Give big and get your name on a University of Missouri building

20 hours ago • Associated Press

Jesse Hall and the columns on the campus of the University of Missouri-Columbia, pictured on July 28, 2010. Photo by Erik M. Lunsford, elunsford@post-dispatch.com

COLUMBIA, Mo. • The University of Missouri is working to make it easier to honor big-money donors who want their names on multiple campus buildings.

A rule first adopted in 1969 says donors can have just one campus building named on their behalf. The rule applies to the four system campuses in Columbia, Kansas City, Rolla and St. Louis.

The university’s Board of Curators now wants to loosen that restriction. At a meeting last week in Rolla, several governing board members and a top campus fundraiser said the rule is antiquated and may discourage multiple gifts by deep-pocketed benefactors.

"Donors who have already made a major investment in the university and had a good experience, and felt good about their recognition, are the best prospects to make the next major investment," said Joan Nesbitt, vice chancellor for university advancement at Missouri University of Science & Technology in Rolla.
"The rule has the potential to signal to a donor that we value your contributions, but we don't value your recognitions and legacy," she added.

Curators didn't immediately approve the change but instead asked university lawyers to write a revised rule for future consideration.

Nesbitt said she hasn't encountered similar limits on naming rights in a 20-year career as a university fundraiser. An informal survey of other campus fundraisers in Missouri and beyond also failed to turn up any comparable restrictions, she said. That group included responses from Ohio State University, Washington University in St. Louis and Boston University.

Missouri S&T Chancellor Cheryl Schrader cautioned that some generous donors want to invest their money in seemingly divergent areas of interest. At Boise State University, where she worked as engineering dean before coming to Rolla, the names of one donor couple graced both a civil engineering building and a performing arts center. Another couple chose to fund a tennis complex and a business building.

"This collective rule could potentially force people to choose," she said.

University officials didn't publicly indicate whether a specific proposed donation was driving the suggested change, but Curator Don Downing noted that Missouri's public universities are far more dependent on private gifts now than four decades ago, when the campuses got most of their money from taxpayers.

University of Missouri-Columbia Chancellor Brady Deaton joined the chorus of support but cautioned the university to "not allow itself to be overly branded in a direction that's not appropriate."

He also pointed out that the existing rule may have some flexibility, noting the presence on the Columbia campus of the Donald W. Reynolds Alumni Center and the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute. Both are named for the Missouri School of Journalism graduate who founded the Donrey Media Group.

For Nesbitt, the change boils down to putting her campus and others in the Missouri system on a level playing field.

"It feels a little bit like telling a student, 'Hey you can get as many degrees as you want, but we're only going to give you one diploma,'" she said.
UM System looks to lift limits on naming rights

Monday, April 15, 2013 | 10:43 a.m. CDT; updated 4:47 p.m. CDT, Monday, April 15, 2013
BY ALAN SCHER ZAGIER/The Associated Press

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Enforcement director urges NCAA to drop motion to dismiss in Haith case

COLUMBIA — A few weeks after Missouri coach Frank Haith joined the University of Miami and other coaches in an effort to get the NCAA to drop its case, the NCAA’s enforcement staff is defending itself.

A 42-page document sent by Jonathan Duncan, the NCAA’s interim vice president of enforcement, urges the Committee on Infractions to deny the motions to dismiss because they are “largely based on assumptions, misleading statements and meritless claims.” The document was obtained by CBSSports.com.

Miami’s motion to dismiss was obtained by ESPN two weeks ago, but Haith’s attorneys have refused to release their client’s motion, citing the NCAA’s request for confidentiality. The enforcement staff’s rebuttal document is revealing in the sense it shines more light on the specific topics Miami and Haith are attacking the enforcement staff’s handling of the case. Among them:

* Miami and Haith allege the enforcement staff found imprisoned booster Nevin Shapiro to be credible before obtaining any corroborating evidence, as Miami and Haith used a letter written to a judge endorsing Shapiro’s credibility by Ameen Najjar — the NCAA’s director of enforcement at the time — as proof of the staff’s bias.

The NCAA’s rebuttal disputes this, saying the enforcement staff conducted 100-plus interviews and reviewed 1,000 pages of documents in an attempt to verify Shapiro’s claims during the course of the investigation. It also cited the fact that some of Shapiro’s information did not lead to allegations and the fact the investigation took almost two years to complete as proof the enforcement staff had not pre-judged the case.

