Curators to decide residence fee hike

Wednesday, January 27, 2010

The University of Missouri System’s Board of Curators this week will decide whether to increase fees for student housing and board.

MU administrators are recommending the predominant plan for room and board cost $7,925 next school year. That plan consists of a renovated traditional double room and 14 meals per week. The cost would be a 3.9 percent increase over this year’s rates.

Room rates vary based on the type of room, the condition of the residence hall and the type of meal plan a student selects.

Room and board rates are adjusted annually to reflect inflation and the cost of new housing.

The curators meeting is scheduled to start at 12:30 p.m. tomorrow at University Center on the Kansas City campus. After recessing overnight, the meeting will resume at 8 a.m. Friday.
Beyond tech geeks and Mac fanatics, the unveiling of Apple's iPad on Wednesday also captured unabashed attention from the business world, from newspaper publishers to telecommunications executives.

The latest iteration of the tablet PC — billed by some as an iPod Touch on steroids — could change the way magazines are read, textbooks are sold and business is conducted.

It could help print publishers in their long-struggling pursuit of operating profitably in a digital world.

"The iPad and other tablet devices have the potential to revolutionize newspaper publishing," said Roger Fidler, program director for digital publishing at the Reynolds Journalism Institute at the University of Missouri.

Unlike Amazon and its Kindle e-reader, Apple won't act as a middleman for publishers, which means newspapers would be able to sell subscriptions to their digital editions on the iPad and tie them into their own circulation database, Fidler said.

"It also means that they would have greater freedom in being able to incorporate advertising into their editions," he said.

Some newspapers, including The New York Times and MediaNews Group's El Paso Times, have already developed reader applications for the iPhone, and those apps will work with the iPad.

"The iPad certainly has the potential to feature newspapers in a digital format that's different from a website and evoke the traditional print design, and adds the ability to include, say, videos instead of just a photo on the front page," said Gil Asakawa, manager of audience development for MediaNews Group Interactive, the online division of Denver-based MediaNews Group, owner of The Denver Post.

The iPad has several distinctions from previous failed tablet efforts, including a starting price of $499. Existing tablets can cost upward of $1,500.
The iPad's 9.7-inch screen, portability and 10-hour battery life could prove to be the right model for digital textbooks and magazines.

"Some might say it's too big to fit in my pocket," said Luke Beatty, founder of Associated Content, a Denver-based online provider of news, instructions and other information. "When you're talking about the consumption of certain kinds of media, it's going to be just right."

For businesses such as Broomfield-based Level 3 Communications, the iPad — with Wi-Fi and 3G Internet capability — could help with "out in the field" work.

"We're really excited in terms of how that enables content distribution anywhere and everywhere," said Peter Neill, senior vice president of the Content Markets Group at Level 3 Communications. "I could absolutely see it being used in a business function. It's kind of a good in-between (with) the iPhone and the PC."

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Media Guru sees (and saw) e-papers coming

By JONATHAN TAKIFF
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Thanks to Apple's big product announcement today, the world should finally get focused on the concept of downloading newspapers and magazines to read on an eco-friendly, instantly updatable e-tablet.

Others like Amazon (with the Kindle), Hearst (with the Skiff) and Plastic Logic (with the business-purposed Que) also are pursing the media tablet notion.

And talk about a long time coming.

Since 1993, when he was the guru of the Knight Ridder Information Design Laboratory, Roger Fidler has been envisioning an electronic tablet-based newspaper.

Back then, talking with me for a "future tech" feature I wrote for Playboy magazine, Fidler envisioned that users would refill the tablet daily at an electronic kiosk (who knew there'd be 3-G/4-G mobile networks?) and perhaps roll the device up for stashing in a coat pocket or bag.

Today, Fidler is still on top of the concept as program director for digital publishing at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute at the University of Missouri. So I thought I'd tap his brain again about how this concept should now play out.

Q: Many seem to be banking on Apple's product to finally make electronic newspapers and magazines fly - except maybe Hearst, with its competitive Skiff. Do you think a per-article fee structure or a weekly/monthly subscription could sustain the publishing industry? Have you done any research on what, if anything, people willing to pay for content access?

