

SEP 17 2012

COLUMBIA DAILY
TRIBUNE

MU administrators agree to share governance, ask for a little faith from faculty



Ryan Henriksen

From left, former UM System President Melvin George, MU Chancellor Brady Deaton and Provost Brian Foster listen to faculty on Sept. 6 at the MU Faculty Council workshop at Memorial Union. Campus controversies have strained the trust between faculty and administration.

By Janese Silvey

Sunday, September 16, 2012

They develop new cancer therapies, come up with solutions to energy problems and, in general, conduct some pretty mind-boggling research every day.

Earlier this month, University of Missouri professors got a new challenge: Campus administrators asked faculty to have a little faith in them.

"It's so vital that we cultivate a sense of trust," Chancellor Brady Deaton told members of MU's Faculty Council. The "more trust we develop, the better off we are as an institution."

A string of campus controversies this year has strained trust between MU professors and administrators. At a Faculty Council workshop a couple of weeks ago, both sides began repairing those relationships and pledged a commitment to share governing power in the future.

Shared governance is supposed to be the foundation that supports operations at colleges and universities. An ideal endorsed by three national higher education organizations, it calls on administrators to share authority with faculty. Although governing boards, such as the UM Board of Curators, have the final say, the notion is that they should lean on the expertise of professors.

"Colleges and universities are not like corporations where you have a hierarchical arrangement in decision-making, top-down decision-making," said Bob Kreiser, the national associate secretary for the American Association of University Professors. "Faculty members are not simply employees of an institution. They are a major constituent. They have areas of expertise to which deference ought to be paid. Well-run colleges and universities respect those notions."

Mostly, faculty are expected to have a say in decisions that affect the educational mission of a university — curriculum, the creation or closure of an academic program or decisions on whether to grant tenure or promote fellow faculty members. And they're supposed to have advisory authority on broader decisions, such as where to allocate dollars.

If that system is lacking, Kreiser warned, an institution won't be highly regarded in the academic community, and there's a good chance students won't be getting the type of education they're paying for.

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MU's shared governance foundation has shown some recent cracks.

The latest appeared when UM System administrators tried to close the UM Press without first asking faculty for input. Although the UM System typically doesn't work with faculty or practice shared governance regularly, there is a faculty group appointed to represent the four campuses, a council that also wasn't consulted before the press decision.

UM System President Tim Wolfe has since said he should have sought input from more stakeholders. Late last month, he reversed the decision to close the press in light of pushback.

Although she appreciates the change of heart, Donna Potts, a UM Press author and MU alumnae involved in AAUP, said the situation could have been avoided had the system been better accustomed to sharing governing power with faculty.

"It's a shame there had to be so much pushback from faculty," she said. "Had they been willing to share power in the first place, faculty could have been spending time researching and teaching instead of spending time fighting to save the press."

Some at the Sept. 6 council workshop said they didn't necessarily oppose revamping the UM Press — they didn't have enough information to make that call — but they weren't happy that the university didn't announce the decision internally first.

"We don't want to find out about something that affects us in the Tribune," said Tim Evans, an associate professor of veterinary medicine. He said faculty "should know about it before the whole general public knows."

The lack of communication and "surprises caused more grief between faculty and administrators than anything else," said Clyde Bentley, an associate journalism professor.

Sometimes decisions have to be made quickly, Provost Brian Foster said. And conversations leading up to those can't always happen in public, he said, especially when they involve personnel matters.

That's where trust comes in.

"One of the most important things we can achieve is trust," Foster said. "There has to be a level of trust between faculty and administrators, and it has to be great enough to accept that hard decisions have to be made and not because there's a plot or something."

The press isn't the only decision related to academics that administrators have made recently without faculty input. In March, MU officials announced the closure of the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute, a move expected to displace four tenured faculty members.

And earlier in the year, Deaton infuriated a faculty committee that had cleared Greg Engel, a tenured engineering professor, of discrimination when Deaton sent the case back to the committee to review a second time using a different standard of evidence.

Those were just the cases that became public.

At the recent Faculty Council workshop, Chairman Harry Tyrer read an email from a professor seeking the council's help in dealing with a problematic department chair. Another council member said she, too, has been asked recently how best to lodge a complaint against an administrator without fear of retaliation.

"We see those cases that blow up, but there are a lot more that go on that we do not see," said Sudarshan Loyalka, a curators' professor of nuclear engineering and one of four faculty members affected by the closure of NSEI.