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* Miami and Haith accuse the enforcement staff of leaking information to the media. Duncan denies this, saying specifically that the staff did not leak Miami’s motion to dismiss and was also not the source for the CBSSports.com report in January that said Haith would be hit with an unethical conduct charge when he received his notice of allegations.

The rebuttal states that in his motion, Haith says the CBSSports.com report was “an almost verbatim recital” of the information the enforcement staff provided he and his attorneys the week before. But the enforcement staff maintains the claim “lacks merit” because the report ultimately proved to be inaccurate. Haith was charged with failure to monitor, a less serious charge than unethical conduct.

* Miami and Haith accuse enforcement staff members Abigail Grantstein and Brynna Barnhart of lying to Haith and former Miami assistant Jake Morton about what other interview subjects had said in an attempt
to obtain condemning information on both — an impermissible investigative tactic, as specified in the NCAA's external review of its investigation.

Interestingly, the enforcement staff admitted that both Grantstein and Barnhart did “misspeak in the questioning of Haith and Morton,” but disagreed with the assertion that it was done with unethical intent or impacted the underlying allegations.

*Haith also alleges that when one of his attorneys spoke to Grantstein before his Sept. 5 interview, she repeatedly told him that the interview would contain “no surprises” and “new issues” and added that the purpose of the interview was to wrap up details from the first interview, held in October. Yet, Haith asserted in his motion that the interview “went well beyond the scope of any questions posed” during the first interview.

The enforcement staff responds in the document by saying it does not feel an obligation to “specifically identify which topics will be covered during an interview,” and added that Haith does not implicitly state which new issues were discussed and neither he nor his counsel raised any concerns about the questioning either during the interview or in a subsequent interview on Sept. 25.

*Duncan also defends the enforcement staff on a number of other subjects, including the criticism it has received from Miami president Donna Shalala and the actions of several enforcement staff members that have been let go, and closed the document by reiterating his stance that the Haith and others were “grasping at straws” in their attempt to get the case thrown out. Nevertheless, he ends with the following:

“However, the enforcement staff would first defer to the judgment of the Committee on Infractions regarding whether it has the authority to act to dismiss a case prior to a hearing. If the Committee on Infractions determines that it has such authority, the enforcement staff believes that the only legitimate argument raised for such action relates to the potential violation of confidentiality involving the public release of Cadwalader report. Nevertheless, even if the Committee on Infractions believes that a violation occurred in that regard, the enforcement staff is uncertain as to any demonstration of harm that would merit dismissal of the case.”
San Francisco — As state support for higher education has plummeted, public colleges have had to look elsewhere for money. That shift has brought changes, both good and bad, said Bradley Barnes during a session here on Monday of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers' annual meeting.

Many public colleges act more like private ones in their pursuit of and reliance on tuition revenue, said Mr. Barnes, senior associate director of undergraduate admissions at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa. "You may not want to admit it," he said, "but it's happening."

On the positive side, tuition can be a more reliable form of revenue than state support is, Mr. Barnes said. That can give colleges a little more stability.

But as public colleges seek more students who can pay more, and especially those from out of state who are charged a much higher price, the institutions risk limiting access, he said. That could undercut the whole purpose of public education.

After the University of Alabama saw its state funds drop, it "made an all-in commitment to out-of-state recruitment," Mr. Barnes said. Today about 40 percent of the university's freshmen come from out of state. The university has had enough capacity that it hasn't hit the point where in-state students are being boxed out, he said, but things are sure to "heat up" when it does.

Using tuition revenue to replace state funds treats the symptom, not the disease, said Bart Grachan, an audience member, during the session's question-and-answer period. Public colleges shouldn't give up so quickly, said Mr. Grachan, director of the Community College Transfer Opportunity Program at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development.

Perhaps when their support is cut, he said, colleges should make a better argument to their state governments than "Hey, c'mon, we were using that."
New bug lives on MU campus

Professor names species after MU.

By Karyn Spory

It was complete serendipity that Ben Puttler discovered a new insect, one he has named after the college campus where he found it.

In spring 2005, Puttler, an assistant professor emeritus of entomology at the University of Missouri, was studying a wasp that would attack an insect called Aphis hyperici — a reddish insect that feeds on a plant called Hypericum, or St. John's wort. It was while he was studying Aphis hyperici that he noticed a similar insect.