Fidler: I don't believe a per-article fee structure will sustain newspapers. Amazon has demonstrated with its Kindle e-reader that there still are quite a few people who are willing to pay a "fair price" for the convenience of having a branded package of news and features delivered once a day. The fair price for a monthly subscription to an e-reader/tablet newspaper edition is probably between one-quarter and one-half of the newspaper's subscription price for home delivery of its printed editions.
However, to make these editions profitable for publishers, they will need to include paid advertising.

Q: How much color and moving eye candy should be applied to an electronic newspaper, or would that turn off traditional newspaper readers?

Fidler: People have come to expect full-color photos and graphics in newspapers and magazines. Color is essential for advertising.

I don't believe newspapers will use lots of interactive multimedia elements in their tablet/e-reader editions. There are several inhibiting factors: they are costly and time-consuming to produce; they can significantly inflate file sizes, which increases download time and the cost for wireless delivery; few stories benefit from adding these elements; and many traditional readers consider them distracting and even annoying.

Q: How much give and take with readers should be part of the mix? Do we need interactivity to lure in the Facebook/Twitter generation?

Fidler: The Apple tablet will undoubtedly provide interactive apps that will appeal to the Facebook/Twitter generation. Newspapers and magazines should be able to give readers a way to interact with stories in their tablet/e-reader editions without distracting from their reading experience.

Q: What about the form factor? Does a 10-inch-screened, one-pound tablet seem about right? How important is it that Apple's device charm people with a unique touch me/talk to me/breathe on me/face recognition interface?

Fidler: In my view, the ideal tablet/e-reader will have a 10-inch touch-screen display, will weigh about a pound and will be ultra thin (1/4-inch to 3/8-inch). Every manufacturer will try adding features that it believes will increase sales. I do like the Kindle's text-to-speech feature.

Q: I did a chat at this month's CES [Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas] with a Lenovo "smartbook" designer who said most netbooks never leave the bedroom or living room couch, so keeping size/weight down is not a critical issue. Your thoughts?

Fidler: Netbooks are essentially small notebook computers with miniature keyboards designed primarily for surfing the Web and messaging. E-readers are essentially green alternatives to paper, so they need to be ultra light and thin. The Apple tablet is likely to be a super-sized iPhone. It, too, will need to be light and thin to serve its anticipated purposes as a mobile reading, communication and entertainment device.
Q: Harking back to your forecasts of the early 1990s, did you know that the Skiff will have a flexible screen core [ostensibly to prevent breakage] made by LG, though the outer casing is hard? Maybe we will evolve to the roll-up tablet.

Fidler: Actually, I've never been an advocate for the vision of roll-up tablets or e-readers. Flexible substrates are required to make these devices thinner and lighter as well as more durable. LG uses a thin metal substrate for the Skiff e-readers; PlasticLogic uses plastic substrates for its Que e-reader.

Both use versions of the E Ink electronic paper display technology and incorporate touch screens that require a flat, semi-rigid display. All of the human-factors research I've seen has found that people prefer a flat, semi-rigid display for reading, annotating, taking notes and doodling.
And from on high ... a new tablet from Apple

By ERIC ADLER and SCOTT CANON

It doesn't happen with breakfast cereals or blue jeans.

Not with colas and no longer with cars.

But nearly every time Apple Inc. founder Steve Jobs steps on stage to unveil a new device — as he did Wednesday with the iPad — millions listen or blog, turning their eyes, ears and expectations his way.

"Steven Jobs is practically a saint as far as the way some people view him," said Roger Fidler, program director for digital publishing at the University of Missouri's Reynolds Journalism Institute. "I can't really think of anything that compares to the almost fanatical following Apple has."

Indeed, what other company generates such buzz? Or stirs fans to drool over a device sight unseen? Or could even half-seriously expect its gadget to get dubbed "the Jesus tablet" before it is revealed?

