

UM comments draw heat in legislature

Reps say they've helped university.

By RUDI KELLER

Thursday, May 10, 2012

ADVERTISEMENT

JEFFERSON CITY — University of Missouri lobbyist Steve Knorr endured a round of public chastisement yesterday over UM System President Tim Wolfe's comments about legislative efforts to kill the Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life.

The General Assembly has been kind to the university this year, members of the House-Senate conference committee on appropriations told Knorr. Instead of a third year of budget cuts, the university could receive a small increase in state aid.

"If he has problems with the legislature, he should talk to the legislature," said House Budget Chairman Ryan Silvey, R-Kansas City.

Wolfe's comments were directed at the first, most sweeping attempt to ban the Sue Shear Institute, housed on UM's St. Louis campus and named for a longtime St. Louis County lawmaker who championed passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Shear died in 1998.

The first version of a ban written for Sen. Jane Cunningham, R-Chesterfield, would not only have eliminated the institute as a UM effort but also forbidden any private entity from taking it over or performing any part of its stated mission. The final language addressing the institute is a statement in the budget that public money should not be used for political purposes.

The institute conducts training programs for women interested in government as well as tracks their success in achieving public office and reporting on those findings.

"It's an embarrassment. It is a fricking embarrassment," Wolfe said of the original language during an interview with the Tribune. He also said he considered legislative directives about individual programs to be interference with academic freedom.

That led to the dressing-down of Wolfe yesterday with Knorr as his proxy, though Wolfe also had his defender. Even the criticism was tempered by members distancing themselves from Cunningham's

original proposal. Silvey told Knorr although he "may not disagree with that assessment of particular language," lawmakers had opposed cuts in higher education since Gov. Jay Nixon announced plans for a \$106 million cut in January.

Instead of \$348.45 million, the university is slated to receive \$398.2 million in the coming fiscal year. If all the money reaches the system, it would be an increase of about \$5 million over the current year's funding.

Sen. Will Kraus, R-Lee's Summit, reminded Knorr that attorney Craig Van Matre had been denied a seat on the UM Board of Curators for offending Republicans with criticism in an opinion piece printed in the Tribune.

But Sen. Kiki Curls, D-Kansas City, said she approved of Wolfe's comments. "What happened on the Senate side in regard to the Sue Shear Institute is an embarrassment, and it is one of those events in which I think many of our members feel that way," she said.

Knorr said little in response but assured lawmakers he would pass on the message.



Cunningham on Shear

'A fricking embarrassment'

By HENRY J. WATERS III

Thursday, May 10, 2012

I was glad to see University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe criticize the effort by Sen. Jane Cunningham to kill the Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life.

Wolfe called Cunningham's original, broadly-worded ban a "fricking embarrassment," an attempt to interfere with the university's legitimate academic role. Before issuing his broadside, Wolfe had investigated the institute to make sure he could support its mission and then was unequivocal against Cunningham's effort to hold the state budget hostage in behalf of partisan ideology.

Wolfe's report on the legitimacy of the institute was necessary because almost all of us had lost track of its work. Since what is left of my memory goes back farther than most, I remember Shear as a member of the Missouri House — reporter Rudi Keller reminds me she served from 1973 to 1998. She was a leader among women in office and a Democrat, as were most lawmakers back then of either sex, but the creation of her institute had no long-term partisan implication. The Democratic Party was a more natural home for female candidates at the time, a situation that clearly has changed.

Wolfe reports that, as part of the University of Missouri, the institute is nonpartisan, despite allegations to the contrary by Cunningham, a notorious right-wing advocate who might think anything associated with the university is hopelessly liberal and Democratic. No doubt she can find Democrats among officials who have hosted interns promoted by the institute, but an objective observer could find Republican hosts as well and an overt plan by the institute to avoid partisanship.

The way for a diligent Republican to relate to the Sue Shear Institute is to actively participate, using its auspices to encourage more women to enter politics, resulting in more active Republicans as well as Democrats.

