Nixon's tuition freeze idea draws criticism

Decision 'not our business,' rep says.

By Rudi Keller

Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 2:00 pm Comments (10)

Gov. Jay Nixon's call for a 5 percent funding boost to state universities is welcome, but his request that governing boards implement a tuition freeze is not, area lawmakers with seats on budget-writing committees said.

Nixon yesterday said he will recommend adding $36.7 million to the budgets of four-year universities, with the amounts for each school based on achievement under five performance measures. He called it a "significant" increase designed to keep college affordable.

The boost will restore a portion of the money cut from the University of Missouri's budget since Nixon took office. That's good, but it should not be tied to tuition, said Rep. Stephen Webber, D-Columbia and a member of the House Budget Committee.

"I have always thought we should put as much money into education as we can, and the university should keep tuition as low as possible to meet their needs, and those two things should be independent of each other," Webber said.

In his first two years in office, as the recession was tightening its grip on state finances, Nixon cut deals on funding and tuition with colleges and universities. In the first year they were protected from cuts, and in the second year the cut was limited to 5 percent if tuition did not increase.

In his third year, Nixon made no deal but cut the University of Missouri's appropriation when the Board of Curators increased tuition by more than the rate of inflation. That was an abuse of the withholding power, said Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia.

"The curators are constitutionally independent," Kelly said. "They set tuition, and that is their business and not our business."

Nixon's announcement yesterday did not include any mention that university leaders had agreed to another tuition deal. A statement from UM System President Tim Wolfe said he will consider
the plan. The university has already announced plans for a 1.7 percent tuition increase for the 2014-15 school year.

"Governor Nixon's proposal of a 5 percent increase to higher education's core budget is a great first step in the process, and we will be consulting with the Board of Curators about keeping tuition levels flat," Wolfe said in the prepared statement.

Nixon is able to propose the increase because state revenue is well above levels projected at this time last year, and modest growth is expected to continue. The estimate for next year's tax receipts will be made soon and will form the basis of all Nixon's spending recommendations and legislative budget actions.

Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, said he is pleased the schools have not already agreed to Nixon's tuition deal, as they did in 2009 and 2010.

"Institutions agreed to that before they came to the General Assembly, which was terribly shortsighted on their part," he said. "There are a lot of variables in developing the budget, and it is too early to know exactly where we will be, other than that we are looking at some additional revenue for the year."

Lawmakers appropriated $407.5 million for the UM System this year, down from a peak of $475.9 million for fiscal 2010.

In a news release announcing his plan, Nixon cited studies showing tuition at Missouri four-year universities has increased an average of only 5 percent since 2008, the lowest in the nation. "To keep our economy growing, we need every student in Missouri to have access to an affordable college education and to graduate without a heavy burden of debt," Nixon said.
Ameren/Westinghouse passed over again for small modular reactor funding

By Jacob Barker


Ameren Missouri and Westinghouse Electric again were passed over by the U.S. Department of Energy, which announced Thursday that its final funding award under a small modular nuclear reactor program would go to NuScale Power of Portland, Ore.

The announcement was the second disappointment for a coalition built around Westinghouse’s nuclear reactor design and St. Louis-based Ameren, which had indicated it would build a new reactor near its existing nuclear power plant in Callaway County if it could secure a federal investment.

The University of Missouri System, state and local officials and members of Missouri’s Congressional delegation all rallied behind the proposal, saying it had the potential to transform the region into a hub of manufacturing, design and education built on the small nuclear reactors.

Instead, the Department of Energy has looked elsewhere to help advance the small modular reactor, or SMR, design. In its announcement Thursday, the department said it would enter into a five-year cost-share agreement with NuScale and invest up to half of the total project cost. The department did not release the final amount it would invest, saying that sum would be negotiated with NuScale and come from a $452 million fund established for the SMR program.

Some of that money already has been earmarked for Babcock and Wilcox and the Tennessee Valley Authority, which won the first award from DOE a year ago. That partnership was estimated to be eligible for about $150 million in federal funding, though Babcock and Wilcox says its agreement with the federal government makes it eligible for up to $226 million in funding for the SMR project.

Congress originally allocated $452 million to the project in fiscal year 2012. In the spring of 2012, Gov. Jay Nixon, along with Ameren, Westinghouse and University of Missouri officials announced they would seek funding for the construction and manufacturing of SMRs.
The Department of Energy’s initial request for proposals said it was seeking up to two SMR partnerships to fund, but its first award went only to Babcock and Wilcox and the Tennessee Valley Authority. DOE said then it would open future funding opportunities, but this time, it isn’t planning any more.

