Noce revises live tiger plan

By Janese Heavin

Posted February 2, 2010 at 7:27 a.m.

Tim Noce -- president of MU's student association -- has received hundreds of responses to his idea that Mizzou have a live tiger at home football games and most, he said, have been supportive of the plan.

Noce outlined his thoughts in a letter to The Maneater. He writes:

"After much research (and learning much more about tigers than I have ever cared to know) I have come to a few conclusions. First and foremost, if the University of Missouri is to ever consider a real tiger as a mascot, it needs to be done right. The right way to house a tiger is to create an environment that is as similar to it's [sic] natural environment as possible, this costs hundreds of thousands, possibly millions of dollars (not $13 million for the record). This also includes having one or two full-time caretakers for the animal.

Considering we have one of the best animal science and veterinary programs in the country this will not be hard to find but will cost money. After learning that many tigers in America need a good home, some sanctuaries have offered to provide a tiger if the University provided a good home for one. Although I have received much support from alumni, including donation offerings, as of right now I am not in favor of spending student fees on such a project.

Considering the time and money associated with such an idea I have concluded that the University of Missouri should sponsor a live tiger or group of tigers and make them "Official Mizzou mascots." After researching various zoos and sanctuaries throughout Missouri I have realized there are many tigers that could use the sponsorship of the University. This will be a good start for the time being as if a live tiger were to happen it would take a great amount of time. As there are many other goals that I look to accomplish over my yearlong term, I feel that sponsoring a tiger can please the most people here at Mizzou. Hopefully students at Mizzou can realize that although this may be a good idea in theory it is something that needs to be carefully considered and funded before it actually happens. If anyone else feels compelled to comment on the issue please talk to me about it as I want to represent all of you on any decision I make."

Count the Saint Louis Zoo out in any sponsorship deal. "We thank you for your recent inquiry. Although many of us at the Saint Louis Zoo are Mizzou Tiger fans, we do not use tigers for
entertainment or promotional events. Our tigers are acclimated to a zoo habitat which meets their physical and social needs," Janet L. Powell, director of public relations, said in an e-mail to me last week.
LETTER: Football games are no place for a live tiger

By Sharon Kinney Hanson, Columbia
February 1, 2010 | 1:25 p.m. CST

Surely MU’s Missouri Student Association President senior Tim Noce is jesting. He wants MU’s administrative staff, alumni and supporters to consider purchasing a live tiger for home football games. His reasoning is, if Louisiana State University and the University of Memphis can have tigers, why can’t we?

It’s only a question of money, he says. OK, no problem. Our athletic department somehow can always find plenty of money for football. Even if money to purchase a tiger would come from ‘private’ sources, Noce’s question still has a double ethical edge.

We all know, I’m sure, folks who are struggling financially, out of work, struggling to pay tuition or repay college loans, etc. We know also that University of Missouri system President Gary Forsee is concerned about MU’s overall 2010 budget.

Of course, MU shouldn’t spend private or public money on a tiger and its perpetual upkeep just because some people might really, really, really want one because other schools have them.

Secondly, tigers are not native to Missouri. What exactly might a tiger feel living here in Columbia, in confinement or on a leash for hours on a football field with gyrating, screaming, drinking fans while the band blares on? Also, live mascot tigers are sedated, declawed and perhaps have a few teeth removed. And very likely they are castrated.

I ask you, would that be a fitting symbol for MU?

Sharon Kinney Hanson graduated from MU with a master’s degree in education in 1977.
Noce cools off on tiger initiative

Noce will discuss co-sponsoring tigers at the St. Louis Zoo.

By Megan Pearl; Published Feb. 2, 2010

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Mizzou Tigers for Tigers is lobbying for Missouri legislation that aims to have the Missouri Department of Agriculture enforce standardization of ownership, transportation, breeding, identification, location, protection from the public, husbandry, health care and an account of all deaths of tigers.

Winkeler said the Missouri Department of Agriculture would be responsible for enforcing it and it's on a limited budget. The department wants to make sure it's big enough of a problem in Missouri for them to spend money on it. But if it were to pass, all the department would have to do is paperwork.

Missouri has no laws for tiger ownership. There is more difficulty involved in legally owning a squirrel as a pet than there is a tiger, Winkeler said.

"I'm meeting with athletics to see if we can co-sponsor tigers at the St. Louis Zoo," Noce said. "If we were going to get a live tiger, it would take longer than a year to build the habitat and get together everything else."
Forsee pushes for higher education bond fund

Posted to Politics Watch by Will Guldin at 12:14 a.m., Feb. 2, 2010

During his State of the University address, Forsee said he wants the state to reconsider creating a bond fund for higher education improvements.

