

Academic Profile – *Full Narrative*

DRAFT AS OF 1-12-16

The Academic Profile goals are as clear as they are challenging. Over the next five years, Missouri State aspires to maintain its strongest academic traditions, fully develop its competitive advantages, and position itself to respond appropriately to the changing environment.

The University will strive to achieve these goals at a time where state appropriations represent a declining percentage of overall funding, where there is a desire and continuing need to increase enrollment in a highly competitive environment, where there are increasing demands of faculty, and where there is increased scrutiny of the value of a college degree.

Academic traditions

Since it was founded in 1905, Missouri State has been known for its outstanding teaching, strong liberal arts foundation, and commitment to academic standards. Those traditions have remained University hallmarks throughout its 111-year history.

Missouri State is committed to the search for knowledge. It recognizes that human curiosity explores unknown intellectual worlds as well as unknown physical worlds. In a world where knowledge can become outdated in only a few years, the University is committed to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge that serves the future, and to emphasizing the importance of critical thinking skills to adapt to these changes.

Missouri State has long been recognized for its student advising, having won multiple regional and national awards. The University is recommitting itself to superior advising, understanding the important role it plays in student success.

Competitive advantages

Missouri State's graduate programs and targeted research set it apart from other institutions in Missouri and the region. The University wishes to build on this competitive advantage in the coming five years.

Over the past 25 years, Missouri State has tripled its graduate programs and more than doubled the number of graduate students. As graduate education has grown, so has a corresponding emphasis on research and scholarly activity.

All tenure-track faculty are expected to participate in research and scholarship, which not only generate new knowledge, but also positively impact teaching and student learning. Missouri State has developed and invested in research areas where faculty have expertise and grant dollars are available, and it will continue to do so.

To maintain its edge, Missouri State will explore ways to balance the faculty's work in research and scholarly activity with its other diverse responsibilities: teaching, advising, mentoring, University service, community service, and more. Finding the appropriate balance will require

the University to use all of the administrative tools currently available, as well as explore other approaches to effectively fulfill these responsibilities.

Finally, Missouri State's statewide mission in public affairs, approved by the Missouri General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor in 1995, distinguishes the University. The three pillars of the mission – ethical leadership, cultural competence, and community engagement – have been woven into all aspects of campus life, from academics to residence life to special events of all kinds.

Response to change

Change will come at an accelerated pace during the next five years. Missouri State is committed to initiating new academic programs to meet societal needs, embracing new delivery systems to respond to student desires, and addressing requirements of employers – all without compromising academic rigor and integrity.

One key to achieving this goal is through cross-disciplinary partnerships in academic programs and research. Such partnerships provide students with breadth and context, and also prepare them to work in teams and across geographic distances to achieve goals – all skills demanded by society and employers.

Vision

Missouri State University will provide students with choices from an array of academic programs, research options and opportunities to connect in meaningful ways, all of which will help them succeed and fulfill their dreams.

Strategic Priorities

- Distinctive academic programs will be necessary to succeed in the crowded and competitive higher education marketplace.
- An environment that stimulates research will enhance the quality of teaching and increase the University's profile at the national and international level.
- Collaboration, both internally and externally, will be critical to promoting academics and research for developing well rounded students who can effectively integrate into society and the workplace.
- Dynamic adaptation will become the norm at Missouri State to meet the pace of change, including theoretical and technological advances.

University Goals

- Continue to offer a strong liberal arts education while modifying, adding, and eliminating academic programs to meet societal needs.
- Expand graduate programs to serve distinctive regional, national, and international needs.
- Provide faculty and students the resources, mentoring, and incentives that support research productivity and collaboration.

- Employ a strategic approach to faculty recruitment and hiring which will enhance scholarship and excellent instruction.
- Improve performance on measures of student success (e.g., retention, graduation) to achieve sustained excellence.
- Organize academic units to increase efficiency and facilitate cross-disciplinary study and research.
- Offer cutting-edge academic programs that incorporate innovative technologies and experiential learning.
- Increase the use of student-centered instructional models and schedules while maintaining academic rigor.

Pertinent Key Performance Measures (KPIs)

KPI 3: Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Awards (Degrees and Certificates)

KPI 4: Degree Program Alternate Pathways

KPI 5: Total Enrollment

KPI 9: Engendering a Supportive Learning Environment

KPI 10: Faculty Scholarship

KPI 14: External Grant and Contract Activity