



Tab 7

Southeast Missouri State University Statewide Mission

Coordinating Board for Higher Education
September 11, 2019

BACKGROUND

In the early 1980s, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education identified the financial access of citizens to quality higher education as the major public policy issue confronting Missouri higher education at the time. The primary means for addressing the issue was to achieve greater diversity among the existing institutions by ensuring that public higher education reflected a mix differing in mission, role and scope, admission requirements, program emphasis, fees, and functional emphasis. Key prerequisites for designation as a statewide public institution at the time were "...both an institutional mission statement that is unique and addresses identified statewide educational needs that are not currently being addressed, as well as the institution's ability to address those educational needs."¹ A statewide mission designation is integrally related to the CBHE's responsibility for statewide planning, requiring first, identification of the needs of the state and an examination of the ways educational resources can best respond, and next, an examination of the mission and purpose of institutions in light of the identified state needs.

In 1995, the CBHE undertook the Mission Refinement Initiative, a comprehensive assessment and refinement of the missions of all colleges and universities in Missouri. The process of mission review was to provide each institution the opportunity to receive limited additional funds for program enhancement, while also ensuring the relevance of the institution's mission and its alignment to identified statewide needs. The outcome of the process was to be a diverse system of higher education institutions characterized by focused missions and clearly defined institutional priorities, mission plans with specific goals and objectives of statewide significance, and public accountability for reporting institutional and student performance. A summary of institutions that have received statewide missions can be found in Attachment A.

In 1995, legislators passed Senate Bill 340, which provides the framework the CBHE currently uses for evaluating requests for statewide missions. Sections 173.030(8) and (9), RSMo, charge the CBHE with reviewing public institutions' missions, based upon "the needs of the citizens of the state as well as the requirements of business, industry, the professions and government...to ensure that Missouri's system of higher education is responsive to the state's needs and is focused, balanced, cost-effective, and characterized by programs of high quality as demonstrated by student performance and program outcomes." The statute defines two steps for institutions asking the CBHE to recommend a statewide mission designation: submission of an application based on criteria found in §173.030(9), RSMo, and completion of a mission implementation plan for CBHE approval (§173.030(8), RSMo).

Once the CBHE has approved of the institution's proposed statewide mission designation, the statute states, "no change of mission for an institution under this subdivision establishing a statewide mission shall become effective until the general assembly approves the proposed mission change by concurrent resolution, except for the institution defined pursuant to subdivision (1) of section 174.010, and has been approved by the coordinating board and the institutions for which the coordinating board has recommended a statewide mission prior to August 28, 1995."² Currently, eight public institutions hold statewide mission designation. Attachment

¹ Coordinating Board for Higher Education, June 12, 1985.

² Institutions requesting a statewide mission designation "shall be judged to have met the prerequisites for such a mission when they demonstrate to the coordinating board that they have met the criteria described in this subdivision." §174.450 RSMo provides an additional requirement that the board of regents for any institution designated as having a statewide mission according to §173.030(8)(9), RSMo shall be abolished on the effective date of the statutory mission change, and any appointed members of the board of regents serving as of the effective date of the statutory mission change will serve as members of the board of governors until the expiration of the term for which they were appointed.

A provides a list of Missouri public higher education institutions with statewide mission designations, including year approved, governing board structure, and supporting statutory language.

CURRENT STATUS

Southeast Missouri State University submitted a request to the CBHE for a statewide mission designation in cybersecurity, computer science, and visual and performing arts (Attachment B). The proposal was posted for public comment, with comments received from the University of Missouri System (Attachment C), Truman State University (Attachment D), and Northwest Missouri State University (Attachment E). The comments received addressed the following concerns: the institution did not offer evidence of “one or more programs of unusual strength,” the programmatic focus of the proposal will disadvantage other Missouri colleges and universities offering programs in these areas and may mislead students, and the proposal is a departure from the intended goal of statewide mission as one “that broadly influences the daily operations and values of the institution.” Southeast Missouri State University provided a response to the comments received (Attachment F).

At its annual retreat on July 30, 2019, the CBHE briefly discussed the proposal from Southeast Missouri State University. The CBHE directed staff to conduct additional research to determine whether Southeast Missouri State University meets the criteria as defined in §173.030(8)(9), RSMo. Staff have reviewed the application and determined that the proposal addresses most of the criteria for statewide mission (Attachment G), with the exception of a mission implementation plan.

NEXT STEPS

MDHE staff requests that Southeast Missouri State University submit, by November 1, 2019, a revised mission implementation plan for CBHE review, based on the questions indicated on Attachment G. CBHE/MDHE staff may request follow-up information or ask additional questions as may be necessary to facilitate the review.

RECOMMENDATION

~~Staff recommend that the approval process move forward, with final consideration of the request after the CBHE has received the revised mission implementation plan.~~ September 10, 2019; Staff recommend that the CBHE approve Southeast Missouri State University’s request for a statewide mission in Computer Science, Cybersecurity, and Visual and Performing Arts.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Institutions with Statewide Mission Designation and Governance Structure
- B. Southeast Missouri State University Request for Statewide Mission
- C. Comment: UM System-Southeast Missouri State University Statewide Mission
- D. Comment: Truman State University-Southeast Missouri State University Statewide Mission
- E. Comment: Northwest Missouri State University-Southeast Missouri State University Statewide Mission
- F. Southeast Missouri State University Response

**Tab 7 Attachment A
Institutions with Statewide Mission Designation and Governance Structure**

Institution	Mission	Authorization	Date	Governance
Missouri Southern State University	International or global education	§174.231	2003	SB 55 in 2003 amended 174.231 to change name to Missouri Southern State University and give statewide mission of international or global education.
Missouri Western State University	Applied learning	§174.251	2005	Section 174.450.1, RSMo / Section 174.453.5, RSMo: No more than three voting members shall be residents of the same county. Two voting members shall be residents of counties in Missouri other than the five county statutory service region of Buchanan, Andrew, Platte, Dekalb, and Clinton Counties. 7 voting members and 1 non-voting student
Missouri State University	Public affairs	CBHE, January 13, 1995; §174.450.2	1995 2005	At the January 13, 1995 meeting, the CBHE approved recommending a “statewide mission” for what was then Southwest Missouri State University. Section 174.450.2, RSMo: 9 voting members must represent each congressional district; 1 non–voting student
Truman State University	Liberal arts and sciences	CBHE February 8, 1985 §174.600	1985 1995	CBHE voted to approve recommending statutory changes to make Northeast into the state’s liberal arts institution with a statewide governing board. Sections 174.610-620, RSMo: 4 voting members must represent Adair, Audrain, Boone, Callaway, Chariton, Clark, Howard, Knox, Lewis, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Macon, Monroe, Montgomery, Pike, Putnam, Ralls, Randolph, St. Charles, Schuyler, Scotland, Shelby, Sullivan, or Warren County, providing that no more than one member may be from the same county; 3 voting members must be from any of the seven college districts as described in statute and from differing congressional districts; 2 non-voting members must be non-residents of the state; and 1 non-voting member must be a student

University of Central Missouri	Professional applied science and technology university	CBHE, October 19, 1996	1996	Section 174.060, RSMo / Section 174.453, RSMo: Five voting members shall be selected from the counties comprising of the institution's historic statutory service region, except that no more than two members shall be appointed from any one county with a population of less than 200,000 inhabitants. Two voting members shall be selected from any of the counties in the state which are outside of the institution's historic service region. One non-voting member shall be a student.
University of Missouri	Land grant	Morrill Act (1862)	1862	Section 172.030, RSMo: 9 voting members must represent each congressional district; 1 non-voting student representative
Lincoln University	Land grant	Morrill Act (1890)	1890	Section 175.020, RSMo: 8 voting members with no geographic requirements; 1 non-voting student
State Technical College	Highly specialized and advanced technical education and training	§178.636	1995	Section 178.632, RSMo: 7 voting members, no more than 2 of whom may reside in Osage County or other immediately contiguous counties; 1 non-voting student



**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY · 1873**

Office of the President

May 15, 2019

The Honorable Zora Mulligan
Commissioner
Missouri Department of Higher Education
205 Jefferson Street
P.O. Box 1469
Jefferson, City, MO 65102

Re: Statewide Mission

Dear Commissioner Mulligan,

Per Dr. Monhollon's March 15, 2019 electronic correspondence to me regarding Southeast Missouri State University's pursuit of a statewide mission, we submit the enclosed application demonstrating sufficient evidence satisfying all of the criteria for institutions seeking a statewide mission. It is our understanding per Dr. Monhollon's correspondence that by sending this to you on this date, this request will be considered by the Coordinating Board at their June 5, 2019 meeting. If this is not the case, I would appreciate the opportunity to have a conversation with you on this matter.

