



Business owners start shaping Tiger Town plan

By Jacob Barker

The committee setting up Tiger Town wants downtown business owners to be involved in setting rules for vendors, times for street closures and other policies surrounding the event slated for home football games.

About 20 downtown business representatives attended meetings yesterday and this morning where Tiger Town board members explained the efforts organizers were making to address the concerns of downtown merchants. In addition to collecting input on the event, Tiger Town board members Adam Dushoff, Mike McClung and Alan Moore also distributed a list of changes organizers had made already.

"It's kind of an open slate, and we've got a ton of creative, entrepreneurial people downtown, and those are the ideas we need to tap," McClung said.

Since word began spreading about Tiger Town, some downtown business owners have voiced concerns that the plan — especially beer and food tents — could draw away business on their biggest days of the year. Organizers have tried to address the reservations by appointing McClung, a downtown bar owner, to the Tiger Town board, and they plan to keep downtown businesses involved in the process. McClung said the goal is to "literally" give businesses a voice in setting the policies, including continued meetings and some sort of vote.

"If we're gonna get something that works for downtown business owners, we need them to be in control of it," said Greg Steinhoff, one of the principal Tiger Town organizers.

One of the concerns business owners raised yesterday was that the closed-street portion of Tiger Town would preclude visitors from leaving if outdoor televisions showed the game. There also were questions about how long the street would remain closed after games. The Tiger Town reps indicated they would try to reach an agreement with business owners on what works best for them, and an informal vote shot down the idea of outdoor screens.

Dushoff said organizers view Tiger Town as a way to draw people downtown, but the intent isn't to make it an all-day destination. Instead, the hope is that people will then fan out throughout the area and patronize various establishments.

To help accommodate that, organizers have changed the street-closure target to Eighth Street between Broadway and Elm Street because there are fewer businesses on the street and it is more central to downtown. Open containers would be allowed throughout downtown, not just the

closed street, on Saturdays. The idea of a Friday-night pep rally or concert has been scrapped, but the board still might pursue an open-container exemption for the evening before games.

Organizers also want a significant number of "Tiger Ambassadors" to assist SEC visitors, and they are hoping to arrange transportation between Faurot Field and downtown. A rough budget of about \$350,000 has been pitched, but the number is preliminary, Steinhoff said. Money would come from vendor fees, sponsorships and grants. The cost for putting on the actual event has yet to be determined.

Most of the money would be used to market Tiger Town in SEC school communities and throughout the state, Steinhoff said.

"It's important for us these first couple of years to really get the word out on what's going on as much as possible, so then they go back and the word spreads," Steinhoff said.

Some business owners had wondered why it wouldn't be adequate to promote downtown as it is, but Shakespeare's Pizza Manager Kurt Mirtsching pointed out an event such as Tiger Town could open up grant funding opportunities through the Missouri Division of Tourism and the Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"The one thing I think is going to win people over is the idea that we can get all this marketing money," he said.

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MU law's U.S. News ranking rises

By Janese Silvey

After back-to-back years of sliding in the U.S. News & World Report rankings, the University of Missouri's School of Law is up 28 spots this year.

MU is ranked 79th — an improvement over last year's 107th spot. That change represents the largest jump of any school this year, the National Law Journal reported.

Dean Larry Dessem doesn't take much stock in rankings. "We work on a daily basis to make this a better law school," he said. "We obviously look at the U.S. News rankings, but we don't let them interfere with us doing the best job for our students."

Although the magazine doesn't release all of the data, Dessem said this year's spike seems to be the result of better peer assessments of MU by other law schools, an improved student-to-faculty ratio and higher employment rates than the previous year.

Employment still was considered low, with 36.6 percent of 2010 graduates having jobs on graduation day. That calculation might be misleading, though, because most law students must pass the bar exam before finding a job, and that exam isn't taken until after graduation. MU's internal data show that 94 percent of the same class of law graduates had jobs within nine months.

The magazine also takes into consideration how much a school spends on each student. MU could improve if it raised tuition and fees excessively, Dessem said.

"But we're not going to do that," he said. "We'll remain a value school. Courthouses across the state look to us to train the judges and lawyers and leaders, and we're going to try to strike the appropriate balance to that mission to serve the state, even though it hurts us in U.S. News rankings."