But such is the cultural phenomenon of Apple and its unveilings. As unfathomably over-the-top as reaction may seem, experts insist the national buzz is as logical as a MacBook operating system.

Of course, Jobs' Apple is not the first company to come out with a laptop, or a digital music player, smartphone or even electronic tablet.

And not everything produced by the folks in Cupertino, Calif., comes out perfect. Few people took to an earlier Apple tablet, the 1993 Newton. Even the iPod and iPhone have their flaws — anemic batteries that aren't easily replaced.

Ford Motor Company didn't come out with the first car, either. But it made the Mustang.

Jobs, observers say, is the guy who was able to define a brand category by making laptops so sleek, cool, simple and reliable that now nearly an entire generation of college students has grown up with his machines.
When he was ousted in a power struggle from Apple in 1985, Jobs was the man who went on to create NeXT, selling education and business platforms, and then redefined animated movies by starting Pixar.

Soon after retaking Apple in a buyout in 1997, he unveiled the iPod with iTunes in 2001, followed by the iPhone in 2007 and later the iTouch.

“iPhones changed the way consumers use phones, iPods have changed the way consumers function with music,” said Julie Hennessy, professor of marketing at Northwestern University.

When Jobs unveils a new product, it now creates anticipation and expectation that some small part of our culture — and the status quo — is certain to change.

“I think that definitely is part of the promise,” Hennessy said.

A promise that has been carefully cultivated, dating as far back as the 1984 Olympics when Apple ran a commercial in which a woman threw a sledge hammer at the image of Big Brother.

“Steve has forever been the sort of countercultural guy,” said David Wertheimer, who worked at Apple and NeXT and is now CEO at the Entertainment Technology Center at the University of Southern California.

“Apple from the earliest days made a decision to court the creative community,” he said. “There’s something really powerful about talking to creative people in a creative language. You capture a group of people who have a great way to express themselves, and an active imagination. . . . That helped create this whole mystique. Steve embodied that.”

Jobs is “hugely opinionated, which helps him create big ideas,” Wertheimer said.

“He’s not quick to let go of ideas that he creates. If you disagree with him, you have to work very hard to get him to come around to your point of view. He can be very difficult. Incredibly smart and keen sense of what consumers want and will respond to.”

One of Apple’s more ingenious moves, said Dag Spicer, at the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, Calif., is the way it not only defines new products, but also creates entire business “ecosystems.”

Once consumers buy an Apple product, they live in its world.

“None of Apple’s products were groundbreaking technically,” Spicer said. “But every product has a huge amount of infrastructure built around it. So with the iPod you have the whole iTunes store. With the iPhone you have the App Store.”

Few doubt Jobs’ Midas touch for marketing, knowing how to build anticipation by controlling both the media message and the way consumers interact with Apple products. Thus the user-
friendly Apple stores, rather than having products lost among other products lost in cavernous box stores.

Early leaks about future Apple products are almost unheard of.

“Normally, secrecy and control lead to consumer suspicion,” said Evan Conway, marketing executive at Handmark, a Kansas City company that has developed about 50 apps for the iTunes store. “But Apple really created a perfect storm of solid engineering, elegant design and slick marketing ... It's really captured the public’s imagination.”

“One thing they are really good at is being completely opaque, unless it suits them,” Spicer said. “Steven is a master showman and great at creating his buzz ahead of the actual event. The flip side of that is that no one at Apple is allowed to talk to the media under the fear of God, or Steven Jobs.”
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Apple iPad latest in e-reading technology

By Bryan Richardson
January 28, 2010 | 12:01 a.m. CST

COLUMBIA — After much hype and few facts surrounding Apple’s new product on the Internet, the Apple iPad was revealed to the public on Wednesday in San Francisco.

The iPad, which resembles and works like a large iPhone, is the latest addition to the e-reading arms race among Apple, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Sony and other companies.

"Every company who develops e-readers and tablets took notice of this announcement today," said Roger Fidler, program director for digital publishing at the Reynolds Journalism Institute and a national expert in e-readers.