"A bond issue just scratches the surface of what our needs are," he said.

Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, sponsored a bond measure last year that received bipartisan support. This measure, which passed the House, stalled in the Senate.

Forsee said the UM system has identified $3 billion of renovations it considers necessary. Some of those projects, such as renovations to the Ellis Fischel Cancer Center, were funded under former Gov. Matt Blunt's plan to sell assets of the state's student loan authority, MOHELA, but Gov. Jay Nixon halted that plan when MOHELA could not make its scheduled payments.

The full text of the speech is below and was copied from a release from Forsee's office:

2010 State of the University address

President Gary D. Forsee

Jan. 29, 2010

Thank you, Curator Haggard, and good morning. Thank you all for being here in person or via the Web! It is always a pleasure and honor for me to be with our faculty, staff and students as I am this week for the board of curators meeting on our UMKC campus.

I appreciate the opportunity today to present an "annual report" on the state of our University of Missouri.

Normally, communications should be two-way with a good balance of talking and listening. My apologies for skewing my remarks toward "one-way" in my limited time with you this morning.

I intend for my comments to be directed to the members of our board of curators who dedicate so much time to this university and whose passion (and patience) I have appreciated.

But my comments also are directed to all of our constituents and those we serve in this great state of Missouri.

Text of Forsee's speech continues...
There are so many individuals and groups to thank for their support and ongoing recognition of the role the University of Missouri plays in our state.

From our governor, Jay Nixon, to the General Assembly leadership—Sens. Shields, Mayer and Pearce and Reps. Richard, Icet and Kingery—as well as members of the delegations surrounding our campuses—thank you.

To our federal delegation, especially Sens. Bond and McCaskill, and to all of our campus supporters, alumni and friends of the university—thank you, as well!

To the lifeblood of what we are about—our faculty, staff and students—your continued commitment to excellence, integrity and social responsibility has been nothing short of extraordinary.

This morning, I will recap 2009. Our accomplishments and challenges were many!

I will talk about commitments, challenges and obligations as shared responsibilities. Finally, I will look to this year and the future with a focus on our priorities and with optimism—tempered with the diligence we need to have in the context of the economic challenges our nation and state continue to face.

Our mission is clear, and it is historic in how we uniquely serve the citizens in our state.

Sometimes the awareness of this mission isn’t as uniform in all corners, but I am convinced that staying true to this charge, and doing it with quality and excellence, is the best way to achieve our objective to "Make a Difference."

At each board of curators meeting, I have asked our four chancellors to spend just a few minutes to talk about their own "bragging rights" accomplishments.

It is tempting today, as we recap last year, to spend all of the time bragging on what was accomplished, but I will be brief instead and ask that all of us be mindful of the effort made by all involved in our state’s land-grant and research institution, our University of Missouri.

Yesterday we heard about a program here at UMKC that prepares our students to be teachers in the urban core. The Institute for Urban Education is just one of dozens of programs of outreach to further the teaching mission.

In our mission of teaching: • The university had record enrollment on all four campuses; 13,000 students have been added during the past decade, representing a 24 percent increase. • Our faculty received national and international recognition. One was elected to the National Academy of Science and another was honored with the prestigious Priestly Medal. Congratulations to Drs. Robert Ricklefs and Fred Hawthorne respectively. And just this week, Dr. Sandra Abell was named a Distinguished Fellow by the National Science Teachers Association. • Many of our departments also received national rankings.

In our mission of service, our leadership in the Caring for Missourians initiative among Missouri’s public higher education institutions will produce more than 220 new permanent and temporary student seats in the health care professions from the University of Missouri.

Extension services pitched in last year with added emphasis on small business support, including growing and protecting Missouri jobs.

There were also a multitude of service learning initiatives taken on by our students, such as Engineers Without Borders.
Our students also served the state with programs like our UMKC Dental School, which offered more than $9 million of in-kind support to the state last year to help the neediest and least able to pay among us.

In our mission of research, the spotlight is shining on all four campuses with federal grant applications and awards at record levels.

Disclosures are up 18 percent for intellectual property pursuits, and we achieved more than $300 million in externally sponsored research. Mizzou, with $205 million, ranked roughly in the top 10 percent of more than 600 institutions on this measure.

And last year, the university committed an additional $2 million toward staff and related technology commercialization activities, a clear "signal of intent" for the future.

In 2004 the fourth component of our mission was added, our role in economic development.

In this difficult time, the relevance of our economic development mission has never been more important.

We highlighted our capabilities in last year's Energy Summit for all to see.

