University presidents face questions about performance-based funding

Wednesday, February 12, 2014 | 2:58 p.m. CST
BY ABBY JOHNSTON

JEFFERSON CITY — Institutional presidents from Missouri’s 13 public universities gathered Tuesday afternoon to defend their school’s statistics on retention, loan default rates and graduation rates.

With statistics from each school, Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, questioned lawmakers to seek more accountability for performance-based funding.

Sen. David Pearce, R-Warrensburg, brought SB 492 to the Senate last week, which would codify an existing performance-based funding model for public universities. Under the proposed bill, 90 percent of new money appropriated to schools would be awarded based on five performance criteria set by the universities.

The representative body for Missouri’s public institutions, the Council on Public Higher Education, unanimously supported the current funding model last June, but a still-skeptical Schaefer still had questions for the presidents.

One by one, presidents faced the Senate panel and a standing-room only crowd to field inquiries about their university’s unique role among other public institutions.

Legislators praised UM System President Tim Wolfe, who spoke for all four UM campuses, for MU’s work as the state’s flagship land-grant university and Missouri S&T’s focus on STEM subjects. Wolfe emphasized that the Columbia campus serves as a resource not only for the other three institutions, but for all Missourians.
"The role of Columbia as the flagship land-grant institution is to provide the highest quality education possible, but also work at fulfilling its mission of reaching out to all 6 million Missourians," Wolfe said.

Schaefer questioned Wolfe specifically on the number of out-of-state students enrolled at MU, saying he believes that determining a university's national draw should be a budgetary consideration. Wolfe said the incoming freshman class was one of the largest out-of-state enrollments that the campus has seen. As of fall 2013, 28.6 percent of MU's student population were out-of-state students.

Wolfe expressed understanding for tough budgetary decisions, but pointed out that a long-term plan is necessary for funding higher education.

"That's the biggest challenge that we've got in this state. What are our priorities from a higher education standpoint? If we really knew those, then we could fund appropriately," Wolfe asked. "That's the challenge I think that we collectively have is figuring out what those priorities are so that can influence the appropriate amount of funding to the appropriate institution."

Missouri Lawmakers Urged To Put Minimum Wage To Vote

AP | by DAVID A. LIEB

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Low-wage workers described how they often must skip meals to make ends meet as they urged Missouri lawmakers Tuesday to let voters decide whether to increase the state's minimum wage to $10 an hour.

Missouri's minimum wage currently stands at $7.50 an hour — 25 cents more than the federal minimum — and is adjusted annually for inflation under the terms of a state law passed by voters in 2006.
Legislation by Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, D-St. Louis, would raise the state's minimum wage to $10 an hour in 2015 and continue to adjust it annually thereafter based on changes in a cost-of-living index. If approved by the Legislature, the measure would go on the November ballot.

The proposal is a longshot in the Republican-led Legislature, where many lawmakers have expressed concerns about the effect of a wage hike on businesses. But supporters turned in strong numbers for the hearing before the Senate Small Business, Insurance and Industry Committee. The panel took no vote on the bill.

The group Missouri Jobs for Justice also has filed a potential initiative petition to get a minimum wage increase on the ballot. But director Lara Granich said Tuesday that supporters aren't gathering petition signatures and are instead hoping the Legislature will place a wage hike before voters.

Patrick Leeper, a fast-food restaurant worker from University City, told senators he eats as much as he can while at work because he often cannot afford other meals. He said he sometimes walks more than an hour as part of his journey to work to avoid the cost of transportation.

"As far as eating, a 50 cent Honey Bun or 50 cent Nutty Buddy or a pack of ramen noodles is like steak — get what you can get," Leeper said.

**India Bloom, a student at the University of Missouri-Columbia, said she works about 30 hours a week while taking a full course load and often has to choose between paying a utility bill or eating. One of her jobs is at a campus dining hall, where she can eat at a discounted cost of 69 cents.**

"There have been plenty of weeks where that was my only meal every day," Bloom said. "I can barely afford to scrape by, and I live paycheck by paycheck every single month."

