For the first time in five years, Missouri parents and students won’t have to dig deeper into their pockets to cover the cost of tuition at University of Missouri System schools.

System curators on Wednesday voted to maintain tuition rates for in-state undergraduate students on the four campuses. Most students will pay $8,335 for the next academic year.

Students coming from out of state will see tuition go up, though, starting with this summer’s session.

Nonresident undergraduate tuition will increase 3 percent at the Columbia campus and at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla. At the University of Missouri-Kansas City and the University of Missouri-St. Louis, nonresident undergraduate tuition will go up 1.5 percent.

In-state tuition has gone up an average of 2.2 percent every year for the past five years at system schools.

University officials said in-state tuition and fees at all public colleges and universities in Missouri have seen the lowest rate of increase over the past five years of any state.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/01/29/4785477/missouri-curators-freeze-tuition.html#storylink=cpy
Trustees vote to freeze undergraduate tuition at University of Missouri system

By Tim Barker tbarker@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8350

COLUMBIA • The University of Missouri Board of Curators agreed Wednesday to freeze Missouri undergraduate tuition for the 2014-15 school year.

An earlier proposal for a modest tuition increase was set aside in response to Gov. Jay Nixon’s pledge to boost higher education spending by more than $80 million. In exchange, he asked state universities to hold tuition flat.

The board approved the freeze in the first of three days of meetings at the University of Missouri-Columbia campus.

The last time tuition remained flat was four years ago, when Nixon promised to hold state appropriations level if colleges and universities held off raising tuition. At the time, state revenue had been battered by the recession and universities faced potential state cuts of as high as 25 percent.

This time around, curators were being offered the promise of more funding in exchange for holding the line on tuition on the four campuses.

“There are all kinds of reasons to consider this,” said Thomas Richards, the system’s interim vice president for finance.

The original plan to increase tuition by 1.5 percent would have generated $3.8 million. Nixon’s proposal, on the other hand, could bring nearly $21 million to the UM system in terms of core appropriations.

That seemed to make for an easy decision, with curators quickly passing the tuition measure with little discussion.

Graduate students, including those from Missouri, and undergraduates from out of state didn’t fare as well.
Those students will see increases ranging from 1.5 percent to 6 percent. The lower increase applies to several categories, including nonresident undergrad and all graduate tuition at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The highest increase applies only to nonresident graduate tuition at the Missouri University of Science and Technology.

Curators also approved increases in a variety of fees and housing rates.

Now, the system will wait to see how much of Nixon’s plan survives the Legislature, where Republican leaders are using more conservative projections on economic growth.

Nixon’s proposal — shared in his State of the State address — 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.

The STEM funding could add an additional $12 million to the UM System, curators were told.

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**Curators approve flat tuition for in-state undergraduates**

By Ashley Jost

**Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 5:23 pm**

The University of Missouri Board of Curators voted unanimously Wednesday afternoon to approve a freeze in tuition for undergraduate Missouri residents for the 2014-15 academic year.

The vote comes on the heels of recommendations from UM System President Tim Wolfe, who vouched for the tuition freeze to take advantage of a 5 percent state appropriation increase proposed by Gov. Jay Nixon two weeks ago during his State of the State speech.

The appropriation increase, if approved by the General Assembly, would mean a $20.7 million jump in UM core funding. Previously, the curators discussed increasing tuition by the cost of
inflation, now at 1.5 percent, which would bring just less than $10 million coupled with a 1.5 percent inflation increase from the state.

Curators also voted to increase tuition for nonresident undergraduate and resident graduate students. The board approved a 3 percent increase for nonresident undergraduate students at MU and Missouri S&T, and 1.5 percent at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Resident graduate students will pay 1.5 percent more in tuition at each of the four campuses. The changes take effect this summer.

Read more on this story later at www.columbiatribune.com and in Thursday’s Tribune.

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Posted in Education, Local, Politics on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 5:23 pm.

UM Board of Curators freeze in-state undergraduate tuition, add new fees

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 | 9:27 p.m. CST
BY KEVIN MODELSKI, LAURA COLE

COLUMBIA — The University of Missouri System Board of Curators unanimously agreed to freeze tuition for the 2014-15 school year for in-state undergraduates at its meeting Wednesday.

The freeze will keep prices 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. The tuition freeze is the first since the 2010-11 school year.

According to a news release from the UM System, most students in the system will pay $8,335 in tuition for the academic year, which is below the national average of public doctoral institutions.
To make up for the unchanged tuition rates against inflation of 1.5 percent, the curators voted to raise tuition for nonresident undergraduates and all graduate students. At MU, the rates for nonresident undergraduate and graduate students will increase 3 percent per credit hour, while resident graduate students will have to pay an extra 1.5 percent. That increases the credit hour rate for nonresident undergraduates from $752.30 to $774.90 per credit hour, affecting about 29 percent of MU students. In addition to these changes, the MU Law and Medical schools will increase rates by 1.5 percent per credit hour for residents and nonresidents to match inflation. The MU College of Veterinary Medicine will increase its in-state tuition 6 percent per credit hour while out-of-state tuition will increase 2.5 percent per credit hour.

The curators also voted to decrease the out-of-state distant online tuition from $774 to $350 per credit hour. The decrease only applies to classes offered exclusively online. MU Interim Provost Ken Dean said the current rates were not considered competitive and the decrease will bring a 60 percent increase in online enrollment.

Changes in tuition will take effect in the summer 2014 session.

The curators also approved other new fees at Wednesday’s meeting:

- A new fee will be implemented in the MU College of Engineering, which will gradually increase over five years.

In the first year, Missouri residents will pay an extra $30 dollars per credit hour, according to the fee Dean proposed. Nonresidents will pay an extra $70 per credit hour, which will only be applied to courses taken within the College of Engineering. Dean said the fee will generate about $1.5 million in new revenue in its first year and $6 million over five years. The money will be used to hire about 20 new tenure-track faculty, give raises to high-performing faculty and staff and renovate and develop labs and equipment, Dean said.

Dean said the fee is needed because the College of Engineering’s enrollment is growing and the educational costs of engineering majors are greater than many other majors.

- Another new fee will be implemented for MU classes in the College of Arts and Science for the 2014-15 school year. Dean proposed a new fee of $25 per credit hour, which will only apply to classes at and above the 2000 level. The curators
will vote next year whether to freeze or increase the fee. The curators also voted to eliminate arts and science lab fees for all class levels.

