

**Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the  
University of Missouri-St. Louis  
University Assembly and Faculty Senate  
September 15, 2015 - 3 p.m.  
202 JCPenney**

The meeting of the University Assembly was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by the Senate Chair, Dr. Keith Stine. Dr. Stine asked for approval of the minutes from the meeting on April 21, 2015. The minutes were approved as written.

**Report of the Chairperson, Dr. Keith Stine:**

Dr. Stine welcomed everyone to the first Assembly/Senate meeting of 2015-16. He also welcomed Dr. Betsy Rodriguez, UM System Vice President for Human Resources. He stated that Dr. Rodriguez will brief the Assembly on the potential changes to retiree medical benefits.

Dr. Stine reported two changes to the members of the Senate. In the Political Science Department, Dr. Kenneth Thomas was elected to replace Dr. Farida Jalalzai. Also, Kathleen Sullivan Brown has retired from the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department. Dr. Judith Cochran was elected as her replacement.

Dr. Stine announced that many of the 22 Senate and Assembly committees have met to elect their chairs and are discussing future agenda items. Next month a complete listing of all the newly elected chairs will be presented.

Dr. Stine reminded the Assembly about the following items:

- Earlier this summer a message was distributed regarding mandatory training to keep our IT systems secure. The deadline to complete this training is Oct. 31, 2015.
- October is UMSL's Month of Giving. Dr. Stine explained that information packets will be distributed in campus mail. Please consider giving generously.

**Report of the Chancellor, Dr. Tom George:**

Dr. George invited everyone to attend the State of the University Address on Sept. 16. He encouraged them to attend to celebrate the faculty and staff awardees. Chancellor George gave the following update:

- Current enrollment is almost 16,900 which is the second highest total on record.
- On-campus enrollment is down; off-campus enrollment is up.
- Transfer enrollment is down. The enrollment at St. Louis Community College has gone from 29,000 to 21,000 over the last four years.
- The good news is that the GPAs for incoming freshmen/transfers are the highest they have ever been. Also, there has been a solid increase in graduate students.

- Dr. George congratulated colleagues in the College of Business Administration. *US News & World Report* has again ranked the International Business Program in the Top 20 (13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year). They are ranked 12<sup>th</sup> – up from 16<sup>th</sup> last year.
- UMSL continues to be recognized for its commitment to diversity and inclusion. UMSL received a Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award by *INSIGHT Into Diversity Magazine*. It is UMSL's third straight year for this award - which is something no other institution in Missouri can say.

**Report of the Staff Association, Mr. Nick Palisch:**

Mr. Palisch announced that the Staff Council will be meeting on Thursday, Sept. 17. He also reported that the Staff Picnic and Recognition Awards Ceremony was held in August. The event was very well attended and they have received great feedback. Mr. Palisch explained that this year the Staff Association will be focusing on a review of its bylaws and constitution to ensure the documents are current and relevant.

**Report of the Student Government Association, Mr. Cameron Roark:**

Mr. Roark reported that one of the goals for the Student Government Association (SGA) this year is to review its structure and how it functions. The SGA will discuss if changes may be needed to stay productive. Mr. Roark explained that another SGA goal is to look at student services on campus. Campus food, shuttle service, financial aid, and cashiers services will be discussed for possibilities of improvement. He reported that students are also interested in transparency issues. Students want to know what they are paying for and where their tuition is going. Mr. Roark stated that students are concerned about scholarships on campus. He stated that last year about 50% of the scholarships were not given out. He explained that it was important that students have access to these scholarships.

The SGA has created something new this year called “Meet a Senator”. Student senators will be going to north and south campus to meet with students. Mr. Roark announced two upcoming events: The “Big Event” is a community service project scheduled for Sept. 26. This year they are heading to Jennings for a big clean-up event. Also, the Campus Safe Walk is scheduled for October 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the Provincial House.

The SGA's Fee Review Committee will meet on Oct. 16 to review proposed supplemental fee increases.