Ameren Missouri has been seeking help to build a second nuclear power generator in Callaway County for years, lobbying Missouri lawmakers to change state law so it could raise utility rates to finance construction before electricity is generated. When it decided to pursue the federal funding for a nuclear plant, it put those efforts on the back burner.

“As a result of the DOE’s decision, we are stepping back and considering our alternatives as we continue to focus on maintaining all generation options for a cleaner energy portfolio to meet Missouri’s energy needs in the future,” Ameren said in its statement. “Ameren Missouri still considers the development, manufacturing and construction of SMRs to be an important initiative to help create a cleaner energy portfolio for our state and our country.”

Joseph Smith, a professor at Missouri University of Science and Technology who is leading the university consortium that would have helped educate the workforce needed for SMR manufacture and construction, has said he and others suspected the energy department would make a total of three awards for SMR development. While it appears DOE is sticking with its original plan of two, Smith said the university is still committed to the consortium and he hopes Ameren and Westinghouse stay involved.

“There are lots of opportunities to develop new technology for small modular reactors,” he said. “We believe Missouri is the center of this.”
Gift will help art and archaeology museum move back to campus

By Andrew Denney

Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 2:00 pm Comments (1)

Two Columbia entrepreneurs have pledged to give a $25,000 donation to Museum Associates Inc. for the relocation of the University of Missouri's Museum of Art and Archaeology, which is temporarily being housed at Mizzou North on Business Loop 70.

According to a release from the museum, Columbia entrepreneurs Beau Aero and Alfredo Mubarah of Columbia Safety Industrial Supply are making the donation to Museum Associates Inc., a not-for-profit that supports the museum, to help fund planning efforts for the museum's relocation.

The museum is being moved from Pickard Hall on the MU campus to Mizzou North as Pickard Hall is being decommissioned for radiation contamination.

The museum has been in talks with the city of Columbia and the Downtown Columbia Improvement District to relocate the museum to a downtown block bordered by Sixth, Seventh, Elm and Locust streets.

The State Historical Society of Missouri's board of trustees has proposed to use that block to establish a "museum district" that also would contain a new building for the historical society, which is now housed in the lower level of Ellis Library on the MU campus.

Bruce Cox, the museum's assistant director of operations, said the donation is "seed money" for planning to re-locate the museum but said there is no timeline set for the museum to leave Mizzou North, which formerly housed Ellis Fischel Cancer Center. He said museum administration plans to open its statue gallery by the end of January and hopes to have the full museum open by spring.
Two months of discussions left the Missourian’s future in the Mizzou Readership Program indefinite, but after today, it seems the newspaper is going to stay.

**Missouri Students Association President Nick Droege said he received confirmation from Missourian General Manager Dan Potter that the Missourian has committed to work to accommodate the request that students access all content on the newspaper’s website for free.**

The Missourian is currently one of four newspapers, along with the New York Times, USA Today and St. Louis Post-Dispatch, that students can take from campus newsstands free of charge.

Droege began talks with the newspaper two months ago, and despite Potter’s initial responsiveness, discussions had subsided during the holidays.

“They understood it was a conversation we needed to have, but after I didn’t hear back after multiple attempts at continuing those talks,” Droege said. "I had to keep extending the deadline."

In an email addressed to Potter and sent to many MU administrators and MSA members Wednesday, Droege finally set the deadline for discussions to 5 p.m. on Dec. 13.

If he did not receive a definitive answer by that time, Droege said he would not invite the Missourian to participate in the readership program, effective Jan. 1, 2014.

“... I simply cannot make sense of students being charged to access content from a newspaper that is funded by the university in which they pay fees and tuition to attend,” Droege wrote.

The Missourian requires a $5.95 monthly fee to access any article that has been online for more than 24 hours. The Missourian has required the paywall for all readers, including students, since September 2012.

After MSA received paywall access from The New York Times in March 2013, students have been able to access online content from all newspapers in the program except the Missourian.
The Missourian will be discussing the financial and technological changes and options to accommodate this request during the next 30-40 days, Droege said. Afterward, the two will discuss specifics of the program change.

“With one of the top journalism institutions in the world, it’s something our students can really benefit from,” Droege said Thursday.
Commencements planned for weekend

Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 2:00 pm

Winter commencement ceremonies are scheduled this weekend at the University of Missouri, Columbia College and Stephens College.

