

### **Why is Truman opposed to an FTE-based funding formula?**

An FTE funding formula only considers one input measure of enrollment; it does not take into account any outcome measures such as retention and graduation rates. FTE is not the number of students a school enrolls. FTE stands for full-time equivalent. It is a way to provide a standardized measure of enrollment across schools and is determined by the total number of undergraduate hours divided by 15, and the total number of graduate hours divided by 12. It's not without its value, but it has flaws when it is used as the sole measure for funding. Schools that enroll large numbers of part-time students at just a few hours each can add those up and, in the proposed formula, get more money, regardless of whether those students are dual credit students, community members taking non-degree courses or are working toward a credential or a degree. For example, at some universities nearly 50% of the student headcount is part-time students. These students typically have significantly lower educational costs than full-time degree seeking students.

### **Is there cause for concern that Truman's budget will be reduced by 53%?**

No. The proposal that has been discussed in recent weeks was put forth solely by the House Budget Committee chair and co-chair. While the bill did advance from the House – passing by just one more vote than was needed – it has already been met with strong [bipartisan opposition in the Senate](#). All of Missouri's community colleges, the University of Missouri, and many other four-year institutions have voiced opposition to this proposed bill.

### **What is Truman doing to prevent this budget from becoming a reality?**

Truman has always had a positive working relationship with members of the legislature and other leaders in Jefferson City. The president and our lobbyists in Jefferson City have been meeting with members of House and Senate leadership, members of the House Budget Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee, and the Governor's Office to [provide a clear understanding of who Truman is, what we do, and our impressive accomplishments; why our funding is the way it is](#); and our support for a funding formula that contains relevant outcome measures and works for all Missouri public colleges and universities. Through our efforts and those of our higher education colleagues including the University of Missouri, other four-year universities, and the community colleges, we are making great strides in our advocacy.

### **What would a budget cut mean for Truman?**

Budget cuts are not uncommon. The University has encountered them before and, thanks to decades of excellent financial management, has always been able to continue operations with minimal disruption. Because state appropriations can be dependent on multiple factors, Truman always accounts for potential cuts to the annual budget. This year is no exception. The bill proposed in recent weeks was a radical departure from semi-regular budget cuts, which is why it has been met with bipartisan opposition in Jefferson City and from higher education institutions from across the state.

### **What is the difference between headcount and FTE?**

Headcount is the number of students enrolled at a university. This can be part-time, dual-credit, or non-degree-seeking students, as well as traditional full-time students. FTE stands for full-time equivalent. It is the total number of credit hours generated by all students, divided by 15 for undergraduate hours and 12 for graduate hours. (This is based on the assumption that the average

full-time load for an undergraduate is 15 hours of classes and 12 hours of classes for a graduate student.)

As a rural, highly selective, liberal arts and sciences university, Truman has primarily full-time, degree-seeking students and fewer dual-credit and non-degree-seeking students than many of the other Missouri public universities. That's part of the University's state-mandated mission. Truman's high retention and graduation rates are what have made it the No. 1 school in the Midwest region for almost 30 years. Truman does exactly what it is supposed to do: graduate students who then make the Missouri workforce stronger. The proposed formula that has been discussed does not take student success and career outcomes into account. It creates a model where a school's only motivation is to get someone to sign up for hours so they can point to that high number and be rewarded, even if those students are not on a path to earning a degree or even a credential. Truman has among the highest retention and graduation rates in the state and is exactly the type of institution the citizens of Missouri expect to support with their tax dollars.

**Is it true that Truman is struggling with enrollment while other schools are doing well?**

No. Enrollment has been a struggle for most schools in the state and nation for several years. This trend will continue for the next decade as there is a significantly smaller population of students in the K12 system across most of the country, creating an "enrollment cliff." Headcount enrollment for Missouri public four-year institutions is flat with a 0.0% change over the last five years. As a group, FTE enrollment for Missouri public four-year institutions is down 3.7% over the last five years. Fewer students are graduating from high school, and fewer students are choosing to attend college. There are 13 public four-year institutions in the state of Missouri. As of the fall 2025 enrollment report, 11 of the 13 schools reported negative enrollment growth over the last five years in FTE. In the last year, the top three public institutions in Missouri for increasing headcount were Harris-Stowe, Lincoln, and Truman. Ironically, these are the three institutions that the current budget proposal would decrease funding towards the most.

**What can I as an alum/parent/student/friend of the University do to support Truman?**

Missouri residents who would like to show support for Truman can let their state legislators know they are not in support of the proposed funding method. If you don't already know who they are, you can look them up [here](#).

(<https://www.senate.mo.gov/BillTracking/LegislatorLookup/>)