The iPad is viewed by many in the publishing industry as a key to adapting to the digital age. Also, the tablet computer represents a significant difference from the e-reader, which doesn’t have much capability beyond electronic reading.

In addition to e-reading, the color, touch-screen tablet computer can play movies and music and has a Web browser and video games. The common e-reader has black and white type, doesn’t run the applications the iPad will and can’t play video.

"The way Apple is marketing it, it’s a new tool for Web browsing, communication with the e-mail capability, entertainment and reading," Fidler said.

In MU’s Walter Williams Hall, a watch party was held to see the unveiling. Attendees watched a live blog of the announcement projected onto a wall. The only other way to follow was to be there. While the dozen or so people there watched and debated, elsewhere on the MU campus, Apple’s big news went unnoticed.

"I’ve never even heard of it until right now," sophomore Maureen Roach said.
"I know of it, but I don't know much about it," junior Matt Burkart said. "I heard about it a couple of months ago from my dad."

Whether people knew what was going on, the announcement was important for some, particularly for those in publishing.

"It's exciting for the industry," said Brian Brooks, associate dean of the Missouri School of Journalism. "For the first time, we have an e-reading device for newspapers and magazines that has color. No one wants a black and white page anymore."

Apple has an established relationship with the Journalism School, which includes strongly recommending students to use a Macbook and the iPod Touch. Brooks said it is too soon to say whether the school will eventually recommend use of the iPad for students.

There have been some concerns about the potential harm the iPad could cause; some newspaper publishers feared Apple could control their content the same way the company controls music content through iTunes.

"We definitely don't want what happened to the music industry," said Sean Reily, a Reynolds institute fellow who this year is studying business models that newspapers can implement for e-readers. "We want our customers with us."

Apple now has iBooks, which functions like iTunes, but at least for now, there isn't a similar shop for news publications. Reily said this is good news for the industry, freeing publishers from the constraints of an online store.

Many of the expectations for the iPad were met, but a big surprise for the device came when the price was announced. After many technology blogs and Web sites predicted the price of the iPad at just under $1,000, it was revealed the price of the iPad starts at $499, and its most expensive version is $829.

"The consumer is the one who ends up winning," Reily said. "Apple has really raised the bar. It undercuts everything it is in competition with."

The competition, products such as the Amazon Kindle and the Barnes & Noble Nook, is against a company that is known for its innovation and easy-to-use technology.
"I just know the iPad is suppose to make everything very easy," said Forrest Dougan, a MU sophomore who describes himself as a bit of a tech geek. "It doesn't take the same tech savvy to work it like other tablets."

The iPad may have just been revealed, but there was a planned project from the 1990s that is considered similar to the iPad and other e-readers of today.

Fidler was the former laboratory head of Knight Ridder, a company that attempted to build the device back in 1994. The tablet was eventually scrapped because of technological issues.

After going through the abandoned Knight Ridder project and seeing other tablets fail, Fidler said he is glad that Apple finally accomplished a goal he hoped would be accomplished.

"It makes me happy to see it happen," Fidler said. "There's still ways to go, but the Apple iPad has certainly taken us in the right direction."

The Wi-Fi model of the iPad is scheduled to ship in late March and the 3G model will ship in April.
COLUMBIA, Mo., Jan. 27 (UPI) -- U.S. medical researchers say they are developing an anti-HIV compound that is substantially more potent and longer-lasting than existing therapies.

University of Missouri Assistant Professor Stefan Sarafianos said current therapies targeting the human immunodeficiency virus have helped patients live longer and healthier lives. Sarafianos says he wants to improve those drug therapies by creating alternative preventative strategies, such as vaginal gels and creams.

The professor of microbiology and immunology said the compound he is developing, EFdA, is 60,000 times more potent than any other drug that is currently being used to treat HIV.

Sarafianos hopes EFdA also can double as a preventative agent in the form of a vaginal gel or cream. That, he said, would provide additional protection to women whose partners refuse to use condoms.

