MO. HOUSE PASSES PERFORMANCE FUNDING FOR COLLEGES

NO MU MENTION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Missouri House has passed legislation that would implement performance-based funding for public universities and community colleges.

Under the bill, the schools would work with the Department of Higher Education to develop goals, such as graduation and retention rates, that would then be used to determine part of their funding.

The performance-based goals would apply in years the state can afford to increase higher education funding. In those years, 90 percent of a school's funding increase would be determined using the goals. Ten percent would go toward resolving historic funding inequities among the Missouri's public colleges.

The House voted 143-3 on Wednesday to send the bill to the Senate. Senators have already passed their own version of the bill, but it doesn't include community colleges and would expire in 2016.

University of Missouri to raze apartment where firefighter died
COLUMBIA — The University of Missouri says it will demolish an apartment complex where a Columbia firefighter died Feb. 22 when a walkway collapsed.

University Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin emphasized in making the announcement Wednesday that engineers have inspected all buildings at the University Village Apartment Complex and declared them safe for occupancy.

Still, Loftin said the 58-year-old complex will close June 30 in the interest of safety and be razed shortly after that.

Veteran firefighter Bruce Britt died when he became trapped by rubble while helping evacuate residents from the partial collapse of the second-floor walkway.

The complex houses graduate students and their families. There is also a child-care center on site.

Loftin says tenants will be allowed to terminate their leases before June 30 without financial penalties.

University of Missouri to demolish apartment complex where firefighter died

The University of Missouri announced Wednesday plans to demolish the University Village apartment complex and on-site Student Parent Center day care facility.

In a news release, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin announced the complex will close June 30 and be demolished "shortly thereafter." The news release pointed out the university made the decision despite engineers inspecting all the buildings at the complex and declaring them safe for occupancy.

The complex, 601 S. Providence Road, was the site of a walkway collapse last month that killed Columbia Fire Department Lt. Bruce Britt. University Village was built in 1956.

Loftin has also asked "several organizations on campus to begin discussing the feasibility of the future of child day care services on the Mizzou campus."
Parents of children at the Student Parent Center day care have expressed concerns about the building's safety, and some started a petition to pressure the university to move the facility to a different building.

Twenty-nine children attend the center, 16 of which are children of students.

"I texted my wife during the meeting and told her," said Nick Foster, whose daughter attends the center. "We didn't anticipate this happening, but we're going to have to arrange other options."

Foster is also executive director of the Volunteer Action Center, and counts Bruce Britt's wife Leigh as a friend.

"... In the midst of all this, I'm still thinking about Bruce," Foster said.

Dorothy Atuhura is one of two University Village residents who uses the day care. She has no car, so having nearby day care for her 3-year-old son is important, Atuhura said. She said she's glad the university is closing a place she calls "unsafe."

Apartment residents will be allowed to terminate their leases without financial penalty between now and June 30, the release said. Maintenance and repair work will continue at University Village, MU said.

"We will provide assistance to any students who are looking for alternative housing, as well as provide resources to those parents searching for child care," Cathy Scroggs, MU vice chancellor for student affairs, said in the news release.

UPDATE: University Village, day care to be demolished, MU officials announce

Wednesday, March 12, 2014 | 11:13 p.m. CDT; updated 6:22 a.m. CDT, Thursday, March 13, 2014

BY MISSOURIAN STAFF

COLUMBIA — The University Village apartments will close June 30 and be demolished shortly after, MU announced Wednesday.

People who live at the apartment complex and parents whose children attend the Student Parent Center day care there were notified of the plans by MU officials at two separate meetings.

Residents will be allowed to break their leases between now and June 30 without penalty. The university will help people find alternative housing or child care, according to a release from MU News Bureau.
The structural integrity of the University Village buildings came into question after part of a walkway collapsed at Building 707 on Feb. 22, killing Lt. Bruce Britt of the Columbia Fire Department as he responded to a structural emergency there. In the wake of that event and because of the cost of renovating the buildings, MU has decided to tear them down.

"The decision has been made that the amount of money we would have to reinvest in those facilities to renovate them or replace them would be at a price that'd be well beyond what our students could afford." Frankie Minor, MU's director of residential life, told University Village residents. Renovating the buildings could cause rents to double or triple, he said.

According to MU's 2008 Graduate and Family Housing Master Plan, the buildings had structural damage and renovating them would require nearly complete demolition and replacement at an estimated cost of more than $15 million.

Minor told the residents that engineers have deemed the buildings safe for now.

"We would not let you occupy those facilities if we didn't believe that they were safe," he said.

The residents' meeting
The media were barred from both meetings, but according to a resident who recorded the meeting for the Missourian, Minor told residents that based on anticipated and routine vacancies, the university would probably have enough space to accommodate them at other facilities. What wasn't known was whether those facilities would meet the needs of the current residents, some of whom are married and have children.

“So if we look at just the number of facilities, the numbers should work out, but until we better understand what your needs are on an individual basis, we won't be able to know where we'll be able to accommodate you and in what types of facilities,” he said.

Rebekah Teller, a graduate student at MU and resident in Building 602, said after the meeting that she felt safe at University Village and liked living there. She said she'd been taken care of by the university and that communication with the university had been good.

