UM System Board of Curators to look at raising tuition rates

By Stephanie Ebbs
December 5, 2012 | 8:33 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — The UM System Board of Curators is considering increases to tuition and course fees at all four UM campuses next year. The board will discuss the system’s budget outlook for the next fiscal year as part of its regularly scheduled December meetings Thursday and Friday at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Curators will hear proposals to increase some tuition rates and course fees based on a model that plans for no change in state support. The smallest increases could be at the rate of inflation — projected at 2 percent — while some tuition and fees could increase even more.

However, the projections presented this week could change following Gov. Jay Nixon’s State of the State address in mid-January, when he will lay out his recommended state budget, including funding to higher education.

Although the board will not vote on tuition or fee increases this week, curators will address an assortment of issues during their meetings in St. Louis.

Curators will hear presentations on several financial topics:

- Designs and estimated costs for building projects at MU, including a new residence hall, an expansion of Memorial Stadium, a new press box at the stadium and a new medical building on South Providence Road.
- An extension of employee benefit eligibility to include domestic partners and other adult dependents.
- A report on cost reductions and increased revenue in the system budget totaling about $80 million.

Other items on the board’s agenda include:
The election of a new board chairperson and vice chairperson for 2013.

Debt financing plans for a new chilled water system at University Hospital and an addition to the Benton-Stadler Science Complex at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

A discussion to finalize campus strategic statements that outline how each of the four campuses plan to distinguish themselves competitively.

The board's full agenda, meeting documents and presentation materials are available on the UM System’s website. The system will stream audio of Thursday's meetings online at www.umsystem.edu/curators/stream.

Supervising editor is Zach Murdock.
Tuition increase goes to curators

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

The University of Missouri is proposing a 2 percent tuition increase next year, which is expected to match the consumer price index.

The UM Board of Curators will see the proposed increases at its meeting tomorrow on the St. Louis campus.

For in-state undergraduates, the 2 percent increase would bring the cost of a credit hour up to $274.80, or $5.40 more than the price this year. For Missouri graduate students, it would cost an additional $6.70, or $343.20 per credit hour.

Curators also will consider a slate of supplemental course fee increases, including a new $500-per-semester charge for those enrolled in MU's accountancy program.

The fee would be assessed to students in the final three years of the five-year program, which earns students both bachelor's and master's degrees. The extra money is expected to be used to hire additional faculty and expand course offerings.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Speak up and change the conversation about rape

By Xavier Billingsley
December 5, 2012 | 4:41 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — The past week has opened up an important discussion about dealing with sexual assault on our campus. Despite the incredible resources meant to educate on this issue, the sad truth is that there is still a culture of victim blaming that permeates MU and countless other college communities across the nation. Although it no doubt seems an insolvable problem at times, as students, you and I can have immense influence in shaping the opinions of our peers and promoting a safe environment if only we learn to speak up.

Rape is rape — not only when a sexual advance is forcible but any time one party says "no." There have been no convictions borne out of the accusations discussed this past week, but to think that any student would want to shut out serious concerns about whether an awful crime was committed for the sake of athletics is incredibly disappointing. This shows that even though we have made great strides in dealing with sexual violence and violation, we still have a long way to go.

Much of this conversation about assault has played out over social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. And, although it's important to call out victim blaming wherever it takes place, we have a habit to overlook dangerous sentiments about rape in the classroom, the residence hall and across MU on a face-to-face basis. Although a Tweet can provide an obvious and (because it's on the Internet) permanent representation of victim blaming, it's the casual comments made in-person that can be most damaging — offhand remarks that play down sexual assault as something people "should just get over," something "not that serious."

