University of Central Missouri
Board of Governors
Plenary Session
August 21, 2026

The University of Central Missouri (UCM) Board of Governors convened in Plenary Session on August 21, 2026, at 11:02 a.m. in the Elliott Student Union, Room 237B, on UCM's main campus in Warrensburg, Missouri. Board President Stephen Abney presided over the meeting. Others participating in the meeting were Governors John Collier, Mary Dandurand, Stu Rogers, Gus Wetzel II, and Ken Weymuth; University President Roger Best; General Counsel Lindsay Chapman; and Assistant Board Secretary Kristen Plummer.

Note: Some items were taken out of order; however, the minutes reflect the order of the published agenda.

Call to Order - Agenda Item No. 1

Board President Abney called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present to conduct business.

Remarks by the Board President – Agenda Item No. 2

Board President Abney welcomed attendees to the first Board of Governors meeting for the Fall 2026 semester, highlighting that it is an exciting time for the campus and the Warrensburg community. He noted that he and Governors Dandurand and Wetzel represented the Board at Freshman Convocation, where they also viewed the UCM Kickoff Welcome Walk. He noted the impressive welcome from the band, cheerleaders, Mulekickers, faculty, and staff for incoming freshmen as they entered the Administration Building, and encouraged anyone who had not participated before to do so in the future. He stated that many exciting projects are underway at UCM and that we are looking forward to a great new academic year.

Remarks by the University President – Agenda Item No. 3

President Best thanked Dr. Shari Bax, Vice President for Student Experience and Engagement, for her report on the full schedule of the UCM Kickoff experience, which was provided during the Student Engagement and University Advancement Committee meeting earlier in the day. Additionally, President Best expressed gratitude to faculty, staff, and volunteers for their extensive efforts and high energy in welcoming students during the fall move-in and Kickoff. He also noted the recent reference in the show *Ted Lasso* that a mule never forgets.

Recognition of Outgoing Board President – Agenda Item No. 4

In recognition of his years of service as Board President from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026, Governor Collier was presented with a plaque by Board President Abney and President Best. A photograph was taken of the presentation.

Emeritus Status Requests and Recognitions – Agenda Item No. 5

President Best stated the following individuals qualified for emeritus status in accordance with BOG Policy 2.1.070 – Privileges Extended to Emeriti and Retired Employees (Attachment 1):

- Ms. Kristie Brinkley (July 24, 2000 – July 31, 2026), Assistant Director of Student Activities, Volunteer Services
- Dr. Eric Honour (August 21, 2000 – July 31, 2026), Chair of the School of Visual and Performing Arts and Professor of Music Technology and Composition
- Dr. Michael Bersin (August 20, 1990 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Music
- Dr. Curtis Bradford (June 22, 2011 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Construction Management
- Ms. Debbie Cunconan (August 20, 2001 – August 31, 2026), Senior Instructor of English
- Ms. Lana Hopping (August 8, 2016 – August 31, 2026), Assistant Instructor of Special Education
- Dr. David Kreiner (August 20, 1990 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Psychological Science
- Ms. Joyce Lawson (March 11, 2002 – August 31, 2026), Senior Strategic Human Resources Partner and Benefits Specialist
- Dr. Monty Laycox (August 17, 2006 – August 31, 2026), Assistant Instructor of Physics
- Dr. James Staab (August 24, 1998 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Political Science
- Dr. Kimberly Stark (August 18, 1997 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Psychological Science
- Dr. Gregory Turner (August 21, 1995 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Communication Disorders
- Dr. Mark von Schlemmer (August 16, 2010 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Communication and Digital Media
- Mr. Matthew Zupnick (August 18, 1997 – August 31, 2026), Professor of Art, Design, and Photography

Governor Wetzel moved that the Board of Governors approve emeritus status for Ms. Kristie Brinkley, Dr. Eric Honour, Dr. Michael Bersin, Dr. Curtis Bradford, Ms. Debbie Cunconan, Ms. Lana Hopping, Dr. David Kreiner, Ms. Joyce Lawson, Dr. Monty Laycox, Dr. James Staab, Dr. Kimberly Stark, Dr. Gregory Turner, Dr. Mark von Schlemmer, and Mr. Matthew Zupnick. Governor Collier seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Photographs were taken of Board President Abney and President Best individually presenting certificates to Dr. Bradford, Ms. Hopping, Dr. Kreiner, Ms. Lawson, Dr. Staab, Dr. Stark, and Dr. von Schlemmer. President Best noted Dr. Doug Thomas, President of the Emeriti Retirement Association (ERA), and Ms. Sharon Jennings, ERA Vice President, were in attendance and would take a group picture in the hallway with the new emeriti members. Certificates will be mailed to those who were unable to attend.