The national AAUP has gotten involved in two of the recent cases. Last year, Kreiser wrote Deaton asking him to adhere to AAUP standards when responding to accusations against Engel.

Last month, he sent a letter to Wolfe complaining that faculty weren't consulted before the announced closure of the UM Press.

"We had the impression that anything but shared governance was involved in that decision," Kreiser said, referring to the press. "It was the antithesis of shared governance."

He declined to answer when asked whether MU was at risk of AAUP censure or sanctions over any of the recent incidents. Those actions don't happen often, he said.

Then again, he doesn't write letters often, either.

"Usually the situation is pretty bad if we write a letter in the first place," Kreiser said. "The fact that I wrote letters reflects a level of concern that's high."

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A former faculty member himself, Deaton told council members shared governance is something he takes to heart.

But it might be easier to embrace as an idea than to put it into practice.

There's no doubt faculty members own academic issues, Foster said, but there are practical constraints. Professors, for instance, might want to create a new academic program, but limited finances or building space — or any legal or political problems — might interfere, he said. "We've got to face the reality of the constraints and how to align the very different perspectives and responsibilities."

Foster questioned how shared governance should work in a number of specific scenarios. For instance, if the university received an unexpected boost in dollars, should faculty committees form to decide where best to spend the money — likely resulting in everyone wanting a chunk — or should administrators invest it in areas they deem critical to the mission of the campus? Should the university spend money trying to get all programs accredited or only those in academic areas where accreditation makes sense?

"You have to have a general understanding of complex issues, and that requires a lot of time of faculty," Foster said.

Faculty groups are known for drawn-out committee work that can span months or years before decisions. Administrators don't always have the luxury of time when trying to draft a budget proposal in time for a Board of Curators meeting or adhere to a deadline.

"I think — and a couple of people articulated this — one of the problems is we have various notions of what shared governance looks like and what does it mean for faculty to have advisory authority," said Nicole Monnier, an associate teaching professor of Russian and member of the council's executive committee. "Does that mean a Faculty Council member is in the room or the

faculty in general is informed? If we can all articulate what we think it is, then at least we understand what the other party thinks it is."

Putting a strict definition on shared governance also is tricky because it could take on different meanings in different situations, said Kattesh Katti, vice chairman of the Faculty Council.

To him, it should be — and, for the most part, already is — embedded in MU's DNA. Katti, a curators' professor of radiology and physics, has worked on campuses in India, Germany and Canada where governance is shared differently, so he appreciates the freedoms he considers unique to U.S. colleges.

A medical researcher, Katti said administrators should use faculty input and ideas to keep the campus energized in the same way human cells use food and oxygen to give people energy.

And rather than just sharing governance for the sake of it, he said both administrators and professors should embrace an environment where decisions can be made in whatever way best builds on MU's quality and reputation.

"We have the ability to be much better than we are," he said. "Administrators and faculty have to believe in that and work on that."

Success will require a culture where people feel they're part of the same team, not an environment where faculty and administrators are hindered by a notion of "us versus them," Katti said.

"We need to understand and appreciate shared governance in the context of the 'big picture' and not get succumbed to smaller events or trying to satisfy everyone along the way of implementing the most effective programs."

U. of Texas, North Dakota State order evacuations after bomb threats

By JIM VERTUNO

AUSTIN, Texas -- A bomb threat phoned in to the University of Texas at Austin campus Friday sent thousands of people streaming off campus as administrators warned students and faculty to "get as far away as possible." No bombs had been found by midmorning.

University of Texas spokeswoman Rhonda Weldon said the university received a call about 8:35 a.m. from a man with a Middle Eastern accent claiming to be with al-Qaida. The man said he had placed bombs all over the campus that would go off in 90 minutes.

All buildings were evacuated at 9:50 a.m. as a precaution, Weldon said.

Most students appeared to be leaving campus in an orderly and calm manner. Police blocked off roads to the 50,000-student campus as lines and lines of cars sat in gridlock trying to get out.

By 10:30 a.m., the university issued another advisory saying that buildings were still being checked and that no decision had been made on whether the campus would reopen for afternoon classes.

Ashley Moran, a freshman from Houston, said she was waiting to get into class when word quickly began spreading among students to leave immediately. She described the evacuation as "orderly but tense."

"It makes me really nervous I just know we're supposed to get out," she said.

