Missouri tells police of alleged rape

Note from the MU NEWS BUREAU: To view the original ESPN story transcript please visit: http://espn.go.com/espn/otl/story/_/id/10323102/university-missouri-officials-did-not-pursue-rape-case-lines-investigation-finds

The University of Missouri released a statement Sunday saying university police have turned over to municipal police names and information about the alleged rape of former Tigers swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, who committed suicide in 2011.

"Outside the Lines" on Friday published a story detailing how the university had not told law enforcement officials about the alleged rape, possibly by one or more members of its football team, despite administrators finding out about the alleged 2010 incident more than a year ago.

In the statement Sunday, Missouri said its university police department acted Saturday night because of new names and information in the story, and that "it was determined that the alleged assault occurred off campus, and therefore lies within the jurisdiction of [the Columbia Police Department]. The university will assist CPD in any way possible as they conduct their investigation."

A spokesperson for Columbia police could not be reached for comment Sunday morning.

Later Sunday, university system president Timothy Wolfe sent a letter to chancellors asking "the board of curators to hire outside independent counsel to conduct an investigation of MU's handling of matters related to Ms. Courey."

"Such an independent review will be beneficial to all our campuses so that we can determine if there were any shortcomings with respect to MU's handling of this matter and, if so, ways in which to improve the handling of such matters in the future," Wolfe wrote.

"Outside the Lines" reported that for most of 2010, Missouri swimmer Sasha Menu Courey harbored a secret: She believed she'd been raped by a football player. Late that year, her life spiraling downward, Menu Courey began to share her secret with others, including a rape crisis counselor and a campus therapist, records show. In the ensuing months, a campus nurse, two doctors and, according to her journal, an athletic department administrator also learned of her claim that she had been assaulted.

The administrator denied to "Outside the Lines" that Menu Courey had told her she was assaulted.
Healthcare providers are generally exempt from requirements to report such crimes and also are bound by medical privacy laws. But those same protections do not extend to campus administrators, who at Missouri were made aware of claims that Menu Courey had been raped through several sources, including a 2012 newspaper article as well as the university's review of records when fulfilling separate records requests by her parents and "Outside the Lines."

In its statement Sunday, Missouri said it had not acted previously "because there was no complaint brought forward from the alleged victim or her parents, and there was otherwise insufficient information about the incident. Privacy laws prohibited MU medical personnel from reporting anything Sasha might have shared with them about the alleged assault without her permission."

Under Title IX law enforced by the U.S. Department of Education, once a school knows or reasonably should know of possible sexual violence it must take immediate and appropriate action to investigate or otherwise determine what happened. The law applies even after the death of an alleged victim. Further, the federal Clery Act requires campus officials with responsibility for student or campus activities to report serious incidents of crime to police for investigation and possible inclusion in campus crime statistics.

Among the thousands of pages of documents gathered by Missouri administrators in late 2012 in response to a records request was a December 2010 online chat transcript between Menu Courey and a rape crisis counselor that had been saved in Menu Courey's university email folder. In the transcript, the former top swim recruit describes an assault after having consensual sex with an unidentified man. Another document discovered by a university hospital administrator shows Menu Courey had told a campus nurse and doctor in 2011 that she had been raped by a football player in February 2010.

Menu Courey committed suicide in June 2011, about 16 months after the alleged assault. The incident has not been reported to campus police, University of Missouri Police Capt. Brian Weimer said Thursday. City police and the Boone County prosecutor's office say they also have not received any reports.

On Thursday, after being shown medical records by "Outside the Lines," Chad Moller, athletic department spokesman, said that the university, in declining to launch an investigation, was honoring what it believes were the wishes of Menu Courey, who never reported the incident to police.

"An important consideration in deciding how to address a report of a sexual incident is to determine what the alleged victim wants," Moller wrote in an email. "In this situation, it is clear that Sasha chose not to report this incident to anyone at MU other than mentioning it to healthcare providers who were bound to respect her privacy."

At least one expert told "Outside the Lines" Friday evening that it appeared Missouri administrators had shirked their duties under Title IX law.
"At the point that the university's administrators had notice of the alleged rape[s], they had an obligation to investigate, based on the potential harm that the alleged rapists posed and pose to the university community," said Brett Sokolow, executive director of the Association of Title IX Administrators. "Title IX obligates universities to these actions, and to efforts to remedy the effects of the acts for the victim and the community."

"Outside the Lines" also reported Friday that Menu Courey shared with at least one other person details of the alleged assault. A friend, former Missouri wide receiver Rolandis Woodland, said he has seen a videotape of the alleged incident that corroborates the basics of what she told medical officials, and that three other Missouri football players actually were involved.

In a second release Sunday, Missouri took exception with reporting by "Outside the Lines" and stood by its actions over the past three years.

"We continue to believe that the university did the right thing in trying to be respectful of Sasha's parents and determine their wishes. We think it is strange and inappropriate for the university to be criticized for not undertaking an investigation when Sasha's parents chose not to respond to our request for their input.

"If they wanted an investigation, they simply could have responded or made a report to law enforcement. Instead, it appears that great lengths have been taken to paint the university in a bad light simply because it asked Sasha's parents about their wishes rather than immediately launching an investigation based on a highly ambiguous chat transcript."

Menu Courey's parents told "Outside the Lines" for Friday's story that they did not respond to Missouri officials because they had lost faith over time and did not feel it was their job to investigate the matter as they had no access to documents. In one example, they doubted university's officials' sincerity, they said, because it took three months for the university to give them a copy of Menu Courey's online chat transcript with the rape crisis counselor. The university discovered it in late 2012 but provided it three months later.

University of Missouri to probe alleged rape of student who later killed self

Sasha Menu Courey, of Etobicoke, a competitive swimmer and straight-A student, committed suicide about 16 months after an alleged rape by a school football player.
The University of Missouri says it will launch an investigation into the alleged rape of a straight-A student and competitive swimmer from Etobicoke who later committed suicide.

“Athletic officials take these situations very seriously,” Mary Jo Banken, a spokesperson for the University, told the Star, referring to the allegation involving Sasha Menu Courey. The renewed push for answers comes following an investigative report by U.S. sports network ESPN on Friday. It alleged that University of Missouri officials learned about the incident more than a year ago, but failed to take action.

Menu Courey of Etobicoke was 20 years old when she died in June 2011, two days after consuming a bottle of over-the-counter pain killers. It was about 16 months after she was allegedly raped by a University of Missouri football player.

“We definitely want this investigation to happen,” her father, Mike Menu, said in an interview on Saturday. “Better late than never.”

The school did not know about the alleged rape until it turned over thousands of pages of documents under a special request by ESPN in late 2012, Banken said.

“There was just an accusation of a sexual assault. We didn’t have enough information to launch an investigation at that point,” Banken said.

According to the ESPN report, Menu Courey shared details of the alleged assault with a campus nurse and doctor, and in an online chat with a rape crisis counsellor. She did not go to the police.

“After the assault, she was seeing her assailant during lunch time. It was the not kind of situation where you can just go and tell. She was really afraid,” Menu said.

Her parents learned of the alleged rape after her death. Menu Courey suffered from borderline personality disorder, a condition marked by extreme high and low mood swings and erratic behaviour.

The couple says that student athletes need more access to mental health support. Their daughter, in particular, found relief from her symptoms in the routines and discipline of competitive swimming.

But by January 2011, she was no longer attending swimming practice, in part because of a back injury. At the same time, she struggled with the emotional fallout from the alleged sexual assault.

“Being an athlete, you’re really put on a pedestal. You’re not supposed to have problems. It’s difficult to find a person to talk to,” her mother, Lynn Courey, said. “By keeping everything inside, it ate her alive.”
Menu Courey was hospitalized in Kansas in April 2011 following a suicide attempt. The family was unable to find help for their daughter in Canada. They were repeatedly told that in-patient programs were full and it would take months just to get on the waiting list for outpatient care.

They eventually found a private facility outside Boston that cost $44,000 for 28 days. Menu Courey spent two months there. Menu Courey’s family has started a fund to raise awareness about borderline personality disorder. More information is available at the website.

“This is really unacceptable. When you’re in pain like this and you have to fight to find care, it doesn’t make sense,” Courey said. “The system failed her. We’re really hoping the legacy of her story will help transform the system to help save other lives.”

U. of Missouri President Seeks Inquiry Into Handling of Alleged Rape Case

The president of the University of Missouri system on Sunday said he was seeking an independent investigation into the Columbia campus’s handling of a case involving a swimmer who was allegedly sexually assaulted by a football player, after an ESPN report raised questions about the flagship’s handling of the case.

The swimmer, Sasha Menu Courey, committed suicide in 2011, about 16 months after the alleged assault.

The ESPN program Outside the Lines reported on Friday that Missouri had learned about the assault allegation more than a year ago but had failed to investigate it or report it to law-enforcement authorities. On Sunday the university released a response that contested the ESPN report’s assertions and called it “skewed and unfair.”

The university also released a separate statement saying that the campus police had submitted details of the case to local law-enforcement officials on Saturday, after learning some information relating to the case through ESPN’s reporting. The university said it had determined that the alleged assault occurred off campus, and as a result fell under the local police department’s jurisdiction.
“MU was previously unable to go forward with an investigation because there was no complaint brought forward from the alleged victim or her parents, and there was otherwise insufficient information about the incident,” the statement said. “Privacy laws prohibited MU medical personnel from reporting anything Sasha might have shared with them about the alleged assault without her permission.”

Timothy M. Wolfe, the system’s president, revealed his request for an independent review in a letter to the chancellors of the system’s four campuses. Such a review, he wrote, would be beneficial to all the campuses “so that we can determine if there were any shortcomings with respect to MU’s handling of this matter and, if so, ways in which to improve the handling of such matters in the future.”

Mr. Wolfe also ordered each of the chancellors to lead a “comprehensive review” of their own campuses’ policies on sexual assault and the availability of mental-health services, and said he would make additional resources available to the campuses “to ensure that we are addressing this issue in the appropriate manner.”

UM seeks investigation of rape allegation

By Dave Matter

COLUMBIA, Mo. • University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe will ask for an independent investigation into MU’s handling of the case of former Mizzou swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, who committed suicide in June 2011 after allegedly being sexually assaulted by Mizzou football players.

Wolfe sent an email Sunday to the chancellors of the four UM system campuses notifying them of his request that the university Board of Curators hire independent counsel to conduct the review.

“Such an independent review will be beneficial to all our campuses so that we can determine if there were any shortcomings with respect to MU’s handling of this matter and, if so, ways in which to improve the handling of such matters in the future,” Wolfe wrote.

Wolfe has also asked that the four campuses lead a comprehensive review of their “policies, training and procedures concerning the prevention and reporting of sexual assaults and the availability of mental health services.”

“We must ensure that each of our campuses has the necessary resources to educate the campus community about sexual assault and prevention, as well as an effective process for reporting
such incidents, plus adequate capacity to address mental health issues among our students, faculty and staff,” Wolfe wrote. “Once we have done a complete examination of our policies and procedures on our campuses and identified any areas of need, I am pledging to make available any additional resources, including funding from the UM System budget, to our campuses to ensure that we are addressing this issue in the appropriate manner. As leaders of our campuses, I am asking you to also volunteer new ideas and new investments that are necessary to ensure the safety of our students.”

