

# a global vision

From his vantage as MU chancellor, Brady J. Deaton sees the university's progress and promise.

Story by John Beahler

Brady J. Deaton says one of the best parts of his job as MU chancellor is the chance to get an overview of Mizzou's many achievements. "It's a great joy being in the kind of position I'm in," he says. "You get to look out and see all the fabulous things we're accomplishing at the University of Missouri."

But that can also be one of the most frustrating aspects of his job, says Deaton, who became chancellor in October 2004. "Sometimes I'm astounded that others don't see all these successes as clearly as we do," he says. After all, public higher education had a huge impact on his own life, and Deaton is puzzled when others don't share his enthusiasm for it.



Chancellor Brady J. Deaton says that MU has a unique role as the state's flagship university. "Our ultimate goal is to help elevate the quality of life," he says.

*Photo by Nicholas Benner*



He delights in pointing out just a few of MU's highlights in recent years:

- Outside **funding for research** has exploded. Over the past 10 years, federal research funding for Mizzou scientists has grown faster than at any other public university in the country. In fiscal year 2005, the university generated more than \$220 million in research and development spending, which supported \$450 million in economic activity and 9,000 jobs.

- Because of that growth in research, more and more MU undergraduates are working with faculty mentors on **real-world research** long before they become graduate students.

- Top high school graduates in Missouri and other states are voting with their feet and enrolling at MU in **record numbers**. Total enrollment was 28,477 in fall 2007, up by nearly 5,200 students since 2000. Enrollment numbers also look strong for fall 2008.

- In November 2007, the University of Missouri System's governing board agreed to **restore MU's original name**, University of Missouri. The name restoration recognizes MU's historical importance as the state's flagship campus and underscores its national prominence.

- MU's fundraising campaign, **For All We Call Mizzou**, is nearing its **\$1 billion goal**. By April 2008, the campaign had raised \$932.81 million for scholarships, endowed chairs and professorships, and enhanced programs and facilities.

- In 2008, MU celebrates **100 years of membership** in the Association of American Universities (AAU), which is the most prestigious group of research universities in the country. Mizzou was one of just a handful of public institutions that were invited to join the association in the first decade of the 20th century.

- This year, MU also celebrates the **100th birthday of the School of Journalism**, the world's first journalism school. A

Since the start of the  
For All We Call Mizzou  
campaign in 2000, the  
university has gained  
97 new endowed  
chairs and 1,500 new  
scholarships.

\$31 million gift from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation established the Reynolds Journalism Institute at MU as a world-class center for studying and testing new models of journalism.

- MU professors are doing pioneering research in **new exciting fields**. Over the past few years, Mizzou has established research centers in nanotechnology (manipulating atoms and molecules to create microminiature devices), in comparative medicine, and to discover new treatments for autism and neurodevelopmental disorders, to name just a few.

- MU is a **national model for mathematics and science education**. Mizzou has received more than \$7 million in funding from the National Science Foundation to develop programs that recruit and train new math and science teachers to meet a growing shortage in the field.

- Mizzou has become **known as a "writing university"** for its nationally recognized programs in creative writing, playwrighting and journalism.

#### A complex mission

Deaton isn't ambiguous about his responsibilities as the University of Missouri's chancellor. His résumé states it succinctly: "The chancellor assumes responsibility for all campus operations." Succinct perhaps, but hardly simple. Major public research univer-

sities such as Mizzou are among the most complex organizations in the world.

With more than 40,000 faculty, staff and students, MU would be one of the larger cities in Missouri if it were on its own — a city with its own power plant and water system, police force, radio and television stations, residence halls and dining facilities for 6,000 students, sports teams and stadiums, and thousands of acres of farms.

When you add in MU's land-grant mission to spread the latest scientific knowledge to people in Missouri and around the world, Deaton's role takes on an international dimension. That possibility didn't seem likely when he was growing up on a small farm in the Appalachian Mountains of eastern Kentucky.

His family raised corn, tobacco and hogs, and Deaton remembers working the fields with a horse-drawn plow and helping his dad with carpentry and bricklaying jobs in the summers. He also found the time to read every book in his grade school's tiny library.