As we have previously discussed, and as Dr. Monhollon's March 15 email alludes, there is no process or format to proscribe the application process. Thus, the enclosed document was modeled and prepared off of an example from the University of Central Missouri that Dr. Monhollon provided to us. Additionally, please note that because §§ 173.030(8)(9) makes reference to submitting requests and applications, and providing evidence to the Coordinating Board, we have shared a copy of this packet with Board's Chairman as well.

If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 573-651-2222 or via email at president@semo.edu. Thank you for your assistance on this topic and we look forward to the Coordinating Board's discussion and consideration in June.

Sincerely,


Carlos Vargas
President

CC: Dr. Rusty Monhollon, Asst. Commissioner, Missouri Dept. of Higher Education
Mr. Douglas R. Kennedy, Chair, Coordinating Board for Higher Education
The Honorable Kathy Swan, State Representative



Application for Statewide Mission

Institution Name: Southeast Missouri State University

Requested Area(s) for Statewide Mission Designation: Visual and Performing Arts, Computer Science and Cybersecurity

Does any other public four-year institution have a statewide mission in the requested area(s)? No

Is the institution requesting any additional appropriations to support its request? No

Does the institution understand that if a statewide mission is approved in the requested area(s), it will not prohibit other public four-year institutions from offering the same or similar programs? Yes

Submission Date: May 15, 2019

At the request of Dr. Rusty Monhollon, Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs at the Missouri Department of Higher Education, Southeast Missouri State University is submitting this application, in narrative form, to the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education pursuant to RSMo §§173.030(8) and (9) in support of its request for a statewide mission in the visual and performing arts, computer science and cybersecurity.

I. Institutional Background

Founded in 1873 as a teacher’s college, Southeast Missouri State University is a dynamic and competitive regional public comprehensive institution located in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. With a total undergraduate and graduate student enrollment of approximately 11,000, Southeast prides itself on offering more than 145 Undergraduate Majors, 100+ Undergraduate Certificates and Minors; and 75+ Graduate Programs. Southeast is also one of five regional institutions in Missouri that participates in a state-wide collaborative with the University of Missouri to offer a Doctorate of Education in Education Leadership (EdD). We are classified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as “Master’s Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs” and we are consistently recognized among the best by U.S. News’ Best Regional Universities in the Midwest and others. Southeast Missouri State University has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission since 1915.

The Academic Experience

With a vast array of academic offerings, Southeast focuses on programs helping students find careers or enter graduate schools of their choice. The University is divided into the following colleges: Donald L. Harrison College of Business and Computing; Earl and Margie Holland College of Arts and

Media; College of Education, Health and Human Studies; College of Humanities and Social Sciences; and College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

The **Harrison College of Business and Computing** offers students empowering opportunities to fine-tune their skill sets into careers in a global marketplace. The business programs are AACSB accredited, a quality distinction held by only 5 percent of institutions offering business degrees worldwide. The College is one of only seven institutions in the U.S. designated by the Network of International Business Schools (NIBS) for deep internationalization. Both the computer science and cybersecurity degrees are ABET accredited and the cybersecurity degree is one of just four in the nation to be accredited under ABET's cybersecurity-specific criteria.

The **Holland College of Arts and Media** includes the River Campus, a one-of-a-kind living and learning space and Missouri's only campus dedicated to art, design, dance, music and theatre. Southeast is also Missouri's only university to have all arts programs accredited. In addition, Southeast's Department of Mass Media is one of only two accredited media programs in the state. Mass media students learn at the Rust Center for Media, a unique laboratory in partnership with Cape Girardeau's professional media organization, located in the heart of media row. Since its creation in 2007, the River Campus has served over 300,000 patrons, through more than 85 museum exhibits 67+ gallery exhibits, 62+ faculty recitals, 50+ symphony concerts, 60+ touring series events, and 240+ theatre and dance productions. In 2017, *The Arrow*, Southeast's student newspaper, was honored with the Best Overall Newspaper award among Division I schools at the Missouri College Media Association Conference..

The **College of Education, Health and Human Studies** prepares students for careers in mind, body, and spirit with a heavy emphasis on technology and experiential learning. The EDvolution Center incorporates the latest technology into the curriculum from robotics to virtual reality to 3D printing. The College boasts nine accreditations for its programs, and the education program has been named an Apple Distinguished School. Our highly sought after nursing program consistently produces high licensure pass rates. In the Department of Kinesiology, Nutrition and Recreation, students can choose from nine undergraduate and two graduate programs, including the Bachelor of Science in Sport Management, which was the first in Missouri to have Commission on Sport Management accreditation. The College also includes the Autism Center for Diagnosis and Treatment, which is one of four Missouri Autism Centers for Excellence designated by the Missouri Department of Mental Health; the Center for Speech and Hearing, which provides clinical training for students by offering comprehensive diagnostic and intervention services to the public; the Counselor Education Training Clinic, which provides free confidential private counseling sessions to all Southeast students; and the Center for Play Therapy Education, which is one of only three approved centers in Missouri.

The **College of Humanities and Social Sciences** offers undergraduate and graduate degrees across five Departments, which include disciplines that prepare students for the skills employers report they want most: critical thinking, communication, and teamwork. In addition, the college includes the three-time national debate champions and one of nine undergraduate historic preservation programs in the nation. Our philosophy graduates are accepted to law school at a rate of 100%. Unique features of the College include experiential learning at a Mississippian archeological field camp site in Cape Girardeau; an historic preservation field camp in nearby Ste. Genevieve, Missouri; and Southeast's Law Enforcement Academy, which is a Missouri Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) approved provider, that provided basic and specialized training for more than 2,800 law enforcement

officers since 1987.

The College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics includes nationally recognized faculty and accreditations from ABET, ACS, and ATMAE. The college offers unprecedented undergraduate research opportunities. This gives students a competitive edge in their career and graduate school. The College created the state's first programs in unmanned aircraft systems and agriculture management systems. Students learn in modern facilities and laboratories, and our very own research farm to prepare them for the professional world. Departments include Agriculture, Biology, Chemistry and Physics, Engineering and Technology, Environmental Science, and Mathematics.

In addition to the five academic colleges, three **regional campuses** and an additional delivery site exist to support degree attainment, research, and workforce development in Missouri's Bootheel region. Since opening, thousands of students have attended one of Southeast's regional campuses where they can now earn a degree in 10 programs.

Supporting all of academic affairs is **Kent Library**, which provides resources and research materials as well as houses the Rare Book Room and the Center for Faulkner Studies. The University also includes a host of **operational centers** designed to give students experience and put curriculum into practice.