When you hear comments like this, even when you overhear comments like this made by classmates, say something. Failing to challenge that behavior allows for an environment in which survivors are afraid to come forward, lest they look like they're "blowing things out of proportion." It is our civic and personal responsibility as Mizzou students, staff and faculty to take a stand on issues like this. When victim blaming occurs, another victim is less likely to report.
We have so many phenomenal students, staff and faculty on this campus who work every day to improve this environment at MU. MSA/GPC's Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center is just one stellar example of an organization that can offer valuable information and resources on how you can help make MU a safer place — one where people take sexual assault seriously, as an issue that deserves attention and public discussion. The Green Dot program is one of the best collegiate programs in the country, and we hope that it can continue to help survivors.

To the survivors of sexual violence, please don't be afraid to report. There are people on this campus that care and want to help. If you want to talk to anyone, please visit the RSVP Center in G-210 in the lower level of the Student Center and ask for Ms. Danica. We can help shape this conversation, but that requires speaking up and calling out the trivializing of sexual assault and victim blaming in all its forms.

**Xavier Billingsley is the president of the Missouri Students Association at MU.**
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Recent MU incidents spark 'victim blaming' and some worry

By Arthur Cook Bremer, Hannah Spaar
December 5, 2012 | 8:16 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — First, there was the "bear hug" incident and the jokes that suggested that the woman who'd reported it obviously didn't know what a real crime was.

Then there were the allegations against now-former MU men's basketball player Michael Dixon Jr., and the comments were even harsher and the name-calling more extreme. Tweeted under the hashtags "#FreeMikeDixon" and "#FreeDixon," the comments turned from wanting Dixon's suspension from playing lifted to aggressive posts disparaging his accuser, including the use of vile names and suggestions of how she should be taught a lesson.

"Angry that mike Dixon isn't playing because some jersey chaser wants attention! Screwing with a promising basketball season! #FreeMikeDixon," Twitter user Joe Kenton tweeted.

Although the reactions to the accusations included many who are not MU students, many students participated in the hashtags.

Rigel Oliveri, associate dean of Research and Faculty Development and an associate professor in MU's School of Law, said that these are not unusual reactions to reports of sexual assault.

Oliveri's area of research is sexual harassment and gender. She said she believes part of the reaction behind the vitriol-filled tweets comes from "a deep-rooted cultural tendency to blame and shame women whenever there is a scandal involving sex — whether it be harassment, unwanted pregnancy or adulterous affairs."

"Victim blaming" is a term used to describe this sort of backlash. Sonja Heath, assistant director of the Emily Taylor Center for Women & Gender Equity at the University of Kansas, said that victim blaming is "the mistaken notion that survivors of sexual assault are in some way responsible for the behavior of the attacker."
This holds true in the social media responses to the Dixon and "bear hug" situations, even though the guilt of the accused has not been proven in either. The reactions online centered on the decision-making of the two women rather than the actions alleged.

"Sorry, but this whole 'rape' thing with Mike Dixon got outta hand. It's clear some girls can't handle being rejected. Feel bad for him," Twitter user Sarah Land tweeted the night the second allegation was made public and Dixon left the team. The second allegation stemmed from a 2010 incident that was reported to police, accusing Dixon of rape.

"Victim blaming is especially harmful in that it hinders other survivors from reporting instances of sexual assault," Heath said.

The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network estimates that 54 percent of rapes and sexual assaults are not reported to police.

"Any time women who report sexual assault or harassment are subject to disparagement and personal attack — and especially in a public way — it is likely to deter others from coming forward in the future," Oliveri said.

These concerns were also expressed by Missouri Students Association President Xavier Billingsley in an email to the student body Wednesday.

"To the survivors of sexual violence, please don't be afraid to report," his email said. "There are people on this campus that care and want to help."

April Colvin, a sergeant with MU Police, also expressed concern that victim-blaming attitudes might discourage people from reporting crimes.

"It takes courage when you've been a victim to come forward and report it," Colvin said. "When you've been attacked, you feel particularly victimized, ... and then to have the community turn its back on you is a horrible, horrible thing."

