Curators finalize state funding requests for 2012

By Abby Rogers
July 23, 2010 | 4:48 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The UM System Board of Curators is asking the state for $293.3 million for priority capital improvements and $124.2 million in new funds for operations for 2012.

The 2012 fiscal year runs from July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012. The appropriations request breaks down this way:

- $588 million overall for capital improvements throughout the four-campus system
- $552.7 million overall for operations throughout the system

Nikki Krawitz, system vice president of finance and administration, said the new money being requested for the operations budget, $124.2 million, is intended to help fund critical needs including competitive salaries, deferred maintenance, technology improvements and the education of health-care professionals. For this current year, fiscal year 2011, the system asked the state for about $519 million but received $427.9 million, Krawitz said.

The curators discussed the state appropriations requests in June and approved the amount on Friday morning via video conference. The request will be submitted to the state in August.

The amounts won't come as a shock to lawmakers. Krawitz said before the meeting that the system still needs the same basic things it has in past years. According to a previous Missourian article, state appropriations for the 2011 fiscal year were about $452.5 million.
"Clearly, the General Assembly and the governor's office are very aware of our needs because the needs that were presented last year haven't changed," Krawitz said.

At MU, top capital projects, known as Tier I projects, are renovating and adding on to the College of Engineering's Lafferre Hall on the southwest end of Francis Quadrangle. The building has been the No. 1 repair job for MU for years.

"Parts of the building are very old, and classrooms, labs and research facilities in these parts are in appalling condition to the point that there are environmental, health and safety issues," Krawitz said.

The system is asking the state for $64.8 million to improve the building, parts of which date back to the 1800s.

Krawitz said that the system understands the state's current budget crisis but that the request is an accurate portrait of the universities' needs.

"We are not always sure that it will be funded, but we do think we have a responsibility to let the governor know what our needs are," she said.

At the meeting, curator John Carnahan of Springfield raised concerns about how the state's budget crisis would affect its ability to respond to MU's request.

Responding to Carnahan, Krawitz said it was important for the university to make its needs to known with the understanding that the state is facing difficult budget times.

"So moved then, I guess," Carnahan said as he approved the appropriations request.

As far as operating appropriations requests go, the UM System is still pushing to get partially state-funded raises for its ranked faculty. For the past three fiscal years, the curators have presented the Competitive Ranked Faculty Compensation request to the state. This request is a matching program in which both the state and the UM System contribute salary increases for ranked faculty members in the system.

MU faculty have not had raises since at least the 2009 fiscal year. In that fiscal year, which ran from July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009, the system implemented the Competitive Ranked Faculty Compensation Program even though the state did not provide its share of funding, Krawitz said. The system paid both its part of the program
and the state's part of the program. Because of that, the curators are asking the state to pay back its part of the program.

If the program is approved, raises will be based on merit and market. Decisions about awarding raises will be made at each campus based on individual faculty members' years of experience and performance evaluations. The system compares faculty members' salaries to their peers to ensure that MU offers competitive salaries.

Curators, in addition to Carnahan, again raised questions about the reality of getting the operations request approved. Krawitz stressed more than once that whether the request is met, filing it is important.

"The state expects us to make the request," she said.

The curators also discussed the system's ongoing changes to its retirement plan. According to a previous Missourian article, all full-time, benefit-eligible employees must pay into their retirement plans. This plan went into effect July 1, 2009.

The system is looking into what it will cost to implement its new retirement plan going forward, said Betsy Rodriguez, vice president of human resources. The system will also hold discussions with employees in the fall to get feedback on the new retirement plan.

Rodriguez said she expects to bring a recommendation about the plan back to the board near the end of the year.
Retirees’ plan set to change

Curators discuss contribution level.

By Janese Silvey

Friday, July 23, 2010

The University of Missouri System is moving forward with a long-term plan that would eventually phase out its current retirement system by requiring new hires to contribute to a retirement savings plan instead.

A recommendation to implement a defined contribution plan for new employees is expected to go to the system’s Board of Curators in December. Before then, though, the system will seek faculty and staff input and keep board members in the loop, administrators told curators during a videoconference meeting this morning.