PLENARY SESSION

Consent Agenda – Agenda Item No. 6

Board President Abney asked for a motion to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

Action Items

- Minutes from the June 18, 2026, Work Session and Plenary Session and the June 26, 2026, Special Plenary Session; and
- Commitment of up to $765,000 for the purchase of a new single-engine Cessna 172S training aircraft for the purpose of flight training, with the purchase agreement to be completed by September 30, 2026, for current pricing and first-quarter 2028 delivery (Attachment 2).

Governor Dandurand moved that the Board of Governors approve the items listed under the Consent Agenda. Governor Collier seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Board President Abney noted the following information item listed on the Consent Agenda:

Information Item

- Annual Investment Report (Attachment 3).

REPORTS/UPDATES

Written Governance Group Report – Agenda Item No. 7

Board President Abney noted the written governance group report from the Staff Council was included in the meeting packet (Attachment 4). The Faculty Senate and Student Government Association did not submit reports, as they do not meet over the summer.

Enrollment Report for Fall 2026 – Agenda Item No. 8

Dr. Tim Crowley, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Mr. Chris Lang, Assistant Vice Provost for Admissions, Analytics, and Financial Aid, presented the preliminary Fall 2026 enrollment report based on data from the first day of classes (Attachment 5). Mr. Lang noted that nearly 1,400 students had enrolled since the update provided to the Board at the June 2026 meeting, with additional growth of 18% to 20% anticipated through the official census date and ongoing dual credit registrations. Mr. Lang reported a 5% increase in first-time freshmen, marking the second consecutive year of freshman growth, and a 2.5% increase in transfer students, driven by a higher transfer conversion rate of nearly 70%.

Board President Abney inquired when high school students enroll in dual credit courses, and Mr. Lang confirmed that it is in the fall when high school begins. Provost Crowley commended the faculty and staff for their hard work throughout the recruitment cycle. Governor Abney also expressed appreciation on behalf of the Board. In response to

Governor Weymuth's question about the increase in undergraduate international enrollment, Provost Crowley explained that undergraduate students receive a different type of visa than graduate students. Governor Rogers asked how current enrollment and credit hour numbers met expectations, and Provost Crowley responded that the credit hours have hit their targets. While revenue was not quite at target, he noted there is a lot of activity still to happen before the census date.

Legislative Update – Agenda Item No. 9

Executive Director for Governmental Relations David Pearce provided an update on state and federal legislative matters (Attachment 6). At the state level, Governor Kehoe signed the state budget on June 30, which included level funding for higher education. He stated that expectations are that it will be a very lean budget year. Mr. Pearce noted the defeat of Amendments 4 and 5 in the recent primary election and addressed congressional redistricting that placed Johnson County into the 5th Congressional District, where candidates Emanuel Cleaver and Rick Brattin are contesting the seat. He also summarized the initiative petition that was submitted to the Missouri Secretary of State's office. Secretary of State Denny Hoskins determined the issue was unconstitutional, stating that redistricting plans are not subject to a statewide vote. A lawsuit was filed, and Cole County Judge Daniel Green ruled in Secretary of State Hoskins' favor. Mr. Pearce noted an appeal will most likely be heard by the Missouri Supreme Court in early September.

At the federal level, Mr. Pearce reported that both the House and Senate are currently in their August recess. Before adjourning, the Senate Commerce Committee passed the bipartisan Protect College Sports Act (S.R. 4668), which establishes national regulations for Name-Image-Likeness (NIL) protections, limits sports agent commissions to five percent, sets transfer and eligibility rules, and preempts conflicting state legislation. The bill is expected to undergo a full Senate vote upon Congress's return in September. Continuing resolutions were also passed to keep the federal government operating until December 4.

Mr. Pearce highlighted several recent campus visitors and external events, including the Governor's Ham Breakfast at the Missouri State Fair, UCM hosting *This Week in Missouri Politics* tapings, and campus visits from congressional field representatives Tobias Steffensmeier and Ka'Von Johnson, as well as Department of Corrections officials Trevor Foley and Valarie Moseley. Looking ahead, Mr. Pearce noted upcoming events including the state legislative veto session on September 16 in Jefferson City, UCM hosting the West Central County Commissioners meeting on September 17, and a campus visit by USDA Farm Service Agency Director Ronald Russell on October 9 to meet with university farms and agriculture classes.

