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The★Star

THE KANSAS CITY STAR

Missouri colleges, universities cut 119 degree programs

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

Missouri colleges and universities are eliminating 119 degree programs to cut down on duplication, but don't expect it to save much money.

The University of Missouri, in Columbia, the state's largest school, has the most programs — 19 — on the chopping block. The University of Central Missouri has 11, Northwest Missouri State University has nine, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City has five that will be phased out.

"There was a time when every institution wanted to offer everything students were requesting on their campus, but we can no longer afford to do that," said David Russell, Missouri commissioner of higher education.

At the community college level, 46 programs are gone from the state's 14 two-year schools. About a fourth of them are being cut from Metropolitan Community College.

The move to review degree programs was suggested by Gov. Jay Nixon, who wanted to weed out duplication while producing more graduates.

The Missouri Coordinating Board of Higher Education defines low-producing programs as those that churn out fewer than 10 graduates per year at the baccalaureate level, five majors per year at the master's degree level, and three majors per year at the doctoral degree level, calculated over a three-year average.

"The elimination will probably produce some marginal financial gain, but this is not the kind of thing that's going to solve the deficit problem," Russell said.

The 119 axed programs represent 20 percent of all identified for review.

Two dozen programs move to inactive status. An additional 175 programs are flagged for follow-up review.

The four-year institutions are ending 73 degree programs, the two-year schools 46. The majors will be phased out so students currently enrolled can still graduate from them.

Truman State and Harris-Stowe were the only two of the state's 13 public universities with no programs cut.



Plan to trim degrees goes to governor

University only to cut handful.

By Janese Silvey

A process that caused a lot of angst on the University of Missouri campus last semester came to a conclusion this morning when the board that oversees higher education in the state approved MU's plans to merge several programs.

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education unanimously approved a plan to whittle down degree offerings in Missouri by 119. The report will now go to Gov. Jay Nixon.

In August, Nixon suggested that colleges do away with small programs, prompting the Missouri Department of Higher Education to require colleges to justify degree programs graduating, on average, fewer than 10 undergraduates.

What the state found was those very programs are mostly in areas considered much-needed for the economic health of the state — math, science, engineering, technology and foreign languages.

Professors at MU, especially those in foreign language studies, expressed that concern at town hall forums and meetings during the review process in the fall. "So, we spent an awful lot of time telling them that, but I guess they had to see it for themselves," Faculty Council Chair Leona Rubin said. "It is Missouri, after all."

Plus, those degrees are in subject areas that provide core courses needed to graduate, MU Deputy Provost Ken Dean said. For instance, students might not earn degrees in foreign languages, but they must take the classes to earn degrees. That means even if a degree is cut, faculty members will still be teaching those classes. That's why doing away with degrees isn't expected to save money, Dean said.

Missouri Department of Higher Education administrators praised the process for creating efficiencies but did not answer when Coordinating Board for Higher Education Chairman Lowell Kruse asked how much the changes would save.

Statewide, the department report shows 73 degrees at Missouri's four-year universities being eliminated, including 19 at MU. The numbers are misleading, though. MU is only planning to do away with career and technical education degrees and a specialist degree in special education as

well as the communication sciences and disorders doctorate and a clinical laboratory sciences bachelor's program.

In all other cases, administrators are planning to combine subjects. Under the proposal, MU administrators plan to:

- Combine French with Spanish, creating new bachelor's and master's degrees in Romance languages.
- Combine three master's programs in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources to create a catchall degree covering forestry, parks, recreation, tourism and soil, environmental and atmospheric sciences. On the doctoral level, forestry and soil and environmental and atmospheric sciences will become one doctorate.
- Combine pharmacology and physiology medicine master's and doctoral degrees into one School of Medicine degree.
- Roll exercise physiology and nutritional master's programs in the School of Human Environmental Sciences into a single degree.

Merging programs at MU will take at least 18 months to work out details, Dean said, and students currently pursuing flagged degrees will be allowed to continue through graduation.

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

State to cut 19 MU degree programs

By Michael Davis

February 10, 2011 | 7:44 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — A total of 73 degrees are on a list to be cut at Missouri's four-year universities — 19 at MU — in an effort to slice low-producing programs from state institutions.

The Missouri Department of Higher Education released a report Wednesday naming all of the degrees to be eliminated or merged. The department pointed to 116 programs in all, including those at both two-year and four-year schools. The announcement effectively ends a process that started last fall after Gov. Jay Nixon ordered the cost-saving measure.