North Dakota State University in Fargo, N.D., also ordered a campus evacuation after a bomb threat Friday morning. But it was unclear whether the two threats were related.

Officials at area universities including the University of Kansas and the University of Missouri said they were monitoring the bomb threat situations in Texas and North Dakota, but their campuses were not under any heightened security.

"We have not gotten any threats here and we have not gotten any security alerts from the Department of Homeland Security," said Jill Jess, KU spokeswoman.

At MU, "our campus law enforcement is watching the situation very closely," said spokesman Christian Basi. "We are being extremely cautious."



Airport funding comes together

By Jacob Barker

Sunday, September 16, 2012

Columbia Mayor Bob McDavid says the region has secured \$3 million in pledges to help lure another airline — offering other destinations — to Columbia Regional Airport.

"It is safe to assume that nearly half of that will come from the city, and the other half of that will come from the private sector, Boone County and the University of Missouri," McDavid said Friday.

For the past year and a half, McDavid has led the push to boost air service, winning support from the private sector and working to bring other local governments and the university on board with the effort. He and economic development officials see it as a critical piece of infrastructure for companies looking to locate in Columbia or expand their operations here.

Although the airport has had a host of successes in recent months — the start of daily flights to Atlanta and the announcement last month by Frontier Airlines that it would begin offering flights to Orlando in November — a volatile airline industry and still limited service options leave city officials far from content. Another destination, they say, will require airport terminal upgrades and a public backstop to cover any losses that a private carrier might incur should it begin servicing Columbia.

If the city can sign an agreement with a carrier, its portion of the revenue guarantee — basically an insurance policy for any airline losses — would come from its fund balance, City Manager Mike Matthes said.

McDavid said the university has pledged "a substantial amount" to the fund, but an MU spokesman declined to confirm that it was willing to dedicate money to the airport.

The university did offer to increase its annual contribution to Regional Economic Development Inc. by \$20,000 a year if the group pledged \$50,000 to the airport — an arrangement that REDI's board approved Wednesday. The private sector also stepped up, with Columbia and Jefferson City businesses pledging \$475,000 for the airport fund.

Another big chunk comes from Boone County, which airport backers were able to wrangle using the county's negotiations with BJC HealthCare over a renewed lease at Boone Hospital Center.

The county was looking for a larger down payment from the lease, and as part of the May agreement, BJC's \$1 million payment to the county stipulated \$500,000 must be used for the guarantee fund.

Tomorrow, the Jefferson City Council will vote on whether to pledge \$100,000 to the fund. Its airport advisory board voted against the contribution, but City Administrator Nathan Nickolaus said city staff supports the idea. The Jefferson City municipal airport isn't large enough to secure commercial flights, and its proximity to downtown makes it complicated for large jets, he said.

"Something that makes a great economic development opportunity for Columbia makes a great economic development opportunity for Jefferson City," Nickolaus said.

McDavid will ask the Jefferson City Council to approve the idea tomorrow. "Not that it makes or breaks the fund, but when we talk to major providers, they want to know Cole County and Jefferson City are committed to air service," McDavid said.

The \$3 million target was identified in Matthes' proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and Greg Steinhoff, who gathered support among area businesses, said it is based on a goal to land a carrier that will provide multiple daily flights.

"When you kind of study other cities and what airlines need in the way of a backstop, I think for the number of flights and the destinations we're looking at, I think the \$3 million is well within the ballpark," Steinhoff said.

The city is shooting for flights that charge no more than a \$30 or \$40 premium above comparable flights from St. Louis or Kansas City, McDavid said. The idea is that the fares will be competitive when factoring in parking and other items.

He's pleased with the way negotiations with carriers are going, but the pressure is running high.

"This may be for the airport a generational opportunity," McDavid said. "If we don't get it right, we may not get another chance at the plate."

The Chronicle of Higher Education

Universities Should Rethink the Publishing Model

To The Editor:

Congratulations to the University of Missouri's president for recognizing the rapidly changing landscape of scholarly publishing. Transformation of the academic-publishing culture toward increased access to research results has begun in libraries and among faculty members who publish in open-access sources. Broadening access to university scholarship assures greater visibility, enhancing the university's global impact, the prominence of institutions, and reputations of scholars.

Universities are prodigious publishers of scholarly and creative work, and nearly all publishing is subsidized through scholarly presses, faculty salaries, library purchases, research administration, and grants for page charges. The academic distributed-publishing infrastructure involves scores of campus offices and stakeholders. Most of these units are not expected to recover direct costs.

