives

With this year in mind, Faculty Senate will continue its work from the previous school year regarding several initiatives. Those items include collaborating with UCPC to create an official “waitlist” procedure for students wishing to enroll in closed courses, a newly developed guide for Robert’s Rules of Order for use in an effort to improve Faculty Senate meeting efficiency, and renewed faculty interest in professional development. These initiatives, as well as the others that will arise throughout the upcoming year, serve as evidence that Faculty Senate will continue to benefit from continuing the high levels of engagement seen in the last year.

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Conclusion

In reflecting upon the previous year, and looking ahead to this year, it is evident that there is much to be proud of regarding Faculty Senate's accomplishments and upcoming initiatives. We are grateful for your continued support and look forward to another year in which shared governance and communication are fostered. We appreciate the Board's support as we work to represent all faculty in a way that strengthens the university and its endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,

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