MU chancellor sets sights on filling vacancies, AAU status

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, February 15, 2014 at 2:00 am Comments (1)

The bow tie is ready for business.

Two weeks after starting as University of Missouri chancellor, R. Bowen Loftin met with reporters yesterday and fielded questions about his priorities for the university, the provost search and his role in the Association of American Universities.

"It would be premature to announce anything in particular," Loftin said about his priorities, adding that "there are many, but not all formed yet."

Among his priorities are filling administrative roles that are currently vacant, including the vice chancellor for research, provost, vice chancellor for administrative services and assistant to the chancellor for University Affairs. The vice chancellor for research and provost are especially important, he said. The search for the research position is pending, but the provost search has yet to begin.

Loftin indicated that a provost search committee could be finalized as early as next week. Addressing the MU Faculty Council meeting this week, Loftin said he wants the search committee to look for candidates at schools that are members of the Association of American Universities, or AAU.

The AAU is a prestigious organization that includes only 34 public universities. Part of MU's strategic plan is to improve its AAU ranking from No. 32 of 34 to No. 28 by 2018. Universities are ranked on four metrics — federal research funding, National Academy of Science members, faculty awards for quality work and faculty citation in high-impact journals. MU's ranking depicts how much money the university gets from the UM System.

"Maybe a senior dean, perhaps an associate, deputy or vice provost, or maybe even a provost," Loftin said of potential provost candidates. "I'm not limiting the search, but I would like to seek
from institutions that are our peers. That way, they'll come equipped with knowledge of how we deal with things here."

During the Faculty Council meeting, nursing professor Rebecca Johnson asked Loftin whether he envisioned the provost search to be an open or closed process. Loftin said he hopes the initial candidate pool can be confidential, but when it gets down to three or four finalists — which he hopes will happen by the fall — those names would be public and candidates would be brought to campus for interviews.

The search for a new dean of the medical school also is in progress, Loftin said. In the coming months, a search for the next School of Journalism dean will begin as well. Loftin said the search for a journalism dean might start before the provost is selected, but he doesn't want a final decision to be made without the new provost's input because the dean reports to the provost.

Loftin also raised the possibility of merging some administrative functions to gain cost savings and focus on the university's core mission, which is teaching students. Loftin said while he was president of Texas A&M University, public universities in Texas spent on average about 12 percent of their budgets on administrative costs. When he left Texas A&M, the school’s administrative costs accounted for about four percent of the school’s budget, he said.

"It takes care to do things right," he said. "There's no rush to make changes here, but there will be structural changes I'm sure we'll make that will improve our ability to be responsive to our students and cut our costs as much as possible."

Loftin said some merging could happen "now as opposed to later" before filling some of the vacant positions.

Texas A&M is a member of the AAU, and Loftin said coming to another AAU school was important to him — as was staying in the Southeastern Conference — because over time he said he has learned about the people, the culture and the ability to work with the organization to "get things done."

However, MU faces a challenge. Loftin said there is no land-grant institution represented on the AAU's membership committee, which decides who stays in the organization.

"That's an issue for us," said Loftin, who ranks 25 out of 62 administrators in the AAU in terms of how long they've been in the association.

Loftin also made mention of a book he is co-authoring, "The Hundred Year Decision," which will cover the decision to move Texas A&M into the SEC. So far, four chapters are done, and he's planning to include one chapter that looks at MU. The book is set to come out sometime "mid-year," he said.
MU chancellor says meeting people is his top priority

Saturday, February 15, 2014 | 6:00 a.m. CST; updated 8:27 a.m. CST, Saturday, February 15, 2014

BY LAURA COLE

COLUMBIA — MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said his main priority right now is meeting as many people at the university as possible — by attending meetings and events, through social media and by walking around campus.

In his first official meeting with news media since becoming chancellor Feb. 1, Loftin sat down with reporters in a Jesse Hall conference room Friday afternoon. Other than a friendly greeting, he offered no preamble before taking questions for a little more than an hour.

**On his top priorities**
Loftin said he believes forming relationships is the key to success as chancellor.

One of the main ways he does this is through his active presence on Twitter, he said. Loftin said he follows several hundred students from various majors and class levels to gain a better understanding of the way students view MU. "It's really important to me to see campus through students' perspectives," Loftin said.

Loftin also uses Twitter to quickly become aware of problems on campus. If a student tweets about an icy sidewalk, Loftin can pass that information along to the proper personnel in order to get the problem taken care of, he said.
In addition to his presence on Twitter, Loftin said he tries to attend plenty of campus events, such as basketball games. He also enjoys simply walking around campus to chat with students, he said.

"I want to get out of the office and be where people are," Loftin said.

He also is taking time to form relationships with MU faculty and staff, he said. He plans to attend the biweekly MU Faculty Council meetings, where he wants to do more listening than anything else.

He plans to get to know other faculty members in the same way he gets to know students — by getting out of the office and finding them.

"Yesterday I went over and visited with folks in the ag (agriculture) area, just to meet some people over there who are faculty leaders," Loftin said. "I'll be doing that around campus on a routine basis as well. You go where faculty are, you listen to faculty, and you try to learn from them."

Loftin said filling key personnel vacancies is another priority. He hopes to hire a new provost first, possibly by September, who will then be able to assist in the decision-making for other positions, such as the vice chancellor for research and the School of Journalism dean.

Loftin said he won't wait until the new provost is selected to begin the searches for these other positions, however.

**On fundraising**

One of Loftin's main jobs as chancellor is fundraising for MU, he said, which he is comfortable doing.

"If you believe in your institution, it's not hard," he said.

Loftin said he believes that building relationships is key to effective fundraising. By building a mutual trust with donors, donors become confident that their contributions will be used well, he said.

Loftin said that from January 2012 to January 2014, he assisted in raising more than $1 billion for Texas A&M University, where he was president. He hopes to use his successful fundraising experience at MU.
"I believe in Mizzou," Loftin said. "I'm very comfortable sharing my passion with anyone who will listen."