Universities have generously supported the stockholders of commercial and certain scholarly society publishers by paying twice for some research and creative work. Research published in scholarly books and journals is first purchased through faculty/staff salaries. Faculty members generally give away their intellectual property to publishers; the university repurchases research in the form of peer-reviewed literature. Faculty members also serve as peer reviewers and editors, usually with no outside compensation.

To keep scholarly publishing sustainable, many university presses and university libraries are collaborating to publish peer-reviewed content online using the open-access model. Open access enables universities to leverage their publishing expenditures by subsidizing costs for peer-reviewed publication once. From then on, anyone connected to the Internet can read the material without additional cost.

Universities should develop new business models to protect their intellectual capital and mobilize their publishing assets by engaging prominent faculty and scholarly societies to envision a more university-centered scholarly-publishing system. Faculty members are eminently

qualified to organize and manage peer review; librarians possess significant knowledge of digital discovery, delivery, and archiving systems; and individuals across the academic community practice efficient publishing processes. Aligning these resources will enable universities to set strategic goals and reallocate funding to achieve the greatest impact from their scholarly publishing investments.

Linda L. Phillips
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Scientists ID HIV mutation

By Janese Silvey

Saturday, September 15, 2012

A team of scientists that includes a researcher at the University of Missouri has discovered a mutation in the human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV, that makes the virus more susceptible to treatment.

That knowledge could help doctors improve the drug regimen they prescribe to HIV-infected people, said Stefan Sarafianos, a researcher at MU's Bond Life Sciences Center.

HIV uses an enzyme to create copies of its genetic codes that are inserted into a victim's genes, taking over the host's cells to reproduce itself. Two types of inhibitor drugs are used to stop that process.

But some HIV strains have become resistant to those treatments. The newly-identified mutation suppresses that resistance, allowing the drugs to fight the virus more efficiently. "Clinical doctors use a database of HIV mutations and the drugs they are susceptible to when they prescribe treatments to an HIV-infected patient," Sarafianos said in a statement. "Our finding will be integrated into this database. Once that happens, when doctors learn that their patients have HIV strains that carry" the specific mutation, "they will know that the infections can be better fought with" the inhibitor treatments.

The study's lead author was Atsuko Hachiya of the AIDS Clinical Center at Japan's National Center for Global Health and Medicine in Tokyo. That's where the mutation was first discovered in a patient. Scientists were later able to re-create it in the lab.

The study was published in the Journal of Biological Chemistry.

theman eater

Coal Free Mizzou presents case at Curator's meeting

MU junior Sarah Johnson led the chanting outside Memorial Union.

Standing in the back of a group of about 30, Johnson clasped her hands together and shouted "M-I-Z!" to the masses. Just like on any Saturday at Faurot Field or basketball game day, she waited for a response.

But this time, sure enough, "Be Coal Free!" wailed the other side.

Johnson, member of the student group Coal Free Mizzou since 2010, led banner-wielding, chanting volunteers into Thursday's UM System Board of Curators meeting. The group's mission for the meeting was to urge the board to make a formal commitment to get coal power off of the MU campus and transition to cleaner energy sources, the group's website states.

They ultimately wanted to get the board to take the issue seriously, Coal Free Mizzou spokeswoman Kelsey Wingo said.

The group was hoping to urge the university to understand how passionate they were about the issue, as evidenced by 3,000 petition signatures and a full-fledged proposal. Wingo said they didn't want it to be anything at all like a protest.

"We want to be allies with the school," she said. "We want to support the school and what they do."

However, Coal Free Mizzou didn't get a chance to make any remarks.

"We appreciate you looking into this for us and we'll assign (Chancellor Brady Deaton) to meet with a management crew so we can look at what can be done in the future in regards to a power plant," Board of Curators chairman David Bradley said in the meeting.

Even though the large student group didn't make any sort of presentation, Johnson was still excited that she and the group had a chance to have their voices heard.

"In the past when we've met with the vice chancellors, any sort of proposal to research or statistics that we've given them have been pushed aside and not looked and taken into consideration when we dialogued with them," Johnson said. "Now they were actually taking notice, looking at (the proposal) and asking questions about it."