Administrators at state colleges and universities were asked to find programs without sufficient enrollment figures to justify continuation. The programs to be cut at MU matched those named in December by MU administrators as candidates for elimination or merger.

"We responded to the request by the MDHE to examine our programs, and they have accepted what we submitted to them," Deputy Provost Ken Dean said Thursday. MU's share of the cut may not be as rough, though.

The only degree programs MU will eliminate are career and technical education, a specialist degree in special education, a communication sciences and disorders doctorate, a clinical laboratory sciences bachelor's degree and a master's degree in natural resources. The rest, such as degrees in the sciences, foreign languages and forestry, will be merged into broader degree programs. For example, bachelor's and master's degree students who wish to study French or Spanish — two programs that will be cut — will now work for a degree under a program called "romance languages."

Students will be allowed to complete degrees in existing programs, Chancellor Brady Deaton said in a letter sent in December to the Higher Education Department.

In addition, "no student currently in those programs will be adversely affected by our actions," Deaton said. If the governor accepts the report, Ken Dean said he expects the phasing-in of these new programs to take at least 18 months.

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The Detroit News The Boston Globe DiscoveryNews

CBS NEWS



NewScientist

Ape-woman Lucy walked like a modern human, new research shows

Note: A version of this story appeared in more than 250 media outlets around the world.

By Alan Bavley

McClatchy Newspapers

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Our celebrated ancestor Lucy was no waddling, hunched-over ape-woman who felt more at home in the trees.

New research from the University of Missouri in Columbia offers the most conclusive evidence yet that Lucy and her tribe spent their lives on solid ground and walked much as modern humans do — more than 3 million years ago.

Lucy, just 3 1/2 feet tall, would have been more capable of strutting her stuff on a dance floor than of swinging from branch to branch.

“I bet she could dance,” said MU anatomy professor Carol Ward. “I don’t know if I could do any better.”

In research to be published Friday in the journal *Science*, Ward and two colleagues used a newly discovered foot bone from a dig in Ethiopia to determine that members of Lucy’s species, *Australopithecus afarensis*, had arched feet like ours.

That may seem like a small detail, but it has huge implications for the course of human evolution.

And it may help settle a decades-old argument among scientists over whether Lucy was a dedicated land rover or still spent much of her time in trees, as many apes do.

Arches put a spring in her step and made it possible to comfortably stand and walk. But arches also took away the flexibility that lets apes grasp with their feet as they scramble up trees.

“Is she a shuffling ape that just stood up?” Ward said. “This tells us she’s given up the ability to be good in trees to be good on the ground. There was no more compromise.

“We can walk well over distances, and that started with *Australopithecus*. It turned out to be a good plan for us.”

The possibility that our early ancestors stood upright and walked with humanlike agility might surprise a lot of people, said Jeremy DeSilva, an anthropologist at Boston University.

Classic charts of human evolution often show a series of pictures of hulking chimplike creatures that gradually become more upright.

“The anatomical evidence just doesn’t support that view,” DeSilva said. “These (*Australopithecus afarensis*) were good upright walkers.”

That suggests upright walking was favored early in human evolution, long before brains grew larger, DeSilva said. Lucy’s brain wasn’t much bigger than that of a chimpanzee.

But why did our ancestors leave the safety of the trees for life on the ground?

One possibility may have been climate change, said Bruce Latimer, a paleoanthropologist at Case Western Reserve University. Millions of years ago, huge forests that provided habitat for dozens of species of apes in Europe, Asia and Africa began to shrink.

But life on the ground held dangers for a two-legged animal.

“We’re incredibly slow on two limbs,” Latimer said. “If we injure one leg, that makes us leopard food. It’s such a peculiar way to get around.”

The big advantage of standing upright may have been that it freed the hands of Australopithecus to carry things, Latimer said.

A social system may have developed where males gathered food for their mates and offspring. That gave females the opportunity to raise more children.

“In evolution, the most important thing is having babies,” Latimer said.

A decade ago, Latimer visited a site on the edge of the Serengeti plain in Africa where fossilized footprints of three of Lucy’s species were discovered.

They show a small “Lucy” leading two larger ones single file over ash from a volcano that had recently erupted. The leader stopped and looked around. The two others stopped as well. Then the three began walking again.

“They could be mistaken for human footprints, except that they were 3.5 million years old,” Latimer said.

