UM Board of Curators to vote on tuition freeze

BY KEVIN MODELSKI

COLUMBIA — The UM System Board of Curators will vote this week on a recommendation to freeze in-state undergraduate tuition for the 2014-15 school year.

The last time UM tuition remained unchanged from the previous year was the 2010-11 school year.

According to the curators' meeting agenda, rates for resident undergraduates would remain at $274 per credit hour for MU and the Missouri University of Science and Technology, $270.10 for the University of Missouri-Kansas City and $315.80 for the University of Missouri-St. Louis. That’s an average of $283.48 per credit hour for the entire UM System.

In 2013, the curators voted to increase tuition by 1.7 percent. At its November meeting, the board discussed raising tuition to match inflation.

UM President Tim Wolfe said on Friday he will recommend a tuition freeze to the board. That aligns with Gov. Jay Nixon’s proposal in his State of the State address on Jan. 21.

To make up for the static tuition fees, however, the curators will vote on a proposal to increase student activity, facility and health service fees for all UM System schools except UMSL, which restructured its additional fees into a base tuition last year. MU’s and UMKC’s additional semester fees would increase by 1.5 percent — which is the rate of inflation — while Missouri S&T’s rates would increase by 1.4 percent.

In addition to the fee increases, tuition rates for graduate students and nonresident undergraduates would increase for the entire UM System. MU’s nonresident undergraduate rate would go up by 3 percent, from $752.30 to $774.90 per credit hour.
Almost 29 percent of MU students were from out of state in fall 2013, according to the MU University Registrar's website.

The curators' agenda states that MU’s average combined annual tuition and fees for residents is $9,415. That is below the average cost of other institutions in the Southeastern Conference, which is $11,296.

The board will also discuss alternate sources of revenue and financial aid during its Wednesday through Saturday meeting in Columbia.

**WHAT OTHERS SAY: Follow Tim Wolfe's advice — freeze tuition for UM schools**

*Wednesday, January 29, 2014 | 6:00 a.m. CST*

The University of Missouri Board of Curators should follow UM System President Tim Wolfe’s advice when it meets this week: *Keep tuition flat for the 2014-15 school year.*

Gov. Jay Nixon has asked all of the state’s public universities to avoid tuition hikes this year. In exchange, he promised “additional” funding.

The word “additional” is in quotes because Nixon’s proposed 5 percent increase in core funding, plus various increases to add slots for mental health and math studies, science and engineering fields and some more scholarship money, is truly only “additional” if you ignore recent Missouri history.

It’s nice. It’s better than last year. But it’s nowhere near adequate.

For instance, as David Lieb of the Associated Press pointed out in a weekend story, even with all the increases proposed by Nixon this year, total funding for the state’s universities will be below the $969 million that was budgeted back in 2002.
In the past 12 years, as a result of two recessions and a legislature that doesn’t value education funding, Missouri continues to fall behind. Missouri ranks worse for state support for higher education than all but four other states.

**Freezing University of Missouri tuition at its current average level — $9,464 per year — is the least the curators can do.**

**President Wolfe has good advice**
But before the board votes on the tuition freeze, here’s what the curators should do: Ask Wolfe for his thoughts on Missouri’s tax policy and how it fits with the stated priorities of the state as set out in the constitution. The views of this former corporate CEO are dead-on.

Wolfe knows Missouri’s decades-long history as one of the lowest-tax states in the nation is directly related to its position as one of the poorest supporters of both K-12 schools and higher education.

“We have got to do something different in our state to be more competitive,” he said Friday in a meeting with the Post-Dispatch editorial board. “We run the risk of having an educational system that is only available to those in the ‘have’ category.”

Most worrisome is that even though Missouri has one of the lowest tax rates in the country (6th lowest, according to Nixon), state lawmakers want to cut taxes even more.

Last week, for instance, a Senate committee passed this year’s version of a tax cut bill similar to the one Nixon vetoed last year. The governor was quick with a news release, pointing out that the legislation, if it became law, would ultimately rob the state of about $1 billion in revenue.

That’s $1 billion less for education, for roads, for health care, for basic state services.

**The myth of tax cuts**
Republicans who vote for such garbage argue that cutting taxes ultimately leads to a better economy. If it were true, Missouri would be booming. Over the past four decades, it has had the 47th lowest tax burden in the nation. Winning the race to the bottom will not help.
When it comes to tax policy, lawmakers are asking the wrong question, Wolfe points out. “I think tax change can be a good thing, but it should be very intentional,” Wolfe told us. “We should change tax policy to fund the objective, and the objective is the priorities we have as a state.”

In Missouri, those priorities are set out in the constitution. First is paying debt. Second is funding education.

Last summer, Nixon flew around the state making the same argument: If the state’s top priority is to fund schools, then tax policy must meet that end. Freezing tuition is a good first step, but the real work remains. Wolfe should grab a megaphone, borrow Nixon’s new state plane and take his message to every corner of Missouri.

If education is truly a Missouri priority, our state lawmakers have a pretty poor way of showing it.

MU issues a Q&A on the Menu Courey investigation

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 | 9:50 a.m. CST; updated 8:51 p.m. CST, Tuesday, January 28, 2014
BY MU NEWS BUREAU

COLUMBIA — The MU News Bureau issued the following statement Tuesday morning about the Sasha Menu Courey investigation (the Missourian has broken up the statement into shorter paragraphs):

The University of Missouri continues to express heartfelt condolences to Sasha Menu Courey’s family and friends.
Although we are limited by our desire not to interfere with the pending Columbia Police Department investigation, MU responds to the most frequently asked questions resulting from ESPN’s "Outside the Lines" story that first ran on Friday, Jan. 24:

Q: Why didn’t the university start an investigation as soon as officials first knew about an allegation of sexual assault?
A: University of Missouri officials were not aware of any allegation of sexual assault until late 2012. (Sasha died in 2011.) In the process of gathering documents in response to Sasha’s parents’ Sunshine Law request, MU discovered a transcript of an online chat between Sasha and a crisis hotline that included a reference to an alleged sexual assault. Sasha had never reported this to university officials or requested an investigation while she was alive, and the transcript did not include the name of an assailant or any other specific information that would prompt an investigation.

However, after discovering this document, the university contacted the parents and asked if they would like an investigation to take place. The parents did not respond.

Therefore, at that point in time, which was after Sasha’s death, the university was unable to go forward with an investigation due to no request for an investigation and a lack of specific information.

Prior to this, the only personnel who knew of Sasha’s allegations of sexual assault were health care providers who are restricted by privacy laws from discussing a patient’s conversations without the consent of the patient. ESPN acknowledges that health care providers are not required to make reports about sexual assaults without patients’ permission.

Q: Isn’t MU required to do a Title IX investigation, especially after the Columbia Daily Tribune reported in early 2012 that an assault had occurred?
A: The U.S. Department of Education’s official guidance on Title IX states, "If a school knows or reasonably should know about student-on-student harassment that creates a hostile environment, Title IX requires the school to take immediate action to eliminate the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects."

The Feb. 12, 2012, Columbia Daily Tribune article contained only these two sentences about an alleged assault: "Menu Courey also wrote in her diary months later that she was sexually assaulted at the end of her freshman year. She did not name the attacker."
This information did not suggest that the alleged assault occurred on or near campus or in this country or Canada; nor did it indicate that any other students were involved. This is not enough information to suggest that the university "reasonably should know about student-on-student harassment that creates a hostile environment."

Although Sasha’s parents shared this information from her journal with the Columbia Daily Tribune prior to publication of the Feb. 12, 2012 article, they never — not at that time or since — brought this information to the attention of the University or otherwise asked the University to investigate.

**Q: Why is the University now turning over information to the Columbia Police Department and asking them to investigate?**

**A:** Although Sasha’s parents still have never responded to the university’s inquiry, the ESPN story quotes them as saying that they want an investigation to be conducted. In addition, the ESPN story included names of individuals who might have relevant information regarding the alleged February 2010 assault. This was the first time that university officials had any concrete information on which to base an investigation.