Intercollegiate Athletics Update – Agenda Item No. 10

Dr. Matt Howdeshell, Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics, presented the intercollegiate athletics update (Attachment 7), beginning with a video of highlights from the 2025-2026 year. Dr. Howdeshell stated that UCM finished 14th in the Learfield Director's Cup, marking its 20th consecutive top-30 national finish, with 11 of 17 teams advancing to the postseason alongside numerous individual student-athlete and coaching honors. Student-athletes

excelled academically with a department-wide 3.30 GPA, completed over 5,000 community service hours, and utilized key support services like the mental health clinician and the fueling station. Dr. Howdeshell shared that Athletics also partnered with former NFL athlete Jason Moore to launch the "Next Season Workshop," which provides student-athletes with valuable skills for life after sports.

Dr. Howdeshell provided an overview of the $2.5 million in facility enhancements that were completed including new turf for the Jennies Softball infield, upgraded stadium lighting and renovated suites at Walton Stadium, and audio-visual enhancements. Looking forward, the department has over $14 million in active construction and design projects underway, alongside plans for $17.5 million in potential future master plan improvements.

Regarding the fan experience, Dr. Howdeshell reported there were over 107,000 total attendees during the 2025-2026 year, with attendance records set across several individual sports. He also noted the redesigned website had over 1.8 million page views and there were over 29,000 views of the 97 broadcasted campus events.

Dr. Howdeshell reported UCM Athletics achieved strong financial performance, securing $4.7 million in major gifts, over $605,000 in gifts to the Cardinal and Black Fund and sport-specific Excellence Funds, and a 29% increase in sponsorship revenue. Key fundraising events like Match Madness and the First Pitch Banquet added significant support alongside major corporate partnerships. Furthermore, a joint economic impact study revealed that campus athletic events generated an estimated $6.25 million for the local Warrensburg economy and supported nearly 69 full-time jobs.

Dr. Howdeshell expressed his appreciation for the support of the Board, President Best, alumni donors, and supporters. In response to a question from Governor Rogers, Dr. Howdeshell provided information on the recently launched Central Missouri Athletics Leadership Academy sponsored by Alan and Kathleen Brandt. Dr. Howdeshell concluded his report by sharing the announcement that Mules Golf Coach Tim Poe will be retiring at the end of the 2027 season.

University Update – Agenda Item No. 11

President Best provided an overview of items distributed to the Board since the June meeting, including the Career and Life Design Annual Report (Attachment 8), the 2026 Annual Debt Service Report (Attachment 9), and the 2025-2026 UCM Community Service Efforts Report (Attachment 10). In follow-up to Mr. Pearce’s legislative update, President Best said the Missouri university presidents would meet with the Commissioner of the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD) the next week to discuss the funding formula. Additionally, Dr. Best acknowledged Dr. Jason Morrill, Associate Vice President for University Analytics and Institutional Research, who has been assisting the Council on Public Higher Education (COPHE) in running a shadow model of the proposed formula to assess its potential financial impact on UCM and other COPHE institutions ahead of the December deadline.

BOARD COMMITTEE ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

Governor Dandurand, Chair of the Board Committee on Student Engagement and University Advancement, stated that the Committee met earlier in the day, during which they heard an update from the University Advancement and Alumni Foundation team, and Dr. Shari Bax reported on the startup activities for the Fall 2026 semester.

BOARD COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Governor Wetzel, Chair of the Board Committee on Academic Affairs, stated the Committee did not meet this month.

BOARD COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Governor Weymuth, Chair of the Board Committee on Finance and Administration, reported that the Committee met earlier in the day to discuss the purchase of an aviation program aircraft, which was approved on the Consent Agenda, alongside information updates on the annual investment report, Fiscal Year 2026 year-end unaudited financial statements, and the Procurement Report.

BOARD BUSINESS

Proposed 2027 Board of Governors Meeting Schedule – Agenda Item No. 12

Board President Abney presented the proposed dates for the 2027 Board of Governors meetings (Attachment 11):

January 26, 2027
March 25–26, 2027
April 29–30, 2027
June 17–18, 2027
August 19–20, 2027
October 28–29, 2027
December 9–10, 2027

Governor Collier moved that the Board of Governors approve the dates listed above for the 2027 Board of Governors meetings. The motion was seconded by Governor Rogers and carried unanimously.

Other Business – Agenda Item No. 13

There was no other business.

Adjournment – Agenda Item No. 14

Governor Weymuth made a motion for adjournment. The motion was seconded by Governor Dandurand and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

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Attachments Listing

Attachment No.	Attachment Description
1	Emeritus Status Requests and Recognitions
2	Purchase of Aviation Program Aircraft
3	Annual Investment Report
4	Written Governance Group Report
5	Enrollment Report for Fall 2026
6	Legislative Update
7	Intercollegiate Athletics Update
8	Career and Life Design Annual Report
9	2026 Annual Debt Service Report
10	2025-2026 UCM Community Service Efforts Report
11	Proposed 2027 Board of Governors Meeting Schedule