The board also voted to increase several existing fees:

- MU undergraduate student activity, facility and health service fees will increase by 1.5 percent, effective fiscal year 2015. Housing will increase by 4 percent, and there will be a 2 percent increase in the dining rate. The housing and dining rate increases are in line with MU’s Residential Life Master Plan, which has about five years left until completion, said Thomas Richards, UM System vice president for finance and treasurer.

- The College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources will increase fees by $2.50 per credit hour, for a total fee of $48.70 per credit hour. This revenue will help address increased demand for experiential learning environments in the college.

- The College of Education will increase fees by $8 per credit hour, for a total fee of $47.60 per credit hour. This revenue will cover the cost of supervising student teachers under the new state-mandated standards requiring more time in experiential learning.

- The School of Health Professions will increase fees by $16 per credit hour, for a total fee of $92.40 per credit hour.

- The School of Journalism will increase fees by $13 per credit hour, for a total fee of $74 per credit hour.

- The School of Nursing will increase undergraduate fees by $3.10, for a total fee of $70 per credit hour. It will increase graduate rates by $4.40, for a total fee of $190 per credit hour.
University of Missouri to hold line on tuition

State residents who pay tuition at the four schools in the University of Missouri system can look forward to flat tuition rates in the coming academic year.

University curators voted Wednesday in Columbia to freeze resident tuition at current levels for the 2015 fiscal year. Most students at the state schools in Columbia, Kansas City, Rolla and St. Louis will pay $8,335 in tuition starting in the fall.

The university says it has raised tuition and fees over the past five years by an annual average of 2.2 percent, compared to 6 percent to other public campuses in surrounding states. Those hikes came amid 34 percent enrollment growth since 2000.

Non-resident tuition will increase by 1.5 percent to 3 percent, with graduate tuition increasing by 1.5 percent.

UM Curators approve tuition freeze

The University of Missouri Board of Curators voted Wednesday to approve a freeze in tuition for undergraduate students for the 2014-15 school year.

The curators went along with a recommendation by university President Tim Wolfe, who vouched for the tuition freeze in order to take advantage of a 5 percent state appropriation increase proposed by Gov. Jay Nixon, the Columbia Daily Tribune reports. The appropriation
increase, if approved by the General Assembly, would be a $20.7 million increase in UM core funding.

The tuition freeze vote comes as the [University of Illinois](https://www.illinois.edu) voted to [raise its tuition this fall](https://www.illinois.edu). The University of Illinois board of trustees approved a 1.7 percent tuition increase this month.

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**UM president on student rape allegation: 'We take this very seriously'**

By Dave Matter dmatter@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8508

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe responds to questions during a news conference on Wednesday Jan. 29, 2014, about the university's plans to appoint an outside independent counsel to investigate the handling of an alleged rape of a Mizzou swimmer. (AP Photo/Columbia Daily Tribune, Don Shrubshell)

**COLUMBIA, Mo. • With an impassioned response to the allegations that rocked his flagship institution last week, University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe gave a voice to his proposed investigation into the rape accusations of former Mizzou swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, who committed suicide in June 2011.**
Five days after ESPN’s “Outside the Lines” reported the story of Menu Courey, who was allegedly sexually assaulted in February 2010 by MU football players, Wolfe met with reporters Wednesday on campus to discuss the independent investigation he later recommended the UM System Board of Curators launch to “look at all matters related to this tragic incident,” Wolfe said.

“It’s unfortunately a tragic situation that’s kind of personal to me because I’m a parent of a female freshman student-athlete myself,” Wolfe said. “What’s important to us at the University of Missouri is the safety of our students. We take this very seriously.”

“What I feel as a parent is one of our students is dead,” he added during a 30-minute news conference. “And I don’t want to feel that anymore. Our goal is to help Sashas of the world and try to give them the necessary mental health support or whatever support they need, for any of our students, in a way that we can never let this happen again.”

Until Wednesday, Mizzou had only addressed the ESPN story with a series of press releases and published email correspondence between the network’s producers and Mizzou’s athletics department. On Monday, the Columbia Police Department announced it had opened a sexual assault case after receiving information from University Police about the alleged assault that occurred 16 months before Menu Courey killed herself while hospitalized in Boston at a treatment center for patients with borderline personality disorder.

ESPN reported that records indicate 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. Mizzou has disputed that Menu Courey also told an athletic department administrator about the rape, a conversation the swimmer had written about in her journal, ESPN reported.

Citing medical privacy laws in its series of press releases, MU has said it didn’t pursue criminal charges upon learning of Menu Courey’s rape allegations in late 2012.

Wolfe, the first representative of the university system to speak publicly about the situation since the story broke Friday, declined to comment on specific points of the investigation. Wednesday night, the Board of Curators approved Wolfe’s recommendation to hire independent legal counsel to investigate MU’s handling of Menu Courey’s case.

“Ms. Courey’s story is very tragic and sad, and our sympathy and prayers are with her family, friends and teammates,” said Curators Chairman Don Downing of Webster Groves. “The board wants to take an independent look at what happened here.”

“Sexual assaults are all too common on college campuses across our country, as President Obama emphasized last week,” Downing added. “We need to do all we can do to address these issues at the University of Missouri and provide appropriate assistance to those who are victimized.”
Once the curators select a firm to handle the investigation, the independent counsel will report back to the board no later than April 11 at its next meeting in Rolla, Mo., with findings and conclusions.

“I believe they will take seriously their responsibility as the Board of Curators,” he said, “in making sure that they (hire) independent counsel — and I stress independent — that’s equipped and has the skills necessary to look at the matters related to Sasha.”

Wolfe, who took over as system president in 2012, said the independent counsel will have “free reign” to investigate everything related to Menu Courey’s case.

“Including me,” he said.

“I cannot envision a wall that they would run into that they can’t get over,” he added. “They are working from the highest authority from a governance standpoint for the University of Missouri System.”

Wolfe declined to answer why Mizzou athletic director Mike Alden has not addressed the situation publicly. Wolfe insisted he has the athletics department’s support in launching the investigation, but asked to comment on Mizzou’s reluctance to address Menu Courey’s allegations outside of press releases, Wolfe said, “I will wait to see what comes back from the investigation and the findings ... and I’ll make some observations (after) that.”