I'd like to thank George Paz at Express Scripts, Neal Patterson at Cerner, General Greg Martin at Ft. Leonard Wood and David Steward at WorldWide Technologies for their confidence in the University of Missouri and in our ability to be a good partner with these important Missouri-based enterprises.

Foundations like Kauffman and Reynolds continue to be supportive of our leading-edge initiatives at UMKC's Bloch School and at Mizzou's Journalism School, respectively.

The response of supporters in this toughest of economic times shouldn't be surprising.

We surpassed in all cases our fundraising requirements and expectations, topped off by the $1 billion For All We Call Mizzou campaign celebration last April and Missouri S&T hitting its goal of $200 million five months ahead of schedule.

Our ongoing relevance to help businesses start in, or relocate to, Missouri is evidenced by this graphic showing 12 locations now supported in these endeavors by the University of Missouri.

We are advocates of Gov. Nixon's jobs initiative, as well as the MOSIRA legislation, which focuses on creating jobs in the science and technology fields.

On top of these core mission achievements, we took many additional actions that will accrue benefit to our university and state. • We held tuition flat last year, and flat tuition is proposed again for this coming year. • We are leading the way, I believe nationally, with a performance management system, as well a comprehensive set of campus-specific accountability measures. • Our "brand" is enhanced by our student athletes on all four campuses. At Mizzou that was apparent with four Big 12 conference titles, an Elite 8 run in basketball and the football team's fifth straight post-season bowl game. Our student-athletes led all BCS schools in the academic progress report standard.

But with all of that, we asked ourselves and our constituents if there was more we can do in these times. Can we be more relevant and help be part of the solution to challenges facing our state? So we took on myriad additional activities positioned to find answers to that question.

Two task forces – P-20 and Outside In – were aimed at the heart of our mission of teaching and learning.
We have set the stage for the future of health care technology and excellence in patient care with the Tiger Institute, which will support our MU Health System in partnership with Cerner Corporation.

We will take a proactive approach in each of our campus cities to seek new, innovative community/campus partnerships to accelerate the finding of creative solutions for our capital needs.

All of this, I believe, is a significant—perhaps unprecedented—profile of engagement and results, and it was done in the context of one of the most challenging backdrops I have seen in my working career.

The constant headlines of economic peril in our country and state had an impact on everything we did, as it did with every one of our internal and external constituents.

We needed to act, and we did. We did not always perfectly communicate or execute—but we had the mindset of staying ahead to keep our mission strong.

Thus, in fall 2008 we began: • Freezing positions and holding more than 600 of them open. • Reaching agreement on tuition and state support. • Making tough decisions on salaries and benefits.

The outcome thus far is perhaps not as draconian as the actions of others around the country, but I accept that that may be in the “eye of the beholder.”

At the same time, there became a very vocal national discussion about higher education juxtaposed against a combination of the rising costs of a degree and a job market for graduates that has crashed dramatically.

All of these issues are important for us to be engaged in, to have our own point of view established, and on many, to take action.

These are the issues at the national level, but the picture in Missouri is a mirror image.

As we move into the third year of this recession cycle, we will continue to be challenged to fulfill all aspects of our mission.

We have agreed again to hold in-state undergraduate tuition flat in exchange for a $24 million cut to our core budget.

We also will incur a $15.5 million cut, or roughly 30 percent, on our non-core category activities. These so-called “non-core” activities, however, include funding for University Hospital, telemedicine and the statewide education broadband network, MOREnet.

And we know that as we look ahead to 2012, absent a recovery in state revenues, another $24 million of federal stimulus money that is in our core budget today may be at risk.

This raises important planning questions as we move ahead: How do we prioritize our activities? How do we prepare for 2011 and 2012 in this context?

But with all this background, we remain confident; we remain investors! Our collective stewardship of the University of Missouri has never been stronger—and it gives us confidence to invest: • in our infrastructure. • in our $330 million bond initiative. • in our strategic initiatives. • and in our students by foregoing tuition increases that would have amounted to a cumulative $70 million over 5 years if we had adjusted tuition only by inflation.
To fully do our part and help build sustaining job and revenue growth, we are taking another investment step today.

We are announcing that we will provide up to $5 million during the next three years in the University of Missouri Enterprise Investment Initiative.

This program will support our researchers and faculty and those who may rely on university researchers to start up/stand up new companies in Missouri—to grow new jobs and create new revenue streams for the university and the state.

This kind of investment is just one of many obligations we take seriously in our "stewardship role." It is the Missouri way of doing things!

