Missouri senator urges leniency for arrested MU fans

The Associated Press • October 27, 2010

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP)  A state senator is urging University of Missouri-Columbia officials not to pursue charges against football fans arrested for running onto the field after Saturday night's win over Oklahoma.

Campus police, the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Boone County Sheriff's Department reported 30 arrests for trespassing. Thousands of people left the stands and carried the goal posts to a downtown bar.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reported Tuesday that state Sen. Kurt Schaefer says officials should drop the matter. Schaefer is a Republican from Columbia.

University spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken says the cases have been forwarded to prosecutors. Banken says fans are warned they'll be arrested if they come onto the field.
State senator urges leniency for Mizzou fans who rushed the field

BY JAKE WAGMAN • jwagman@post-dispatch.com > 314-834-8628 | Posted: Tuesday, October 26, 2010 7:45 pm

When the Mizzou football team beat the top-ranked Oklahoma Sooners Saturday night in Columbia, it was so clear students would rush the field that officials took the preemptive step of lowering the goal posts.

Now one lawmaker is hoping something else gets dropped -- trespassing charges against fans celebrating the victory.

State Sen. Kurt Schaefer, a Republican whose district includes Columbia, issued a statement Tuesday urging the university to show leniency against those students who were caught on the field after the game.

According to the Columbia Daily Tribune, 30 people were arrested for trespassing.

"Many of these individuals arrested are students, who will now have to face the task of looking for a job after graduation with a criminal record," Schaefer said. "Perhaps we could look for a compromise given the excitement of the moment this event generated."

Schaefer suggested trespassing charges could be dropped if offenders agree to community service -- which is a typical punishment in misdemeanor cases.

"We should, of course, use some restraint to keep anyone from getting hurt, and charges other than simple trespass should be handled accordingly," Schaefer said. "But people genuinely care about University of Missouri athletics in this state."

A university spokeswoman told the Daily Tribune that the cases have been turned over to prosecutors and are out of their hands.

Either way, police in Columbia won't have to worry about the goal posts coming down again this weekend. The Tigers do face another tough opponent on Saturday, but this time they'll be on the road, in Nebraska.
Schaefer wants trespassing charges dropped

State Sen. Kurt Schaefer wants the University of Missouri to drop prosecution of 30 people arrested for trespassing when they rushed onto Faurot Field after the Homecoming victory over Oklahoma.

Thousands of people poured onto the field following the victory, the first over the Sooners since 1998. They brought down the goal posts and carried them downtown. One person suffered a broken leg in the pandemonium.

In the surging crowd, officers from the University of Missouri Police Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Boone County Sheriff's Department arrested 30 people for trespassing. Eight other people were arrested in the stadium during the game, four for trespassing elsewhere in the stadium, three for being minors in possession of alcohol and one for public urination, Capt. Brian Weimer said Monday.

Schaefer said he wants the charges of trespassing dropped against anyone arrested for going onto the field. He was at the game, he said, but did not go on the field with other fans at the end.

"It gets a little silly," Schaefer said in an interview. "The university needs to make a decision on the disposition of these cases. The people who went on to the field knew they shouldn't go on the field, but the charges are disproportionate to what the atmosphere, what the circumstances were."

The matter is out of the university's hands, said Mary Jo Banken, director of the MU News Bureau. The cases have been turned over to prosecutors and it is up to them to make a decision about whether to proceed, she said.

The university's policies are based on the need for safety for the fans and the players, she said.

"We feel like our plans, our policies are communicated very directly to the fans," she said. "For coming on to the field after a football game, onto the court after a basketball game or any athletic fields after a game, people will be arrested. Now, it is impossible for security personnel to control the overall actions of an entire group, but we will enforce our regulations as much as possible."

In addition to being a lawmaker, Schaefer also is a lawyer. He used a quote from Athletic Director Mike Alden, printed in the Kansas City Star, that emotions during the game made a rush to the field inevitable and "you just let them come on (the field)."

Speaking as an attorney, Schaefer said that leaves open the question of whether trespassing actually occurred.
"I think Mike is being reasonable in that regard," Schaefer said. "I don't fault the police for doing their job."

Banken said university administration would not consider asking prosecutors to drop the charges.