Economics Professor Allen MacNeill, of Webster University in St. Louis, said a minimum wage could help the economy because low-wage workers are likely to spend the additional money. He described a $10 minimum wage as "quite moderate" — essentially setting the standard at a little less than it would have been if a federal 1968 minimum wage had been regularly adjusted for inflation.

Lobbyists for a variety of business groups testified against the measure.

David Overfelt, whose clients include the Missouri Grocers Association and Missouri Retailers Association, said a higher minimum wage could force some employees out of the workforce as businesses become choosier about whom to keep on their payrolls.

"This economy is tough, I understand that," Overfelt said. "This type of an increase could make it even tougher for the people with the lowest skills."
Jay Atkins, an attorney for the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said he worked numerous minimum-wage jobs at restaurants and other places before he graduated from college. He rejected implications that people are stuck in low-wage jobs.

"The idea that there was something better out there was a motivating factor in my life," Atkins said.

Schaefer explores ways to save higher education dollars in committee hearing

Nixon has offered a funding increase.

By Rudi Keller

[Image 186x529 to 426x594]

Jefferson City — Missouri has 13 four-year universities under nine governing boards. During the Senate Appropriations Committee hearing Tuesday on higher education spending, Chairman Kurt Schaefer suggested repeatedly that one of those numbers is too large.

Schaefer, R-Columbia, said he's not thinking about closing campuses, but he does want to consolidate administration. A new budget emphasis to reward schools that succeed on performance measures led Schaefer to zero in on those that do not.

"I think shared governance is a concept that a lot of other states have embraced to reduce costs," Schaefer said after the hearing. "I believe it will save costs, both in administration as well as procurement."

Gov. Jay Nixon proposed an average budget increase of 5 percent for four-year state universities. The money was allocated using a model that rewards performance, with Lincoln University one of two schools receiving a 3.1 percent boost and the University of Missouri System among five receiving a 5.2 percent increase. Lincoln met three of five performance goals; the UM System met all five of its performance goals.
Discussions of revamping higher education governance have occurred on and off for more than 30 years. Schaefer is trying to push his views through the annual budget process. Paul Wagner, director of the Council on Public Higher Education, said he is comfortable with having that debate as part of budget discussions.

"The political culture in Missouri is for local control, so the legislature really doesn't have a lot of involvement in higher education aside from the budget process," Wagner said. "So, to the extent that's where public higher education and the legislature really intersect, that is as good a place as any."

Schaefer said he's looking for new ways to determine funding for each school rather than just providing an increase in base support. The UM System and Truman State University are very selective schools providing a high-quality education, he said.

During Lincoln University President Kevin Rome's appearance, Schaefer focused on graduation rates at the Jefferson City school. "Dollars are scarce, and how do we make sure the dollars we spend go to benefit the most students?" Schaefer asked.

"That is exactly the conversation we are having at Lincoln: What is our niche," Rome said.

When UM System President Tim Wolfe sat before the committee, Schaefer and other members emphasized the rapid growth at the school and whether Missouri is doing enough for the school.

The university, Wolfe said, has taken steps similar to what Schaefer wants for all of higher education — it has revamped its method of allocating money for each campus based on need, not what the campus has traditionally received.

"That is the challenge we have, to figure out appropriate funding for each institution," he said.

As he discussed each school's budget in the afternoon, Schaefer occasionally returned to a theme of the morning session. He questioned why students of Western Governors University, an online school, were eligible for Access Missouri grants, a need-based program available only to students at public and private schools in the state.

Western Governors was declared an in-state school in an executive order from Nixon. The state provided a $4 million Community Development Block Grant for the school to establish an office in the state.

Wolfe, asked after his appearance whether he had any issues with the way the state has handled Western Governors, said he did not.

The school targets working-age students who can advance quickly based on their experience, Wolfe said. The goal is a better-educated populace, Wolfe said, "and I am all for that. So if dollars are available for that purpose and we become a more educated citizenry, I am fine with that."
Western Governor's University students now eligible for in-state financial aid, lawmakers voice concern

By Alex Stuckey astuckey@post-dispatch.com 573-556-6186

JEFFERSON CITY • The 1,000 Missourians attending Western Governor's University will never enter a classroom during their educational tenure. They'll never even step foot on a brick-and-mortar campus. Yet, an executive order signed last year by Gov. Jay Nixon makes the online only university an in-state institution. Therefore, their students are eligible for some in-state financial aid.