At around 3 p.m. Thursday, once the meeting hit its break, Coal Free Mizzou President Alexandra Rather met with Deaton, Johnson said. The chancellor told Rather that he would talk the proposal over with UM System President Tim Wolfe and they would get a team together. He told them they will be ready to have a discussion by the next meeting.

Next week they hope they can make the presentation they've been preparing months for, Johnson said. Their goal is to get the administration to formulate an overarching plan to move beyond coal. They don't think it will come suddenly, but the group wants it to happen by 2015.

Johnson, who was pumping up the crowd members Thursday, said she is happy that MU is on its way.

"I'm so happy (with the way it turned out)," Johnson said, laughing. "I'm about to go open a bottle of wine right now and celebrate."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

A Tiger Town ad in Athens, Ga., newspaper creates a stir

By Sarah Barr

September 14, 2012 | 6:56 p.m. CDT

A Tiger Town ad placed in an Athens, Ga., newspaper thanked UGA fans for visiting and extended a warm-welcome back to Columbia.

A Tiger Town ad gushing about the friendliness of Georgia Bulldog fans appeared in an Athens, Ga., newspaper this week, and it has gone viral.

It turns out the message was paid for by Tom Atkins, who is pulling out the stops to brand Columbia as “Tiger Town USA.”

The ad ran in the print and online editions of the Athens Banner-Herald, a local community newspaper.

It read: “Our thanks to all of you Georgia Bulldog fans! What a terrific bunch of visitors you were — friendly, gracious and fun. We don’t like to lose around here, but both of our teams played an undeniably exciting and awesome game!

You gave us an unforgettable first game in the SEC, and we thank you for that. We hope you enjoyed your visit to mid-Missouri, and look forward to seeing you next time.”

Best wishes from the fans & residents of Tiger Town, USA.”

Atkins said he arranged for the ad to “get the name (Tiger Town) out there.”

He said he was unaware of the stir his advertisement had caused on sports blogs and newspapers.

Joel Provano, an editor with the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, referred to the ad on the newspaper’s sports blog:

"Nice. But can you imagine Auburn or Tennessee fans taking out such an ad after a loss to Georgia? Can you see Georgia fans taking out an ad in the The Alligator thanking Florida fans for a fun time in Jacksonville after a loss?

Clearly, Mizzou needs to step up the hostility a notch if they're going to be a real SEC team."

Nearly three hundred people commented on the post, some defending the move as a sign of Midwestern manners.

"Sounds like you could learn a thing or two from Mizzou, Mr. Provano," one comment noted.

Dog days skip over incubator

By Jake Halliday

Saturday, September 15, 2012

The term "dog days" usually refers to a time period that is very hot or stagnant or is marked by a "dull lack of progress." The heat of this summer came and went, but there were no dog days at the business incubator in Columbia.

In August, Ken Gruber, founder and CEO of Tensive Controls, received an award of \$1.8 million from the National Cancer Institute to continue his work on a new drug that dramatically improves the opportunity for cancer therapies to be effective. Imagine his delight to have his discovery reviewed by the top scientists, physicians and engineers in his field and receive their thumbs-up on its potential to help cancer patients.

One consequence of this success is that Gruber's company has hired additional staff (new jobs for Columbia) and moved from a lab at the business incubator that he was sharing with two other companies (yes, we are that full) into a much larger laboratory just vacated when one of our companies graduated at the end of August.

Earlier this year, incubator company Elemental Enzymes made a pitch to Centennial Investors for capital to complete product development and grow the company. Over the summer, a committee of Centennial Investors members did its homework on Elemental Enzymes' business plan, and in August, it offered Elemental Enzymes' founders almost twice the amount of capital the company had requested. So August was nonstop excitement for Katie and Brian Thompson and their team at Elemental Enzymes as well as for Centennial Investors as they negotiated the deal to closure. In consequence, Elemental Enzymes also added jobs and expanded its laboratory — and the company is projected to need additional laboratory space by the end of the year.

Modern Meadow is a new spinoff based on technology innovated at the University of Missouri. That company created excitement of a different kind over the summer. With the space challenges referred to above, incubator management and MU Campus Facilities moved into top gear to be able to convert shell space at the incubator and build out a double laboratory suite that had to be ready by September — to guarantee this company would take root here in Columbia. I am pleased to report the mission was accomplished. Modern Meadow is attracting international attention and is positioned to announce exciting developments over the coming weeks.

I suspect most entrepreneurs have never experienced dog days. They are too busy creating value and excitement for themselves and those around them on a continuing basis.