

Spectrum

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Faculty & staff benefits announce open enrollment, new vision program

University of Missouri employees have until Nov. 10, 2006, to change their benefits during the annual open enrollment period. No action is required for those employees who do not want to make changes to their enrollment.

Medical premium rates for active employees in 2007 will not increase for the UM Choice Plus POS program or the Catastrophic program. There will be about a 16 percent increase in premium rates for Humana HMO, available only in Kansas City.

Dental premium rates for active employees in 2007 will increase 8 percent effective Jan. 1, 2007, with monthly premiums ranging from \$13.64 for an employee; \$27.30 for an employee and spouse; \$33.12 for an employee and children; and \$46.76 for an employee, spouse and children.

New to the University of Missouri benefits package is a comprehensive vision program offered to both employees and retirees. Employees may select either a full service plan or a discount plan offered through VSP. VSP providers can be found by visiting their website at www.vsp.com.

For the full service plan, monthly premium rates for active employees in 2007 will be \$6.00, employee; \$12.00, employee and spouse; \$13.00, employee and children; and \$20.60, employee, spouse and children. Those who choose to enroll in the full service vision program must complete the vision section of the enrollment form and return it to their campus benefits office.

With the full service plan, services obtained from out-of-network providers will be reimbursed at the out-of-network reduced amounts. The same co-payments(s) and limitations on services will apply as services obtained from VSP doctors. Bills for services from out-of-network providers may be submitted to VSP for reimbursement up to the amounts specified.

Employees who do not select the full service plan are eligible for the VSP discount plan, only available to employees and their family if no one in the family is enrolled in the full service plan. There is no premium cost for the discount option, which offers 20 percent discounts on exams, prescription glasses and frames every 12 months, among other discounts. The discount option does not require enrollment and is only available from a VSP provider.

Those who participate in the Flexible Spending Account program (FSA) must re-enroll each year for that account. Effective Jan. 1, 2007, the maximum amount that employees can contribute to their Health Care FSA will increase from the current \$3,000 to \$4,500 per year.

Employees will receive detailed information about the benefit plan changes in the mail in October. Retirees also will receive a mailing with information on the new vision program and the applicable retiree premiums.

Meetings on the annual enrollment change period and benefit changes will be held on each campus and at University Hospital. More information can be [found online](#).

University serves as leader in international programs, Bennett reports

The University of Missouri is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its historic academic exchange with the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, and the University continues to be a global leader in international exchanges, Board of Curators Chair Angela Bennett reported at the Oct. 6 board meeting in Kansas City.

“The University of Missouri has more international initiatives than any other major university in the U.S.,” Bennett said. “This includes areas such as research, instruction, student exchanges, public service and economic development.”

The agreement with the University of the Western Cape, signed in 1986, was the first ever such agreement between a U.S. university and a historically black South African university. Since its inception, the program has sponsored more than 361 exchange visits, representing more than 40 academic disciplines.

Last year, a collaborative research effort between UM and the UWC resulted in a \$4.4 million grant from a division of the National Institutes of Health to investigate African indigenous herbal medicines. In seeking the grant, the UM/UWC team competed against some of the best medical research groups in the world, including Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University and Columbia University.

Each campus also is engaged in global initiatives from student exchanges to departmental programs, fostering cooperation in teaching, research and service.

UM-Columbia has more than 400 international memorandums of understanding with universities from more than 70 nations, including Thailand, Japan and Russia. More than 800 students participated in University-sponsored study-abroad programs last year, up 58 percent from 2001. A relationship with the Republic of Korea dates back to the 1950s, when Harry S Truman announced scholarships for Korean students to attend UM-Columbia. This relationship has produced many prominent Korean UM-Columbia alums in business, academia and government, Bennett reported, making the campus alumni association in Seoul the largest international chapter.

UM-Kansas City students also participate in study abroad exchange or international programs; last year saw an increase of 68 percent from 2001. The School of Law at UM-Kansas City offers a summer program with Peking University in Beijing, China. At the Bloch School of Business and Public Administration, graduate students are required to visit international business centers to gain a better understanding of their practices.

In addition to 25 student exchange agreements, students and faculty at UM-Rolla are involved in the campus chapter of Engineers Without Borders. The chapter recently traveled to Guatemala

and Bolivia to partner with those communities in building infrastructure such as water and sanitation systems and other engineering endeavors.

At UM-St. Louis, the International Business Program, a collaboration between the Honors College and College of Business Administration, has been ranked in the top 20 by U.S. News & World Report for the past four years. The Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center has become the premier institution for tropical ecology and biodiversity conservation with graduate students from more than 20 countries.

International students also bring a direct impact. "The international students on our four campuses have contributed more than \$80 million to the economic growth and engine of Missouri," Bennett said.