When the name of the man with whom Sasha had consensual sex and at whose residence the alleged assault occurred was revealed, the university checked its records and determined that the man had an off-campus address.

Accordingly, the information was referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials, the Columbia Police Department.

**Q: Why was Sasha taken off the swim team?**

**A:** Sasha was never "taken off" the swim team. From the time she came to MU in 2009 until Sasha, in consultation with her parents, approved submission of a withdrawal form in the spring of 2011, she remained a team member and was receiving a scholarship. Sasha’s scholarship was not canceled even upon her withdrawal from classes, and she was entered into the financial aid system for summer school on May 3, 2011. Sasha remained enrolled in fall semester classes until her death.

Specific questions have been raised regarding Sasha’s withdrawal from classes in spring of 2011. Sasha had been a patient at University Hospital following her suicide attempt.

Based on her parents’ decision to move her to an inpatient mental health care facility in Kansas City, an athletics department academic adviser suggested, to protect Sasha’s
academic record, that Sasha sign a form of withdrawal from classes while still in Columbia, to be used only if it became evident that Sasha would not return to school that semester.

Sasha and her parents agreed. Sasha signed and dated the form April 6, 2011. Sasha’s parents then decided to move Sasha from Kansas City to a facility in Boston.

At this time the unlikelihood of her return to school that semester was discussed, and Sasha and her family made the decision to have the withdrawal form submitted. The appropriate university official signed it on April 19, 2011.

Q: Are you concerned about sexual assaults involving students?
A: The university’s top priority is the safety and security of its students. Of course, we are concerned about alleged sexual assaults, and the university takes appropriate action to address such allegations.

The first action is to make certain that the alleged victim is provided with all needed assistance. The university’s Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center’s (RSVP) staff, counseling services and medical personnel are on call 24 hours a day to assist victims in a comprehensive way.

The next action step is to ascertain the wishes of the alleged victim about the handling of the alleged assault. Consistent with Title IX, the university considers whether the alleged victim wishes to maintain confidentiality before determining whether to proceed with an investigation.

Although an investigation may be necessary in some situations regardless of the wishes of the victim, the victim’s wishes are respected to the extent consistent with the university’s obligation to provide a safe environment.

In addition, MUPD personnel inform the community through a Clery release if a threat to the university community exists.

Q: How do you feel about the investigation (UM System) President Wolfe is calling for?
A: We agree with President Wolfe that the safety and security of our students is our most important priority.

While we feel that University of Missouri personnel did everything possible considering the amount of information available at the time to help Sasha Menu Courey, we support
COLUMBIA — It's a question of interpretation and who really knew what and when they knew it.

That's the not entirely satisfying answer to the question of whether an MU employee ought to have alerted the university to the allegation that a student athlete, Sasha Menu Courey, was saying she'd been sexually assaulted.

A news release from the MU News Bureau on Tuesday answered some questions about Menu Courey's allegation of sexual assault by at least one MU football player. What remains unanswered is the broader question of if and when the university is legally obligated to investigate under Title IX.

Menu Courey, a swimmer on scholarship at Missouri, committed suicide in June 2011 after a series of hospitalizations for psychological problems. She had previously attempted suicide once when she was in high school and later in April 2011. Her parents have said that she suffered from borderline personality order, according to ESPN's "Outside the Lines" investigation.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on college campuses based on a person's sex. An April 2011 letter from the U. S. Department of
Education Office for Civil Rights states that sexual harassment of a student is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

Sexual harassment includes sexual violence — acts such as rape, sexual assault, sexual battery and sexual coercion — and interferes with a student's right to an education free from discrimination, according to the letter.

Under Title IX, a school is required to respond when it "knows or reasonably should know" about sexual harassment or violence involving students. Action must be taken to end student-on-student harassment or violence, ensure that it does not happen again and address any effects, according to the letter.

The letter expresses the Department of Education's interpretation of Title IX, said Erin Buzuvis, professor of law and director of the Center for Gender and Sexuality Studies at Western New England University. The department relies on this interpretation to determine whether a school is in compliance with the law, she said.

**Interpretation controversies**

According to an MU News Bureau statement released Tuesday, the university did not investigate the alleged assault following the Columbia Tribune's February 2012 news story about Menu Courey's death because the article did not specify whether the incident occurred on campus or whether it involved any other students.

The reference in the Tribune article to the incident was brief and vague: "Menu Courey also wrote in her diary months later that she was sexually assaulted at the end of her freshman year. She did not name the attacker." But it could be enough to obligate the university to investigate under Title IX, Buzuvis said.

According to the ESPN investigation, a copy of the story was circulated within MU's athletics department.

"It raises a red flag," Buzuvis said. At the very least, MU should have looked into where the incident took place and whether it involved students, she said.
Brett Sokolow, executive director of the Association of Title IX Administrators, interprets the issue differently. He said the Tribune story didn't contain enough information to trigger an investigation.

The university would have known, Sokolow said, if Menu Courey had informed Meghan Anderson, former MU athletics department academic adviser, of the assault, as Menu Courey wrote in her diary and ESPN reported. Anderson has said that Menu Courey didn't tell her about an assault.

Without a request from Menu Courey or statements from some other witness, the university couldn't reasonably be expected to know about the incident until the ESPN "Outside the Lines" story came out last week, Sokolow said.

"It doesn't sound like the athletic department knew," Sokolow said. "I don't sense a cover-up."

Creating a safe and secure environment
Under Title IX, the university has an obligation not only to the victim but also to the rest of its students. Without gathering any details, the university could not have known the extent of the effects of any possible incident, Buzuvis said.

"The law is very clear that the university still has to do something," Buzuvis said, even if the victim is no longer a student or, as in this case, is no longer living.

Even if the harassment or violence occurred off-campus, a school might be required to take action if the victim continued to experience the incident's effects in school or if there was a threat of harassment or violence to other students, according to the Department of Education's letter.

Again, interpretation here differs. Sokolow said that Title IX applies off campus only under narrow circumstances. Although most campuses would want to address off-campus issues, it's not necessarily mandated under Title IX, he said.

"The obligation that the school has is to ensure a safe and secure environment," said Neena Chaudhry, senior counsel and director of equal opportunities in athletics for the National Women's Law Center.
In the statement released Tuesday, MU made clear that it had not investigated Menu Courey's allegations in part because its Office of Student Conduct never received a response from her parents as to whether they wanted to proceed with an investigation.

However, according to the Department of Education's letter, an investigation is required regardless of whether students or their parents have filed a complaint or want action taken on the students' behalf. And a victim's request for confidentiality does not remove the obligation of the school to investigate or respond to an incident. If a victim requests confidentiality, a school should still seek to address the effects of an incident or prevent the recurrence of incidents, even if it cannot discipline an alleged harasser, according to the letter.

A school's investigation should be distinct from a criminal investigation, and law enforcement involvement doesn't relieve a school of the obligation to investigate and respond to any incident of sexual harassment or violence.

The MU Police Department turned over information to Columbia police on Saturday, according to news releases from both agencies.

Law enforcement has different standards of proof than those of Title IX, and could also decide not to prosecute. Standards of proof in Title IX investigations are generally lower, Chaudhry said.

In a criminal court, evidence must convince a jury "beyond a reasonable doubt" that the accused is guilty. For student conduct investigations, a student conduct board would have to find only that it was more likely than not that a violation occurred to take action, according to previous Missourian reporting.

At the moment, there are no open complaints against MU in the Office for Civil Rights in regard to the university's Title IX compliance, said Jim Bradshaw, spokesman for the U.S. Department of Education. The Office for Civil Rights could not comment on possible investigations, he said.

If the Office for Civil Rights were to find that a university was not compliant with Title IX, the school's federal funding could be withdrawn.
No school has ever had funding withdrawn, Chaudhry said. Usually a school can come to an agreement with the department to get into compliance with the law, she said.

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe said that he recommended the UM System Board of Curators hire an independent consultant to look into whether the university could have better handled the case and how it could better handle such cases in the future.

