Missouri student leader touts live tiger mascot at football games

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — A University of Missouri student leader wants to bring a real tiger on the football field as the school's mascot.

Missouri Students Association President Tim Noce says having a live tiger at Faurot Field would increase school spirit and draw attention to Missouri athletics. He estimates the cost of using a live tiger at $2 million and says it would require private donations.

Similar efforts are in place at Louisiana State University and the University of Memphis, two other schools with tiger mascots.
College endowment funds shrank across U.S., including at MU and KU

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

American universities always have been divided between the “haves” and “have-nots” when it comes to endowments.

Now, in this economy, we see the “losts” and “lost-mores.”

The University of Missouri System, which invests for all four of its campuses, saw a drop of 14 percent from June 2008 to June 2009. The University of Kansas endowment’s value slid 21.6 percent.

Grim and grimmer, you say.

So what would you call Harvard’s 30 percent loss over the same period?

Not quite the grimmest, as it turned out. That goes to Syracuse University, which watched a cool $300 million — a third of its endowment — evaporate.

Across the country, college endowment funds shrank by an average of 23 percent, said Ken Redd at the National Association of College and University Business Officers. “That drop is the worst we have seen in the 39-year history of our study.”

From June 2008 to June 2009, the billionaires’ club for colleges was winnowed from 77 to 54.

“Entirely due to the downturn in the market,” explained Nikki Krawitz, director of finance for the UM system, which had the fifth-smallest percentage drop among the 100 richest schools.

It is likely, however, that the two universities will regain admittance. The latest numbers in this report, released last month, date back to June and do not reflect the significant recovery in the stock markets.

“We are beginning to see things turn around,” agreed Jeff Davis, KU senior vice president for investment. “The key is building a long-term portfolio with sufficient liquidity to withstand the bad time so we can be in the market when the recovery occurs.”
At the same time a bear market was shredding their investment portfolios by an average of 18.7 percent, the nation’s public and private schools also watched private contributions fall by 11.9 percent — the greatest decline ever recorded.

Some colleges surveyed by the business officers association said donations were down more than 45 percent last year.

Besides the smaller gifts by donors who are hard hit and the market mishaps — “which were horrible for everyone,” said Rosita McCoy, KU endowment spokeswoman — the reduced endowments also reflect how much universities paid out of them for operations, usually around 4 to 5 percent.

It’s all a lesson in relativity, of course. Harvard suffered a $10 billion loss, in part, because of its more exotic investment plan, riskier for practices such as using hedge fund managers but once envied for fatter returns. But the world’s richest university still has $25 billion in the kitty, $9 billion more than next-ranked Yale.

At 57th, KU had an endowment valued at $955 million at the end of June 2009. The UM system was listed at 65th with an endowment valued at $881 million.

Private schools must rely on their vastly larger endowments for operating costs more than public institutions, which receive taxpayer funding. The smaller funds at public schools often go to scholarships, professor chairs or projects dedicated to the donors’ wishes. For the past five years, Harvard, Yale, Stanford and Princeton ranked first through fourth.

Even private colleges as small as Grinnell in Iowa, Pomona in California and Swarthmore in Pennsylvania have larger endowments than MU or KU.

Kansas State University, with 23,000 students, ranked 191st with a $260 million endowment. In St. Louis, Washington University, a private school with nearly 14,000 enrolled, had a $4 billion endowment and ranked 16th.

Although more than two-thirds of schools with at least a $1 billion endowment have stepped up spending to help students with rising tuition and costs, a debate has erupted over whether they are doing enough with the huge funds.

Meanwhile, the top 20 institutions in terms of attracting donations from alumni and supporters saw $1.13 billion less than the top 20 the year before, the Council for Aid to Education reported recently. They collected $7.28 billion in 2009.

Two-thirds of the surveyed colleges and universities reported dips in philanthropic support.