Wolfe has already asked the chancellors at all four of the UM System campuses to review their policies and resources devoted to addressing students with mental health issues and incidents of sexual assault and agreed to spend university system funds to pay for needed improvements.

“I can’t think of a higher priority for me and the rest of the University of Missouri System to truly understand where we are right now,” he said, “and figure out where we can invest further.”
COLUMBIA, Mo., Jan. 29 (UPI) -- University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe said Wednesday the suicide of a swimmer who said she was raped was "tragic" and promised a thorough review.

Wolfe held his first news conference since ESPN ran a story last week on Sasha Menu Courey's alleged rape in 2010 by university football players, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported. He released a statement Sunday saying he was urging the board of curators to launch an independent investigation.

On Monday, the Columbia Police Department announced it was opening a criminal investigation.

"It's unfortunately a tragic situation that's kind of personal to me because I'm a parent of a female freshman student-athlete myself," Wolfe said. "What's important to us at the University of Missouri is the safety of our students. We take this very seriously."

ESPN reported records show Courey told a rape crisis counselor and other school staffers she had been raped. In her journal she said she also reported the assault to an administrator in the athletic department, which the university says did not happen.

Courey, from Toronto, took her life in June 2011 while she was a patient in a Boston psychiatric hospital.
Editorial: Sexual assault victims need support, not condemnation

Sexual assault victims at the University of Missouri-Columbia are better off reporting the crime to the Columbia Police Department than to the university’s rape counseling center if they hope for legal action against the attacker.

But even then, there is no guarantee. The tragic truth is that at Mizzou and elsewhere, colleges and law enforcement aren’t protecting women students.

Those are among the important messages to come out of the heartbreaking suicide in 2011 of 20-year-old Sasha Menu Courey, a Mizzou student and former member of its swimming team.
Sixteen months before her death, Ms. Menu Courey reported a sexual assault to campus counselors, doctors and nurses. She told them that she had been raped by a football player, but she did not report the crime to campus police or Columbia police.

School officials say they did not have enough information to bring the allegation to law enforcement or to investigate under Title IX, the federal law that addresses gender equity in education.

Following a lengthy report by ESPN’s “Outside the Lines” show last Friday, university President Tim Wolfe asked the UM system’s Board of Curators to hire an independent counsel to review the way MU handled the case.

Mr. Wolfe sent an email to the chancellors of the four UM system campuses Sunday saying the review could show “ways in which to improve the handling of such matters in the future.” He asked them to review their sexual assault policies and procedures and to assess the availability of mental health services for their students.

That is exactly what Mr. Wolfe should have done.

The university also is assisting the Columbia Police Department, which has opened an investigation. The accused rapist lived off campus, in the police department’s jurisdiction.

It’s too late to help Ms. Menu Corey but not too late for justice. Mr. Wolfe’s call for action could have a significant impact on how future assault cases are handled by Mizzou and the other schools in the system.

For all of the finger-pointing over who should have, could have, is or was responsible for investigating Ms. Menu Courey’s alleged assault, the problem is far more widespread.

At its root, it’s about a culture on college campuses — and in other hierarchical institutions including the military and the Catholic church. Sexual assault victims are afraid to tell their stories. The problem cannot be blamed on any single factor and should have everyone looking for solutions.

Victims stay silent because they fear they won’t get a fair hearing. They’re concerned their attacker will get the institution’s support — the high-priced attorneys, medical experts and community backing needed to win a case in court, if it even gets to court.

Victims worry that their reputations will be tarnished and their futures destroyed if they challenge the star athlete, the lieutenant colonel, the beloved priest. They’re afraid they won’t be believed, that they will be blamed and that it will be for naught because the authorities won’t do anything, anyway.

For example, in 2012, Michael Dixon, a senior guard on the Mizzou men’s basketball team, was accused of forcible rape. The Columbia Daily Tribune reported that his accuser had told Columbia police that she was
hesitant to report the attack because “people worship Mr. Dixon,” and she worried “they wouldn’t take her seriously, and the school wouldn’t take it seriously.”

Columbia police did not file charges against Mr. Dixon, saying their investigation determined there was insufficient evidence.

Brenda Bethman, director of the Women’s Center at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and head of the school’s Women’s and Gender Studies program, said the situation won’t change until the culture does.

Ms. Bethman said that at UMKC, she has worked to create a climate where victims are comfortable telling their story, don’t fear being censured and are secure their report will not be ignored.

It’s not going to happen soon and it’s not going to be easy, she noted, adding: “I joke that my goal is to put myself out of a job.”

Recognizing the scope of the problem, President Barack Obama last week created a high-level federal task force — including the attorney general and the secretaries of the Education, Health and Human Services and Interior departments — to coordinate enforcement efforts to combat rape on college campuses.

His action was spurred by a report from the White House Council on Women and Girls that showed rapes occur more frequently on campuses than anywhere else. While one in five students has been assaulted, only 12 percent of them report the crime.

The report said that many of the attacks occur at parties, while the victim is drunk, under the influence of drugs, passed out or otherwise incapacitated. Today’s culture has done a terrible job at teaching men and boys to understand that a woman in any of those conditions is unable to provide consent. Sex in those situations is not consensual, no matter how available a woman may seem, no matter how drunk or high her attacker might be. Rape is rape.

Sasha Menu Courey did what few women do when they are frightened, she reported the assault and asked for help. Thanks to the courage of her parents, this very personal crime has a face. For that, women and everyone who cares about them, should be grateful.

Now school administrators, medical professionals, law enforcement officers and the courts must put procedures and laws into place that will protect victims everywhere.
Dodging blame can be a shameless game.

Repeatedly, the University of Missouri has pushed its initial inaction in the alleged rape and then the suicide of Sasha Menu Courey off on the people suffering the most — Menu Courey and her grieving parents.

“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,” said the university’s statement.

Crucial points must be emphasized.

MU did not need the OK of Menu Courey to pursue an allegation of sexual assault.

Nor did the university need the go-ahead of Menu Courey’s parents to begin an investigation under Title IX.

What appears to have been lacking was a strong understanding of the university’s duty to protect all students — not just Menu Courey — from the possibility of a sexual predator operating within the campus community.

And that apparent shrugging off of university responsibility quickly became one of the most overlooked aspects of this complicated and troubling story.

