

River Campus Board of Managers Minutes

March 21st, 2025

Attendees	Danielle Poyner, Brad Koester, Bruce Skinner, Brittany Schroeder
Guests	Amber Cook, Nick Kenney, Michelle Brune, Ellen Wood, Sara Steffens
Absent	Sophia Han, Kenneth Haskin, Rhonda Weller-Stilson
Location	River Campus Seminary, Conference Room (RCS305)
Minutes	No minutes were approved at this meeting because there was not a quorum.

Danielle Poyner called the meeting to order, and introductions were made.

Agenda

- **Restaurant Hop and Extravaganza fundraising updates with Sara Steffens**-Sara provided updates about the upcoming Restaurant Hop, providing information about the different restaurants that are participating. It is a great event for students, along with giving exposure to the restaurants in town. There was discussion about the tickets for the event and how much the tickets cost. Sara also provided updates about the annual Theatre & Dance Extravaganza; this year's theme ties into the production of *"Into the Woods"*. The fundraising from the Extravaganza goes to help the Theatre & Dance students travel to New York.
- **Upcoming Season updates with Amber Cook**-Amber provided updates about the upcoming season. Some of the musicals and plays that will be coming next season will be *Grease*, *Lanford Wilson Short Play Festival*, *Working*, *Twelfth Night*, *Big Band Holiday Jukebox*, and *Winter Dance Concert*. Students will have an opportunity to work on different plays this season (*Moving Perspectives*, *Legally Blonde the Musical*, and *The Laramie Project*). There were 750 full plays submitted last year for the *Lanford Wilson Short Play Festival*. Celebrate the Arts was talked about as a closer for the semester, along with the different performances from students. Celebrate the Arts helps to raise funds for student initiatives for travel & experiential learning experiences. All these productions are student productions, made in-house; we do not hire outside performers. This large season is part of the reason we are successful at recruiting students on a national level, because of the experiential learning opportunities.
- **Upcoming New Orleans Tour with Amber Cook**- Amber provided information about the upcoming New Orleans trip; there will be 18 faculty and students from Music and Theatre & Dance. The purpose of the trip has multiple reasons, these students have been vetted and chosen for the performance concert. The students will be able to do a formal performance, and they will be able to experience the culture. They will be going to Jazz Fest to see world-class performances in the field that they want to pursue, giving them the formal experience of seeing how these performers put on shows. There is also a recruiting aspect to the trip; we have had many talented students from New Orleans who have graduated from Southeast. One of the students who graduated from New Orleans will help the group meet with different schools in the New Orleans area.
- **Music Season Updates and Planning for next year with Nick Kenney**- Nick provided updates about the upcoming Music season and the scheduling of Band Events. The Music season will be very large this year. The Band is still scheduling items and has a theme

focusing on America celebrating its 250th anniversary next year. There will be some scheduling changes to the symphony season. They are adding Symphonic Pops in Capaha Park in September, as an outreach event. The opening concert will be changed to a Friday night because of scheduling. They are hoping for more engagement with it being moved from a Tuesday to a Friday. Next year is also the 25th anniversary of the Southeast Missouri Symphony Society, and there will be a celebration. Music is scaling down the size of the orchestra for the Winter Concert to feature strings. One of the smaller areas of Music is strings, so they are trying to get more exposure and engagement from the community. Dr. Hopkins will be bringing in guest artists and retired faculty to help with the 25th celebration of the Southeast Missouri Symphony Society. Nick also went over the different additions to the Chamber series. There is no shortage of events going on in this upcoming season. It was also shared that through an FFR grant and some Opera and Music funding, they can set up a livestream showing in the Bedell & the Shuck Recital Hall. The equipment is being set up, and they will have the ability to livestream the faculty and student recitals through YouTube. It is a great addition to the River Campus, and we can record the recitals to play back to students for an assessment tool. There was discussion about it being a free livestream on YouTube. They will be talking about how not to lose ticket sales with this new process. A lot of universities are streaming their recitals to promote engagement. Ellen stated that we do have the capability to do online ticket sales, and they talked about setting up a livestream link and a traditional link. It is an incredible recruitment tool, because you can have potential students watch recitals and see the recital hall without having them travel to Cape Girardeau. Nick reported that he expects it to be a record year for new admits in Music; things are on the uptick because of how we showcase our students and the different recruiting events that we do.

- **Ticket Sales Update with Ellen Wood-** Ellen provided an update on ticket sales for this year versus last year. We are up over 25% as far as quantity, and gross is up 60% comparatively. Ellen stated she worked with the different departments on more social media exposure by using free social media campaigns, and it has increased exposure and engagement at the River Campus. They have also increased email advertising to promote ticket sales and changed billboard locations around Cape Girardeau, which has been very beneficial in promoting the exposure of the River Campus.
- **HCAM Newsletter Update with Ellen Wood-**Ellen provided an update about the HCAM newsletter. She stated they are trying to help everyone get more familiar with the people on the River Campus by doing a faculty/staff spotlight each month. This helps connect people with us.
- **Giving Day Project Updates with Ellen Wood-** Ellen provided an update about the Giving Day initiatives for the River Campus. The Jazz Up New Orleans project has reached 52% of its goal so far, the sound studio has reached 46% of its goal, and the scene shop has hit 38% of its goal. There is still time to donate.

Discussion

The next meeting was set for June 6th, 2025.