Donations to K-State were down from 2008, but still it received the fifth-largest total in the 65-year history of the university foundation. Similarly, MU gifts also were down but still topped the 2009 goal by $2.6 million. KU saw cash, pledges and deferred gifts go up in the fiscal year that ended June 30.
“Overall, it was a great funding year,” said McCoy of KU. “But I’ve heard people say it was the worst investment year since the Great Depression.”

Institutions of higher learning invest in a variety of different areas, but many of those with the largest endowments, such as a Harvard, tend to tie up more money — some as much as 40 percent — in hedge funds, real estate, commodities and private equity. “The type of investments hit hardest when the market fell,” Redd said.

Institutions with smaller endowments, such as KU and MU, fared better in the downturn because “we have relatively smaller allocations to that class of investment,” Krawitz said.

The bulk of MU’s investments, 58.5 percent, were in publicly traded equity at the time. The same is true for KU.

“What we have is high-quality, publicly traded stocks and bonds that do not employ leverage,” said Davis at KU. “When you leverage up a portfolio, it increases its exposure to the market.”

In the 2006-2007 year, gains on endowments reached an average of 17 percent.

When the market flies high, so do the gains, Davis said.

But when the market crashes, some of the great universities tremble.
Graduate school dean applicants scheduled for interviews

By Nicole Lebsack
February 8, 2010 | 5:31 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — The next steps in the search for a new MU graduate school dean will begin Wednesday with the first round of candidate interviews.

Four candidates from MU, Oklahoma State University and the University of Kansas will vie for the position of dean of the graduate school and vice provost for advanced studies through a multiple-day interview process that will include tours, meetings and meals.

The interview process will continue through March 2. Each candidate is scheduled for an open forum on campus, where the public is invited to ask questions and learn more about the candidates.

Former Dean Pam Benoit accepted the position of executive vice president and provost at Ohio University, and the job announcement was publicized in late September or early October, journalism Professor Lee Wilkins said. The position will remain open for new applications until it is officially filled.

All candidates for the position went through an “airport interview” – an initial interview that allows search committees to quickly interview a large number of applicants – with the search committee, and four were invited back for on-campus interviews.

The two-day process includes meetings and interviews with search committee members, department chairs, faculty groups and graduate student associations. The final decision will rest with Provost Brian Foster.

According to the job announcement, hiring will depend on candidates’ leadership abilities, communication skills and commitment to excellence.
In addition to these traits, Wilkins said, the search committee and provost are looking for someone with a strong ability to work across multiple disciplines.

You can see the full position announcement and description on the graduate school's Web site.

The candidates, in order of interview schedule, are:

**A. Gordon Emslie**

- Interview: Thursday and Friday
- Open forum: Thursday at 205 Cornell Hall

*All open forums will be held from 4 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.*

Emslie is the associate vice president for research and dean of the graduate college at Oklahoma State University. He spent 23 years at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, where he taught classes in physics and astronomy and was dean of the School of Graduate Studies from 1998 to 2004.

Emslie's research specializes in the study of energy release and transport in solar flares. He holds doctoral degrees in astrophysics and science from the University of Glasgow in Scotland.

**George Justice**

- Interview: Feb. 18 and 19
- Open forum: Feb. 18 at 205 Cornell Hall

Justice is the interim vice provost for advanced studies and interim dean of the graduate school at MU. He is an associate professor of English and was the English department's director of graduate studies and associate dean for MU's graduate school.

He holds a doctorate in English from the University of Pennsylvania.

**Diana Bartelli Carlin**
Carlin is a professor in the department of communication studies at the University of Kansas. She was the dean of the Graduate School, the acting assistant provost and acting chair of the department of communication studies at the University of Kansas.

She has a doctorate in speech communication from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

**Cerry M. Klein**

Klein is program director of manufacturing enterprise systems and service enterprise engineering for the National Science Foundation and is a Lapierre Professor of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering at MU. He was also chair and director of both graduate and undergraduate studies in the department of industrial and manufacturing systems engineering at MU.

Klein holds a doctorate in industrial engineering from Purdue University.