Colvin and Jennifer Lynch, the crime prevention officer for the department, spoke to the Missourian between the two incidents. After the Michael Dixon accusations were made public, inquiries were referred to the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center on campus. The center declined to comment because of a policy "to not comment on active cases nor 'in light of recent events,'" as explained by Danica Wolf, the center's coordinator.
The Boone County prosecutor declined to pursue criminal charges against Dixon in the incident reported to Columbia Police on Aug. 20. There are no criminal charges pending against him.

**Miscommunication adds to confusion**

On Oct. 25, two Clery releases were sent out by MU Police that came to be referred to — almost infamously — as the "bear hug" releases.

The first release was in response to a woman who reported that she was near Ellis Library on campus and "passed an unknown individual who then turned, came up behind her and wrapped his arms around her putting her in a 'bear hug,'" according to the release. The rest of the release detailed how the woman tried to free herself but was unable to do so until someone else approached and she was released. The man who had grabbed her ran away after saying "Oh, I thought you were someone else."

A second release about what was suspected to be a related incident was sent out later that day.

As students took to Facebook groups such as "Overheard at Mizzou" and Twitter to share reactions to the Clery releases, most of the reaction made the incidents into a joke, focusing on the word "hug." Many expressed opinions that the woman shouldn't have reported the incident as a crime. Some of the posts even resorted to calling the woman who reported the incident names, such as "prude."

"It really saddens me that the campus community saw this as trivializing," Colvin said. She explained that "bear hug" is the term they use in the Rape Aggression Defense class the pair teach on campus. The other term used to describe this type of aggression is a "body lock," and she said police did not believe that term would be understood by those reading the Clery Release.

"It is a very controlling technique," Lynch said.

After reading the Clery Release about the incident near the library, an MU student reported to MU Police that a person matching the suspect's description had borrowed his phone more than a week earlier to send a text message to a female student at Stephens College. The student at Stephens College then identified the suspect and accused him of stalking her and using other people's phones to call and send text messages to her.
After Timothy Anderson, another MU student, was arrested, several students at Stephens College came forward to report that they had seen him on campus. Three female students on the campus reported being approached by him.

Anderson is being charged with stalking, third-degree assault and harassment. He has a court trial scheduled for Tuesday.

The Dixon debate

Because of his prominence as a member of the Missouri men's basketball team, the response to the accusations of rape against Michael Dixon stretched beyond the MU student body and into the team's nationwide fan base.

According to Janet Fink, an associate professor at the Mark H. McCormack Department of Sport Management at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, fans with a high attachment to a team or a player will have one of two reactions when they learn that a player or team has been accused of an illegal or immoral act.

They might support the player while disparaging the person or organization who has made the accusation. That's because they see themselves as closely connected to that person or group.

"When people are incredibly and highly identified as a fan, it becomes a part of their social identity, and they see these teams, or a particular player, as an extension of themselves," Fink said.

"Sport fans who have an attachment to a player typically will not accept the immediate accusations as being correct or possible because the attachment is typically generated by the need for vicarious achievement," said Galen Trail, associate professor of sport administration and leadership at Seattle University. "What this means is that a close connection with the player who may have done something wrong reflects poorly on the sport fan who is attached to that player and promotes that association."

A second possible reaction by fans might be to treat the accused as a "black sheep" who does not share the values of the team and its fans, Fink said.

This, too, was a reaction visible on Twitter, though without the help of hashtags to propel the point. In other words, there's no hashtag for people who were disappointed in their peers' reactions.
"We're a green dot school. A school with an RSVP center. A school that respects women. That is so much greater than points on a scoreboard," Kam Phillips said in a series of tweets about how people were reacting to the accusations. Phillips is a former MU Homecoming queen.

Trail said if the athlete is eventually found guilty or more accusations come to light, support from the fans may decrease. This phenomenon was apparent when the second accusation of rape against Michael Dixon was made public on Thursday. Some Twitter users deleted earlier tweets disparaging the accuser as well as tweets supporting Dixon. Some Twitter users went so far as to post admissions that they may have spoken prematurely on the matter.