This isn’t just my opinion.

It’s also the view of Nancy Hogshead-Makar: “They have a duty to the entire campus, not just to her, and she’s dead now. So that excuse, if you will, that rationale, no longer holds true.”
The reason universities cannot wait for “that one brave victim,” she said, is that studies have shown that undetected rapists “do it over and over again.”

Hogshead-Makar is in a unique position to know. She is an attorney, a legal expert on compliance with Title IX through her work as the senior director of advocacy for the Women’s Sports Foundation. She is an Olympic champion with three gold medals and one silver in swimming from the 1984 games. She co-wrote “Equal Play: Title IX and Social Change” and has testified before Congress on gender equity in sports.

She is also a rape survivor.

It happened her sophomore year at Duke University. It was near dusk. She was out running when she was attacked, a brutal fight between her and the rapist in the woods. The violence lasted two and a half hours.

Duke University gave her counseling for what was later diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder, she dropped two classes in which finals were nearing and her campus housing was changed. She was redshirted from the swim team, her scholarship saved for when she was ready to return to practice.

“That is what we need to do for all women who are sexually assaulted, whether it was in the woods by a stranger, or in a dorm room by a peer,” she said. “But we don’t. We treat them differently. We blame them.”

Duke’s empathy for a then 19-year-old Hogshead-Makar rescued the future Olympic medalist, mother of three, wife and one of the strongest voices in America for young women’s civil rights.

Hogshead-Makar’s attacker was never caught.

“This is such a teachable moment for all schools and students and their families,” Hogshead-Makar said of the suicide of Menu Courey in June 2011.

The allegation is that in February 2010, Menu Courey was attacked off campus after a night of drinking and after having had consensual sex with one man, but no one else.

“Some rapists need to jump out of a bush to rape,” Hogshead-Makar said. “Others have a strategy of waiting until women are really drunk. Some overpower their victim. This is all rapist conduct.”

The right avenues are being pursued now in Columbia. A police investigation is launched, and MU president Tim Wolfe has requested an independent review of the university’s actions.
But Hogshead-Makar contends MU had notice to proceed with its own investigation — the legal standard that must be met under Title IX — long before ESPN’s “Outside the Lines” wrote extensively of the case last Friday. Hogshead-Makar was consulted on the original reporting by ESPN.

The standard was met by fall 2012 after university officials — not therapists bound by privacy laws — gained access to Menu Courey’s email account through a records request. This was months after Menu Courey had killed herself, ingesting 100 Tylenol. But she had saved a transcript of a rape crisis hotline online chat where she discussed the alleged attack in detail.

Too often, Hogshead-Makar said, allegations that involve athletes are kept to coaching and athletic administrators rather than handled outside those departments in ways that meet obligations under Title IX.

But disciplinary systems set up for all students can also bring complications. Colleges often check bad behavior with the lenient attitude that a young person is learning, growing toward full adulthood. That can be appropriate when the violation is minor, say being caught underage with liquor on campus. But sexual assaults are crimes and need to be understood within that context, she said.

“And sexual assault is a major reason why women interrupt their educational plans,” she said.

As an elite athlete herself, Hogshead-Makar respects the importance swimming played for Menu Courey, a young woman who had previously struggled with mental health issues. A scholarship athlete at a top Division I school is already within the top 2 percent of all high school athletes in the nation, she said.

And there is a need for fairness, justice all around. Young men who are accused have every right to have their names cleared as well. No one deserves rumors tainting a college experience, no matter if they are an athlete or not.

Hogshead-Makar also sees the need for a campaign to let victims of sexual assault know that things can get better, that they will be able to resume their lives, meet career and personal goals. But they have to reach out to find that a massive amount of resources can be available, including getting classes rescheduled, initiating no-contact orders and receiving professional counseling.

Instead, Menu Courey felt shamed.

“We need them to know that it is possible for them to be just fine and they can get help,” Hogshead-Makar said. “Think how different the story could have been had she known.”
COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - University of Missouri curators have agreed to hire an outside law firm to review the school's handling of a former varsity swimmer's 2011 suicide.

The nine-member governing board voted late Wednesday to approve system President Tim Wolfe's request for an independent legal inquiry in the case. No firm has been selected, but the university expects a report to be complete for the next Board of Curators meeting on April 11.

University leaders say they didn't learn about the purported attack until after Menu Courey committed suicide 16 months later. They said they followed the law and didn't have specific knowledge of the incident or a victim to interview. The case has since been referred to Columbia police.
In a regularly scheduled meeting Wednesday in Columbia, the University of Missouri Board of Curators approved system President Tim Wolfe’s request for an independent counsel to investigate the circumstances of former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey’s alleged rape and eventual suicide.

“Ms. Courey’s story is very tragic and sad, and our sympathy and prayers are with her family, friends and teammates,” board Chairman Don Downing said in a news release. “The board wants to take an independent look at what happened here. Separately, our chancellors are promptly reviewing their campus policies and procedures concerning the prevention and reporting of sexual assaults and availability of mental health services, and President Wolfe has rightly committed to devoting additional resources to the extent those policies and procedures are found to be lacking.”

The board’s next step will be to retain an independent firm to conduct a thorough review of Menu Courey’s case.

“Once selected, the independent counsel will report back to the full Board of Curators no later than April 11, 2014, the board’s next meeting in Rolla, with findings and conclusions,” the release said.

Wolfe initially made the request Sunday after an ESPN “Outside the Lines” investigation, which aired earlier that day after being published online Friday, questioned MU’s handling of Menu Courey’s withdrawal from school and the sexual assault allegations that became public after her death.

“Based on the recent events and information that has come to light, I have asked the Board of Curators to take a look at hiring independent, outside counsel to take a look at all matters related to this tragic incident,” Wolfe said during a news conference Wednesday before the Board of Curators met. “Hopefully, from this investigation, we can understand what happened and we can learn from this.”

Wolfe also called on the chancellors at the University of Missouri system’s four campuses — Columbia, Kansas City, St. Louis and Rolla — to come up with recommendations for improving each school’s responsiveness to students in distress and promised resources to help in the training of students and employees “on issues like sexual assault and issues like mental health and how we respond to those in need.”

Wolfe deflected all questions specific to Menu Courey’s case, citing an ongoing Columbia Police Department investigation that started Monday after MU forwarded information gleaned through ESPN’s report.