Curator Don Downing, a St. Louis-based attorney who also has worked for a large Kansas City firm, said Missouri firms don't pay much attention to magazine rankings.

"We have a great law school. It turns out very high-quality graduates," said Downing, who is also an alumnus. "In terms of the lawyers I know in this state, we don't put any stock in rankings like that."

In other rankings, Yale Law School retained its No. 1 slot, with Stanford overtaking Harvard for No. 2. The University of Kansas ranked 89th.

"I will say it's always nice to be ranked ahead of Kansas," Downing quipped. "In whatever ranking, it's nice to be ahead of Kansas."

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Brady Deaton among MU speakers at Bond lecture series

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

March 13, 2012 | 8:33 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — MU Chancellor Brady Deaton and Indonesia's ambassador to the U.S. will be among the speakers at the first campus lecture named for former U.S. Senator Kit Bond.

The Christopher S. "Kit" Bond Distinguished Lecture will be delivered Wednesday afternoon at the university's Life Sciences Center, also named for the retired senator from Missouri. The topic is food security, with a focus on supplies and costs in underdeveloped countries.

Deaton was appointed by President Barack Obama in 2011 to lead the Board of International Food and Agricultural Development, which advises the U.S. Agency for International Development. He holds a doctorate in agricultural economics.

Deaton will be joined by Bond; Indonesian ambassador Dino Patti Djalal; and Roger Beachy, president emeritus of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU's Harry S Truman School of Public Affairs to become autonomous

By Anli Xiao

March 13, 2012 | 8:14 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The Harry S Truman School of Public Affairs will reorganize into a college on Thursday. Since the public affairs school was founded in 2000, it has been a part of the MU Graduate School. George Justice, dean of the graduate school, said the reorganization is part of the public affairs school's original vision, adding that its size, prominence and merits are worthy of independence.

The public affairs school has 30 teachers, 175 students in its master's program and 12 students pursuing doctoral degrees. Last year, the school accomplished 61 projects with \$4 million of funding coming from outside the university, said Barton Wechsler, the school's director. Justice said the reorganization will be beneficial both internally and externally. Wechsler agreed, saying that the reorganization will create opportunities for collaboration and allow students and faculty to do more research and policy work that will help the state.

"We will deepen and strengthen the areas where we're already involved, and we are likely to offer more cross-discipline courses with other faculties and other departments," Wechsler said. Guy Adams, a professor in the school of public affairs, said he sees the long-term benefits of the reorganization.

"Our students will benefit from graduating from a more-prestigious school, as this change enables a much higher rate of development in teaching, research and service moving forward," Adams said. Wechsler said the cost of reorganization is low, and will ultimately save money and time by reducing layers of reporting and approval to the Graduate School. The school anticipates having more than 200 master's students and between 25 and 30 doctoral students after the reorganization.

The school is considering launching an undergraduate program and developing a strategic plan for the next two to five years. Wechsler will be the dean of the school until his term ends Aug. 1, 2014.

Gov. Jay Nixon defends aid program for blind Missourians

By Zach Murdock

March 13, 2012 | 3:35 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — The governor is taking aim at proposed budget cuts designed to increase **funding for higher education.**

At an event in Columbia on Tuesday, Gov. Jay Nixon called for funding of a program providing aid to blind Missourians to be restored to a budget proposed in the Missouri House.

"It needs to be restored in its entirety," he said. "The lives of 2,000 Missourians hang in the balance."

The program provides aid for more than 2,000 blind Missourians earning too much to qualify for Medicaid and is in danger of being eliminated in order to restore Nixon's cuts to higher education in a budget passed by the House Budget Committee last week.

"Quite frankly, this is just plain wrong," Nixon said among cheers and applause.

More than 75 people were on hand at Services for Independent Living on Tuesday morning to support Nixon's call to restore funding for the program.

The new budget, introduced in the House by Rep. Ryan Silvey, R-Kansas City, would cut the \$28-million program to shift that funding to public colleges and universities.

Silvey's proposed budget would allocate \$31 million more to the University of Missouri System than under Nixon's proposal.