The Twitter account for the Antlers, a student fan group for the men's basketball team, was one of the early driving forces of the #FreeMikeDixon tweets. After the second allegation was revealed, the group's tweets were deleted.

"Of course, there are always some fans who won't believe regardless," Trail said. This was also observable as some Twitter users continued to post in the same attitude as they had before.

One Twitter account set up in response to the accusations, @DixonFree, has continued to post tweets in defense of Dixon even after the second allegation and Dixon's decision to leave the team.

But Fink predicted that with Dixon transferring to another college, fans' connection to him will start to weaken.

"If he is accused of sexual misconduct in the future, research indicates the fans that are defending him now would not hesitate to condemn him when he is a member of another team," Fink said.

However, some fans with a high attachment to the team may still blame those who have made the accusations against Dixon if they feel the team is doing poorly as a result of his absence, Fink said.

Why we blame

Heath said that one of the main reasons people blame victims for what happens to them is that it makes them feel safer.

"I think it's easy to say (it's the victim's fault) because not only does it allow ourselves to distance ourselves from that behavior but also because it's very difficult for us to look at a
situation and not place blame," Heath said. She said it’s easiest to look at a situation and name the decisions you wouldn’t make in order to help the situation make more sense.

Heath said one of the most common examples of situations where women are most often blamed is when they have consumed alcohol. Neither the Dixon or the Anderson incidents were reported to involve alcohol, but Heath said it is one of the most common aspects of victim blaming on college campuses.

What the Dixon allegations did involve was an issue of consent.

"Consent is a difficult thing to understand, and that’s where we get these victim-blaming ideas," Heath said.

Many of the tweets about the first allegation against Dixon mentioned aspects of the police report, using them to say that what was being described was not rape.

"We try to understand the situation, but only the two of them will ever know what happened," Heath said. She said people have a lot of misconceptions about consent, such as believing consent to one type of behavior means consent to all sexual acts or that consent cannot be revoked.

"Sure, we may read a report, talk to friends, read a newspaper article, but we will never know what actually happened," Heath said.

Supervising editor is Katherine Reed.
MU students take campus coal campaign to St. Louis

(AP) -- ST. LOUIS (AP) -- A University of Missouri student group fighting for a coal-free campus is taking its campaign to St. Louis.

Coal Free Mizzou wants university leaders to commit to using renewable energy to completely power the system's campuses by 2015. They plan a coal-free demonstration Friday during the Board of Curators meeting at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Organizers say they will be joined by students from Missouri-St. Louis, Missouri-Kansas City, Webster University and Washington University.

They held a similar silent and peaceful protest at the curators' previous meeting in September and have met with President Tim Wolfe and other top administrators.

The student effort is part of a national Sierra Club campaign that focuses on coal use at U.S. universities.
MU prepares for possible federal cuts

Research might see an impact.

By Janese Silvey

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

University of Missouri administrators are trying to brace for federal budget cuts, but it's difficult because they're not sure yet what is on the other side of the "fiscal cliff."

Unless Congress acts, sequestration will become effective Jan. 2, leading to across-the-board cuts to federal agencies.

In fiscal year 2011, MU spent nearly $200 million from federal funds coming in the form of grants, contracts and other awards from the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Agriculture and other agencies. If those agencies passed along the across-the-board cut, 8.4 percent in most cases, MU would face a $16.7 million loss, said Tim Rooney, MU's budget director.

But there are a lot of factors that could change that number. Agencies might have internal reserve funds to cushion some of the cuts they pass along, said Rhonda Gibler, who is taking over as budget director in January. Agencies such as the National Science Foundation also might prioritize research areas, sparing some projects while cutting others more heavily, she said, or they could make adjustments to grants that have been advertised but not yet funded.

"There are a lot of scenarios," Gibler said.