The change is necessary to maintain a viable retirement plan for faculty and staff while reducing the university’s liability, said Betsy Rodriguez, vice president of human resources.

The UM System now provides a pension package that requires employees to contribute, on average, 1.4 percent. Faculty members are eligible to retire at 65 and receive 2.2 percent of their salary for every year of employment, with salary being based on the average of their highest pay over five years.

Every year, UM administrators have to figure out how much the university must pay into that system to ensure it can meet retirement commitments, meaning the university’s contribution fluctuates every year.

Switching to a defined contribution plan, not unlike a 401(k), for new hires will initially be expensive because current faculty and staff will be able to keep their existing plans. And Rodriguez stressed that the UM System would keep its benefit commitments to current employees as they age. But in the long run, making the change would save the university money and provide a more stable structure, she said.

Rodriguez will spend the coming months crunching numbers before taking a proposal to employees this fall. That proposal likely won’t be a final product but rather a starting point, UM President Gary Forsee said.
"I think with the range of variables as such, we’re going to have to come up with a straw man or a proposal that we can vet with different organizations," he said. After getting feedback, administrators will "look at all the variables and try to hone in and narrow down the options."

MU Faculty Council Chairwoman Leona Rubin expects some push back from senior faculty members who don’t want to see any change to the benefits plan.

"It’s going to affect the university for a very long time, so they need to make it right and not just a reaction to current market conditions," she said.

Curator Wayne Goode also expressed concern that a defined contribution plan would make it difficult for the university to recruit new employees. Rodriguez, though, reminded him that 15 peer universities already offer similar savings plans. Plus, there’s some evidence that younger employees prefer them because they can take contributions with them if they leave the university early, she said.

Goode said he agrees with the change, “but I’d like to go through it in a way we don’t jump to conclusions or jump to a decision without really thinking through the long-term ramifications.”

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Ethics in advertising: Industry forms Missouri research center to boost image, sway consumers

ALAN SCHER ZAGIER Associated Press Writer

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — From gimlet-swilling adulterers on TV's "Mad Men" to seven-figure fines for deceptive ads touting cold remedies and credit scores, the ad industry sure could use an image makeover of its own.

**Industry leaders are teaming up with the nation's oldest journalism school to launch the Institute for Advertising Ethics.** Among the research center's goals is to improve the public image of a business that spent $125 billion last year but isn't exactly known for its bedrock principles and unwavering scruples.

Whether it's the duplicitous exploits of fictional television character Don Draper or the latest penalties levied by the Federal Trade Commission, the ad industry struggles to put its best face forward. A 2007 Gallup survey ranked advertisers among the least trustworthy professionals — barely beating out lobbyists and car salesmen.

"Because it is persuasion, advertising is viewed in a questionable way by a lot of people," said **Margaret Duffy, a former ad executive who now teaches at the University of Missouri School of Journalism and is helping to organize the ethics institute.**

But even though the industry's fundamental purpose is to convince shoppers to buy a product they may not actually need, such persuasion can be done in an "ethical and tasteful" way, she added.

The research center's leader is visiting professor Wally Snyder, a former FTC lawyer and American Advertising Federation president. While acknowledging the need to improve the industry's reputation, he emphasized that the institute will also benefit the people who view ads.
Snyder pointed to research that suggests consumers are more likely to do business with companies they consider ethical, ones that don't use deceptive ads.

"This is what consumers want, and expect," he said.

The ethics institute is just part of a broader PR campaign envisioned by the industry.

The Washington-based trade group once led by Snyder is shopping a reality TV show featuring young ad reps — a "Mad Men" for the modern age. The federation also wants to shift its industry Hall of Fame, an online entity, to a physical location in New York City.

According to the oft-cited 2007 survey, the industry can use the help. Just 6 percent of respondents ranked advertisers' ethics as "high" or "very high," with 42 percent ranking their ethics as "low" or "very low."

Nursing, the top-ranked of the 22 professions listed, received an 83 percent trustworthy ranking. Even nursing home operators (21 percent), lawyers (15 percent) and members of Congress (9 percent) scored higher.