Loftin said he agrees with the UM System Board of Curators that the renovation of Lafferre Hall is the highest facilities priority at MU. MU has reached its fundraising goal to finance the renovation, Loftin said, and is waiting to see if it will receive matching funds from the state.

**On Michael Sam**
Loftin said he thinks the response to former MU football star Michael Sam's announcement that he is gay says a lot about the MU community.

"I think it's very clear to say that this is a supportive community," Loftin said. "I think the story here is that there is no story. I think that speaks highly of Mizzou."

Westboro Baptist Church, known for its virulent opposition to homosexuality, wrote on its website that members plan to protest outside Mizzou Arena on Saturday before Missouri's game against Tennessee.

In response, two MU students created a Facebook event called "One Wall, One Mizzou" to gather students to form a human chain in front of the protesters Saturday. As of 6 p.m. Friday, more than 4,700 people responded that they were attending.

According to the event page, the creators modeled the idea from a similar initiative at Texas A&M when Westboro members said they would protest a student veteran's funeral.

Loftin said that 2,000 students showed up to form a "maroon wall," a reference to the school colors, but no Westboro protesters came.

"It speaks well for our student body to show solidarity," Loftin said.

**On the Menu Courey investigation**
Although the Sasha Menu Courey investigation began before he became chancellor, Loftin said he has talked almost daily about the matter. Making sure students know how to report incidents is important, he said.

"We have to develop mechanisms to continually remind people, 'This is what you do,'" Loftin said.
Loftin had no immediate comment on a St. Louis law firm being hired by the Board of Curators to investigate MU’s handling of the Courey situation. He said he heard of the selection immediately before arriving at the news media gathering.

Michael Sam, a University of Missouri football player who made headlines last week when he announced he is gay, received a standing ovation at Saturday night’s Missouri basketball game.

Sam’s face appeared on the arena video boards during the game, to which the crowd responded with cheers and support in the form of a standing ovation.
According to the Associated Press, Sam later blew a kiss to the student section and shook hands with fans at the game. From the AP’s report:

Mason Schara, the student body president who posted Monday on Twitter that he’s gay, said the university will always treat Sam as one of its own.

“The majority of us knew and we just didn’t think anything of it because that’s just who we are here,” Schara said. “The fact that there’s been such a positive reaction across the nation is what sparked us to be here today.”

“I am hopeful that the NFL won’t care about something like this,” Schara said. “It doesn’t matter about his sexual orientation. He’s a great player and everyone would be lucky to have him.”
Former MU star feels support as hundreds turn out to ‘Stand with Sam’

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, February 16, 2014 at 2:00 am Comments (22)

Hundred of people — University of Missouri students, administrators and Columbia residents — gathered on the roadsides around Faurot Field Saturday to show their support for former MU football player Michael Sam, who came out a week ago Sunday, and to drown out a protest by a group from Kansas.

MU students Kelaney Lakers and Alix Carruth organized the event when they heard members of the Westboro Baptist Church planned to come to Columbia to protest Sam yesterday afternoon. They noted that Texas A&M students organized a similar event when Westboro members announced they would picket a funeral there. The group never showed up for the funeral.

Fourteen Westboro members showed up in Columbia yesterday afternoon and stood at Providence Road and Stadium Boulevard near the football stadium.

They held up signs with derogatory slogans about Sam and homosexuality.
But they were far outnumbered by Sam supporters, who made a half-mile-long "human wall" along Stadium near Faurot Field.

The group included MU administrators, students and even former MU football players. Capt. Brian Weimer of the MU Police Department said about 500 people turned out to show their support.

Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for student affairs, attended the event and said she was impressed that so many students came out in the cold to show their support for Sam. "Their presence says it all," she said.

Scroggs said administrators attended the event because "we wanted students to know we support them."

David Tipton was among the community members in the crowd of students. He said he attended to support Sam and show people that the community's voice is louder than Westboro's.

This isn't the first time members of Westboro have visited Columbia. About half-a-dozen protestors came to Columbia in July 2012 to picket the funeral of a Columbia soldier who died in Afghanistan. Thousands of residents turned out to counter protest.

MU student Craig Jaworski yesterday carried signs saying, "You're perfect just the way you are," and "free hugs (or kisses)."

Many of the students were wearing clothing or pins showing their support for Sam. The Missouri Students Association handed out 1,000 "Stand with Sam" buttons to administrators, athletes and students.

Sam acknowledged the support during halftime of the MU basketball game against Tennessee yesterday afternoon.

He was with former coaches and teammates as they accepted the Cotton Bowl trophy. Sam got a turn holding the trophy and then saluted fans, shook hands with students and did his signature sack dance.
COLUMBIA — It started as a trickle — a few people milling about on the intersection of Tiger Avenue and Stadium Boulevard.

Then it grew. A line of bodies started stretching east, then west.

They came in droves, huddling together against the February cold.

For the next two hours, a human wall swelled along the north side of Stadium Boulevard until more than a thousand people stood atop the icy sidewalk.

Most wore black and gold, with some sporting rainbow buttons labeled #StandWithSam on their chests. Chants of "M-I-Z" were loudly answered by not just "Z-O-U" but also "S-A-M."
Cars honked their approval, and iPhone cameras peered from open windows. Twice, the line locked arms and stumbled its way through MU’s "Alma Mater."

The people were there as part of One Wall, One Mizzou, an event in support of Michael Sam, the former Missouri football player who publicly announced last week that he is gay.

For most of the afternoon, they had their backs turned on what they were responding to: 14 members of the Westboro Baptist Church who waved signs, blared music and stomped on rainbow and American flags in protest of Sam across the street.

MU students Brian Reitz and Varun Bajaj thought that the line should face campus, away from the protesters on the south side of the street, to refrain from giving them a captive audience.

"I think it’s great that we’re all gathered out here, but by looking at them and giving them attention, we give their message a platform," Reitz said. "By turning our backs and not looking at their signs, it allows us to show them that we really don’t care what they think."