The research that included Professor Michael Parniak at the University of Pittsburgh and Dr. Hiroaki Mitsuya of the National Institutes of Health appears in the Journal of Biological Chemistry.
SOUTHEAST MISSOURIAN

Associated Press

Effort helping educators learn suicide warnings

Wednesday, January 27, 2010
The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) -- A University of Missouri program is enlisting high school teachers and administrators in an effort to prevent suicides of young people.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported Wednesday that the program developed by psychologist and retired university professor Jim Koller teaches educators about the risk factors and warning signs. It also asks them to report potential problems to parents and authorities in much the same way they have reported signs of child abuse.

So far, the university has set up six training programs around the state with 22 school districts participating. The sessions are helping fine-tune Koller's prevention program before it is released nationally.

 Suicide is the third-leading cause of death -- after accidents and homicides -- among people ages 15 to 24, according to the American Association of Suicidology.

At one recent workshop in Columbia, 75-year-old Del McMillen talked about her son, Dennis, who killed himself in 1999. He was 44, a family man with three children, but had shown warning signs much earlier.

"When he was a teenager, I wanted to get him evaluated -- his great-grandmother was in a state hospital at Fulton, they called it the insane asylum in those days," McMillen said. "But his dad and grandparents absolutely refused. There was such a stigma back then."

The university has started an online course offering suicide prevention training for educational professionals, funded by grants from the Missouri Department of Mental Health and the National Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

"We were seeing a monumental lack of training for people in the trenches -- teachers, administrators, school counselors," Koller said.

Suicide prevention experts say they welcome the effort.

"Teachers are a tremendous gatekeeper when talking about suicide prevention for youth," said Elizabeth Makulec, executive director of Kids Under Twenty One. "Parents often are too close in some cases to see and evaluate. And, unfortunately, there continues to be a tremendous stigma associated with mental health."
Koller's training includes a 195-page workbook explaining the important role teachers play in students' lives, and how those teachers are often the first to notice changes in behavior or social and emotional difficulties.

The training also seeks to protect teachers from possible civil litigation.

"One of the challenges is if a school isn't active enough in identifying the triggers -- there's a lot of finger-pointing," Koller said. "There is a duty to warn."

The workbook identifies risk factors such as a divorce at home, a traumatic breakup with a boyfriend or girlfriend and bullying, including cyberbullying. Studies have found that 90 percent of suicides involve people who have shown signs of depression.

Among the warning signs that a student may be suicidal is aggressive and impulsive behavior, or mood swings and angry outbursts.

Julie Harrison, who coordinates counseling for the 18,000 students in the Parkway School District in St. Louis County, attended a training session and will share information with the district's 80 counselors.

"We had two suicides this year," Harrison said. "We don't usually have any."
The University of Missouri-Columbia has notified students that a recent mailing inadvertently may have revealed Social Security numbers through the envelope window.

Natalie Krawitz, vice president for finance and administration, sent out an e-mail saying that the university mailed Internal Revenue Service 1098-T forms the work week that began Jan. 11. The forms were mailed to some 70,000 students on its four campuses. By mid-week, it learned that the SSN on the form "was partially or fully viewable through the envelope window."

Krawitz said she didn't know how many of the mailings had the problem, or to whom the revealing envelopes were mailed.

All students were being asked to determine if the number was viewable by inspecting how the form aligns with the envelope window. This can be done, the school said, even if the envelope already had been opened.
If the number was viewable, and students are concerned about possible identity theft, Krawitz said they should contact a national credit agency. The university gave contact numbers for three agencies, including Experian, which has an agreement with the school to provide credit monitoring services at a discounted price.

Some parents complained that the university made the mistake, and should not require students to pay for a credit check. The school said its agreement with Experian allowed for one free credit check.

The school said it was reviewing processes used by the company that was hired to handle the tax forms to prevent future problems.

"The security of our students' personal information is a top priority for us, and we deeply regret that this occurred," Krawitz said.
Mizzou medical school is off probation
By Blythe Bernhard

The probation on the graduate medical school at University of Missouri-Columbia has been lifted, according to the agency that monitors doctors' residency programs.

