March 17, 1905

*This Date in Missouri Senate History*

On *This Date in Missouri Senate History*, the date was March 17, 1905, the day the Southwest Missouri State Teachers College was established in Springfield.

It was known, at that point, as the Fourth District Normal School. As a “teacher’s college,” its role was to prepare instructors for teaching in southwest Missouri’s public schools.

By June of 1906, the university would officially open with 543 students.

The name change to Southwest Missouri State Teachers College would happen in 1919. In 1945, the name would be shortened to remove the word “Teachers.” “College” became “University” in 1972.

Perhaps the most-famous, and controversial, name change would happen in 2004. With the 100th anniversary of the school approaching, a new move to change the name was gaining momentum. Missouri senators passed the measure 25-seven. The Missouri House would follow suit, and the new law would be signed on March 17, 2005.

But, it all started with establishment of the Fourth District Normal School — now known as Missouri State University — March 17, 1905, on *This Date in Missouri Senate History*.

(Sources: [Missouri State University history](https://www.missouristate.edu/about/history.htm) and Missouri Senate Journal)