Based on his own research, Latimer has long advocated that Lucy had an arched foot, but he never had enough evidence to prove it.

The fossilized bone, the fourth metatarsal, that Ward analyzed was the key to determining the structure of Lucy’s foot, according to Latimer.

The fossil was found recently by William Kimbel of Arizona State University. The third researcher on the arch study, Donald Johanson, led the team that discovered the original Lucy skeleton in 1974.

The well-preserved metatarsal is one of the bones that connect the toes to the base of the foot. The way it is shaped shows that it’s part of an arched foot. It matches its human counterpart very closely.

“It confirms a lot of what we were thinking but couldn’t tell for sure,” Latimer said.

Lucy the ape-woman walked much like modern humans

By ALAN BAVLEY

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Fossil marks big step in evolution science

MU research is part of new revelation.



Courtesy of Carol Ward

The discovery of a foot bone in Ethiopia has shown researchers that the species of human predecessor commonly known as Lucy had arched feet. The finding indicates the species walked upright. "She's a lot more human-like than we had ever supposed before," said Carol Ward, an MU researcher.

By Janese Silvey

Turns out, Lucy wasn't in the sky at all; she was grounded just like us. The 3.2 million-year-old skeleton considered a predecessor to modern man had arches in her feet, meaning she didn't climb trees as previously thought, researchers have found.

A new study being published this week in Science magazine from the University of Missouri and Arizona State University details how a fossil found in Ethiopia a decade ago proves our predecessors had arched feet.

Lucy is the nickname for a fossil skeleton of *Australopithecus afarensis* — a species of animal somewhere between an ape and a human. She got her name from the Beatles' song "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," which played during a celebratory party after the majority of the skeleton was found in the 1970s.

Not everyone loves Lucy. Critics condemn the skeleton as an evolutionary hoax, even though many think she's some sort of link between primate and man. For the latter, the new finding is significant and changes what they thought they knew about the origins of mankind.

"We had this idea that *Australopithecus afarensis* was part ape and part human and partly still tree-climbing," said Carol Ward, an MU researcher in the Department of Pathology and Anatomical Sciences at MU's School of Medicine. Instead, they "were walking just like we do."

William Kimbel, director of the Institute of Human Origins at Arizona State, discovered a fourth metatarsal — the fourth long bone in the foot — fossil in Hadar, Ethiopia, in 2000. It's the only one of its kind known among Lucy's species, he said in a statement.

The foot bone is one of 49 new bones discovered, Ward said, and researchers were hoping to publish studies about all of them as a bundle. "But this was too important to wait," she said.

Having arched feet means Lucy and her relatives were consistently roaming around upright on two feet and weren't equipped to grasp tree branches. That changes what types of food they could eat and how they avoided predators, Ward said.

Ultimately, the development of arched feet was a major shift requiring early men and women to give up the ability to use the big toe for grasping branches, she said. It's a "signal that they abandoned life in the trees in favor of a life on the ground."

There are still plenty of unknowns about Lucy and her kind. There's debate about her torso structure because those bones don't preserve well, Ward said, and it's not known whether she was covered in hair like a primate.

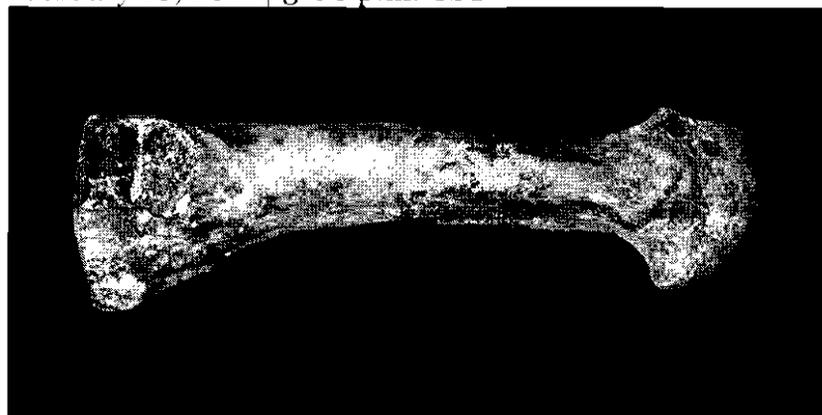
But "this one little bone of the foot happens to be a key part of the foot," Ward said. "She's a lot more human-like than we had ever supposed before."