I'm glad Wolfe affirmed my own recently untested opinion of the Sue Shear Institute — that its purpose is gender-based, not party-based. If its philosophy and practice seek out women without requiring any sort of partisan litmus test, Cunningham's foray is thoroughly counterproductive. Not only is it nonsensical, but it exploits the always-fragile state budget-making process to make an ideological point.

And here comes my old pal Catherine Hathaway, a tough former House speaker who is listed as a former Shear faculty member but says she now wants to kill the institute. To be a practicing Show-Me Republican these days is to line up with almost any bomb-thrower pest who wants to rankle the Democrats. Hathaway could have done herself and her party more good by saying the Democrats generally are full of it but the Sue Shear Institute is not an apt exemplar. Hathaway could have remained a nonpartisan faculty member helping ensure evenhanded promotion of up-and-coming women, including those who might become Republican activists. Instead, she feels obliged to join Cunningham's rabble.

I pray for the likes of Catherine Hathaway to lead the Grand Old Party away from the philosophical fringe without giving up its energy. She has the personal and political strength for the job, but does she have the instinct? I will continue to defend her against my most partisan lefty friends who say she is nothing but a Viking warrior swinging a mace. She is smart and tough, but the more she sides with her party's far right, the more she disappears into that polarized crowd.

HJW III

So much of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to work.

— PETER DRUCKER



Lawmakers send budget bills to Nixon

By RUDI KELLER

Published May 10, 2012 at 4:37 p.m.

JEFFERSON CITY — A budget process that began with the University of Missouri facing a massive budget cut ended with the school set up for what might be its first increase in actual state aid in three years.

The Senate completed work on the \$24 billion state budget Thursday afternoon when it sent the last of 12 spending bills to Gov. Jay Nixon. Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, was given a standing ovation in the Senate when it was over, a congratulations from colleagues for navigating his way through when opposition seemed like it might cause a complete breakdown.

"It was a really interesting dynamic this year, and actually I think for this economic climate it is a very good budget," Schaefer said when it was over. "Every major thing I wanted in this budget is in there."

He listed preventing cuts in the UM budget, adding \$200,000 for the State Historical Society of Missouri and \$200,000 for the Missouri Scholars and Fine Arts academies as his personal priorities, as well as being able to give a 2 percent pay increase for state workers who make \$70,000 a year or less.

The budget spends \$8 billion of general revenue, the most flexible area of the budget. The spending plan, which takes effect July 1, keeps funding steady for public schools and maintains the state medical program for the blind, which the House had targeted for elimination.

Nixon began the year proposing a \$106 million cut to state colleges and universities, part of a package of \$500 million in budget cuts and adjustments needed to make spending match revenue. The cuts to colleges and universities were reduced by \$40 million expected from a national mortgage settlement.

Republican leaders in the House and Senate reacted badly to the proposal and vowed to find the money to prevent the cuts.

A key part of the budgets proposed by Nixon and the Missouri House included money from a \$70 million tax amnesty and enforcement bill. That bill is dead, and the final budget spends \$55.8 million less general revenue than Nixon proposed.

"I think we needed to be conservative on what dollars we had and where everything else would shake out," Schaefer said.

UM is slated to receive \$398.45 million in the coming year. This year, after Nixon's withholdings from the budget, the school is slated to receive \$393.2 million. Even in good years, not all money allocated is released, but the budget gives UM a chance to see an actual increase in state support.

Nixon has opposed tax increases, and he has been quick to withhold large amounts from budget lines when he feels it is necessary to make the budget balance. He issued a statement Thursday that made no mention of whether he considers the budget lawmakers completed to be balanced.

"While I still need to review every line of the budget passed today, I appreciate the efforts of the General Assembly to get a budget to me within the constitutional deadline," Nixon said. "As I give this budget a very thorough review over the next several weeks, Missourians should know that we'll continue to live within our means and hold the line on taxes, while doing everything possible to help businesses grow and create jobs."

Rep. Mary Still, Schaefer's re-election opponent in the 19th Senate District, issued a statement calling the budget "a recipe for mediocrity" after voting against the higher education budget bill. The Columbia Democrat has traditionally voted against that measure when she feels it leaves UM underfunded.