For more information about the applicants, including resumes and interview schedules, go to the graduate school's Web site.
COLUMN: Don't worry about professors requiring students buy their books

By Andrew Van Dam
February 8, 2010 | 12:15 p.m. CST

This semester, 24 or more MU professors required students to spend what I estimate to be about $158,557.44 on textbooks which those professors themselves had written. This is one conflict of interest about which I couldn't be less concerned.

The American Association of Publishers estimates that 2 out of every 3 textbooks sold are new, and that on these new textbooks, about 11.6 percent of the price is paid to the authors as royalties. Based on those numbers, students bought 1,992 of their professor's own books this semester, earning them a collective total of $13,375.31 in royalties.

(Even that number's a little high, because royalties and proportion of used book sales vary, as does the amount of income that's split with co-authors and whatnot, but unfortunately I'm not able to subdivide it any further without breaking into the offices of the world's major academic publishers and stealing confidential accounting data.)

Why do I know all this? Because I walked into the university bookstore and compared the assigning professor's name with the author list of every single book on the shelves. I only counted required books, and I didn't count course packets or other non royalty-generating materials.

Ten hours, 3,000 books and 17 awkward responses to "sir, are you sure I can't help you find anything?" later, I emerged with a decent list. What I didn't emerge with is any sort of righteous indignation.

In between writing titles in my notebook, I had plenty of time to think about the issue. Especially in sections like "ancient Greek philosophy," where I could put my eyes on
autopilot and skip across author names like "Plato" and "Socrates," as I was fairly certain that if they were lecturing at MU this semester, I'd have heard about it. Somewhere between Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky, I decided that while it may sometimes look a little sketchy, assigning your own books just isn't a huge deal.

MU's conflict of interest and disclosure regulations require that, in such cases, "royalties arising from the purchase of the assigned materials are returned to the University of Missouri, another educational institution, a charitable organization, or a not-for-profit foundation."

Unfortunately, we have no idea if that's happening. The university does not have any formal system for tracking these royalties and relies instead upon individual departments and the honor system. Professors are good, well-educated people, and I have no doubt they're doing the right thing. And even if they aren't, it's not like they're going to be able to afford to reanimate an army of giant prehistoric beavers on their private island or anything.

Those 25 professors who assigned their own books? The 24 of them for which information is publicly available earn a combined 2.24 million in 2008, for an average of $93,376.92 a year each. Actual pay ranged from $46,331 to $177,706. Split 24 ways, the puny $13,375.31 in royalties would barely move the needle.

Those royalties wouldn't even make or break students, the one group of people who make more "we're so poor we can't even afford secondhand dirt" jokes than professors do. MU estimates the average in-state undergraduate spends about $20,600 per year. That includes $8,500 in class fees and $1,080 for textbooks.

Even if every professor pooled their royalties from this semester into a single scholarship fund, they'd barely cover the $10,300 a single in-state student will spend during the same time period.

Under Gov. Jay Nixon's proposed budget, MU's going to lose $10 million in state funding for the next fiscal year. That means that, even in the unlikely event that all 29 professors poured their royalties straight into the general fund, the university would still be $9,986,624.69 in the hole.
And, putting aside the numbers (which is pretty easy to do, given their size), there's the simple matter that many professors are perfectly justified in assigning their own books. Many classes in which professors self-assign are the sort of specialized grad offerings only given because the professor is a leader in that field. And as the leader in their field, that professor has presumably authored its defining text.

Epilogue: I e-mailed every MU professor who appeared to be assigning their own texts; replies ranging from "thoughtful and amusing" to "defiant" have already started to come in. Once they've all said their piece, I'll try to address it in a future column.

*Andrew Van Dam is a graduate student at the Missouri School of Journalism. His wife is applying for PhD programs now.*
Man sightings becoming rare on campuses

By Janese Heavin

Posted February 8, 2010 at 2:33 p.m.

Ladies Night has become all too familiar for students at the University of North Carolina: The school’s student body is nearly 60 percent female.