The research center will be affiliated with Missouri's Reynolds Journalism Institute, a nonprofit think tank and futures lab intended to help the struggling industry figure out new ways to make money while embracing technology and re-engaging a skeptical and time-pressed citizenry.

Its priorities include developing a voluntary code of ethics, honoring businesses for ethical behavior and examining the effects of social media and digital technology on the ad world.

The first principle of the ethics code, as envisioned by Snyder, outlines advertising's purpose as "to provide commercial information that will assist consumers in their purchase decisions in a truthful, fair and cost-effective manner."

A group of the industry's heaviest hitters will serve on the institute's advisory board, including executives from Procter & Gamble, Omnicom Group, Interpublic and Ketchum.

Both Duffy and Snyder acknowledge that the effort must overcome initial skepticism — much of it from within the ad industry itself.

Mark Fleisher, owner of a small advertising agency in central Pennsylvania near Harrisburg, says the industry doesn't need to be reminded of the importance of ethical behavior. It just needs to increase the honesty quotient.
"The industry has become more ethical because the clients have become smarter," he said. "Agencies are still going to pull whatever they need to (clinch a deal). And those agencies will run roughshod over the honest ones. That's been going on for years."

Business journalist Jim Edwards, a former Adweek managing editor who still writes about the industry, is also dubious about the latest effort. He notes there have been no fewer than four other attempts to codify industry ethics, including one generated by the American Association of Advertising Agencies in 1924.

"History does not suggest that these things catch on very well," he said. "There's a structural problem in the advertising business. The entire industry is engaged in a race to the bottom. Whoever can do it the cheapest and the fastest wins."
Kin, faith can help fight drugs
Published: July 26, 2010 at 2:09 AM

COLOMBIA, Mo., July 26 (UPI) -- American Indian teens have the highest rate of illicit drug use, but U.S. researchers suggest family and faith counteract this risk.

Researchers at the University of Missouri in Columbia say positive family relationships and religious affiliation can counteract many drug risk factors -- including addicted family members, exposure to violence and deviant peers.

"For American Indian youth, our study suggests that intervention and prevention programs should consider a supportive family environment as an important focus," study researcher ManSoo Yu said in a statement. "Healthy relationships protect adolescents against exposure to violence and negative social environments, and therefore, may lower their risk for drug involvement."

Yu and colleagues suggest practitioners can also encourage adolescents to connect with religious organizations, which can reduce negative peer influence and increase positive family relationships.

Yu says the study findings, published in Addictive Behaviors, expands prior research that indicates healthy families protect adolescents from delinquent behaviors -- including drug problems -- and religious affiliation mediates the impact of deviant peers and other negative factors.

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Possible Maryland Avenue name change might cost campus addresses

By Dan Everson, Naomi Stevens  
July 24, 2010 | 5:17 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Maryland Avenue is named for the state of Maryland, according to two Missourian articles — one from 1911, another from 1912 — found at the State Historical Society of Missouri.

This question came up on Friday after the Missourian reported that MU is considering changing the name of the north-south street that runs through campus between Stadium Boulevard and Conley Avenue.

Todd Christine of the historical society said Maryland is one of several state-themed streets in that area, such as Kentucky Boulevard and Virginia Avenue.

Mary Beth Brown of MU's Western Historical Manuscript Collection said Columbia has other streets named for states, as well — Texas and Nebraska avenues, among others.

Historian Warren Dalton co-authored “Historic Downtown Columbia” and is working on a sequel, “Historic Columbia,” that will discuss the history of the rest of the city. Dalton pointed out that the 1912 Missourian article refers to the road as Maryland Place, not Maryland Avenue. He said the label of “Place” indicates that Maryland was not a through street.

Rather, Dalton said, Maryland led south from Conley Avenue, past Rollins Street, to a dead end.

“It was just a short street,” Dalton said. “It wasn’t a thoroughfare like it is now.”

Dalton said Maryland had become a through street by 1935, when he began taking classes at MU.
At that point, Maryland Avenue led to a nine-hole golf course, he said. The golf course was in the area defined by Maryland Avenue, Kentucky Boulevard, Providence Road and Stadium Boulevard.