The board of curators is scheduled to meet Wednesday through Friday in Columbia. John Fougere, chief communications officer for the UM system, said Sunday he was unsure when the board will consider Wolfe’s recommendation.

Shortly after ESPN aired its story Sunday on the suicide and sexual assault claim by Menu Courey, the university released two statements, saying in one that the MU Police Department submitted information to the Columbia Police Department on Saturday night and that the university will assist Columbia police “in any way possible as they conduct their investigation.”

“This information from ESPN’s story included names of individuals who might have relevant information regarding the alleged February 2010 assault,” the university news bureau’s statement read.

Menu Courey committed suicide in June 2011, 16 months after she was allegedly raped by Mizzou football players, according to a story published Friday on ESPN.com. ESPN’s story says records indicate that Menu Courey spoke about her assault in 2010 to campus personnel, including a rape crisis counselor, a campus therapist, a campus nurse and two doctors.

According to her journal, ESPN reported that an athletics department administrator also learned of her claim, about 15 months after the alleged rape. MU has denied that Menu Courey told the administrator, Meghan Anderson, who now works at the University of Tennessee, about the assault.

In its statement Sunday, the MU news bureau said the alleged sexual assault lies within the jurisdiction of Columbia police because it occurred off campus. Citing medical privacy laws, MU said it was unable to go forward with an investigation without a formal complaint from the alleged victim or her parents.

As of Sunday, Columbia police did not have any record of a sexual assault case involving Menu Courey.

“I have checked our records system and I am not finding a report like this in our system,” Officer Latisha Stroer, the department’s public information officer, said in an email. Stroer said she would check further with detectives today.

In a separate statement released Sunday, MU athletics department harshly criticized the ESPN piece, referring to its “skewed and flawed reporting” while calling it “strange and inappropriate”
for the university to be criticized for not investigating the assault when Menu Courey’s parents chose not to respond to a letter from the university a year ago.

In a letter dated Jan. 28, 2013, Donell Young, the senior coordinator of the Office of Student Conduct, reached out to Lynn Courey and Mike Menu, asking if they had further information on the rape allegation and whether they wanted the university to conduct an investigation. An open records request had uncovered an online chat transcript from December 2010 between Menu Courey and a rape crisis counselor, in which Menu Courey recounted the sexual assault.

Friday, after the ESPN story was posted online, Lynn Courey told the Columbia Daily Tribune that they did not reply to the letter, which MU sent three months after first discovering the chat transcript.

“They were the ones that had all the information of Sasha’s correspondence. We didn’t have any of that,” she told the Tribune. “We were the ones asking for information in order to understand. We didn’t know anything.

“We didn’t know they needed our permission to investigate something that happened, and they were aware of it for over a year. This is the part that kind of has me puzzled.”

Menu Courey’s parents were unavailable for comment Sunday.

Missouri athletics countered in Sunday’s statement: “If they wanted an investigation, they simply could have responded or made a report to law enforcement. Instead, it appears that great lengths have been taken to paint the University in a bad light simply because it asked Sasha’s parents about their wishes rather than immediately launching an investigation based on a highly ambiguous chat transcript.”

UM System president calls for review of MU response to Menu Courey case

MU turns over information to police; athletic department refutes ESPN claims

By David Morrison

The University of Missouri has turned over information about the alleged sexual assault of former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey to the Columbia Police Department for investigation, and the president of the University of Missouri System has said he will ask for an independent review of MU’s handling of the situation.

The moves come after a story by ESPN’s program “Outside the Lines” that questioned MU’s response to the alleged sexual assault of Menu Courey, a former MU swimmer who committed suicide in 2011, about 16 months after she allegedly was raped by a Missouri football player.

In a statement addressed to the chancellors of the UM System’s four campuses, UM System President Tim Wolfe said he is going to ask the UM System Board of Curators to hire “outside independent counsel” to investigate MU’s handling of Menu Courey’s situation.

“Such an independent review will be beneficial to all our campuses so that we can determine if there were any shortcomings with respect to MU’s handling of this matter and, if so, ways in which to improve the handling of such matters in the future,” Wolfe said in the statement.

John Fougere, the chief communications officer for the University of Missouri System, said the Board of Curators is expected to put Wolfe's recommendation up for discussion during a meeting in Columbia this week, starting Wednesday afternoon and continuing all day Friday at the Reynolds Alumni Center.

Wolfe also directed the chancellors to lead comprehensive reviews of their “campuses’ respective policies, training and procedures concerning the prevention and reporting of sexual assaults and the availability of mental health services.”

The ESPN story — published on its website Friday and broadcast Sunday morning — said at least six campus medical officials either knew about the incident or signed documents including information on the alleged assault while Menu Courey was still alive.

Excerpts of Menu Courey’s journal obtained by ESPN include an entry from May 2011 in which the swimmer wrote that she had informed her athletic department academic adviser of the alleged rape. A Tribune article about Menu Courey from February 2012 also mentions the incident, though without any specifics.

The ESPN article noted that despite that information, Missouri’s athletic department had yet to investigate the incident or report it to authorities.

On Friday, MU Athletic Department spokesman Chad Moller said the department's only statement on the matter would be two letters he sent to ESPN. They are here and here.

In one of the letters, Moller wrote: "no one on the coaching staff … and no one in our administration nor any staff members, were to the best of our knowledge, ever told about this event while Sasha was alive. Had Sasha told any of our staff that she felt she had been assaulted, we expect that our staff would have reported it immediately to the proper authorities."
The MU News Bureau released a statement Sunday morning shortly after ESPN’s “Outside the Lines” program began airing. The statement said the university turned over the case to the MU Police Department on Saturday night after learning more from ESPN’s report, including “names of individuals who might have relevant information regarding the alleged February 2010 assault.”

MUPD determined the alleged assault occurred off campus and then it passed the case to Columbia police. Columbia police Officer Latisha Stroer on Sunday said she did not have any information on the case.

“MU was previously unable to go forward with an investigation because there was no complaint brought forward from the alleged victim or her parents, and there was otherwise insufficient information about the incident,” the MU News Bureau statement said. “Privacy laws prohibited MU medical personnel from reporting anything Sasha might have shared with them about the alleged assault without her permission.”

It was after Menu Courey’s death, while the university was responding to an open-records request from ESPN and Menu Courey’s parents in 2012, that the university became aware of a December 2010 chat transcript with a rape crisis counselor in which Menu Courey mentioned the incident. MU sent a letter to Menu Courey’s parents — Mike Menu and Lynn Courey — on Jan., 28, 2013, asking them for more information on the incident and whether they would like the university to proceed with an investigation.

Menu Courey’s parents did not respond, the MU News Bureau statement said.

“They were the ones that had all the information of Sasha's correspondence. We didn't have any of that,” Courey told the Tribune on Friday. "We were the ones asking for information in order to understand. We didn't know anything.

"We didn't know they needed our permission to investigate something that happened, and they were aware of it for over a year. This is the part that kind of has me puzzled.”

The MU News Bureau statement said Missouri made repeated requests to ESPN throughout the fall of 2013 for “names of anyone at the University who they claimed knew about the alleged assault; they refused.”

The MU Athletic Department followed up Sunday morning by releasing a point-by-point refutation of four main prongs of the ESPN report.

The statement points out that ESPN references health care professionals cannot make reports about sexual assault incidents without authorization from their patients, which Menu Courey never gave, yet still alleges the university should have done more because of its health care professionals who knew about the case.

“It is important to point out this type of skewed and flawed reporting because it is dangerous,” the athletic department statement said. “Victims of sexual assault need to know that they can
seek medical care without the concern that reports will be made to police or campus officials without their consent. Otherwise some victims will be deterred from seeking medical care.”

Missouri also points out that Meghan Anderson, the academic adviser Menu Courey said she told about the assault in May 2011, has denied any knowledge of the incident both to ESPN and to university athletics officials.

Anderson, who now works at the University of Tennessee, declined comment to the Tribune on Friday through Volunteers athletic department spokesman Jimmy Stanton.

“Based on the experience of MU Athletics in working with Meghan, we have no reason to doubt her statement on this point,” the MU athletics statement said. “In any event, there has been no suggestion that anybody else at the University was told anything about a sexual assault at that time.”

The university also stated that the 2012 Tribune article in question made only passing reference to the alleged assault and did not include any identification of location or possible assailants.

Further, the athletics department statement said, Menu Courey’s parents never shared the journal entry in which she wrote about the assault nor did the Tribune inquire with the university about the incident.

“It makes no sense to fault the University for not launching an investigation based on two vague sentences in a news article about Sasha's journal when Sasha's parents did not choose to bring that information to the attention of the University or law enforcement and request an investigation,” the statement said. “This further shows the flawed and skewed reporting by ESPN.”

Menu Courey’s parents told the Tribune on Friday that the Missouri representatives with which they had maintained consistent contact after the swimmer’s death stopped returning their calls after the February 2012 Tribune article.

Finally, the athletic department statement said, the chat transcript unearthed through the open-records requests did not indicate a location or possible perpetrators of the alleged assault, other than to say they were “football players.”

“Under the circumstances, we consider that it was right and appropriate to ask Sasha's parents whether they wanted the University to conduct an investigation,” the statement said.

“We continue to believe that the University did the right thing in trying to be respectful of Sasha's parents and determine their wishes,” the statement concluded. “We think it is strange and inappropriate for the University to be criticized for not undertaking an investigation when Sasha's parents chose not to respond to our request for their input. If they wanted an investigation, they simply could have responded or made a report to law enforcement.
“Instead, it appears that great lengths have been taken to paint the University in a bad light simply because it asked Sasha's parents about their wishes rather than immediately launching an investigation based on a highly ambiguous chat transcript.”

MU system president calls for independent investigation of alleged rape

By TOD PALMER

The president of the University of Missouri system called Sunday for an independent investigation into how the school handled a sexual assault allegation made by a female swimmer who subsequently committed suicide.

MU announced Sunday that it had forwarded information about the alleged assault of Sasha Menu Courey to the Columbia Police Department. But MU system president Tim Wolfe issued a statement later Sunday that said, in part, that he had asked the Board of Curators to hire independent counsel to investigate MU’s handling of the Menu Courey case.

“Such an independent review will be beneficial to all our campuses so that we can determine if there were any shortcomings with respect to MU’s handling of the matter and, if so, ways in which to improve the handling of such matters in the future,” Wolfe said in a statement.

Wolfe also called for the system’s university chancellors to “lead a comprehensive review of your campuses’ respective policies, training and procedures concerning the prevention and reporting of sexual assaults and the availability of mental health services.”

Wolfe also pledged to make funding available to address any deficiencies found by the independent investigation.

On Sunday, ESPN’s “Outside the Lines” aired a story claiming MU failed to investigate Menu Courey’s claims. The school announced in a statement released Sunday morning that it learned new details about Menu Courey’s allegations Friday when an online story accompanying the “Outside the Lines” piece was initially published.

Missouri’s statement reads, in part: “After review of this new information which was previously unavailable to MU, it was determined that the alleged assault occurred off campus, and therefore
lies within the jurisdiction of CPD. The university will assist CPD in any way possible as they conduct their investigation.”