Researchers on campus don't seem to be in panic mode; few have contacted the MU Office of Research to discuss the cuts, said Rob Duncan, MU's vice chancellor for research.

"I think that most faculty think that some deal will be reached at that point, as I do, but we must be prepared if sequestration hits," he said in an email.

If it were to happen, Duncan said, the impact would be felt across campus.

"We are all funded through the discretionary part of the federal budget, and both discretionary defense and non-defense are hit equally hard under the current sequestration plans," he said. "Most basic research is conducted in universities today, and if we drop public support of basic..."
research, then we know that there will be profoundly negative impacts on our national competitiveness and on our general livelihood and quality of life.

If the cuts go into effect, researchers relying on federal grants likely would have to re-evaluate the scope of their studies to match a smaller budget, Rooney said. Departments on campus could use reserve funds and provide some temporary money to give researchers time to make adjustments.

"We could provide some bridge funding," Rooney said. "But we're not going to replace federal funding. We can't do that."

Some student aid also is at risk, although Pell grants, which are awarded to low-income students, are safe from the cuts. MU estimates a loss of about $311,600 in work-study funds as well as other federal scholarships. Rooney thinks the campus could make up that lost funding with reserves to help students now relying on those programs to pay for college.

"We're hoping we might be able to handle that from our fund balance so our students will not be disadvantaged," he said.

A cut, though, would mean fewer federal dollars available for future students.

Rooney does not expect sequestration to be factored in when the university considers future tuition increases. "I don't see that as a direction we will want to go," he said.

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com
MU Residential Life uncertain about future of campus housing for graduate students

By Dan Burley
December 6, 2012 | 6:00 a.m. CST

COLUMBIA — As upscale student apartments surface around Columbia and residence halls rise with MU's student population, the Department of Residential Life continues to search for a long-term housing solution for graduate students and students with families. Since 2008, Residential Life has explored renovating or rebuilding four aging complexes known as University Student Apartments, particularly University Village and University Heights on South Providence Road, Residential Life Director Frankie Minor said.

Residential Life reserves the apartments for students with children, married students, single graduate students and students older than 21 — demographics likely to prioritize close proximity to campus, affordable housing and access to child care and public transportation.

"These are typically not the type of students receiving financial support like your traditional undergrad," Minor said.

In total, 436 residents have contracts with the apartments, which also include Manor House and Tara Apartments. Graduate or professional students comprise 76 percent of the tenant population, according to statistics provided by Residential Life.

MU Vice Chancellor Cathy Scroggs, who heads a committee on graduate housing, said the university remains committed to providing inexpensive graduate and family housing. But it also needs to acknowledge the financial realities of a competitive, high-rent private apartment market, she said. In what manner MU moves forward in the graduate housing market remains unclear. Universities across the country are wrestling to remain loyal to their graduate and family housing residents as well as adhere to their bottom lines.

"Kansas, Texas, Texas A&M, Iowa State and many others — they're all struggling with the same issue," Minor said.
Affordable and close, but ...

University Village was constructed in 1956, and University Heights was completed three years later. The two-story, terrace-style apartments were built to accommodate married students, according to the student housing reference file in the MU archives. The adjoining complexes stand nearly unchanged since their original construction. Residents complain of leaky windows, cracked ceilings and chipped paint. The faded-brown bricks, fluorescent lights and iron stairwells give the exterior an impersonal feel.

But they are convenient. Campus is just across Providence Road. The Student Parent Center at University Village provides day care for the children of residents. And rent, relatively speaking, is cheap. For example, a two-bedroom apartment at University Village runs $485 a month plus utilities. A two-bedroom apartment at the Ashwood Apartments near campus starts at $670 a month plus utilities, according to Ashwood’s brochure. Both complexes allow children.

From Nepal to Columbia

Finances, a short walk to campus and the comfort of dealing with the university instead of a private landlord lured Bhawani Mishra to University Village in 2006. Mishra, a doctoral candidate in agricultural and applied economics, moved from Nepal with his wife, Kalpana, and 4-year-old daughter Anusha.