The street might be renamed Tiger Avenue, Mary Windmiller, director of Children's House Montessori School on Maryland Avenue, said.

MU's University Affairs has been in contact with her since May regarding the switch, which they hope to make before MU Homecoming this year.

"They offered to help me with the cost because I'll have to change some things," she said.

Windmiller listed business cards, stationery and mailing stamps as a few items that would need to be changed to reflect the new street name.

"I assume they're doing it for Tiger spirit," Windmiller said. "We support the Tigers."

The St. Thomas More Newman Center plans to change its address from 701 Maryland Ave. to 601 Turner Ave.

JoAnn Jorgovan, associate campus minister, explained that the center's original entrance faces Maryland Avenue, but after renovation, the main entrance now faces Turner Avenue.

Changing the address to reflect the main entrance's location seems logical now that Maryland Avenue might be renamed.

"We just thought to be proactive and do it ourselves," Jorgovan said.

MU's ROTC building, Crowder Hall, is also located along Maryland Avenue. Its offices use the building name in their addresses rather than the street name.

Upon hearing that the street might be renamed Tiger Avenue, Joe McCoskrie, senior military science instructor with the Army ROTC said: "It could probably work. It leads right to the stadium." He offered that comment as his unofficial opinion.

Residents who live in Greek housing and other student housing along the street were not available for comment.
Ex-MU worker challenges firing

Lawsuit alleges medical violation.

By Janese Silvey

Friday, July 23, 2010

A former University of Missouri employee said she was wrongly terminated after she reported the School of Medicine to state officials for allegedly dispensing pharmaceutical drugs illegally.

Mary Joy Ellen Stafford filed a lawsuit against the UM System in Boone County Circuit Court last week. She is asking a judge to either require the university to rehire her or to pay her a salary, plus benefits, until she reaches retirement age. Stafford, a Jefferson City resident, is 57.

Stafford worked in the School of Medicine’s pediatric neurology department as an office assistant two years ago. In May 2008, she contacted MU’s human resources department to report that another assistant possessed a pad of blank prescription drug forms that were already signed by a physician, according to the lawsuit. The assistant, the suit says, would then fill in a patient’s name and drug to prescribe medication without the physician’s review.

When the university failed to take action and the pre-signed prescription forms continued to be used, Stafford lodged a complaint to the state’s Department of Health and Human Services, the lawsuit asserts.

According to the lawsuit, a state investigation found the office to be in violation of prescription drug dispensing laws.

The health department would not say what those violations, if any, were. Spokesman Kit Wagar said the department is prohibited from discussing this case because of the terms of an agreement made when the investigation was closed.

“We are prohibited from confirming anything on this particular case because of the way it was handled and the ultimate disposition of it unless we have the doctor’s permission or we have a subpoena,” he said.

Mary Jenkins, spokeswoman for University Hospital, said she would not respond to allegations made in pending litigation. In general, she said, “use of pre-signed prescription pads is not our policy or practice.”
Stafford also believed she had been sexually discriminated against by a male physician, according to the lawsuit.

The university fired her in July 2008, after the prescription drug investigation ended. Stafford then filed a petition with the Missouri Commission on Human Rights seeking to sue in response to the sexual discrimination claims.

Around the same time, MU's department of photojournalism hired Stafford as a temporary worker. As soon as the human rights commission finished its investigation of the discrimination charge, that department essentially terminated her by making her position a permanent one and not hiring her when she sought the job.

"We think there's a pattern of being retaliated against," one of her attorneys, Kevin Graham of Liberty, said.

The lawsuit does not allege the sexual discrimination charges but instead accuses the university of one count of retaliation for whistle-blowing and two counts of wrongful discharge.
It's your democracy—get connected to it

By DAVID KLEPPER
Topeka correspondent

Is your thirst for democracy unslaked? Do you hunger for more rich online political debate? Do you lie awake trying to name all nine Republicans running in the Aug. 3 primary to replace U.S. Rep. Dennis Moore?