The New York Times had an interesting article last week about large universities that are seeing demographic shifts favoring women -- or not favoring, depending on how you look at it.

From the story:

North Carolina, with a student body that is nearly 60 percent female, is just one of many large universities that at times feel eerily like women’s colleges. Women have represented about 57 percent of enrollments at American colleges since at least 2000, according to a recent report by the American Council on Education. Researchers there cite several reasons: women tend to have higher grades; men tend to drop out in disproportionate numbers; and female enrollment skews higher among older students, low-income students, and black and Hispanic students.

In terms of academic advancement, this is hardly the worst news for women — hoist a mug for female achievement. And certainly, women are primarily in college not because they are looking for men, but because they want to earn a degree.

But surrounded by so many other successful women, they often find it harder than expected to find a date on a Friday night.

...  

But in a classic college town, the social life is usually limited to fraternity parties, local bars or coffeehouses. And college men — not usually known for their debonair ways — can be particularly unmannerly when the numbers are in their favor.

“A lot of guys know that they can go out and put minimal effort into their appearance and not treat girls to drinks or flatter them, and girls will still flirt with them,” said Felicite Fallon, a senior at Florida State University, which is 56 percent female.
Several male students acknowledged that the math skewed pleasantly in their favor. "You don't have to work that hard," said Matt Garofalo, a senior at North Carolina. "You meet a girl at a late-night restaurant, she's texting you the next day."

The story has found its way on Twitter. A Mizzou student "tweeted" that she believes MU is male dominated.

Not so. According to info from the UM Accountability Measurement System chart (which is kinda handy to have around), 54 percent of students in FY2009 were female; 46 male. That's been the case since 2007, when the ratio was 53-to-47 percent.

It's less balanced on the St. Louis campus, where 65 percent of students are female, and the Kansas City campus, where 57 percent are women.

The trend is reverse at Rolla, where 78 percent of students are men.
Treadmill stress test: Do you need one?

Dr. Marc Wallack routinely passed his cardiac exercise stress test with flying colors. He was, after all, a veteran marathon runner with respectable cholesterol and blood pressure numbers.

But as many heart disease patients discover, a treadmill analysis often isn't enough. Six months after a "normal" stress test, surgeons cracked open Wallack's chest for quadruple bypass surgery. An artery was 95 percent blocked.

"I thought I understood heart disease," said Wallack, a New York City surgical oncologist, with a strong family history of the illness. But his most recent stress test looked fine. So like many men, he convinced himself that the chest pain was merely heartburn.

Cardiac stress tests, also called exercise or treadmill tests, are commonly used to find evidence of blockages in the arteries of the heart. They're non-invasive—require no surgery or needles—are as easy as walking up a slight hill on a treadmill or riding a stationary bike, and can be done in a doctor's office.

For people with chest pain, a positive result can determine whether the problem is heart-related. Stress tests can also evaluate your heart risk prior to a surgery or after you've had a heart attack. And doctors use them to jump start exercise programs for sedentary patients.

But accuracy is a concern. Exercise stress tests are only about 60 percent effective, meaning they miss 40 percent of the problems, said cardiothoracic surgeon Kathy Magliato, director of cardiac services at Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica.

They're even less accurate for women than for men, possibly because when women have heart disease, the smaller branches of the blood vessels are often affected, said Magliato. Breast tissue can trigger false negatives. Other factors, including sex or stress hormones or estrogen's effect on the cells of the heart muscles can also come into play.

"We don't have the perfect test for heart disease," Magliato said.

The high rate of false positive and false negative results doesn't just add to a patient's anxiety; it often leads to more invasive procedures and the unnecessary use of medications, said Dr. Michael LeFevre, a professor of family and community medicine at the University of Missouri School of Medicine. The wrong results can also give people a false sense of security or delay treatment.
As a result, the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force does not recommend treadmill testing for those with a low risk. For high risk populations, there's not enough evidence for--or against--screening adults with treadmill testing, the agency said.