The board will meet beginning Wednesday afternoon. The meeting will continue through Friday, and the board is expected to consider Wolfe's recommendation during that time.

MU releases new statement regarding alleged rape of swimmer

January 28
BY TOD PALMER
The Kansas City Star

The University of Missouri updated its response Tuesday to ESPN’s “Outside the Lines” investigation into the alleged sexual assault of former swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, who subsequently committed suicide.

The statement — more of a “frequently asked questions” response — offers little new information, but it reiterates the university’s stance that it did not become aware of the allegation until late 2012 and that the school could not launch an investigation until new information was brought to light by the ESPN report.

“(T)he ESPN story included names of individuals who might have relevant information regarding the alleged February 2010 assault,” MU’s latest statement reads in part. “This was the first time that University officials had any concrete information on which to base an investigation. When the name of the man with whom Sasha had consensual sex
and at whose residence the alleged assault occurred was revealed, the University checked its records and determined that the man had an off-campus address.”

MU turned over that information Saturday to the Columbia Police Department, which confirmed Monday that it had launched an investigation into the alleged sexual assault of Menu Courey.

Menu Courey died June 17, 2011, at McLean Hospital near Boston, where she was being treated for borderline personality disorder.

Before she died, Menu Courey mailed a tape of her alleged assault to Rolandis Woodland, a former MU football player and friend, according to Woodland. On Tuesday, Woodland gave a phone interview to the Sports on Earth website in which he said he was advised to ignore future media requests.

Woodland said he wanted to speak to explain why he decided to make public what he had seen in the tape. Woodland alleged to ESPN that more than one of his teammates had raped Menu Courey.

“I was scared because they’re my teammates, and I love those guys. I love all of those guys,” he told Sports on Earth. “They’re like my brothers. But this event occurred, and Sasha needed my help.”

Woodland told both ESPN and Sports on Earth that the tape has been misplaced.

In its statement, MU claims that no staffers, other than medical personnel who were legally bound to protect Menu Courey’s right to confidentiality, were aware of the sexual assault allegation until late 2012.

MU, which claims the mention of the assault allegation in a February 2012 story in the Columbia Daily Tribune was too vague to prompt action, also denies that Menu Courey was removed from the swim team.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/01/28/4781512/mu-releases-new-statement-regarding.html#storylink=cpy
Swimmer's death casts light on campus sex assaults

By ALAN SCHER ZAGIER

The case of a former University of Missouri swimmer who said she was raped in an episode that her parents say led to her suicide underscores the problems higher education institutions in the U.S. face in cracking down on sexual assaults.

The parents of Sasha Menu Courey say the university and its athletics department by now should have investigated her alleged off-campus rape by as many as three football players in February 2010.

University leaders say they didn't learn about the purported attack until after Menu Courey, a Canadian, committed suicide 16 months later. They also said they followed the letter of the law because they didn't have specific knowledge of the attack and no victim to interview.

Schools nationwide are spending more time and money fighting campus rape in response to stricter federal enforcement of gender discrimination laws under Title IX. The White House has called it a public health epidemic, and President Barack Obama last week announced the formation of a new task force on college sex assault, citing statistics that show 1 in 5 female students are assaulted while in college, but only 1 in 8 victims report attacks.

But balancing the needs of individual students _ including those who report attacks but don't want a criminal investigation _ with protecting the larger community is vexing for many schools.

Colleges and universities are also required to report campus crimes to the federal government under a 1990 law known as the Clery Act.
At least 50 schools have bolstered their efforts in recent years. Complaints of Title IX violations related to sexual violence are also increasing, a sign Catherine Lhamon, assistant secretary for civil rights in the U.S. Department of Education, attributes to new vigilance on campus.

"Obviously, there are all too many that still need prompting," she said.

Earlier this week, Lhamon's department announced an investigation of Penn State University's handling of sexual harassment and sexual assault complaints amid the Jerry Sandusky child sex-abuse scandal. The University of Colorado and California State University-Fresno have been ordered by civil courts to pay millions for Title IX violations asserted in victim lawsuits.

The University of Missouri's efforts to reduce sexual violence on campus are extensive. A campus equity office led by a lawyer oversees compliance with Title IX, the federal law more commonly known for ensuring equal participation by women in college sports but also has broader discrimination protections. There also is counseling and help available through the campus women's center and the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center.

Students who eschew legal intervention can still seek a campus disciplinary hearing. And the university can also help students switch dorms or class schedules or bar contact outright.

Menu Courey, 20, killed herself in June 2011 in a Boston psychiatric hospital soon after being diagnosed with borderline personality disorder and two months after an earlier suicide attempt.

"There are many resources out there, but there's not really any (sense) that she was provided with those resources," said Zachary Wilson, development director of the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. "It's difficult for sexual assault survivors to go at it alone."

Missouri didn't immediately investigate the death of Menu Courey, who by then had withdrawn from classes at the university's urging and lost her financial aid. The school said in a statement Tuesday that a 2012 Columbia Daily Tribune article about Menu Courey's suicide briefly alluded to the alleged assault, but didn't meet the legal standard that the school "reasonably should know about student-on-student harassment that creates a hostile environment."

The school says Menu Courey's parents ignored its request for more information a year ago after it discovered an online chat transcript with a campus rape counselor in which Menu Courey mentioned an earlier attack.

Missouri initially responded to an ESPN story about the swimmer by defending its handling of the case while criticizing the news organization's "skewed and flawed
reporting." But soon after, the university said it was turning over information on the case to Columbia police, since the alleged attack happened off-campus.

A police investigation is underway, and University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe wants the university's governing board to pay for an independent legal review of how officials handled the situation. The Board of Curators is expected to consider that request at its regular meeting on Wednesday.

Other sexual assault cases have been linked to Missouri's athletic department. Former running back Derrick Washington was convicted in 2010 of sexually assaulting a tutor in her sleep, and basketball player Michael Dixon transferred in 2012 after two sex assault claims against him went public, though he was never charged.

In suburban Toronto, Mike Menu and his wife Lynn Courey have channeled their grief into a mental health foundation named in her memory. They want accountability from Missouri, though Menu said the couple hasn't hired an attorney and isn't "looking for money."

"We just want to make sure that changes are made," Mike Menu said. "We need more than Band-Aids. We need a transformation."

Coach responds to coverage of Sasha Menu Courey's suicide

Rhodenbaugh believes he provided proper support for Menu Courey.

By BLAKE TOPPMeyer

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 2:00 pm

Missouri swimming Coach Greg Rhodenbaugh believes he did the right thing.

In his first public comments in the aftermath of ESPN's "Outside the Lines" report regarding the June 2011 suicide of MU women's swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, Rhodenbaugh told the
Tribune during an interview yesterday he tried to help Menu Courey get the support she needed.

"I would've handled it the same way — with respect and care, the same way we handle all our students. That's what we do," Rhodenbaugh said. "Would I have handled it any differently? Probably not, because I was pointing her toward people that could give her much more professional care than I could. … I think we got her into the right hands."

Menu Courey was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder in March 2011 while at the MU Psychiatric Center. ESPN reported she wrote in her journal she had been sexually assaulted in February 2010.

Rhodenbaugh said Menu Courey never told him of the alleged assault. MU hired Rhodenbaugh, who had been an assistant coach at Arizona, to be its head coach in May 2010.

"I didn't know a lot of the stuff that came out in the story," Rhodenbaugh said. "A lot of it is alleged. I get that. But I didn't know a lot of that."

According to ESPN's report, Menu Courey wrote in her journal in May 2011 she told academic adviser Meghan Anderson via phone she was sexually assaulted. Anderson told ESPN she did have a phone conversation with Menu Courey but that Menu Courey did not tell her about the alleged assault.

Menu Courey was admitted to McLean Hospital in Belmont, Mass., in April 2011 and was undergoing treatment for BPD. She died after ingesting 100 pills of Extra Strength Tylenol at the hospital.

The ESPN report said federal Title IX law requires a university to take immediate action once it reasonably determines an assault has occurred.

