COLUMBIA - Longtime MU professor Leona Rubin has been appointed interim dean of the Graduate School.

Rubin, currently a professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences in the College of Veterinary Medicine, will begin serving as dean June 1, according to a news release. She has been teaching at the university since 1989.

Rubin said she is excited and honored to have the opportunity but isn't planning any radical shake-ups in the school.

"As interim dean, I'm not here to walk in and make any giant changes," Rubin said Tuesday. "(Current dean) George Justice has done a great job developing the school, so I'm going to help continue that work and value the faculty to the best of their ability."

Justice has been dean of the graduate school since 2010 but will be leaving to serve as dean of humanities in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University, according to the graduate school website. His resignation will be effective June 1.

With degrees from Temple University, Rutgers University and the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Rubin has done extensive research on cellular pathways. She also served as an American Council on Education Fellow at the University of Iowa this past year, studying predictive analytics.

Rubin is also a member of the MU doctoral faculty where she has served as a mentor to graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and professional students.

In addition to teaching, Rubin is a member of the Center for Gender Physiology and Environmental Adaptation at MU, as well as a research investigator for the Dalton Cardiovascular Research Center. Rubin was a member of MU Faculty Council from 2006 to
2011. In 2009 and 2010, she served as chairwoman of the MU Faculty Council on University Policy, according to the release.

MU Provost Brian Foster said in the release that this leadership experience, in addition to Rubin’s ability to train professional students, demonstrated she was a perfect fit for the job.

"The roles and duties of the graduate dean are different than those of other schools and colleges because the graduate dean is dealing with the campus broadly," Foster said. "It’s a campus-wide position and it requires productive relationships with all other deans and faculty."

It is not known how long Rubin will serve in her interim role, but according to the release, MU officials will begin searching for a permanent dean soon.

*Supervising editor is Kate Moritz.*
The University of Missouri School of Health Professions will have a new dean starting July 1.

Kristofer Hagglund, who is director of the Master of Public Health Program and associate dean of the health professions school, has been selected for the position, replacing Richard Oliver, according to an MU news release.

Oliver, who was the founding dean of the School of Health Professions in 2000, is stepping down to serve a two-year term as president of the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions.

Hagglund has been associate dean since 2001. He has a bachelor's degree from Illinois State University and a master's degree and doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Alabama-Birmingham.
The Tribune's View
From Teresa to Nikki

The passing of the gavel

By Henry J. Waters III

Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at 2:00 pm

Two of my favorite public servants were involved in an informal succession ceremony last weekend: Teresa Maledy handed the gavel to Nikki Krawitz.

For several years, Teresa has presided over the Stephens College Board of Trustees with as much grace and competence as one can imagine. Those of us on the board and college President Dianne Lynch have come to rely on Teresa's calm demeanor and efficient management of board affairs. As any college president can attest, a smooth relationship with her governing board is perhaps the single most important element in managing the institution.

But she also wants a board aware of the difficult and often subtle issues confronting her administration. Academic quality is vitally important, particularly at a place like Stephens, but on a residential women's college a host of unique social and cultural issues also must receive attention.

President Lynch would attest to the invaluable help and support she has received from chairman Maledy, who now reaches the end of her current board tenure and time in office. (She promises to remain active as a volunteer.)

But, blessedly, the next team is ready in the person of Nikki Krawitz, who is just now retiring as chief financial officer of the University of Missouri System.

Oh, did I fail to mention financial management in the list of primary issues facing the college? I would venture no other small college board in America has an incoming chair of similar experience in this field.

Krawitz has been a vital component of Stephens' governance for years. In her earlier career, she was the chief financial officer at Stephens before moving to UM. She is a Stephens alumna with an abiding love for the institution. She moves seamlessly, almost, from her duties at the state university system to a role at her alma mater, where issues are in some ways more challenging.
Krawitz accepted the gavel from Maledy with a full understanding of what lies ahead but with a degree of comfort none of us has had in the past. Affairs at the college are more stable than ever in modern memory.

The transition at Stephens from near death to stability has taken several generations of presidency. I can't write the definitive biography of Stephens College here. I'll just say the transition has been dramatic, best exemplified by the administrative team now in place and the college balance sheet.

And in the operating statement. For the past four years, Stephens has had a balanced operating budget, and recent physical changes on campus bode very well for the future. Challenges remain, but the pursuit of solutions is in the best hands I have seen. The arrival of President Lynch has energized everyone on campus.

Maledy passed the gavel with a new level of confidence in Stephens' future. Krawitz, just relieved of her consuming job at UM, now moves into full gear to keep improving the health of her beloved incubator college.