"I don't think the university administration would ever do that," she said. "The university administration would never get involved in recommending leniency or non leniency."

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Students Association, senator seek leniency for arrested field rushers

By Allison Seibel
October 26, 2010 | 8:23 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — About 30 people were arrested on charges of trespassing during the rush to the field after Missouri’s win against Oklahoma.

Now, different people and organizations are pushing for leniency toward those arrested.


“Many of these individuals arrested are students who will now have to face the task of looking for a job after graduation with a criminal record,” Schaefer said. “Perhaps we could look for a compromise given the excitement of the moment this event generated.”

Schaefer asked MU to drop the trespassing charges and instead give a lesser punishment, such as community service.

Also seeking to help protect the students is the Missouri Students Association.

“We have to stand up for the students,” MSA President Tim Noce said.

MSA is trying to find more information about Saturday’s arrests. It is trying to figure out what agencies arrested the students and is also trying to talk to the students themselves. With that information, the association hopes to work with MU administrators to try to work something out.

MSA is also questioning the use of pictures of students rushing onto Faurot Field on university websites, Noce said.

The university was also selling photos of the scene on the field, MSA Senator Matt Sheppard said.
"We want to make sure there is no double standard," Noce said. "I don't understand how the university is profiting off of what the students did but arresting and ticketing them at the same time."
Gov. Nixon: Missouri higher education needs to tighten its belt

COLUMBIA — Missouri governor Jay Nixon told higher education leaders Tuesday that he is committed to reducing state education expenses with increased collaboration and possibly eliminating redundant programs.

Nixon told a Columbia conference Tuesday that Missouri’s public colleges and universities need to tighten their belts. He says the schools should look for more opportunities to work together while embracing advances in technology.

State officials have instructed MU and other public schools to review degree programs that have few graduates for possible elimination or consolidation.

The state Department of Higher Education defines such programs as those awarding an average of fewer than 10 bachelor’s degrees a year.
Mo. governor repeats call to streamline higher ed

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Governor pledges $100,000 for redesign of courses

By Janese Silvey

Gov. Jay Nixon said today he will scrape together $100,000 in this year's state budget to help public universities redesign general education courses.

"We're going to put some skin in this game," Nixon told some 150 higher-education leaders from across the state this morning. The group is in Columbia for a University of Missouri System-sponsored summit on how state colleges and universities can better collaborate.

The state funding will be pooled with matching contributions from participating universities as well as some private funds, Nixon said. Although details still are being worked out, he envisions universities redesigning courses by integrating technology into large-scale freshman classes to deliver course content across multiple campuses. Mike Nietzel, the governor's adviser on education, is spearheading the project.

During his morning remarks, Nixon reviewed a four-point plan for higher education he first laid out during a statewide education summit in August. In addition to boosting the number of students who earn college degrees, that agenda also calls on public universities and colleges to review low-producing degree programs. Those are the degrees that graduate, on average, fewer than 10 undergraduates, five master's degree students and three doctoral students annually.

Some on the MU campus have questioned those numbers, saying they don't make sense in light of the fact that the undergraduate population is significantly larger than the graduate student body. At MU, for instance, about 80 percent of all students are undergraduates. Interim Higher Education Commissioner David Russell told the Tribune that those graduation rates have been long established benchmarks in Missouri higher education policy.

Universities have until Friday to submit lists of those low-producing programs and reasons those degrees should or should not continue. MU has identified 75 such programs, most of which are graduate-level.

Russell said he'll spend the next month reviewing the information, looking for patterns in the data that might highlight where institutions could better collaborate. He'll then submit a preliminary report to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education in December, and a final report will go to Nixon in February. The timeline is "ambitious," Russell acknowledged, but, he said, the process is simply a starting point.

The process has caused some angst among MU faculty members, who have questioned why the first review is targeting academics rather than administrative programs.
Nixon has apparently heard concerns as well. He said he understands the process is unsettling and frustrating, but he assured higher education leaders that other aspects of state government are undergoing similar scrutiny.

Nixon said he's not interested in a confrontational process but rather having an “adult” conversation with “intelligent educators about how our path for the future can be better.”