Missouri Students Association President Mason Schara and Vice President Kelsey Haberberger passed the message along the line, which at its longest spanned almost the entire sidewalk between Providence Road and Tiger Avenue.

Students weren’t the only ones in line. Amy and Laura Whiffen, a same-sex couple who were married in Iowa, drove from Springfield to be with their daughter Kelsey Wingo, an MU student, at the protest.

"She (Kelsey) has come a long way in accepting the gay lifestyle with me and Amy. We’re here to support Michael Sam and do it with Kelsey," Laura Whiffen said. "We believe in this."

Suzanne and Rodney Brownell made the trip from the Lake of the Ozarks for the sole purpose of attending the event. The Brownells’ son told them he was gay about nine years ago.

“We’re showing him our support through supporting Michael,” Suzanne Brownell said.

The Brownells said their views changed when their son, who now lives in Prague, came out to them.
"For us, it’s been something that we’ve come to grips with and are able to accept," Rodney Brownell said. "Not tolerate, but accept. To me, that’s the big difference."

And for Delan Ellington, Sam’s announcement had a special resonance. Ellington, who is a gay, black man, linked arms with friends as he had his back turned to the protesters.

"(You) rarely see black, gay role models," Ellington said. "And when they are, they are always super skinny and very lean. Michael Sam, I met him, and we have a similar body size. That’s just a huge thing for me. It’s empowering."

On the Sunday night Sam announced he is gay, the Westboro Baptist Church, a Topeka-based group that’s achieved notoriety for protesting homosexuality at military funerals, announced that it would protest at MU.

In response, MU sophomores Kelaney Lakers and Alix Carruth organized "One Wall, One Mizzou. #StandWithSam" on Facebook. By the time the event started Saturday afternoon, almost 5,000 people had signed up to attend.

Although the actual attendance didn’t match that number, Haberberger said, the turnout "blew our expectations out of the water."

"We passed out over a thousand (#StandWithSam) buttons in the first 30 minutes we were here, and I think we’ve at least doubled in size (after)," Haberberger said.

One of the people wearing a button was Max Copeland, a former teammate of Sam’s. He said that it was an opportunity to physically show his support for someone he considers a brother.

But the mass of bodies didn’t engage with the small band of protestors across the street. That was crucial, Copeland said.

"It’s Martin Luther King that said — this is probably just butchering it — but, 'Nonviolence is not just refusing to shoot a man but also refusing to hate him,'" Copeland said. "We would be hypocrites to be anything less than peaceful around these people because this whole thing is about peace and love."
Students ‘Stand with Sam’ against Westboro Baptist

By Jacob Bogage

MU students and Columbia residents formed a line half a mile long between Stadium Boulevard and Tiger Avenue on Saturday in response to a protest by members of Westboro Baptist Church.

The church brought around a dozen members to voice opposition to the coming out of former Missouri defensive end Michael Sam.

The approximately 2,000 counterprotesters in attendance made clear the WBC’s message was not welcome. The event, named “Stand with Sam,” asked participants to stand in a line in support of Sam.

The event was organized by sophomores Alix Carruth and Kelaney Lakers.

“Just because they have the right, doesn’t mean I want it on my campus,” Carruth said in reference to Westboro Baptist Church’s protest.

Missouri Students Association President Mason Schara led attendees in singing Missouri’s alma mater and handed out rainbow buttons stamped with the words “Stand with Sam.”

Schara said that once Carruth and Lakers created the event Sunday on Facebook, MSA threw its support behind it.

“When someone targets a student in the way Westboro Baptist did, I expect nothing different than this,” Schara said. “We are such a progressive university, compared to what we used to be like.”

Westboro’s members said the opposition was nothing unusual, especially in a college town.

“Most young people nowadays don’t have a lot of Bible upbringing,” said Betty Phelps, toting signs reading “Fags are violent” and “2 gay rights: AIDS and hell.”

She sang along to dubbed-over pop songs that decried “sins” like homosexuality and adultery. One aimed at Sam — written to the tune of The Beatles’ “Get Back” — told him to “Get back/Get back/Into the closet where you belong.”
“Pretty cool songs, right?” said Fred Phelps Jr., holding two more signs reading “Fags doom nations” and “America is doomed.”

He said his contingent focused on Columbia because of what he claimed were Sam’s misdeeds.

“The national and international spotlight is on this town in one of the most evil states in the United States of America,” he said. “It’s disgusting and unnatural.”

Counterprotesters and onlookers gawked at the provocative signs, and passing motorists hollered unpleasantries and took photos with cell phones. MU police restricted pedestrians from Westboro’s assigned street corner to diffuse any conflict.

MU Police Department spokesman Brian Weimer said the force would station extra officers in front of the stadium park throughout the day due to the increased crowds. The protest coincided with the beginning of Missouri’s men's basketball game against Tennessee.

The crowd dissipated as the game time neared and the 16-degree wind chill took its toll. Dr. Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for student affairs, encouraged participants to stay warm and helped Carruth and Lakers maintain control.

“You talk about the values of this institution, and here’s your proof,” Scroggs said. “It’s pretty impressive.”

MU Board of Curators hires law firm to investigate its response to swimmer's death

COLUMBIA, Mo. - The University of Missouri Board of Curators has hired an independent law firm to conduct an investigation to determine if university employees acted in accordance with the law and school policy regarding allegations of rape by a student-athlete who later took her own life.

The Dowd Bennett Law Firm will report back to the board on April 11 with its own findings and conclusions.

No member of the investigative team is an MU alum, according to University of Missouri System spokesman John Fougere, and the firm has never worked for the school in the past. Two
team members served as U.S. attorneys, three served as Assistant United States attorneys; and another served as the head of a sex crimes unit and USPS inspector.