ESPN's report suggested Missouri should have investigated Menu Courey's alleged sexual assault after it was mentioned in a February 2012 story in the Tribune or after uncovering Menu Courey's medical records, in which the alleged assault was mentioned, and records of a December 2010 online conversation Menu Courey had with a rape crisis counselor, during which Menu Courey discussed the alleged incident. Those records were uncovered when MU responded to open-records requests from Menu Courey's parents and ESPN.

MU announced Sunday it had turned over all information about the alleged incident to police and followed up this morning by responding in a statement to "frequently asked questions" resulting from ESPN's report. The investigation will be handled by the Columbia Police Department because the alleged assault is believed to have occurred off campus.

Rhodenbaugh questioned whether ESPN's report — ESPN published a story online Friday, and the report aired on television Sunday morning — best honored Menu Courey's memory and wishes. Menu Courey did not report the sexual assault to law enforcement.
ESPN's report "just isn't going to do anything to preserve the memory that I think her parents want to preserve and certainly our team wanted to preserve of her," said Rhodenbaugh, who called ESPN's report "sensationalized."

Rhodenbaugh said he doesn't think ESPN's report will impact his job status at Missouri.

"People know me all over the swimming community, and I haven't changed in years," Rhodenbaugh said. "I've always been after what's best for the student athletes."

Rhodenbaugh also reiterated that he never kicked Menu Courey off the swimming team. ESPN reported that Menu Courey felt she had been kicked off the team.

Menu Courey was sidelined throughout the 2010-11 season with a back injury, and Rhodenbaugh said she was not doing the physical therapy needed to recover from that injury. He said the injury prevented Menu Courey from practicing. Although Menu Courey's BPD had not been diagnosed at the time, Rhodenbaugh said he was aware she was undergoing counseling during the 2010-11 school year. He said he would ask Menu Courey if she was attending her counseling, and he said he learned there was a two-week stretch during which Menu Courey did not go to counseling. ESPN's report stated that Menu Courey didn't stop going to counseling.

"She told me she had stopped going to counseling," Rhodenbaugh said. "I guess there was a 13-day gap. In that gap, she hadn't gone. I know I asked her a couple times. I said, 'You're not going to' physical 'therapy. You're not going to counseling. Those are the things you have to do. ... Use the 2 o'clock to 4:30' practice 'slot to do all that stuff.' "

Rhodenbaugh said the lines of communication were still open between Menu Courey and him after that conversation.

"Even after I told her that she had to go to therapy and use the 2 to 4:30 just as physical therapy and she had to go to counseling, she still talked to me," Rhodenbaugh said. "She still dropped by. I saw her up at the" Mizzou Athletics Training Complex.

Rhodenbaugh said Menu Courey was still on scholarship and was still required to fulfill obligations required of student athletes, such as meeting with academic mentors.

Menu Courey checked into MU's Psychiatric Center in March 2011, and after being released she reportedly attempted suicide. She had also attempted suicide while in high school. She was admitted to a hospital in Kansas City in April 2011. Rhodenbaugh said he visited Menu Courey while she was there and tried to calm her concerns about whether she would have a spot on the team the next season.

"She asked me that question of, 'Will I still have a spot on the team next year?' " Rhodenbaugh said. "I went, 'Absolutely. If you go through the process of taking the measures you need to, and when you're cleared, of course you can come back. ... But we have a long way to go before that happens.' She was like, 'Don't worry. I get it now.' "
ESPN's report implied MU should not have presented Menu Courey with an academic withdrawal form, which Menu Courey signed, in the spring of 2011 with Menu Courey in a fragile mental state. Rhodenbaugh maintains he and others were trying to protect Menu Courey's academic standing.

"She was a very good student," Rhodenbaugh said. "Failing all of her classes at that point would have been horrible for her academic standing."

Rhodenbaugh said he believes Menu Courey was registered for classes for the 2011-12 school year and that the university didn't cancel those classes until after MU's memorial service for her in July 2011. Rhodenbaugh said he has some great memories of Menu Courey and that she "had a side where she was full of life."

"Her smile was killer," Rhodenbaugh said. "She had a great smile. She had a lot of energy. She kind of lit up the room."

Menu Courey's suicide "was a tragic situation, and it really rocked the swim team," Rhodenbaugh said. "It rocked the coaching staff. It rocked the whole community."

This article was published in the Tuesday, January 28, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Coach responds to coverage of MU swimmer's suicide; Rhodenbaugh believes he provided proper support for Menu Courey."

Woodland talks with Sports on Earth about role in Menu Courey case

By David Morrison

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 1:49 pm

Rolandis Woodland, the former Missouri receiver who told ESPN's "Outside the Lines" that he has seen a video of three of his former teammates sexually assaulting former Tigers swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, spoke with Sports on Earth about his reasons for coming forward and the difficult predicament in which his role in the story has placed him.
Menu Courey alleged that she was raped by at least one football player in February 2010. In June 2011, while under care for borderline personality disorder at a Massachusetts hospital, she committed suicide.

Woodland told ESPN that Menu Courey, who was a close friend, sent him a package containing a video of the alleged assault shortly before her death. He said the package has subsequently been misplaced.

"People are saying 'Why did you do this? You could get into trouble. Do you just want to be famous?' " Woodland told Sports on Earth in a Monday phone interview. "You don't understand. I miss her so, so much, and I wish I didn't have to do this. I just want her to be here."

Woodland told Sports on Earth that lawyers advised him to ignore media requests after ESPN's story broke Friday. According to the article, he agreed to the Sports on Earth interview to "explain his decision and describe his friendship" with Menu Courey.

A Tribune interview request to Woodland has not been returned.

Woodland said Menu Courey's parents -- Mike Menu and Lynn Courey -- asked him to speak up.

"I was scared because they're my teammates, and I love those guys. I love all of those guys," he told Sports on Earth. "They're like my brothers. But this event occurred, and Sasha needed my help."

He told Sports on Earth he has received more than 2,000 Facebook messages since the ESPN story, many thanking him for stepping forward in the case.

The Columbia Police Department is currently investigating the incident, which they say may have occurred in the 600 block of Huntridge Drive, about three miles south of campus.

Anyone with information on the incident is urged to contact the department's non-emergency number (573-442-6131) or Crime Stoppers at 573-875-TIPS (8477) to remain anonymous.

The MU News Bureau also released another statement Tuesday outlining its views on the university's treatment of the Menu Courey case.

UM System President Tim Wolfe called for an independent review of the school's response to Menu Courey's sexual assault allegations Sunday.

Missouri contends that no university officials -- outside of campus health professionals who are bound to confidentiality -- knew of the sexual assault allegations until more than a year after Menu Courey's death.

The university reached out to Menu Courey's parents and asked if they would like Missouri to pursue an investigation of the incident, but they never responded.
Missouri turned the Menu Courey case over to law enforcement Saturday after, it says, the ESPN report shed new light on the situation, "the first time that University officials had any concrete information on which to base an investigation."

"While we feel that University of Missouri personnel did everything possible considering the amount of information available at the time to help Sasha Menu Courey, we support a full review of the university’s policies and procedures and look forward to any potential improvements that might be identified," Tuesday's statement concluded.

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Posted in Behind The Stripes on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 1:49 pm.

Nixon: Mo. swimmer case 'heart-breaking situation'

January 28
The Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon says "our thoughts and prayers" go to the family of a former University of Missouri swimmer who said she was sexually assaulted and later committed suicide.

Nixon said Tuesday the case of Sasha Menu Courey was a "heart-breaking situation" and that college campuses need to be safe havens. He says allegations of sexual assault must be taken seriously.

Menu Courey committed suicide in June 2011. Her family says the university did not properly investigate allegations that several football players had assaulted her in February 2010.

University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe has called for an external legal review into her death. The university also has said it was turning over information about the off-campus incident to Columbia police.
STRAUSS: QUESTIONS OUTNUMBER ANSWERS AT MIZZOU

Joe Strauss jstrauss@post-dispatch.com

When colleges and universities initiate recruitment of student-athletes, potential recipients of academic scholarships or average high school achievers, the pitch typically flows from educational enrichment to a sense of community, even family. Become one of us, they say, become part of our legacy.