MU will award 2,436 degrees, including 1,756 bachelor's degrees, 498 master's degrees, 157 doctorates, 18 education specialist degrees and seven law degrees. Some students will receive more than one degree. More than 300 students are receiving degrees after completing online programs.

Ceremonies are scheduled tomorrow and Saturday at various locations on the MU campus. For a complete list, visit commencement.missouri.edu.

Columbia College's winter commencement is planned for noon Saturday at Southwell Complex. A pinning ceremony for nurses is scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday in Launer Auditorium. Columbia College will award degrees to 315 students, including 227 bachelor's degrees, 27 master's degrees and 61 associate degrees.

Stephens College's commencement is scheduled for 6 p.m. tomorrow at the Kimball Ballroom of Lela Raney Wood Hall. At the ceremony, 35 undergraduates will receive bachelor's degrees, and 21 students will receive master's degrees.
A gowning achievement: Graduation dress explained

Friday, December 13, 2013 | 6:00 a.m. CST

Gowns

Undergraduate gown worn with black cap and colored tassel according to degree

Masters gown worn with black cap, black tassel and colored hood according to degree

Doctoral gown worn with black cap, gold tassel and colored hood according to degree

Source: MU REGISTRAR

During commencement, students and faculty wear traditional academic regalia according to what degree they are receiving or have received. 

BY JULIA BUSH

COLUMBIA — If green brings out your eyes, you'd better be an MU School of Medicine graduate.

Each color and item a faculty member wears to commencement ceremonies signifies a department, degree level or achievement, right down to the gown's trimming and the hood's length.
Here's how to decode faculty members' academic attire, according to the MU commencement website and Darla Dyer, MU's gift and graduation buyer.

- **The hood**: A 3 1/2-foot hood indicates a master's degree, while a hood 4 feet long means the wearer has earned a doctorate. The hood lining corresponds to the official colors of the university that awarded the degree, so MU graduates will have a black and gold lining.

- **The gown**: The black gowns many faculty wear often have different-colored velvet trimmings, like purple for the School of Law or red for the School of Journalism. The gown's sleeves indicate the wearer's degree level; closed, pointed sleeves for a bachelor's degree, sleeves that are open at the wrist for a master's degree and bell-shaped sleeves for a doctorate.

- **The tassels**: Faculty members wear tassels on the left side of their caps. The tassel's color depends on the school with which the member is associated. For example, the School of Nursing is apricot, the College of Engineering is orange and the College of Arts and Science is white.

- **The cap**: Everyone can wear a mortarboard, the traditional graduation cap, but doctoral and professional graduates get the option to forgo a mortarboard for a tam, with looks like a floppy, cloth version of the mortarboard.

All these specialty items can rack up the price of a faculty member's attire. Purchased through The Mizzou Store, a full graduation package for undergraduate students costs $54.99, but faculty members have the option to order custom-made, high-quality gowns with personalized embellishments and colored velvet that range from $149 to $659, Dyer said. Faculty can also rent their gowns each year.

**Robe origins**

Why do faculty look like they just stepped out of a time machine? Probably because academic regalia traditions date back to the 12th and 13th centuries, according to Willsie Cap and Gown's [history of academic dress](https://willsie.com/history-of-academic-dress). During this time, graduates and faculty from the first universities in Europe dressed like members of the clergy for commencement ceremonies.
Colors associated with degrees

**KEY**

- Bachelor, master's and/or doctoral degree
- Master's or doctoral degree only

- College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources: Doctor of Physical Therapy
- School of Natural Resources: Master of Occupational Therapy
- Parks, Recreation and Tourism: Master of Public Health
- College of Arts and Science: Master from School of Health Professions
- Fine Arts: College of Human Environmental Sciences
- Music: School of Social Work
- The Robert J. Trulaske Sr. College of Business: School of Journalism
- School of Accountancy: School of Law
- College of Education: School of Medicine
- Library and Information Science: School of Nursing
- College of Engineering: College of Veterinary Medicine
- School of Health Professions: Harry S Truman School of Public Affairs
- Bachelor of Health Studies

Source: MU REGISTRAR
had their heads tonsured, or shaved, for the ceremony, so they wore hoods for warmth until graduation caps took over that job. Long robes kept them warm in unheated buildings. Scholars clearly weren't thinking about hot spring and summer graduation days in Missouri when they set that precedent.