Southeast is accredited by the North Central Association through the Higher Learning Commission. The most recent reaffirmation of accreditation occurred in 2013-2014. The institution will host a reaffirmation of accreditation visit in September 2019. In addition to accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, Southeast has more than 32 program-specific accreditations and certifications, which is believed to place Southeast as one of the top two public four-year institutions in Missouri with this number of accreditations and certifications.

The Student Experience

Southeast's student population of approximately 11,000 comes from around the world – 82 percent from Missouri, 12 percent from out-of-state, and six percent from more than 60 countries. Since 2007, our international enrollment has grown 266 percent (+536 students) and our out-of-state enrollment grew 71 percent (+787 students).

The University has an average class size of 21 students, allowing a personalized learning environment in which students can get to know fellow classmates and instructors. More than 1,100 students are enrolled in online-only courses, generating more than 21,000 credit hours.

Southeast supports more than 230 student organizations, including Student Government, Phi Beta Lambda, Air Force ROTC, the Missouri Army National Guard Show-Me Gold officer leadership development program, and much more. Nineteen percent of students are members of Greek social fraternities and sororities, and there are more than 5,000 participants in intramural and club sports. In addition, Southeast is the only institution in the nation to participate in a week-long program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington, D. C. think tank. Southeast also offers a wide variety of study abroad opportunities for students from all majors and interests in more than 35 countries.

Southeast has 13 Division I athletic programs. As a member of the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) since 1991, Southeast is successful in Division I competition, claiming more than 50 OVC regular-season titles and 19 OVC tournament titles, as well as having several teams make NCAA Division I tournament or playoff appearances.

Infrastructure

Southeast's 328-acre main campus is located in Cape Girardeau, Missouri with regional campuses in Kennett, Sikeston, and a delivery site in Poplar Bluff. Southeast also has a regional campus location in Malden that serves as a destination for agriculture research and workforce development collaboration.

Southeast has worked to improve its physical plant to enhance the student experience, investing \$200 million in campus improvements since 2010. New construction includes Merick Hall, LaFerla Hall, Dobbins River Campus Center, four fraternity houses, University Autism Center, Transit Nexus, and the Center for Speech and Hearing. When the River Campus opened in 2007, Southeast founded the only campus in Missouri dedicated exclusively to art, dance, music, and theatre. To accommodate growth, a new residence hall was added on the River Campus and the Department of Theatre and Dance became The Jeanine Larson Dobbins Conservatory of Theatre and Dance. Other recent projects include Catapult Creative House, the Rust Center for Media, the Center for Speech and Hearing, and renovations to Grauel Building.

II. Statutory Criteria

RSMo §173.030(9) states that institutions seeking a statewide mission “shall provide evidence to the coordinating board that they have the capacity to discharge successfully such a mission,” demonstrated by evidence to support the following:

1. The institution enrolls a representative cross-section of Missouri students.
2. The institution offers one or more programs of unusual strength which respond to a specific statewide need.
3. The institution has a clearly articulated admission standard.
4. The institution is characterized by a focused academic environment which identifies specific but limited areas of academic emphasis at the undergraduate or graduate level with a demonstrable capacity to provide significant public service.
5. The institution has adopted and maintains a program of continuous quality improvement, or the equivalent of such a program, and reports annual appropriate and verifiable measures of institutional accountability related to such programs.

In response, Southeast submits the following evidence demonstrating satisfaction with all criteria.

1. Southeast enrolls a representative cross-section of Missouri students.

Southeast Missouri State University enrolls at least 40 percent of its Missouri resident, first-time

degree-seeking freshmen from outside its historic service region. Specifically, using fall 2018 data, 581 students (47.4 percent) came from outside Southeast's CBHE defined service region.

2. Southeast offers multiple programs of unusual strength that respond to specific statewide needs.

Visual and Performing Arts

Southeast's programs in the visual and performing arts are of unusual strength because the institution is the only one in Missouri accredited in all areas of the arts – art and design, music, theatre and dance. There are some institutions in Missouri that have accreditations in these areas from the respective accrediting bodies – the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), the National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD), the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), and the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) – however, Southeast is the only institution in the state accredited by all of them. In addition, Southeast is the only institution in Missouri that has a separate campus completely dedicated to the visual and performing arts. The quality of our programs, as evidenced by the accreditations; and our state-of-the-art facilities, housed at the River Campus, place Southeast in a position of strength with regard to visual and performing arts education in Missouri.

At Southeast, we are leveraging the quality of our programs and infrastructure to prepare graduates ready to compete in today's global society. During the 2018-2019 academic year, there were 975 students enrolled in the Holland College of Arts and Media, which accounted for over 9 percent of Southeast's total enrollment. Of these, there were 678 students majoring in art, design, music, theatre and dance, representing an increase of nearly 21 percent in just the last two years alone. As a testament to their success, students in the Holland College of Arts and Media have a 95.5 percent career outcomes rate and they are well positioned to help fill some of tens of thousands of jobs that exist in their chosen career pathway. According to MERIC data, careers related to the visual and performing arts have been included in the "hospitality and food service" career pathway. The data shows that jobs in this industry are projected to grow 8.6 percent, or 25,000 jobs, from 2016-2026,¹ providing evidence that Southeast's programs in the visual and performing arts are responding to a specific statewide need.

Computer Science and Cybersecurity

Southeast's programs in computer science and cybersecurity are of unusual strength because the quality of their programs and the success their students have attained. Regarding quality, Southeast's computer science program is one of only eight ABET accredited programs, and Southeast's cybersecurity program is the only program in Missouri, and one of only four in the United States, that is accredited by ABET under new cybersecurity-specific criteria. In addition, Southeast is designated a NSA-DHS National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education, making Southeast one of only three four-year institutions in Missouri to hold this designation and one of just 250 nationally. Southeast's student have leveraged this quality to excel inside and outside of the classroom as evidenced by the fact that the Southeast's cybersecurity students have won the Missouri Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition seven years in a row (2013-2019) and they consistently finish in the top-five at the Midwest Regional Cyber Defense Competition out of schools from approximately twelve states. In addition,

¹ <https://www.missourieconomy.org/pdfs/CareerPathwayHospitality.pdf>

Southeast recently opened a state-of-the-art Cyber Range, which provides a space for education and training, product development, offensive activity and competition, detection and defensive competition, response and recovery, and assessment by students, industry and government professionals. The quality of our programs, as evidenced by the accreditations and student success; and our state-of-the-art facilities, place Southeast in a position of strength with regard to computer science and cybersecurity education in Missouri.

At Southeast, we are leveraging the quality of our programs and infrastructure to prepare graduates ready to compete in today's global society. During the 2018-2019 academic year, there were 1,886 students enrolled in the Harrison College of Business and Computing, which accounted for over 17 percent of Southeast's total enrollment. Of these, there were 468 students in Southeast's undergraduate and graduate computer science and cybersecurity programs, representing an increase of nearly 24 percent in just the last two years alone. As a testament to their success, students in the Harrison College of Business and Computing have a 95.5 percent career outcomes rate and they are well positioned to help fill some of tens of thousands of jobs that exist in their chosen career pathway. An April 2017 "Missouri Labor Supply and Demand Analysis" reported approximately 47,837 job ads for positions related to science and technology, but only 3,607 jobseekers. Additional Talent for Tomorrow Labor Market Projections include nearly 5,000 total annual job openings related to computer and information systems managers, computer systems analysts, software developers and other related fields. Further data from the U.S. Department of Labor and others quantifies additional workforce need through the state and nation. Magnifying the need, the Missouri Department of Higher Education reports that Missouri's four-year public institutions of higher education are graduating less than 500 students a year in computer science-related disciplines. All of this provides evidence that Southeast's computer science and cybersecurity programs are responding to a specific statewide need. And when one considers that forecasting using Southeast data from fall 2013 through fall 2018 suggests that the institution's undergraduate and graduate enrollments in computer science and cybersecurity could grow by 28 percent and 51 percent respectively by 2023, Southeast is positioned to respond to this specific need well into the future as well.