Ward is in South Africa studying other fossils, and Kimbel is continuing work in Hadar. The ongoing work, he said, "is producing rare parts of the skeleton that are absolutely critical for understanding how our species evolved."

MU researcher helps change view of human evolution

By Matthew Busch

February 10, 2011 | 3:08 p.m. CST



This fourth metatarsal from *Australopithecus afarensis* is a key piece of evidence for the early evolution of the uniquely human way of walking. Carol Ward, an MU researcher in the department of pathology and anatomical sciences at the MU School of Medicine, and colleagues from Arizona State University are studying the 3.2 million-year-old foot bone discovered in Hadar, Ethiopia. | Photo courtesy of Carol Ward, Elizabeth Harmon and Kimberly Congdon

COLUMBIA — Researchers, including one from MU, have discovered that early humans walked fully upright much earlier than scientists previously thought.

The team studied a fossilized foot bone in Ethiopia that is at least 3 million years old and determined that human ancestors had arches in their feet, which allowed them to stand and move on two legs.

That means researchers can begin to pinpoint when human ancestors abandoned swinging in trees for walking on the ground.

“It’s the first one ever discovered,” said Carol Ward, a researcher from the department of pathology and anatomical sciences at MU’s School of Medicine, and one of the team’s primary researchers.

“It’s an important bone because it gives us information about the structure of the foot. It may be one reason our ancestors were so successful.”

Ward, along with William Kimbel and Donald Johanson, co-authors from Arizona State University, will publish their findings Friday in the journal *Science*.

Evidence from the findings could exchange the classic image of hunched-back apes for one similar to modern humans who were capable of walking and even running as we do today.

The existence of arches in early human feet strongly supports the premise that humans walked much earlier, Ward said, although the researchers cannot give an exact date.

The fundamental difference between human feet and ape feet is that humans' are stiff, providing stability and shock absorption when we move. An ape's foot is more flexible, so it can grasp branches easily. Evidence of arches in the fossilized bone proved to researchers that our human ancestors evolved at a faster rate than was previously understood.

The bone, which was unearthed in Ethiopia 10 years ago, is a fourth metatarsal, located on the outside of the foot. The shape of the bone is clear evidence of arches in early human feet, according to the findings.

"This bone could only exist in an arched foot," said Jeremy DeSilva, an anthropologist at Boston University, who has read the study.

The quest to fill an evolutionary gap began in 2000 when the research team found the foot bone in an Ethiopian desert.

The Hadar region of Ethiopia has produced more than 370 fossils. Arguably the two most important specimens to come from the region belonged to "Lucy" and "Ardi." Both human ancestors are the most complete fossil skeletons from their time periods.

Donald Johanson, a member of the current research team, originally uncovered "Lucy" in 1974. She is dated to around 3.2 million years ago, and "Ardi" lived roughly 4.5 million years ago.

The fossilized bone that led to the latest findings belongs to the same species as "Lucy," *Australopithecus afarensis*.

After it was removed from the field in 2000, the foot bone was cleaned using dental drills and brushes. Casts were made, and the original packed away in the National Museum of Ethiopia.

It remained there for several years with hundreds of other bones from the region. Political upheaval in the country forced researchers to wait before studying the original fossils again.

It wasn't until 2008 that Ward, Kimbel and Johanson could return to their research.

It had been assumed “Lucy” and her relatives held onto some tree-climbing characteristics while living on the ground. The research team's discovery supports a primarily ground-dwelling species instead.

“This has been a debate within the anthropological community for decades,” Ward said, “partly because we haven’t had the right bones preserved in the fossil records. This foot bone really shows that these were indeed ground-walking animals.”

Scientists largely commended the study as the best skeletal evidence for early arches to be found yet, calling it consistent with fossilized footprints found in Tanzania that indicate similar arches.

“A big step in evolution is abandoning trees as sources of refuge and resources,” Kimbel said.

Anthropologist William Jungers of Stony Brook University in New York said researchers “made the case, successfully,” that the arches described in the study are human-like.

“I think there is still sufficient evidence to support that this species still took advantage of the trees,” Jungers said.

Longer, more curved toes and fingers useful for climbing trees have been found from the same species. Along with shorter legs and longer arms, these fossils support the theory of some residual form of tree-climbing.

“These are not apes, but they’re not people either,” Jungers said.

“An animal with poor locomotion like that would have been eaten by leopards,” DeSilva said. “If this species was primarily on the ground, as I think it was, it raises the interesting question of how they survived for so long.”