"I just happened to be looking at the plant, and I saw these black mummies, which is characteristic of this genus," Puttler said, referring to the shells of the bugs.

The next year, Puttler went out and collected a sample of the insect and sent it to Doris Lagos, a doctoral candidate in entomology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, whose thesis is about the systematics of the genus Aphis.

"At first she thought it was the same" as Aphis hyperici, "but looking further, we found out it was different," Puttler said.

Lagos did a DNA extraction and found the newly discovered Aphis mizzou and Aphis hyperici had "high genetic divergence." She said even though the species were closely related, "their biology and ecology are different."

When Puttler's discovery was authenticated, he was allowed to name the new species. He chose the name Aphis mizzou in honor of the place where he made his discovery. But there's another link to the campus: Puttler noted that as of right now, the MU campus is the only place where Aphis mizzou has been found.

Aphis mizzou has a five-segmented antenna and a black head, thorax and abdomen that look to be dusted with white wax. It feeds on the sap of plants, mainly St. John's wort, but Puttler said Aphis mizzou doesn't seem to harm the plant.
Aphis mizzou is expected to be seen on campus around May, but Puttler said good luck to anyone trying to find it — it's smaller than a grain of pepper.
Why we need a better conversation about the future of journalism education

By Tom Rosenstiel
Published Apr. 15, 2013 9:20 am
Updated Apr. 15, 2013 5:09 pm

Two New York writers exchanged misfire recently about journalism education, and almost all of it was misdirected. Then the conversation they started died with damning faint praise.

We should have that conversation, only a better one.

The brouhaha began when media pugilist Michael Wolff in USA Today attacked the Columbia’s Graduate School of Journalism as a “disgrace” and “an intellectual failure” largely because President Lee Bollinger had appointed a traditional journalist as new dean, ex-Washington Post managing editor and New Yorker writer Steve Coll.

The New York Times’ David Carr rose to praise Columbia and Coll, but in the process he tarred almost everyone else. “Journalism education is something of a confidence game,” he tossed off. Given a shrinking job base, “many journalism programs ... are escalators to nowhere.”

This is a critical juncture in the history of how we teach the next generation of journalists—whether they work in conventional newsrooms or elsewhere. Some schools, including the University of Colorado, Indiana University and Emory University, have made the decision to do away with their standalone journalism programs. The reason, oversimplified, is that the trade school model of teaching journalism, which has never fit comfortably in research universities, falters when the jobs supporting it are shrinking.

The universities, however, are walking away at exactly the wrong moment. The trade school model is giving way to something better, a change many of us have been advocating for years. In the process, research universities now have a larger responsibility and role to play in helping rethink and revive civic discourse and ensuring journalism has a sustainable and ethical role in that. The opportunity will require new approaches. But it is not the time to leave the field because it doesn’t ring the cash register the way it used to.

But Wolff and Carr got several things wrong. First, they fundamentally mis-defined the universe. Nick Lemann estimated by phone that roughly 200,000 students take communication and journalism classes in the United States, the majority of them undergraduates studying public relations, communications or other fields, many learning basic skills in writing, grammar, information theory. There is no market failure there.
Lemann, Columbia journalism school’s outgoing dean, noted that only about 2,000 students are in “professional” graduate journalism programs like Columbia’s (my alma mater). And none of them is all that similar. USC’s Geneva Overholser told me by phone that many students are getting better jobs out of school than previous generations ever did because they have digital skills now in demand (and newsrooms are shifting to less costly workers).

Wolff and Carr, in Lemann’s words, were also evaluating journalism school “by the metrics of a Monroe College placard on a New York subway car that the investment should be equal to the salary of an entry level job in the field.”

If journalism has value to democratic society that makes it more than another form of commerce, then licensed or not, it has the qualities of a profession and should be evaluated as we evaluate other professional schools.

A few months ago, a group of foundation funders wrote to an open letter to nearly 500 college presidents arguing that journalism and mass communication education was not changing fast enough and advocating a move to a “teaching hospital” model.

The letter is too easily misinterpreted. In the teaching hospital metaphor, students produce journalism for public rather than classroom consumption under the watch of a skilled professional editor teacher. In so doing, the journalism they produce is better, more digital, more connected to the community, and helps make up for some of what’s disappearing from commercial newsrooms.

