Mizzou prepares for winter commencement

COLUMBIA, Mo. • More than 2,300 students expect to receive their diplomas at the University of Missouri's winter commencement exercises this weekend in Columbia.

The university expects to issue nearly 1,900 bachelor's degrees and more than 150 doctorates. Another 300 students are receiving degrees from online programs. Graduation ceremonies are set to begin Friday.

Lawyer Larry McMullen will receive an honorary degree at an honors commencement ceremony Saturday. Speakers at the individual graduation ceremonies to be held by each school and college at MU include former two-sport star Phil Bradley, now an assistant softball coach; and former Missouri poet laureate Walter Bargen.
MU, Stephens College, Columbia College graduations are this weekend

COLUMBIA — Nearly 3,000 students will receive degrees from MU, Stephens College and Columbia College this weekend. Commencements will be held Friday and Saturday.

Columbia College's graduation will be held at noon Saturday at the college's Southwell Complex on 700 Rangeline St.

At the ceremony, 315 students will be awarded degrees, including 61 associate degrees, 227 bachelor's degrees and 27 master's degrees, according to Jeff Branscom, the school's public relations coordinator.

The graduation will include not only students from Columbia College's main campus in Columbia but also students from its nationwide campuses, Branscom said.

"People from as far as Arizona, Maryland and Mississippi will be attending the graduation here," he said.

Faye Burchard, dean of student affairs, will be the speaker at the ceremony.

In addition to the main graduation ceremony, there will also be a nurses' pinning at 10 a.m. Saturday in the college's Launer Auditorium on 1001 Roger St.

**Stephens College**

A total of 55 students are set to graduate at 6 p.m. Friday from Stephens College, including 35 undergraduates. The ceremony will be held at Kimball Ballroom of Lela Raney Wood Hall at 6 N. College Ave.
The keynote speaker will be Allyson Spellman, a 1993 Stephens College alumna who is the CEO of Unleash Your Voice, a women’s empowerment group, said Janese Silvey, Stephens College spokeswoman.

Spellman has also been an actress, entertainment producer and casting director, Silvey said.

**MU**

**More than 2,300 graduates will receive degrees from MU this December. Separate ceremonies will be held for each school, spread across Friday and Saturday.**

Larry McMullen, a lawyer and MU alumnus, will be awarded an honorary degree at the Honors Ceremony on Saturday morning. McMullen was named the Kansas City Personal Litigation "Lawyer of the Year" in 2009, among other honors.

Other notable speakers include Stuart Bascomb, MU alumnus and owner of the largest vision correction surgery business in the country, who will speak at the Trulaske College of Business graduation; Walter Bargen, Missouri’s first Poet Laureate, who will speak at the School of Natural Resources graduation; and Phil Bradley, former Major Baseball Player and MU softball assistant coach, who will speak at the College of Human Environmental Sciences and School of Social Work graduations.

Here are the specifics on each MU school’s graduation ceremony:

**Friday**

- **School of Nursing:** 1 p.m. Jesse Auditorium. Speaker: Harold Williamson Jr., vice chancellor of the MU Health System.
- **Trulaske College of Business:** 2 p.m., Hearnes Center. Speaker: Stuart Bascomb, MU alumnus and founder of QualSight Inc.
- **Missouri School of Journalism:** 3:30 p.m., Jesse Auditorium. Speaker: Margaret Engel, MU alumna and director of the Alicia Patterson Journalism Foundation.
- **College of Engineering:** 6 p.m., Jesse Auditorium. Speaker: Don Flora, founder and former president of Flora & Associates Inc.

**Saturday**
- **Honors College**: 8:30 a.m., Jesse Auditorium. Speaker: Larry McMullen, MU alumnus and honorary degree recipient.

- **College of Human and Environmental Sciences & School of Social Work**: 11:30 a.m., Jesse Auditorium. Speaker: Phil Bradley, former Major League Baseball player and assistant baseball coach of MU softball team.