Mishra spoke English but had little working knowledge of the U.S. housing market, he said. Like many international students coming to school in the U.S., Mishra couldn’t visit apartments and shop around. A friend already studying at MU linked him to the University Student Apartments’ website.

"It’s a good thing for international students to be close to the university," Mishra said. "And I like going through the institution. You know who you’re dealing with." International residents account for 42 percent of the graduate and family housing population. Nearly half of those residents are from China. Now, as he wraps up his degree, Mishra, 40, said he’s been relatively happy with residential life. He said they’ve responded to most of his maintenance requests. His only complaint is the annual increase in rent. Rent usually jumps 2 percent to 3 percent per year, Minor said.

"I recommend that my friends stay with the university," Mishra said. "The apartments look very old, but you’ve got to judge by multiple variables."
Alana Flowers, president of Mizzou Families Involved Together, or MizFit, toured University Heights in January 2011. She was searching for an apartment for herself and her 3-year-old daughter, Addyson.

"It was not appealing," Flowers said. "It's located next to a busy road, and it gets really dark at night." Roughly 15 percent of the residents at the University Student Apartments live with their spouse or children, according to information provided by Residential Life.

Catherine Leviten-Reid, a professor of community economic development at Cape Breton University in Sydney, Nova Scotia, said that as MU weighs its options, the challenges of a graduate student juggling a full-time workload while raising a child should be kept in mind. In 2009, Leviten-Reid co-authored a study, "Making Space for Graduate Student Parents: Practice and Politics," that explored the institutional disadvantages of graduate students, often without an income, caring for children.

"Old institutions were developed at a time when most students who went to university were males," Leviten-Reid said. "The institutions are changing slower than the world around them." Along with day care in the student apartments, Leviten-Reid recommends a co-op system at the housing complex so students can exchange high chairs, strollers and winter wear.

Finding a place to live

Mishra's 6 1/2-year tenancy is rare for the University Student Apartments. Scroggs said the average student stays 18 months. A few years ago, Residential Life capped the maximum stay to three years. Scroggs and Minor have noticed out-of-state and international students using the apartments as a transitional residence until they better familiarize themselves with Columbia. This insight has shifted the administrators' outlook on the future of graduate and family housing.

"I don't have an answer on how to replace or renovate the housing," Scroggs said. "But our residents are getting here, getting accustomed to the community and moving out. We need to step our game up in referring them to off-campus housing." Graduate Professional Council President Kristofferson Culmer, who has worked closely with Scroggs on the issue, said MU's future role could be that of a mediator, channeling students toward off-campus housing options.
"Students from out-of-state and out-of-the-country shouldn't be left to their own devices to find housing," he said. "After talking with graduate students, the issue isn't with the conditions of housing but the process of acquiring housing."

The MU Wellness Resource Center’s off-campus housing office already acts as a hub, helping undergraduate and graduate students find off-campus residences. More than 2,000 students visited the center’s off-campus housing fair on Nov. 14. The office is staffed by a part-time graduate student, but Wellness Resource Center Director Kim Dude said a new position — a full-time, off-campus housing coordinator — is expected to be created by summer 2013.

"We put special emphasis on populations like international students, students with children and freshman who can’t find a spot in the residence halls," Dude said. Minor said 5 percent of MU’s 6,481 graduate students live in Residential Life housing. He’s working with a bioinformatics team to map out where graduate students who live off campus cluster. He said understanding the students’ behavior can help craft Residential Life’s plans.

"If I had to guess, I bet they’re living around public transportation, near schools and grocery stores," Minor said.

**At other universities**

Helen Baker oversees the two university apartment complexes at the University of Iowa. Just like MU, Iowa’s apartments cater to families and graduate students but imposes no age restriction, unlike MU’s restriction of 21 years and older. Baker said the apartments’ age is becoming a factor. Hawkeye Drive Apartments, which has 168 two-bedroom apartments, was built in 1960. The 427-unit Hawkeye Court was built in 1968.

