

## **JAMES E. COFER, SR.**

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **President**

##### **Missouri State University**

August 1, 2010 – Present – Springfield, MO

Missouri State University is a public, comprehensive university system with a mission in public affairs, whose purpose is to develop educated persons. Missouri State is the second-largest university in the state with an enrollment of nearly 23,000 on its three campuses in Springfield (selective admissions), Mountain Grove (research campus), and West Plains (separately-accredited two-year campus). The University has nearly 150 undergraduate programs and 42 graduate programs, including two doctoral degrees, organized in six academic colleges.

#### **President**

##### **University of Louisiana at Monroe**

March 28, 2002 – July 31, 2010 – Monroe, Louisiana

President of a comprehensive regional institution granting bachelors, masters, specialist, and doctoral degrees. The University of Louisiana at Monroe offers degrees in the following colleges: College of Health Sciences; College of Business Administration; College of Education and Human Development; College of Arts and Sciences; and College of Pharmacy.

The following are few examples of the accomplishments during my administration;

- Elementary Education math program rated one of the top ten in the country by the National Council on Teacher Quality
- Rated as a top twenty research program in the social sciences by American Analytics
- Engaged faculty in a redesign of instructional pedagogy for freshman gateway courses
- Planned and implemented 68 new technologically state of the art “smart” classrooms
- Increased on-line and distance learning academic programming
- Developed the School of Visual and Performing Arts
- Eliminated an inherited \$4 million deficit in auxiliary and athletic operations
- Received the largest increase in student satisfaction of all schools in Louisiana for four consecutive years
- Planned, designed, and implemented a \$70 million Residence Hall construction program
- Developed an institutional strategic plan with full faculty involvement and leadership

- Achieved first increase in enrollment in eight (8) years, continued by two additional years of enrollment increases, a 42% increase in the freshman class, 40% increase in state scholarship eligible students, two point increase in average freshman ACT scores
- Increased Philanthropic support by 20% last year and 24% in the current year
- Improved the image and perception of ULM within the community and the media.
- Integrated a new two-year community college onto the campus

### **Vice President for Finance and Administration**

#### **UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI SYSTEM**

September 1, 1998 to March 27, 2002 - Columbia, Missouri

Chief fiscal and administrative officer of a multi-campus system of higher education, including a land-grant institution and a multi-disciplinary health sciences campus. The UM System has an enrollment of over 54,000 students and an operating budget of more than \$1.9 billion. With 46 schools, colleges and divisions and a physical plant valued at over \$1 billion. The UM System employs more than 20,000 people.

Reporting directly to the president responsibilities of the position include: budget development, finance and treasury operations, strategic planning, risk management, debt management, operating budget of more than \$1.5 billion, capital budget, financial systems, facilities, economic development, insurance and real property, financial aid, physical plant/construction, auditing, and other business and administrative services affecting the entire University. Also serves as a general officer of the University of Missouri System.

Manage the economic development enterprises of the university including a 200+ acre research park with adjoining golf course in the research corridor west of St Louis, Missouri.

Oversee the \$2.4 billion Retirement Trust Fund, \$700 million Endowment Fund and \$600 million in short-term cash.

Managed the University of Missouri Health Science Center activities for the Board of Curators. Advise the president and the Board of Curators on all matters pertaining to the administrative affairs of the University.

### **Vice President for Finance and Administration**

#### **UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SYSTEM**

July 1, 1995 to August 1998 - Little Rock, Arkansas

Chief fiscal and administrative officer of a multi-campus system of higher education, including a land-grant institution, a multi-disciplinary health sciences campus, a historically black college, a regional campus, and three two-year colleges.

Responsibilities included: budgeting, accounting, and reporting approximately \$1 billion; development of appropriate state level funding mechanisms; management of all risk management activities, an optional retirement program; and leadership of all system institutions in financial, human resources, and administrative areas.

Managed the system's managed-care health insurance initiative in conjunction with the University of Arkansas Medical Science Center.

Coordinated the facilities planning activities at all system units including: master planning,

renovation, construction, and financing.  
Developed and implemented investment policies and procedures for the management of the system's \$600 million in endowments.  
Worked extensively with the legislature and their committees and the various state agencies, such as: the Arkansas Department of Higher Education; Department of Finance and Administration; State Building Services, and others.