- **College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources**: 12:30 p.m., Hearnes Center.

- **School of Health Professions**: 2 p.m., Jesse Auditorium. Speaker: Ellis Ingram, senior associate dean for diversity and inclusion.

- **College of Arts and Science**: 3:30 p.m., Hearnes Center. Speaker: Justin Walensky, MU chemistry professor.

- **School of Natural Resources**: 5 p.m., Jesse Auditorium. Speaker: Walter Bargen, former Poet Laureate of Missouri.

- **Graduate School**: 6:30 p.m., Hearnes Center. Speaker: MU Provost Brian Foster and MU Interim Dean of the Graduate School Leona Rubin.
MU business program offers student-analysts real-world experience

Wednesday, December 11, 2013 | 6:00 a.m. CST

BY SKY CHADDE

COLUMBIA — Lance Schafer, in a green pullover with the collar up, a black pen in the back pocket of his blue jeans, directed the laser pointer to a slide of Darth Vader with his mask off.

Every so often, he'd press his hands together in front of his chest, as if in prayer. It was Monday, Nov. 18. As he spoke, 10 young men and two young women gazed intently at a set of two computer screens in a room on the ground floor of Cornell Hall, a building that is part of the Trulaske College of Business.

At first glance, it looked like the students weren't paying attention to Schafer, who's getting a master's degree in business administration. In fact, they were using Bloomberg terminals to look up analyst reports and stock projections for ResMed, the company Schafer was presenting.

ResMed specializes in breathing apparatuses to treat people with sleep apnea, a disorder in which people stop breathing while asleep.

The former CEO of ResMed likened the 1980s apparatuses to the machine Vader needed to breath, Schafer told the group. These days, they are much smaller.

Schafer's presentation was an assignment for the Investment Fund Management Program, a course for undergraduates and MBA students. They get real-world experience managing a portfolio of stocks using real money that has been donated to the school. At the end of the fall semester, the portfolio was worth about $1.5 million.

In 1967, the university set up the fund in honor of a late faculty member. The program started as a club but developed into a course.
Students spend tens of hours creating presentations, complete with 10- to 20-page analysis reports and a slideshow, on companies' stocks and growth potential. They make recommendations to buy a stock not in the fund or to sell or hold a stock in it.

Students said they use the Bloomberg terminals to help them perform the analysis at a high level. The business school pays $144,000 a year to use the 36 terminals, said Dan French, the chair of the finance department.

The portfolio includes some big names, such as Amazon.com Inc. and Microsoft Corp., and some lesser-known ones, such as United Natural Foods Inc. and Schlumberger Ltd., which provides services to oil companies.

"What you'd think is, here's a bunch of 21-year-olds, plus or minus, you'd think that they would be really, really aggressive," said Adam Bixler, a first-year MBA student and the program's CEO who remembers coming home after elementary, middle and high school and watching CNBC, a business news TV station.

"We're actually very conservative as a class," he said. "I think the fact that we're dealing with real money, I wouldn’t say it's necessarily intimidating, but it makes people have a real vested interest in the performance. Nobody wants to go up there and recommend something that they don’t actually believe in."

Half of those who apply for the course are accepted, said Michael O'Doherty. He's the course’s instructor, but it's really student-led, he said. He facilitates conversation and has no say in which stocks students buy or sell.

"If an instructor led the class, everybody's going to look up to the instructor and have a tendency to follow what his investment thesis is," said Geoffrie Greene, a second-year MBA student who has been managing his own portfolio since he was a college freshman. "There's a kind of pressure to do your work well and present it in a nice fashion so we can make accurate, good decisions from it."

A stock revisited
At the end of Schafer's presentation on ResMed, he recommended that the group not buy in at this time. He thought it was a good company, but the uncertainty of how the new federal health care law would affect it scared him a bit, he said.
The group asked him questions before he returned to his seat in the second row of Bloomberg terminals.

