

University Council, October 7, 2025

Updates from Jamie Birch

- Ombuds launches the 1st week of November (the 3rd)
- Government Excellence Award – Dallas County State Senator Sandy Crawford
- Bronze Bear Award – Bill Rowe (former athletic director)

Campbell Keele – Transfer Students and National Transfer Student Week

- Transfer students up 2.8% (to 1342 students)
- Transfer student profile
 - 51% juniors
 - 62% seated courses
 - 59% female
 - 67% between 18 and 24
 - 73% are full-time
 - 74% transfer in from 2-year institutions
- Top institutions: OTC, MSU WP, Crowder, St. Louis CC, Metro (KC) CC... Mizzou, Drury, Evangel are top 4-year institutions
- Top majors – Finance, Econ, and Risk Mgmt, Psychology, Nursing, Accounting, Childhood Ed
- National Transfer Student Week – 3rd full week of October
 - Focus is on retention and building community
 - Last year's retention rate was 81%
 - We have a history of doing this well at little to no cost (go Campbell!)
 - This year – 14 student spotlights, 5 employee spotlights, __ faculty spotlights will be on social media
 - Events each night – advisor forum on Monday 10/20, soccer games, movie night, therapy dog event w/ counseling center, etc.
 - Events are listed here -
<https://blogs.missouristate.edu/advising/2025/10/01/take-part-in-national-transfer-student-week-celebrations-3/>
 - Follow @mostatetransfer on Instagram, publicize events (Campbell Keele can get you paper flyers if you need them), attend events, go to the advisor forum or another event

Missing Student Resident Notification Policy – University Safety

- Required by Higher Education Act/federal law for all institutions that provide on campus housing

- Procedures of the policy –
 - Students, employees, or others should report to University Safety if a student has been missing for 24 hours
 - Campus Safety has 24 hours to notify the student’s contact (the student provides this when they sign up for housing) and law enforcement
 - Policy says all university personnel should cooperate in fact-finding
 - The process can be enacted before 24 hours have passed with reason
 - If you have reason to believe someone is missing, you are obligated to report this to campus safety.

Policy updates – Registration (Provost Phillips)

- 3 words added – “undergraduate readmitted students” to the advisor hold. So, if an undergrad sits out a semester or more, they have to meet with an advisor before registration

Policy updates – Scholarship Policies (Rob Moore, Financial Aid)

- Previous scholarship policy was very prescriptive, giving lots of procedures and governance
- Focus has been on becoming more nimble and making operating policy more general, setting out guiding principles (Strategic Alignment, Equity, Discretionary Governance, and Transparency), scholarship categories, operational discretion and oversight, and compliance issues.
- This allows students to leverage scholarships more effectively, so students aren’t over-funded and fewer aren’t under-funded. “One size fits you” approach
- Supports pilot programs and rapid response to market changes
- This also aligns with peer institutions and best practices and should help maximize net tuition revenue
- Next steps –
 - Scholarship page updates to be more consumer-friendly, with policy in the background
 - Transparent scholarship procedures, standards, and rules – one landing site to understand what needs to happen regarding scholarships (rather than several)
 - Comprehensive and dynamic scholarship model
 - Strategic awarding timelines – formerly had rolling admissions, which caused delays between acceptance and scholarship awards/FAFSA (December 1 is the guarantee date in order to get all scholarship and aid award information

by winter break, but it will be rolling for later admits and FAFSA filers;
February 1 is the final deadline)

- Students won't be penalized by the university for missing a deadline, but they might miss potential state or federal grants, etc.
- Knowledgeable student scaffold team and support
- “Every Bear, Every Year” – pushing students toward filing a FAFSA
- “Don't Wait, File Today” – pushing students to meet the Dec. 1 early deadline (or Feb. 1 deadline)
- Once a student is awarded a scholarship, they do not have to file their FAFSA to renew it (but they should, since they can potentially get more awarded)
- Rob's office is looking at streamlining and aligning scholarship renewal processes