Once someone has taken a stress test, "a cascade of things can happen and we don't have the information that people lived longer or better because we initiated the cascade," said LeFevre, who helped write the Task Force's 2004 guidelines.

Stress tests can effectively show whether the heart's arteries are 70 percent narrowed or more. But heart attacks can arise from arteries that are less than 50 percent blocked. This seems counterintuitive: Doesn't the artery gradually narrow because of progressive fat deposits that block the artery until blood is cut off?

Not always. Heart attacks arise from what cardiologists call a "vulnerable plaque," which can be thought of as a pimple in the artery. These pimples can suddenly erupt—no one knows why—releasing chemicals from the artery that trigger a blood clot to form. "It's possible for a plaque to evolve from a 20 percent narrowing to a complete blood clot—causing a heart attack—in a matter of minutes," said preventive cardiologist Steve Devries, an associate professor at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

The only way to uncover the pimples or large fat deposits in the arteries is through an invasive procedure called an angiogram, where a thin ultrasound tube is inserted into the artery of the heart. But even this procedure isn't foolproof; moreover, it would never be given to a runner without symptoms.

Given the weaknesses with the treadmill test, the Task Force, which is reviewing the current guidelines, says prevention is a key strategy. That means reducing the risk factors, including high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and high cholesterol.

It's also critical to know the symptoms: new or unusual chest pain, pressure, tightness or shortness of breath that lasts more than five to 10 minutes. If the symptoms appear when you exercise and vanish when you stop, it's a clear sign something is wrong.

For 50 percent of women with heart disease, however, chest pain never appears. Instead, they're fatigued, have indigestion or upper abdominal or jaw pain.

Wallack, who ran a marathon after his open heart surgery and has written "Back to Life After a Heart Crisis" still gets his annual stress test. But it's even more important to pick the right cardiologist, he said. "If you have a heart history, are hypertensive or have high cholesterol or diabetes, choose carefully," he said. "A cardiologist becomes a key person in your life."

Here's a quick run-down on the non-invasive tests:

Electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG): Records the heart's electrical activity and shows abnormal heart rhythms. Can show a heart attack in progress.
**Good for:** Showing whether a heart attack has occurred, Predicting whether one is developing, Monitoring a change in heart rhythm.

**Exercise stress test:** (Also called treadmill test, exercise test and exercise cardiac stress test): Doctors monitor your EKG while you're at rest and when you're working hard, such as walking on a treadmill or riding a stationary bike.

**Good for:** Picking up blockages greater than 70 percent; showing how much you can safely do after a heart attack or surgery.

**Echocardiogram:** An ultrasound for the heart. Patients exercise on a treadmill or bike but instead of using the EKG, doctors place a handheld device on the chest to create video pictures of the heart's chambers, valves, wall motion and blood flow patterns.

**Good for:** Assessing heart health, including abnormal rhythms (arrhythmia) in the heart. For women, it's slightly more accurate than an exercise stress test.
For New and Healthy Recipes, a Magazine Turns to Leftovers

By STEPHANIE CLIFFORD

Published: February 7, 2010

When Health magazine promoted “Your New Favorite Dinners” in its December issue, there was just one problem: the dinners weren’t exactly new.

In its December 2009 issue, Health revised five recipes from Real Simple, including chicken with roasted sweet potatoes.

Real Simple, which like Health is owned by Time Inc., had created and run essentially the same five recipes, for dishes like chicken with roasted sweet potatoes, in its February 2009 issue. Health had slightly revised them and added nutrition facts. It also republished the original photographs.

Ellen Kunes, the editor in chief of Health, said that Health had been careful to credit Real Simple as the source, and that the recycled recipes were “a rarity.”

“I happened to see this story and I thought that it fit really perfectly with what we were doing,” she said. “I think Real Simple is a great magazine — I think their food is amazing, and I love the photography they do.”

She said that editorial fit, not cost savings, had driven the decision.