3. Southeast is a moderately selective institution.

Southeast's clearly articulated admission standard is "moderately selective." This category is one of four-tiered admissions structures approved by the CBHE in 1992 pursuant to §173.0052(6), RSMo.

4. Southeast's programs have demonstrated capacity to provide significant public service.

Southeast's programs in the visual and performing arts, computer science and cybersecurity have demonstrated their capacity to provide a significant public service.

Visual and Performing Arts

Since the opening of the River Campus in 2007, the students, faculty and staff and the programming they offer have had a significant impact on the cultural offerings, quality of life, and economic development throughout southeast Missouri. Specifically, over the last twelve

years attendance at River Campus events has exceeded 300,000 people; more than \$3.2 million in revenue has been generated from the more than 650 gallery exhibits, symphony concerts, touring and theatre and dance productions, and special events hosted. In addition, Southeast has hosted the River Campus Summer Arts Festival for the last six years. In 2018, over 4,000 people attended the Festival, which is an increase of at least 500 compared to 2017 and more than double compared to 2015. This day-long free community event features live music, dance and theatrical performances, magic, visual arts displays, hands-on family-friendly art experiential activities, museum exhibitions, musical instrument exploration, creative writing workshops, an art walk and other hands-on activities. To further demonstrate the significant public service Southeast Missouri State University's visual and performing arts programs provide, a February 23, 2019 *Southeast Missourian* article credits the River Campus for helping "redevelop an area of town that was 'in dire need of support'" and talks about the positive impact that entertainment or events such as those offered by Southeast programs has on attracting people to Cape Girardeau that engage in other economic activities thereby positively impacting the city's revenues and growth strategies.²

Computer Science and Cybersecurity

Southeast's programs in computer science and cybersecurity prepare students for in-demand careers and serve the region by providing needed expertise to assist industry and government partners secure digital assets in connected cyber-infrastructure. Through partnerships with local, regional, national and international organizations, Southeast's students have participated in experiential learning opportunities that have resulted in the development of mobile applications, web-based applications, modules and other programs. In addition, the Center for Cybersecurity at Southeast serves to aid student learning outcomes, foster community outreach, and encourage knowledge expansion by performing cutting-edge research, contributing to industry standards, and publishing research findings. The Center also is a resource for computer science and cybersecurity-related news, external portals and journals, and includes information to connect individuals with Southeast's undergraduate and graduate programs and industry-specific certificates and trainings. To further demonstrate the significant public service Southeast Missouri State University's computer science and cybersecurity programs provide Governor Parson commented on the important role Southeast's cybersecurity programs plays in "workforce development – preparing a skilled workforce, equipping our students for tomorrow's demands." He stated that Southeast is "on the cutting edge of fighting and defending a national security issue and an economic concern for the U.S." and noted that "SEMO has stepped in to fill an important gap in our workforce."

5. Southeast maintains a program of continuous quality improvement.

By virtue of the various accreditations mentioned heretofore above, Southeast Missouri State University has adopted and maintains a program of continuous quality improvement, and reports annually appropriate and verifiable measures of institutional accountability related to its visual and performing arts, computer science, and cybersecurity programs. For example, the conditions accompanying the accreditations from NASAD, NASD, NASM and NAST require that once accreditation is granted, following a comprehensive review process, an institution must maintain compliance with the bodies' guidelines and standards and file annual reports. The accrediting

² <https://www.semissourian.com/story/2590103.html>

bodies also require that institutions must file for approval of new curricula or substantive changes. Similar requirements exist through ABET, the accrediting body for computer science and cybersecurity. The National Center of Academic Excellence designation from NSA and DHS also has annual reporting requirements.

In addition to the external avenues for continuous quality improvement afforded by accreditation, Southeast has internal policies and procedures related to academic program review that provide an opportunity for academic departments to reflect on their academic program offerings and to develop and sustain plans for continuous improvement.

In §173.030(9)(e), RSMo, it outlines various other measures that can demonstrate an institution's commitment to continuous quality improvement and institutional accountability. One of those measures is the percent of students meeting institutional admission standards. As previously stated, Southeast is a "moderately selective" institution and using data provided by the Missouri Department of Higher Education in fall 2018, 80.1 percent of first-time, full-time students meet the admissions guidelines. This percentage places Southeast as the highest among the four "moderately selective" institutions in the state.

Another measure is student retention rate. Students in the Holland College of Arts and Media are retained in the University at a rate of 82.6 percent, which is a rate that has increased every year since fall 2014 and is the highest since at least fall 2007. Students are retained in the College at a rate of 73.2 percent, which is a number that has increased every year since fall 2014 and is the highest since at least fall 2007. Students in the theatre and dance are retained at a rate of 81.9 percent, and students in music are retained at a rate of 79.4 percent, both rates are the highest since at least fall 2007. Students in the Harrison College of Business and Computing are retained at the University at a rate of 71.2 percent, which has been fairly consistent over about a six-year period, and are retained within the College at a rate of 58.3 percent. Students in the Department of Computer Science, which includes computer science and cybersecurity have a 56.5 percent retention rate, which is the highest since at least fall 2007; and are retained within the University at a rate of 71 percent, which is the highest since fall 2010.

The statute also includes student graduation rates as a measure of continuous quality improvement and institutional accountability. In academic year 2018, 88 students completed a degree in art, design, dance, music or theatre; and there were 51 in computer science and cybersecurity, which when combined account for nearly 8 percent of all undergraduate completers during AY18. Some points of distinction include that not only have completers in the Department of Computer Science increased among traditional aged students (18-24) over a ten-year period, but they have also increased for those 25-31 and over 32 years of age. Completions for the Department of Computer Science have also increased for female, international and minority students over this same ten-year period. When it comes to student placement, which is another articulated measure of continuous quality improvement and institutional accountability, students in the Holland College of Arts and Media have a 95.5 percent career outcomes rate, and students in the Harrison College of Business have a 92.3 percent career outcomes rate.

The statute also provides that students attending graduate or professional schools can be evidence of a commitment to continuous quality improvement or institutional accountability. A sampling of

graduate or professional schools where Southeast's Holland College of Arts and Media have found success include, but are not limited, to: American University; Art Institute of Chicago; Carnegie Mellon University; DePaul University; Juilliard School of Drama; University of Arkansas; University of Maryland; University of Missouri-Columbia; and Washington University. A sampling of graduate or professional schools where Southeast's Harrison College of Business and Computing have found success, include, but are not limited, to: Boston University; Clemson University; George Mason University; Northeastern University; Purdue University; Schmalkalden University of Applied Sciences (Germany); Saint Louis University; University of California-Irvine; University of Memphis; University of Missouri; and University of Virginia.

As evidenced by the information immediately above, Southeast Missouri State University has a demonstrated commitment to continuous quality improvement and institutional accountability.

Taken as a whole, the commentary included in this Section II, Statutory Criteria, provides significant evidence that Southeast meets the requirements for institutions seeking a statewide mission articulated in RSMo §173.030(9).