MU researcher Ward is currently studying fossils in South Africa.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Divorced women do care for ex-spouses

Divorced women do care for their former spouses, offering support, assistance with daily tasks and management of health needs, says a new study.

"Some women reported caregiving as a turning point in relationships with their ex-husbands," said Teresa Cooney, study author and associate professor at the University of Missouri College of Human Environmental Sciences.

"We didn't expect to find this in a study of ex-wife caregivers. Several women noted that their ex-husbands had 'softened' during illness and there was less conflict."

Cooney and Christine Proulx, at the Missouri Department of Human Development and Family Studies, conducted phone interviews with caregivers throughout the U.S, according to a Missouri release.

"A surprising number of the women reported continued involvement with their ex-husbands post-divorce," said Proulx. They strongly desired to maintain relationships, not with ex-husbands, but typically with their children.

"It appears that having shared children with an ex might facilitate emotional attachment. Women also might try to shield their children from the demands of caregiving."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU law students put Frankenstein on trial

By Lainie Mullen

February 10, 2011 | 11:27 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA – One hundred ninety-three years after the crime, Missouri lawyers and law students tried Dr. “Victoria” Frankenstein for negligence for her behavior in creating the creature responsible for the death of Henry “Igor” Clerval.

The purpose of the trial, which was put on by the Historical and Theatrical Trial Society, was to provoke thinking in the community, inspire law students and give people a chance to watch and participate in a trial that never, but arguably should have, happened.

The trial proceeded unscripted, from the judge – played by actual Missouri Western District Court of Appeals Judge Mark D. Pfeiffer – telling the first witness to take a bath, to another witness flirting with a lawyer and to the live winged creature that unexpectedly flew over the stage just before the closing arguments.

The participants took the trial seriously, stretching it to three hours and 20 minutes. The jury then deliberated for 35 minutes before the judge stepped in and moved them along.

Still, the jury was hung.

They agreed about the negligence by Frankenstein and on the humanity of her creation, but they could not decide whether to strip the doctor of her medical license.

The trial struck a deep chord with some. Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" may have been written in 1818, but students were still able to use the story to discuss modern themes.

"The one thought that touched me is that the research we did here is kind of similar to stem cell research," said Ty Harden, a third-year law student and attorney for the defense.

Frank Bowman, faculty adviser for the project, said, "The theme here and the reason that people found it attractive was that it allows you to talk about the advances of science and the creation of life ... the responsibility that we have."

Still, many found an outlet for humor in the trial as well. When the plaintiff's lawyer, who wore her bangs in a six-inch poof, requested the creature — or "this hideous beast-man" — be secured to his chair, the judge denied the request. He added to the creature, "If you make a move toward me, I've got a gun."

Played by third-year law student Whitney Miller, the lawyer also made two excuses in her arguments to let people know that she is looking for a job.

At one point, she "accidentally" projected her resume onto the screen that was used to show evidence documents for the trial.

The society is now in its fifth year of performing mock trials and pulls from members of the community, the MU Law School and courts to fill roles.

MU art department buys new printmaking press

By Laura Orosemane

February 10, 2011 | 7:21 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — The MU art department bought a new press for its printmaking program Thursday.

The new machine is a big addition to the art program and will give it potential to expand and acquire nationwide recognition. Printmaking presses are used to make creative content.

The artist etches his or her design on a surface or a plate, then places it under the press rollers. The rollers press the paper or other material against the crafted plate. The results may vary depending on the pressure used or the ink concentration. Every piece made from a single design is unique.

Printmaking professor Chris Daniggelis said the press will allow students to compete with the top 10 printmaking programs in the nation.

“It will impact the dynamics of the program, increase its visibility and ultimately attract more candidates into it,” Daniggelis said. There are 60 students enrolled in his undergraduate printmaking class this semester and one graduate student majoring in printmaking. Eric Sweet, the only graduate student in the program, said the purchase is a great opportunity.

“It will allow us to make artistic projects as high as 35 inches wide and 9 feet long,” he said.

The department received funding from the university with the participation of Michael O'Brien, dean of the College of Arts and Science, and professor Melvin Platt, chair of the art department.

Print machines as large as the department's new one, which is one of the largest in the country, cost around \$27,000. The university bought it for \$22,000. The press was a long-term investment that could benefit students for decades to come.

“A purchase like this, if it is taken care of, can last 500 years,” Daniggelis said.