Implicit in the sepia-toned correspondence is that parents may entrust the educational institution with their most precious possession as well as significant amounts of money. We will do for you, it says.

One wants to believe the message. The unsavory alternative is to believe it’s just another cynical marketing tool designed to win trust when the real goal is monetary or to obtain a teen’s personal service to an athletic department that may or may not extend a scholarship on a year-to-year basis.

Now comes the University of Missouri waist-deep and sinking in a bog of unflattering media reports, prepared releases and multiple investigations.

A troubled swimmer dies and leaves behind her account of sexual assault.

Only after a media outlet goes national with the story does the university approach the local police department with promises of cooperation. An internal probe is announced. The university dispenses news releases, including one in which it deigns to answer questions it poses to itself.

University and athletic department administrators, meanwhile, decline to answer legitimate questions from real, live reporters.

Sasha Menu Courey committed suicide in a Boston mental hospital more than two years ago. She was allegedly assaulted off-campus in February 2010. The alleged incident
reportedly was taped and involved a football player. Menu Courey sought counseling on campus two months later.

A Columbia newspaper made passing reference to the assault in a 2012 story about Menu Courey’s death. During a nearly 18-month investigation ESPN subsequently attempted to tie together loose ends Mizzou left frayed.

Mizzou is telling the world via its website that it handled the matter properly and legally, that numerous stipulations prevented it from taking a more proactive role in investigating Menu Courey’s assault, which one might suspect contributed to her spiral into a suicidal state.

Because this is the state’s flagship university, the hope is that folks in charge did what was right and are now offering transparency about a situation that at the very least is a tragedy that partly played out on their watch.

Recent years remind us about the risk in perceiving institutions of higher learning as beacons on the hill. Lessons learned in Waco and State College and another still being investigated in Chapel Hill don’t impugn those in Columbia. But they remind us that blind faith is unpardonable.

In the case of Menu Courey, Missouri has its own interpretation of the constraints imposed on it by Title IX. Another reading suggests that the university was free, even obligated to contact local police without consent from the deceased swimmer’s family.

This much is incontrovertible: Mizzou made no public comment regarding Menu Courey’s case until ESPN posted its story online last Friday.

In five days since, the Mizzou athletic department has questioned the network’s motives, defended its handling of the case in part by blaming Menu Courey’s parents for not answering emails and failed to take direct questions while posting almost daily position statements on the matter.

It’s nice that university system president Tim Wolfe has asked the board of curators to initiate an independent investigation of the matter. The move is in welcome contrast to how several other incidents have been deflected, including the abrupt withdrawal of basketball player Michael Dixon after he was tied to two alleged sexual assaults, one against a former athletic department tutor who was reminded that life on campus might become difficult if she followed through with charges. Suspended with his case under appeal, Dixon accompanied the team on its trip to a holiday tournament in the Bahamas. He abruptly withdrew from MU within hours after the Post-Dispatch uncovered a second alleged incident in which charges were never pressed.

The nature of allegations against Dixon became public only after an exchange on social media between former Mizzou teammate Kim English and the complainant in one of the cases. English publicly referred to the charges against Dixon as “a joke.”
Mizzou running back and co-captain Derrick Washington received a seven-year sentence for a June 2010 sexual assault against a tutor.

This is the same institution that produced the Ricky Clemons affair, in which the former Mizzou guard crashed an all-terrain vehicle while violating terms of his work-release. (Clemons had been convicted of choking and detaining his girlfriend, a university student, against her will.) The ATV incident famously occurred on the grounds of then-university system president Elson Floyd. Floyd remained as Mizzou president for more than three years after the incident.

Against such a backdrop, there are legitimate questions to be answered. Menu Courey is dead. Shining light on another alleged assault involving a university athlete revives an unwelcome issue. A university that supposedly wished to gain parental permission to initiate a police investigation failed to follow up an unanswered letter with a phone call.

Refusing to answer questions about such incidents has previously served Mizzou well. The athletic department stonewalled after Dixon’s exit. In this instance a swimmer with a complicated psychological history died in Boston. In her journal, Menu Courey wrote of divulging her sexual assault to a university employee. The employee, no longer at Mizzou, denied the account to ESPN.

Any independent investigation should go beyond whether Mizzou did right by Menu Courey. It should delve into campus climate, about a recent spike in sexual assaults at the university, and answer whether the school and its athletic department are part of a systemic problem as well as a tragic incident.

Please, address an issue never discussed in recruiting literature.

WHAT OTHERS SAY: Follow Tim Wolfe's advice — freeze tuition for UM schools

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 | 6:00 a.m. CST

The University of Missouri Board of Curators should follow UM System President Tim Wolfe’s advice when it meets this week: Keep tuition flat for the 2014-15 school year.
Gov. Jay Nixon has asked all of the state’s public universities to avoid tuition hikes this year. In exchange, he promised “additional” funding.

The word “additional” is in quotes because Nixon’s proposed 5 percent increase in core funding, plus various increases to add slots for mental health and math studies, science and engineering fields and some more scholarship money, is truly only “additional” if you ignore recent Missouri history.

It’s nice. It’s better than last year. But it’s nowhere near adequate.

For instance, as David Lieb of the Associated Press pointed out in a weekend story, even with all the increases proposed by Nixon this year, total funding for the state’s universities will be below the $969 million that was budgeted back in 2002. In the past 12 years, as a result of two recessions and a legislature that doesn’t value education funding, Missouri continues to fall behind. Missouri ranks worse for state support for higher education than all but four other states.

Freezing University of Missouri tuition at its current average level — $9,464 per year — is the least the curators can do.

President Wolfe has good advice
But before the board votes on the tuition freeze, here’s what the curators should do: Ask Wolfe for his thoughts on Missouri’s tax policy and how it fits with the stated priorities of the state as set out in the constitution. The views of this former corporate CEO are dead-on.

Wolfe knows Missouri’s decades-long history as one of the lowest-tax states in the nation is directly related to its position as one of the poorest supporters of both K-12 schools and higher education.

“We have got to do something different in our state to be more competitive,” he said Friday in a meeting with the Post-Dispatch editorial board. “We run the risk of having an educational system that is only available to those in the ‘have’ category.”

Most worrisome is that even though Missouri has one of the lowest tax rates in the country (6th lowest, according to Nixon), state lawmakers want to cut taxes even more.
Last week, for instance, a Senate committee passed this year’s version of a tax cut bill similar to the one Nixon vetoed last year. The governor was quick with a news release, pointing out that the legislation, if it became law, would ultimately rob the state of about $1 billion in revenue.

That’s $1 billion less for education, for roads, for health care, for basic state services.

**The myth of tax cuts**

Republicans who vote for such garbage argue that cutting taxes ultimately leads to a better economy. If it were true, Missouri would be booming. Over the past four decades, it has had the 47th lowest tax burden in the nation. Winning the race to the bottom will not help.

When it comes to tax policy, lawmakers are asking the wrong question, Wolfe points out.

“I think tax change can be a good thing, but it should be very intentional,” Wolfe told us. “We should change tax policy to fund the objective, and the objective is the priorities we have as a state.”

In Missouri, those priorities are set out in the constitution. First is paying debt. Second is funding education.

Last summer, Nixon flew around the state making the same argument: If the state’s top priority is to fund schools, then tax policy must meet that end. Freezing tuition is a good first step, but the real work remains. Wolfe should grab a megaphone, borrow Nixon’s new state plane and take his message to every corner of Missouri.

If education is truly a Missouri priority, our state lawmakers have a pretty poor way of showing it.
COLUMBIA — **Students living in about half of MU’s residence halls have to get used to a new security procedure at their halls’ front doors this semester.**

The Department of Residential Life implemented a new safety policy regarding door locking in residence halls effective Dec. 13. Under the policy, doors to the living areas of residence halls are locked at all times.

"There should not be a situation where someone can just walk right in the front door and get to residential areas," said Frankie Minor, director of residential life.