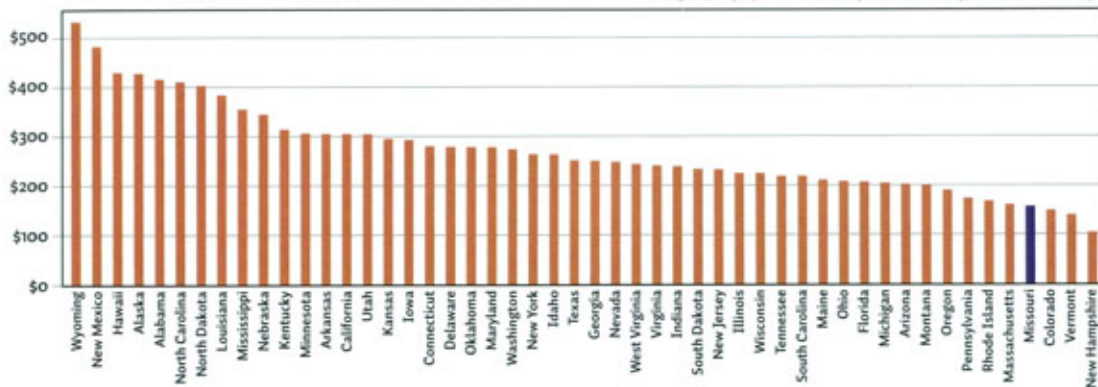
An early introduction to 4-H programs opened Deaton's eyes to the possibilities of what might lie past the hills and hollows that stretched beyond the family farmstead. Those early education experiences eventually steered him to a career that has taken him around the world, to work on such problems as hunger, poverty, food security and economic opportunity.

Deaton wants young people today to experience that same sense of wonder. He wants them to know that, with hard work and a high-quality education, almost anything is possible, no matter their financial resources. He wants Mizzou students to understand they can succeed in any corner of the globe.

His first international experience came when he joined the Peace Corps in 1962 after two years at the University of Kentucky. Deaton taught vocational agriculture in Nan, Thailand, in the Thai language, which he still speaks fluently. During his first two years at Kentucky, he planned to study

Ranking of states on appropriations of state tax funds for operating expenses of higher education per capita 2008

The Grapevine Project, Center for the Study of Education Policy, Illinois State University



Missouri ranks near the bottom among states for per capita state funding of higher education. In fiscal year 2008, Missouri ranked 47, spending \$159.05 per capita. At the middle of the pack, Texas ranked 25, spending \$253.44. Wyoming was No. 1, spending \$536.96.

animal genetics to improve milk production for dairy cattle. To help pay his way, Deaton tended the university dairy herd and lived in a room above the dairy barn.

Deaton's time in Thailand changed his original academic goal. "After the Peace Corps, I switched to agricultural economics because I felt we knew enough science to feed the world," Deaton says. "The real job was in organizing and getting the political and economic will to do it."

People at Mizzou know Deaton as an accomplished administrator, but he's also a nationally respected scholar on economic and rural development issues. At the University of Tennessee, his first faculty post, he worked on rural poverty problems in Appalachia. He also has consulted overseas in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, and he worked with food aid programs in Kenya and Zambia.

#### The university's role

Deaton's international academic work underscores his philosophy about the role of higher education: "I think a university's work ought to be pulling together basic knowledge from diverse fields and making that knowledge serve society," he says.

"As a major land-grant research university, we must be developing new knowledge

at all times and in all fields. We have a different role than other higher education institutions, because we are here to develop new knowledge and to disseminate that knowledge both in the classroom and off campus. Our ultimate goal is to help elevate the quality of life."

#### Mizzou's bottom line

Some lawmakers who control the state's higher education purse strings suggest that colleges and universities should simply

MU has managed to absorb state budget reductions by reallocating money, holding positions open, and requiring students and their parents to pay a larger share through higher tuition.

cut their costs in tight financial times. It isn't that simple, Deaton argues. The state's appropriation for higher education is really an investment in Missouri and its citizens, he says.

The state has been skimping on that higher education investment in recent years. Since 2001, Missouri's appropriation to support MU has dropped by more than \$11 million — from \$193 million in 2001 to \$181.8 million in 2008. If that appropriation had increased only at the rate of inflation, Mizzou would be receiving \$50 million more each year from the state.

Over the past five years, MU has managed to absorb state budget reductions by reallocating money, holding faculty and staff positions open, and requiring students and their parents to pay a larger share through higher tuition. In 2004, for the first time in its history, Mizzou received a larger percentage of its operating budget from tuition than it did from the state. That trend continues.

Universities, and especially large land-grant research universities such as MU, can't just flip a switch on and off to increase and decrease their academic and research enterprise in the same way a manufacturer can.

"There's no real comparison," Deaton



says. "We're a knowledge industry. We produce knowledge, not things. And, as a land-grant university, we also have a mission to disseminate that knowledge and ensure its application in targeted ways. Higher education is not a rote, manufacturing process, a die that stamps out a piece of metal the same way every time. We're dealing with human beings and the human brain, with all its capacity and creativity."

MU and its supporters have to convince the legislature that the university desperately needs more public funds, Deaton says. In fiscal year 2008, Missouri ranked fourth from the bottom in per capita state funding for higher education, according to the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University.

"The future of this state depends on its ability to fund what's happening on this campus. It would be very shortsighted of them if the legislature fails to do that. We are not a poor state, and this university should not be funded as if we were a poor state."

### Access and affordability

Is the state's budget-cutting a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy? The facts bear that out, Deaton says. Low state funding for MU robs the campus of intellectual venture capital it needs to invest in vital programs and new opportunities, he says. Science and scholarship is changing so quickly that, in many fields, being just a year or two behind the leading edge practically puts scientists and researchers back in the horse-and-buggy days.