Have we got a place for you.

The Midwest Democracy Project — http://midwestdemocracyproject.org — is The Kansas City Star/The Olathe News' new online election portal. We looked for a new way to connect voters with candidates and the issues that matter most in this election. A fresh way to encourage lively debate. A better, more user-friendly connection to the latest political news, analysis and insight.

We surveyed hundreds of candidates in scores of races in Kansas and Missouri - from Cass County Recorder of Deeds to the U.S. Senate and everything in between. Find out where the candidates stand while there's still a chance to make a difference come Election Day.

At MDP you'll also find news stories from around the region and the nation, alongside blogs, social media apps and vital tools to help you register to vote and find your polling place. One feature allows you to track the races that interest you the most.

Hundreds of candidate pages provide biographical information on those seeking public office, contact information, photos and even Twitter feeds from the candidates themselves. You can also check the voting records of members of Congress.

Jump into the fray in the issues section, where you vote on the hot button-topics and pose questions for other users.

Like anything new and different, MDP is a bit of an experiment. We hope you will join us for the ride. Tell us what you think — and visit often. We'll be making changes and adding new and richer features as we go. What's to come? Video capabilities, more interactivity and more than a few surprises.

We're not alone in this: The Project is a collaboration of The Kansas City Star, the University of Kansas' William Allen White School of Journalism and Communications and the University of Missouri School of Journalism and its Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute.

So come inside. Get comfy. After all, it's your democracy.
CAST YOUR BALLOT
To find your polling place and district, look under “Get Connected” at the Midwest Democracy Project.

Polls will be open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Aug. 3 for the primary election, but you don't have to wait until then to vote. Advance voting by mail began July 14 for voters who applied.

Advance voting in person began Tuesday at these locations:

**Johnson County Election Office, 2101 E Kansas City Road, Olathe**
- 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday through July 30.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays, today and July 31.
- Aug. 2: 8 a.m. to noon, Olathe location only.

**Johnson County Northeast Offices, 6000 Lamar Ave., Mission**
- 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday through July 30.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays, today and July 31.

**Metcalf South Shopping Center, 9531 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park**
- 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday through July 30.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays, today and July 31.

**Ten Quivira Plaza, 12156 Shawnee Mission Parkway, Shawnee**
- 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday through July 30.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays, today and July 31.
Hollywood tailors movie marketing to get guys to see summer "chick flicks"

Posted on Fri, Jul. 23, 2010  By ROBERT W. BUTLER

For several years, The Walt Disney Co. has worked on an animated version of "Rapunzel," the fairy tale about a beautiful, lonely girl with long hair who has been condemned to live in a high tower.

But when the trailer hit theaters this month, the movie had been renamed "Tangled." And Rapunzel was hardly seen. Instead, the trailer focused on a roguish, wise-guy thief named Flynn Rider.

What gives?

"'Chick flick.' Those are dirty words to most men," said movie industry analyst Paul Degarabedian of Hollywood.com. "Here's the problem: Girls will go to see guy movies, but guys don't want to see girl movies. That's been a truism throughout the history of cinema."

Writing in Entertainment Weekly, Missy Schwartz noted that after Disney's animated "The Princess and the Frog" failed to attract boys and grossed a disappointing $104 million, "the studio is emphasizing 'Tangled's' male character at the expense of anything remotely girly. Somewhere Ariel and the rest of the Disney princesses are weeping."

The runaway success of this summer's "The Twilight Saga: Eclipse" can be traced at least, in part, to an advertising campaign that downplayed the film's romantic triangle of human Bella, vampire Edward and werewolf Jacob in favor of fangs, fur and furious action.

From the "Eclipse" trailer you might not even realize that the movie is part of an epic love story. Which was fine with Kansas City moviegoer Andy Kyser — described by his wife, Emily, as a man who "doesn't watch crying movies unless it's 'Rudy.' "

Kyser, 32, who works in sales for UPS, was familiar with the whole "Twilight" phenomenon because his wife was a big fan. He knew he would be expected to attend the new 'film with Emily, but admitted the "Eclipse" trailer piqued his curiosity in ways the two earlier installments had not.