“I can’t comment on the matters pertaining to Sasha, because of the criminal investigation that is being led by the Columbia Police Department but fully supported by the MU campus and the rest of the MU chain,” Wolfe said.

Wolfe said the goal of the investigation and reviews he was asking for is to create “the safest possible campus environment” for all students and visitors.
“I believe we can learn from this and I believe that based on these learnings, it will help not only the MU campus, but all four of our campuses in how we can better support and proactively help those students that have mental illnesses,” Wolfe said. “… We have made considerable progress and considerable investment in this space, but we can always do better.”

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/01/29/4784874/mu-system-president-says-he-hopes.html#storylink=cpy

University of Missouri board votes to hire outside counsel to investigate handling of Menu Courey case

By Ashley Jost


The University of Missouri Board of Curators voted Wednesday night to hire outside, independent legal counsel to investigate how the university addressed the alleged rape of MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey.

The board will next select and hire a firm to conduct the inquiry, according to a news release distributed following a Wednesday night closed-session meeting. The counsel will report findings no later than April 11 at the curators’ next meeting in Rolla.

The vote comes after a recommendation by University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe, who said in a news conference earlier Wednesday that the counsel would report to curators in part because the counsel might want to interview him about the case.

“Ms. Courey’s story is very tragic and sad, and our sympathy and prayers are with her family, friends and teammates,” board Chairman Don Downing said in a statement. “The board wants to take an independent look at what happened here. Separately, our chancellors are promptly reviewing their campus policies and procedures concerning the prevention and reporting of sexual assaults and availability of mental health services, and President Wolfe has rightly committed to devoting additional resources to the extent those policies and procedures are found to be lacking.”
Downing added that sexual assaults are “all too common” on campuses, as noted in a White House report on sexual assault released last week.

“We need to do all we can do to address these issues at the University of Missouri, and provide appropriate assistance to those who are victimized,” Downing said.

In his news conference, which came before Wednesday’s start of the three-day curators meeting, Wolfe refused to answer specific questions about the criminal investigation into Menu Courey’s reported rape, which is being conducted by the Columbia Police Department.

Wolfe said he didn’t make any recommendations on who the curators should hire.

“What I feel as a parent is one of our students is dead, and I don’t want to feel that anymore,” Wolfe said during the news conference, adding that the UM System’s goal is to help “the Sashas of the world” get mental health support, as well as any other assistance they might need.

Wolfe declined to comment on the ESPN “Outside the Lines” story, published last weekend, that questioned MU’s response to the reported sexual assault of Menu Courey. Wolfe said giving his thoughts on the ESPN story would be a “waste of time.”

The ESPN story brought national attention to the Menu Courey case and was critical of the university’s treatment of the swimmer. She committed suicide in 2011, about 16 months after the alleged rape. MU has said it had no way to know about the rape allegations until long after Menu Courey’s death.

Columbia police are investigating the case because it happened off campus.

UPDATE: UM Curators to hire outside investigator in Menu Courey case

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 | 7:40 p.m. CST; updated 6:35 a.m. CST, Thursday, January 30, 2014

BY BRANDON FOSTER

COLUMBIA — The UM System Board of Curators voted Wednesday to hire an outside firm to investigate MU’s handling of the Sasha Menu Courey situation, as recommended by System President Tim Wolfe.
“Ms. Courey’s story is very tragic and sad, and our sympathy and prayers are with her family, friends and teammates,” Board of Curators Chair Don Downing said in a statement. “The board wants to take an independent look at what happened here.”

Earlier in the day, a horde of journalists brought their video cameras, tape recorders and yellow legal pads from across the state to record the first public words of Wolfe since an ESPN report accusing MU of negligence in response to an alleged sexual assault of a former swimmer.

But it might have been a pause from Wolfe that spoke loudest.

“President Wolfe,” one reporter asked roughly 10 minutes into the press conference, “do you think that the university failed Sasha?”


“What I feel as a parent,” he said, “is one of our students is dead. And I don’t want to feel that anymore.”

Wolfe’s recommendation to have independent legal counsel look into matters was approved by the UM System Board of Curators during a closed-session vote Wednesday night. The board has not yet hired the firm to conduct the study.

"Separately, our chancellors are promptly reviewing their campus policies and procedures concerning the prevention and reporting of sexual assaults and availability of mental health services, and President Wolfe has rightly committed to devoting additional resources to the extent those policies and procedures are found to be lacking,” Downing said.

In his afternoon meeting with the press, Wolfe also gave pause to any questions asked about the specifics of MU’s response to the alleged sexual assault. The system president refused to comment on at least six queries that inched close to the case, saying he "can't comment on the matters pertaining to Sasha because of the criminal investigation that is being led by the Columbia Police Department."

Wolfe began the conference by saying the topic hits home because his daughter, Madison Wolfe, is a freshman collegiate athlete.

Video of the press conference is available here.
Here’s what Wolfe did say:

- The independent counsel gives MU the “best possibility of having a true understanding of the events that surround this situation.” The counsel will have unobstructed access, including issues pertaining to Wolfe himself.

- The issues of whether medical staff should have more liberty to inform authorities about potential assaults or whether the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) needs reformation to better pursue potential assaults will both be on the table. However, Wolfe said the chances of HIPAA reform passing are low.

- Mental health awareness needs a boost both on UM System campuses and across the nation. “We do have a healthy environment, but we’re not where we need to be,” he said. “We will never be where we need to be. This is in the category of a never-ending journey.”

What Wolfe did not say:

- Why athletics director Mike Alden has remained mum thus far. “All I can say is Mike is in full support,” he said. He also said he has had “complete cooperation” from the athletics department.

- Wolfe said he does not agree with accusations of a dangerous culture persisting at MU that allows sexual assaults to occur. “I will not admit that,” he said.

- What the timeline for an independent investigation will be, though, was cleared up a bit in the press release from the Board of Curators. That statement said that when a firm is selected, it will report its findings and conclusions to the board "no later than April 11, 2014," which is the date of the board’s next meeting. In the afternoon, Wolfe said it was not possible for him to “project out” but assured that he “can’t think of a higher priority right now for me and the rest of the University of Missouri System.”
Letter to the Editor: Nothing has changed on college campuses

My heart goes out to the parents of the Mizzou rape victim who committed suicide. But nothing has changed. I once wrote a book called "Talking Back to Sexual Pressure." In the warnings about acquaintance rape, I quoted the Post-Dispatch that 400 acquaintance rapes had been reported during 1989, 75 percent by fraternity members (" 'Date rape' stirring debate at Mizzou,” April 23, 1989.) Rape was so prevalent that the Mizzou “Little Sister” program, where fraternity boys were supposed to welcome new students and treat them with respect, was suspended. The reason was the number of rapes of Little Sisters at fraternity parties.