Our obligations cut across all of what we should be about: • carrying out our mission with quality. • ensuring accountability to our stakeholders. • providing access and affordability for students as part of our land-grant mission. • respecting our faculty and staff as we engage with them to find solutions.

But there is also a set of obligations that we rely on for support by the state. In this context, it is NOT just the General Assembly or the governor, but recognition by all of us as citizens about the role education plays in our state's past and future.

Do we value education and are we willing to make it a priority?

Do we collectively accept our obligation as stewards of public education and the investment—not just in dollars—required to keep that strong?

Whether it is partnering with state leaders to leverage Missouri's balance sheet for accessing the capital market or partnering with the state and other institutions for federal research support, these opportunities require this notion of a shared obligation to make things work better.

In that regard, let me be very clear: higher education needs money and support in Missouri for capital projects.

The specifics are clear and well documented across this university and our four-year public colleagues: classroom space, antiquated labs, science and engineering, maintenance and repair—the full gamut of needs.

There will be no better time for the state to access the capital market via a bond initiative to address these capital needs than now. • We have a AAA credit rating. We should put it to use! • Rates are still at historic lows and there are incentives to move now. • We are rolling off the bond issue adopted 35 year ago and its debt service. Education needs to lay claim to that line item. There would be in essence no new debt or no new debt service! • Real jobs in construction will be created.

This window likely will close this year. What will Missouri do? What kind of stewards will we be for the next generation?

Of course, it is easy to look back and be critical, and in tough times maybe that's not even fair. But the facts are that several years ago, public higher education accepted more state oversight of outcomes in exchange for: • Capital project funding. • Three years of increased financial support. • Recognition of needed equity adjustment to strike a balance among four-year public institutions. • A funding model that recognizes inflation support and enrollment growth. • Incremental funding for a scholarship program, Access Missouri. So far, we have received two years of that incremental funding, which did not get us back to 2001 funding levels on an absolute basis.
During that time, we also have encountered a 24 percent growth in enrollment with no new support.

And while a select group of lobbyists will tell you otherwise, my sampling of Missourians says we should be shocked that the Access Missouri Scholarship program implemented in that cycle now supports a student with $1,500 to go to public institution versus $3,150 to go to a private institution in our state.

Collectively, this is not the balance we had expected from Senate Bill 389.

While no one, including me, likes to talk about taxes, let's put them in terms of state revenue, either foregone or diverted.

The facts are that since 1997, thanks to a series of a la carte tax policy changes, state revenues have been reduced by $800 million.

Last year alone, more than $500 million in tax credits were applied, diverting state revenues in many cases to worthy projects.

That's a total of $1.3 billion in revenues "foregone or diverted." So, back to commitments and obligations:

- Could some of this revenue "leakage" have been used to fund or build a new state cancer hospital to replace the state's 70-year-old Ellis Fischel Cancer Center?

- Could some be used to plug holes in our budget for programs like telemedicine, where we link Missouri's underserved rural health care patients with the state's best health care professionals?

- Could some money be used to keep the light burning on science, engineering, math and technology programs, which are being cut at our public elementary and secondary schools?

- Could some money be found to sustain Caring for Missourians by continuing to educate more health professionals, including programs like the joint pharmacy program between UMKC and Missouri State that leverages UMKC's foundation?

There are no easy decisions here—only hard choices we must consider as Missourians—but we can't not have this discussion.

This chart shows myriad data—from student growth to growth in tuition and state appropriations—and indicates that during the past decade there has been a 31 percent efficiency improvement at the University of Missouri.

It is a telling chart. It certainly harkens back to the questions we have been asked to address by the state, including how our mission will be affected in the next two years.

The record clearly shows we've been doing a lot more with less and have avoided—thus far—the slippery slope of doing less with less.

We will continue to look ahead and first challenge ourselves.

In October I suggested a number of areas be examined that represent part of the national discussion about the value of higher education. We will need to test these paradigms with our best thinking and shared governance approaches.

As a result I have asked our campus and system leadership to shine a spotlight on these points in 2010 and give us their best thinking during the course of this year.
Two years ago, shortly after I began as president of the University of Missouri System, I had a chance to have lunch with a man who has been one of our state's recent great philanthropists, entrepreneurs, supporters of education and benefactors to our university.

During that lunch, Des Lee, then 90 years old, looked across the table and asked me very directly (as I found out later was his M.O.): • What's your plan?! • What are you going to accomplish in your first year? • What's your five-year plan? • How can I help? In our subsequent few times together, it was pretty clear that you better have some answers to Des' questions!

Desmond Lee passed away a few weeks ago, and I shared with his son Gary my discussions with his father and my conclusions: • You better show up with passion. • You better take your stewardship seriously. • Hope is not a plan; what IS your plan? • You better be the loudest advocate for your mission.