III. Mission Implementation

As a component of this application, Southeast Missouri State University has been asked to outline a mission implementation plan supporting this request. And while §173.030(9), RSMo states that such plan shall be provided in a manner proscribed by the Coordinating Board, this section will briefly address some thoughts on how the institution will move forward should a statewide mission in the visual and performing arts, computer science and cybersecurity be granted. However, the institution is mindful of the referenced statutory language and would welcome dialogue with the Coordinating Board on any additional thoughts its members may have.

1. Southeast will work to increase retention and graduation rates in each of the respective areas. While some of the data presented in Section II above suggests progress has been made over a 10-12 year period, additional work remains. As an institution, Southeast has a goal to retain 80 percent of its first-time, full-time freshman and have a six-year graduation rate of 60 percent. Both rates currently stand at 74.4 percent and 48.8 percent respectively. Through multiple student success initiatives initiated throughout the University, Southeast is working to improve all of these numbers.
2. Southeast will work to continue identifying ways in which its programs in the visual and performing arts can influence other academic units on campus. As a starting point, Southeast has already deliberately included other academic areas such as design and mass media alongside the programs in visual and performing arts within a new Holland College of Arts and Media. These areas of study were strategically placed in this College because of the way in which they complement each other and the way in which employers and industry are increasingly acknowledging the artistic nature of such programs like journalism, graphic design, advertising, and TV and film. Other opportunities for increased collaboration and inter-disciplinary influence include the exploration of new or redesigned program offerings and experiential learning experiences through Southeast's Rust Center for Media, which is an experiential laboratory in the heart of Cape

Girardeau’s “media row” that gives students direct access to industry professionals; and Catapult Creative House, which is Southeast’s creative labs incubator that provides entrepreneurial and collaborative learning space for art, design and more than a dozen other academic disciplines.

3. Regarding computer science and cybersecurity, Southeast is currently in the process of developing several “CS + X” degrees that will allow students across the University to pursue a flexible program of study that incorporates a strong foundation in computer science with technical and/or professional training in their primary area of study. To date, conversations have been initiated with five other majors that could result in new “CS + X” degrees. At least two of these majors are in the process of vetting their final proposals through Southeast’s internal processes in anticipation of submitting the official forms to MDHE in the coming months. These programs would complement an already existing minor in Cybersecurity Business Systems designed for business students.

In addition to the three items articulated above, Southeast will continue its execution of arts-related events and programs serving patrons from throughout southeast Missouri and beyond; and it will continue to identify ways in which to enhance its computer science and cybersecurity-related capabilities be it through hosting conferences or events, offering professional development or training, or through the delivery of industry-recognized certificates or short-term credentials. All of these approaches would be consistent with items other statewide mission institutions have included in their “mission implementation plans.”

IV. Conclusion

For more than 145 years, Southeast has taken seriously our responsibility to prepare high quality teachers, business people and entrepreneurs, scientists and health professionals, agriculture leaders, artists and performers, computer science experts and the citizens of tomorrow. And throughout our history, we have worked hard to build robust academic programs that are responsive to student interest, employer demand, and regional, state and national workforce needs. However, despite our proven success, our strong reputation, and our commitment to academic rigor and quality, Southeast Missouri State University is one of three public four-year institutions in Missouri without a statewide mission.

After reviewing the other statewide mission designations at institutions throughout the state and recognizing that they are in areas felt to be strengths for those institutions, it made sense for Southeast to pursue a designation in areas of strength for it – visual and performing arts, computer science and cybersecurity. At Southeast, nearly 11 percent of our students are enrolled in these areas. As mentioned above, all of these programs are accredited, and students in each area are beyond successful.

A statewide mission in the requested areas – visual and performing arts, computer science and cybersecurity – would only serve to enhance the stature of these programs and aid in the continued promotion of Southeast Missouri State University. Currently no other school has a statewide mission in these areas. The institution is not asking for additional appropriations to support this request, and Southeast officials are aware that granting a statewide mission in the

requested will not prohibit any other institution in Missouri from offering programs in these areas.

As such, and having demonstrated evidence satisfying all of the criteria outlined in § 173.030(9), Southeast Missouri State University respectfully requests the Coordinating Board's endorsement of a statewide mission in the visual and performing arts, computer science and cybersecurity.



MISSOURI

June 17, 2019

Rusty Monhollon, Ph.D.
Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs
Missouri Department of Higher Education
205 Jefferson St., 11th floor, P.O. Box 1469
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Re: Southeast Missouri State University Request for a Statewide Mission

Dear Dr. Monhollon:

Thank you for the opportunity to address Southeast Missouri State University's (SEMO) request for a statewide mission in the visual and performing arts, computer science, and cybersecurity. We recognize SEMO's efforts to address important statewide workforce needs in key areas, and the substantial work it has done and has committed to doing in its application. The purpose of this letter is to raise some questions and concerns the University of Missouri System believes should be answered before the state proceeds.

First, we would like to acknowledge the important work that SEMO is doing in these areas. The institution has done a great deal of work to ensure its programs are accredited by national organizations across the board; and that it is the only institution with accreditation in art and design, music, theater and dance is an accomplishment that should be recognized. We agree with Governor Parson that, with its cybersecurity programs, "SEMO has stepped in to fill an important gap in our workforce." According to *Burning Glass*, there have been 4,288 Missouri-based job postings for cybersecurity positions in the last 12 months, and this is expected to grow by nearly nine percent over the next decade. SEMO is setting the bar in some important ways. Beyond SEMO's application, our concerns focus predominantly on the broader process for and purpose of requesting a statewide mission.

Scope of statewide missions

Our first concern centers on the intended scope of statewide missions, as it appears that SEMO's application is a fairly significant departure from existing practice. Our comments can be placed into two categories: its focus on programs in specific academic areas like computer science and cybersecurity, and its selection of two disparate fields of focus. We reviewed some of the existing statewide missions to get a sense of the scope and tone that has previously been the norm:



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- Missouri State University’s statewide mission in public affairs is centered around the high-level ideals of “educating persons to become responsible citizens and leaders.” In order to do so, “the university must foster a community where all individuals are called upon to act and to respond to public affairs issues and to develop a sense of public spiritedness.”¹
- Truman State University’s statewide mission focuses on offering “an exemplary undergraduate education to well-prepared students, grounded in the liberal arts and sciences.”²
- The University of Central Missouri’s mission is focused broadly on the dissemination of knowledge and the professional and applied sciences.³
- The University of Missouri System’s mission is closely linked to its status as a land-grant university and Missouri’s only public research and doctoral level institution.

By contrast, SEMO’s application is narrowly focused, particularly when it comes to requesting a statewide mission in two specific academic areas: computer science and cybersecurity. We believe this may be problematic, because traditionally an institution’s mission has been something that broadly influences the daily operations and values of the institution.

Another takeaway from existing statewide missions is that they tend to be a cohesive package, yet SEMO’s proposed mission focuses on visual and performing arts on one hand and cybersecurity and computer science on the other, making it difficult to holistically weave both of those themes throughout the entire campus. This is a departure from precedent that may create incentives for institutions to apply for statewide missions in any number of specific programs. While this may increase efficiencies in some areas, it can also be harmful in situations in which multiple institutions will be needed to successfully meet statewide needs. These concerns were somewhat heightened by SEMO’s response to the University of Missouri—St. Louis’ (UMSL) proposal to offer cybersecurity programs in the St. Louis area, despite the fact that no institution will be able to meet significant demand on its own.

We believe this application could be greatly improved by hewing more closely to the precedent for statewide missions. This would include a statewide mission less narrowly focused on specific academic programs and with a more unified message.