Rent for a two-bedroom apartment ranges from $480 to $600 a month, lower than the average rate in Iowa City. As with MU, Baker said any plan to rebuild the apartments would push rent higher than cost-conscious students can afford.

"All of the schools in the Big 10 are struggling with it," Baker said. "These apartments are aging. We’re trying to keep affordable housing for students, but if we rebuild, it’ll be hard to keep the rent low, especially with the competition." The University of South Carolina has decided to stop providing graduate and family housing by 2016.

The university has two apartment complexes with 177 units total. The apartments accommodate 2 percent of the 7,340 graduate and professional students enrolled, said Heather Young, coordinator for marketing and communications for university housing.
After analyzing the financial implications of renovating or rebuilding the graduate apartments, Young said in an email, "We determined as an institution that the private market could address the needs of our graduate students and their families." SEC schools that have left the graduate housing market are the University of Auburn, the University of Arkansas, the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia and the University of Tennessee, Minor said. Vanderbilt University and Mississippi State University also plan to close their facilities by 2016, he said.

**Possible solutions at MU**

MU's Department of Residential Life, a self-sufficient operation that doesn't receive funding from the state, has yet to find space in its $2.8 million budget to finance renovation for the University Student Apartments. Minor said he has spoken with private developers about rebuilding University Heights and University Village, but it's been a struggle finding a financially feasible model.

"Most private developers don't want anything to do with graduate and family housing," Scroggs said. So far, Minor said any renovation model he's toyed with would raise two-bedroom rent to $1,300 a month to recover the costs.

University Village's flood-plain designation makes renovations even more difficult. Bordered to the west by Flat Branch Creek, 10 of the complex's 14 buildings are situated on ground designated as "100-year flood plain elevation," according to MU Campus Facilities' stormwater master plan map. To renovate while also accommodating the same number of students, Residential Life would have to fill in the land to at least 2 feet above the flood plain or add floors to its current housing not in the flood plain.

"You see children living in highrises in New York and Chicago, but we don't want that here," Minor said.

Another option is the master lease, similar to what MU does at Campus View Apartments. Residential Life would rent out apartments and run them like the University Student Apartments. This idea, too, is in the preliminary stages.

"We've got a ways to go," Minor said. "We're not going to get out of the business all together. Right now we just can't afford to reinvest in the current type of facilities."

*Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixey.*
Smithsonian working with MU to restore part of Jefferson tombstone

By Keith Reid-Cleveland
December 5, 2012 | 6:19 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — With its back to Francis Quadrangle, the original tombstone of one of the country's founding fathers has a space for an epitaph that's been empty for more than a century.

The slab memorializing Thomas Jefferson that once had filled that space rests in the attic of Jesse Hall — for now.

The 150- to 200-pound marble slab will be sent to the Smithsonian Institution for extensive restoration, nearly 130 years after the grave marker was first dedicated at MU.

The restoration project is anticipated to take up to a year and is being done for MU free of charge. When the slab is returned to the university, it is expected to be put on display for the public, John Murray, assistant director of business services for the university, said.

Carol Grissom, senior objects conservator at the Museum Conservation Institute, and her team at the Smithsonian will examine the damage that the slab has gathered over time and determine how to repair it.

"We will examine some samples using the scanning electron microscope and conduct other analyses," Grissom said in a news release. "We also know that the stone was previously broken, so we might try to take it apart first to get a better look at the internal damage."

According to a plaque on the front of the memorial, the tombstone was officially dedicated at MU on June 4, 1885. The epitaph has been kept in storage in Jesse Hall since 1895, though it was originally held in the university's Academic Hall until the building famously burned down in 1892.

Grissom and her team also plan on finding out where the stone used to make the slab came from.
"Was it something that was imported, domestic or local?" Grissom said. "The information is historically significant, but it could also affect the treatment of the stone."