Ladies and gentlemen...we DO have a plan.

It will require our collective passion, stewardship, engagement in anticipating the changes around us, and advocacy.

That advocacy will be supported by an unprecedented level of transparency and outcomes that we measure. There is no better way to “show ‘em” what we’re getting done—and how good we are and aspire to be.

We are a very special interest group, and our advocacy and our collective voice must be heard. Our state depends on us.

Thank you.
LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Concern for higher education's upcoming fiscal year

By Robert B. Stein, Commissioner of Higher Education
February 2, 2010 | 12:01 a.m. CST

At the December 2009 meeting of the Coordinating Board for Higher Education, the staff of the Missouri Department of Higher Education was charged with initiating conversations throughout the higher education community to address the concerns identified in Jim Moody's presentation regarding the state's short and long term fiscal situation.

The facts are clear that, absent some unforeseen intervention or unprecedented economic turnaround, the state's fiscal situation will mean reduced state appropriations to public higher education beginning in fiscal year 2011, deepening in fiscal year 2012, and likely persisting as a new lowered base for several years beyond.

Missouri higher education has confronted reduced funding in previous years when the state faced difficult economic challenges. Each public institution adapted to its reduction with management decisions involving a combination of actions including tuition increases, reallocations, consolidations and eliminations. This round, however, is different due to the extensiveness of the current economic downturn worldwide, the expectation that economic recovery will take longer than in past recessions, and the sensitivity about using tuition increases to fill a portion of financial shortfalls.

Projecting forward, the combined conditions of a tuition freeze for fiscal year 2011, lowered operating budgets on an already lowered base from past cuts in 2001 and 2002, rising fixed costs, and demands from public policymakers for increased productivity highlight the need to seek new approaches. New approaches might include sector and system solutions, rather than simply having each institution absorb its share and slowly shrink its commitments.
Ultimately, each board is responsible for balancing its institution's budget. However, fostering statewide conversations and sharing perspectives may lead to some collective responses that could reduce unintended effects, such as limiting access or key program offerings. These informal conversations are intended to provide some insight about a collection of potential cost reduction strategies.

The governor's recommendations for fiscal year 2011 suggest use of approximately $900 million of federal budget stabilization funding in order to balance the state's budget with no such funding available for fiscal year 2012. Thus, for fiscal year 2012, it is estimated that the state will be facing a beginning deficit in the neighborhood of $1 billion before netting the gain or loss between revenue growth and basic spending pressures.

Even if higher education were to absorb only 10 percent of the cuts necessary to balance a $1 billion deficit (an optimistic assumption given past practice), reduction would be in excess of 10 percent of core budgets on top of the 5 percent recommended cut in fiscal year 2011. If history is any guide, higher education would experience a larger percentage of the cuts (potentially 15 to 20 percent or more.) Of course, the Missouri General Assembly has yet to take action on the fiscal year 2011 budget.

At the state level, addressing this situation on the revenue side (new taxes) is a political non-starter. At the institutional level, the revenue side is also particularly challenging because of the tuition freeze agreements that have been struck for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 academic years, as well as the SB-389 tuition constraint that limits an institution's ability to replace cuts in state funding with tuition revenue.

It is not known whether or not there will be another negotiated tuition freeze for the 2011-12 academic year. Aside from tuition, increased private fundraising including donations, sponsored grants, and other externally funded projects will certainly be a part of every institution's financing strategy in the future. The ability to attract increased giving from philanthropists and to secure funding from other external sources will vary widely among institutions.

Engaging in conversation on the expenditure side has been difficult and uncomfortable. One of the most common detours taken involves the tendency to focus discussion on higher education as an investment that will generate economic growth.
Connected to this argument is often the belief that more effectively lobbying the governor or General Assembly will change attitudes and result in additional funding. While it is important to continually communicate about the value that higher education brings to the state, the reality is that even the most receptive or easily persuaded governor or General Assembly may very well have to cut millions of dollars of state spending regardless of what they would like to do.

It is hard to imagine with shortfalls of this magnitude that higher education funding can be protected, much less increased, even by elected officials who are champions for higher education.

Another common thread in conversations about higher education funding challenges tends to focus on cost efficient ways of expanding outreach to students or cooperatively addressing unmet needs. These are important issues that many in higher education are focused on, but for the purposes of this discussion, they do not necessarily result in reduced expenditures. For example, if two institutions want to add courses in Russian and decide to make a joint hire and share expenses rather than each hiring a Russian instructor separately, the end result would be cheaper to each institution but would not necessarily reduce overall expenditures, especially if Russian is not currently taught. Unless cost sharing results in lowering overall expenditures, the real savings needed in the immediate future will not be realized.