Statewide missions as signaling tools

Granting a statewide mission to an institution influences both the public’s perception of the relative quality of academic programs as well as institution’s perception of their external environment. SEMO supports this conclusion when it points out that “a statewide mission in the requested areas ... would only serve to enhance the stature of

¹ Missouri State University Statewide Mission:

<https://www.missouristate.edu/countdown/statewidemission.htm>

² Truman State University Statewide Mission: <https://www.truman.edu/about/mission-vision/mission-statement/>

³ University of Central Missouri Statewide Mission: <https://www.ucmo.edu/about/university-mission-and-vision/index.php> degree



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these programs and aid in the continued promotion of Southeast Missouri State University.” When a statewide mission is sufficiently broad, this is not particularly problematic. For example, while Missouri State’s statewide mission in public affairs or the University of Central Missouri’s mission in professional and applied sciences and dissemination of knowledge are certainly intended to promote those universities, they are also a communication of broader values from which students can make an educated choice.

This is not the case for SEMO’s application, however. Because it focuses narrowly on specific academic programs, students may perceive this as meaning that SEMO’s programs in the visual and performing arts or computer science are the best-in-state, even if this is not necessarily the case. A more rigorous analysis and comparison beyond what is required of this application process would be needed to discern this.

Broadly, our concern is that approving a statewide mission in these specific areas could be misleading and undermine students’ ability to make accurate comparisons between the programs offered at different institutions across the state. That is, a student should not be given the impression that a program at a given school is superior to others simply because that institution applied for a statewide mission in that area.

The “unusual strength” standard.

Pursuant to RSMo §§173.030(9), an institution seeking a statewide mission must provide evidence that it “offers one or more programs of unusual strength which respond to a specific statewide need.” While the statute provides some broad examples of the kinds of evidence an institution might use in attempting to make that case, there is a great deal of ambiguity around the terms “unusual strength” and what this means in practice. This is an important benchmark to define if we are to have a process for establishing statewide missions that is consistent and fair over time.

SEMO’s application relies most heavily on the accreditation of its programs to establish the strength of the programs. Particularly with respect to computer science, however, SEMO’s program is joined by Missouri State, University of Central Missouri, University of Missouri—Columbia, University of Missouri—Kansas City, and Missouri University of Science and Technology in having an ABET accredited program. Further, the UM System campuses have various national and international rankings with deep engagements with industry and government. For example, MU, S&T, and UMSL have initiated an extensive collaborative relationship with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency housed in St. Louis. In this case, would we consider SEMO’s program to be unusually strong?

The same questions are raised with respect to retention rates. The application notes that 58.3 percent of students are retained in the Harrison College of Business and Computing, and that 56.5 percent of students are retained in the Department of Computer Science. These numbers are substantially lower than the retention rates for SEMO’s visual and performing arts programs; how should this be considered when making judgement calls about unusual strength?

In closing, our intent with this letter is not to prevent SEMO from achieving a statewide mission. SEMO is doing important work in each of the fields it has identified, and we applaud and hope they will continue doing work in these areas. However, their application diverges from existing precedent with respect to statewide missions in some important ways. While the Coordinating Board may deem it necessary to change precedent, it is our intent with this letter to highlight some of the consequences of doing so that the board can make the most informed decision possible. We appreciate your consideration of the questions and concerns we have raised.

Sincerely,



Mun Y. Choi, Ph.D.
President

c: President Carlos Vargas, Southeast Missouri State University



MISSOURI

Janet L. Gooch, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Provost
660.785.4105
660.785.7460 FAX



Office of Academic Affairs
McClain Hall 203
100 East Normal Avenue
Kirksville, MO 63501-4221

June 28, 2019

Rusty Monhollon, PhD
Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs
Missouri Department of Higher Education
205 Jefferson St., 11th Floor, PO Box 1469
Jefferson City, MO 65101

RE: Southeast Missouri State University's Application for a Statewide Mission

Dear Dr. Monhollon:

I am writing today to express concerns about Southeast Missouri State University's (SEMO's) application for a statewide mission. While I applaud SEMO's work in developing its programming in the fields it has identified, I am concerned about the precedent of approving a statewide mission that is program focused. The controlling statute (RSMo §§ 173.030(9)) is mission-focused rather than program-focused. That is, the point of a mission is not to establish a statewide *advantage* for particular programs, but to represent the actualization and sustainability of a defining approach to the higher education experience that *pervades the institution's character*. Inherent in the approval of this application is a genuine risk that narrowly-focused statewide missions based upon perceived program strengths will result in institutions using them to indicate the state's endorsement of their programs as best, even where successful programs may flourish at other institutions in the state.

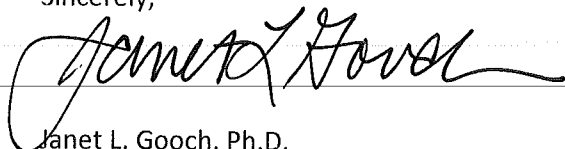
To be clear, it is not my argument that a Missouri institution – or even SEMO – could not have a visual and performing arts focus or a computer science and cybersecurity focus. However, at this stage, this seems aspirational for SEMO and not a realized mission change. The application articulates several wonderful steps that SEMO is already taking to connect these programs to other programs within the University, but the very fact that the application cannot yet articulate a firm strategy for a broader institutional integration of these pedagogies and perspectives into their broader curriculum underscores my concern. To use our experience as an illustration, Truman underwent significant reorganization to a highly selective, liberal arts and sciences focus before its statewide mission was granted by the State. The professional programs it retained were re-envisioned with a liberal arts foundation in mind as part of this process.

Each of our institutions has one or more programs of which we can be exceedingly proud. Having a stellar program is not the same as a defined mission. Initiatives such as MoExcels – which allows for the creation of “Centers of Excellence” – can probably do more to help actualize goals for program-specific enhancement and growth than can a broad mission change. At a time of increased scarcity of resources, increased competition for qualified students, and general increased sensitivity of our institutions to market shifts, the use of a statewide missions for the selective promotion of individual programs without a comprehensive strategy for institutional mission change risks an “arms race” in which state

institutions clamor to obtain a multitude of statewide missions in an effort to achieve competitive advantages. Such an outcome would be deleterious to enrollment at other institutions with similar programs while distorting future students' perception of the landscape of their educational choices.

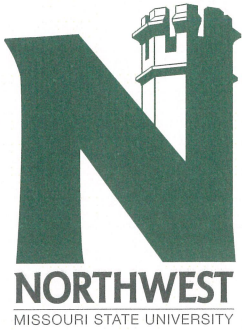
I sincerely hope that SEMO continues to work on refining its mission, and I genuinely believe that it should continue evolving itself in ways that will make the entire institution distinctive. However, it is in neither SEMO's interest, nor in the broader interest of higher education in Missouri, to set the precedent of putting the cart before the horse on the mission change process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet L. Gooch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "G".

Janet L. Gooch, Ph.D.