The university's in-state status was news to members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, who discovered this fact at their Tuesday hearing.

"Rather than come to the General Assembly, the governor just does an executive order -- that's a novel idea," Committee Chairman Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, said Tuesday upon hearing the news.

Specifically, these 1,000 students are eligible for Access Missouri grants, a need-based program available only to students at public and private schools in the state.

After the university was declared an in-state school, it received a $4 million community block grant from the state to establish an office in Clayton -- its only physical presence in the state.
Schaefer is concerned this executive order sets a precedent for other universities not physically located in Missouri to be eligible for in-state financial aid.

"A flood gate has been opened for an unknown number of institutions not located in Missouri to get Access," Schaefer said.

LeRoy Wade, Higher Education Deputy Commissioner, said this likely wouldn't be a problem. The university targets a specific niche: working age people who can advance through the program at their own pace. It costs 6,000 a year to attend Western Governor's University.

Borderline personality disorder: Sasha Menu Courey represents one of many

Wednesday, February 12, 2014 | 6:01 p.m. CST

Sasha Menu Courey  |  PHOTO COURTESY MIKE MENU AND LYNN COUREY
BY MARY RYAN

COLUMBIA — Anger one minute, then sadness, then agitation — emotions change unpredictably for people living with borderline personality disorder.

About one in 20 to 25 people are living with the disorder, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Sasha Menu Courey, the former MU student and swimmer who committed suicide in June 2011 and whose story recently came to national attention, was one of those people. Up to 80 percent of those living with borderline personality disorder will have suicidal thoughts, according to the National Institute of Mental Health; 4 percent to 9 percent actually kill themselves.

Borderline personality disorder is a relatively newly identified mental disorder, first diagnosed in 1980. It is typically characterized by impulsive or reckless behavior, unstable relationships and difficulty regulating emotions.
Eric Fertuck, who holds a doctorate in psychology and is an associate professor at the City University of New York, defined patients' tendency to swiftly changing moods as emotion instability.

"They (the patients) can very rapidly change from feeling angry to feeling despondent and sad to feeling anxiety," Fertuck said. "This can happen within minutes or hours."

Often, the changes in mood and emotion manifest themselves in personal relationships.

"People with BPD can fluctuate with their view of people," Fertuck said. "One minute they can see them as a savior. ... If that person disappoints them, then that view can flip, and they can see them as an enemy."

Any sort of emotion impacts people living with borderline personality disorder intensely, said Mary Kelley, family support coordinator for the National Alliance on Mental Illness-Missouri.

"It is the emotional equivalent of a burn victim," Kelley said. "They have no emotional skin."

Before his daughter was diagnosed 2011, Mike Menu had never heard of borderline personality disorder. He began learning about the disorder while Menu Courey was receiving treatment at McLean Hospital in Boston in April 2011.

"I remember writing down the information I was getting about validation and communicating effectively with a loved one," Menu said. "It is so easy to make this worse with borderline personality disorder. ... Everything family and friends do — even with the best of intentions — can make things worse."

Menu knows firsthand how difficult it is to cope with someone who has borderline personality disorder. For people living with the disorder, even normally comforting comments made by loved ones can cause pain.

"If a kid says something negative about himself or herself, the parents' first response is to say 'Oh honey, don’t say those things about yourself,'" Menu said. "They say it with the best intentions, meaning that they feel bad that they feel that way, but what the child hears is ‘How you feel is wrong.’"
What parents should say instead is: "It must be so difficult and hard to feel that way," he said. "They shouldn't tell them that they shouldn't feel that way, just that it is hard to feel that way."

"You have to connect with them and validate that way," he said.

**Misconceptions**
Because of the relative newness of the disorder, not much is known about what triggers it. Some studies, such as one published in the *British medical journal The Lancet in 2004*, suggest that while borderline personality disorder can be triggered by environmental factors, such as a chaotic family situation or an assault, people's genetic makeup may increase their risk of developing the disorder.

Menu Courey wrote in her journal and told several people that she'd been sexually assaulted. Columbia Police recently [began an investigation into the alleged assault.](#)
Her father stressed how important it is to make the environment around all people — not just those living with borderline personality disorder — accepting.