Time took its toll on the monument before it arrived at the university from Monticello, Va., leaving it cracked and weather-beaten. The worn epitaph, written by Jefferson himself, reads:

"Here was buried

Thomas Jefferson

Author of the Declaration of American Independence

Of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom

& Father of the University of Virginia."

MU was the first state university in the Louisiana Territory, which included over 800,000 square miles of land west of the Mississippi River, purchased from France in 1803. Jefferson played a major role in obtaining this land. MU is even modeled after the University of Virginia, which Jefferson founded in 1819.

"Something like that is obviously important to the country's history, and Thomas Jefferson was a very important part of the university's history, since he created the land-grant institution," Murray said. "It's a national treasure, and we consider it a treasure of the university."

Supervising editor is Simina Minstrateu.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU hosts doomsday discussion to debunk end of the world theories

By Kaylie Denenberg
December 5, 2012 | 10:08 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — When Rosie Robinson’s sixth-grade history teacher told her that the world was going to end in 2012, it struck fear in her heart.

Now 17, Robinson says she has been dreading this month for years.

On Wednesday night, Robinson and so many students, faculty and other members of the community piled into a lecture hall for a discussion of doomsday predictions that the group had to move to a different room to accommodate all the visitors, Angela Speck, professor and director of astronomy at MU, delivered the presentation debunking end of the world theories as a part of the "Cosmic Conversations" lecture series.

Speck’s goal was to show people the Mayan calendar wasn't meant to predict the end of the world.

"It’s just a calendar," she said, laughing.

The doomsday discussion was the kick-off event for the MU Department of Physics and Astronomy's "Countdown to the End of the World," which will include various events and discussions leading up to Dec. 21, the supposed Mayan prediction for the end of the world. The countdown will end with a Dec. 21 rooftop party on MU's Physics Building.

With shows such as "Doomsday Preppers" airing on television and frequent chats on the Internet about the end of the world, it's no wonder people want to seek out information and discuss predictions surrounding the world’s supposed impending doom.

After attending the event, Robinson said she feels much better and thinks people need to stop making predictions.

"Why cause fear when there is no backup?" Robinson said.
Speck thought it would be a good conversation to put on the department's "Countdown" schedule after attending an event this summer where experts on the Mayan people discussed the myth and updated research.

"This is a great opportunity to involve people who might not usually come to a science talk," Speck said. "We get to pull in a new audience."

Doomsday predictions have been made before, but none have reached the hype the myth of the Mayan calendar has since it began. Speck says that there are a lot of factors that add to the hype surrounding this prediction.

"It's just another fad for people to get behind and talk about," Mikah Sargent, 20, said. "It just goes along with other groups who have said similar things."

Although predictions have been made before, the Internet and social media have greatly contributed to the amount of attention this particular myth has received. The danger is that incorrect information is also being spread, Speck said.

"Everyone is entitled to the truth," Colby Delise, 20, said. "It can be dangerous when people feel like they have nothing to lose."

Speck doesn't believe the world is going to end in a catastrophic event, but she isn't surprised there are people who are scared. She says that though it is ill informed to think the world will end on a certain date, there are still other natural disasters people should be prepared for.

"If this pushes people to be prepared for some kind of catastrophe, that isn't a bad thing," Speck said.

Supervising editor is Zach Murdock.
MU to host event on future of news

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

A symposium on tablet computers and mobile news begins tomorrow at the University of Missouri.

The symposium and workshop, titled "Pressing Ahead: Tablets, Mobile and News After Paper," is scheduled for tomorrow and Friday at the Reynolds Journalism Institute on the MU campus.

Sessions will include information on technologies for digital publishing, research on mobile media and strategies for growth in mobile news content and applications.

Most events will take place Friday, beginning with registration at 8 a.m. The symposium is free and open to the public.

A full schedule and registration information are available at www.rjionline.org