Swimmer Sasha Menu Courey committed suicide in June 2011 at a Boston psychiatric hospital, two months after a previous suicide attempt while still enrolled at the University of Missouri. She'd recently been diagnosed with borderline personality disorder prior to her death.

In 2010, Menu Courey told a campus therapist and a rape counselor that she was raped earlier that year by one or more players on the football team.

University authorities claimed she did not file an official complaint in 2010, and they only became aware of the incident in 2012 after reviewing a transcript of a chat between Menu Courey and a crisis hotline therapist.

**UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI**

**Missouri curators hire law firm to investigate MU’s handling of Menu Courey allegations**

February 14

*BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS AND TOD PALMER*

The Kansas City Star

*A Clayton, Mo., law firm has been hired by the University of Missouri Board of Curators to determine whether employees on the Columbia campus acted within the law and university policy regarding the alleged rape of former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey.*

“The board wants an independent counsel to look at what the facts actually are — what the university knew and when it knew it, and what it should have done under applicable law and our policies,” curators chairman Don Downing said Friday in a teleconference.

The law firm, Dowd Bennett, is scheduled to report to the board with findings and conclusions on April 11, when it meets in Rolla for its next meeting.
“We’ve received a commitment from the Dowd Bennett firm that they can get this done, that they’ll devote whatever resources are necessary to get this done within the time period we’ve asked them to,” Downing said.

The university said that no member of the firm’s five-person investigating team is an MU alum and that, to its knowledge, the firm has never performed work for the University of Missouri.

Menu Courey alleged that she had been raped in 2010 by a member of the school’s football team. Her parents discovered the allegation in her journal after she committed suicide in June 2011.

The sexual assault allegation, which may have involved more than one player, was made public in a newspaper article in February 2012, which circulated among MU athletics staff members.

MU’s conduct was called into question because no investigation was launched until the story was reported by ESPN last month. At that time, the university forwarded information to Columbia police, who subsequently opened a criminal investigation.

Downing didn’t know if the independent counsel would contact Menu Courey’s family as part of its review.

“I don’t want to prejudge or direct in any way what the independent counsel should do,” Downing said. “We’ve left that up to their independent discretion. The identity of those that they choose to interview and the sequence and all of those things will be up to them.”

Downing said he expected the Board of Curators to release the findings publicly. He cautioned that “there may be some (privacy or legal) issues there, but I know the board’s intention is to release the report to the extent it can under applicable law.”

Downing said the second part of the process, on-campus reviews of all policies with respect to sexual assaults, reporting of sexual assaults and mental health services at the MU system’s four campuses is underway.

New MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said Friday that deputy chancellor Mike Middleton has been leading a comprehensive review of all rules, practices, policies and procedures as they pertain to student social services on the Columbia campus. He was given 30 days to complete the process.
Law firm gets started on inquiry into MU’s handling of Menu Courey case

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, February 15, 2014 at 2:00 am

Employees of the Dowd Bennett Law Firm already are working on the investigation into the University of Missouri’s handling of former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey’s allegation of rape, senior partner Ed Dowd said Friday.

The University of Missouri Board of Curators announced the hiring of the Clayton firm yesterday.

The first step, Dowd said, is to gather documents, and he said the university is giving representatives of the firm full access to documents and communication records. The only exceptions will be documents that conflict with privacy laws.

Dowd said the firm hopes to begin interviews in the next two weeks.

Four full-time lawyers at the firm will work on the investigation: Edward Dowd, Lisa Hoppenjans, Gabriel Gore and Jim Martin. The firm also is enlisting Becky Powers, a retired federal agent who worked as a postal inspector for the U.S. Postal Service for 20 years, including as head of the sex crimes unit for this region. Two of the lawyers are former U.S. attorneys, and three were assistant U.S attorneys. None of the five people working on the case has ever worked for or studied at MU. The firm has no university ties.

The board approved hiring the firm during a closed meeting Jan. 29, according to a UM System news release. The board's executive committee has met twice behind closed doors since the last public board meeting.

Board Chairman Don Downing said the curators received inquiries from "many firms around the country." Dowd said a curator — he doesn't know which one — suggested Dowd Bennett apply to conduct the investigation.

Downing said the firm is a "very well qualified team." He said he wouldn't answer specific questions about what the curators want so as not to "prejudge or direct" the investigation.
The firm is scheduled to report its findings during the curators' April 11 meeting in Rolla. Downing said the findings likely will be reported to the curators during a closed session. He said the report will be made public later, but some of the information might be redacted for privacy or legal reasons.

**Board of Curators assign investigation to Dowd Bennett Law firm**

By Katie Pohlman

*The Dowd Bennett Law Firm will conduct an independent investigation on how MU responded to the Sasha Menu Courey case.*

The UM System Board of Curators announced Friday that the law firm will be in charge of determining whether university employees followed university policy when dealing with the sexual assault incident that happened in 2010.

Several members of the law firm will work on this case and present their findings to the board during its April meeting at the Missouri University of Science and Technology.

“Our task from the Board of Curators is to do a complete investigation, get all the facts and report our findings promptly,” Edward Dowd said in a UM System news release.

Anyone with information important to the investigation is asked to call the attorneys at (314) 889-7300.
The University of Missouri has started its review of policies in response to the alleged sexual assault of former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey.

Deputy Chancellor Michael Middleton is "working on review and inventory of existing policies, procedures and services" for University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe, MU spokesman Christian Basi said.

"Training on proper reporting is under consideration," Basi said. He said Middleton and his staff are looking at all of the options available, but their biggest concern is making sure MU policies and practices don't deter anyone from seeking help, whether for assault, rape or any other issue, Basi said.

Meanwhile, faculty members are working on a project to increase on-campus knowledge of sexual assault and mental health issues.

At yesterday's Faculty Council meeting, Rebecca Johnson, a nursing professor and chair of the diversity enhancement committee, and Tim Evans, veterinary professor and chair of the student affairs committee, announced their collaboration on a campaign addressing sexual assault and mental illness, among other issues, on campus.