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost



Office of the President

Dr. John Jasinski
143 Administration Building
660.562.1110 office
johnj@nwmissouri.edu

June 24, 2019

Dr. Rusty Monhollon, Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs
Missouri Department of Higher Education

Re: Southeast Missouri State University Request for a Statewide Mission

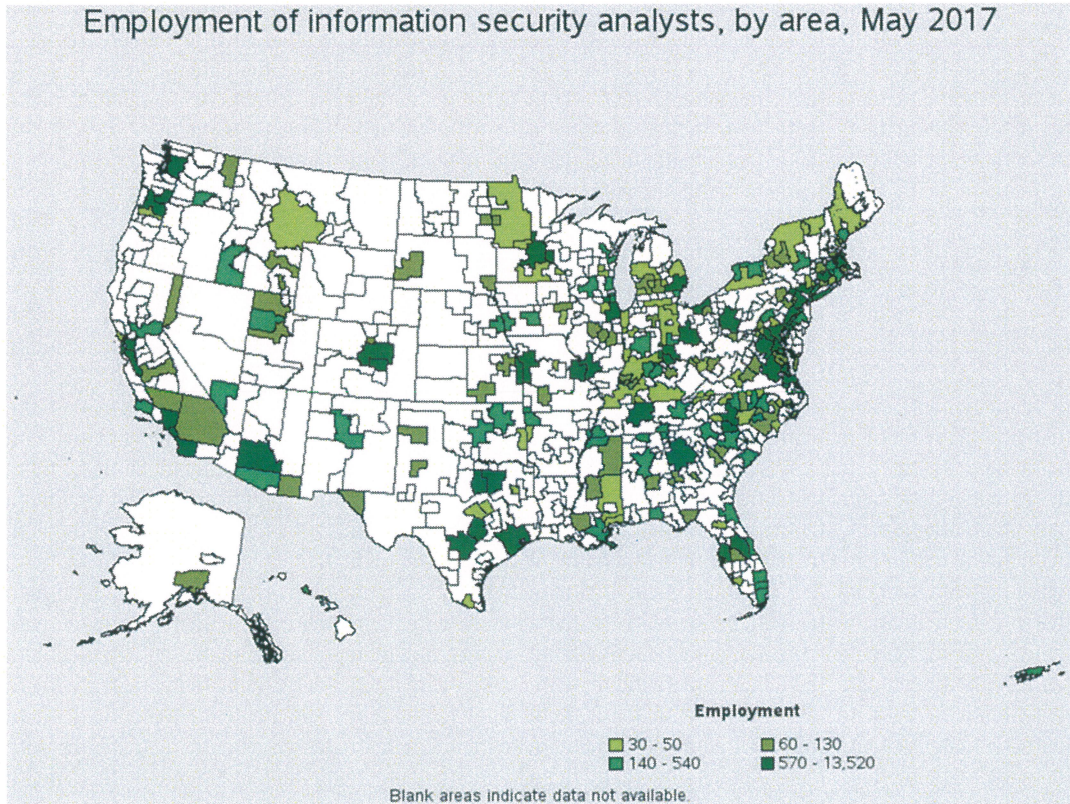
Dear Dr. Monhollon:

Thank you for the opportunity to address Southeast Missouri State University's (SEMO) request for a statewide mission in the visual and performing arts, computer science, and cybersecurity. We want to recognize the good work that SEMO has completed, but we feel strongly that there are some questions about the message that this might send if SEMO was recognized in this manner.

In regards to cybersecurity recently, many Missouri community colleges, colleges and universities have added and strengthened cybersecurity programs. This is because the demand for cybersecurity needs exist throughout the state and not in just one region of the state. Southeast has not adequately shown that they represent a cross-section of Missouri students. In fact, from the graph below, the southeast region of the state shows limited growth in this area, when compared to other portions of the state.

Northwest focuses on student success – every student, every day.

Employment of information security analysts, by area, May 2017



Bureau of Labor Statistics (<https://www.bls.gov/oes/2017/may/oes151122.htm>)

Southeast's mission is regional in nature. While they may have a very successful cybersecurity program, they appear to be attracting students primarily from St. Louis, Arkansas and Tennessee. Given the predicted state-wide demand for graduates in cybersecurity, the locations of those predicted positions, and the huge variety of specializations within cybersecurity, compared to the capacity and focus of any single university, it would seem that no specific school should be identified as holding a statewide mission in cybersecurity.

Therefore, Northwest's view is that many regional schools need to be offering cybersecurity programs and provide local opportunities for students to work through internships while they attend schools in their particular region. A single statewide designee cannot accommodate the enormous growth in this area. If SEMO receives a statewide designation, it will detract from efforts at other Missouri schools working to start regional programs and diminish the opportunity for workforce development in various regions in the state.

In regards to fine arts, a general observation is that a designation of a mission specific to fine arts is a significant departure from the broad mission emphases previously offered to various state institutions. Doing so carries the significant implication that those programs at Southeast Missouri State are not only excellent, but superior to other institutions in Missouri as the "primary" institution in those fields. This would potentially mislead students relative to their options in the state and have a detrimental impact on enrollment at other institutions that have equally excellent fine arts programs, and in some cases superior programs based on their current resources.

More specific observations:

- SEMO certainly has strong programs in the fine arts and particularly in theatre with their "conservatory" approach. We applaud them for that program as an asset to their region. However, across all of the fine arts programming, it is not reasonable to claim that any of the four-year institutions in the state are notably superior to the others to the extent that one could be offered the designation of superiority implied by singling those disciplines out in their mission. Doing so will come at the cost of other state programs, given the narrow focus of the designation sought by SEMO.
- Art, music, and theatre have so many sub-disciplinary areas of interest that to identify a regional institution that offers the full scope is problematic. The variety in concentrations of faculty and facilities throughout the state is a strength that balances the value of multiple state institutions. Granting a designation of "Primary Institution" inevitably devalues the other schools and creates an unequal playing field. This will negatively affect students across the state as they seek uniquely tailored pursuits that likewise benefit employers and communities.
- Programs throughout the state of Missouri have significant capital assets that serve their regions and should not be undermined. SEMO does have some fine facilities, but other institutions have equal and in some cases superior assets. Northwest, for example, has a three-dimensional sculpture and ceramics facility that has resources superior to SEMO and others. Likewise, other peers in the state have excellent facilities to which SEMO would aspire.

- While SEMO certainly has high quality faculty in all of the fine arts areas, the nature of those disciplines is such that the specific strengths of sub-discipline faculty vary across the state within music, art, and theatre. This affords students a choice of programs where they can make their selection based on the unique strengths of faculty at these institutions.
- The accreditations SEMO cites as rationale for mission designation are certainly a standard of quality, but it begs the question that if there are eight other institutions in Missouri that maintain the same accreditation in art, for example, what then makes SEMO distinctive and superior to those others. Northwest's accreditation through the National Association of Schools of Music, like all of our state peers who also have NASM accreditation, have met a set of standards that establish it as a quality program like those of our peers. They nonetheless all have unique strengths based on facilities, faculty, and community resources that make them each valuable regional resources.
- Fine arts programming across the state, and particularly at the regional state universities, devote a considerable percentage of their service to students in preparation for K-12 teaching. Regional institutions are a bedrock of quality teacher preparation since they serve regional school district needs, maintain close relationships with those schools that are mutually beneficial, and provide practicum and student teaching sites that are logistically viable for everyone. Since BFA, BS, and BSEd content curriculum overlaps significantly in these regional institutions it would be a disservice to students across the state to elevate one program over others with a specified mission and potential resource and recruiting benefits.

As stated above, we have great respect for SEMO and their programs, but it appears that the request for these specific programs that are shared by other state institutions might send the wrong message to future students and does not appear to be in line with the intent of institutions submitting specific statewide mission requests. Northwest believes that "Statewide Mission" in and of itself could perhaps be misleading, and the MDHE needs to exercise caution as these concerns arise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Jasinski".

John Jasinski, Ph.D.
President



**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY · 1873**

Office of the President

July 23, 2019

The Honorable Zora Mulligan
Commissioner
Missouri Department of Higher Education
205 Jefferson Street
P.O. Box 1469
Jefferson, City, MO 65102

Re: Statewide Mission

Dear Commissioner Mulligan,

This correspondence is in response to our July 19, 2019 phone conversation wherein we discussed the comments received from Truman State University (Truman), Northwest Missouri State University (Northwest) and the University of Missouri System (the System) regarding Southeast Missouri State University's statewide mission application. During that conversation you mentioned that while a response was not necessary, we were welcome to submit one nonetheless. Therefore, this response will serve to provide brief comments reflecting on the notes submitted by the aforementioned institutions and the comments you personally shared with me. I will also address at the end, comments made by Senator Nodler at the June meeting regarding the potential for implications on the composition of Southeast's government board.