“What you need to know about this is that this is not free. Why it’s not free is because we retested these recipes,” she said, to make sure they met Health magazine’s nutritional guidelines. Health made minor changes: in a chicken dish, a tablespoon of olive oil was cut, and in all the dishes, Health specified the amount of salt-to-taste so it would meet its sodium limits.

Also, Ms. Kunes said, Health paid to reuse the photographs.

Sharing articles “has been common practice for a long time,” especially among small sister publications, said John Fennell, an associate professor at the Missouri School of Journalism.
“What surprised me a little bit about this one is these are fairly big consumer titles,” Mr. Fennell said, which tend to be “a little more cautious.” Health has a circulation of almost 1.4 million, and Real Simple almost two million. But there is little overlap between the magazines — only about 7 percent of Real Simple’s readers read Health, and 8 percent of Health’s readers read Real Simple, according to Mediamark Research & Intelligence.

But, Mr. Fennell said, with Time Inc. having cut its staff late last year, “clearly, they’re shorthanded in some cases.”

He added, “Material that can be repackaged or repurposed is a way to keep up profits.”

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: February 9, 2010
A picture caption on Monday with an article about Health Magazine’s revising recipes from Real Simple, a sister Time Inc. magazine, misstated the issue in which the revised recipes appeared. It was the December 2009 issue, not the February 2009 issue. (The original recipes appeared in Real Simple in its February 2009 issue.)
E-learning center plays part in new UM system goals

CDIS enrolled more than 20,000 students in 2009.

By Jared Grafman

Published Feb. 9, 2010

UM system President Gary Forsee outlined a new initiative in his State of the University address Jan. 29: a push to explore e-learning opportunities across the system's four campuses.

The university's main venue for e-learning, the UM Center for Distance and Independent Study, enrolled more than 20,000 students in 2009 and increased that figure by 25 percent this fiscal year, MU Extension Marketing Director Dolores Shearon said.

The program offers online courses that supplement the courses students take on campus.

"Our courses are independent study," Shearon said. "Meaning that you enroll any day of the year and can take as little as six weeks or as long as nine months, to finish."

Students from various majors take CDIS courses with approval from their advisers, Shearon said.

Traci Fleenor is enrolled in CDIS and works in the College of Engineering.

"Working full time and trying to finish my degree made it difficult to take courses," Fleenor said. "Through CDIS, I can take courses that do not interfere with my work schedule."

Donna Monnig works as a liaison between the College of Arts and Science and the Recruit Back program, which encourages former students who left the university in good standing but without a degree to return and complete it.

"When they choose to return, I work with them in helping to determine their graduation goals," Monnig said. "Because so many students within this population are no longer in the Columbia area, CDIS courses become an ideal way for them to continue their education with the University of Missouri and achieve their goal of degree completion."

Nearly every conversation with a Recruit Back student living away from Columbia involves explaining CDIS as an option, Monnig said.
"The variety of courses offered and the convenience of online access have opened up many opportunities for students to find a way to complete their degree," Monnig said. "Especially when time commitments from their personal or professional lives impair their ability to enroll in seat-based courses."

Fleenor said there were many benefits to being a student in CDIS.

"I can still receive my degree from MU and not have to take evening courses," Fleenor said. "You have up to nine months to complete a single course, which is great if you are busy like I am."

CDIS' location on campus and its availability for people to visit, call or e-mail with questions has been beneficial, Fleenor said.

Shearon said there are a number of possible reasons for increased growth in past semesters.

"We've made a concerted effort to work closely with advisers, so that they can make their students aware of the flexible options available, and we have worked hard to make sure that every Mizzou student is aware of our center and what it has to offer," Shearon said. "Another trend to watch is a result of the troubled economy. Students are under more financial pressure to graduate in four years or less, and we can be a valuable resource in some of these situations."

Shearon said CDIS works with academic departments to provide courses its students need. The program adds and revises courses to reflect those demands.

"CDIS has been one of the best resources for students on this campus for most of the university's history," Shearon said. "Long before the Internet and back when people dropped off their lessons at our office or mailed them in. In fact, we will be celebrating our 100th anniversary next year."