ESPN’s story includes an interview with former Tigers wide receiver Rolandis Woodland, who said Menu Courey mailed him a package that included a videotape from February 2010 of the alleged assault shortly before she committed suicide June 17, 2011.

Woodland said a family member misplaced the tape, according to the ESPN report.

Meanwhile, Gil Moye, a former Missouri running back who left the team around the time of the alleged assault, admits to having consensual sex with Menu Courey, but he denies letting other players assault her.

MU said in the statement that it wasn’t able to conduct an investigation — as legally required by Title IX and the Cleary Act — until now, because no complaint had been made to the university and it lacked sufficient evidence about the incident to proceed on its own.

Meanwhile, MU maintains its stance that it didn’t learn about the alleged sexual assault until fall 2012, when it uncovered the transcript of an online chat Menu Courey had with a National Sexual Assault Hotline rape crisis counselor in response to a Sunshine Law records request from her parents, Lynn Courey and Mike Menu.

MU also published a letter Donnell Young, the university’s senior coordinator in the Office of Student Conduct, sent Menu Courey’s parents Jan. 28, 2013, asking for any additional information they might have about the alleged assault and asking if they wanted the university to pursue an investigation.

The university claims that Menu Courey’s parents never responded to the letter.

MU doesn’t dispute that Menu Courey told campus healthcare providers about the alleged sexual assault, but maintains that those employees were bound by legal and patient privacy concerns from disclosing that information to university administrators.

Furthermore, in a response to the “Outside the Lines” story posted on its website, MU said it believes former assistant director of academic services Meghan Anderson, who denies that Menu Courey told her about the alleged assault during a May 2011 phone conversation.

An entry in Menu Courey’s journal said she told Anderson, who now works at the University of Tennessee, while undergoing treatment at McLean Hospital in Boston for borderline personality disorder after a suicide attempt in April 2011.

MU’s response goes on to say that there was insufficient information in a Feb. 12, 2012, article from the Columbia Daily Tribune to prompt an investigation.

On Friday, the university said athletic director Mike Alden was out of town until Tuesday and unavailable for comment.
MU official seeks independent review of alleged assault

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - The president of the University of Missouri system is seeking an independent review of how the university handled allegations from a swimmer that she had been sexually assaulted by a football player more than a year before she committed suicide.

The move Sunday by UM System President Timothy Wolfe comes after an ESPN story questioning the University of Missouri's response to the alleged sexual assault of Sasha Menu Courey, who committed suicide in 2011, about 16 months after the alleged rape.

In a letter to chancellors of the university's four campuses, Wolfe says he'll ask the board of curators to hire "outside independent counsel" to investigate how the university handled Menu Courey's allegations.

The university also says it turned its information on the matter over to police on Saturday.

Another sexual-assault scandal should force culture change

By Joe Walljasper
When former Missouri swimmer Sasha Menu Courey committed suicide in June 2011, her parents donated her heart. It was the one organ that could be salvaged after an overdose of Tylenol. The next day, the heart was transplanted into a 26-year-old man, ensuring that at least some good came from Menu Courey's tragic end.

Perhaps the only other positive that could emerge from Menu Courey's death — which was revisited yesterday in an ESPN story that accused the Missouri athletic department of failing to investigate her claim that she was raped by a football player — is that MU gets a lot more curious when its athletes are alleged to be the victims or perpetrators of sexual assaults.

To summarize a lengthy story that will be explored further in an episode of "Outside the Lines" at 8 a.m. tomorrow on ESPN, Menu Courey told campus counselors, doctors and nurses that after a night of drinking in February 2010 a football player raped her. Former Missouri wide receiver Rolandis Woodland, a friend of Menu Courey's, told ESPN it wasn't just one football player but three who raped her. Woodland said Menu Courey mailed him a tape of the incident as proof but said he had since lost the tape.

The ESPN report suggested the sexual assault was a contributing factor to Menu Courey's tailspin that eventually led to her suicide. While discovering no proof that coaches or athletic department officials knew about the alleged rape before her death, the story did take Missouri officials to task for not investigating or informing law enforcement about the assault within the last year when they did become aware.

Missouri spokesman Chad Moller said yesterday that Athletic Director Mike Alden was out of town until Tuesday and unavailable for comment. I would think the modern convenience known as the telephone would make it possible for Alden to discuss this situation from wherever he is. It's disappointing when the head of an organization isn't out front during a crisis.

Moller said the department's only statement on the matter would be two letters he sent to ESPN. In one of the letters he wrote that "no one in our administration nor any staff members were, to the best of our knowledge, ever told about this event while Sasha was alive."

It's impossible to know what role the alleged rape played in her death or whether the outcome would have been different if Missouri did any number of things differently in her time of need. She suffered from borderline personality disorder and had attempted suicide once as a teenager before she came to MU. Ten percent of people with that mental illness commit suicide.

I do question the athletic department's interest in proactively policing its athletes when the results could be unpleasant. Nothing ever seems to happen until the media reports an incident. It seems reasonable to think coaches and support personnel who are around athletes every day would hear things before random reporters do.

The benefit of the doubt was forfeited four years ago. Coach Mike Anderson and other athletic department officials were informed by a tutor in January 2010 that she was raped by basketball
player Mike Dixon. After initially reporting the matter to campus police, the tutor decided against pressing charges, but a nurse who examined her concluded force was involved. Still, Alden and Anderson allowed Dixon to stay on the team. He wasn't required to part ways with the university until the ugly details of that police report hit the media in November 2012 after he had been accused of another sexual assault.

Also, in the recent book "The System," there is a chapter about former running back Derrick Washington's sexual assault of a tutor. The book accused Missouri of being too lax in preventing sex between athletes and tutors in its Total Person Program.

An athletic department can be a wonderful advertisement for a university. It can also be the opposite.

Too often in the last few years, it has been the opposite.

One of new Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin's first priorities when he takes over next week should be to sit down with Alden and find out what changes are going to be made to ensure his athletic department is going to seriously investigate any rape allegation, whether or not charges are pressed and whether or not the public is going to find out.

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Parents say the system failed former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey

By VAHE GREGORIAN

The Kansas City Star

For all the trauma they’ve absorbed and haunting questions unanswered about the suicide of their daughter, former Mizzou swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, her parents’ quest now is simple:

To ensure that the disturbing, complicated circumstances that preceded her death, as outlined Sunday on ESPN’s “Outside The Lines,” don’t mean she died in vain.

In one sense, that wish drew life the day she died, June 17, 2011, when her heart was donated to Pat Healy, who had been waiting months for a transplant.
As Healy, then 26, felt “trapped in my own body,” he had the grim realization that the appropriate heart probably would be delivered only out of tragedy: someone dying too early.

“If I somehow had the power … if I somehow could have prevented what happened to her, I would have done it in a second,” Healy said by phone from Boston, adding, “I don’t want to say I’m living for two people, living for somebody else, but there is a piece of that.”

Somehow, that’s been the least complicated element of breathing broader meaning into Sasha Menu Courey’s life, which ended at age 20 after a series of institutional disconnects and decisions at MU that her parents believe contributed to her death — decisions that might have been averted.

Menu Courey’s parents aren’t blaming Mizzou, necessarily, but they’re puzzled by the events that transpired after Sasha’s arrival in Columbia from her native Canada in fall 2009. More than anything, they want to make sure that what appears to have happened to their daughter doesn’t happen to anyone else.

Although Sasha had suffered from mental health issues before coming to Missouri, she seemed happy enough as a freshman at MU. But she harbored deeper issues that would be exacerbated by an alleged rape in 2010. Being let go by the swim team only deepened her despair.

To Menu Courey’s parents, their daughter’s suicide speaks to a failure of “the system,” a universal tag under which MU’s procedures fall: a system girded and guided by legalese and privacy laws that are intended to protect, but that also can clog the sharing of vital information.

This system accounts for why the parents say they had no knowledge of the alleged sexual assault on their daughter until after her death … even though a handful of MU health care workers came to learn of it.

That’s how confidentiality is supposed to work, of course, but it’s also part of the depressing haze that lingers over Sasha’s death.

The system, too, accounts for why it’s unclear what was shared and when among coaches and administrators at Mizzou.

Menu and Courey believe voids and gridlock in the system ultimately led to their daughter’s feeling isolated and even discarded from the swim team, a particularly jarring development as she struggled to cope with the alleged assault.

News of that assault allegation became public in February 2012 in an article in the Columbia Daily Tribune, but it had yet to be investigated by Columbia or university police as of Sunday while MU fought vigorously through its website to defend itself.

That allegation was left unaddressed because the system, evidently, didn’t have an obvious answer for whose jurisdiction or responsibility a posthumous mention of an alleged rape taken
from the diary of a suicide victim was … or an answer for who should extend themselves beyond protocol to say it couldn’t just be left there.

All of this leaves Sasha’s parents off-balance but no less committed to the real mission: never again.

If all the boxes can seemingly be checked in the system, and this happens, then something is wrong with the system, isn’t it?

“It would be too easy to say, ‘Oh, we’re just going to sue the university.’ That is not our intention,” Mike Menu said. “What we really would like would be to work with them to make sure that this change is done, so that these things don’t happen.”

It would be nice, too, Lynn Courey said, if MU were to say that working to make things better “is Sasha’s legacy.”

At least symbolically, that wish was paid heed on Sunday, when MU announced it had turned “new information which was previously unavailable” over to Columbia Police because the alleged assault occurred off campus.

MU later released a letter from system president Tim Wolfe to its chancellors, announcing Wolfe is asking the Board of Curators to hire independent counsel to investigate MU’s handling of “matters related to Ms. Courey.”

“Such an independent review will be beneficial to all our campuses so that we can determine if there were any shortcomings with respect to MU’s handling of this matter and, if so, ways in which to improve the handling of such matters in the future,” Wolfe wrote.

Maybe it’s a shame that it apparently took fallout from ESPN’s work to prompt this. But Lynn Courey said, “We’re quite pleased with that.”

Done right, any inquiry should address some of the excruciating questions the parents still are grappling with. Among the many:

• Will there be a thorough investigation of the alleged assault? Despite the fact it’s been three years next month since the alleged incident, despite the obstacles to obtaining a conviction after all this time, a starting point for authorities would be interviewing Rolandis Woodland, a former receiver on the MU football team.

Woodland told ESPN that Menu Courey told him of an assault and later sent him a video of what he said was three of his teammates sexually assaulting her, a video he said she received from a former girlfriend of one of the players.
Woodland told ESPN the video had been inadvertently misplaced, but he said he confronted the three after her death.

“People have to be told what they did was wrong and there’s consequences,” Lynn Courey said, adding, “We lost our child, right?”

• Why did Missouri wait until a year after the published report alluding to the allegation of rape (passed on by her parents from her journal) to send a letter asking them if they wanted it investigated?

MU’s online stance is that it “makes no sense to fault the University” based on “two vague sentences in a news article about Sasha’s journal when Sasha’s parents did not choose to bring that information to the attention of the University or law enforcement and request an investigation. This further shows the flawed and skewed reporting by ESPN.”

But Menu and Courey say they were stunned by the letter and bewildered that permission was needed to investigate, especially so long afterward and especially after they had come to believe Missouri was distancing itself from them by not responding to phone calls and texts.

• What happened in the May 2011 phone call their daughter made from McLean Hospital, a Boston institution specializing in disorders like Sasha’s, to Meghan Anderson, then the MU academic adviser to swimming?