Schafer was the oldest person in the class. His first degree is in French literature, and he taught English in France before moving back to the United States. Regular brunches with the president of a French bank's northern branch sparked his interest in finance.

**Schafer sat behind Nathan McCormick, an MBA student who was an All-American wrestler for Missouri his senior season.** As this semester's external relations chair, McCormick was responsible for creating the program's semester-end report, which included a summary of the fund's performance, a list of investments and student bios.

As Schafer chewed on a mint, McCormick turned around from his seat in the front row and handed Schafer his bio.

"Check if everything's right," McCormick told him softly.

Schafer looked it over and handed it back to McCormick. He gave the square-jawed ex-wrestler a thumbs-up and nodded his head.

When class ended, O'Doherty told the group that all portfolio decisions needed to be finalized by the next class, two days later.

"Any stocks we want to revisit?" He asked the class. "BP?"

Much discussion during the semester had focused on BP, the oil company facing large fines for a 2010 spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Because of uncertainty over how big the fines would be, the company wasn’t exactly an attractive prospect.

However, Adam Swantner, a red-bearded MBA student who presented BP and recommended buying it, believed the stock was undervalued. He wanted to get in while the stock was still inexpensive.

**To BP or not to BP?**

At the next class, Greene made his way to the front of the room. As the program's portfolio manager, he determined the overall direction of the fund, and he would lead that day's discussion to finalize the portfolio.
The group needed to vote on seven companies. A recommendation was made to buy BP and sell Schlumberger (pronounced shlum-bear-zhay), the oil services company.

From his seat in the third row, Swantner told the group that people on Wall Street believed — and he agreed — that BP’s stock price would increase despite there being no word yet on fines.

"I don't know why we'd sell Schlumberger to buy BP," Schafer said from the second row.

He knew many financial analysts believed Schlumberger’s stock had the potential to grow, and not one he could find recommended selling it.

"Is there any sentiment for both these companies?" O'Doherty asked.

Schafer was the only one to respond.

"I'm down on BP and up for Schlumberger," he said.

Greene, speaking in a low monotone, took it to a vote.

Those for selling Schlumberger and buying BP?

Four people raised their hands.

Those for keeping Schlumberger and not buying BP?

Nine hands.

After the group voted on the remaining companies, O'Doherty announced that because of their decisions, the portfolio would have around $87,000 in cash.

What to do with that extra money? Invest it? Keep it in cash? The amount wouldn't grow if it were kept in cash, and next semester’s group wouldn’t touch the fund for the next three months.

Someone made a joke about going to Las Vegas with it. The group laughed.

From his position at the front of the room, Greene suggested increasing the amount the group owned in an exchange-traded fund, which is a group of stocks in one industry — in their case, health care. Nine hands went up.
That leaves us with $42,000, O'Doherty said.

Swantner said three months wasn't that long to hold that amount. The others agreed, and O'Doherty said the trades would be made before the last bell the next day.

**Breakfast at Reynolds**

*On the Thursday after Thanksgiving break, the group gathered in a second-floor room in MU’s Reynolds Alumni Center to present their portfolio to finance professionals.* No blue jeans and T-shirts were to be found.

Despite three floor-to-ceiling windows with a view of Tiger Plaza, the room felt cramped with four round tables and a crescent table with a Dell laptop and a projector. Copies of McCormick’s end-of-semester report lay next to gold napkins.

A line for the breakfast buffet formed out in the hallway around 8 a.m. There were croissants and cinnamon rolls; bacon and sausage; cantaloupe and honeydew; triangles of French toast with raspberries; and crepes stuffed with egg, cheese and mushrooms.

Back in the room, most of the 40 chairs were occupied. O'Doherty stood up and gave a quick introduction before handing it over to Bixler, the CEO. Bixler wore a gray suit with a green tie, and rings adorned his right ring finger and his left index finger.