Colors assigned to signify each discipline or field of study were not standardized until the late 19th century in the United States. According to Willsie Cap and Gown, which is where The Mizzou Store gets academic regalia, the original colors were:

- **Arts and letters**: white, taken from the white fur trimming in hoods at University of Oxford and University of Cambridge
- **Theology**: red, a traditional color of the church
- **Medicine**: green, which was associated with herbs and medicines
- **Pharmacy**: olive, a color close to green to signify pharmacy's connection to medicine
- **Science**: golden yellow, to demonstrate the wealth the sciences have produced

Since the original color code was created, the American Council on Education created an [official code for academic dress](#) in 1932 that is still followed by most U.S. institutions today. The council made revisions to the code in 1959 and 1986.
Rising pork output seen softening bacon prices

Healthy five-month-old pigs, nearing their desired market weight, stand in a weaning-to-market barn at a farm in Illinois. Photographer: Daniel Acker/Bloomberg

Bacon prices are poised to retreat from a record high as the fad that put the meat into everything from muffins to milkshakes wanes and pork supply rebounds after last year’s historic drought.

Retail bacon jumped 23 percent to $5.708 a pound this year, the highest since at least 1980, government data show. Pork bellies, which are cured and sliced to make bacon, account for a record share of the value of a hog as demand growth outpaced other cuts, according to the National Pork Board. Production shrank this year after last season’s drought, the worst since the 1930s, increased costs for corn, the main feed grain.

That’s reversing as this year’s 38 percent plunge in corn prices returns U.S. pig farmers to profit, sends hog weights to a high and pork output to a record in 2014. A looming threat of a spreading pork disease, however, could derail the rally in pork production.

Pork-belly prices have plunged 23 percent since the end of September, and hog futures will fall 13 percent next year to the lowest since October 2012, according to an average of analyst estimates compiled by Bloomberg. That may help ease prices for bacon, which is appearing on more menus even as chefs say the trend is fading.

“There’s been this explosion of bacon in all kinds of different uses, ice cream and all kinds of things, and that certainly has helped demand,” said Steve Meyer, the president of Paragon Economics Inc. in Adel, Iowa. “The price is going to moderate some because we will raise more pigs.”

A&W Restaurants Inc. says it was the first chain to serve a bacon cheeseburger in 1963. In the past two decades, fast-food restaurants started adding more items with bacon in their menus and frozen, pre-cooked bacon made it easier to eat at home.

Fine dining has embraced bacon as well, often artisanal varieties. Bacon has become something chefs are expected to put on the plate to add value, said Clark Wolf, a New York-based restaurant consultant who has advised hotel companies, casinos, arts institutions and universities.
Forty-four percent of Americans eat bacon in a two-week period, compared with 38 percent 13 years ago, according to NPD Group, an industry consultant.

**Traditionally cheaper than other cuts, bacon caught up with pork chops in 2007 and became more expensive in 2010, according to Ronald Plain, a professor of agricultural economics at the University of Missouri-Columbia.**

“Bacon has become more popular than other cuts, but hogs are not producing more bacon than they ever did, and so the price has gone up dramatically,” Plain said. “Food fads come and food fads go. History says, at some point in time, this will go away.”

In a survey of U.S. chefs by the National Restaurant Association, 60 percent said bacon-flavored chocolate would be “yesterday’s news” in 2014. Still, 64 percent called artisan or specialty bacon a “hot trend,” up from 60 percent in last year’s survey.

While bacon sales at U.S. supermarkets, drugstores and other retailers rose 5.8 percent to $3.84 billion in the 52-week period ending Nov. 3, the number of units declined 2.7 percent, according to data from IRI, a Chicago-based market research company.

**RECORD HERD**

Wholesale pork-bellies will fall 1 percent to average about $1.80 a pound in 2014 as supply expands, Steiner Consulting estimates. That’s still up 34 percent from 2000.

Retail prices for bacon include other costs such as marketing and transportation, and competition with restaurants curbs supply, said Altin Kalo, an economist at Steiner Consulting. Lower pork-belly prices will cause bacon prices to decline after a lag, according to James Robb, director of the Livestock Marketing Information Center in Denver.

Prices will also ease because pork production peaks in the fourth quarter while bacon consumption traditionally declines, Robb said. November retail prices fell in eight of the past 10 years, U.S. Department of Agriculture data show.

The hog herd as of Sept. 1 totaled 68.4 million head, the largest for that time of year on record, according to USDA data.

Pork production in the U.S., the world’s biggest exporter of the meat, will climb 2.9 percent to a record 23.92 billion pounds next year, the USDA said on Tuesday.