Anderson, now at Tennessee, told ESPN that Menu Courey said nothing to her about an assault.

That clashed with an excerpt of Menu Courey’s diary ESPN said was dated the same day, May 12, 2011, and entered about the time of the phone call:

“My voice was firm and direct when I told her I’d been raped and then I moved on to telling her how I’m doing well now, talking to therapists and figure out the next steps. I was pleased that she didn’t mention the rape again and simply told me she was happy I was at McLean (Hospital) getting better.”

The excerpt itself speaks to the complications of Anderson’s position: Since Menu Courey was pleased she didn’t mention the alleged rape again, it might be inferred that she wished the point to remain in confidence.

Yet that’s still hard for the parents to reconcile. As a university official instead of medical personnel, they contend, Anderson had an obligation to report that to superiors if she were told. They don’t claim to know whether she did or didn’t pass it on.

They also were troubled that Anderson had secured a signature of withdrawal from the university from their daughter when she was hospitalized after an apparent suicide attempt in April 2011. Though that almost certainly was done to prevent her from failing classes, it came off to them as an inconsiderate move by MU.
Most of all, though, they don’t understand why her daughter’s journal would be dismissed.

“Lying to herself in her own journal?” Lynn Courey said. “I don’t know how many people actually do this.”

• Wasn’t there a better way for swimming coach Greg Rhodenbaugh to handle their daughter’s back injury and distress in the winter of 2010-11 than to disconnect her from the team altogether?

While Rhodenbaugh evidently was attempting to leverage her to attend therapy sessions he had been told she wasn’t attending, and MU says she was never officially released from the team, the parents argue that swimming truly was “her lifeline” and that isolating her was part of a descent into darkness.

“It needs to be more sensitive,” Mike Menu said, and his wife noted that stopping her “cold turkey” made her feel “really alone and weak, then all those negative feelings and thoughts are just invading (her).”

In a letter to parents and alumni of MU swimmers dated Friday, Rhodenbaugh said ESPN’s work was marked by “many inaccuracies” and added, “There is no doubt in our minds that every action taken by Mizzou with regard to Sasha focused on what was best for her health and well-being.”

But here, too, conflicting intricacies arise.

Rhodenbaugh was in his first year at MU and inherited Menu Courey as a member of the swim team. She had written on a health form that fall that she was dealing with a “major depressive disorder,” but that information was not shared with Rhodenbaugh.

So he had little apparent reason to know of any existing mental health issues.

Encouraged as they might be by MU’s announced actions on Sunday, Menu and Courey are taking their own initiatives. Their website, sashbear.org, seeks to raise mental health awareness.

And they are thrilled by developments with Healy, the recipient of Sasha’s heart, with whom they’ve met several times.

“It’s wonderful, wonderful,” Lynn Courey said through tears by telephone from Toronto, adding with a laugh that when Healy has children, “We will be grandparents, you know?”

But as they wait for reconciliation with MU, they also know that even Healy’s healing wasn’t immediate. Complications from the surgery, he said, left him in a coma for several days before he came to new life.
Then, for the first time in years, he felt blood pressure in his toes. When he looked in the mirror, he saw color in his pale face.

Most of all, he could feel his pulse.

And Sasha’s heart.

“You can feel it beating,” he said. “It’s tangible.”

And just one way her life wasn’t in vain.

**UPDATE: Sasha Menu Courey's parents paint picture of betrayal**

Saturday, January 25, 2014 | 10:23 p.m. CST; updated 3:02 p.m. CST, Sunday, January 26, 2014
BY Sean Morrison

*This story has been updated to include comments released by MU Sunday morning in response to ESPN's report and from UM System President Tim Wolfe. Calls by The Missourian to Columbia Police Department were not returned.*

He talks quickly — sharply, too. He speaks tense words. Words with underlying anger and frustration, the kind said through clenched teeth with quiet restraint. Even through the phone, the tone is unmistakable.

She, also on the phone, takes longer. Her words fall heavily. It’s the familiar monotone of a person worn down, tired from stress and desperation and the ever-present confusion she and the man have grappled with the past two years.

**These are the words of Lynn Courey and Mike Menu, the parents of Sasha Menu Courey, a former Missouri swimmer who was allegedly raped and then fell through the cracks.**

Their daughter, they say, was the victim of a system of indifference at Missouri — a system that failed her and, in doing so, led her down a path that ended with the ingestion of 100 Tylenol and her suicide on June 17, 2011.

Whether Menu Courey was raped, at this point, is moot, they add. This is about an investigation that didn’t take place.
“It doesn’t matter if it’s today, yesterday or tomorrow,” Lynn Courey says. “Something has to be done about it.”

ESPN’s report

The family thinks something should have been done about it Feb. 21, 2012, when, according to open records requests from ESPN’s “Outside the Lines,” Missouri senior athletic officials received an article from the Columbia Daily Tribune.

That article referenced a journal written by Menu Courey, in which she said she was sexually assaulted in February 2010. The family had been in regular touch with the swimming and diving team and MU since Sasha committed suicide in 2011.

After the article was released and spread among higher-ups in the athletics department, her parents said, Missouri cut ties.

“I sent another email, and then another email, and nobody was replying to me. It seemed like since the article came out and talked about the rape, now they don’t want to talk to us,” Lynn Courey said. “We felt that the school was on our side, and then suddenly we felt like we were taboo.

“Maybe after all they weren’t supporting us. Maybe they were just trying to make sure they were covered."

The two went to "MU Remembers" on April 13, 2012, to attend a ceremony commemorating their daughter and 13 other students who died the year prior. There, they finally made contact with her former teammates, coaches and some athletics department officials who were in attendance.

Her parents said the people who had been so supportive just months before offered condolences but not comfort. They said people were mum on the allegation of sexual assault.

To her parents, it seemed Menu Courey had already been swept under the rug. So, when the university finally sent a letter to seek permission for a formal investigation, three months after ESPN found myriad documents that suggested a possible rape, the family did not reply.

The university had failed them once, they said, and they had no further information to provide. All of the documents needed to begin an investigation were readily available.

“Could you have faith in the school to investigate after this?” Lynn Courey said. “We felt we were played more than anything else. We thought that my daughter wasn’t taken care of properly.”
Athletics department’s response

Missouri athletics department spokesman Chad Moller said the university will offer more information Sunday, the day ESPN broadcasts the report on “Outside the Lines,” which will air at 8 a.m.

*Mary Jo Banken, MU spokeswoman, announced Sunday morning that in light of information reported by ESPN on Friday, MU Police submitted additional information to the Columbia Police Department. She said the ESPN report included names of individuals who might have information about the incident that the university had not been previously aware of.

Banken said the information indicated the alleged assault occurred off campus and lies within the jurisdiction of Columbia police.

Moller would not respond as to whether Title IX requires the university to get consent to begin an investigation of an alleged rape from either the victim or, in this case, the parents of the deceased.

The department also would not comment on whether an investigation was forthcoming, its motivations for not launching an investigation previously or whether it thought it had enough information to pursue the matter as of Saturday night.

Despite the thoroughness of the ESPN investigation and the response by Missouri, there is still uncertainty about whether the university was legally obligated to pursue an investigation.

Menu Courey would have wanted answers and change, her parents said. That’s why they came forward and continue to weather the maelstrom of emotions, phone calls and email requests.

They want to tell her story. They want to try to close the cracks their daughter slipped through.

“We cannot change Sasha’s fate, unfortunately,” Lynn Courey said. “I think she really felt while she was there that the system really failed to support her, and I believe — we believe, and we’re hoping that her story will help other people in having better care and better service and better support at the university. …

“I’m pretty sure the reason why Sasha didn’t report it was she felt she wouldn’t be supported in it. She would be crushed by it.”
The University of Missouri has been accused of ignoring the alleged rape of a star swimmer by at least one member of its football team - and the student later committed suicide.

Staff at the school first learned about the alleged February 2010 incident after Canadian-born Sasha Menu Courey recounted her harrowing experience to a rape crisis counselor during an online chat conversation and a campus therapist in December that year, according to ESPN's 'Outside the Lines.'

But, despite their legal obligation to report possible sexual violence to police, law enforcement was never notified and the college still hasn’t launched its own investigation into the claims, the website reports.

Menu Courey committed suicide in June 2011, about 16 months after the alleged assault.

Since her death, the university was alerted to the allegations from even more sources, including a 2012 article in the Columbia Daily Tribune.

However, Missouri officials have said the information was insufficient for them to bring to law enforcement or to investigate under Title IX - the law enforced by the U.S. Department of Education that requires a school, once it knows or reasonably should know of possible sexual violence, to take immediate and appropriate action to investigate or otherwise determine what happened. This applies even after an alleged victim is dead.

'The chat transcript was not very clear about the situation and didn't identify anyone else involved, nor did it give any indication that Sasha had reported the situation to anyone,' Chad Moller, athletic department spokesman, wrote in a letter to 'Outside the Lines' in December.

He said information about the alleged rape reached athletic officials only after she passed away.

'No one on the coaching staff... and no one in our administration nor any staff members were, to the best of our knowledge, ever told about this event while Sasha was alive. Had Sasha told any of our staff that she felt she had been assaulted, we expect that our staff would have reported it immediately to the proper authorities.'
Menu Courey's distraught mother, Lynn Courey, feels the school failed her daughter and has called on Missouri to share the online chat transcript and any other potential evidence with law enforcement.

'They should investigate,' she said. 'Without a doubt.'

In the transcript, Menu Courey describes how, after a night of drinking, she returned to the apartment of a male friend, whom 'Outside the Lines' identified as Gil Moye, and the pair had consensual sex.

Then the alleged rape happened, she explained.

'[We] were falling asleep & then i heard the [door] open & some other guy walked in & locked the door & i couldn't really see who it was & i never saw a face the whole time.... but i remember just sitting upright in bed at the sound of someone walking in,' the swimmer wrote to the counselor.

'& i just remember feeling really scared thinking that the two guys had planned this or something. so my first thought was figure out who this other person was in case so that if i needed the information i would have it later... the guy told me his name & then he pulled down his pants & put on a condom & just knew i was screwed ...'

Menu Courey went on to describe the assault in detail, and said she tried to call a friend and former boyfriend for help while it was happening.

'... I started to panic & as i still on the phone trying to reach one of them tears start going down & the guy just lift up my dress & next thing i knew he inserts from behind. by that point tears were falling more but i wasn't loud & didn't anything. and then i just snapped and kind pushed him away & yelled no! and then he just left.'

Former Missouri football receiver Rolandis Woodland backed up her account and said he saw cell phone video of three of his teammates raping her in a dark room as she sobbed hysterically.

'You could see her saying "No, no," hysterically crying,' Woodland told 'Outside the Lines.'

'She uses the name of [the player] when she tells him to get off of her, and he says, "It's only me." They dim the lights and you could see them switching her but you cannot see who was switching because the lights were dimmed. About three minutes into the tape, she pushed whoever was on her off of her and ran out of the room.'

He said the video was sent to him by Menu Courey before she killed herself in June 2011 but he said it was inadvertently misplaced by one of his family members.

Woodland, who previously dated Meny Courey and considered her his best friend, said he didn't go to police because he didn't think she would have wanted him to.
The swimmer's emotional state declined rapidly after the incident, documents show.