The program has a strict asset limit, Nixon said, which ensures that aid from the program is going only to blind Missourians that need it most.

Nixon said he does want to continue to invest in education but argued that no college presidents asked for cuts in aid to the blind to fill a higher education budget gap.

Nixon defended his budget and said that by adding \$40 million back to higher education after Missouri joined a settlement with the nation's five largest mortgage companies, no public colleges or universities have filed for a waiver to raise tuition above the rate of inflation.

Blind Missourians receiving aid from the program have basically nowhere else to turn, Nixon said, and often have other significant health issues.

"It's just dead wrong to cut the health care of needy blind people," Nixon said.

Moving forward, Nixon said he hopes that funding the program can be a priority in the Senate.

In a letter sent to the governor Tuesday, Silvey said the administration should contact him to discuss funding education and blind assistance after Nixon completes his "press conferences and campaign rallies."

Silvey also criticized Nixon in tweets Tuesday afternoon.

Last week, President Pro Tem Rob Mayer said the Senate disagrees with Silvey's proposed cuts to funding for the blind and is unlikely to compromise when it reviews the budget.

Before going to the full House, the proposed budget must go through the House Rules Committee. Legislators will take up the budget when they return from legislative spring break on Monday.

Nixon pushes to keep benefits for blind

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

Gov. Jay Nixon had a message Tuesday for the House Appropriations Committee that has proposed restoring funding for higher education in part by cutting a \$30 million health care program for blind Missouriians.

“Not one college or university president has asked for more funding at the expense of needy, blind Missouriians,” Nixon said during a late-morning event outside the office of Services for Independent Living, 1401 Hathman Place in Columbia.

Nixon was joined by SIL staff and board members and several other advocates, and many of the more than 100 people at the outdoor event were accompanied by service animals.

The state budget Nixon proposed in January called for a 12 percent cut to funding for higher education, though a later amendment restored \$40 million in funding. The Republican-led House Appropriations Committee on health, mental health and social services proposed cutting services to residents who receive assistance through the Missouri Blind Pension, which provides health care to more than 2,800 blind people who earn too much to qualify for the Medicaid program for the poor.

The committee proposes a new, smaller program at a cost of \$6 million to replace the Medicaid MO Healthnet coverage. In proposing the cuts, House Budget Committee Chairman Ryan Silvey said the state no longer can afford the health care program.

“This cut will only affect 2,800 people who are employed, who have income and who are treated differently under the system than any other disability,” he said this month.

But Nixon said Tuesday he believes the program should be restored “fully, not in part.”

“The lives of more than 2,000 Missouriians hang in the balance,” Nixon said as a voice in the crowd shouted, “Thank you.”

“This is just plain wrong,” Nixon said, telling the crowd that funding for the health care program for blind people “is now in great danger.” He said the targeted program was established 40 years ago to provide “an efficient and compassionate program” for blind residents.

SIL board President Homer Page thanked the governor for helping take the lead in the legislative and budget battle.

Gretchen Maune, chairwoman of the Mid-Missouri Advocacy Council, said advocacy groups had heard that House members might aim their budget ax at the targeted program. "He thought we had this headed off," Maune said. "We're going to keep fighting."

Maune, who is blind, is a graduate student at the Truman School for Public Affairs at the University of Missouri.

"I definitely understand how important higher education is," she said. "But there are other sources for that funding."

Maune said Nixon was correct when he referred to the endangered program as a lifeline.

"I wouldn't be able to live independently without Medicaid," Maune said. "We need this health care. It's not an exaggeration that the blind are the most needy of all out there."

In a joint statement of the Missouri Council of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri, officials said the Blind Pension Fund includes Medicaid MO Healthnet coverage. People who receive services through that program do not qualify for typical Medicaid coverage.

Nixon stayed after his speech to speak with several people. One woman spoke softly, telling Nixon the proposed cuts would make her choose between buying groceries or medicine for her chronic asthma.

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MU students discuss ways to improve Columbia's transit system

By Antony Lee

March 13, 2012 | 10:39 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — MU students met Tuesday night at Memorial Union to discuss ways to improve the public transit system in a way that best accommodates students.

The forum was hosted by Tiger Transit Movement, a student organization formed in November to educate students about public transportation.