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education had placed the doctors' residency program at the school on a two-year probation in April based on an on-site review. Most of the problems were related to record keeping and a lack of funding, according to the council's report.

Investigators for the council returned to the campus in October to re-evaluate the program. The school was released from probation ahead of schedule and given a three-year renewal of its accreditation.

The medical education council monitors residency programs for their curriculum as well as quality of life for the doctors.

The school had been cited for a lack of support staff and low student involvement in educational committees. Residents had been assigned duties such as scheduling patient appointments and retrieving medical records.
Other staff members are now completing those noneducational tasks, according to school officials.

Improvements also included the hiring of a vice chancellor in health and a medical school dean, creating a new system of oversight.

The probation involved the school's residency training program, not the four-year medical school. Residency programs are the three to seven years of specialty training and research that doctors practice after graduating from medical school.

The medical school supports 38 residency programs, which train about 400 doctors in specialties from anesthesiology to urology. Those programs are reviewed individually, and the orthopedic surgery department remains on probation.

Probations of entire institutions by the council are rare. There are now just three teaching hospitals out of nearly 400 nationwide under the disciplinary action.
Accrediting probation lifted for MU med school

By Janese Heavin

The University of Missouri School of Medicine has been awarded three years of accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, meaning the school is no longer on probation.

ACGME staff visited MU in October to review improvements and decided last week to lift the two-year probation after just nine months.

The accreditation council put the administrative component of MU’s resident education program on probation last year because of concerns about a lack of administrative oversight of residents, policies and resident representation at meetings. The probation did not affect individual residency or fellowship programs, nor was it associated with undergraduate medical education, which is accredited through a separate agency.

The probation was the result of ACGME’s visit in 2008. Since then, the UM System reorganized MU Health Care, creating a new health system vice chancellor apart from the medical school dean, in part to improve oversight and operation of the school, hospitals and resident education.

Also, the medical school dean and the CEO of University Hospital assumed personal oversight of the residency program, according to information from the school.

Those changes addressed most of the ACGME’s concerns, and the school took other actions after receiving notice of probation, said Jack Gay, associate dean for graduate medical education.

“Medical school and hospital leaders, faculty members and resident physicians worked together as a team to address the ACGME’s concerns as thoroughly and quickly as possible,” Gay said. “All of us are committed to providing the highest-quality education for resident physicians at MU.”

Having the probation lifted is “a big load off of our shoulders,” he said.

The next ACGME accreditation site visit is scheduled for 2013.
Probation lifted at Missouri medical school

Wednesday, January 27, 2010
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) -- The University of Missouri medical school has regained full accreditation after a nine-month probation for problems in its resident education program.

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education put the school on a two-year probation in April 2009 but lifted the sanction earlier this month.

The oversight group said a lack of support staff caused medical residents to improperly schedule patient appointments and retrieve medical records.

School officials issued a statement Tuesday describing a series of improvements to the graduate medical education program. The changes included assigning more administrative tasks to nurses, social workers, pharmacists and other workers to free residents for more patient care duties.

The school is now accredited through 2013.
Missouri men's basketball team's success brings complaints about ticket system

By Alex Ruppenthal
January 28, 2010 | 12:01 a.m. CST

COLUMBIA – Tickets for Missouri men’s basketball home games are at high demand right now, unlike several years ago when the student section at Mizzou Arena was rarely close to full.

And while heightened demand for tickets is a sign of a program on the path back to national relevancy, it also means more competition among students for the 4,000 student tickets distributed for each game out of the 15,061 seats available. And more complaints about the ticket pickup system.

"The renewed success of our basketball program has obviously made it more popular with students," Andrew Grinch, assistant athletic director for marketing, said. "We heard less complaints in the past, and I think part of that was due to the fact that we went through several pickups over the past few years where not all the student tickets were even picked up."

Last season's team went 31-7 and came within one game of the Final Four, revitalizing student interest in the team. The pickup system for tickets to games has stayed the same since 2002-03 and, for the most part, has worked just fine. But this season, it's become a major headache for students who have become critical of the setup.

