

COTA SPEAKERS

Rethinking Policies, Practices, and Partnerships



**Dr. Maggie Segnitz,
Missouri State University**

Dr. Maggie Segnitz is the Director of Success Advising at the University of Central Missouri, with over nine years of experience in academic advising. Specializing in transfer student support, she has worked extensively to improve transfer student onboarding and advising, collaborating with cross-

campus partners at the University of North Georgia. Dr. Segnitz holds a bachelor's in Communication, a master's in College Student Personnel Administration from the University of Central Missouri and a doctorate in Higher Education Leadership & Practice from the University of North Georgia. Her dissertation focused on training academic advisors to better support transfer students. She has presented at regional and national conferences and served as a keynote for the Georgia Transfer Virtual Workshop. Dr. Segnitz is passionate about advocating for transfer-focused practices in higher education.



**Dr. Stephanie Ferguson,
St. Louis Community College**

Dr. Stephanie Ferguson is the Coordinator of Transfer Pathways at St. Louis Community College, where she is committed to ensuring students have the tools and support they need to achieve their academic goals. She earned

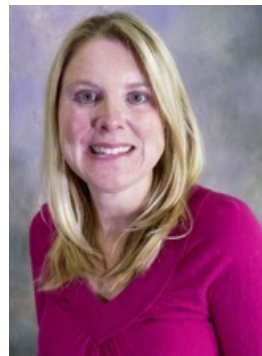
She earned a bachelor's degree in history and a master's in education from Truman State University, as well as a doctorate in Leadership for Organizations from the University of Dayton. In her role, Dr. Ferguson promotes transfer opportunities, provides academic advisors with best practices for guiding students through the transfer process, and develops resources that enhance the transition experience for students and staff alike. Known for her collaborative approach, she leads cross-departmental initiatives that align efforts across advising, admissions, and academic departments to streamline processes and remove barriers for students. Dr. Ferguson is deeply passionate about bridging gaps for student success and creating equitable pathways for all learners.



**Leslie Buck,
Professor of Psychology,
Jefferson College**

Leslie Buck earned a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Psychology from Southeast Missouri State University and a Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Community Counseling from the University of Oklahoma. She completed most of the requirements for

her Doctorate degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Oklahoma-Norman, except the dissertation. Prior to joining the Jefferson College Psychology department in 2007, Professor Buck was an instructor at McKendree University in the Masters in Counseling program. She has also taught undergraduates about career and life planning at the University of Oklahoma. In addition, Professor Buck has worked in a variety of applied psychology settings, including community and hospital-based centers, providing psychological treatment to both children and adults. She has supervised the training of Masters-level counseling students. Her most recent applied position was in the United States Air Force at a military medical treatment facility.



**Dr. Becky Blackaby,
Moberly Area Community College**

Dr. Becky Lee Blackaby is a distinguished professor of physical sciences at Moberly Area Community College. She has taught at MACC since 2011 and serves on the college's General Education Assessment Panel. She is one of the original members of the Core Curriculum Advisory

Committee for Core 42 and serves as the Faculty Discipline Co-Chair for Natural Sciences. Becky is also a certified group exercise instructor with the YMCA.



**Leigh Kolb,
East Central Community College**

Leigh Kellmann Kolb is an Associate Professor of English at East Central College, where she teaches English, humanities, and media studies courses. She also advises student publications and

organizes the film and lecture series; her film and television criticism has appeared in various publications. She has been involved in Guided Pathways, CORE 42, and Achieving the Dream initiatives.



**Heather Flint,
Crowder College**

Heather Flint is the Transfer and Career Advisor at Crowder College in Neosho, MO, a role she has held for over a year. With more than a decade of experience at Crowder College,

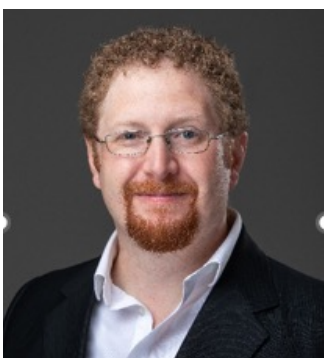
Heather has previously served in the Admissions Department as a recruiter and worked with the TRIO Upward Bound program. She holds a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Arkansas and is passionate about helping students navigate their educational and career pathways.



**Elizabeth Kirby,
EnrollML**

With over 12 years of experience in higher education, Elizabeth Kirby has led innovative strategies to enhance student recruitment, retention, and success. As a former Senior Director of Recruitment at a Missouri institution, she was pivotal

in transforming enrollment practices to meet evolving student needs. Elizabeth is researching the impacts of artificial intelligence on higher education as part of her doctoral program, with a focus on ethical considerations and practical applications. As Director of Enrollment Solutions at EnrollML, a machine learning AI company, she works to bridge cutting-edge technology with student-centered solutions. Elizabeth's passion lies in adopting forward-thinking ideas that support both enrollment success and organizational relevance, ultimately making a lasting impact in the world.



**Robert Halbach,
Missouri Southern State
University**

Robert Halbach is an Academic Records Specialist at Missouri Southern State University (MSSU), where he also serves as MSSU's MRT Coordinator. He is well-versed in MSSU's current MRT manual processes and data

key role in this project by acting as a liaison between MSSU's IT Department and the NSC Reverse Transfer System's data requirements, translating their specific data requirements into beneficial inputs for system implementation. Outside of work, Robert enjoys life as a husband and proud father to two little girls.



**Jamie Stanley,
Crowder College**

Jamie Stanley is an Academic Advisor with the Student Success Center at Crowder College in Neosho, MO, a position he has held since 2013. With more than 20 years of experience at Crowder College, Jamie previously served the TRIO

programs as an Academic Coordinator in the Student Support Services and Upward Bound Math/Science programs. He holds a Master's degree in Community Health from the University of Arkansas. Jamie is a proven collaborator that effectively works with staff and departments at Crowder College along with transfer school partners. He is dedicated in providing academic and transfer advisement for students to assist them in attaining their personal and academic goals.



**Joanna Szewczak,
Missouri Southern
State University**

Joanna brings 17 years of IT Consulting experience to her IT Analyst role on Missouri Southern State University's Enterprise Services Team, supporting data-driven solutions for all university departments.

She is enjoying her first year living in Missouri, where she is also pursuing her Master of Science in Data Analytics.



**Faustina Abrahams,
Missouri Southern State
University**

My whole higher education career has been at Missouri Southern State University starting in January 2006. I started out as a Mental Health Counselor/Freshman Orientation Course Coordinator/Academic Advisor. I transitioned to other positions

in the same department till I became the Director of Advising for the same department. In 2021, on very short notice, literally within 2 weeks, I took a leap of faith to change career path and accepted the position of the Registrar. It has been a rewarding experience so far. I am married and have two wonderful children and two adorable grandchildren. Life is rewarding with my crew.