There is an entire book called "Fraternity Gang Rape." The next highest rate of rape on campuses is from football players.

Amazingly, there are still many females trusting enough to think they can go to someone’s apartment or frat house and be treated like a human being. If any of your readers think that drinking, dressing in clothes the viewer thinks are sexy or going to someone’s home justifies rape, you’re sick. I know many fine men who would never dream of forcing sex onto another person. But many males talk about females as if this person’s precious body is a ball game.

Mothers and fathers, correct your sons when you hear any disrespect or joking about these things. Correct that impression in TV or movies. Wake up and educate your sons.

Elizabeth Powell • St. Louis County
COLUMBIA, Mo. — **University of Missouri Libraries officials are trying to decide what to do with about 600,000 books damaged by mold at an off-campus storage site.**

Staff discovered the problem in October at Subtera, an underground storage site in north Columbia, Libraries Director Jim Cogswell said. A health and safety officer reported last week that the mold was not a type that endangered public health, The Columbia Daily Tribune reported (http://bit.ly/1jILYhw ).

Cogswell said it's likely that fewer than half the books will be saved because it would cost $3 per volume to remove the mold — a tab of about $1.8 million. The goal is to save books published before 1870, Cogswell said, although he wasn't sure how many books that would be.

"We have a self-insurance fund, but there is around three-quarters of a million dollars in there," Cogswell said.

The university puts $100,000 a year into the fund. In the last five years, two mold blooms in on-campus collections — one in the journalism library and one in the health science library — cost $100,000 to fix. The library has stored books off-campus for the six years because the main library ran out of space, Cogswell said.

After the books have been cleaned, they'll be moved to another facility. Some can be stored in the university's Library Depository but staff members aren't sure how many.
"We are in this predicament because we had to find a cheap alternative," 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."

In the past, the library had a preservation officer who would have helped prevent mold problems by monitoring the collections, Cogswell said, but that position was cut several years ago for budget reasons.

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**Mold Endangers 600,000 Books at U. of Missouri**

January 30, 2014

About 600,000 books from the library of the University of Missouri at Columbia -- stored at an off-campus facilities -- have been damaged by mold, *The Columbia Daily Tribune reported*. The university plans to remove the mold from some of the books, but the high cost of that process (about $3 per book) probably means that all of the books can't be saved.

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**Actor, author Hill Harper honors MLK in speech**

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 | 11:05 p.m. CST
BY CASEY NEIGHBOR

COLUMBIA — The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. once said everyone is tied together in a single garment of destiny. Hill Harper heard that message, meshed it with his own and
brought it to Columbia in hopes of inspiring young people to be courageous and proactive.

"I think the biggest obstacle facing young people today is themselves because they've been told their whole lives that they can't change the world, that what they've been handed is what they have to accept, which just isn't true," Harper said.

*During his speech, Harper spoke about living with courage and understanding connections to one another. He was invited by the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative at MU to speak in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Wednesday evening at the Missouri Theatre.*

Harper is a best-selling author, actor and youth advocate. He graduated from Brown University and earned a graduate degree from Harvard University. He has acted on television series "CSI: New York" and is the creator of his own foundation, Manifest Your Destiny, which encourages young people to realize their potential.

He spoke to a full room about applying King's message in the modern world.

"We need to find the spirit and energy of Dr. King, and it needs to rub off on us so that we aren’t ignorant of those who need our care," Harper said.

MU freshman Haven Morris came to see Harper speak because of his positive effect on today's youth.

"I came because I've followed his organization, Manifest Your Destiny, and I really like the message that he gives to young kids," Morris said.

Harper said everyone in the world is tied together and equally responsible for both its successes and its failures. By challenging his listeners to expand their immediate circle of care, he hopes to minimize ignorance and inspire change.

He specifically said people in prison are in the deepest need of care and attention. He said that if King were still alive, he would be most concerned about the high levels of incarcerated people in the U. S. today.

"I believe if Dr. King were here today he would be leading marches to protest the incarceration rate," Harper said. "Poverty, not race, links together incarcerated people. We should be ashamed of our criminal justice system in this country, and we are all to blame."
Helping people realize they are all a part of a bigger picture is just one of Harper's messages. As a youth advocate, he speaks to young people about reaching their potential and living without fear.

Harper is quick to note that living a courageous life like King's is not about living without fear, but instead turning that fear into a positive change.

"It's about knowing you're afraid and doing it anyway," he said.

Burglaries increase over MU winter break period

Total number of break-ins reported in 2013 is down significantly from 2012.

By Alan Burdziak

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 1:14 pm Comments (1)

The number of burglaries during the University of Missouri's winter break increased 45 percent compared to last year even though the total number of break-ins for 2013 was down from the previous year, according to the Columbia Police Department.

Between Dec. 14 and Jan. 20, 96 burglaries were reported in Columbia. That included 75 residential burglaries, 15 commercial burglaries and six burglaries in other classifications. From Dec. 15, 2012, to Jan. 21, 2013, there were a total of 66 burglaries — 59 at residential properties and six business break-ins.

For calendar year 2013, there were 703 burglaries, down from 784 reported in 2012 and 798 in 2011. The 2011 and 2012 numbers were up from 552 in 2010 and 692 in 2009.

Columbia police Sgt. Joe Bernhard said the biggest factor in the increase in burglaries from 2010 to 2011 — and the overall rise over the past five years — is Columbia’s population growth. Columbia’s population at the 2010 Census was 108,500. The latest estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau is 113,225 in 2012.
Even with the population increase, crime overall is going down, as is the crime rate, Bernhard said. The department is expected to release overall data on crimes, verified by the Missouri State Highway Patrol, on Thursday.

Police track holiday burglaries because students leave their dorms, apartments or homes for weeks at a time over the semester break. Every year, the time period is based on when the fall semester ends and the winter semester begins. It has been 35 days on average over the past five years.