In order to receive basketball tickets, students must purchase the Student Season Ticket Combo, a $226 package that gives them guaranteed tickets to all six home football games and the opportunity to receive tickets for men's basketball home games (Admission to all other MU sports events has been free for students since last year).
Students aren't guaranteed basketball tickets because the department sells more combos than the number of tickets it allocates for students at Mizzou Arena. This fact alone disgusts some.

"It doesn't make sense for them to sell more tickets than they're actually giving out," MU sophomore Kailee Richey said.

This season, Missouri athletics sold 9,700 Student Season Ticket Combos, Grinch said. The department does not have trouble accommodating students at football games because of the size of Memorial Stadium, but it distributes men's basketball tickets only to the first 4,000 students who pick up their tickets during four separate one-week time periods.

During the first two periods, in late October and mid-November of last year, tickets were available for 14 of the basketball team's 20 home games. All but two of the 14 games were less popular and less competitive nonconference games. Grinch said during those time periods the ticket office didn't distribute its last ticket until the last day of the period, meaning students had five weekdays to get to Mizzou Arena to get tickets.

Still, students have several complaints. Some said if they are required to buy the combo to obtain football and men's basketball tickets, they should have the chance to attend each home game. This could be made possible in a system, for example, where wristbands guaranteeing entrance to a particular game are distributed to the first 4,000 ticket combo-holding students who arrive at the game.

Another complaint is that it's difficult for students to get to Mizzou Arena during the week, leaving them to wonder why the tickets aren't distributed on class-free weekends.

"They (pickup dates) always conflicted with something I had going on," sophomore George Panousis said.

On Monday, the pickup period began for tickets for Missouri's most popular home game of the season, the March 6 game against rival Kansas. All 4,000 tickets were distributed by 2 p.m., leaving some students with ticket combos out of luck if they had class (or refused to skip class) Monday morning. Their only alternative is to wait until Feb. 5 to purchase tickets made available to the general public at a cost of $50 a seat.
"If we moved it to a Tuesday or a Wednesday, then you're going to limit students there," Grinch said. "If you move it to a weekend, obviously students are active and may be gone or other things. If you do it at night, people have meetings or other group or extracurricular involvement that could involved them. We've certainly looked at that and considered different things. Of course, with anything we do, it's ongoing and we're always looking to improve."

Some students find it unreasonable that the pickup dates occur well before the games for which they receive tickets. Each pickup period, except the first one, was more than a month before the first game that fell into that period.

"You don't know if you can go or not that early in advance of the game," senior Mita Patel said.

Before the 2002-03 season, students still had to buy a combination package to obtain men's basketball tickets but were guaranteed at least an upper level seat at the Hearnes Center if they bought the package. Mizzou Arena replaced the Hearnes Center as the home of the men's and women's basketball teams in 2004.

Now, some students buy the ticket combo without knowing they aren't guaranteed men's basketball tickets.

"A lot of time students may purchase the pass without the full understanding of how the pickups work and that kind of thing," Grinch said. "I think more than anything what we try to do is further educate them and direct them to some of the policies that are on our site."

Grinch said that this year, because students could only purchase the ticket combo online, it should have been clear how the system works.

"We wanted to make sure that the students had the ability there, when they were ordering, to see the policies and procedures of that," he said. "They all had to check off that they read the policies and agreed with them."

Grinch said he thinks the majority of students understand that basketball tickets are not guaranteed. But to some students, advertisements for the combo package focus too
heavily on selling the idea of obtaining football and basketball tickets and fail to emphasize information about the non-guaranteed basketball tickets.

"I think it needs to be reiterated," Richey said.

Panousis, a sophomore, said he didn't know about the stipulation until this year.

Quelling student complaints and confusion is "just a matter of educating the students on the policy," Grinch said.

But no matter how well the athletics department can inform students about the system, some students have a principle objection to the department making money off students who, if they are unable to make certain pickup dates, cannot attend basketball games.

"People are just really mad about it and don't understand," Richey said. "That doesn't make sense, that we are putting our money into something and nothing's coming out of it."