Still has filed bills to increase the tax on tobacco and extend sales tax to Internet purchases, both of which are unpopular in the Republican-controlled legislature.

"State support for MU remains lower than it was a decade ago and Missouri remains 47th in the nation in funding for higher education. ... This budget is not a victory for MU or for our state," Still said.

"Missouri needs a new equation if we are going to move forward."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Missouri Legislature sends budget to governor

BY ELIZABETH CRISP • ecrisp@post-dispatch.com > 573-635-6178 | Posted: Thursday, May 10, 2012 5:13 pm | [\(0\) comments.](#)

MU MENTION P. 3

JEFFERSON CITY • Missouri lawmakers have approved a \$24 billion spending plan for the coming year that includes 2 percent raises for most state workers and spares higher education from funding cuts.

The budget now goes to Gov. Jay Nixon for approval.

In a statement, Nixon said he will take time to review the Legislature's plan for the budget that begins July 1.

“While I still need to review every line of the budget passed today, I appreciate the efforts of the General Assembly to get a budget to me within the constitutional deadline,” he said. “As I give this budget a very thorough review over the next several weeks, Missourians should know that we’ll continue to live within our means and hold the line on taxes, while doing everything possible to help businesses grow and create jobs.”

Negotiators who have been working through differences in House and Senate plans for the budget for the fiscal year starting July 1 approved a \$24 billion compromise Wednesday afternoon. The House and then Senate quickly approved the plan today before adjourning for the weekend.

Among the key decisions in the budget:

- A health care program for blind Missourians will receive most of its funding from the state budget.
- Seven universities will split a \$3 million boost to higher education funding.
- The Sue Shear Institute for Public Life at the University of Missouri-St. Louis will not be stripped of state dollars.

- Missouri's seven veterans homes will be funded primarily through the state's casino entrance fee.
- Most state employees will receive 2 percent raises in the coming year.

"It's another one of those years where I think we all wish we could do a lot more," said House Budget Committee Chairman Ryan Silvey, R-Kansas City.

The Senate had been struggling this week to approve a plan for funding veterans homes — a critical move before the budget could continue through the process.

Disagreements between the House and Senate shut down open negotiations while lawmakers attempted to craft agreements behind closed doors.

The Senate on Wednesday approved a bill that would create funding for veterans homes from the casino boarding fee. Lawmakers agreed on the funding plan but used other language added into the bill as leverage to sway the budgeting process.

The casino money currently goes to early childhood programs. In its place, those programs will receive some of the money supplied by a national settlement with tobacco companies.

Much of the debate over the bill dealt with unrelated issues that were attached to the veterans home plan, including a proposal to eliminate funding for the Shear Institute. Such language was not included in the final version of the bill, and budget writers removed a provision in the higher education spending plan that would have blocked any state funds from going to the institute. Instead, the budget states that money cannot go to any organization that "engages in political activity."

Senate Appropriations Chair Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, said the language reflects current law.

A \$2 million increase in funding for Southeast Missouri State University that was backed by Republican House Speaker Steve Tilley of Perryville became one of the main sticking points in budget talks earlier in the week.

Sen. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau, was the chief opponent of the bump, saying that disparities in higher education funding should be dealt with across the state — not just for one institution. He accused Tilley of using the budget to gain political favor with SEMO, the alma mater of both Tilley and Crowell.

The new plan calls for \$3 million to be distributed among seven universities, including SEMO, to address disparities.

"Obviously this is the resolution for the disagreement between Senator Crowell and Speaker Tilley," Schaefer said.

Some lawmakers raised concerns that Missouri State University was left out of the \$3 million split this year, as was the University of Missouri.

A provision added to the veterans bill will require the Legislature's Joint Education Committee to address inequities with a new funding formula effective fiscal 2015.

The budget includes 2 percent raises for nearly 55,000 state workers who make below \$70,000 a year.

It also suggests slight alterations to a health care program that serves some 2,800 blind Missourians. The House had previously moved to strip \$28 million from the blind health care program, but the Senate voted to restore \$25 million.