"This is the first time we've had the opportunity to speak to students and get feedback," said Rose Eppensteiner, who helped organize the meeting.

What was the feedback?

Students, many of them members of Tiger Transit Movement, discussed the places they want buses to pick students up, the times they want buses to run, the frequency at which they'd like to see buses running and how much they'd be willing to pay for rides.

Some of the places students highlighted on maps were hospitals, Greek Town, downtown, Columbia Mall, movie theaters, hospitals, parks, Old 63 housing, Nifong Plaza and retailers such as Sam's Club and Walmart.

"I'd like to see more availability throughout the city," Alex Gold said.

Students also want to see buses run from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. This would benefit students who hang out downtown late on weekends and would help ensure safe transportation, as well as provide rides for those who have to work early in the morning.

"We would like it to start at 6 a.m. for those who have to be at work around 7," Madeline Smith said.

Students discussed a 15- to 20-minute wait time between buses, more bus stops and extra buses for peak hours.

"I think the big key is frequency of travel," graduate student Jason Wilcox said, adding that a couple more buses and shorter wait times would be best, especially during the busiest hours when most students are going to and from school.

The price students said they were willing to pay per semester for such services varied from \$30 to \$100, but they added they should be able to dictate bus routes and frequencies for that price.

Anne Ahlvers suggested having a real-time app that tracks where buses are and shows when the buses are going to come to each stop.

What's next?

Eppensteiner said the Tiger Transit Movement would gather the feedback and send the information to Mitch Skyer, president of Solstice Transportation Group, which MU hired earlier this year to assess students' transportation needs. She said they would also get in touch with city officials to work out a plan for the future that would be better both for the city and for students.

"We want to enhance our relationship with the city," she said. "Once we have a strong base of information, then we'll take the next step of talking to the city."

What's being done by the city

Columbia officials visited Ames, Iowa on Feb. 17, Lawrence, Kan. on Feb. 24 and Champaign-Urbana on Friday to explore how these Midwestern college towns cooperate with the universities to offer students a bus system that works. Members of Tiger Transit Movement went on some of these visits and shared their impressions at the meeting.

Xavier Billingsley, president of the Missouri Students Association and a host of Tuesday's meeting, said he was staying connected with Mayor Bob McDavid and that there would be communication between the university and the city.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Final bus trip gives Columbia chance to reflect on transit

MU Mention on Pg. 4

By Jacob Kirn

March 13, 2012 | 12:47 p.m. CDT

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, Ill. — The difference is like night and day. Of the three educational bus trips to Midwestern towns organized by Columbia city officials, the final installment, a visit to the home of the University of Illinois on Friday, was the most jaw-dropping.

The disparity between Champaign-Urbana's robust bus system, a nationally recognized juggernaut, and Columbia's, is striking.

The Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District will soon count more than 11 million annual riders. A recent study by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a nonprofit group based in Washington, D.C., ranked Champaign-Urbana as the eighth best U.S. metropolitan area for non-driving commuters, behind places such as Boston, San Francisco and New York City.

The Columbia bus system carries 2.2 million riders annually. Although the Champaign-Urbana metropolitan area has roughly twice as many people as Columbia, its bus rides per capita are much higher.

In Champaign-Urbana, there are 17 bus routes during the week, several of which run past midnight. Service is frequent for students and non-students alike; wait times on campus typically make memorizing bus schedules unnecessary, although a 156-page, magazine-size map and schedule guide is available. Wait times can be about 30 minutes for stops farther from the center of the university campus and the twin cities.

In Columbia, buses don't run much beyond normal business hours except on Thursdays and Fridays, when they run until about 9 p.m. Buses typically run 40 minutes apart, and there is no service on Sundays.

The Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District had a \$27 million operating budget in fiscal 2011. Maintenance, capital and administrative costs pushed its total budget to more than \$36 million.

Columbia Transit's operating budget is about \$4.8 million.

Differences in state funding create the enormous discrepancy between the two budgets. The state of Missouri's contribution to Columbia Transit is negligible, according to Transportation Supervisor Drew Brooks. The state of Illinois covered more than \$17 million, or well over half of the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District's operating budget in fiscal 2011.