Pork supplies are also climbing as hogs get bigger. The average U.S. carcass weighed 214.24 pounds on Dec. 6, the most in government data going back to 2002. Weights have climbed 2 percent this year.

A spreading virus called porcine epidemic diarrhea may curb gains in pork production. Reported in 19 states since April, the virus slows growth of older hogs and has a mortality rate as high as
100 percent in suckling pigs younger than three weeks, data from the Iowa Pork Industry Center show.

About 1 million to 1.2 million fewer hogs will be coming to market in the first four months of 2014 because of the virus, according to Steiner Consulting Group, the Manchester, N.H.-based consultant to the food industry.

Some companies are concerned that the virus could boost pork prices. Headwinds for Hormel Foods Corp. in 2014 include “potentially volatile hog cost” if the virus limits supply, Jeffrey Ettinger, chief executive officer of the Austin, Minn.-based meat producer, said on an earnings conference call on Nov. 26. Still, bacon prices helped improve margins for Hormel in the three months through October, Ettinger said.

**RISING STOCKPILES**

U.S. stockpiles of pork bellies totaled 27.429 million pounds as of Oct. 31, 47 percent more than a year earlier, according to USDA data. That’s the most in cold storage for that time of year since 2009.

Meanwhile, bets on higher hog prices by hedge funds and other money managers fell 38 percent since the end of September, Commodity Futures Trading Commission data show. They are now the least bullish since July.

“The uses of bacon are getting a little bizarre — 2013 saw it being added to cocktails, which is probably not my favorite fruit,” said Michael Whiteman, president of Baum & Whiteman LLC, a restaurant consulting firm whose projects included the Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Center. “When food combinations start to get baroque, the end is near.”
FROM READERS: MU student learns the beauty of inconvenience in Brazil

Friday, December 13, 2013 | 6:00 a.m. CST

Audrey Zigmond poses with her students at an NGO called Projeto Alegria da Criança — “Project Happiness of the Child” — in Fortaleza, Brazil, in the summer.

BY AUDREY ZIGMOND/MISSOURIAN READER

Audrey Zigmond is a junior studying international strategic communication at MU. She lived in Fortaleza, Brazil, this past summer to teach English. There, she discovered the beauty of inconvenience.

Last May I finished finals, moved all of my things into a storage unit, shopped, went to a concert and kissed my mom goodbye within a 36-hour time span. Little did I know my jam-packed lifestyle of checking things off an endless list had met its match as soon as I boarded my plane to Fortaleza, Brazil.

After completing a Portuguese minor at MU, I chose to immerse myself for 10 weeks to improve my language skills. I was placed with a host family and was hired as an English teacher at an NGO called Projeto Alegria da Criança, “Project Happiness of the Child.” My job was to independently develop lesson plans and teach about 100 kids age 8 to 22.

From day one, my students were calling me “tia,” which translates to “auntie.” They asked me to take them to the United States at the end of the summer, posted pictures with me on Facebook and invited me to eat dinner with their families. I was so overwhelmed by their willingness to learn and share with me. My confidence in my abilities immediately vanished. I had to rebuild.

Absolutely nothing came easy in Brazil. There’s no such thing as a “quick trip” to the grocery store, and most people didn’t speak English. My 12-mile trip to work took about an hour each way on the public bus. It’s usually dangerous to go anywhere alone, and
police are notoriously untrustworthy. All of those factors combined gave me an incredible gift: appreciation for inconveniences.

For example, many of my plans were affected when nationwide manifestations erupted in Brazil during the Confederations Cup. This “inconvenience” actually gave me the opportunity to participate in historic, progressive protests that changed Brazil. Things rarely worked out the way I wanted. They worked out better.

Time ceased being a distraction in my life. I learned to let go of the mentality that my students were on “my time,” and as a result things like tardiness or miscommunication no longer inhibited me. This helped me regain my confidence and teach effectively. I grew very close to my kids because I learned how to be present with them.

In the United States time is money and convenience is king. We have about 25 options for any food or service we crave, we rarely spend more than 15 minutes eating lunch and we can confidently drop our kids off at the gym daycare while going for a run in between errands. When everything is easy and fast, it’s difficult to be present with one another because we see time as a hindrance, not a blessing.

When people ask me about my summer I default to the American action movie version. I had a demanding job, participated in the protests, was robbed, traveled on weekends, went to the hospital and met friends from all over the world. In reality, the days were slow and full of inconveniences.

I wouldn’t have had it any other way.