“My first default is to go to the next best university housing because it’s the easiest, simplest thing,” Teller said.
Chinchao Suriyakul, a graduate student at MU who also lives in Building 602, said he was happy with the decision to close the apartments and said it was prudent after the walkway collapse. He said he felt unsafe after the incident and unsure if the wooden supports installed beneath the walkways were adequate.

He said he doesn't know where he is going to live and isn't sure if he will terminate his lease with University Village.

Minor said residents can indicate their housing preferences when they file for transfer, but he didn't know when preferred spaces will become available. Residents with families will be given first priority, he said, followed by those who have lived at University Village the longest.

University Village is one of four apartment complexes intended for older students, graduate students and families. The other three are Manor House, Tara Apartments and University Heights.

The day care meeting
During the residents' meeting, a parents' meeting was taking place at the Student Parent Center, the day care at University Village. **MU spokesman Christian Basi said Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin will be consulting with several campus organizations about the future of the day care, located in Building 602.**

Basi said no particular locations are under consideration, and he said that is one of the things yet to be discussed.

After the collapse, parents whose children attend the day care raised concerns about the future of the center, asking that it be kept open but moved away from University Village.

Naomi Clark, a graduate student and parent whose children attend the day care, said before the meeting that she didn't know what to expect. She said she was keeping her expectations low.

After the meeting with Heath Immel, associate director of the Missouri Student Unions, and Jeff Zeilenga, assistant vice chancellor for student affairs, and others, Clark said she felt angry, betrayed and impatient.

"As long as I am able, I will petition the university to do the right thing," Clark said.

Clark said she and the Association of Parenting Students have been asking MU for five years about the future of the day care and have not received any answers.

Kimberly Bodner, a graduate student and parent, said she was surprised that a decision had been made so quickly, especially since no plans for the future had been put in place for residents or parents.
Parents were able to voice their concerns, but Bodner said she wasn't sure if those concerns would be addressed.

Bodner and her husband are still searching for a new child care facility for their son. She said some of the places were as much as or cheaper than the center but location, part-time care and child-to-caretaker ratio were still major factors to consider.

A history of problems
Wednesday was not the first time the idea of demolishing the nearly 60-year-old complex has been raised. An MU housing plan from 2008 recommended University Village be vacated and demolished by 2011, determining that it would be too expensive to renovate. The report identified walkways, such as the one that collapsed Feb. 22, as safety hazards.

The university chose to keep the complex open because of its low cost, proximity to campus and family atmosphere, Basi said in an interview on March 5.

After the collapse, an inspection by Trabue, Hansen and Hinshaw Inc., a local structural engineering firm hired by MU, identified three other walkways in danger of "catastrophic collapse," according to the firm's reports. Wooden beams have been installed under all University Village walkways to provide extra stability and allow residents to continue living there.

Additional lateral braces will be installed beneath several other walkways within the next few days, Minor told residents Wednesday night. He said engineers have been going to University Village a couple times a week to re-inspect the walkways and make sure they're safe.

**Minor said he was told by the engineers that the concrete failure that caused the walkway of Building 707 to collapse could not have been predicted even a day before it happened.**

Beyond demolition, the future of the property now occupied by University Village is uncertain. Minor told residents that it was too early to tell what would happen to the property.

"The current plans are to at least, at the current stage, to demolish the buildings once they're vacated, and then we'll be determine what is the best use of that property for re-use for the university," he said.
House committee signs off on budget with contingency spending

By Rudi Keller

Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 8:04 pm

JEFFERSON CITY — The House Budget Committee voted Wednesday to give a little bit more to higher education than its chairman originally proposed as members finalized a plan to send to the House floor for debate.

The spending plan for the year beginning July 1 has nearly $300 million in contingency spending, money that can only be used if revenue exceeds legislative predictions. It also rejects, for the second year, Gov. Jay Nixon’s call to expand Medicaid at federal expense and includes several items intended to send messages to state and federal executive agencies.

The committee voted on 13 spending bills for the year beginning July 1, passing most unanimously. The sharpest disagreement was on the bill that would have provided $1.7 billion for expanding Medicaid coverage with federal support, with the committee approving that bill on a 19-10 party-line vote.

Committee Chairman Rick Stream, R-Kirkwood, was not able to give firm totals for the budget proposal, which arrived as a $27.7 billion plan from Gov. Jay Nixon. It will be substantially below Nixon’s figures without Medicaid expansion and after almost $40 million was cut from proposed increases to colleges and universities.

The budget will be debated on the House floor in two weeks, after lawmakers return from their midsession break that begins when they adjourn Thursday.

As approved Wednesday, the budget provides an overall 3 percent increase for colleges and universities, but is short of Nixon’s plan to give a 5 percent average increase to state universities and 4 percent to community colleges. Nixon also proposed a 3 percent increase in permanent funding to support science, technology, engineering and mathematics education that is not included in the committee’s proposal.