This policy changes procedures in 11 of MU’s 21 residence halls. Those 11 halls do not have a secured door separating the lobby from the living area, so once a person enters the building, he or she has access to every floor of student rooms.

Previously, the main door of these halls was unlocked while a student staff member was behind the front desk. Under the new policy, all exterior doors have been locked 24 hours a day.

The other 10 residence halls have a separate door to the living area, allowing visitors to freely enter the building during daytime hours without having access to students’ hallways. The new policy does not affect security procedures in these halls.

One of the biggest challenges to making the policy effective is keeping nonresidents from "piggybacking" into the residence halls behind a student who swipes his or her ID, Minor said.

"It’s completely dependent on students' compliance with it," Minor said.
This semester, MU's on-campus residence halls can house as many as 6,011 students, Minor said. Last semester, about 57 percent of residents were women and about 43 percent were men.

"I know that people still get in because people just piggyback in all the time," MU freshman Lauren Alexander said. "It's impossible to keep everyone out."

Alexander said that although there will be people who get around security procedures, she still feels safe in her residence hall, Gillett. She tries to do her part to keep strangers out of the hall, though, by holding the door only for people she knows.

"Typically, it's someone I've seen come into the building before, so I'm fine with it, but if it's someone else, I won't make an extra effort to keep the door open," Alexander said.

The new policy does not affect access to classrooms within residence halls, as all classrooms are in buildings with a separate door to the living area. All dining facilities also remain accessible without a hall resident's ID.

The policy change had been discussed several times in the past four or five years, Minor said. The Department of Residential Life, the Residence Halls Association and the MU Police Department took part in the discussion before making the decision to implement the policy this year.

"I think the timing was just right, both in terms of the technology, what we've already been doing to increase security and the students' understanding of the importance of that," Minor said.

Laws Hall is one of the residence halls affected by the policy. On Monday, MU police issued a release saying an assault occurred early Sunday morning. According to the Clery release, an unknown man entered a woman's unlocked room and assaulted her. The victim noticed another man in her room, and both men fled when she grabbed her phone to call the police, the release stated.

Minor said the Department of Residential Life is working closely with MU police to investigate the incident. Both men have since been identified, and the case has been reclassified as a sexual offense, according to a second Clery release issued Tuesday afternoon.
The Laws staff will discuss ways to improve the safety and security of the hall with students, as they have all year, Minor said. Notices have also been posted around the hall reminding students of safety procedures they can follow to prevent or report incidents.

As older residence halls are rebuilt or renovated, the Department of Residential Life will plan security measures that adhere to the new policy with the lowest level of student inconvenience.

"In some situations, it’s easier to add that second level of security," Minor said. "The other one is that we eliminate that need, or work around the need, to have the exterior door of the building unlocked because there’s a legitimate need for people to get in there."

For example, newly renovated Mark Twain Hall has a separate entrance for its dining facility, so nonresidents going there to eat do not have to enter the residence hall at all, Minor said.

Although Minor said student safety is the No. 1 priority of the Department of Residential Life, he does not want to overdo it.

"We don’t want them to be like prisons. We don’t want to keep all people out or all people in. They need to be students’ homes," Minor said. "We want them to be as safe as they reasonably can be but still feel like places students can call their home."

Alexander said the extra inconvenience doesn’t bother her. When she visits friends in halls whose doors are locked 24 hours a day, she just gives them a quick call and they let her in, she said.

Freshmen Adele Fritz agrees that the new policy is not a big deal, especially since residents already have to swipe their cards to get into their rooms.

"I think people will get used to it," Fritz said.
MU student reports dorm room assault

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (4) Updated: 3:21 pm, Tue Jan 28, 2014.

Police have identified the two men who allegedly entered a woman’s dorm room on the University of Missouri campus on Sunday night, and they say one of the men sexually assaulted her while in her room.

MU Police Department Capt. Brian Weimer said the crime, which was classified as a burglary in a news release issued Monday afternoon, has been reclassified as a sex offense.

Campus police released the information in accordance with the Clery Act, which requires disclosure of campus crime information nationwide.

Weimer said one of the men was involved in the assault. MUPD officers are talking to the victim, other people in the area and the office of Boone County Prosecutor Dan Knight. No arrests have been made yet.

The information about the suspects and crime reclassification were contained in a second Clery release, which was issued Tuesday afternoon. In the Monday statement, Weimer had said the two men fled when the woman called police. That was incorrect, he said Tuesday.

“There was an incident that occurred that caused the individual to leave,” Weimer said of the perpetrator. “That’s about as detailed as I can get at this moment.”

The two men, both MU students, entered the woman’s unlocked dorm room in Laws Hall at 7:51 p.m. Sunday, and one of the men sexually assaulted her after the other man left, Weimer said. He could not disclose the specific nature of the assault, he said.

Because of the original Clery release sent out Monday, Weimer said police were able to identify the pair.

“It’s because of that information yesterday that we were able to solve this,” he said. “Hopefully even more people will come forward with more information.”

People with additional information can call MU police Officer Crystal Becker at 573-884-4495 or CrimeStoppers at 573-875-8477. Weimer said this incident was not related to a string of break-ins in downtown Columbia and in the East Campus neighborhood that occurred from June to November last year in which a man entered through unlocked doors.
COLUMBIA — After reading the university's campus-wide Clery release, an MU student identified two students suspected of being involved in a sex offense at a campus residence hall on Sunday morning, MU Police Capt. Brian Weimer said.

The two men are not currently in police custody, and the best course of action is still being decided, Weimer said.

Originally classified as a burglary, the case was reclassified as a sex offense after further investigation, Weimer said. He would not release further details Tuesday afternoon.

The victim was getting ready for bed in Laws residence hall around 1:30 a.m. Sunday morning when an unknown man entered her room through an unlocked door and physically assaulted her, according to the news release. When the victim reached for her cell phone to call the police, she noticed a second man in the room. She said she was calling the police and the men fled her room.

MU police will work with the victim and university officials to move forward with the investigation, according to the release.

Weimer said he is grateful for the student's help in identifying the suspects. "Thank you to those who called in," Weimer said. "If you have any more information, give us a call."
Lawmakers hope new Bright Flight loans can slow ‘brain drain’

By Rudi Keller

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 2:00 pm

JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri pays $15 million a year to keep its brightest students in the state, but about half of those students leave after graduating to find work elsewhere, the chairman of the House Higher Education Committee said during a hearing Tuesday.

The Bright Flight scholarship program provides grants of as much as $3,000 a year to top high school students who choose a college or university in the state. A new addition to the program would provide an additional loan of $5,000 a year to students, and the state would forgive 25 percent of the loan for each year the recipient lives and works in the state after graduation.

"I think it is imperative we cut down on what we call 'brain drain,' " said Rep. Mike Thomson, R-Maryville, sponsor of the bill and chairman of the House Higher Education Committee. "A lot of very sharp kids are leaving the state."

Gov. Jay Nixon embraced the idea as a legislative priority, and there was no opposition to the idea during testimony before the House committee today. A fiscal note accompanying the bill estimates the loan program could add up to $19.2 million to the annual cost of the program, but Thompson said he will add language that will cut that cost by about one-third.

Under the current program, students who score in the top 3 percent in the state on the ACT or SAT college exams are eligible for a grant of as much as $3,000. Students who score in the top 4 or 5 percent may receive grants of as much as $1,000, if grants for top scorers are fully funded. Because of a lack of money, the smaller grants have never been awarded. The average grant, for the approximately 6,500 students receiving it, is about $2,500.

About 2,500 new students qualify each year, Thomson told the committee. Of that number, about 60 to 65 percent receive a grant. When he was researching the new proposal, Thomson said, economists he consulted estimated about 37 percent of the top scorers attend school and take jobs in Missouri.
The loan program would provide as much as $5,000 annually, with a cap of $20,000 for undergraduates. For each year the recipient lives and works in Missouri after graduating, the state would forgive 25 percent of the total owed.

"We believe this is enough of an enticement that we can keep a lot of the kids in the state," Thompson said.