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Nixon announces $100,000 grant to fund higher education redesign

NO MU Mention

By Laura Kebede
October 26, 2010 | 1:15 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The packed conference room of the Hampton Inn in Columbia erupted in applause Tuesday after Gov. Jay Nixon announced Missouri's universities and colleges will receive a $100,000 grant from state funds.

The grant will finance a course redesign study to reduce program replication in Missouri higher education and cut back on costs.

The Governor's Summit on Higher Education in August, which detailed budget cuts for public colleges and universities in Missouri, spurred leaders to continue "reimagining higher education in Missouri" and resulted in the statewide workshop in Columbia on academic transformation and collaboration.

Nixon commended university educators for their initiative in participating in the two-day workshop.

"You are vital soldiers and leaders of my state," Nixon said to the collaborators.

Conference sessions focused on how to reduce program overlap between campuses and develop strategies to reduce cost because higher education funding probably won't increase until the end of the decade, said George Mehaffy, of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Nixon said Missouri community college enrollment jumped to more than 106,000 and public university enrollment increased 10 percent to more than 255,000, showing a higher demand for quality Missouri education during tough economic times. Workshops like the one held Monday and Tuesday help meet the new demand, Nixon said. "Education is not a political view," Nixon said. "That's a value, a value we share."
Mo. university opening new cancer center for pets

Associated Press - October 27, 2010 5:14 AM ET

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - The University of Missouri plans to open a veterinary cancer center in the St. Louis area.

The university says it has bought a building in Wentzville that will house a Mizzou Animal Cancer Care clinic. It's expected to open next spring.

The center will diagnose and treat dogs and cats that are referred by their regular veterinarians.

University officials hope the new center will make cancer treatment more convenient for pet owners in eastern Missouri, southeast Iowa, southern Illinois and Kentucky. Those people currently would have to bring their pets to the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital in Columbia.

The Wentzville building previously housed a human radiation oncology service.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Study: Scholarship athletes still pay for school

NO MU Mention

By ALAN SCHER ZAGIER/The Associated Press
October 26, 2010 | 11:06 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A new study suggests that the so-called "free ride" for college scholarship athletes isn't quite so free.

The report by Ithaca College researchers and a national athletes' advocacy group shows that the average "full scholarship" Division 1 athlete winds up having to pay $2,951 annually in school-related expenses not covered by grants-in-aid.

The shortfall represents the difference between educational expenses such as tuition, student fees, room and board and ancillary costs not covered by scholarships, from campus parking fees to calculators and computer disks required for classes.

At some schools, the shortfall can approach or exceed tuition costs. At Arkansas-Little Rock, for instance, the 2009 shortfall is nearly $11,000, said Ramogi Huma, a former UCLA linebacker who now heads the National College Players Association.

"It's really deceptive to use the words 'full scholarship,'" he said. "There's never an explanation for recruited athletes that the price tag for attending school falls short of the scholarship amount."

College athletes whose academic expenses aren't fully covered by scholarships are more susceptible to the influence of money-wielding sports agents, Huma suggested. In a recent Sports Illustrated report, a former agent said he paid more than 30 college football players from 1990-96. Seven of the athletes confirmed that account.

"The amounts of money he talked about giving these players falls within the scholarship shortfalls," Huma said. "These players are putting everything on the line to get a few bucks in order to make ends meet ... and to meet their basic necessities."
"If they were to fully fund scholarships, there would be less temptation."

A law passed in California earlier this month requires the state's colleges and universities to disclose more complete information about the actual costs of attendance, as well as details about uncovered medical expenses and policies on scholarship renewal and transferring to other schools.

The scholarship study by Huma's group and Ithaca College's Graduate Program in Sport Management is based on data submitted by individual schools to the U.S. Department of Education.

An NCAA spokesman called the current scholarship formula "appropriate for most student-athletes" and noted that some can obtain federal Pell Grants and other need-based aid in addition to athletic-related assistance.

The association's Division I Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet considered changes to the scholarship formula last year "allowing athletics aid up to the cost of attendance," but the proposal was not endorsed for further consideration, said NCAA spokesman Erik Christianson.

Another NCAA committee recently endorsed eight separate proposals allowing athletes to accept more financial aid — both merit- and need-based — without affecting team limits on such aid.