By March 2011, she checked herself into the campus psychiatric center and told the nurse she had been raped by a football player.

Two doctors were also made aware of the alleged assault and variations of 'raped/football player' were written on multiple admission notes.

A few weeks later, after being released to her parents' care, she convinced them to let her spend the night with friends but instead checked into a local hotel and slashed her wrists.

Police were called to the hotel and had to pepper spray and taser her to get her to drop the razorblade.

According to her mother, a police officer later said she had been yelling, 'The system failed me, the system failed me!'

On April 26, Menu Courey was moved by her parents to Boston's McLean Hospital, which specializes in borderline personality disorder - a condition she had been diagnosed with. On May 12, Menu Courey wrote in her journal that she called Athletic staffer Meghan Anderson and told her about the alleged rape.

Phone records from the hospital confirm the call but Anderson denied to 'Outside the Lines' that Menu Courey had told her she was assaulted.

Two weeks later, Missouri's Student Financial Aid director sent Menu Courey a letter saying she was no longer eligible for financial aid because she had withdrawn from school.

On June 15, 2011, while still in the Boston hospital, her parents said Menu Courey somehow managed to obtain a large number of prescription pills and took 100 of them. Two days later, she died of organ failure.

'This cost her her health,' Lynn Courey told 'Outside the Lines.'

'It cost her her swimming. It cost her her life. I really believe today that the rape really put her into that borderline personality [disorder] full bloom. This is what killed her. The reason why she needed all this treatment is because she was raped. And nothing was done about it.'

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

University of Missouri president will recommend a tuition freeze
The president of the University of Missouri system said Friday he would recommend that tuition at the system’s four campuses be frozen in the 2014-15 school year.

The recommendation — which will go before the system’s Board of Trustees for approval next week — comes after Gov. Jay Nixon proposed this week injecting more than $80 million into higher education.

In exchange for that investment, Nixon has called on colleges and universities in the state not to raise costs, saying that undergrads “should not have to pay a penny more in tuition next year.”

Tim Wolfe, president of the UM system, told the Post-Dispatch editorial board Friday that he believed the system could make that agreement.

Previously, the system’s curators had been moving ahead on a plan that would have called for a 1.5 percent tuition spike — an amount that would be tied to the rise of the Consumer Price Index.

The last time tuition remained flat was four years ago. Last year, Curators voted to increase tuition on its four campuses by 1.7 percent — the rate of inflation — for Missouri resident undergraduate students.

That’s also how much tuition will increase for incoming freshmen at University of Illinois campuses next year after a vote by trustees on Thursday.

Wolfe said he would send his recommendation to trustees, who would probably take up the matter at a meeting scheduled for Thursday and Friday.

Nixon’s proposal — shared in his State of the State address Tuesday — calls for a 5 percent jump in core appropriations to higher education. In addition, he is proposing $22 million on science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, initiatives; and nearly $20 million to add 1,200 classroom slots for students in mental health fields.

But there is a vast divide between Nixon’s spending plan and those of the Legislature, where Republican leaders are using more conservative projections on economic growth.

Despite that, Wolfe said he is confident the Legislature also is committed to spending more on higher education.

“We feel good that they are going to work to support what the governor has in mind” in terms of higher education spending, Wolfe said.

Nixon’s budget proposal would bring $21.3 million to the UM system in terms of core appropriations, Wolfe said. In contrast, a 1.5 percent tuition increase would generate $3.8 million.

Yet, although Wolfe said he was encouraged by this week’s developments, he expressed continued concern about the state’s broader financial commitment to higher education.
He said the system’s campuses had profound needs in terms of facilities and the maintenance and upkeep of buildings.

For example, he said, a lack of science lab space is making it difficult to keep up with efforts to produce more graduates in STEM fields. He said the system would like to produce an additional 18,000 such graduates by the year 2020.

“We have a very, very steep hill to climb,” he said. “The bottleneck is lab space and lab investment.”

Wolfe was accompanied Friday by University of Missouri-St. Louis Chancellor Tom George, who said his campus had not benefited from a major state investment in higher education buildings since 2003. That was when he was handed the keys to the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center.

Also on Friday, Wolfe visited Bayless high school and middle school students as part of his tour that began last March to promote the value of college. Wolfe said he feared that some students were reconsidering a college education because of worries about debt and job placement rates.

This isn’t the first time Nixon has sought a tuition freeze. In 2009, Nixon promised to hold state appropriations level if colleges and universities would toe the line on tuition. At the time, state revenue had been battered by the recession and universities faced potential state cuts of as high as 25 percent. In the end, the deal went through.

University of Missouri president asks for tuition freeze

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe is recommending tuition at the system's four campuses remain the same for the 2014-15 school year.

The last time tuition remained unchanged was four years ago, KMOV reports. The university system’s curators had been planning to advance a plan that would have increased tuition 1.5 percent.
Wolfe's recommendation comes as the University of Illinois voted to raise its tuition this fall. The University of Illinois board of trustees approved a 1.7 percent tuition increase this month.

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**The Tribune's View**

**State budget**

A sharp divide

By Henry J. Waters III

Friday, January 24, 2014 at 2:00 pm

The state of Missouri is host to a divisive debate about public spending.

Democrat Gov. Jay Nixon proposes a spending plan on expectations of more revenue than Republicans in the General Assembly accept. The argument is more about philosophy than money.

The two sides refused to arrive at a common budget revenue expectation figure, ensuring they would not work toward a common spending goal. This was the point. With a common income figure, they could not stage the spending argument they pursue with such vigor.

Nixon expects some $215 million more revenue, underwriting his proposed increases in education and capital spending. Alleging $215 million less underwrites Republicans' call for frugality.

**Much of Nixon's largesse is aimed at education and the University of Missouri in particular. Local delegates of both parties seem accepting of the UM increases. In a mini-break from his party's doctrine, Republican Rep. Caleb Rowden said he thinks increases for the university are "reasonable — we can make that happen."**

With so many parts and pieces, the state budget offers many little stages for debate, but in the large view, I think Nixon is on a better path.
Even before the recent recession, Missouri had a deserved reputation as a low-tax, low-spend state. Support for central programs such as education and transportation infrastructure has lagged behind. We have a stellar record for careful money management but have been too tight for our own good, often in the false name of avoiding anything remotely labeled a "tax increase."

Many, of course, including today's legislative majority, believe this is good government. But now, as we emerge finally from economic doldrums, we should try to recover lost ground. By any reasonable measure, we have fallen behind with education, and the condition of our highways approaches a crisis stage, to name only two areas crying for more support.

One can continue to be a Missouri tightwad, a loving phrase in this rendition, and still believe in using growing state resources for catching up with essential basic services and projects. Given our recent recession-induced parsimony, room exists for the governor's increases without overindulgence or threats to a balanced budget.

The budget can be balanced using either party's spending number. Details aside, I hope the compromise results in a budget more in line with the governor's spending plans. Now, on to more discussion of details.

HJW III

University of Missouri Now Has a Class on Jay Z and Kanye West’s Relationship

Best friends so hard, academics wanna study them.

Friendships have nurtured great art: Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald championed each other’s literature in post-war Paris; Paul Gaugin and Vincent van Gogh pushed each other to new heights of Post-Impressionistic mastery; John Lennon and Paul McCartney blended their talents into songwriting classics; and Jay and Ye have established a hip-hop empire.

By Jay and Ye, I’m referring to hip-hop’s reigning kings, Shawn “Jay Z” Carter and Kanye West. West and Carter’s relationship is the subject of a University of Missouri class, “Jay-Z and Kanye West.”
The course is taught through the English department, and the instructor Andrew Hoberek compared the periphrastic rappers to poets in an interview with music blog *Consequence of Sound*: “I really do think that these guys are warming up to the level of major poets, and not many people think of it in those terms,” he said. “They’re very much like painters and novelists in the 20th century, moving beyond the confines of the art form’s boundaries.”

For people who aren’t rap fans, this may seem crazy (or, rather, *cray*), an example of the academy kowtowing to student demand for fluffier classes. But Hoberek makes a valid point. Jay Z and Kanye’s projects are now multidisciplinary, mingling visual and performance arts as integral elements of their albums and concerts, to a greater extent than their predecessors. And their collaborations inform their solo projects. All of this is worth exploring in an academic setting, even if it’ll make Harold Bloom hyperventilate over the ruination of the academy.

*You Can Take A College Course About Jay-Z And Kanye West At Mizzou*

By *Tyler Kingkade*

*Some University of Missouri students will need to have a copy of the "Watch the Throne" album if they sign up for English 2169.* That’s because the English class is primarily devoted to studying two of hip-hop’s biggest stars: Jay-Z and Kanye West.

Andrew Hoberek, who has a background in 20th century literature, first taught the course in fall 2013. The class filled up quickly, prompting him to make an early decision to offer the course again in fall 2014.

The course description reads:

This course looks at the career and work of Jay-Z and Kanye West from three perspectives: (1) Where do they fit within, and how do they change, the history of hip-hop music? (2) How is what they do similar to and different from what poets do?, and (3) How does their rise to both celebrity and corporate power alter what we understand as the American dream? In addition to listening to music and watching videos, we will also read Jay-Z’s *Decoded*; histories of and critical works on rap music by Jeff Chang, Adam Bradley, and others; and one or two good studies of how poetry works.
Hoberek told The Huffington Post he was listening to a lot of Kanye and Jay-Z while trying to decide what classes to offer in the fall 2013 semester. He'd heard about the pop culture-themed courses at other universities, and came up with own version based on Yeezy and the Jigga Man.

The class had four main points Hoberek touched on, as he explained in an email to HuffPost:

1) the history of poetic form in English, and how it does and doesn't apply to rap; 2) the history of rap as a new art form; 3) how to do research into popular culture; and 4) most importantly, how to become a better, more knowledgeable listener to rap music.

With one semester in the bag, Hoberek considers the class a success for a couple of reasons.

"The subject matter lends itself to questions about what it means to treat something seriously as a work of art," Hoberek said, a nod to the notion these hip-hop artists aren't exactly the usual focus of a collegiate level course.

The students also came into the class already critics, Hoberek said, some with defined opinions about Jay-Z and Kanye.

"Working from that point, I wanted to teach them that what we do in English classes isn’t about ‘reading into’ things, or ruining what makes them pleasurable," Hoberek explained. "On the contrary, studying works of art closely and learning about their history can make them even more pleasurable."

University of Missouri provost faces dilemma in divvying out raises
Deans request $2.21 million.

By ASHLEY JOST
Sunday, January 26, 2014 at 2:00 am

To comply with the University of Missouri's Strategic Plan, Provost Ken Dean is working to hammer out the final details of mid-year merit-based raises for faculty. But some Faculty Council executive members have concerns about the process.
As he finalizes the numbers, Dean will have to reconcile the $2.21 million worth of nominations for 224 faculty members from the deans of each school with a money pool of only $1.70 million.

The unfortunate reality, Dean said, is that everyone who was nominated might not receive the full reward.

Heads of colleges could submit nominations for the most productive 15 percent of their faculty, according to an email sent from the provost to each of the deans. In the email, Dean wrote that he expected 50 to 75 percent of nominated faculty will receive raises.