In preparation for a more engaged discussion among higher education leaders in new approaches to cost savings, the Higher Education Department has sought ideas from education and government leaders. The ideas are listed below to serve as a catalyst for further discussion. Because of the sensitive nature of many of these suggestions and the informal structure used to gather them, neither attribution nor evaluation are provided.

Potential Cost Savings Ideas

- One or more institutions could be closed.

- One or more institutions could be made a branch campus of another institution.

- One or more institutions could be privatized by simply removing the state funding and restructuring internally.
- Students who receive state financial aid and do not graduate could be required to repay their aid awards.

- Institutions could lower their discount rate and thus collect more of the tuition that is charged.

- An increased portion of benefit costs could be shifted to employees.

- Class sizes could be increased, and a minimum class size could be instituted.

- All athletic programs could be eliminated.

- Faculty workloads could be uniformly increased so as to allow for a reduction in the number of faculty.

- Various administrative and support functions, such as purchasing and IT, could be consolidated if they haven’t been already.

- Some services or support functions could be subcontracted among institutions when capacity is available.

- Depth and breadth of some program offerings could be reduced or eliminated, if it would correspondingly reduce personnel costs. For example, perhaps not all Colleges of Education need to offer a full array of certifications and degrees that cover teaching from early childhood through secondary subjects as well as offer programs for principals and superintendents.

These conversations also produced a variety of suggestions regarding online education although there was disagreement on whether this form of delivery would save money or be more expensive especially in the early years. Some were confident that online delivery is not less expensive than traditional classroom delivery. Others believed that certain courses can definitely be cheaper to deliver online. It was suggested that there could be one basic course outline and syllabus for a basic government class, for example, and large numbers students around the state could take the course online with graduate students or adjunct faculty in a much higher student-teacher ratio than in the classroom.
Almost everyone who suggested ideas agreed that if cuts of this magnitude were to pass it would be uncharted territory for higher education. Many institutions have reallocated significant resources in mission-driven restructuring, or otherwise reduced activities in one area to enhance another. This situation, however, would necessitate reduced or eliminated activities without the option of reallocation since funds would not be freed up – they would be gone. With constant pressure from a variety of constituents to expand offerings, produce more graduates and accommodate more demands from business and industry, shrinking out of financial necessity could be a very painful process.

The Department of Higher Education staff is very appreciative of the engaged and constructive participation. Although the financial scenarios discussed are only speculative and any decisions on major changes can be delayed until a later date, and hopefully never come to pass, it would be irresponsible to not plan for the bad if not the worst. As this work continues we will continue to exercise all necessary discretion as options are considered for repositioning higher education to serve the needs of Missourians in the future.

Best,

Robert
Higher education commissioner presents possible cuts in budget

By Ben Wieder
February 2, 2010 | 12:01 a.m. CST

The potential cuts include closing campuses, incorporating campuses into existing systems and abolishing athletics programs.

JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri’s budget director, Linda Luebbering, said the anticipated state budget shortfall is actually a quarter of a billion dollars more than originally projected by the state’s top higher education official.

When Higher Education Commissioner Robert Stein laid out potential cuts to education in a letter to public college officials, he estimated the state would lose nearly $1 billion in two years when federal stabilization funds expire.

But now, the hole he’s worried about is potentially even worse.

Gov. Jay Nixon’s proposed budget for next year includes nearly $1.2 billion in stabilization funds, $300 million of which Nixon’s office anticipates will come from an extension of federal stabilization funds that the state doesn’t currently have.

A tentative deal reached between Nixon and the presidents of public four-year institutions would cut more than $40 million from the higher education appropriation next year, preserving 95 percent of funding, in exchange for freezing in-state undergraduate tuition, pending approval by Missouri’s legislature.

Stein’s letter presented a variety of scenarios for dealing with anticipated future budget shortfalls, including closing campuses, incorporating independent campuses into university systems, abolishing athletics programs and reducing course offerings. His suggestions are based on conversations he had with education officials and experts across the state.
Columbia Rep. Chris Kelly, a Democrat, praised the contents of Stein's letter, which was sent two weeks ago, but said it would be difficult to implement.

"Every single person that you talk to about Missouri higher education would say there are too many institutions," Kelly said. "Not one single person would tell you their institution ought to lose anything."

Even if none of the suggestions contained in the letter come to fruition, Kelly said it still serves an important purpose.

"His comments will kick off intellectual discussion about these things, and that's good," he said.