Speaking with his hands, Bixler explained that their portfolio had outperformed the Standard & Poor's 500 index, a benchmark for the market’s success. He also told the attendees what the program had meant to him personally.

"The program has been directly responsible for my internships at Edward Jones," he said in his deep voice, mentioning the financial advising company based out of St. Louis.

His red beard trimmed down to a neat mustache, Swantner said they remained cautious with the fund.

Greene, dressed in all gray except for brown shoes, mentioned some of the high-performing and low-performing stocks.

"A little Cisco debacle hampered us near the end," he said.

A slide showed that the networking company had fallen 16.5 percent this semester. The slide also showed four stocks that had increased by more than 20 percent.
"Thanks for coming," said Greene, wrapping it up, "and a special thanks to Professor O'Doherty. He makes it all possible."

French, the finance department chair, got up from his seat at a back table and came to the front of the room.

"Thank you for your service to the university," he told the students.

French said the university usually pays for the type of analysis the class performed.

Schafer watched him from across the room. He said he plans to take the course again in the spring.
FROM THE NEWSROOM: What is the Missourian's relationship to MU?

Welcome to From the Newsroom, the section dedicated to answering your questions about the Missourian. Our goal is to be transparent about our practices and processes and to invite our readers behind the scenes of what we do. Suggest topics you'd like to see explained by contacting Joy Mayer at mayerj@missouri.edu or 882-8182.

The Columbia Missourian has an unusual relationship with MU that is unlike those at other campus-affiliated news organizations.

The Missourian’s first edition published Sept. 14, 1908, the same day classes began at the Missouri School of Journalism. Walter Williams created the Missourian so the newspaper could serve as a laboratory for students pursuing careers in journalism. For more than 100 years, the Missourian has fulfilled Williams’ mission by allowing students to create community-based newspaper content under supervision of faculty editors. This real-world media experience is part of the Journalism School’s “Missouri Method,” in which students learn their craft while working for community-focused news organizations, under the supervision of professional journalists, with built in assessment, analysis and improvement.

This hands-on laboratory receives financial assistance from MU.

The Missourian is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit incorporated as the Missourian Publishing Association. The association's board of directors, made up of media industry professionals, advises the School of Journalism dean, who serves as the Missourian's publisher, and the Missourian's general manager and executive editor. According to the Missourian Publishing Association's most recent 990 tax form, "The Missourian Publishing Association Inc. is operated as a learning laboratory for the University of Missouri's School of Journalism." The Missourian is not owned by MU but is an agency of MU, which means it must follow university regulations.
Since 1997, the Missourian has received a laboratory fee from MU in recognition of its importance to the campus as a teaching and research tool, similar to support provided to teaching labs in other fields.

The Missourian's paid staff members and faculty receive their paychecks from MU. Students who are taking staff classes through the School of Journalism are not paid for their work at the Missourian.

Missourian journalists are expected to report on the university as they would with any other business or organization, without special treatment or fear of retribution. The Missourian's executive editor has tenure status as a professor, which underscores his editorial independence.
'Nothing changes' at Newsy after $35M sale to Scripps

Tuesday, December 10, 2013 | 6:02 p.m. CST
BY MOLLY DUFFY

COLUMBIA — Newsy has been bought for $35 million, but its founder says nothing is changing for the Columbia-based digital news provider.

The E.W. Scripps Co., a media conglomerate based in Cincinnati, announced its purchase of Newsy on Monday. Scripps posted a Newsy video on the Scripps YouTube channel, explaining Newsy's business model and its strengths.

"It's a great fit," Newsy president and founder Jim Spencer said of his decision to sell his 5-year-old startup. "One of the reasons it's such a good fit is that nothing changes."

Newsy has partnered with the Missouri School of Journalism and the Reynolds Journalism Institute since 2008. The video news analysis service features one- to two-minute videos that present coverage of the news from multiple sources. Newsy's partnership with the School of Journalism and the Reynolds Journalism Institute lets students get hands-on experience through classes that require them to produce and write Newsy's content.