**The Bright Flight scholarship began as a grant of $2,000, enough to cover tuition and fees at the University of Missouri. When higher education officials were studying how to improve the program, some questioned whether the money was being well spent, said Paul Wagner, executive director of the Council of Public Higher Education.**

"A lot of what we heard wasn't, 'Are these kids going to school in Missouri?' but, 'Where are they working?'" he said. The loan program was designed to meet those concerns, Wagner said.

The bill saves the program money by requiring students to earn 24 credit hours during their first year in college and 30 hours per year afterward. The program now requires only "satisfactory" progress toward a degree.

The committee also heard testimony on a bill to use performance measures to distribute funds when colleges and universities receive a budget increase. It is similar to a Senate bill awaiting floor debate.

The House committee did not vote on either bill.

*This article was published in the Tuesday, January 28, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Lawmakers take aim at 'brain drain'; Bill would offer loans for Bright Flight students."*

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Posted in Politics on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 2:00 pm.
House committee considers forgivable loans for Bright Flight students
Tuesday, January 28, 2014 | 6:15 p.m. CST

BY ABBY JOHNSTON

JEFFERSON CITY — Legislation that would add loan forgiveness to the existing [Bright Flight scholarship](#) was hailed as one way to help keep Missouri’s top students from being lured to out-of-state schools.

**MU student and staff representatives came to Jefferson City on Tuesday in support of House Bill 1308, which would augment funding for the Higher Education Academic Scholarship Program.**

Rep. Mike Thomson, R-Maryville, the sponsor of the bill and chairman of the House Higher Education Committee, said the bill could provide incentive for Missouri’s top high school students not only to stay at in-state universities but also to stay in Missouri after receiving diplomas.

“It’s imperative that we cut down on the so-called brain drain. We’re losing our brightest kids,” Thomson said.

Established in 1986 by the General Assembly, Bright Flight scholarships reward the top 3 percent of Missouri’s ACT and SAT score recipients if they choose to attend an in-state university. Initially implemented during the 1987-88 school year, students were awarded $2,000 in scholarships for every year they studied. The annual award amount increased to up to $3,000 in 2009. But the award has not been fully funded, according to the [Missouri Department of Higher Education’s website](#).

In 2013, a student with an ACT score of 31 or above or an SAT score of 790 or above in reading and 780 or above in math was qualified to receive $3,000. However, because of insufficient legislative funds, recipients received only $2,500.
One notable change House Bill 1308 would bring is that students in the top 4 percent and 5 percent of scores would no longer be eligible for forgivable $1,000 loans.

House Bill 1308 would implement forgivable loans for Bright Flight scholars up to $20,000 if they work in Missouri for four years after graduating. Under the bill, Bright Flight recipients are eligible for a $5,000 loan on top of the program’s scholarship. If students choose to work out of state before the four-year period ends, the loan must be repaid with interest.

“We feel like after four years, the kids get out and work to establish themselves in the state of Missouri and we are more likely to keep them here,” Thomson said.

**According to MU research presented at the hearing, Missouri loses about one-third of Bright Flight-eligible high school graduates to out-of-state schools. The research also estimated that only 37 percent of these qualified students hold a job in Missouri after graduation.**

“That competition has increased greatly from out of state,” MU Director of Admissions Barbara Rupp said Tuesday. “Other schools are coming into the state of Missouri and attracting many of our brightest students with their scholarships. This bill would really help address that.”

Nick Prewett, director of MU’s financial aid office, also came out in support of the bill, adding that in-state costs for a four-year degree at MU total just more than $22,000. Representatives from the Associated Students of the University of Missouri and the Missouri Students Association also voiced support.
Mold mars 600,000 MU volumes stored at off-campus facility

By Ashley Jost

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (6)

University of Missouri Libraries officials face tough choices as they consider what to do with 600,000 mold-covered books at an off-campus storage facility.

The volumes are stored at Subtera, an underground storage facility off Stadium Boulevard in north Columbia. Jim Cogswell, director of MU Libraries, said library staff discovered the mold problem in October.

An on-campus environmental health and safety officer has been studying the issue since then and last week issued a report that identified the mold as aspergillus and/or penicillium — common types of mold that don't pose a health threat, MU spokesman Christian Basi said.

A representative of Con-Agg of MO LLC, the company that operates Subtera, declined to comment this morning.

Cogswell said he can't say for sure how many books will be salvaged, but it likely will be fewer than half. The reason is that removing the mold is estimated to cost $3 a volume — for a total estimated cost of $1.8 million for all 600,000 volumes.

"We don't have that," Cogswell said.

He said the goal is to save books that were published before 1870. Cogswell said he is unsure how many books that includes.

"We don't have that kind of money" to save all the books, Cogswell said. "We have a self-insurance fund, but there is around three-quarters of a million dollars in there."

The fund was created about eight years ago, and the university puts $100,000 into it each year, he said. In the past five years, there have been two other mold blooms in on-campus collections — one in the journalism library and the other in the health science library. In total, those two cost $100,000 to fix.
The library has stored books in the affected Subtera location as well another similar facility for the past six years after the main library ran out of space, Cogswell said. After the books are cleaned, they will have to be moved to a new facility. Some books can be stored in the MU Library Depository, but staff members are not sure how many books they can accommodate there.

"We are in this predicament because we had to find a cheap alternative place to put our books in," Cogswell said. "We were required to find cheap alternatives to essentially rent storage space because our library is underfunded compared to every other library of our size."

The funding problem, Cogswell said, comes from the state's lack of support for higher education. During years past, the library had a preservation officer who was trained to take care of books and would have helped prevent this type of problem by monitoring the collections, Cogswell said. That position was cut "years back" because of the budget, he said.

Cogswell said the library has already received two bids, but it is still accepting more bids.

This article was published in the Tuesday, January 28, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Mold mars university volumes; Problem affects 600,000 books."

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Posted in Education on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 2:00 pm.

COLLEGE ATHLETES TAKE STEP TOWARD FORMING UNION

NCAA and the Big Ten Conference insist that college athletes cannot be considered employees.

MICHAEL TARM, Associated Press

NO MU MENTION

CHICAGO • Calling the NCAA a dictatorship, Northwestern's quarterback and the United Steelworkers announced plans Tuesday to form the first labor union for college
athletes — the latest salvo in the bruising fight over whether amateur players should be paid.

Quarterback Kain Colter detailed the College Athletes Players Association at a news conference in Chicago, flanked by leaders of Steelworkers union that has agreed to pay legal bills for the effort. The NCAA and the Big Ten Conference both criticized the move and insisted that college athletes cannot be considered employees.

Colter said the NCAA dictates terms to its hundreds of member schools and tens of thousands of college athletes, leaving players with little or no say about financial compensation questions or how to improve their own safety. That college football generates hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue only bolstered the argument for a union, he said.

"How can they call this amateur athletics when our jerseys are sold in stores and the money we generate turns coaches and commissioners into multimillionaires?" Colter asked.

"The current model represents a dictatorship," added Colter, who just finished his senior year with the Wildcats. "We just want a seat at the table."

Colter said "nearly 100 percent" of his teammates backed the drive to unionize. But only he spoke publicly, saying the others wanted to keep a low profile.

CAPA's president, former UCLA football player Ramogi Huma, said a union would help ensure that scholarships, at minimum, cover all living expenses as well as tuition. Currently, he said, scholarship athletes come up thousands of dollars short each year. A union would also push for full medical coverage that could carry over past college.

While the effort to form a union among college athletes appears without precedent, there is a recent case that may help their cause. More than 600 graduate teaching and research assistants at New York University voted to form a union in December and to affiliate with the United Auto Workers. It was the first such union in the country to win recognition by a private university.

For now, the push is to unionize college athletes is focused only on private schools like Northwestern — though large public universities, which are subject to different sets of regulations, could follow, said Huma, who is also the head of the National College Players Association he founded in 2001 to lobby for the interests of college athletes.

"This will be the first domino," Huma said.