Strategic Plan Implementation update – Chief of Staff Jamie Birch

- Plan is launched and distributed (MarCom brochure)
- Website is updated and focused on implementation of the plan
- Working group leaders and members are set
- Training on incorporating data and benchmarking
- Kickstarting funds (\$500k) has been/is being awarded
- Software has been purchased, prepped, and shared with the plan members; eventually, all staff and faculty will be able to access the software to see what groups are doing
- Lots more detail in slides
- Every 2 months, starting October 15 – “Strategic Initiatives Forum” w/ reports to leadership (Pres., Fac Senate chair, Staff Senate chair, SGA pres.)

Budget update – VP Matt Morris

- Slides on this forthcoming
- Tuition/Scholarship mix is down and short of budget by \$3.3 million
 - \$3 million was frozen last spring and will remain frozen
 - Anticipating being \$3.9 million short in spring; cabinet is preparing to address this shortfall with additional savings with focus on strategic plan, enrollment and retention
- Investment earnings are projected to be at budget for the year
- Auxiliary – room rental for fall semester is more than budget by \$1.3 million (90% occupancy at the moment)
- WP is similar (about \$500k short) and looking at targeted cuts
- Capital expenditures

- Policy is that operating reserves shouldn't go below \$50 million. We're currently at \$60 million in reserves, down from \$97 million.
- University has invested in lots of projects, but with 4 external dollars for each university dollar
- Ongoing or recently finished projects: Blunt, Kampeter, Cheek, University Advancement Center, Craig Hall, JER Performing Arts Complex – these are all set to conclude in FY '27
- Athletics expenditures
 - Lots of projects required by the move
 - Generally paid by reserves and donations
- Key dates
 - Mid-January – State of the State address by Gov. Kehoe
 - Budget process begins then
- Federal interest rates are decreasing and are likely to continue to drop. This limits interest incomes from reserves
 - Mosers Employer Contribution Rate increased by 1.5% this year and will rise 1.75% next year to 32%
 - This could make fringe reach 50% unless there is relief from state budget
- Employee benefits update – Matt Morris
 - MedPay is rebranding as Point.C at the end of the year. So, any mail you have received from Med Pay will now show up as Point.C – don't throw it away!
 - Claims vary, so it's difficult to forecast costs too precisely
 - Pretty even split between the base and buy-up plans
 - Open enrollment is in November
 - Wellness incentive program is ongoing – need to do 2 of the 3 by December 1, 2025 – flu shot, educational questionnaire, biometrics (any time between January 1 and December 1, 2025); these are all covered 100% on plan
 - Premiums will rise
 - Last year, costs rose and left the plan \$200k behind
 - Feedback has generally been not to adjust the benefits, so something has to give. Last 3 years, both base and buy-up premiums have increased
 - This year, monthly premiums will increase from \$4 (employee only base plan) to \$56 (employee+family buy up plan)
 - Dental rate will stay (no increase since 2019)

VP Dawn Medley – Enrollment update

- Headcount is up, but the mix is not

- Graduate and international enrollment is a big challenge
- Focus of Financial Aid in revising scholarships to draw in FTNIC students
- Our expected net tuition revenue for an undergraduate student is very low – we are at \$4167, but state average is over \$9600. The scholarship funding is part of the story here
- Headcount by residency – we are down with out-of-state students, which decreases the tuition intake
- Pre-college/dual enrollment numbers are great. However, the revenue model is an issue. Plans to address this – giving stipend to districts/teachers, rather than processing them as MSU employees/teachers of record, etc.
- Volunteers needed for Showcase – October 2025 - <https://www.missouristate.edu/Admissions/Showcase/default.htm>
- On-campus interviews for new Assistant VP for Enrollment Management; there will be open forums

Update: University Council members can bring forth items to discuss. Need to go through VP and be submitted 2 week prior to meeting

VP Shaw: Announcing her retirement in March, but her last day will be on Friday