Modifications within the compromise plan are intended to cap the income level for the program and save the \$3 million difference.

Nixon, however, said he doesn't think the Legislature can change the program through the budgeting process.

"We are pleased that the conference committee has restored full funding authority for this vital lifeline for blind Missourians, but the attempt to place additional limitations on eligibility through the budget process does not change existing law — and is invalid," he said in a statement Wednesday. "We will ensure that this program continues to serve all 2,800 needy, blind Missourians who depend on it."

Schaefer said the Legislature includes the same language in SCHIP funding, so he thinks it is constitutional.



MU graduation ceremonies set to begin Friday

By JANESE SILVEY

Thursday, May 10, 2012

An author, educator and congressman top this year's list of commencement speakers at the University of Missouri.

Graduation ceremonies kick off tomorrow and run through Sunday. MU will award 6,495 degrees to nearly 5,800 students, some of whom are earning more than one.

Ron Powers, author of "Flags of Our Fathers," and educator Euclid Williamson will receive honorary degrees at the Honors Commencement at 8:30 a.m. Saturday on the Francis Quadrangle. That event will be moved to Mizzou Arena if the weather doesn't cooperate.

Powers graduated from MU in 1963 with a journalism degree. A Pulitzer Prize winner, Powers has written three books, including "Mark Twain: A Life." Williamson is the founder of Target Hope, a program that assists high schools in Chicago.

"We're very fortunate to be awarding the honorary degrees to two individuals who have made a significant difference in the American landscape," MU spokesman Christian Basi said.

A campus committee nominates recipients for honorary degrees, and recipients must be approved by the UM Board of Curators.

U.S. Rep. Sam Graves, R-Tarkio, has been tapped to speak at the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources commencement at 4:30 p.m. Saturday at the Hearnes Center.

The School of Medicine will host Robert Smith, the first black graduate of MU's medical program and an associate professor of surgery at the University of Tennessee. That ceremony is at 3:30 p.m. Saturday in Jesse Auditorium. Although there are no big celebrity names on this year's graduation roster, traffic around campus will be heavy. Columbia Police Department spokeswoman Sgt. Jill Schlude urges residents to allow extra time to get to a destination this weekend. Those not attending graduation should avoid campus, she said.

Police officers will conduct a checkpoint sometime before Monday as part of the Missouri Department of Transportation's youth DWI enforcement initiative.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Seniors reflect on their time at MU

By Allie Hinga, [Breanna Dumbacher](#)

May 11, 2012 | 12:01 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Ask upcoming graduates if they've changed in their time at college, and very few of them will say no. In fact, many of them will laugh as if the answer to the question is a given. Yet no two experiences were the same.

Some said they grew more mature. For others, college was about adopting the motto, "You Only Live Once," or "YOLO." **The Missourian asked upcoming graduates to reflect on their time in college:** What would they tell their freshman selves? How have they changed in the past few years? What defined their years at MU?

'Really, really stressful'

Two years into college, Jessica Askew realized change was a necessity. After a high school experience where she didn't feel challenged, Askew said it was difficult to learn how to study at MU. She said she got caught up in the social opportunities of college life and without the structure of high school classes, she ended up having a GPA that was too low to get into graduate school, she said.

"(It was) really stressful. Really, really stressful," she said. "Because I guess I had gotten used to kind of not putting in too much effort, but just enough, and then I had to put in enough to get all A's constantly, and if I got a C, it would just destroy the rest of it, and I wouldn't have been able to get into grad school." Askew was able to bring her grades up and get into graduate school at MU where she will be studying health care administration in the fall.

"It was hard to get that GPA back up, but you know, you work hard enough, you certainly can."

'Go and see lecturers'

For Joshua Behiels, the chance to have an international experience drew him to MU. Behiels, who is studying international business, is from Australia. He said he thought a degree from America would help him in his career. Behiels said coming to MU also had social and

academic benefits. He said he really enjoyed the social atmosphere surrounding sports at MU, which is different from the atmosphere in Australia. Behiels specifically remembers the February basketball game against the University of Kansas.