Under a law passed in the 1970s, the state of Illinois will cover up to 65 percent of a "downstate" transit agency's eligible operating expenses.

"Despite the fact that Illinois has lots of financial problems, we have the best transit funding in the country," said Bill Volk, managing director of the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District. "That's a huge benefit for us here."

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Like in Ames, Iowa, and Lawrence, Kan., the two previous stops on the Columbia delegation's Midwest tour, the bus system in Champaign-Urbana is funded in part by student fees. But it wasn't always that way.

A referendum among students to create a fee to increase bus service failed in 1987. Then school officials persisted.

"One of the real reasons the university administration was interested in this was they didn't want to build parking garages," Volk said.

Another referendum for a one-year trial fee passed in 1989. The student bus fee has passed in every election since.

"It's important that we have the service on campus," said Jim Maskeri, the University of Illinois student representative on the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District Board of Trustees. "It's necessary just in case they want to utilize it. (Students) feel like their friends and colleagues use it, and therefore it's needed."

From 1989 to 1990, ridership increased from 2.8 million to 5.5 million after Champaign-Urbana implemented a fare-free system for students and added campus-centric routes.

Volk said it was difficult to keep up with the increased demand.

"We bought buses from all over the place," he said.

Finding enough drivers to operate the extra buses was also a challenge.

"We still have problems getting drivers," Volk said. "We're paying a lot of overtime right now."

The University of Illinois student transportation fee is \$50 per semester. A referendum just passed that will increase that to \$59 per semester by 2015. About 65 percent of riders are students and faculty or staff of the university, who also ride fare free, according to Jan Kijowski, marketing director of the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District.

More than \$4 million, or about 11 percent of the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District's budget, comes from the student fee and University of Illinois administrative contributions. That's a far smaller share than in Ames or Lawrence, whose student contributions are roughly 50 percent and 68 percent, respectively.

In a bus traveling past the Illini Union Bookstore on Wright Street, Natalie Wroughton, a Champaign-Urbana resident of 44 years, read a book while she was on the way to see her mother.

"I started riding the buses when I was 12," she said.

Wroughton doesn't drive, and she relies on the buses every day.

"Overall they do a really good job if you live close to a bus route," Wroughton said. "There's certain neighborhoods I wouldn't move into because (the bus stops are too far away)."

Lucinda Morris, a senior studying earth science at the University of Illinois, said she takes the bus to and from class and to her job at the mall.

"I think we have one of the better bus systems anywhere," Morris said. "They're pretty well on time."

Outside the bookstore, as students stood waiting for their bus, Bahareh Javadi, a senior studying architecture, praised the local biking community.

"Usually, it takes me about 10 to 15 minutes to bike to class," she said.

Javadi said she only takes the bus in the winter when it's too cold to bike.

On the same stretch of Wright Street, as students made split-second decisions to board passing buses, Michael Lopez sat on a bench next to an electronic display board that flashed approaching arrival times.

The sophomore physics major lives in one of the Pennsylvania Avenue residence halls on the southeast corner of campus.

Lopez takes a bus to and from most of his classes at Loomis Lab, about a mile and a half from his dorm.

Columbia officials, MU students and commission members were overwhelmed by the differences between Columbia and Champaign-Urbana's bus systems.

"This one almost seems like another planet," Brooks said. "The funding from the state level, it is just phenomenal."

Brooks said he noticed that ridership grows exponentially when people have short waits between buses.

"(At the bus stops), the people weren't looking at the signs," Brooks said. "We were standing there for 20 minutes. There were at least half a dozen buses pulling up, and they were all full."

David Wilson, transportation coordinator for Columbia Public Schools, was interested in the collaboration between both Champaign and Urbana public schools and the city buses.

Together, the two school districts pay about \$450,000 annually to the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District. In exchange, city buses provide nearly all transportation to and from school for middle and high school students who want it.

Wilson said that for this to work in Columbia, "the community has to get involved and support a model like this."

Wilson said if he were to implement a system in which students rode city buses, he would start by looking at students who live within two miles of their school. Those students currently are not eligible for district-funded transportation.

"And if that was successful, that could be a place to start," he said.