Many details about their plans are still being discussed, Johnson said, but the collaborators hope to get community input.

Johnson said representatives from the MU Police Department and student assistance services on campus met with the Faculty Council representatives yesterday for preliminary planning.

Policy reviews are in the works, but Evans said campus safety, binge-drinking and hate crimes are other areas where there is no set idea of what faculty should do — something they hope to address with this collaborative effort.
Finding a fix for Lafferre

Legislators on both sides of the aisle want to fund renovations of MU’s engineering and science building.

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, February 16, 2014 at 2:00 am

The first thing Marty Walker shows on his tour of the building that houses the College of Engineering at the University of Missouri is a long stretch of hallway with eight trash cans strategically placed to catch water leaking from the ceiling.

This part of Lafferre Hall was built in 1935. It’s not the oldest part of the building, but it easily competes for the worst part.

Walker, director of administrative services for the dean of engineering, said the roof is arguably the biggest problem that needs attention but not the only one. In one makeshift classroom that doubles as a storage space, Walker points out rust where the wall meets the ceiling and another place where water sometimes trickles down from the ceiling near an electrical conduit. When that happens, the class in progress has to move somewhere else because the room becomes a shock hazard.

In that same room, Walker points out places where the exterior wall is visibly moving away from the rest of the building. It has been patched — like everything else in the building — but Walker and his colleagues are hoping for more than a temporary solution.

“This is one of the areas we need to fix,” Walker said. “We owe it to our students. We have premier students here. Just think of what we could have if we got all of this taken care of.”

Researchers working in medical, engineering and an array of other unrelated disciplines are crammed in one giant, warehouse-like room together, divided primarily by their own equipment. Small groups of student researchers have some places to do their work in the hallways, where chain link fencing has been set up to create a makeshift wall, but like the spaces their professional counterparts use, these stopgap spaces are not ideal, Walker said.
The College of Engineering houses 3,900 students and almost 15 faculty members and generates about $30 million in annual research expenditures. Most of those faculty and students are working out of Lafferre.

Over the years, the university has updated the building several times, but now there is a push for more.

The total amount of deferred maintenance costs from Lafferre is $21,443,414, the UM Board of Curators’ finance committee said. The estimated renovation cost is $32,623,640.

With financial help from fundraising, donors and the General Assembly, the hope is that Lafferre Hall can get the money and construction help needed to become a more functional environment.

One of the most recent renovations was in 2009 to a section that was built in 1920, according to a presentation from the finance committee. That section now includes space for students to work and up-to-date laboratories and research equipment.

The 2009 renovation was Phase One of the Lafferre project. Phase Two is what system and MU administrators are advocating for now, which would include renovations to the sections of the building built in 1935 and 1944.

In setting his goals for the year, UM President Tim Wolfe said he wants to improve at least one building used for science, technology, engineering and mathematics — or STEM — on each of the four campuses this year. At MU, he picked Lafferre Hall.

Wolfe said the idea to prioritize these facilities comes from hearing business leaders say they need more graduates than ever to fill open positions in the STEM fields.

“To put it bluntly, we will not be able to address these critical needs of the state until we can solve our critical needs in STEM-related facilities on all four campuses,” he said in prepared remarks to the board.

A possible funding source for Wolfe’s STEM facilities goal is Missouri’s 50/50 higher education capital fund, where institutions raise half of the money required for a project from private donors, and then they can apply to have that amount matched by the state.

This is the first year the 50/50 option is available for state schools, and the UM System raised $40 million to be matched for projects across the campuses. Of that, $22.1 million is from the Columbia campus.

Some, though not all, of these 50/50 projects overlap with Wolfe’s building priorities. The Lafferre Hall project does. For it, administrators are asking for a $6.1 million state match of a $12.19 million renovation — a portion of what administrators say that building could use.

MU has three other projects administrators want approved, including $10.7 million for the 232,000-square-foot Trulaske College of Business Applied Learning Center that would be built.
next to Cornell Hall, $1.5 million for a teaching winery and $2.76 million for renovations of existing space as well as a new building for the College of Arts and Science, primarily for the School of Music.

Another potential funding option is the $1.2 billion bond issue that Rep. Caleb Jones, R-Columbia, introduced last month. The bond issue would provide $600 million for higher education capital improvements, with $480 million going toward public, four-year institutions. The issue, if approved by the General Assembly, would need voter approval.

Jones’ bill, HJR 73, would put $55.9 million toward renovations to Lafferre Hall.

HJR 73 is similar to the bond issue Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, has proposed the past six years, this year included.

With a few months until the General Assembly must finalize budget bills, members are discussing their options and hearing from stakeholders.

Of course, core funding is one of the main topics of conversation, but the 50/50 projects are, too. Columbia’s legislative delegation, which represents a school with $22.1 million on the line, is particularly interested in the topic.

Kelly said if any of the 50/50 projects are funded, it will be Lafferre Hall.

“We can make it happen,” he said, adding that his local peers from both sides of the aisle are working on the issue.

Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia, said a lot of representatives are still being educated on the infrastructure issues.

“I think it’s going to be a process over a few years, if I’m being honest,” Rowden said.

He said advocates are highlighting the private-sector involvement. The problem, he said, is fitting it all into the budget.

David Russell, commissioner for the Department of Higher Education, said his department was responsible for going through the applications. Russell then makes recommendations to the state Coordinating Board for Higher Education before the 50/50 projects move on to the governor, legislators and the budgeting process. He said the effort from UM schools was “aggressive” and “impressive.”

The deadline for the budget bills in the Senate — the final stop before the governor — is May 9.

There is still time, and anything can happen.
A busy week and a short round up

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, February 16, 2014 at 7:17 pm

Busy week at University of Missouri, that’s for sure.

In the next few days I hope to post a blog post to supplement the story from MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin’s first press availability. If you didn’t catch the story, be sure to. He discussed his plans for a new provost search and the possibility of merging non-academic offices on campus, considering his history of doing so at Texas A&M.