But as a central idea for modernizing journalism education, the teaching hospital concept is too limited. In many ways, it’s an extension of the trade school approach. Tom Goldstein, one of the most thoughtful educators of the era (a former Berkeley and Columbia dean) pointed out in a phone interview. There are limits to what students are capable of producing. (Medical students don’t start to practice until they have been in school for years). It works far better under the careful tutelage of an extraordinary practitioner such as former Washington Post Editor Len Downie at Arizona State University than some others.

The approach also misses the fact that given the pace of change and the uncertainty about journalism going forward, a range of experiments is better than a single solution.

The biggest thing missing in this conversation is that those experiments are now occurring.

At the University of Missouri, scholars such as Esther Thorson and others at the Reynolds Institute are pushing toward economic research for the news industry to operate more scientifically. At Columbia, the first double degree majors in computer science and journalism will soon graduate.

At the University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs, Robert Steiner has developed a wholly new approach (which I hope I’ve helped him refine) of recruiting subject matter experts — academics and professions — to become journalists in their own disciplines. Steiner’s idea connects to the scholarship of Matthew Nisbet at American University about what he calls Knowledge Journalists, reporters who move beyond simply covering events to creating new knowledge through their own expertise.
Scholars such as George Washington’s Matthew Hindman are pioneering understanding of metrics and audiences. At USC, Robert Hernandez is pioneering concepts in peer learning, students creating their own curriculum, with teachers as Socratic coaches. Poynter’s Howard Finberg has written about distance learning, and Rosental Alves at the University of Texas is at the cutting edge of using MOOCs to reach across international borders. I am barely scratching the surface.

Hernandez and scores of others are examples of a new model of journalism educator — young dynamic thinkers who have moved to teaching because they want to invent and rethink, and because universities are better incubators now than shrinking newsrooms. PolitiFact’s creator Bill Adair, for instance, is leaving for Duke. These innovators can be found a lot of places, not just “top” schools.

For years, journalism was marred by an ugly streak of anti-intellectualism — the denial of theory, the exaltation of craft, the repudiation professional identity, ignorance of scholarship. One byproduct of the crisis in journalism is that anti-intellectualism is giving way to something better at schools where practitioners and scholars work together to create a new curriculum.

At the risk of oversimplifying, I think there are four essential components to the new curriculum for teaching news and communication.

1. **Teaching of technical skills** (how to use different platforms and technology). A critical dimension of this teaching is computer science, so journalists can invent new ways of reporting. But given the pace of technology change, technology and platform skill cannot be the singular core they once were. The key is to teach students enough that learn they can master these tools themselves on their own as the tools change.

2. **Journalistic responsibility** (including history, values, ethics, community, material that always made journalists better). Now that journalism is more than whatever journalists do, knowing what the public requires of a responsible journalism is even more important.

3. **Understanding of business** (how to understand audience metrics, revenue, entrepreneurship). Journalists are hamstrung if they are illiterate on these matters.

4. **The intellectual discipline of verification**, what some call evidence and inference, or what might better be understood as social empiricism. It is a more conscious, disciplined and clinical approach to what we once called knowing how to report, think and write. At its best, journalistic inquiry is a rigorous, numerically literate, skeptical and independent way of thinking, in the same way we describe law, engineering and medicine as teaching a way of thinking. As Jack Hamilton, the former provost and dean at LSU told me on the phone, these were always the core of the best journalism.

The curriculum for this more fully realized vision of journalism as intellectual discipline rather than a set of techniques isn’t complete. It must be built out further from other parts of the university, from anthropology and sociology, computer science, and beyond. It will require a range of scholarship, from applied to theoretical. And it will require a range of scholars and practitioners to invent it.

Does that sound a bit academic for journalism education? It should.
Schools visit MU for MBA contest

The Trulaske College of Business at the University of Missouri played host to the first MBA Case Competition for the Southeastern Conference.

Each of the 14 SEC schools participated in the event Thursday through Saturday. Participating students took real business cases from event sponsor AT&T and created a proposal for the company. The teams with the best solutions received awards, including a divided cash purse of $20,000.

Overall first place went to the University of Florida. The University of Arkansas took second place, and third place went to Texas A&M University.
MU internist takes leadership position

A University of Missouri professor has been named president-elect of the American College of Physicians.

David Fleming, professor of internal medicine and director of the Center for Health Ethics at the MU School of Medicine since its inception in 2001, began his one-year term as president-elect Thursday during the ACP’s annual scientific meeting in San Francisco. He will serve as the group's president from 2014 to 2015.