At the University of Missouri-Kansas City, which ranks fifth-highest in the new study with average out-of-pocket expenses of $5,030 annually, athletic director Tim Hall said the school is up front with recruits about their financial responsibilities beyond the scholarship amount.

"UMKC coaches and staff are careful to communicate to our potential student-athletes exactly what financial aid package will be provided to them," he said.
COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — A Princeton University professor and a former Cabinet secretary head the list of policy experts scheduled to speak Friday at a University of Missouri health policy conference.

Princeton economics professor Uwe Reinhardt will deliver the keynote speech at the Missouri Health Policy Summit on the future of health care.

Former Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan will lecture on social factors in health care. Sullivan served in the cabinet of President George H.W. Bush and is the founding dean and first president of the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta.

The summit attracts health care researchers, policymakers and working professionals. Among the topics this year is the impact of federal health care reform on Missouri.
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Burwell: A goal-line stand against goal posts

BY BRYAN BURWELL • bburwell@post-dispatch.com, 314-340-8185 | Posted: Wednesday, October 27, 2010 12:20 am

COLUMBIA, MO • On Saturday night as the Faurot Field goal posts went floating up and then out of Memorial Stadium on the shoulders of that collective sea of a wild and crazy Mizzou student body, and disappeared into the drizzling night, it got me thinking.

OK, now that you've ripped off the goal posts, what do you actually do with them?

I knew about the tradition of absconding with the goal posts and taking them to Harpo's tavern. Generations of MU students have been doing this after every big football victory since the 1970s, lugging the goal posts 17 blocks through the narrow campus and downtown streets north from the stadium to the very popular haunt on the corner of 10th and Cherry.

But seriously, how did they get the goal post inside?

Well, as it turns out, they didn't. at least they didn't this time.

On Tuesday at the start of the lunch hour, I found Harpo's bar manager Stephen Savage and general manager Jared Ater hanging out at the bar laughing about that memorable Saturday night when it seemed like the entire stadium showed up on their front door. Less than an hour after Mizzou's big victory over Oklahoma, the streets flooded with gold-clad students — basically 40,000 or 50,000 of them — who arrived in a euphoric (inebriated?) state with two goal posts floating on their shoulders.

And the folks at Harpo's were ready for them. Savage and Ater stood guard near the door and instructed the squadron of beefy bouncers to follow only one prime directive:

"We were told by the original owner whatever we do, don't let them bring the goal posts in here," Ater said. "He said it would be a huge mistake if the kids got the goal posts in here."

So here's a good place for a frightening visual montage — nearly 20 feet worth of metal piping being hauled into a bar jam-packed with over-served revelers.

Can you say "bull in a china closet"?

Can you say BAM! BLAMMM!! CRASH!!?
So they stationed the largest bouncers they could find at the door on 10th Street, hauled away the lovely female employees who were originally stationed at the door and made a valiant stand that made the owner and his insurance adjuster very, very happy.

"We were all at the door," Savage laughed. "The kids were outside trying to jam the crossbar in, and we were all in the doorway shoving back. They were all chanting 'LET US IN!' and we were all yelling 'No we won't!'"

Now here's a surprise.

The kids peacefully complied.

"It was the strangest thing," Savage said. "I've never seen a crowd that large try to come in here. I remember a few years ago when we beat Nebraska, they showed up with the goal posts and it was maybe 40 or 50 kids. This time it seemed like the entire stadium was out there. They were loud and having a good time, but no fights broke out. They didn't act too rowdy when we wouldn't let the goal post in."

Instead, in a tribute to higher education, the kids improvised.

They simply dropped the Day-glo green posts in the middle of 10th Street, one section in front of Harpo's, another a half-block down in front of Sake's, the Japanese restaurant, and set up a makeshift souvenir assembly line.

"All these students started coming out with buzz saws and circular saws and hacked off pieces of the goal posts," Savage said. "By the time I left here about 4 in the morning, they were still out here cutting away, passing out pieces of goal posts to anyone who wanted one."

 Seriously?

Circular saws?

At 4 o'clock in the morning?

Wow, how many college students just happen to have a reciprocal saw (and I am assuming a very long extension cord) handy at 3 in the morning?

Mizzou moms and dads, you might want to check those Home Depot credit card receipts.