"What got me going was the fight scenes," he said. "It looked really exciting."

The effort to attract male viewers worked. Not only did "Eclipse" have the fourth-highest-grossing Independence Day opening weekend ever, but, said Degarabedian, "I'm hearing that audiences for 'Eclipse' are 35 percent male. That is about double the numbers of the first two 'Twilight' movies."

While "Twilight" fans are not exactly weeping over the male-oriented advertising for "Eclipse," some are disappointed, saying that the approach taken by Summit Entertainment reinforced stereotypes about entertainment geared mostly to women.

"We understand that there's a financial incentive to attract men to the franchise," said Jennifer Aubrey, an assistant professor of communications at the University of Missouri-Columbia and a co-author of a new book, "Bitten by Twilight: Youth Culture, Media, & the Vampire Franchise."
But attempts to make the movie “boyfriend worthy” undervalue its diehard female supporters, Aubrey said.

“Girl culture is routinely dismissed as schlocky and unworthy. Pop music, soap opera, chick lit … all are culturally devalued when compared to forms that men tend to enjoy.

“In our research we heard from ‘Twilight’ fans who had been mocked for their enthusiasm. We talked to boys who are embarrassed to call themselves ‘Twilight’ fans. They were so ridiculed by their peers that they had to renounce the books and movies.”

By appealing to the guys, Aubrey said, Summit may have created a short-term boost in ticket sales. But it also missed a long-term opportunity to “develop the terms for future female franchises.”

“The media won’t confer cultural legitimacy on an entertainment until it is accepted by men,” she said, adding that “Twilight’s” success was just as valid as that of the “Harry Potter” or “Star Wars” series. “Why not sell the movie for what it is?”

Movie marketing has come a long way since filmdom’s golden era, when the content of studio films had to conform to the moralistic dictates of Hollywood’s Production Code and every movie was deemed suitable for everyone. It didn’t matter if you were a grandmother or a 5-year-old … one trailer fit all.

But today’s movie-going audience is splintered — kids, action fans, grown-ups, women, sci-fi and comic-book geeks, tweeners. “Eclipse” suggests how the same movie can be effectively marketed to different audience segments.

“For the ‘Twilight’ series you don’t even need the guys to have a huge box-office hit,” Degarabedian said. “But why not go for the guys? To do that they just had to focus on things guys want to see.”

Tailoring movie marketing for specific audiences is a fairly new development. In recent years, studios have often turned out two trailers for a forthcoming movie — one to play before G, PG and PG-13 films, another featuring more disturbing/shocking/lurid material to be shown before R-rated features.

Now there are so many delivery systems for movie advertising — TV, specialty magazines and websites, not to mention the in-theater trailer — that it pays to create slightly different ads for different audiences, said Paul Pflug of Principal Communications Group, a consulting firm that works with many Hollywood studios.

The same movie can advertise in Playboy and McCall’s, he noted, but smart marketers will recast the message for each magazine to be more attractive to the readers of those very different publications.

With these new opportunities come some risks. For example, did any of those men who bought tickets to “Eclipse” feel that they had been lured in by advertising that misrepresented the film’s tone and content?

Pflug said the instantaneous nature of modern communications made it dangerous for movie advertisers to play too fast and loose with the truth.

“For several years we’ve been seeing movie trailers that contain scenes that aren’t in the finished film,” he said. “But now it’s unwise to do that, and the reason is texting. After the first showing on the East Coast on opening day, audience members will be texting, telling their friends about the movie. And they will call you out if they feel the trailer misrepresented the movie they’ve just seen.”

An attempt by movie marketers to mislead ticket buyers may backfire, creating a viral storm that hurts rather than helps the film, Pflug said.
"It keeps you honest."

Perhaps the last word on the subject should come from Kyser, who reported that "Eclipse" got to him a bit more than he was comfortable with.

“I actually got a little angry when Bella kissed Jacob before the big battle,” he said. “Not that I like Edward a lot — I’m not on anybody’s ‘team.’ It’s just that the movie got me involved. Despite my manliness.”

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