Because Deaton must balance Mizzou's budget every year, falling state appropriations have forced the university to boost tuition. That means current and future students might be shortchanged the most, and Deaton has pledged to do everything he can to keep Mizzou affordable. His administration has committed record amounts from endowments and the university's general operating budget for need-based scholarships. In fiscal year 2004,

MU spent \$35.9 million on undergraduate scholarships. By 2007, that number had increased to \$46.7 million, nearly a 30 percent increase.

In April, Mizzou launched a long-term scholarship initiative called the University of Missouri Flagship Scholars. The program's goal is to raise money from private donors to endow at least one full-ride, four-year scholarship worth up to \$15,000 in every county in the state and the city of St. Louis.

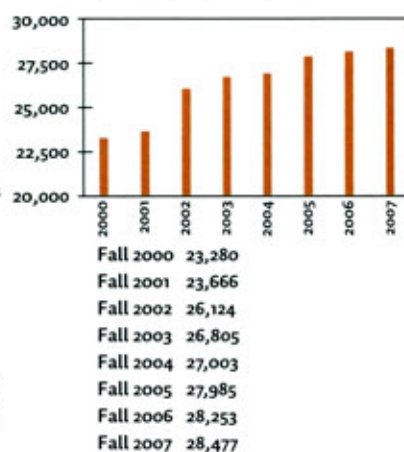
The Show-Me State is falling behind when it comes to college access and completion. The percentage of Missouri high school graduates who go on to college is relatively low. So is the graduation rate. Nearly 28 percent of adults in the United States have a college degree, but only 24 percent of Missourians have a degree.

Mizzou has developed several programs in recent years to help qualified students consider a college career when otherwise they might not. For nearly a decade, different schools and colleges at MU have hosted college-visit programs that acquaint potential students from underrepresented groups with their college options in areas such as medicine, engineering and veterinary medicine.

This fall, MU will initiate its Missouri

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Enrollment growth, 2000–07



Total enrollment has increased 22.3 percent between 2000 and 2007, from 23,280 to 28,477. In 2002, MU started including students enrolled in on-campus evening programs and online courses in the total count. Enrollment for fall 2008 is not yet available, though freshman deposits are up by 26 percent from the same time last year.

More: [registrar.missouri.edu/statistics/index.php](http://registrar.missouri.edu/statistics/index.php)

College Advising Corps in eight high schools in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas and in southeast Missouri. The college advisers will be recent Mizzou graduates who work one-on-one with high school students to broaden college access by demystifying the enrollment and financial aid process for underrepresented students. Other advisers will be assigned to three Missouri community colleges to smooth the transfer process to MU and other four-year colleges.

### Taking care of teachers

As a veteran professor himself — during his career, he has held every academic rank from assistant professor to department chair — Deaton knows that faculty are key to the university's long-term success. "The only way you can have a great university is to have great faculty. You simply can't have one without the other," he says.

"That means we've got to ensure that we're recruiting the best faculty, and that once we get them here, we nurture them; we retain them. We find ways of supporting





their scholarship and their ability to interact effectively with students.”

But he warns that efforts to retain Mizzou’s best professors are being stymied by low faculty salaries. A fall 2006 survey by the American Association of University Professors found that MU faculty salaries were second from the bottom among the 34 public AAU universities. From 1997 to 2006, MU had the lowest growth rate among its peers in salaries for ranked faculty. During that time, MU faculty salaries went up by a total of 20.4 percent compared with 49.2 percent for faculty at the highest ranked school, the University of Maryland at College Park.

Deaton’s goal is to raise the salaries for ranked faculty members to the median of public AAU universities, in part through a

three-year plan called Compete Missouri. That plan will close a projected \$7 million deficit next fiscal year through cost-savings, new revenues and by not filling many vacant faculty positions, and it will dedicate \$2 million of that money to enhance faculty salaries. That’s in addition to a planned 4 percent increase for merit raises.

At a special faculty meeting in early May, some professors warned that those salary increases could come at the expense of MU’s teaching mission. Regarding faculty salaries, Deaton says the university must keep pace.

“If Missouri is to compete successfully with other states in economic development, and if our students are to compete successfully for jobs and graduate education, then we must have the faculty

Every spring, Deaton visits classrooms of faculty members who receive William T. Kemper Fellowships for Teaching Excellence, as he did this April, accompanied by Commerce Bank Chairman Jim Schatz, center, and Deputy Chancellor Mike Middleton. “The only way you can have a great university is to have great faculty,” Deaton says. “You simply can’t have one without the other.”

and staff who can make that happen and not lose them to other states and private institutions,” Deaton says. “We firmly believe that the future of our state’s social and economic progress is linked to the University of Missouri.” ■

**MORE** > Anne and Brady Deaton welcome guests into their home on the Quad.  
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