**Eisenhower Fellow**

**EISENHOWER EXCHANGE FELLOWSHIP, INC.**

September 1995 to January 1996 - Budapest, Hungary

In conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Hungarian Rector's Conference and the higher education community, developed: 1) a funding formula for Hungarian higher education institutions, and 2) an organization structure for multi-campus, multi-disciplinary institutions in Hungary to reverse the effects of the previous communist regime.

**Vice Chancellor for Fiscal Affairs and Treasurer of the Board of Regents**

**THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

January 1991 to July 1995 - Atlanta, Georgia

Chief fiscal officer for a higher education system of 34 institutions which included four major universities, a free-standing medical school 13 regional colleges, and 16 two-year colleges; responsible for annual expenditures of \$1.8 billion; maintained a consolidated self-funded health and life insurance program, and an optional retirement plan for professional employees.

Supervised the investment management of over \$100 million trust and endowment funds.

Developed and implemented policy in the areas of: finance, accounting, resource allocation, legislative and executive branch interaction, human resources, auxiliary services, and physical plant.

Served as liaison and was the principal contract negotiator between the Board of Regents and the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games. Responsible for the planning and construction of the Olympic Village and oversight of the swimming, soccer, boxing, volleyball, sailing, and badminton venues.

Worked with the legislature and the City of Atlanta on such topics as Olympic development, downtown revitalization, and annual appropriations to all units of the University System of Georgia.

**Treasurer**

**MISSISSIPPI POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY**

September 1987 to December 1990 - Jackson, Mississippi

Managed the \$4 billion capital structure including the refinancing of approximately \$600 million in mortgage bonds and the issuance of \$100 million in common stock.

Served as the company representative on several parent company committees including: cash management, information systems, corporate restructuring and strategic planning.

Provided direct leadership in the functional areas of budget and forecasting, information systems, computer operations, cash management, and treasury operations.

**Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services and Treasurer  
MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY**

May 1985 to September 1987 – Murray, Kentucky

Provided direct leadership in the functional areas of accounting, budget, human resources, physical plant, purchasing, auxiliaries, and information systems; managed a self-insured health insurance program for all employees.

Managed the university's long-term debt including issuance of revenue bonds.

Served as liaison for the university with all governmental and regulatory bodies.

Managed the university budget from development through implementation and control.

Turned a Disclaimer of an Opinion on the annual audit to an Unqualified Opinion in less than two years.

Managed the institution's and the foundation's endowment portfolios.

**Chief Fiscal Officer**

**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**

June 1981 to May 1985 – Jackson, Mississippi

Served as the state budget director for two governors.

Developed, implemented and controlled the official state budget.

Supervised the centralized purchasing operations of all commodities used by state government.

Administered a 150,000-member self-funded health and life insurance program.

Managed the unemployment compensation trust fund for the state.

Managed the state's general obligation bond program.

Directed the centralized accounting function.

Directed administrative committees that controlled the investment of state funds, law enforcement and firefighter's academies, the state's real property.

Developed and directed the state's first telecommunications office.

**Director of Financial Analysis and Management Information**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING**

July 1977 to June 1981 – Jackson, Mississippi

Responsible for development of short-term and long-term fiscal policy for Mississippi's higher education system.

Served as the liaison to legislative and executive offices on issues dealing with fiscal matters in higher education, including testimony before legislative committees.

Developed formula funding methodologies to fund the higher education system.

Supervised the analysis of university operational, capital and athletic budgets.

## **RELATED TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

University of Louisiana at Monroe Graduate Faculty  
Adjunct Faculty - Department of Educational Leadership, University of Missouri-Columbia  
Adjunct Graduate Faculty - University of Arkansas at Little Rock-Current  
Instructor, School of Business - Mississippi College  
Assistant Professor, School of Business - Murray State University  
Adjunct Graduate Faculty, Department of Finance, General Business and Computer Science - Jackson State University  
Instructor, Computer Science Department - Mississippi State University

## **EDUCATION:**

### **UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK**

Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration, December 1998

Dissertation: A Decade of Indifference: The Effects of Federal Financial Aid Policy from 1987 to 1996 on Within-Year Persistence of Four-Year Undergraduate Students

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Melvane Hardee Dissertation of the Year Award

### **MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY - Mississippi State, Mississippi**

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, 1971

*Double Major:* Accounting, Business Statistics and Data Processing

Master of Business Administration, 1975

Postgraduate study in Accounting, Economics and Computer Science, 1975-1978

## **PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

Somers, P., Woodhouse, S., Cofer, J. (Spring, 2004), Pushing the Boulder Uphill: The Persistence of First-Generation College Students. NASPA Journal.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (2000). Performance Funding: Promise or Curse? Journal of Student Financial Aid, 31 (2).