Jessika Redmond, an MU student and intern with the PedNet Coalition, said she liked SafeRides, an on-demand service in Champaign-Urbana that picks up students from the library, parties or bars and takes them home. The service runs seven days a week, through the night until 6:30 a.m.

Rose Eppensteiner, a senior at MU and a member of the Tiger Transit Movement, said she was impressed that it took only three days for the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District to collect the 4,500 signatures needed to get the latest student fee increase referendum on the ballot.

MU students should be that involved, Eppensteiner said.

Homer Page, chairman of the Columbia Disabilities Commission, said fixed-route Columbia city buses should be as accessible as the ones in Champaign-Urbana.

"We need more accessibility to the main line transit," Page said. "The better it gets, the better it can serve people with disabilities."

Before the Columbia delegation left the land of the Illini, Tom Costello, assistant managing director of the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District, climbed on the small bus preparing to head back to Missouri.

And although the bus system they witnessed seemed flawless to many aboard, Costello offered the day's first confession.

"We make mistakes like everyone else does," he said. "But we try really hard."



Greg Perreault

Doctoral Student, University of Missouri

Faith Fueled Violence Invades Video Games

In video games stories, violence is motivated by greed, family, survival and yes, religion.

In the fictional world of Mass Effect 2, the assassin strikes with both grace and extraordinary violence. He takes out the two guards and then kills his target. When she's dead he leans over her body, crosses her arms and begins to pray.

The classic scene illustrates the deep, spiritual element of the assassin Thane and also shows extraordinary violence.

Shepherd: "Can we talk? I came a long way to talk to you."

Thane: "One moment. Prayers for the wicked must not be forsaken."

Shepherd: "Why? Do you really think she deserves it?"

Thane: "Not for her. For me."

In a recent study conducted at the University of Missouri, I examined how video games portray organized religion. I suspected I would find organized religion portrayed badly. What I saw was a bit more nuanced. While the specifics differed in each game, the commonality I saw was a tie between religion and violence.

We also don't purchase games to watch people pray and be kind. We purchase games to be entertained, and conflict is entertaining. There are types of conflict that don't translate well to a console game format: I couldn't imagine an entertaining video game on the U.S. monetary policy. Violence translates visually into something that entertains. Given the history of religion, it's not surprising that violence appears.

Religious imagery like that scene above is not uncommon in video games but it's rarely discussed. There is a lengthy history involved in the depictions of religion in console games --

one that includes Link from Nintendo's Legend of Zelda using a shield with a giant cross, Cecil from Super Nintendo's Final Fantasy IV (II in America) who undergoes what could be described as a conversion experience, and more subtle images, such as characters praying to idols in order to "Save Your Game."

In many games, religion works as a motivator. There's a good god(dess) who needs the video game hero to defeat evil, and to do so, the hero must kill a lot of bad guys. And there are games where you must defeat the world's god(dess). Other times, it's part of the character's story, like in the case with Thane from Mass Effect 2. As the player, we like Thane's religion. We find it compelling because it's part of Thane's personal story and it doesn't keep him from doing the violence that he must do to save the galaxy.

In a way, the findings reflect some of the more popular games available now, of which there are quite a few that focus on the Crusades and themes related to the Knight's Templar. Go to the local video game store and you'll see a host of religious messages represented in the narratives: the Knights Templar in "Dante's Inferno" and Assassin's Creed, Norse myths in Valkyrie Profile, Greek myths in God of War, and recently Hinduism in Asura's Wrath. You'll notice there aren't any games on the Quakers.

My impression isn't that video game makers are trying to indoctrinate us (or our children). Video games have evolved from the days of the Atari; it was, after all, difficult to tell a deep narrative in "Space Invaders." As game technology has increased and censorship decreased, so has its ability to tell a story. And now, game developers are tapping into the great conversations of Western civilization. The role of religion in games, as in the real world, can't be ignored.

Symposium at MU connects policymakers, scientists

By [Dan Burley](#)

March 13, 2012 | 6:42 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Several MU undergraduates hosted a symposium Wednesday hoping to bridge the gap between science and policymaking.

Legislators, scientists, attorneys, students and even former NASA astronauts met at Memorial Union for the daylong dialogue, divided into six topic-specific panels. The event's overarching theme concerned the intersection of politics and science and the roadblocks separating the two communities from working together to achieve efficient public policy.