"I'm experimenting with caps in terms of percentages, caps in terms of dollar amounts and a few other ideas in order to come in the range of funds we have available," Dean said. "I'm trying to make sure we can make as many awards as possible to those who have been nominated and recommended."

Faculty Council executive committee members spoke of a few concerns about the process, which Dean heard and addressed during a meeting Thursday afternoon.

Sudarshan Loyalka, nuclear engineering professor and member of Faculty Council's executive committee, said the council had concerns about faculty not having any input in the process, among other issues.

Loyalka said one of the concerns was whether the raises were a step toward improving faculty salaries across the board, which would help retention and MU's Association of American Universities ranking, he said.

Loyalka and the executive committee suggested a pool system where 80 percent of the money available for raises goes into a general pool from which all faculty members receive an equal raise. Another pool with the remaining 20 percent would be distributed as merit-based awards. The idea, Loyalka said, was based off of the way Penn State, another AAU school, operates its raise system.

Dean said MU did something similar to a two-pool system during years past, but any raises given out in the last few years and years to come are based solely on merit.

On the nomination form, deans were asked to fill out the faculty member's current salary, how that salary compares with other institutions and any information about grants or fellowship awards the nominee has received.

Typically, raises are only given on an annual basis, with merit raises going out on Sept. 1, Dean said. Any other raises throughout the year were situational — such as a job change — until now, but part of the Strategic Plan implemented in October requires mid-year raises as well, Dean said.
Dean said the goal is to finalize the raises by early February so the numbers will kick-in the same month.

Related to the concerns about faculty being engaged in the process, Dean said that he is assembling an evaluation committee including faculty, administrators, member of the strategic planning advisory council, deans, a student and a staff member to look at how each part of the strategic plan, including the part about mid-year raises, is being implemented.

The Chronicle of Higher Education

January 27, 2014

What's the Point of an Honors College, Anyway?

By Nancy M. West

West is director of the Honors College at the University of Missouri at Columbia.

At a baseball game two summers ago, as other parents cheered on their kids, I argued about the value of an honors college with the father of my son’s teammate, whom I’ll call Tyler.

Tyler’s dad is the kind of parent who blares constant “advice” to the coach and points out the mistakes of every child on the team but his own. Between innings, he asked what I did for a living. When I told him I had just been appointed to direct the Honors College at the University of Missouri, he sneered. “My ex-wife wants our oldest son to enroll in that, but I’m opposed. He plans to be a doctor. He needs good grades. He shouldn’t be taking harder classes.”
Then he looked me straight in the eye and asked, “What’s the point of an honors college, anyway?” It was hot, and I wanted to smack him. So I gave him a snooty answer about how I thought “any parent would want his child to challenge himself.” Needless to say, he didn’t respond well.

That exchange turned out to be the first of many conversations I’ve had about the value of an honors college. Like Tyler’s dad, though more politely, prospective students express concern that the challenge of an honors curriculum will jeopardize their GPAs, and therefore their chances of finding a job or getting into graduate school. So do their parents. Some people on campus bristle at the “elitism” of honors colleges, uncomfortable with the notion of singling out students for special attention and benefits.

Both of these viewpoints are understandable. More distressing has been my realization that the honors college often needs to be defended to administrators, from department chairs upward. Honors education has never been a cost-effective enterprise, given its demands for quality instruction, small classes, enhanced opportunities, and personalized service to students. As more and more colleges gravitate toward larger classes and online delivery, honors now seems like a luxury they can no longer afford.

We need then to think about honors colleges in a way that deals with current anxieties and economic pressures. And we need to state their value so that it can resonate with many people, even Tyler’s dad.

So what is the point of an honors college? There are two ways to answer that question. The first is in terms of students. Most high-ability students need individual attention. Honors colleges provide that. More important, they promote the value of striving for the best one can do. In an academic culture tainted by grade inflation, honors colleges celebrate true accomplishment, instilling in students the pride that comes with being thoroughly in earnest about their education.
As to GPA concerns: My experience has been that honors students often do better in their honors courses than in their nonhonors courses. The reasons for this success are partly the quality of the instruction, partly the mentoring students receive from professors, but mainly the firepower that comes from putting smart, motivated students together. In the words of Rachel Harper, who coordinates our honors humanities series, “Surrounded by other high-achieving and curious students—both in their classes and in their living arrangements—honors students feel pressure in the best of ways to do well.”

Honors is thus the “natural home of pure meritocracy,” as my colleague David Setzer argues. Universities need such a home more than ever. While colleges become more like companies, and “excellence” increasingly refers to financial success, surely we can justify the value of an honors college by guaranteeing that it remains one space on the campus where deep thought flourishes, and where “excellence” still possesses meaning.

The other way to answer the question of an honors college’s value is in terms of its benefit to a university. For one, honors colleges enhance the prestige of their universities by enrolling high-achieving students who provide a leavening influence on the campus and then go on to achieve great things.

They also have the potential to serve as a “third place” for their universities. In 1989, the sociologist Ray Oldenburg coined the term “third place” to refer to environments, separate from work and home, which people visit frequently and voluntarily. Examples include coffeehouses, cafes, salons, and the Internet.

Although they vary wildly in look and feel, third places share certain fundamental traits. They act as social levelers, discounting class status as a marker of social significance. Their mood is playful; their atmosphere is warm and friendly. They promote group creativity and lively conversation. Most important, they serve as anchors of a community, fostering broad and less scripted interactions than those we have at home or our regular workplaces.
“These shared areas have played an outsized role in the history of new ideas,” observes Oldenburg. And yet compared with other countries, America does not place much importance on third places. And what’s true of our country is also true of our universities. Faculty and staff rarely venture beyond the buildings that house their departments. University officials sequester themselves in spacious offices located within buildings populated exclusively by administrative offices. And students—too many of them these days—go from their classrooms to their part-time jobs to their apartments.

Universities need third places in order for new kinds of research and thinking to propagate. Honors colleges, meanwhile, need a new identity in order to successfully assert their value in the future.

Thinking about honors colleges as third places gives us a new and nonelitist way of asserting their value to a university. It reinforces how they can serve as spaces of creativity; conversation; intellectualism; collegiality. It also reinforces their potential as homes of interdisciplinarity. Like all third places, honors colleges are neutral ground, separate from departments and yet in the business of serving them all; as such, they provide an ideal space for the kind of “in between” collaboration required by interdisciplinary work. Honors colleges are where team-teaching—that activity we all say we should do more of but can’t because of departmental restrictions—really can happen.

This spring, thanks to the cooperation of the art history and English departments, I’m team-teaching an honors course called “Thinking About Color” with two other professors. The course is wildly interdisciplinary, focusing on subjects like Technicolor and the history of mauve. Our planning meetings for the course have been electrifying, intellectually and pedagogically. And in each meeting, ideas for collaborative research bubble up. I can’t remember ever feeling this creative, or collegial, about my teaching.

The answers I’ve articulated here all arrive at the same conclusion, which is that the “point of an honors college” is its idealism. Honors represents higher education at its
As Missouri public university students struggle to pay their ever-increasing tuition bills, not all of the colleges’ funds are going to professors’ salaries, campus upkeep or other expected costs.

Instead, Missouri’s public universities have spent almost a million dollars since 2011 on contracts with professional lobbyists to represent their interests in Jefferson City — while plying state legislators with tens of thousands of dollars more in free meals, sports outings, concert tickets and other perks.

On paper, it doesn’t look different than typical lobbying efforts by private companies and industries, which pump hundreds of thousands of dollars a year into attempts to influence state legislators on budget and policy issues.

But some question why the universities — which are state entities, funded in part through the state budget — should need hired guns and political perks to get legislators to do what they should be doing anyway: taking care of the state’s core institutions of higher learning.

“It doesn’t seem logical that government should be lobbying itself,” says Rep. Kevin Elmer, R-Nixa. He does accept some lobbyists’ gifts, but he was sufficiently uncomfortable with the five Missouri State football tickets he was given in 2011 that he chose to pay for them.

Most of Elmer’s legislative colleagues don’t have such misgivings.

**State legislators in the past three years have accepted more than $55,000 worth of perks from public universities, a Post-Dispatch analysis of lobbying records found. More than half of that total, about $35,000, came from the University of Missouri alone.**

**Sometimes it’s spent all at once for legislative events, such as one day last year when, records show, MU treated the whole Legislature to a group basketball outing at a cost of almost $2,000, plus a catered dinner for another $1,000.**
More spending comes in the form of targeted gifts to individual members of the Legislature and their families and staffs, some of whom have enjoyed dozens of free meals, concerts, and — especially — basketball and football games.

“Do I enjoy the games? Sure,” said state Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, who has received more than $1,800 worth of college basketball tickets, football tickets and free meals from MU since 2011. His district includes the university.

“Did that get me to do anything more or less for the universities? No. I would have been as supportive as I was.”

It’s a common refrain from all sides in the lobbying process: The sports tickets, concerts, dinners and other perks aren’t designed to curry favor with the Legislature, but merely to keep lawmakers and universities well connected.

Kelly said it was at one MU basketball game that he introduced top officials of the state prison system and the university. He said that started a conversation that ended up creating a joint program related to autism. “That relationship grew out of that basketball game. The question arises: Was that a good use of a basketball ticket?”

But some others — including former lawmakers who once enjoyed those same perks — wonder whether those legitimate connections are worth the cost in public perception.

“Is there a quid pro quo? ... I can’t look into anyone’s heart. Is there a perception issue? Absolutely,” said former state Sen. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau.

He maintains that he was one of those who was able to accept the university’s gifts (about $3,700 worth in 2011 and 2012) without letting it sway his official actions. But, “not too many legislators are going to put principle above the perks,” he said.

“I would be for just getting rid of all of it,” Crowell said. “I’ve never seen anyone do anything crazy for basketball tickets ... but it’s probably better to just do away with it. Let them get on StubHub to buy their tickets.”

expensive lobbyists

While the sight of individual lawmakers enjoying thousands of dollars worth of free college basketball tickets might create controversy, the real university spending comes in the form of contracts with private lobbying firms — the same hired guns employed by private businesses and industries.

Data obtained by the Post-Dispatch through Missouri’s Sunshine Law shows that of the 13 public universities in Missouri, at least six contract with private firms to represent the colleges in Jefferson City. Since 2011, those contracts have added up to $964,180. And that figure doesn’t include the University of Missouri’s small army of on-staff lobbyists, the cost of which couldn’t immediately be calculated.

“It’s really to provide information. It’s a lot more than wining and dining and trying to get more money” from the state budget, said Paul Kincaid, chief of staff and assistant to the president for university
relations at Missouri State University. Since 2011, the college has spent more than $263,000 on professional lobbying contracts, along with almost $8,000 on gifts and perks to legislators.

“We get about $81 million (annually) from the state. That’s not an insignificant amount of money,” Kincaid said. “Part of what we ask (the lobbyists) to do is to be our boots on the ground in the capital ... and educate them on the how the money's being spent.”

Truman State University at Kirksville spent $207,000 on private lobbying contracts from 2011 to 2013. “Would I rather not have to have legislative consultants? Certainly,” said President Troy Paino. “I would love it if I could rest assured that the legislators understand what Truman is and what our mission is ... and not have to worry about it. But I think that is, quite frankly, naive.”

