With a flurry of action, the first session of the 95th General Assembly has closed. Listed below are several bills that may be of particular interest to the campus community - Aaron Podolefsky

End-of-Session Legislative Update

- Bills Truly Agreed and Finally Passed
  - Higher Education Appropriations – House Bill 3 maintains operational spending for public colleges and universities at the FY09 levels as recommended by the Governor. In addition, $39 million is allocated for the Caring for Missourians initiative – UCM will receive $1,216,361 in one-time funding. However, for the Caring for Missourians initiative to be successful in the long term, we will need ongoing core funding rather than a one-time appropriation. We appreciate the Governor’s leadership and the Legislature’s support for this important initiative, and we look forward to working with them in the future to ensure that we are able to increase our capacity to educate and graduate healthcare professionals to serve Missouri’s needs. Although our total FY10 appropriation remains the same as FY09 (plus the Caring for Missourians monies), the Legislature reduced funding from general revenue and backfilled the difference with more than $6.5 million in federal budget stabilization funds. We remain concerned as to whether higher education funding will be protected next year when the stabilization funding may no longer be available for this purpose.
  - Omnibus Education – Senate Bill 291 strengthens the P-20 Council by allowing it to operate as a private not-for-profit corporation (which will increase funding opportunities), codifying its purpose, and expanding the membership of its board of directors.
• Immigration – House Bill 390 changes the laws regarding unauthorized aliens. This bill clarifies language in last session’s HB 1549, including issues related to what documentation students must produce before they receive a “public benefit.”

• Financial Assistance
  ▪ House Bill 490 allows all public vocational and technical schools to receive students participating in the A+ Scholarship Program.
  ▪ House Bill 247 and Senate Bill 152 revise the definition of “eligible student” as it relates to the Nursing Student Loan Program and allow individuals seeking certain degrees on a full- or part-time basis to participate. The definition now includes students working toward a doctorate in nursing or education or who are taking courses leading to the completion of educational requirements for a licensed practical nurse.
  ▪ House Bill 427 revises the War Veteran’s Survivor Grant. Changes are primarily definitional and do not modify the number or dollar amount of awards.

• Trusts & Funds – House Bill 239 changes the laws regarding the management of trusts and funds. It establishes guidelines for the management, investment and expenditure of endowment funds held by charitable institutions and other entities holding funds for charitable purposes.

• Crime & Emergency Action
  ▪ House Bill 62 contains language criminalizing the use of a phony diploma.
  ▪ House Bill 103 allows college and university police to respond to emergencies and provide services outside institution property lines if requested by local law enforcement.

• METS Week – House Bill 506 requires the Governor to issue an annual proclamation designating the third week of March as Math, Engineering, Technology and Science Week.

• Motorcycle Helmets – Senate Bill 202 exempts people 21 years of age or older from wearing protective headgear except when operating or riding motorcycles or mototricycles on interstate highways.

❖ Bills of Interest that Didn’t Pass

• Concealed Carry – Neither House Bill 668 nor Senate Bill 171, allowing people with concealed carry permits to bring firearms onto public higher education campuses, passed both chambers.

• Capital Bonding – House Joint Resolution 32, a proposed constitutional amendment that would have allowed issuance of bonds to fund higher education building projects (including a new $55 million UCM science and math building), was not approved this session. Similar legislation is expected to be introduced again in the future.
Access Missouri – Neither of the bills (HB 792, SB 390) that would have equalized Access Missouri award amounts among public and private universities made significant progress.

Missouri Promise, A+ and Bright Flight – Several unsuccessful bills, including Senate Bill 79 and Senate Bill 291, contained language that would create the Missouri Promise Program (a completer scholarship for students who earn associate degrees using A+ and then go on to complete bachelor’s degrees at public universities), expand the A+ program, and clarify award amounts for Bright Flight recipients.

What Happens after a Bill is Truly Agreed and Finally Passed?*

Bills truly agreed and finally passed are signed in open session by the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tem of the Senate. At the time of signing, any member may file written objections which are sent with the bill to the Governor. The Governor has 15 days to act on a bill if it is sent to him during the legislative session, and 45 days if the Legislature has adjourned.

The Governor has four options:
1. Sign the bill, making it become part of Missouri law.
2. Veto the bill. In this case, the bill is returned to the General Assembly where a two-thirds vote of both houses is required to override the veto.
3. Not sign the bill. Should the Governor take no action within the prescribed time, the bill goes to the Secretary of State, who then enrolls the bill as an authentic act. It then becomes law.
4. Veto line-items in an appropriation bill. On appropriation bills only, the Governor may choose to veto selected items within the bill. The General Assembly may override this veto by a two-thirds majority of both houses.

No law passed by the General Assembly can take effect until 90 days after the end of the session at which it was enacted (Aug. 28 for regular sessions) unless an emergency clause is attached. If a bill was passed with an emergency clause, it takes effect immediately upon the Governor's signature. In addition, some bills specify the exact date when they are to take effect.

* Source: Missouri House of Representatives