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (2000). Within-year persistence of students at two-year colleges. Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 24 (10).

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (2000). A Comparison of the Influence of Debtload on the Persistence of Students at Public and Private Colleges. Journal of Student Financial Aid, 30 (2).

Cofer, J., Bourne, B., & Gates, L. (2001). Setting Strategic Directions Using Critical Success Factors. Planning in Higher Education, 28 (4).

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (2000). Mortgaging their Future: Student Debtload in the U. S. United States Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (2000). An analytical approach to understanding student debtload response. Journal of Student Financial Aid, 29 (1).

Cofer, J., Bourne, B., & Gates, L. (August, 1999) A New Paradigm in Strategic Planning for Quality Improvement. Paper presented at the European Association of Institutional Research. Lund, Sweden.

Cofer, J. (March, 1999). A comparison of the persistence by income level: 1986-1996. Paper presented at Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. San Antonio.

Somers, P., Cofer, J., Martin Hall, M., & Vander Putten, J. (2000). The persistence of African American college students: How national data inform a Hopwood-proof retention strategy. In Gregory, S. (Ed.), The Academic Achievement of Minority Students: Comparative Perspectives, Practices, and Prescriptions. New York: University Press of America.

Somers, P., Cofer, J., Martin Hall, M., & Vander Putten, J. (1999). A comparison of the persistence of African American and white students using NPSAS: 96. Paper presented at Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference. San Antonio.

Somers, P., Cofer, J., DeAngelis, S., Cook, J. (1999). Buddy, can you spare a dime? Loans, debt, and graduate education. Virginia Education Review, 1(1).

Cofer, J. & Somers, P (1999, June). Deeper in Debt: The Effect of the 1992 Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act on Within-Year Persistence. Association for Institutional Research, Seattle.

Cofer, J. (1999, May). The Evolution of the Investment Manger Search Process. Presented to the Southern Employment Fringe Benefit Association, Atlanta.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (1999, March). A National Study of Persistence at two-Year Colleges. A paper to be presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Montreal.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P., Vander Puten, J. (1999, March). The Influence of Early Aspirations and Attitudes on Postsecondary Attendance. A paper to be presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Montreal.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (1998, April). How Debtload Influences Student Persistence at Public and Private Colleges: A Comparison Between 1987 and 1992. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Diego.

Somers, P. A., & Cofer, J. (1998). Singing the student loan blues: Multiple voices,

multiple approaches? Proceedings from a National Symposium: Student Loan Debt: Problems and Prospects (pp. 97-128). Washington, DC: The Institute for Higher Education Policy, Sallie Mae Institute, and The Education Resources Institute.

Somers, P. A., Cofer, J. E., Austin, J. A., Inman, D., Martin, T., Rook, S., Stokes, T., Wilkinson, L. (1998). Faculty and Staff: The Weather Radar on Campus. In Karen Bauer (Ed.), Campus climate: Understanding the critical components of today ' s colleges and universities, New Directions in Institutional Research (pp. 35-52). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (1997, April). An analytical approach for the review of performance funding standards. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Conference, Chicago, IL.,

Somers, P., Cofer, J., DeAngelis, S., & Cook, J. (1997, October). Buddy can you spare a dime? Debtload and graduate students. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Meeting, Albuquerque.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (1997, October). Mortgaging their future: Debtload and undergraduate persistence. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Annual Meeting, Albuquerque.

Cofer, J., & Somers, P. (1997, October). Faculty Productivity: An Analysis from the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Annual Meeting, Albuquerque.

Cofer, J. (1996, August). Reorganization of Hungarian Higher Education and its Implications on Formula Funding, a paper presented to the European Association of Institutional Research, Budapest Hungary.

Cofer, J. (1995). Normative Financing of Hungarian Higher Education. World Bank.