That partnership won't be affected by the deal, said Spencer, who earned his master's degree in journalism from MU in 1991.

Spencer said one of the first things Scripps wanted to do was meet with Dean Mills, dean of the Journalism School. "They're very pleased with our partnership with the university and the School of Journalism," Spencer said.

Newsy Managing Editor Nathan Byrne, who also teaches advanced global converged news at MU, said the sale won't affect his class.
"The class always changes just based on the industry changes and new topics and new things to talk about," he said. "But we don't have any changes planned based on the Scripps acquisition."

Spencer said Newsy will remain in Columbia — it is at 904 Elm St., just east of the Journalism School — and will have the same number of positions available. He said Scripps does not have specific plans to expand Newsy.

"Our company grows because our business grows," he said. "So everything stays the same."

Newsy has had interested buyers before, but none that fit like Scripps, Spencer said. Scripps' values and personnel sealed the deal for him.

"It's extremely rewarding to take something from just an idea and build it into something that someone would want to buy," he said.

Scripps tweeted Monday that the acquisition is an attempt to "enter (the) digital video business." Scripps owns 19 local television stations and daily newspapers in 13 U.S. markets. It also has an "expanding collection" of digital journalism and information businesses.

"This acquisition fits our digital strategy to run a national news brand that both enhances our local content offerings and gives us more access to the fast-growing digital news audiences and revenues on national platforms," Scripps CEO Rich Boehne said in a Scripps news release Monday.
Mizzou Cotton Bowl tickets sell out

Tigers will face Oklahoma State.

By Karyn Spory

Tuesday, December 10, 2013 at 2:00 pm

It took only 10 minutes for University of Missouri fans to purchase the final 1,000 seats from the school's ticket allotment for the 2014 AT&T Cotton Bowl Classic.

Coverage of the Jan. 3 game against Oklahoma State at AT&T Stadium, also known as Cowboys Stadium, in Arlington, Texas, starts at 6:30 p.m. The game will air on Fox.

David Reiter, spokesman for MU athletics, said in an email that Missouri was allotted 12,500 tickets and requested an extra 1,000 tickets, which was the maximum available for requests.

Reiter's email said, "11,500 tickets were pre-sold to Tiger Scholarship Fund members, and 1,000 were reserved for students." He added that fans can join the Tiger Scholarship Fund for as little as $50 annually.

The extra 1,000 tickets were opened up to the general public yesterday and were sold out in just 10 minutes.

Reiter said fans can still purchase tickets through MU's secondary ticket partner, Vivid seats.

The Mizzou Alumni Association is also selling Cotton Bowl tour packages

Cassie Reeser, manager of alumni activities, said as of this morning, 400 to 500 travel packages have been sold.

The additional package begins at $529 and offers two-night accommodations at the Renaissance Dallas Hotel. This package is similar to the Tiger Land Only-Marriott Dallas package, which Reeser said sold out very quickly.
The Black & Gold Deluxe Land Only Package is priced at $719 and offers two nights accommodations at the Westin Galleria Dallas, as well as shuttle services to and from the tailgate/game.

Reeser said the final package, which begins at $1,379 and includes round-trip, nonstop airfare from Columbia to Dallas, as well as accommodations at the Westin Galleria Dallas and shuttle services to and from the airport to the hotel and from the hotel to the game, has also been popular.

"We had such good feedback yesterday that we went to a larger aircraft, so we're looking to get more folks down there on the charter," Reeser said.

None of the packages includes tickets; however, tickets are still available and can be purchased separately for $140.

Reeser said enough tickets are available for all of the packages.

*This article was published in the Tuesday, December 10, 2013 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "MU’s Cotton Bowl tickets sell out fast: Tigers will face Oklahoma State."*

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Posted in Local, Mu Football on Tuesday, December 10, 2013 2:00 pm.