"The last basketball (game) was one of my favorites," Behiels said. "The feeling, the atmosphere, was fantastic. One of the best feelings." Behiels said if he could give advice to his freshman self he would encourage himself to be outgoing not only at sporting events but also when he needed to talk to his professors. Behiels said he would tell himself to talk to his professors sooner.

"More than likely they'll like your initiative," he said. "And they'll give you more tips on what you're having problems with, whether it's an assignment, or an exam, or a paper or anything."

Behiels plans to return to Australia after graduation to try to get a job, but he also hopes to continue preparing himself for an international career. He already speaks English and Chinese, and he hopes to take classes to learn another language, possibly French.

'Something that really applies to what I want to do'

For the past four years, biology major Jessica Philbrick has been involved in the Raptor Rehabilitation Project, a service organization in the MU College of Veterinary Medicine. During her first two years of college, she volunteered and learned to work with birds that were part of the program. During her sophomore year, she became an education coordinator and had the opportunity to make presentations to the public about the birds.

"So that's what our main objective is, is to teach people about how important (the birds) are and what we can do for them and how much they should be valued," Philbrick said. "It's a lot of fun." While she has been a part of multiple organizations in the past four years, her work with the Raptor Rehabilitation Project has been constant.

"I've been involved with them for these four years, very involved," Philbrick said. "And so that was one thing that I kept around as something that really applies to what I want to do." Since she wants to do research as a future career, she said her work with the project will help her communicate her ideas to others. "It will really help me to teach people about the conservation applications of the research that I want to do in the future," she said.

After graduation, Philbrick will spend the summer at the San Diego Zoo's Institute for Conservation Research working on projects about genetic diversity in cactus wrens and northern mockingbirds. After that, she plans to attend graduate school.

'I had to miss a semester for military training'

David Nagel, a political science major, is about to graduate after five years at MU. During his time in college, he spent a semester training with the National Guard, which he joined to help pay for college. Nagel has also participated in two-week training sessions each year and other monthly trainings. He said the transition between a military and school atmosphere required him to learn how to balance the two.

"Whenever I came back from military training, it was different being in a relaxed environment that you get in college, where like students will talk while the teacher's talking," he said. "In the military that wouldn't happen. You'd be sitting up in your seat, quiet, waiting for instruction or something."

He also said his experiences in both areas helped him learn to find something he liked and to excel at it. He will continue to be a part of the National Guard until his contract expires in three years.

'I came in pregnant'

When Tiffiny Jones, 21, came to college, she was pregnant. During her second semester at MU she had her daughter, Trinity Chambers, who is now 2 years old. That semester, Jones had to drop all of her classes except one online class. After that, Jones had to juggle her time and her budget. She said there were times she had to decide if it was more important to pay the electric bill or buy her daughter diapers.

"It was just having to juggle spending time with my daughter and then doing my homework," Jones said. "Late nights, early mornings, every night, every day. It's definitely been a struggle, especially financially, because I am a single mom and I really had no support coming in here. My parents didn't support me. It was just me doing it by myself." Jones said being a single mom made her college experience different from most, but she said she still felt herself grow in her own way.

"My decisions compared to a traditional student's is very different," Jones said. "Instead (of) worrying about going to this party this weekend, I had to worry about how am I going to get diapers for my daughter. And I didn't work, so those (are the) kind of the decisions I had to make. But I've definitely grown as a student here at Mizzou."

Jones is graduating after just three years of school as a sociology major, and she plans to attend graduate school at MU in the fall.



Flasher reported in MU residence hall

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A man who exposed himself Wednesday in a University of Missouri residence hall has yet to be identified, campus police said.

University of Missouri police received a report around 10:45 a.m. about a man who exposed himself in Schurz Hall. The suspect was described as a light-skinned black man in his 20s, about 5 feet, 9 inches tall, with a medium build, scruffy facial hair and an earring.

The police department notified the campus through email about the incident.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call Detective Sam Easley at 884-3721 or contact CrimeStoppers at 875-8477 or 875tips.com.