The round up is short and late this week. Sorry about that, but when it's short that means the news made it into story form this week. That's always a plus.

Inside the system:

- The University of Missouri Board of Curators officially hired the independent counsel to investigate the university’s handling of the alleged rape of former student Sasha Menu Courey. The Dowd Bennett Law Firm is very well known in St. Louis, and is based in Clayton. Read more about their plans, and some comments from board chairman Don Downing here.

- The Vagina Monologues at MU was this weekend. I attended and much like I anticipated, it was incredible. If you haven't seen it or heard of it, read about it here.

- This week's legislative update from the system level addresses a few appropriations-related issues, among other things.

- The Missouri University of Science and Technology received approval for the country’s first Ph.D. in explosives engineering.

Outside the system:
- The Secretary of State’s office sent a reminder email this week about the first day to file as a candidate for a 2014 primary and general election, which is Feb. 25. The final day is March 25. MU’s state Rep. Chris Kelly announced a few months ago that he won’t be running for reelection for his House seat in 2014. One candidate, Democrat Kip Kendrick, announced his interest in the seat, but so far there are no other contenders.

- The Columbia College Alumni Association formed a “Scholars Program” to celebrate the group’s 50 year anniversary. Through the scholars program, students can apply for one of three $1,000 scholarships that will be awarded at an Alumni Association event in April.

- I had the opportunity to write about the annual spring fashion exhibit at Stephens College. "Faux Real: Exploring Natural and Synthetic Fur, Leather and Animal Motifs" opened to the public this weekend. A reception is set for later this month.

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**The New York Times**

**The All-or-Nothing Marriage**

By ELI J. FINKEL

ARE marriages today better or worse than they used to be?

This vexing question is usually answered in one of two ways. According to the marital decline camp, marriage has weakened: Higher divorce rates reflect a lack of commitment and a decline of moral character that have harmed adults, children and society in general. But according to the marital resilience camp, though marriage has experienced disruptive changes like higher divorce rates, such developments are a sign that the institution has evolved to better respect individual autonomy, particularly for women. The true harm, by these lights, would have been for marriage to remain as confining as it was half a century ago.

As a psychological researcher who studies human relationships, I would like to offer a third view. Over the past year I immersed myself in the scholarly literature on marriage: not just the psychological studies but also work from sociologists, economists and historians. Perhaps the most striking thing I learned is that the answer to whether today’s marriages are better or worse is “both”: The average marriage today is weaker than the average marriage of yore, in terms of both satisfaction and divorce rate, but the best marriages today are much stronger, in terms of both satisfaction and personal well-being, than the best marriages of yore.

*Consider, for example, that while the divorce rate has settled since the early 1980s at around 45 percent, even those marriages that have remained intact have generally become*
less satisfying. At the same time, consider the findings of a recent analysis, led by the University of Missouri researcher Christine M. Proulx, of 14 longitudinal studies between 1979 and 2002 that concerned marital quality and personal well-being. In addition to showing that marital quality uniformly predicts better personal well-being (unsurprisingly, happier marriages make happier people), the analysis revealed that this effect has become much stronger over time. The gap between the benefits of good and mediocre marriages has increased.

How and why did this divergence occur? In answering this question, I worked with the psychologists Chin Ming Hui, Kathleen L. Carswell and Grace M. Larson to develop a new theory of marriage, which we will publish later this year in a pair of articles in the journal Psychological Inquiry. Our central claim is that Americans today have elevated their expectations of marriage and can in fact achieve an unprecedentedly high level of marital quality — but only if they are able to invest a great deal of time and energy in their partnership. If they are not able to do so, their marriage will likely fall short of these new expectations. Indeed, it will fall further short of people’s expectations than at any time in the past.

Marriage, then, has increasingly become an “all or nothing” proposition. This conclusion not only challenges the conventional opposition between marital decline and marital resilience; but it also has implications for policy makers looking to bolster the institution of marriage — and for individual Americans seeking to strengthen their own relationships.

TO understand marriage today, it is important to see how we got to where we are. Throughout America’s history, its populace has experienced three distinct models of marriage, as scholars like the sociologist Andrew J. Cherlin and the historian Stephanie Coontz have chronicled. In the era of the institutional marriage, from the nation’s founding until around 1850, the prevalence of individual farming households meant that the main requirements Americans had for their marriage revolved around things like food production, shelter and protection from violence. To be sure, Americans were pleased if they experienced an emotional connection with their spouse, but such affinities were perquisites of a well-functioning marriage rather than its central purpose.

In the era of the companionate marriage, from roughly 1850 until 1965, American marriage increasingly centered around intimate needs such as to love, to be loved and to experience a fulfilling sex life. This era overlapped with the shift from rural to urban life. Men increasingly engaged in wage labor outside of the home, which amplified the extent to which the two sexes occupied distinct social spheres. As the nation became wealthier and its social institutions became stronger, Americans had the luxury of looking to marriage primarily for love and companionship.

Since around 1965, we have been living in the era of the self-expressive marriage. Americans now look to marriage increasingly for self-discovery, self-esteem and personal growth. Fueled by the countercultural currents of the 1960s, they have come to view marriage less as an essential institution and more as an elective means of achieving personal fulfillment. “You make me want to be a better man,” from the 1997 movie “As Good as It Gets,” could serve as this era’s marriage ideal. In the words of the sociologist Robert N. Bellah, love has become, in good part, “the mutual exploration of infinitely rich, complex and exciting selves.”
As a psychologist, I could not help noticing that this history of marriage echoes the classic “hierarchy of needs” outlined in the 1940s by the psychologist Abraham Maslow. According to Maslow, human needs fit into a five-level hierarchy: The lowest need is that of physiological well-being — including the need to eat and drink — followed by the need for safety, then for belonging and love, then for esteem and finally for self-actualization. The emergence of each need characteristically depends on the prior satisfaction of a more basic need. A person unable to satisfy the need for food, for example, is wholly concerned with meeting that need; only once it is met can he focus on satisfying the need above it (safety), and so on.