Sen. Joan Bray, D-St. Louis County, said she hopes the letter will inspire public colleges to work together to achieve a solution.

"I do believe that the system as it is now is not sustainable for the long term," she said.

Part of the problem, she said, is that some institutions formerly classified as colleges have become universities, with increased funding needs, a process she deemed "name inflation."

Stein said the goal of his letter was not to advocate for closing campuses but to increase the coordination between campuses across the state.

"I'm saying let's not wait until it's too late," he said.

By working together, he said, campuses could more efficiently employ limited financial resources and strengthen applications for competitive federal grants. He pointed to coordination among University of Missouri System campuses as an example of successful collaboration.

In an interview before the legislative session, Rep. Allen Icet, R-Wildwood, said a duplication of programs among state colleges is part of the problem.

"All these universities want to offer every degree under the sun," he said.
Reducing the number of programs and courses offered across the state is one of the suggestions in Stein's letter. He cited the proliferation of state-approved education programs as an example of this.

But Stein said the regional diversity of Missouri will make the decision of canceling or consolidating programs that much more difficult.

"There's not a single wide brush stroke that's going to work effectively across the state," he said.
Parents, students on edge over soaring tuition

No MU mention

By DONNA GORDON BLANKINSHIP/The Associated Press
February 2, 2010 | 12:01 a.m. CST

SEATTLE — As students around the country anxiously wait for college acceptance letters, their parents are sweating the looming tuition bills at public universities.

Florida college students could face yearly 15 percent tuition increases for years, and University of Illinois students will pay at least 9 percent more. The University of Washington will charge 14 percent more at its flagship campus. And in California, tuition increases of more than 30 percent have sparked protests reminiscent of the 1960s.

So far a few states, like Oklahoma and Missouri, have avoided tuition increases entirely. And the Oklahoma Legislature gave its state universities no reason to complain when it fulfilled the state higher education budget request.

Tuition has been trending upward for years, but debate in statehouses and trustee meeting rooms has been more urgent this year as most states struggle their way out of the economic meltdown.

According to the College Board, families are paying about $172 to $1,096 more in tuition and fees this school year. The national average for 2009-10 is about $7,020, not including room and board, according to the nonprofit association of colleges that oversees the SATs and Advanced Placement tests.

Mike Sarb, a University of Illinois senior from suburban-Chicago Elk Grove Village, Ill., said money is a big concern for his blue-collar family scrambling to find the money to pay more than $20,000 for tuition, room and board.
They are not pleased that university officials are likely to raise tuition 9 percent this summer.

"They do complain that the school's taking advantage of people (by raising tuition)," Sarb said.

But interim President Stanley Ikenberry said the school has run out of options. With a budget deficit expected to top $11 billion this year, the state of Illinois owes the university more than $430 million, money he doesn't expect to see any time soon.

In some cases, one student's tuition disaster is another's bargain.

State officials have told Florida students they can expect 15 percent tuition increases every year until tuition reaches the national average. That could be a long slog, as the state is starting its tuition realignment from a place other students envy — about $3,000 a year.

In California, unprecedented budget cuts to higher education have led to huge fee increases at the state's two public university systems, as well as layoffs, furloughs, enrollment cuts and reduced course offerings.

At the University of California, which has ten campuses and about 220,000 students, in-state undergraduate fees in fall 2010 are set to reach $10,302 — 32 percent more than in fall 2009 and three times what California residents paid 10 years ago.

But at California State University, the nation's largest public university system with 23 campuses and 450,000 students, resident undergraduate fees rose 32 percent from fall 2008 to fall 2009 to $4,026, which is nearly three times what students paid 10 years ago. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's budget proposal for 2010-11 assumes that the system will raise fees another 10 percent in the coming academic year.

"We're paying more and getting less," said Steve Dixon, a Humboldt State University senior who heads the California State Students Association.

At the University of Washington, where tuition and fees are expected to pass $9,000 by the 2010-11 school year, students are worried about threatened cuts in financial aid as well.
"It's kind of a perfect storm for students," said Jono Hanks, a political science major from Everett, Wash., who is the UW student government lobbyist at the statehouse this quarter.

Hanks lives at home, packs his lunch and pays tuition with work and about $4,000 in student loans a year. Others have told him they're looking for a second job and adding to their debt to keep up with this year's 14 percent tuition increase.

"Some of them are even talking about dropping out for a few years so they can pay off the loans they have," Hanks said.

The Seattle university expects to raise tuition another 14 percent next year. UW tuition used to double every decade. At 14 percent a year, it could double in five.