Rebuilding Stephens College is of vital importance to this community. Along with Columbia College and the university, Stephens is a crucial part of what makes this college town special. Along with the leaders of all our education institutions, on this day we should be particularly grateful for Lynch, Maledy and Krawitz.
MU students share their experience with Moore, Okla., tornado

By Brendan Gibbons
May 21, 2013 | 5:53 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — On Monday, an EF5 tornado with wind speeds of more than 200 mph swept through Moore, Okla., killing at least 24 people and injuring hundreds. One current MU student and one recent graduate shared how the tornado affected them.

Jace James

Missouri baseball player Jace James was in Hoover, Ala., for a tournament when he got a disturbing text from his dad: A tornado had just ripped through a suburb of Oklahoma City, his hometown.

The text came at about 3 p.m., while the team was practicing for the 2013 SEC tournament, which began Tuesday. That was the last James heard from his father for five hours.

The tornado knocked out land lines and slowed down cell networks, according to The Associated Press. James said he tried to get in touch with his family, with no success.

"I couldn't get a hold of anybody," James said. "I was freaking out."

He watched footage of the destruction on YouTube. He recognized the partially damaged Warren Theatre, which had become a makeshift triage center.

By 8 p.m., James got back in touch with his friends and family and learned they were safe. The tornado destroyed three friends' homes, but none of his friends were killed.

"I have a lot of friends who grew up and live in Moore," he said. "I'm glad I didn't lose anybody."

He said even though tornadoes frequently touch down in Oklahoma, they rarely become so monstrous.
“We obviously get a lot of tornadoes, but we don’t get a lot of them like that,” James said. “If you’re not below ground, you’re not gonna make it.”

**Kristina Houser**

Kristina Houser graduated from the Missouri School of Journalism on May 17. By Monday, she was packed and ready to drive south to her hometown of Austin, Texas.

She was traveling with her father, who had been checking the weather the night before. The two left Columbia early Monday morning, trying to outrun the storm.

They stopped north of Oklahoma City for lunch when they turned on the radio and heard the weather was getting worse.

“We just didn’t expect how bad it was,” she said.

As they drove south on Interstate 35, Houser said the sky boiled with black clouds behind them. Although high winds whipped around the car, Houser was surprised to see no rain or hail.

She remembers passing Moore, Okla., because of its water tower.

“I remember laughing because it has a really big ‘Home of Toby Keith’ on it,” she said.

Houser did not know how severe the tornado was until she and her father were far enough south of Oklahoma City to leave the radio station they had been listening to behind. Then she checked her phone and saw the destruction they barely missed.

“I don’t know what would have happened if we’d been there 10 minutes later,” she said.

*Do you have ties to Oklahoma City? To share your thoughts or experiences about Monday’s tornado, email news@ColumbiaMissourian.com or call 573-882-5720.*
Transit plan, committee signal shift

By Andrew Denney

Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at 2:00 pm

The Columbia City Council on Monday night approved a new transit advisory group as city leaders look to reconfigure and revitalize the bus system.

At its regular meeting last night, the council approved the formation of the Public Transit Advisory Commission, a 13-member group of which four members will be representatives from the University of Missouri, Columbia College and Stephens College.

The measure altered the make-up and slightly changed the name of the existing, nine-member Public Transportation Advisory Commission and dissolved the Transit System Task Force, which had been formed in 2011 and also included student representatives.

The latter group met twice that year but did not meet again after MU representatives rejected a proposal from Mayor Bob McDavid to use fees on college students to support Columbia Transit. McDavid continues to support that idea.

The bill proposed to create the Public Transit Advisory Commission included one membership seat that would have been appointed by the Missouri Students Association, but Fourth Ward Councilman Ian Thomas, who served as executive director of the PedNet Coalition before he was elected to council in April, proposed to amend the bill to change that position to an MU student position that would be appointed by the council.

Like his two predecessors, Nick Droege, the current MSA president, has said he would not support a new activity fee to assist funding Columbia Transit. Thomas said there might be students who want to apply for the new commission who might not “see eye-to-eye” with the MSA on transit.

“I think there is growing interest in the transit issue among students,” Thomas said.

McDavid and Second Ward Councilman Michael Trapp, who were joined by Fifth Ward Councilwoman Laura Nauser in voting against the amendment, said MSA should have a seat at the table during transit talks.

“Even if they appoint someone to be an obstructionist, they’re part of the process,” Trapp said.

The amended bill was unanimously approved.
In other transit-related news, city leaders are planning to reveal a reconfigured Columbia Transit system tomorrow at 3 p.m. at a council work session. Leaders have not yet fully revealed their plans for a reconfiguration, but Public Works Director John Glascock told the Tribune earlier this month that the city would like to alter its current "hub and spoke" system, in which buses for most routes all return to Wabash Station in downtown Columbia.