Burglary clearance rates are low. Only eight percent of burglaries were solved in 2013, down from 12 percent in 2012, Bernhard said. In 2012, the national burglary clearance rate was 12 percent, he said. That is the most recent year in which data is available on national clearance rates.

Bernhard said clearance rates for burglaries are lower than for violent crimes for several reasons. First, crimes against people take precedence over property crimes. Second, most burglaries don’t have an eyewitness nor do people record the serial number for most property that is stolen. Other reasons also include the lack of physical evidence.

“A lot of times on burglaries you can catch a guy and make a burglary case on him, but you can’t tie the other burglary cases to him even though you suspect him,” Bernhard said.

Though relatively few burglaries are solved, police do have ways to try to prevent them from happening, Bernhard said. The department offers seminars on crime prevention and uses social media to offer tips, such as securing buildings and valuables.

Police proactively patrol areas that are known to be targeted or, especially during semester breaks, where there is a large concentration of student housing, Bernhard said.

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Posted in Crime, Local on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 1:14 pm.
COLUMBIA — More homes and businesses were burglarized during the 2013 holiday season than in any of the previous five years, according to a Columbia Police Department release.

A total of 96 burglaries were reported between Dec. 14 and Jan. 20, according to the release. In 2012, the Police Department recorded 66 burglaries between Dec. 15, 2012, and Jan. 21, 2013.

However, the total number of burglaries in 2013 decreased in comparison to the previous two years, according to the release. In 2013, 703 burglaries were reported, compared to 784 in 2012, a 12 percent decline. In 2011, there were 798 burglaries reported.

During winter break, 75 of the burglaries were residential, 15 were commercial and 6 were classified as "other", which take place in an unattached garage or shed, according to the release.

The Police Department began keeping reports about break-ins that occur over the winter break in 2009. The department takes a closer look at holiday periods in general as many university students leave their Columbia residences to visit their hometowns, said Sgt. Joe Bernhard, Columbia Police Department public information officer.

The department tends to see an increase in burglaries reported during breaks from academic sessions. But it is hard to pinpoint why the increase in burglaries during breaks might increase from year to year, Bernhard said.

"Maybe several burglars just got released from prison, maybe more students had their doors unlocked — it could be a variety of factors," he said.

The department increases the number of police patrolling the areas heavily populated by students when universities aren’t in regular academic sessions, Bernhard said.

Bernhard attributes the overall decrease in burglaries to crime prevention campaigns the Police Department held in 2013. Police went door to door handing out informational fliers, provided security tips through social media and installed a sign on Bearfield Road reminding residents to lock their doors.
Student-run SafeTrek app gains popularity

By Marek Makowski

When Samantha Green was a freshman, she would study at Ellis Library late into the night, and after leaving, she would begin a hurried walk to the parking garage.

Green had no comfort in walking alone in the dark, and she called her parents, friends — whoever came to mind.

“I think that the biggest thing for me is that extra feeling of security that could help in emergency situations,” she said.

Zach Beattie, a senior studying business administration and a man who knows no fear of failure, created a new security net which soon replaced Green’s calls.

Last October, Beattie launched SafeTrek, a mobile phone application in which a user holds down a button when he or she feels unsafe. If the user releases the button, police are notified after 10 seconds and can track the user via GPS coordinates.

False alarm? Type in the preset four-digit PIN number and the alert is canceled.

“We wanted it to be extremely simple,” Beattie said. “You open it up, there’s a brief tutorial, you hold the button, and when it’s done, you enter your PIN.”

Beattie has worked for New Student Programs in past years at MU, and he was frequently asked how to make campus a safer environment for students, Students responded that the campus’ blue light emergency phone system, in which people can press a button for help at various blue light towers, would work, but Beattie saw flaws in the costly system. It cost $65,000 per year.

“The more you think about it, it’s not really that practical to press the emergency button,” he said. “Do you keep running? Do you stay there?”

Beattie then sifted through The Maneater’s archives and realized that the blue lights were rarely used, anyway. His solution, SafeTrek, was conceived at the SEC Exchange in January 2013 and born in May 2013 when he collaborated with now-senior Natalie Cheng and then-senior Zach Winkler in the Reynolds Journalism Institute Tech Showcase.

Teams had to create the best Windows 8 phone application and, with Winkler developing the app and his partners planning the business side of things, Beattie’s team won.
Since the launch of the application, the trio has expanded to a larger team that includes former Missouri Students Association President Nick Droege. The program has also grown as it has garnered more than 5,000 downloads.

Last week, Beattie and the makers of SafeTrek sold the $2 application, which runs on iPhone and Android, for free. But that’s only a glimpse of the vision SafeTrek’s makers carry.

“The ultimate goal in the app isn’t just the downloads for users,” Beattie said. “It’s so we can create heat maps of cities of where people feel unsafe.”

Since it launched the app, the SafeTrek team has worked alongside local police departments to create a complement to the application: a police dashboard. When the application is used, locations are marked and tracked on the dashboard. After a steady group of people uses SafeTrek, police departments and the company can see which locations are making people feel insecure.

After that, they can work together to find the problem and solve it, improving peace and safety. It’s innovation rethinking age-old concepts of security, technology’s mark on yet another facet of society.

“If you have a good developer, they could probably sit down in a couple weeks and recreate our app,” Beattie said. “That’s why we think the data is more valuable than the app itself. Where we have value is we now have a user base who’s using it. That’s what can carry us down the road.”

SafeTrek is also moving forward geographically. It’s trying to differentiate with a focus on college campuses, but it’s also targeting large cities in the midwest: Kansas City, St. Louis and Chicago. Beattie said the team is trying to have people manage the data for each city.

For a pair of weeks in the winter, Green, now a first-year law student, interned with a federal judge at the Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse in downtown St. Louis. Green came to work early in the morning and stayed until the night, making her way from metro stop to metro stop.

Her surroundings this time were more unfamiliar and she was more wary of them, so she turned to her cellphone. Instead of her past tactics, though, she used SafeTrek.

“Nine times out of 10, I don’t feel the need to use it,” said Green, who met Beattie and Droege through MSA. “For that one instance (though), it’s nice to have it in my pocket. Even if I’m just kind of feeling unsafe, I have it. And if I have it, why not use it?”
Muslim students lack designated prayer space at MU

By Elizabeth Loutfi

When sophomore Adam Mefrakis came to MU, one of the problems he had was finding a space where he would pray.