Institutional Comments

Southeast appreciates the time that Truman, Northwest, and the System took to submit comments in response to our statewide mission application. However, we disagree with some of the points made. The below comments are just a few of the points I would like to address.

- Truman comments that the areas in which Southeast seeks a statewide mission do not permeate the entire institution's character. As you may recall from previous conversations we have had, there is nothing in the statutory language governing statewide missions that requires this. All that RSMo §173.030(9) requires is that an institution seeking a statewide mission "shall provide evidence to the coordinating board that they have the capacity to discharge successfully such a mission," which then the statute then goes on to list five areas of evidence the institution must satisfy. Southeast has demonstrated evidence in each of these areas. None of them require that the statewide mission permeate the entire institution's character. Thus, we disagree with Truman's comment and find it to be without merit.
- Northwest seems to take issue with the part of the application addressing cybersecurity. Specifically, in the notes you forwarded you state that "Northwest raises the point that the demand for cybersecurity is too high for one institution to accommodate." We do

not disagree. However, the same could be said for liberal arts (Truman), public affairs (Missouri State), global or international education (Missouri Southern), applied sciences and technologies (Central), and applied learning (Western). As I have publicly stated, and our materials note, nothing in our request should be viewed to prohibit other institutions from offering programs in the areas made the basis of our request. As such, we disagree with Northwest's comment and find it to be without merit.

- The System's comments tend to take issue more with the "process", or lack thereof, than substantive matters of our request. For example, you note that they "voiced concerns" regarding our interpretation of the term "unusual strength" found in § 173.030(9). Specifically, they take issue with our use of program accreditations as a measure of "unusual strength." However, "receipt of national, discipline-specific accreditation" is the first example of evidence cited in § 173.030(9)(b) that an institution can use to demonstrate "unusual strength." Another example of appropriate evidence is "receipt of independent certification", which we speak to as well in our proposal by discussing our designation as a NSA/DHS National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education. Our evidence simply responds to the guidance of the statute; therefore, we stand by the contention that our programs are of "unusual strength."

While we respect our colleagues, we disagree that the CBHE making a recommendation to endorse our request will set a dangerous precedent. As you know, there are only three institutions without a statewide mission, so we fail to fully understand this argument. Our application responded directly to the statutory criteria; and as such, we believe that the evidence submitted demonstrating compliance with the statute should be the only material considered when reviewing our request.

Comments Raised During Phone Conference

On Friday, July 19, 2019 you and I had a conference call to discuss the above referenced comments received in response to our request for a statewide mission. During that call, we discussed whether cybersecurity is a valid standalone field or something that should be considered a sub-set of computer science. I have heard similar comments asking "is cybersecurity an established field" and "is cybersecurity a fad and will it still be around in 5, 10, 20 years." Our research shows that cybersecurity has been a topic of interest with connected areas of study dating back potentially five or more decades. There is further evidence that cybersecurity as we know it today began developing its roots in the 1980s; and as an industry, one projection from the Colorado Technical University says there will be 3.5 million open positions in cybersecurity by 2021 alone. All of this seems to demonstrate that cybersecurity is not an emerging field nor is it a fad; but, rather, a valid standalone area of study.

Additional evidence that supports the likely tenure of cybersecurity is that the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) recognized the need to establish

cybersecurity as a formal academic discipline and created new cyber-specific criteria, which resulted in the first ever accreditation for cybersecurity programs. ABET has been accrediting programs for more than eighty (80) years and accredited its first engineering programs in 1932. It helped established the Computing Sciences Accreditation Board in 1985; and today, across all of their disciplines, ABET accredits 4,005 programs at 793 colleges and universities in 32 countries. ABET's reasoning for establishing accreditation for cybersecurity – to recognize it as a formal academic discipline – supports the notion that cybersecurity can, and does, exist as a standalone program. Therefore, we dispute the argument that cybersecurity should be considered a sub-set of computer science, and we respectfully request that it be kept a part of our request.

Another area we discussed was the degree of impact and contribution the visual and performing arts have on Missouri's economy and workforce. To that end, I would direct your attention back to our application and the data from MERIC that shows jobs in the "hospitality and food service" career pathway, which includes arts-related careers, are projected to grow 8.6 percent, or 25,000 jobs, from 2016-2026. Further evidence from the Missouri Arts Council shows the importance of the arts to Missouri's economy. The Council's most recent report available online shows that during FY2015, the arts and culture industry in Missouri generated \$1.039 billion and supported nearly 32,000 jobs. All of this demonstrates that the visual and performing arts do make meaningful contributions to Missouri's economy and its workforce. Therefore, we respectfully disagree that visual and performing arts should be removed from our request.

Governing Board Considerations

At the June CBHE Work Session, Senator Nodler made reference to possible implications on Southeast's governing board should the CBHE recommend a statewide mission, and the Legislature ultimately approve it. We agree with his observation. In support, §174.450 states that institutions with a statewide mission shall be governed by a Board of Governors. And while the statute outlines the number of Governors that shall comprise the Board, we take notice that almost every institution with a statewide mission is operating at different levels than listed. Thus, should the CBHE recommend Southeast for a statewide mission in the areas requested, we would engage in conversations with the Governor's Office prior to the 2020 Legislative Session to reach consensus on this topic. We have had preliminary conversations with them on this previously, simply noting that should the institution be approved for a statewide mission, likely changes to our Board will result. However, in acknowledgement of Senator Nodler's comments we will be proactive about this; and while recognizing governing boards fall under the purview of the Governor, we will work to include language that speaks to Board composition in the legislation we file to implement and authorize our statewide mission request.

In closing, let me reiterate some of the comments made in our application packet. A statewide mission in the requested areas – visual and performing arts, computer science and cybersecurity – would only serve to enhance the stature of these programs and aid in the continued promotion of Southeast Missouri State University and Missouri. As you know, there

is currently no other school with a statewide mission in these areas. As I have previously stated, Southeast is not asking for additional appropriations to support this request, and we are aware that other institutions in Missouri will not be prohibited from offering programs in the areas requested. As such, and having demonstrated evidence satisfying all of the criteria outlined in § 173.030(9), Southeast Missouri State University respectfully requests the Coordinating Board's endorsement of a statewide mission in the visual and performing arts, computer science, and cybersecurity.

We recognize the commitment that our colleagues at institutions across the state have to their students and the work they engage in on their campuses to ensure that their students are successful. However, we have the same responsibility to those we serve – a responsibility to ensure that we provide all possible opportunities for our students to succeed and make meaningful contributions to this workforce needs of the state. We feel that this application aids in the fulfillment of that duty.

Finally, I would be remiss not to mention our appreciation for the opportunity to engage in conversations with you and the Department on this topic over the last several months. Specifically, thank you for making time to meet with us either in person or via phone to discuss this matter; and for the opportunity you created for us to have dialogue with the CBHE about this at their June work session. We look forward to hearing any additional or new feedback the Coordinating Board may have, and we would welcome the opportunity to answer any further questions that may arise. If you have any questions about the contents of this letter, or wish to discuss it further, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 573-651-2222 or via email at president@semo.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlos Vargas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carlos Vargas
President

CC: Mr. Douglas R. Kennedy, Chair, Coordinating Board for Higher Education
The Honorable Kathy Swan, State Representative