The symposium was largely the brainchild of Marc Canellas, an engineering student. Canellas said he experienced the lack of mutual understanding between scientists and lawmakers firsthand when he spent the past summer working on space policy in Washington, D.C.

He said the lightbulb moment came when he realized his scientific peers seemed to work in a vacuum, avoiding communication with the political realm.

"Scientists don't get out of their cubicles," Canellas said. "If engineers know nothing about how policy affects them, then how can they influence policy in the right way?"

When Canellas returned to Columbia he emailed Bill Horner, a political science professor at MU, with the idea of hosting a conference bringing together professionals from a variety of disciplines to talk about the lack of collaboration.

Horner was on board immediately and brought in a few undergraduate members of Pi Sigma Alpha, the political science honors fraternity on campus, to help plan the event, Canellas said.

After spending the fall 2011 semester sorting out the details, the symposium blueprint emerged in January packed with big names like former U.S. Sen. Christopher "Kit" Bond, political strategist and science advocate Shawn Lawrence Otto and current U.S. Rep. Rush Holt, D-New Jersey, the only physicist in U.S. Congress.

Bond kicked the day off in a crowded Stotler Lounge with opening remarks promoting the union of politics and science.

"We live in a time of breakthrough of scientific discovery in energy technology, military technology and biological technology," Bond said. "We need Washington to respond to science rather than the political passions of the day."

Bond then addressed the future of science, technology, engineering and math education in the U.S. He said the country needs to attract more students to these sectors of academia.

Following Bond's welcome speech, a variety of expert panelists discussed topics including the future of NASA after drastic budget cuts, the effects of changes to U.S. patent law on the scientific community and how governmental processes can help further research and development nationwide.

Horner said he thought the symposium was successful and showed a lot of value.

"In a (scholastic) environment like this we operate with blinders on," Horner said. "This is bringing people together who never talk but depend on each other in the real world."

BUSINESS JOURNAL

Many top NCAA seeds spent big last season

Kansas City Business Journal

Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2012, 1:26pm CDT

Money isn't everything, but it sure doesn't hurt college basketball teams' chances of getting an NCAA tournament bid and high seed.

The Memphis Business Journal, an affiliated publication, analyzed Equality in Athletics data from the U.S. Department of Education to come up with a chart showing this year's NCAA men's basketball tournament seeds and their 2010-11 season spending. Among the Division 1 basketball teams, 70 percent of the top 10 spenders for the 2010-11 season were seeded among the 16 best in the NCAA tournament field this season. Exactly half of the No. 1 seeds, No. 2 seeds and No. 3 seeds came from that group.

The overall No. 1 seed this season, the University of Kentucky, also spent the most of the No. 1 seeds in the prior season — one of only four teams to spend more than \$10 million in 2010-11.

The University of Kansas — the No. 2 seed in the Midwest region — spent \$9.5 million last season, the most of Kansas and Missouri schools. But its situation doesn't fit the trend — the Midwest region's No. 1 seed is the University of North Carolina, which spent less than the Jayhawks last season at \$6.5 million.

The University of Missouri, the No. 2 seed in the West region, spent \$5.4 million last season. The No. 1 seed in that region spent \$9.26 million, but the No. 3 seed also outspent Missouri.

Kansas State University, the No. 8 seed in the East region, spent \$4.97 million. That region's No. 7 seed spent \$5.34 million.

The Kansas and Missouri schools are slated to play Thursday and Friday.



Ron Paul set for MU campus visit

Presidential hopeful Ron Paul is scheduled to visit the University of Missouri on Thursday.

The event starts at noon at the Carnahan Quadrangle on campus.

The event is sponsored by MU's chapter of Youth for Ron Paul, which announced the "on-campus town hall" on its Facebook page last night.

The event is open to the public at 11:30 a.m. Those wanting vouchers for earlier access and limited seating can register online at ronpaulatmizzou.eventbrite.com.

Paul's visit comes two days before caucus events take place in most of Missouri, including Boone County.

Also in Mid-Missouri this week, candidate Rick Santorum planned a stop Friday in Osage Beach. Mitt Romney was visiting the St. Louis and Kansas City areas today.