The work session will be held in the council chamber at City Hall, 701 E. Broadway. Members of the public are allowed to attend the session, but there will not be an opportunity for public comment.
WHAT OTHERS SAY: Governor should veto bill aimed at state income tax cuts

Tuesday, May 21, 2013 | 4:01 p.m. CDT
BY St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Now that the Missouri legislature mercifully has adjourned for the year, Gov. Jay Nixon should waste no time in vetoing House Bill 253, the final iteration of the unfair, unwise and unproductive session-long effort to cut state income tax rates.

In some ways, HB 253 is less odious than earlier versions of the tax-cut proposal. It would not, for example, replace revenue lost to the income-tax cut with revenue raised by higher sales taxes. That means poor and working-class Missourians wouldn’t be dinged — again — to pay for tax breaks given to wealthier Missourians and corporations.

On the other hand, after 10 years, the annual price tag for the bill would be anywhere from $700 million to $817 million. That’s money that would not be spent on schools, higher education, corrections or any of the other niceties that smart states invest in.

The bill’s supporters insist that annual safeguards — or "triggers" — included in the legislation would keep the cuts from kicking in unless state revenue has risen $100 million. State revenues will grow, they say, just not as fast as they would if HB 253 hadn’t been passed.

This growth is predicated on a boom in business activity that supporters expect once people figure out how tax-friendly Missouri has become. There is little objective data to support that conclusion and quite a bit to suggest that tax rates are not a critical factor in business location or expansion decisions.

HB 253 would reduce the top personal income tax rate from 6 percent to 5.5 percent. Everyone in Missouri who earns at least $9,000 a year pays the 6 percent top rate. The graduated income tax was adopted in 1931; at the time, very few people earned $9,000 a year — equal to $137,682 today. Missouri essentially has a flat tax rate, one big reason for its poor state services and benighted economic condition.
The basic corporate income tax rate for so-called "C-corporations" — generally public companies — would be cut from 6.25 percent to 3.25 percent. The cuts would be phased in over 10 years as long as revenue growth "triggers" were pulled.

The big winners under HB 253 would be so-called "pass-through" corporations organized under subchapter S of the Internal Revenue Service code or as partnerships, limited-liability firms (in some instances) or sole proprietorships. These firms "pass through" their corporate income to individual owners or owners, where it is taxed as individual income.

IRS data show that some 82 percent of all U.S. companies are organized as pass-throughs. This enables them to avoid federal corporate income tax. If HB 253 becomes law, they'll see their Missouri income taxes cut by 50 percent.

Result: The owners of a pass-through corporation eventually would be paying a Missouri income tax rate of 3.25 percent on their income; in some cases, the rate would be as low as 3.125 percent. The people who clean the office toilets will be paying 5.5 percent.

Even as the legislature is bending over backward to give a break to pass-through companies, Congress has begun to realize that such firms have an unfair advantage over C-corporations that have to pay the 35 percent federal rate. With tax shelters, credits and other forms of legal tax evasion, few companies actually pay as much as the 35 percent rate, but it's the thought that counts.

Pass-through owners argue that taxing their corporate income, and then turning around and taxing their personal income, amounts to double taxation. It does. That's fair.

Corporations create multiple public costs that the individual taxes of their owners don't begin to pay for. Like the rest of us, they're protected by the most expensive military on earth. Their employees are educated in public schools. Their goods are shipped on public highways. Laws are enforced for them. Nearly all of the state and federal civil court systems exist to litigate their disputes. It goes on.

It simply makes no sense that they get a free (or cheaper) ride on income taxes. In Citizens United v. FEC, the Supreme Court ruled that corporations are people when it comes to funding elections. They ought to be people when it comes to paying taxes, too.

HB 253 is a pure corporate welfare bill. Veto it, governor.

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I see that MU is taking pride in its "no tray for you!" policy in the dorm cafeterias. The university reports that the move has reduced waste as students no longer take more food that they can eat. The effort, spearheaded by students, has also helped the university "stave off rising food costs." (Wonder if room and board charges have been reduced proportionately, with similar portions?)

MU officials, who turned down the opportunity to host the filming of "Animal House" on campus back in the 1970s, must have viewed the famous food fight scene recently, watching Belushi pile his tray high, pretend to be a zit, spew out his mashed potatoes and start the brawl. Mustn't have any of that going on around the columns.

Did those environmentally conscious students, saving those tons of waste, ever think about the poor raccoons and opossums who rely on dumpster diving to feed their families? No wildlife on campus now, other than activity in Greektown.

Will it become a trend? Will a "Pick Two," pumpkin muffie and medium coffee at Panera require three trips to the counter? Let's hope this trend doesn't spread 120 miles eastward.

One of the most important parts of the college experience is to learn how to handle freedom, and exhibit self-control. I think that the best and brightest of MU can handle a cafeteria tray with good judgment and maturity.

Craig Niehaus is a resident of Glendale and a 1979 graduate of MU.