University of Missouri briefs

Edwards honored as recipient of Pacheco Leadership Award

Dr. Linda Edwards, dean of the School of Education at UM-Kansas City, is the 2006 recipient of the Manuel T. Pacheco Academic Leadership Award.

Edwards was presented with the \$2,500 award at the Leadership Development Program event on Sept. 18. The award, created in 2002, is presented to an administrator who exemplifies outstanding academic leadership at the University of Missouri.

Edwards has served as dean of the School of Education since 2003 and has held various positions at the school for more than 30 years, including associate dean and chair, division of curriculum and instructional leadership.

Under her leadership, the school developed the Institute for Urban Education, which focuses on preparing exemplary educators for urban settings. Edwards received a master's degree and a doctorate from the University of Kansas.

Curators' professors named

The Board of Curators approved the appointments of a curators' teaching professor and a curators' professor at UM-Rolla.

D. Kent Peaslee, professor of metallurgical engineering, was named curators' teaching professor. James L. Drewniak, professor of electrical and computer engineering, was named curators' professor.

Each will receive a \$10,000 annual stipend as long as they hold their respective positions. Both appointments are effective Jan. 1, 2007.

Board approves appropriations request for UMR/MSU cooperative engineering program

The University of Missouri and Missouri State University signed a memorandum of understanding on Aug. 21 that allows UM-Rolla to offer electrical and civil engineering degree programs at MSU.

At its Oct. 6 meeting, the board approved amending the FY08 appropriation request to include a request for \$500,000 in recurring funds and \$500,000 in one-time funds to support implementation of the program. MSU is requesting the same amount of funds.

Planning funds would be used to assess the projected mix of students in the programs; develop the appropriate distance education technology to deliver laboratory-based courses; and appraise and begin renovations of existing laboratories at MSU to accommodate the delivery of other laboratory-based courses in civil or electrical engineering. Ongoing state funding would cover the additional costs to deliver the programs.

New master of public health at UMC approved by board

The board approved a proposal for a master of public health degree at UM-Columbia.

The program will be a collaboration between multiple campus divisions and will attract traditional students and practicing health care professionals. The goal is to provide high-quality training to enhance the state's public health workforce.

The degree proposal now goes to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education for approval.

Board approves naming, firms for design services

The board approved the selection of architects and engineers for campus projects.

Cannon Design, St. Louis, Mo., was selected for design services for the University of Missouri Health Care Orthopedics Institute in Columbia.

The board approved Trivers Associates, St. Louis, Mo., for a schematic design for the Thomas Jefferson North Tower residence hall, Phase 1, at UM-Rolla.

Cannon Design also was approved for the schematic design for the Life Science Business Incubator – Phase I at UM-Columbia. The board approved naming the incubator the MU Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place.

Governance & external affairs committees appointments

The board approved two new standing committees at its Oct. 6 meeting: External Affairs Committee: Marion H. Cairns, chair; Doug Russell; Don Walsworth. Governance Committee: John M. Carnahan III, chair; Anne C. Ream, O.D.; Cheryl D. S. Walker.

United Way campaign continues

The University of Missouri and the Columbia campus are participating in a United Way campaign, with UM President Elson S. Floyd and UM-Columbia Chancellor Brady J. Deaton serving as honorary chairs. More information about the campaign, which runs through October, can be found at: <http://unitedway.missouri.edu>

University's focus on access, accountability consistent with report

An important national conversation on the future of higher education is underway, led by U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, University of Missouri President Elson S. Floyd told curators at the Oct. 6 board meeting in Kansas City.

Spellings recently released an “action plan” based on a report by the U.S. Commission on the Future of Higher Education. Recommendations from the report fall into three categories: access, affordability and accountability.

The University of Missouri is keenly focused on access, Floyd said, and has changed some of its admission policies to reflect that.

“We want our institution to be the institution of first choice,” he said. An enhanced admissions policy approved by the board last year guarantees admission to high-achieving Missouri students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their class, complete the college preparatory course-work and take the appropriate standardized test.

“We also are maintaining the affordability of our institution, doing all that we can to control and contain our costs and making sure that we are directing those resources toward the highest priorities — for us that is teaching and research responsibilities,” Floyd said.

The administrative streamlining plan, in which the University will redirect some \$20 million in administrative funds, is consistent with the report. About \$18 million will be directed to priorities that benefit students, with the long-term objective to improve efficiency and control future tuition increases without compromising quality.

“Accountability is crucial for what we do both now and into the future,” he said. “The University will never waiver from our accountability to the public.”

Floyd said the next board meeting will include a roundtable of key individuals to discuss the report and the impact it could have on the University of Missouri.