**Benefits Update, Dr. Betsy Rodriguez:**

Dr. Rodriguez, UM System Vice President for Human Resources, provided a presentation on potential changes to retiree medical benefits. She explained that UM System began a retiree medical study in January. The study's objectives are as follows:

- Ensure retirees and university are getting the most for their dollar
  - Affordable, accessible retiree medical plans are now available in the market.
  - Taking advantage of options such as Medicare subsidies could lower costs.
- Ensure university can continue insurance benefits (medical, dental, life) for current retirees
  - By 2019 the liability for current and future retiree medical benefits will be over \$1 billion, increasing to \$4.5 billion in 30 years.

- Recent finalized Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) ruling means the university will need to begin to fund the liability.
- This is additional money that will increase the benefit rate.

Dr. Rodriguez also shared the following facts:

➤ Outside the University:

- Only 6 million of 45 million Medicare retirees have coverage through an employer plan.
- Market plans for Medicare-eligible are robust and offer universal access.
- Significant federal subsidies are available to complement or replace Medicare.
- Enhanced Medicare pharmacy benefit by 2020 (provided through Affordable Care Act)
- Pre-65 is more challenging.

➤ Next Steps:

- Proceed with current retiree recommendations.
- Final determination of timing for employee announcement
- Recommendation to Board of Curators

Dr. Rodriguez explained that because of the recent GASB ruling, UM System will have to add \$25 million each year to its budget to cover this cost increase. Administrators from UM System have been researching possibilities and options for ways to handle this increase, including the review of benefits at other institutions and employers. Dr. Rodriguez reported that she has met with various groups to get feedback on their concerns about retiree medical benefits. Dr. Matthew Keefer stated that in the spirit of shared governance, faculty and staff need to be given an opportunity to respond to proposed recommendations before any final decision is made. He asked if more information will be shared with the Intercampus Faculty Council (IFC) and the Total Rewards Advisory Committee before an announcement is considered. Dr. Rodriguez responded that she understood the importance of discussing this information and getting feedback. She will present more details to the IFC at their upcoming retreat. The Total Rewards Advisory Committee will also be getting more information and time for input. Dr. Rodriguez explained that even though a specific date has not been determined for changes that affect current employees, she wants to ensure that everyone has plenty of time to consider their options once a decision has been made.

Dr. Rodriguez answered many questions from faculty and staff. In conclusion, she reminded the attendees that this proposed change to the retiree medical benefits has no impact on the retirement plan itself. She commented that the retirement plan is in good shape. UM System is not considering making any changes to the retirement plan.

**UMSL Media Usage Report (Mr. Ron Gossen):**

Mr. Ron Gossen, Senior Associate VC for Marketing & Communication, presented the Assembly with the results of the recent media survey. The survey received a total of 2,290 responses from students, faculty, staff, and alumni. The survey included results regarding social media engagement, UMSL news sources, mobile apps, web factors tested, radio and communication media preferences, and the “I Chose UMSL” billboard campaign. The survey also measured the ability to find UMSL information regarding sexual harassment/assault concerns. Mr. Gossen explained the significance of the results and how it will assist them in future marketing of the university.

There being no other business, the University Assembly meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

## **Faculty Senate Meeting**

The Faculty Senate meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m. by Senate Chair, Dr. Keith Stine.

Dr. Stine did not have any additional comments for the Chair's Report.

Chancellor George did not have any additional information to report.

Dr. Stine invited Dr. Alice Hall to provide the Committee on Committees report.

### **Committee on Committees Report, Dr. Alice Hall:**

Dr. Hall presented the following nominations from the Committee on Committees:

- Academic Advisory Committee:  
Wilma Calvert (replacing Susann Farberman)      Nursing representative  
Jeffrey Sippel (replacing Ruth Bohan)              CoFAC representative
  
- Bylaws & Rules Committee:  
Jeanne Allison (replacing Margaret Barton-Burke)      Broad representation
  
- Research Policy Committee:  
Erwin Wong (replacing Christine Garhart)              Optometry representative

**The members of the Faculty Senate approved all of the nominations.**

### **Executive Session:**

The Senate met in Executive Session to consider candidates nominated to receive honorary degrees.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Keefer  
Senate/Assembly Secretary

(Minutes written by Loyola Harvey, Faculty Senate/University Assembly Office)