Southeast Missouri State University’s president, Kenneth Dobbins, said he views the almost $200,000 the school has spent on private lobbyists since 2011 as augmentation to the area legislators who represent the college. He stressed that he has “a good relationship” with those legislators, but believes that’s not enough.

“We need somebody to look after Southeast Missouri State” in the Legislature, he said. “Our senator is one senator and our representative is one representative. They have so many things going across their desks. ... It’s very important that our opinion be expressed in Jefferson City.”

The University of Missouri system (which includes the campuses at Columbia, St. Louis and Kansas City, and Missouri University of Science and Technology) didn’t report any private lobbying contracts. But state lobbyist records show UM is by no means underrepresented in Jefferson City. At least 30 UM officials and staffers are listed as lobbyists for the UM system in state records.

UM spokesman John Fougere said the university believes its in-house lobbyists — many of whom hold other titles with the school — are better suited than contract lobbyists to “protect the university’s interests in Jefferson City” and “educate legislators” about UM’s needs.

OTHER GOVERNMENTS

Universities aren’t alone as public entities that lobby lawmakers. Cities, school districts and other governmental entities do it, too.

“It’s every group — nursing homes, K-12 schools, doctors, you name it,” said Paul Wagner, executive director of the Council on Public Higher Education in Missouri.

“Like most entities that are heavily dependent upon state funding ... we’re always advocating for more funding.” He said the role of university lobbyists is to “help inform legislators,” and some “don’t know anything about higher education.”

Several university officials argued that, while food and perks are part of their lobbying efforts, the scale is more modest than what private businesses and industries often lavish on legislators. “It’s not ... ‘wining and dining,’” said Paino, the Truman State president. “We’re not taking them to Broadway shows.”
But state Sen. John Lamping, R-Ladue, a frequent critic of Jefferson City lobbying practices, argues that it’s not the scope of lobbying that matters, but how it looks to the public. And when the lobbying is done by universities, local governments and other public entities, he said, that perception problem can look even worse.

“These government institutions see it as their mission to fight for dollars or to work to change government policy to their benefits,” Lamping said. “You would think that they could do that inside of state government itself.”

As in past years, Lamping is sponsoring legislation that would ban all lobbyist gifts to lawmakers. Such a ban would encompass Mizzou basketball tickets right alongside meals from Anheuser-Busch and golf outings from Time Warner Cable.

“This argument that a basketball game gives me a chance to interact with people, I don’t think has any merit. You don’t have to do that in any particular venue,” Lamping said.

“We’re public servants. You cannot explain to the public why it is that you need … (sports) tickets, and in the same breath say, ‘This is about me serving you.’ That’s just not something the average person will believe.”

Walker Moskop of the Post-Dispatch contributed to the report.

Top-grossing recipients of public university lobbying gifts since 2011

- Former state Sen. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau

Gifts: Six tickets to George Strait concert; more than 50 tickets to university basketball and football games.

From: University of Missouri

Value: $3,717

- State Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia

Gifts: Two George Strait tickets; more than 35 university basketball and football tickets; and several lunches and dinners. All gifts were designated to a senatorial staff member.

From: University of Missouri

Value: $2,290

- State Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia

Gifts: More than 30 college basketball and football tickets; a half-dozen meals.

From: University of Missouri
Value: $1,856

- State Sen. Jason Holsman, D-Kansas City

Gifts: More than a dozen college game tickets; UCM Gift Bag with veterans affairs promotional items.

From: University of Missouri; University of Central Missouri

Value: $1,465

- Former state Rep. Vicki Schneider, R-O'Fallon

Gifts: More than a dozen college football and basketball tickets.

From: University of Missouri

Value: $1,222

Source: Missouri Ethics Commission lobbyist disclosure reports.

**Spending by Missouri public universities on private lobbying contracts, 2011-2013**

- Missouri State University: $263,547
- Truman State University: $207,000
- Southeast Missouri State University: $199,247
- University Of Central Missouri: $144,000
- Missouri Southern State University: $75,386
- Harris-Stowe State University: $75,000
- University of Missouri: Doesn't contract with private lobbyists, but has at least 30 university employees who are listed as lobbyists by the Missouri Board of Ethics.
MU receiver Copelin arrested on suspicion of peace disturbance

University of Missouri police arrested Mizzou wide receiver Levi Copelin on Thursday on suspicion of peace disturbance after an incident on campus.

Copelin, a backup redshirt freshman last season, went to the student union to request a new student ID, and when told by a campus employee that his account was on hold, Copelin “made comments that the staff found threatening,” MU police Captain Brian Weimer said. After Copelin left the office, the student union staff called MUPD, which contacted Copelin and met him at the police department headquarters on campus, Weimer said. After speaking with Copelin, officers arrested him under state statute 574.010 for first offense peace disturbance, a Class B misdemeanor. Copelin was taken to Boone County Jail and later released on $500 bail. He has a court date set for Feb. 19.

Copelin caught three passes for 61 yards last season and blocked a punt at Kentucky. This is Copelin’s second arrest since he arrived at Missouri. He was one of three players arrested on suspicion of marijuana possession outside Memorial Stadium in October 2012. He later pleaded guilty to an amended trespassing violation. (Dave Matter)

Notre Dame hires LaFleur for QBs • Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly has hired former Washington Redskins quarterbacks coach Matt LaFleur to hold the same position for the Fighting Irish.

LaFleur was fired, along with most of the Redskins staff, after a 3-13 season. He was an offensive assistant under Kelly at Central Michigan in 2004 and 2005. (AP)

Winston ready for baseball season • Heisman Trophy winner Jameis Winston wants to help Florida State win another national championship — in baseball.

Winston participated in his first baseball practice of the 2014 season on Friday. He quarterbacked the Seminoles to the BCS title and says, “I just want to have an effect on this team like I did the football team.”

That would mean hoisting the championship trophy at the College World Series in Omaha.

Florida State was picked to win the Atlantic Coast Conference Atlantic Division by the league’s coaches, and the 6-foot-4, 225-pound Winston is the favorite to win the closer role.

Coach Mike Martin said there are no restrictions on how much Winston is used on the baseball field. (AP)

Rodeo staying in Las Vegas • The National Finals Rodeo is staying in Las Vegas after all.
The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and Las Vegas Events announced Friday that they reached a deal to keep the 10-day event in Las Vegas through 2024. (AP)

Ambush lose again • The St. Louis Ambush lost their third consecutive game when they suffered a 26-2 blowout at the hands of the Missouri Comets in Independence. The win improved the Comets’ record to 9-5, while the Ambush dropped to 4-9 and fell from fifth place to sixth in the MISL standings. St. Louis has scored only two goals in its last three games while giving up 27. (From news services)

Georgetown’s Smith ineligible • Georgetown starting center Joshua Smith is academically ineligible and will miss the remainder of the season.

Coach John Thompson III made the announcement Friday. Smith was third in scoring at 11.5 points for the Hoyas (11-7, 3-3 Big East). He missed five games because of grades. (AP)

MU clinic to open in 2015

By JACOB BARKER

Saturday, January 25, 2014 at 2:00 am

University of Missouri Health Care’s new University Physicians clinic, South Providence Medical Park, is on schedule to open in spring 2015.

The $35 million, 85,000-square-foot clinic is being built at Providence Road and Southampton Drive. It is replacing University Physicians' Green Meadows Clinic and will offer almost twice as much as space as the nearly 30-year-old building off Green Meadows. With an estimated 50 physicians planned to staff the clinic, it also will have about double the number of doctors.

MU Health Care plans to move some of University Physicians' family medicine staff from offices at Woodrail clinics to the new facility. It also plans expanded behavioral health services at the clinic.

The university plans to sell the Green Meadows facility.
The University of Missouri hosted the SEC Exchange — an event that brings student government leaders from all Southeastern Conference schools to the host institution to share ideas — this weekend for the first time since it joined the group of schools.

Student government presidents and vice presidents filed into Jesse Hall Friday afternoon for a kick-off ceremony before embarking on two days worth of tours and breakout sessions.

Almost all of the 14 schools were represented, with the exception of Texas A&M University, whose student representatives were snowed in at College Station, Texas, before their Friday flight.

Mason Schara, president of the Missouri Students Association, said the purpose of the event is to introduce each school's programs and procedures in an effort to exchange ideas. Schara said among the MU-related programs he planned to talk about was Tiger Pantry, MU's food pantry for students.

The pantry concept isn't new in the SEC schools, but Schara said MU is the first to sell produce in its pantry.

The group toured the pantry early yesterday morning.

Truman's Closet, another MU student government program, lets students purchase discounted, professional clothing, an idea MU adopted from another school when it was still in the Big 12.

Koshan Palli, student body president at the University of Kentucky, said his student government's experience with the exchange has always been a good one.
One of Kentucky's programs, the "Cats Cab" — a taxi-like system for students — was an adapted version of a program at the University of South Carolina, "Carolina Cab."

Building relationships is the ultimate goal of the short conference, South Carolina student body president Chase Mizzell said.

"The SEC Exchange turns a formal email into a text message," Mizzell said.

Yesterday, students toured campus, had breakout sessions and attended the MU v. South Carolina basketball game where they met incoming Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

Last year's exchange event, the first that MU participated in, was at Texas A&M.

Mold leads to elimination of 300,000 MU Libraries' volumes
Friday, January 24, 2014 | 7:43 p.m. CST; updated 4:09 p.m. CST, Saturday, January 25, 2014

BY CAROLINE BAUMAN

COLUMBIA — About 300,000 volumes belonging to MU Libraries will have to be eliminated because of mold contamination, according to a letter emailed to MU faculty and staff on Friday afternoon by Director of Libraries Jim Cogswell.

In October, MU Libraries staff discovered mold growth on about 600,000 volumes in an off-campus library storage facility north of Interstate 70, Cogswell wrote. The volumes must be treated or be destroyed to ensure that contamination cannot spread to other collections.

Cogswell said in an interview that there is only enough money and time to save up to half of the contaminated volumes.

"This affects deeply those of us in libraries who spend our work lives taking care of sources of study and scholarship," Cogswell said. "It goes to the center of everything we try to do. We try to build and expand, not destroy."
The storage facilities are part of Subtera underground warehousing, said Shannon Cary, communications officer for MU Libraries. MU started moving volumes into the location in 2007, she said.

No one at Subtera, a part of Con-Agg of MO, LLC Cos., was available for comment mid-afternoon Friday.

Cogswell said in the letter that treating all affected items could cost up to $1.8 million but that the self-insurance fund created by MU Libraries for such disasters is about $700,000.

"We will not get rid of any materials that we are not able to replicate through other means," Cogswell said in the interview. "Some materials are available online, and others we are relying on partner libraries to help us with, as we have done for them in the past."

MU Libraries expects to remediate and keep up to 300,000 volumes from the contaminated materials, according to the letter. The materials must be dealt with quickly and removed to safer storage before warm weather and humidity return. Cogswell said they are seeking new storage options and intend to move all treated materials before the end of June. To meet the deadline, at least 15,000 volumes will have to be treated and relocated every week.

"Nothing we consider 'rare' is stored here or else it wouldn't have been in that space," Cary said. "The oldest volumes are from 1740 to 1760."

MU Libraries staff are in the process of determining which volumes need to be retained. The determination will be made on the basis of if the volume is irreplaceable — if it cannot be found online or in other libraries.