"It's about just slowing down to observe our emotions and learning to communicate more effectively," he said.

Borderline personality disorder is a fickle illness. Because some symptoms look so much like other disorders, such as bipolar disorder, major depression or anxiety disorders, Fertuck said, it is often difficult for professionals to diagnose.

"With bipolar disorder, the mood changes are not as rapid — someone will be depressed for several weeks, and then they'll be feeling manic, on top of the world," Fertuck said. "People with BPD tend to not have the really elevated moods; they tend to fluctuate between the negatives emotions."

While not being able to diagnose someone with the disorder can lead to years without proper treatment, the more devastating side of not understanding borderline personality disorder is when the people living with it themselves are not understood.

"It's a sort of blame game," Menu said. "What a lot of people will say is that (the person with the disorder is) very difficult, manipulative and selfish."
He used an analogy to the terminally ill cancer patient who, days before dying, shows some anger. "If you are in excruciating pain, you don’t really care if you show some anger," he said. That's how a person with borderline personality disorder feels at times, though the pain is emotional. And the outward signs of that are often misunderstood, he said.

Finding help
As recently as 10 to 20 years ago, few therapists knew what to do with a person diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, Kelley said. Since then, the outlook for those living with the disorder has changed dramatically. New treatments and better understanding of the disorder have improved recovery expectations.

"The prognosis is, for some people, actually quite good," Fertuck said. "With the right treatment and support, they might still be struggling with some aspects of life, but they might not have the most severe expression of the disorder, such as suicidal behavior."

Although many psychiatric disorders can be controlled with medication, borderline personality disorder is not affected much by drugs, Kelley said. The Food and Drug Administration has not approved any specific medication for the treatment of borderline personality disorder, according to the National Alliance on Mental Health.

The most successful form of treatment is dialectical behavior therapy, Kelley said. This form of therapy focuses on mindfulness, getting the patient to accept how he or she feels. The treatment has a 50 percent success rate.

Menu thinks that part of reason it's effective is that there's no blame attached to it.

"The person doesn’t fail the treatment," he said, "the treatment fails the person."

Still, finding help is not a matter of just picking up the phone and calling the nearest therapist.

"It's very challenging," Kelley said. "Many therapists don't want to see borderline patients because it's such a difficult diagnosis, and they require more intense therapy."

But Kelley said borderline personality disorder is treatable.

"It's a disorder of the brain. ... It's not a character flaw," she said. "To reduce the stigma associated with it, we have to talk about it."
Even though Menu Courey's battle with borderline personality disorder did not end as hopefully as others, her family is determined to help spread awareness about the disorder through the Sashbear Foundation.

“We needed to go through 20 years of Sasha to find out the things that didn’t work and to embark on this awareness effort,” her father said.

Board considers if college players are employees

By MICHAEL TARM

NO MU MENTION

A federal agency kicked off the first in a series of hearings Wednesday on whether to approve a bid by Northwestern University football players to unionize, and both sides acknowledged the key question was whether college athletes can be considered employees.

During a National Labor Relations Board hearing in Chicago, lawyers for the proposed union and the university agreed that if college football players qualify as employees, they can legally form the first-of-its-kind union and if not, they can't.

"That is the key threshold issue," university attorney Alex Barbour said.

If the union, called the College Athletes Players Association, or CAPA, eventually gets the green light, advocates say it will provide athletes a vehicle to lobby for financial security and improved safety on the field.

This first attempt is being closely watched, with the expectation that, if it succeeds, other college teams nationwide could quickly follow suit.
The players' attorney, John Adam, argued his clients met the definition of employees because they put in 40-hour workweeks during the season, are managed by coaches and receive payment in the form of scholarships.

"They are entitled to be represented by a union ... to bring a voice" to their grievances, he said.

Barbour disagreed. He told the hearing scholarships aren't divvied out as wages.

"Scholarships are for getting an education," he said. "It is not a form of compensation for playing football."

Supporters stretch the definition of employees too far, he argued. And he said it would raise other questions, including whether walk-ons without scholarships could be in the union.