My colleagues and I contend that an analogous process has occurred in our expectations about marriage. Those expectations were set at the low levels of Maslow’s hierarchy during the institutional era, at medium levels during the companionate era and at high levels during the self-expressive era.

This historical ascent is, on its own, neither good nor bad. But it has major implications for marital well-being: Though satisfying higher-level needs yields greater happiness, serenity and depth of inner life, people must invest substantially more time and energy in the quality of their relationship when seeking to meet those higher-level needs through their marriage. To be sure, it was no small feat, circa 1800, to produce enough food or keep a house warm, but the effort required to do so did not require deep insight into, and prolonged involvement with, each other’s core essence.

As the expectations of marriage have ascended Maslow’s hierarchy, the potential psychological payoffs have increased — but achieving those results has become more demanding.

HERE lie both the great successes and great disappointments of modern marriage. Those individuals who can invest enough time and energy in their partnership are seeing unprecedented benefits. The sociologists Jeffrey Dew and W. Bradford Wilcox have demonstrated that spouses who spent “time alone with each other, talking, or sharing an activity” at least once per week were 3.5 times more likely to be very happy in their marriage than spouses who did so less frequently. The sociologist Paul R. Amato and colleagues have shown that spouses with a larger percentage of shared friends spent more time together and had better marriages.

But on average Americans are investing less in their marriages — to the detriment of those relationships. Professor Dew has shown that relative to Americans in 1975, Americans in 2003 spent much less time alone with their spouses. Among spouses without children, weekly spousal time declined to 26 hours per week from 35 hours, and much of this decline resulted from an increase in hours spent at work. Among spouses with children at home, spousal time declined to 9 hours per week from 13, and much of this decline resulted from an increase in time-intensive parenting.

Though this is not a specifically socioeconomic phenomenon, it does have a socioeconomic dimension. One of the most disturbing facts about American marriage today is that while divorce increased at similar rates for the wealthy and the poor in the 1960s and ’70s, those rates diverged sharply starting around 1980. According to the sociologist Steven P. Martin, among Americans who married between 1975 and 1979, the 10-year divorce rate was 28 percent among people
without a high school education and 18 percent among people with at least a college degree: a 10 percentage point difference. But among Americans who married between 1990 and 1994, the parallel divorce rates were 46 percent and 16 percent: an astonishing 30 percentage point difference.

The problem is not that poor people fail to appreciate the importance of marriage, nor is it that poor and wealthy Americans differ in which factors they believe are important in a good marriage. The problem is that the same trends that have exacerbated inequality since 1980 — unemployment, juggling multiple jobs and so on — have also made it increasingly difficult for less wealthy Americans to invest the time and other resources needed to sustain a strong marital bond.

What can be done? Government actions that reduce inequality and family-friendly work policies like on-site child care are likely to help strengthen marriage. But they are not the only options, particularly for individual couples.

First and foremost, couples can choose to invest more time and energy in their marriage, perhaps by altering how they use whatever shared leisure time is available. But if couples lack the time and energy, they might consider adjusting their expectations, perhaps by focusing on cultivating an affectionate bond without trying to facilitate each other’s self-actualization.

The bad news is that insofar as socioeconomic circumstances or individual choices undermine the investment of time and energy in our relationships, our marriages are likely to fall short of our era’s expectations. The good news is that our marriages can flourish today like never before. They just can’t do it on their own.

Mizzou professor is finalist for $50,000 book prize

February 15, 2014 6:00 am  •  By Jane Henderson jhenderson@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8107

University of Missouri history professor Jeffrey L. Pasley is a finalist for the George Washington Book Prize.

Worth a handy $50,000, the prize is given to a book on early American history. Pasley’s "The First Presidential Contest: 1796 and the Founding of American Democracy" came out last year. It was published by the University of Kansas.
The other finalists are "The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of the Empire" (Yale) by Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy and "The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772-1832 (W.W. Norton) by Alan Taylor.

A press release said:

“These books are just too good to miss. Everyone should know about them,” adds James Basker, the president of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, which co-sponsors the George Washington Prize with Washington College and George Washington’s Mount Vernon. “We want the George Washington Prize to bring great history to a larger public — to teachers, students and general readers everywhere.”

The winner will be announced May 20 at a gala dinner at Mount Vernon.

MU history professor named finalist for $50,000 book award

Monday, February 17, 2014 | 6:00 a.m. CST

COLUMBIA — MU history professor Jeffrey L. Pasley was named one of three finalists for the George Washington Book Prize Sunday.

The $50,000 annual prize is awarded to authors of books on the United States' early history. Finalists are announced each year on President's Day, Feb. 17, and the winner will be named at a ceremony at George Washington's Mount Vernon estate near Alexandria, Va., May 20.

The award is co-sponsored by Washington College, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, and Mount Vernon.

Pasley authored "The First Presidential Contest: 1796 and the Founding of American Democracy." The other finalists are "The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership,
"It's great company to be in," Pasley said Sunday. "But I'm not counting the money yet."

Pasley's book tells the story of the 1796 U.S. presidential election. After George Washington refused to accept a third term as president, candidates John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were the first to compete for the presidency. The 1796 election was also the first determined by the Electoral College.

"Most of the system is not in the Constitution," Pasley said. "They were trying to figure out what to do with no map."

Pasley said the 1796 election was interesting because neither candidate campaigned directly to the public, and much of the campaign occurred out of public view. Adams' running-mate Aaron Burr and former Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton waged most of the campaigns.

"There was very little public information. There was a lot of uncertainty," Pasley said. The book was written over the course of seven years, and the lack of information that one would expect from a more modern campaign made the process difficult, he said. Pasley pieced the story together through newspaper essays and letters from politicians' estates, made available by the Library of Congress.

"I was just glad to get it done on any basis," Pasley said. "That people think enough of it to nominate it for an award is great."