Cofer, J. (1995). A Model for the Integration of Higher Education Institutions in Hungary. Hungarian Rectors Conference.

Cofer, J. E., Baraknoyi, K. and Dinya, L. (1995, November). Integration as an element of the Modernization of Higher Education. (ed. Laszlo Frenyo), Hungarian Rectors Conference.

Cofer, J. and Triplett, B. (1984). The Evolution of the Mississippi Tax Structure: From January, 1966 to Present. State Fiscal Management Board.

Cofer, J. (1976, July). An Interactive Student Information System. Proceedings of the 14th Annual Southeast Regional ACM Conference, Birmingham, AL.

Cofer, J. (1980, December). Information Needs for Budgetary Analysts. Proceedings of the Annual Conference on Higher Education.

Cofer, J. (1982, February). Mississippi Individual Income Tax Analysis. Mississippi Commission of Budget and Accounting.

Cofer, J. (1982, April). An Overview of Mississippi's Economy: Since 1977 Current Recession, Toward the Future. MCBA.

Cofer, J. (1982, March). A 1982 Monthly Forecast of Mississippi's Employment, Income and Output Sectors: A Forecast of False Recovery. MCBA.

Cofer, J. (1982 March). Mississippi's Employment and Economic Outlook: Full Recovery for Mississippi. MCBA.

## **Research Grants**

Post-Master's Certification Program in Institutional Research. Co-Principal Investigator with Pat Somers, Mikyong Minsun Kim, and Dwayne Smith. Association of Institutional Research.

Impact of Federal Financial Aid Policy Shifts in the 1990's: Developing Expanded Models for Two- and Four-Year College Persistence Using NPSAS 2000. Co-Principal Investigator with Pat Somers, Association of Institutional Research.

An Indentured Generation of Students? How Debtload Influences Student Decisions. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Patricia Somers, 1997. Association for the Study of Higher Education.

The Effect of Federal Financial Aid Policy on Student Persistence. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Patricia Somers, Association of Institutional Research.

The Impact of Federal Financial Aid Policy on College Choice and Persistence. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Patricia Somers, America Educational Research Association.

Presentations both formal and informal to the following organizations:

United States House of Representatives Committee on Governmental Affairs  
Society for College and University Planning (SCUP)  
National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO)  
National Governor's Association (NGA)  
National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
United States Department of Education  
United States Department of Energy  
Office of Management and Budget  
Legislative committees in Mississippi, Kentucky, Georgia, Missouri, and Louisiana  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

## **STATE, CIVIC AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

NCAA Division I Board of Directors  
St. Francis Medical Center Board of Directors, Chair  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)  
Council for a Better Louisiana (CABL)  
Northeast Louisiana Economic Development Council  
Ouachita Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors 2002-present  
Monroe Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors 2002-2005  
Senior Fellow - Eisenhower Foundation  
Missouri Commission on College Affordability 1998-1999  
State of Arkansas Formula Funding Committee 1996-1998  
Eisenhower Foundation International Advisory Council  
1996 Olympic Games Operational Coordinating Committee 1991-1995  
Executive Advisory Council for the Mississippi State University College of Business  
1992 - 2004  
National Association of College and University Business Officers  
Southern Association of College and University Business Officers  
Professional Development Committee 1979-81 and 1994-1996  
State Higher Education Finance Officers (SHEFO)  
National Planning Committee Chair 1978-79  
National Planning Committee Vice Chair 1994-95  
Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) 1991-Present  
National Association of State Budget Directors (NASBO) 1981-1985  
Southern Budget Directors Chairperson 1984-85  
National Association of Auditors, Treasurers and Comptrollers 1981-1985  
Host Committee 1983  
Member of the State of Mississippi Capitol Commission and Governor's Policy Council  
1981-1985

## **HONORS:**

2010 CASE IV Chief Executive Leadership Award (Council for Advancement and Support of Education)  
Chairman's Award from Ouachita Economic Development Corporation, 2003  
Jaycees Outstanding Young Men of America, 1982 and 1984  
Named Public Administrator of the Year by the American Society for Public Administration, Mississippi Chapter, January, 1983  
Listed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Edition of Who's Who in the South and the Southeast  
Who's Who in Jackson, 1989  
Phi Kappa Phi