ACP is a national and international professional organization of internists, with a membership of 133,000 internists, internal medicine subspecialists, medical students, residents and fellows.

Fleming, a medical school graduate of MU, has been a member of ACP since 1980 and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians since 1986.
Mizzou Botanic Garden hosts plant fashion show

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

A botanical garden at the University of Missouri is sponsoring a spring fashion show for style mavens and backyard gardeners.

The Mizzou Botanic Garden encompasses plant displays near historic points across the Columbia campus. The garden will host a Thursday night fashion show entitled "Taking the Mystery out of Plants."

Local mystery writer Elaine Viets will help host the 8 p.m. event in Memorial Union's Stotler Lounge. The show combines plant displays with detective-themed apparel designed by textile and apparel management students.
Six months ago, Kara Welter drastically changed her diet by eliminating food that contains wheat, rye or barley.

“I don’t eat gluten,” said Welter, a 41-year-old marketing executive in Kansas City. “I happened to just try it because I was having stomach issues for years. And it turns out within three days, I stopped having stomach issues.”

Welter’s gluten decision stemmed from what she read online. Medical tests showed that she did not have a gluten sensitivity or celiac disease, the disorder that causes the immune system to reject the gluten.

“I don’t care if it’s the placebo effect it’s completely changed my life,” she said.

More than 1.6 million Americans like Welter are on gluten-free diets even though they haven’t been instructed by their doctor to do so. And it’s not just gluten-free foods that consumers are hoping will fix their health woes. People are eating according to their blood type, following low-carb diets and eating like cavemen on the Paleolithic – or Paleo - diet. With a few clicks of the mouse, they are finding plenty of guidance through Facebook discussions, online recipes and videos featuring celebrities extolling a diet’s benefits.

In her office at the University of Missouri in Columbia, registered dietician Ellen Schuster said she’s seeing more people make food decisions by surfing the net, adding that a recent Pew Research Center report found that 59 percent of adult Americans look online for health information.

“I do think people are relying on the Internet, they’re relying on mobile apps, they’re relying on social media,” she said. “And I do think that there is -- for some people, not everyone -- there may be distrust of the health care system and people look to friends and other sources of information, family, for, for health conditions.”

Johnna Perry, who teaches gluten-free cooking classes in Liberty, Mo., agreed.

“So many people have gone through doctor after doctor after doctor looking for a way to feel better and not finding that doctor who’s the puzzle solver for them just yet,” she said. “And so they’re kind of left putting this in their own hands.”

Perry, who does have celiac disease, estimated that half her students are eating gluten-free by choice, not medical necessity.

The word on gluten-free has spread rapidly over the last few years. Gluten-free retail sales rose 28 percent last year to $4.2 billion, according to the market research group Packaged Facts.
Jen Cafferty, who organizes gluten- and allergen-free expos across the country, has seen the number of people attending them grow from 200 to 10,000 in six years.

“There are a lot of people trying the diet because it’s the cool, popular thing to do,” Cafferty said. “However, I also think that there are a lot of people trying the diet because they don’t feel well. And they’re hoping that might help with their symptoms.”

University of Missouri dietitian Schuster said consumers are looking for a magic bullet.

“What is the one thing that I can do? If I can remove gluten from the diet, everything will be fine. I’ll feel better,” she said. “And of course we know that’s not true.”

Eliminating certain foods from a diet can be risky said Paula Vandelicht, a nutritionist at a Hy-Vee grocery store in Columbia, Mo. Among other things, she advises customers about the shortcomings of a gluten-free diet.

“Unfortunately if you take out the wheat component of food, that encompasses some of the fiber in your everyday diet,” Vandelicht said. “So unless you’re getting large numbers of fruits, vegetables, other whole grains such as chia seed or flax seed, you’re missing the big fiber component.”

Many gluten-free products on the market are also highly processed and full of added fat and calories.

Still, because so many of her clients are sold on certain diets, Vandelicht said she simply tries to make sure they’re fully informed – rather than change their diet.

“I can’t really argue with them if they’re saying it makes them feel better other than to show them ways to make sure that they’re getting all of the nutrients that they need by following that certain diet,” she said.

What do you think? This story was reported with help from our Harvest Network -- a network of real people that helps inform us about issues facing food producers and consumers. Click here to sign up to be a part of the network.