



The Role of the Center for Science, Technology, and Society

Missouri S&T has nine research centers. Of those nine, the Center for Science, Technology, and Society (CSTS) is unique because of its humanistic focus. The CSTS consists of “researchers and students from disciplines across Missouri S&T who work together to address critical issues raised by technical innovations and problems from a global, human-centered perspective.”

The interdisciplinary field of science, technology, and society has a long history, with scholarship from at least the 1930s. The field became a formalized academic discipline in the 1970s. Missouri S&T’s CSTS was formed in 2017, and its first director was Dr. Kathleen Drowne, professor of English and current dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Business. Since August 2019, Dr. Kristine Swenson, the current ETC department chair, has been the director.

The CSTS’s mission is to critically assess the practice of science, the process of creating

scientific knowledge, and the implementation of technology within society. To achieve this mission, Swenson said, “The CSTS advances research in areas where science and society intersect and supports work that presents scientific and technical ideas to general audiences. The Center fosters creative intellectual collaborations among those in STEM fields, humanists, and social scientists by bringing together diverse perspectives to solve problems of practical importance, conceptual significance, and broad societal concern.”

As CSTC director, Swenson is responsible for scheduling, running, and setting the agenda for two meetings every month; making arrangement for visiting speakers for meetings; handling membership and budget for the center; awarding and managing seed grants; attending campus meetings for center directors; writing annual and other reports as requested; keeping track of center awards and external funding; managing the

center’s website; and supervising the administrative assistant’s work.

Reflecting on her first year as director, Swenson said that she hopes she has been able to facilitate greater collaboration across disciplines by helping to create networking opportunities and seed grants for research groups at S&T.

Department Forms Alumni Advisory Board

The new alumni board will advise the department on matters of curriculum development and serve as mentors for ETC majors. Current board members include:

- Molly Albertson
- Tara Bryan de Cañellas
- Mariah Covington
- Killian Knowles
- Natalie Light
- Matthew Peaslee
- Shubhangi Vajpayee

The board met for the first time on September 25.