The jury for the award, which includes historians Gordon S. Wood, Joyce Appleby and Annette Gordon-Reed, praised Pasley's style of writing.

"Pasley captures with verve and wit the frothy politics that emerged unexpectedly at the end of the eighteenth century," according to the jury in a Washington College press release.
Pasley employs a "middle-out" approach, focusing on the people who write speeches and organize campaigns rather than the political figureheads at the top or the mass voters at the bottom.

He said this approach was informed by time he spent in Washington, D.C., as a reporter for the New Republic magazine and later as a speechwriter for Al Gore's 1988 campaign.

"My method is based on the idea that, hey, I've got an interesting perspective on this," he said. "I've always enjoyed seeing the founding fathers as politicians, rather than as gods."

Ethics group gives MU $50,000 grant

Friday, February 14, 2014 at 2:00 pm

The Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation announced the distribution of $1.9 million in grants, including a $50,000 grant to the University of Missouri.

The grant is for the National Freedom of Information Coalition — part of the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute — for online development for state affiliates, training modules for journalists and an annual Freedom of Information summit.

The MU grant was one of 19 dispersed to journalism organizations.

MU faculty vote not to change calendar

Saturday, February 15, 2014 at 2:00 am
During a University of Missouri Faculty Council meeting this week, the council voted to issue a statement proposing no change to the academic calendar after the two recent snow days.

Nicole Monnier, academic affairs committee chairwoman, said because one of the missed days was on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday schedule and the other on a Tuesday, Thursday schedule, there was "no compelling reason to make up one or the other."

Monnier said faculty still have the chance to find make-up time if need be, and the statement asks that students be flexible if that extra time is required. If a student has a "legitimate conflict" with the rescheduled date they cannot be penalized for missing that new time, according to the statement.

Faculty Council is charged with handling the academic calendar and gets the ultimate say in these decisions.

Analysis: Early Mo. gov's race new political norm

19 hours ago  •  By DAVID A. LIEB

MU Mention Page 2

It's barely 2014. Candidates haven't even officially begun filing for this year's elections. Yet Missouri's 2016 gubernatorial campaign is in full swing.

Democrats already have a successor-in-waiting to term-limited Gov. Jay Nixon.

Republicans already have one officially declared candidate, a second who appears all but certain to run and a third who is publicly contemplating the gubernatorial race.

Does it seem a bit early? Perhaps.

Premature? Perhaps not.

Quick starts to campaign seasons are becoming increasingly common both nationally and especially in Missouri due to the mounting pressure to raise money, line up key supporters and lock down the best professional campaign consultants.
"Letting time pass makes it more difficult to win," Republican Catherine Hanaway said while announcing her gubernatorial candidacy this past week. "I'm trying to build the best grass-roots organization ever in Missouri."

Hanaway, a former Missouri House speaker and U.S. attorney, hasn't appeared on a Missouri ballot for 10 years, when she lost a bid for secretary of state. So she has work to do to re-establish a political network.

The challenge is particularly pressing because Democratic Attorney General Chris Koster already has amassed nearly $1.6 million while building a gubernatorial campaign.

Koster first confirmed on April 9, 2013, that he was preparing to run for governor in 2016. That came just three months into Nixon's second term as governor, and 1,306 days before the general election. If records were kept on such things, Koster's early confirmation of his gubernatorial plans may have broken the mark set by Nixon for the 2008 elections.

Nixon, who then was attorney general, changed his campaign committee to note he was running for governor on Nov. 10, 2005 _ 10 months into the tenure of Republican Gov. Matt Blunt and 1,091 days before the next gubernatorial election. As it turned out, Blunt decided not to run again _ a decision he didn't announce until January 2008.

Nixon's early start to his gubernatorial campaign allowed him to be positioned as the front-runner as Republicans scrambled to find an election-year replacement for Blunt. A contentious GOP primary ensued, and Nixon cruised to election.

_When candidates enter a race early, "it's usually either a heavyweight who just wants to clear the field quickly or somebody who is facing an uphill battle who really needs extended time to build an organization and put together a campaign," said Peverill Squire, a political science professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia._

Squire said Koster falls into that first category. The strategy appears to have worked, as Democrats are coalescing around Koster as their presumed nominee.

Squire said Hanaway falls into the second category.

"She's been out of it for a decade, and she has a lot of reintroducing herself to do in terms of running a statewide race," Squire said. "I think she's getting in early because she's starting from behind."

Hanaway appears likely to face a primary challenge.

Republican State Auditor Tom Schweich hasn't officially announced his candidacy, but that's mainly because it would be politically awkward to do so. Schweich first must win re-election this year _ he so far has no opponents _ and be sworn into a second term next January before it would be politically couth to acknowledge he wants to become governor.
But Schweich has provided some good indications that he's preparing a gubernatorial campaign. A day after Hanaway's announcement, Schweich released a lengthy list of political heavyweights involved in his re-election — a team that could remain intact if he transitioned to a gubernatorial run.

Schweich declined to comment directly about Hanaway's candidacy, but said: "I think we have to remain 100 percent focused on 2014 right now, and any distraction from that is not a good idea."

Three days later, Republican businessman John Brunner — who lost a GOP primary for U.S. Senate in 2012 — said he also was contemplating a gubernatorial bid but would make no decisions until after the 2014 elections. He plans to attend an annual Republican conference this coming weekend in Springfield where Schweich and Hanaway also will have a presence.

Republican consultant John Hancock, who worked for Brunner's Senate bid, said he expects Republican leaders to try to avert a contentious gubernatorial primary. In 2004, 2008 and 2012, the party with a tense primary for Missouri governor or U.S. Senate ultimately ended up losing the general election to a rival from the opposing party who was untarnished by a primary.

Missouri's August primary gives little time for candidates to rebuild a campaign account before the November election.

"The other problem is the winning candidate in a primary takes on water for months and months," Hancock said. "A lot of times, the water you take on ends up drowning you in November."