MU Environmental Health and Safety staff will soon publish the results of testing done to determine the type of mold and assess any possible health risks to employees at the facility, Cogswell said in an interview.

"Environmental Health and Safety are looking at the mold as well as the chemicals for the possible remediation process," Cogswell said. "We want it to kill mold but not harm anyone who handles the volumes in the future."
MU Libraries will hire an outside company to handle the remediation process, Cogswell said.

A second off-campus storage facility on Lemone Industrial Boulevard is not affected.

Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixey.

So nice to meet you; Dale Carnegie still making friends

Walt had his mouse and Henry his Model T. Hugh had shapely bunnies. But a big-eared guy from Nodaway County, Mo., got ahead mostly with a friendly manner and the gift of gab.

A plainspoken, Midwestern salesman found that the best product he could sell was his own talent for positive talk and sincere interest in others.

“Dale Carnegie is a quieter kind of influence,” says his biographer, Steven Watts.

Carnegie’s famous book, though, is embedded in mainstream America, Watts says. Since 1936, “How to Win Friends and Influence People” has sold more than 35 million copies. “It’s one of just a handful of books in American history that really has shaped who we are and how we approached the world,” he says.

Watts, a professor of history at the University of Missouri in Columbia, will talk about Carnegie and “Self-Help Messiah” on Wednesday at the St. Louis County Library.

The professor, who specializes in intellectual and cultural history, has written books about four Midwesterners who all became movers in 20th-century culture: Walt Disney, Henry Ford, Hugh Hefner and now Carnegie.

“He didn’t have the big personality the others had,” Watts admits. But there had never been a biography about the important figure, and when Watts read through his archives he did uncover much that was fascinating. There was even a surprise in the self-help guru’s closet: an apparent love child.

On a cruise to Cuba, Carnegie met a young woman married to a blind man. Ten months later, the woman had a child and named her Linda Dale. Later, the husband finds out and “moves from outrage to sort of acceptance,” Watts says. “It was a very strange sort of triangle relationship.”

“You can’t make this stuff up.”

“Uncle” Dale Carnegie doted on his namesake for the rest of his life.
So the polite Midwesterner did have some interesting personal stories. He also married two strong-willed intelligent women; with his second wife, he fathered a child at age 63.

Carnegie’s wider legacy puts him firmly among populists like Ford and Disney. Carnegie’s courses and books nurtured, Watts writes, “a fresh set of values based on the search for personal growth, abundant health, and radiant personality.”

No longer were Americans told that to find their dream they should look toward a Victorian sensibility of self-reliance and deprivation.

Carnegie advised self-confidence and emotional intelligence (before there was such a term). Knowing how to handle people was the key to advancement, Carnegie advised. Don’t criticize, don’t argue, offer praise, be liked.

Watts writes: “Carnegie, who often presented himself as an expert in ‘practical psychology,’ emerged as the first great popularizer of this newfound stress on mental health and self-esteem ... the psychological ideas of William James, Alfred Adler, and Sigmund Freud, as well as many lesser figures, (‘How to Win Friends’) promised that ‘positive thinking’ and the art of ‘appreciation — the easiest of all psychological techniques,’ would create among adherents ‘a new way of life.’”

The ideas Carnegie popularized influenced businessmen (including Warren Buffett), politicians (Lyndon B. Johnson), performers (Johnny Cash), even a murderer (Charles Manson). Legions of inspirational talkers, from Norman Vincent Peale to Oprah Winfrey, owe the Missourian a debt.

Although he didn’t preach Horatio Alger stories, Watts says, Carnegie’s own background suggests one.

Near Maryville, Mo., Dale was born in 1888 to struggling farmers. James and Amanda Carnagey worked 16-hour days only to lose crops to floods and pigs to cholera. After 10 years, most of what they had accumulated was debt. Dale would later remember the pleasures of the countryside and his devoted parents. He took after his energetic mother, a former teacher and a lay preacher who taught him to memorize and recite religious stories.

At least once he charmed her out of whipping him for misbehaving, Watts writes. “I asked her if I couldn’t have a cookie and lie down on the couch and rest a while before she switched me,” Carnegie remembered. His mom laughed and he got off unscathed.

When Dale and his brother, Clifton, matured, the family moved close to Warrensburg so the children could attend college for free. They couldn’t afford for Dale to live at the State Normal School, so the embarrassed, shabbily dressed boy rode a horse to school every day. Eventually, though, he gained confidence by joining one of the college’s literary societies. The school celebrated public speaking, and Dale would practice speeches while riding to class.

Clifton was a lackluster student. His younger brother would go on to be the family success. In the 1920s, Carnegie (he’d changed the spelling to make it simpler and, perhaps, evoke the wealthy Andrew Carnegie) was sending money home.
He’d started as a salesman, and did well, but he preferred dramatic speaking. By 1911, he’d saved enough money to go to New York and was admitted to the selective American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

Later, though, he again tried selling but faltered in the automotive industry. By 1914, however, he’d found his niche: offering speaking courses and teaching adult education classes at YMCAs. He also started writing for magazines, and in 1915 he co-authored a book called “The Art of Public Speaking.”

Not everything he attempted was a success. In one of his articles, he’d embellished an anecdote and was caught and chastised. His growing business teaching public speaking was derailed by World War I. (Although he was drafted, he stayed in New York because he’d lost a finger in a childhood accident.) After the war, he attempted to write a “Lost Generation”-type novel. Carnegie learned he’d never be a fiction writer.

He prospered, though, with his new version of success ideology, Watts says. Although some reviewers even in 1936 poked fun at ideas that seemed cynical or simplistic, “How to Win Friends and Influence People” became an immediate best-seller.

A company continues his work, training thousands of people around the world in Carnegie techniques. A couple of years ago, Dale Carnegie & Associates published “How to Win Friends & Influence People in the Digital Age.”

Watts finds modern students divided over Carnegie’s advice with some believing the method can be used by people who are less authentic, more manipulative than the naturally enthusiastic Carnegie. “In trying to gauge how the students react (to Carnegie’s advice), I think it often says more about us than it does about him.”

But Watts says the techniques are usually still a success. Some people are so good at the Carnegie method, he says, “you almost can’t help yourself responding in a positive way.”

**Steven Watts**

**When** • 7 p.m. Wednesday

**Where** • St. Louis County Library, 1640 South Lindbergh Boulevard

**How much** • Free

**More info** • 314-994-3300

**Note** • Watts’ other books include “The People’s Tycoon: Henry Ford and the American Century”; “Mr. Playboy: Hugh Hefner and the American Dream”; and “The Magic Kingdom: Walt Disney and the American Way of Life”

‘**Self-Help Messiah: Dale Carnegie and Success in Modern America’**

By Steven Watts

Published by Other Press, 582 pages, $29.95
Dale Carnegie

Birth • Nov. 24, 1888 near Maryville, Mo.

Death • Nov. 1, 1955, Forest Hills, N.Y.

Select bibliography • “The Art of Public Speaking (1915, with Joseph Berg Esenwein); “Lincoln the Unknown” (1932); “Little Known Facts About Well Known People” (1934; based on his radio show); “How to Win Friends and Influence People” (1936); “How to Stop Worrying and Start Living” (1948)

On the verge of graduating college, but no way to pay

January 25, 2014 12:15 am • By Tim Barker tbarker@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8350

NO MU MENTION

When Congress decided two years ago to slash lifetime eligibility for federal Pell Grants, financial aid advocates worried the abrupt change would cast adrift thousands of students on the verge of graduation.

They were thinking about students such as Lauren Colquitt.

She was in her final semester at the University of Missouri-St. Louis when a notice arrived in September from the school’s financial aid office, telling her she was no longer eligible for the Pell Grant.

It was a message that left her staring at a $5,000 tuition bill and no way to pay it.

“It was very devastating,” said Colquitt, of St. Louis. “I spent a lot of nights crying.”

What snagged Colquitt was a 2012 change in the number of years students are eligible to receive a Pell Grant, one of the primary sources of financial aid for students from lower-income families.

Before that, students were eligible for 18 semesters — essentially nine years. The new rule, which went into effect during the 2012-13 school year, cut it to 12 semesters.

Congress made the move ostensibly to encourage students to complete degrees more quickly. But it also was an attempt to trim a program whose costs have soared in the past decade.

Rather than cut the overall award amount for each student — the current maximum is $5,645 per year — legislators opted to cut off aid to long-time students. The idea was that students who fail to get a degree in six years are unlikely to get one in nine years, said Mark Kantrowitz, a financial aid expert and senior vice president of Edvisors Network.
Congress also wanted to reduce waste by making it harder on so-called Pell runners — people who enroll in college only to run off with their Pell grant money.

The change may indeed be effective in eliminating some Pell fraud. But it also trapped students such as Colquitt, who’ve been slow to finish college in six years for one reason or another.

COLD TURKEY

Colquitt’s college journey started in 2007 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City where she was pursuing a career in dentistry. But after two years there, she decided she wanted to be closer to home.

“I really liked the university. But I was so homesick,” Colquitt said. “I was driving to St. Louis every weekend.”

So she transferred to UMSL and started work on a nursing degree. In doing so, she found herself with some 30 credit hours that wouldn’t count toward the new degree requirements.

Then came the new rules from Congress, which offered no relief to students such as Colquitt who were already working their way through college.

“It’s a shame there was no grandfathering,” Kantrowitz said. “This was cutting them off cold-turkey.”

It’s difficult to say how many students have been caught by the change. But it seems likely the number is larger than originally projected.

When the new time limits were announced, the federal government estimated it would affect 100,000 students nationally.

The number has not been updated, but there is anecdotal evidence suggesting the initial projection was optimistically low.

Educators in just two states — Mississippi and Alabama _ are expecting some 28,000 students to lose Pell eligibility during the first few years of the change, according to a report last year by The Institute for College Access and Success.

Some financial aid experts expect the problem to diminish over time, as students adjust to the new restrictions.

But that does little to help those who were caught in the abrupt policy shift, said Lauren Asher, president of the Institute.

“It put students who were close to completion in an impossible position,” Asher said. “There was gravely insufficient warning.”

LITTLE HELP
For many of these students, there’s not much help available. Many have already exhausted their federal student loan eligibility and lack the financial resources to offset the substantial loss of support.

In Colquitt’s case, the out-of-class obligations for her nursing degree made a second job virtually impossible. She considered a private loan but doubted her credit score would be strong enough to secure one. Her family, she knew, didn’t have the money.

“I had no idea how I was going to pay that $5,000,” she said.

Then UMSL stepped in.

The school recently put together a new scholarship — the Senior Degree Completion Program — designed to help students such as Colquitt.

It covers tuition and fees and is awarded based on academic achievements, payment history and progress toward graduation. Preference is given to those needing 15 or fewer credits to graduate.

Colquitt was one of six students to get the scholarship last fall, helping her graduate in December.

So far, the school has seen more than 500 students lose Pell eligibility. And although the new scholarship program can’t help all of them, there will be as many as 30 more scholarships given out this spring, said Alan Byrd, dean of enrollment services.

Byrd sees it as a safety net of sorts for promising students stuck within arms reach of their degrees.

“You can tell if they are abusing the system or are really trying to graduate,” Byrd said.