Hanks is almost finished with school so he's not that concerned about his ability to pay for the last few quarters of his degree. But he does worry what barrier tuition increases will pose for his younger sister and brother, who are both in elementary school.

Other states have been more subtle in their budget balancing attempts.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison is in the first year of a four-year tuition increase plan aimed at improving quality. In addition to statewide tuition increases of about 5.5 percent, in-state students at the university will pay an extra $250 a year each year.

This year, tuition went up by $617 to $7,296, or about 9.2 percent, but financial aid increased at the same time.

Still, few are complaining because the extra money — $100 million in the first four years and $40 million each year afterward — is reserved for providing more classes, improving student services and increasing need-based financial aid.

The Georgia Board of Regents has suspended indefinitely its popular "Fixed for Four" guaranteed tuition program, which since 2006 has meant students have paid the same tuition rate annually for four years of college. A freshman at the University of Georgia this year pays $3,865 in tuition and fees per semester if they take between seven and 15 hours of classes.
Some students are relieved at modest tuition increases this year, including 3.5 percent in Ohio, less than 5 percent in Pennsylvania, and 3.9 percent at the University of Colorado at Boulder.
University program uses $5 million to create jobs

Forsee revealed the program in his State of the University address.

By Michael Sewall; Published Jan. 29, 2010, last updated 1:50 a.m., Feb. 2, 2010

KANSAS CITY — UM system President Gary Forsee announced the system will establish a three-year, $5 million plan to create more jobs across Missouri.

The plan, called the Enterprise Investment Program, was announced at the Board of Curators meeting Friday in Kansas City.

Forsee focused a good amount of his State of the University speech on the economic concerns affecting the system and the state. He said the UM system must be proactive in creating new jobs to bring in money for the university and the state.

"We need to fully do our part in the state to help build sustaining revenue growth and job growth," he said. "We need to recognize that role education has played in our state's past and will play in our future."

An outside advisory panel representing various business sectors will be formed to review funding applications and recommend funding awards. The panel will review business plans and their proposed use of funds. It will begin this summer, and the system hopes to award its first funding by the fall.

Curator Warren Erdman of Kansas City said the university's goal to create economic ventures has developed well since he joined the board in 2007.

"It's come light years," Erdman said. "I'm particularly proud our university is willing to establish benchmarks. When we go to the legislature and make our case, it's strengthened by the fact that we're willing to move forward."

MU already houses the Life Sciences Business Incubator at Monsanto Place, which aims to form and recruit new companies and graduating them as self-sustaining companies. Forsee said businesses coming out of the incubator or other enterprises, such as Newsy or the Tiger Institute for Health partnership with Cerner, are examples of ways the UM system can create jobs to aid the economy.

Gov. Jay Nixon is gunning for a jobs plan this legislative session that could help revive the state's economy. The Missouri First program would make businesses that have been in Missouri for more than five years eligible for certain incentives. Another program, the Missouri Science and Innovation Reinvestment Act, aims to create jobs in science and technology, and a third program would allow for $12 million in job-training programs at community colleges.

Despite the proposal of various economic development programs at the statewide level, Forsee said it's important for the UM system to help where it can. He admitted $5 million is "not a lot of money" from the university's $1 billion operating budget and added creating jobs is part of the core mission of the university.

"It's not just teaching and learning," Forsee said. "We've been criticized in the past for not doing enough."
Some faculty and staff have used comment boards to criticize the move, saying the money should have gone to improving MU's faculty salaries, which rank 33 out of 34 of schools in the Association of American Universities. But Faculty Council Chairwoman Leona Rubin said that wouldn't have been much of a solution.

"Sad as it may seem, $5 million dollars would not put a dent in our salary woes," she said in an e-mail.

Rubin said the university's role in external activities, such as job creation, could reflect on its mission to educate students through research.

"This activity has the potential to benefit both faculty and students in the short term through research and entrepreneurial activities," she said. "If we consider that our primary mission is to educate students to be productive members of society and the workforce, the university as a whole needs to be concerned with more than just its core teaching responsibilities."
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU employee arrested on suspicion of sexual misconduct

By Doug Davis
February 1, 2010 | 5:23 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — An MU employee was arrested Saturday on suspicion of sexual misconduct, Capt. Brian Weimer of the MU Police Department said.

Justin Q. Mull, 27, of Columbia, is accused of rubbing a female co-worker's back and grabbing her breasts and buttocks, Weimer said. The victim told police she told the suspect to stop, but that he forced her to touch him.

According to the MU faculty and staff directory, Mull is a waiter at MU's University Club.

Mull was released Saturday after posting $500 bond.

Boone County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Andrew Scholz said an arraignment date has not yet been set.