Wednesday's hearing was meant to identify main points of contention, not to thrash them out in detail. That happens next week with three days of testimony. A decision on whether CAPA can organize could come soon after.

One witness who will testify next week for those petitioning for the union will be the Wildcats' outgoing senior quarterback, Kain Colter.

Colter and former UCLA linebacker Ramogi Huma, CAPA's designated president, announced the formation of the union last month. United Steelworkers said it was footing the legal bills.

For now, the push is to unionize athletes at private schools, like Northwestern. Public universities, which are subject to different regulations, could follow later

After Wednesday's hearing, which lasted less than an hour, Northwestern distributed a statement reiterating its opposition to the union at the Evanston, Ill.-based school.

"We do not regard, and have never regarded, our football program as a commercial enterprise," said Alan K. Cubbage, the vice president for university relations.

But Adam told reporters after the hearing that football players generate hundreds of millions of dollars for schools annually. So, he said, universities' insistence on calling them "student athletes" was inaccurate.

"This is a myth that we intend to demolish," he said.
J-School introduces new documentary journalism program

By Austin Dubinsky

The School of Journalism announced it is adding yet another program to its curriculum: documentary journalism.

The $6.7-million grant to kick off the program was gifted from Jonathan Murray, a 1977 journalism graduate. The grant will help establish a new Documentary Journalism Center and will tentatively be housed in the Reynolds Journalism Institute, said Dean Mills, dean of the School of Journalism.

Murray is co-founder and chairman of Bunim/Murray Productions, where he has won two Emmy awards for the documentary film, “Autism: The Musical,” which he produced in 2007. He also created the reality television series, “The Real World,” which is now MTV’s longest running program at 29 years.

“Jon is simply one of those alums you would like to clone,” Mills said.

Kent Collins, radio-television faculty chairman, worked closely with Murray to make this program happen.

Collins said the shared vision would benefit not only the school, but also the citizenry of the country to create documentaries with real journalistic content.

“We had the pieces already, but this plows new ground for the (journalism) school,” Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said.

Murray has been working with the journalism school faculty on this project for the last five to six years, Collins said. The program will begin in the Fall 2015 semester and will start possibly as an interest area, Mills said.

Murray said he hopes these documentaries will benefit people and tell stories to open minds. He said he also wants the films to make their audiences think about things in a way they have not beforehand.

Collins, Mills and Murray said the program is not yet fully created, but it will be full flowing by the Fall 2015 semester.
Loftin said he is looking forward to bringing this program to the university.

“Mr. Murray’s gift creates a unique opportunity that adds to a remarkable curriculum that has made the MU School of Journalism the best in the world,” he said in a news release. “It also complements community efforts such as the True/False Film Festival, making Columbia, Mo., a true force in documentary storytelling.”

**ASK A SCIENTIST**

**Q: Do insects migrate long distances like other larger animals?**

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

**Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at 2:00 pm**

*This question was submitted by Mrs. Kelly Pulliam's fifth-grade class at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary*

**A:** "Most insects change habitats at some point in their life cycle," University of Missouri entomology graduate student Lauren Diepenbrock explained. Insects might move short distances to locate a new food supply or migrate to distant overwintering sites. The seasonal movement of insects is known as migration. The purpose of migration is to escape a habitat that is becoming increasingly unfavorable for reproduction and survival. This means migrating insects move to new locations that provide more-favorable conditions for reproduction and overwintering.

One of the most well-known of the migrating insects is the monarch butterfly. Monarchs have a summer and winter range. The summer range is located in southern Canada. Monarchs actually migrate to the same overwintering site in central Mexico each year when their summer range in Canada is in the grip of winter. After overwintering in central Mexico, adult monarchs begin migrating back to the Canadian summer range. The adults, however, do not make it all the way back to southern Canada. They stop along the way to lay their eggs on milkweed leaves. Diepenbrock noted: "An interesting fact is that scientists can tell how many monarchs are in the population by how many acres they usually cover in Mexico. The scientists can tell the population is decreasing because the number of covered acres is decreasing."
Insects are amazing creatures. Even though they are very small, they exhibit fascinating abilities. Diepenbrock added: “To learn more about monarch butterflies, insect migration and how you can help, go to the Xerces and Monarch Watch websites.”

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