If the players succeed, a union could fundamentally change college sports, said Brian Rauch, a New York-based labor attorney. He said it could raise the prospect of strike by disgruntled players or lockouts by schools.
The NCAA has been under increasing scrutiny over its amateurism rules and is currently in court, fighting a class-action federal lawsuit filed by former players seeking a cut of the billions of dollars earned from live broadcasts and memorabilia sales, along with video games, and multiple lawsuits filed by players who say the organization failed to adequately protect them from debilitating head injuries.

NCAA President Mark Emmert and others have pushed for a $2,000-per-player stipend to help athletes defray some of their expenses, but critics say that isn't nearly enough, considering players help bring in millions of dollars to their schools and conferences.

Last season, Colter and football players from Georgia and Georgia Tech had the letters APU — All Players United — written on their gear during games as a show of solidarity in an effort organized by the NCPA. At the time, the NCAA said it welcomed an "open and civil debate regarding all aspects of college athletics."

The NCAA issued a statement Tuesday making clear where it stands on the athletes' quest to form a union.

"Student-athletes are not employees," NCAA chief legal officer Donald Remy said. "We are confident the National Labor Relations Board will find in our favor, as there is no right to organize student-athletes."

He added: "This union-backed attempt to turn student-athletes into employees undermines the purpose of college: an education."

A statement from the Big Ten Conference echoed that, saying it "does not believe that full-time students participating in intercollegiate athletics are employees."

"That said, the Big Ten Conference has the utmost respect for both the legal system and the rights of students to pursue their beliefs through that system," the league said.

Northwestern backed the NCAA stance as well, but expressed pride in the students' leadership and independent thinking.

"However, we agree that the health and academic issues being raised by our student-athletes and others are important ones that deserve further consideration," said Jim Phillips, Northwestern's vice president of athletics and recreation.

"Kain and our student-athletes have followed their beliefs with great passion and courage," Wildcats coach Pat Fitzgerald tweeted. "I'm incredibly proud of our young men! GO CATS!"

NLRB spokesman Gregory King confirmed that a petition by the players to form a union was filed at the board on Tuesday. King said the board would likely conduct a hearing within the next 10 days.
The key issue the board must resolve is whether the football players are employees as defined by federal labor law, said United Steelworkers official Tim Waters. If they're deemed employees, he said, they would have the legal right to organize.

"It's crystal clear that college football players are employees," he said, arguing most put in a 40-hour work week and create revenue, though not for themselves. He and the Steelworkers president, Leo W. Gerard, said the relationship between colleges and athletes amounted to "pay for play."

William B. Gould IV, a Stanford Law School professor emeritus and former NLRB chairman, predicted the board will rule for the players.

"The major obstacle is the Brown University decision of a decade ago," he said, referring to a 2004 decision under a George W. Bush-era board that removed the right of graduate students at private universities to unionize.

The NLRB said in 2012 that it will reconsider Brown, and Gould thinks it will be reversed.

"I think these guys are employees because their compensation is unrelated to education, unlike the teaching assistants in Brown University, and they are supervised not by faculty, but by coaches," Gould said. "Their program for which they receive compensation does not have a fundamentally component. So given the direction and control that supervisory authorities have over them, I think they are easily employees within the meaning of the act."

Rauch, the labor attorney, said he thought union-minded athletes will have a tough time demonstrating they are employees, and he thought their chances of prevailing were slim.

"They have high hurdles to jump," he said.

AP writers Ron Blum and Sam Hananel contributed to this report.

NCPA: www.ncpanow.org

NCAA: www.ncaa.org
MU research hits on reality of 'contract year'
Professor, student find players do up performance when money's on line.

By CAITLIN SWIECA
Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 2:00 pm

When Albert Pujols put up typically stellar numbers during his 2011 campaign with the Cardinals, it was no surprise to most sports fans. After all, it was the last season of his contract, and conventional wisdom says that players tend to try harder when they know they'll be seeking a payday after the season.

But few would have predicted the decline that Pujols had after signing a huge deal with the Los Angeles Angels. Pujols saw dips in power and average during the 2012 season and struggled even more the next year.

Perhaps the Angels could have foreseen the drop in production if they had access to new research done by MU psychology professor Ken Sheldon and undergraduate student Mark White. The research, published in the journal "Motivation and Emotion," suggests that professional athletes truly do perform better in contract years and that there tends to be a dip in production in the first season of a new contract.

The study looked at three-year statistical periods from the careers of MLB and NBA players, two sports that tend to give out long-term, guaranteed contracts. Sheldon and White used the year before a player's contract year as a baseline then compared that to the contract year and the first year of the player's new contract.

In the NBA, players showed statistically significant improvement in offensive stats — those usually tied to pay increases — in their contract years. Players scored about an extra half-point per game, and player efficiency rating, an all-in-one stat summarizing a player's contribution to a game, increased by an average of 0.5. MLB players' statistics did not significantly change from the baseline year to the contract year.

But for both sports, there was a performance crash in the first year of a new contract. NBA players saw player efficiency ratings decrease by 1.17, and points, rebounds and steals per game all
dropped to below baseline levels. In baseball, batting averages and on-base percentages dropped by around .015, while slugging percentages dipped by .032.

Sheldon said the phenomenon can be explained through psychology.

"This fits with theories of intrinsic motivation undermining," Sheldon said. "Somebody likes to do something, then you start paying them to do it, and it kind of spoils their motivation."

The results support psychological research that suggests players do play better when given an extrinsic motivator, like money. Once they receive the benefit, though, their internal enjoyment of the activity is diminished.

White, a senior psychology student at MU and sports fan, said he got the idea for the study after learning about this effect in Sheldon's class. While the phenomenon has been tested many times in laboratories, White wanted to see whether it held up in the real-world situation of athletes playing for new contracts.

"I was almost surprised that it actually worked out where a lot of these dipped down the year afterward, especially in baseball," White said.

While the information is unlikely to change the practice of giving out lucrative multiyear contracts, it could be of use to general managers.

"I think it's interesting to look at if someone has this crazy year but it's also their contract year," White said. "If I were a GM, I would at least hedge my expectations for what they're going to do the next few years."

MU opens sites for free tax assistance

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 2:00 pm

Starting today, the University of Missouri and MU Extension are opening its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites around the state for residents to get help with their tax returns.
The two MU campus sites, which offer free tax preparation help to households that earn less than $58,000, served nearly 1,500 families last year.

Andrew Zumwalt, an assistant extension professor for financial planning and a member of MU Extension faculty, said in a news release that students who help clients prepare their taxes have gone through IRS training and certification.

MU's VITA sites are at Room 162 in Stanley Hall and Room 005 in Cornell Hall.

The Stanley Hall site will be open from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturdays. The Cornell Hall site will be open from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Mondays.

The service is first come, first served on a walk-in basis.

Zumwalt also noted that Missourians can file their taxes for free at www.myfreetaxes.com/motax.

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OUR TOWN

By Nick Schnelle

Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 2:00 pm

University of Missouri sophomore Lanette Henderson understands the value of a mentor for incoming college students. Had it not been for the Mizzou Black Women’s Initiative, Henderson said she would have left the university to go back home.

“It was very hard for me to transition and adjust to college,” Henderson said. “Because I was a part of MBWI, it made me stay.”

The leadership development program provided by the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center offers academic, social and moral support to black women at the school. The student
organization works as a peer support system whereby upperclasswomen mentor freshmen and sophomores.

Henderson said when studying at a predominantly white institution, the opportunity to be with a group of peers to relate to culturally is a necessity.

The separation from her family in Calumet Park, Ill., a suburb south of Chicago, was difficult to deal with her freshman year, but Henderson said the student organization helped her get back on track and encouraged her to become a student leader on campus.

“My mentor has been a big help to me,” Henderson said. “It taught me to keep going, to keep pushing through, even when times were hard.”

A social work major at school, Henderson is ambitious about giving back and helping others. After graduating, she hopes to involve herself with public policies in the education system and to work with at-risk teens.

“I’m always trying to better myself so I can help someone else out,” Henderson said.

While her schoolwork now limits her participation in the group, Henderson said she will continue to encourage her peers to join.

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