With no designated spot for Muslim students to pray on campus, Mefrakis would make the trip to The Islamic Center of Central Missouri, located at the intersection of Fifth and Locust streets downtown — the only designated Muslim prayer space in Columbia.

“I didn’t know too many other people,” Mefrakis said. “It took me a while to start making it a habit on campus.”

Mefrakis, now an education officer for the Muslim Student Organization, works the MSO desk in the Center for Student Involvement and uses this space to pray with the rug folded neatly beneath his desk.

MU’s campus includes the A.P Green Chapel, St. Thomas More Newman Center and Baptist Student Union — which accommodate Christian students, who make up the majority of the MU student population — and there is Mizzou Hillel for Jewish students, who make up approximately 700 students in the undergraduate population.

There are approximately 500 Muslim students at MU, graduate student Aamer Trambu said.

Last year, Four Front Minority Student Leaders Council met with former Chancellor Brady Deaton and several members of MU’s minority groups to discuss the potential addition of an interfaith prayer space that could be used by Muslim students and other minority religions on campus, Four Front Co-Chairman Anthony Simpson said.

“There are some things that we can do to be more inclusive and acknowledge (minority religions),” Simpson said.

Islam asks Muslims to follow a prayer schedule of praying five times per day in the direction of Mecca, the Holy City of Islam.

Each prayer is named and performed at certain times during the day. Fajr is performed in the morning, Dhuhr at noon, Asr in the afternoon, Maghrib at sunset and Isha in the evening.
If a Muslim student is on campus from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., he or she might need to pray two to three times on campus in a clean and relatively quiet environment, MSO President Farah El-Jayyousi said. Finding a place that fulfills these requirements on campus and is easily accessible is difficult, especially for new students.

MSO was founded in the 1970s to serve the Muslim community on campus, to educate the general community about Islam and to eliminate stereotypes, El-Jayyousi said. The organization meets twice a week in the Multicultural Center and is made up of approximately 50 Muslim students.

El-Jayyousi, a junior, has attended MSO meetings since her freshman year. She said she still sees stereotyping against Muslims on MU’s campus.

“Sometimes it’s not necessarily overt … people might be hesitant to sit next to me in class or talk to me as much,” El-Jayyousi said. “It’s a historical bias in the West that goes back centuries, but more recently it has a lot more to deal with media representation of Muslims.”

The MSO education board is currently organizing its annual spring conference, which attracts more than 100 students and community members. While it mostly caters to Muslim students, interested individuals of all religions attend, Mefrakis said.

For the last three years, the conference has been part of MSO’s push for an inclusive social environment for Muslim students and further education for other groups on campus and in Columbia.

Four Front’s discussion with Deaton inspired Trambu, who served as MSO’s 2012-13 vice president. He called a meeting last year with Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for Student Affairs, three weeks after the discussion.

MSO currently provides a list of unofficial campus prayer spaces for Muslim students to use between classes. These spaces include the A.P. Green Chapel, Ellis Library, Women’s Center rooms, empty conference rooms and the residence halls.

“(Scroggs) said she would look into the chapel and see if it could be made amenable to accommodate Muslim prayer,” Trambu said. “In the last communication I had with her, I requested if S30 Memorial Union (the room below the chapel) could be assigned as a multi-faith prayer space.”

Although there are only 50 Muslim students in MSO, the hundreds of other Muslim students attending MU might not know about this list.

“When I joined MU, I was surprised they did not have a multi-faith prayer room,” Trambu said, “Colleges and universities across North America have such spaces where Muslims can walk in and pray their daily prayers or join other Muslims in a congregation during the prayer times.”
This year, an interfaith prayer space is not a major discussion point for Four Front or MSO, but it is not entirely off the table.

“We’re humans. We’re people. We have obligations and deadlines, and we are students first,” Simpson said. “And so it sucks to table something like this to school work, … but it doesn’t mean that (we’re) not thinking about it.”

Four Front and MSO are still very much in support of an interfaith prayer space. El-Jayyousi imagines it as a prayer space like the one she saw at an airport in Amsterdam. The room was carpeted and was furnished with prayer mats, meditation blocks and religious texts.

“Something like that, with a few pews or chairs, would be best for our campus in order to be more accommodating for people of different faiths, or even someone who doesn’t necessarily subscribe to a certain faith but would like a quiet place to go meditate,” El-Jayyousi said.

Both Trambu and Simpson believe MU could be more accommodating to minority groups on campus with providing information or interfaith spaces.

“It’s just finding the most effective way … to reach students whose religion doesn’t necessarily align with the religious centers on campus,” Simpson said, “Maybe (Four Front should have) an open discussion where we (can hear) from the voices of the people who would utilize it.”

Q: WHERE DO INSECTS GO IN THE WINTER?

By DEANNA LANKFORD, KATHRYN INGERSLEW and TAMRA REALL of MU’s Office of Science Outreach

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 2:00 pm

A: "Insects have unique ways of surviving during the coldest months of the year. Some insects survive as eggs laid in the fall and hatch in the spring. Others survive as immatures and burrow into the ground or remain within leaf litter on the forest floor. And still others migrate to warmer climates," said Kathryn Ingerslew, a University of Missouri master's student.
Unlike mammals or birds, insects cannot generate body heat internally and instead rely on outside heat sources to avoid freezing. Many adult insects cannot survive in our cold winter climate. So, before winter sets in, insects such as the monarch butterfly migrate thousands of miles to warmer climates. Bees stay warm by clustering together and vibrating in their hive. Some other adult insects burrow into leaf litter, the soil or even try to come inside your house.

"Insects are very interesting to study because they live everywhere on Earth. For example, ice crawlers — resembling roaches and crickets — live at high elevations on glaciers in the Northwestern U.S. and western Canada. Ice crawlers are adapted to very cold climates, and their bodies contain an antifreeze-like substance, which prevents freezing within their body tissues," Ingerslew noted.

Although you can't see them, there are insects all around you, even in winter! Insects are very common, with nearly 1 million insect species identified and many yet to be discovered. When you go outside in the winter, enjoy the view without insects around you. But know that in just a few months, when it starts getting warmer, they will be back!

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Posted in Editorial Archive on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 2:00 pm.