Stream had proposed limiting the higher education increase to 2 percent. Reps. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia, and Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, worked to boost that to 3 percent — an extra $9.2 million. Rowden secured $7.2 million, but the money is from a fund that would only be available if state revenues exceed legislative projections. Kelly won $2 million of the total from general revenue, a more secure funding source.

Stream set up a “surplus reserve fund” to park revenue not anticipate by the legislative base budget. Nixon and lawmakers were unable to agree on an overall revenue estimate. Rowden tapped that fund for his boost to higher education and said it is a statement of legislative priority for extra money.
“It is important for us as the House Budget Committee to make a statement of our support for higher education,” he said.

As it will go to the floor, the budget includes a $13.1 million increase for the University of Missouri, to about $420.6 million. The increase is slightly above 3 percent because the University of Missouri System met all five performance goals last year and both Nixon and lawmakers support providing money based on those measures.

The House voted 143-0 yesterday to make division of new state higher education money based on performance a permanent part of the budget process.

The message items, as usual, took large amounts of the committee’s time as it was finalizing its proposed spending plan for the year that begins July 1. Some of the messages direct agencies to do something, including eradicate Asian carp, river otters and the centralized issuance of driver’s licenses. Others directed some to stop certain activities, including allowing undocumented foreigners to attend college at the same cost as state residents or, in the case of the National Park Service, to just give the Ozark National Scenic Riverways to the state.

Stream amended the budget to include $500,000 for the Department of Agriculture to eradicate Asian carp, an invasive species that responds to motorboat vibrations by leaping out of the water. Rep. Robert Ross, R-Yukon, added an amendment to the Department of Conservation budget to eradicate river otters.

River otters are eating large numbers of fish in some places. The conservation agency introduced the otters to the state to restore a native animal. Ross’ plan would pay $50 for every otter a trapper or hunter proved they had killed.

“I wish the department would have had the foresight to train these otters to go after the Asian carp,” he said.

Missouri House Committee Passes State Budget For FY2015

BY MARSHALL GRIFFIN

NO MU MENTION

House budget writers have passed Missouri’s state budget for Fiscal Year 2015, which begins July 1st.
The roughly $28 billion spending plan still includes a so-called "bifurcated" funding increase for the state's K-12 schools, which would be around $122 million if projections by House and Senate Republican leaders turns out to be correct. If Governor Jay Nixon's rosier revenue picture turns out to be correct, then K-12 spending would increase by $278 million.

**Medicaid Expansion blocked again**

The House Budget Committee discussed and voted out all 13 budget bills Wednesday and fielded several proposed amendments, including two that would have expanded Medicaid. They were both sponsored by State Rep. Jill Schupp, D-Creve Coeur.

"I take advantage of every opportunity I have to talk about the importance of the expansion of Medicaid in the state of Missouri," Schupp said. "Our hospitals, particularly our rural hospitals, our social workers, our Missouri Chamber (of Commerce), our doctors, our do-gooders, and most importantly, the people of Missouri, have said 'do this!'"

Schupp's first attempt to expand Medicaid would have increased the state's allocation by $21.3 million and drawn down $102 million in federal funds. The second attempt was much larger: it would have raised the state's Medicaid allocation by $53.6 million and would have drawn down $1.64 billion from Washington. Both attempts were voted down.

**Battle over Ozarks Nat. Scenic Riverways**

Democrats also tried, but failed, to block $6 million from being used to operate the Ozarks National Scenic Riverways in the event that it ever becomes a state park. Federal legislation has been filed in the U.S. House of Representatives by 8th District Missouri Congressman Jason Smith. Chris Kelly of Columbia, the ranking Democrat on the Budget Committee, strongly criticized the idea of a state takeover of the National Park property.

"This is not just happening in Missouri," Kelly said. "There are similar efforts in Shenandoah (National Park) in Virginia (and) in Zion (National Park) in Utah...this is a concerted effort to destroy the National Park system in the United States of America, and the people of this state will not put up with it."

Republicans on the committee argued that the new general management plan for Ozarks National Riverways is too restrictive and would harm the local economy.

"What's been going on is a continual restriction on usage of that area," said State Rep. Kevin Elmer, R-Nixa. "The direction we've seen from the National Park Service is flawed and too restrictive, and I think that it is important for us at this time to send a message to the federal government that we would like to take control of this area."
There were six amendments that would have blocked usage of state funds to operate a new state park at the current Ozark Nat. Scenic Riverways, and none of them were adopted.

**2013 document scanning controversy not forgotten**

Another partisan issue that took shape as a budget amendment would de-fund the salaries of the directors of the Department of Revenue and the Motor Vehicles Division. Democrats called the move political payback over last year's driver's license document scanning controversy.

"I have a problem when we have our state employees, probably the lowest paid in the nation, I really have trouble with this method of -- I don't know -- getting even or trying to send a message," said State Rep. Jeanne Kirkton, D-Webster Groves.

The sponsor, Republican Robert Ross of Yukon, Mo., denied that his amendment was an attempt to get even with Governor Jay Nixon, a Democrat, over the political dustup.

"I think when you see an absolute lack of concern in the way that the policies are developed within some of these state agencies for the concern of the citizens that they're reported to serve, I think that this is an alternative," Ross said.

The amendment passed on a voice vote. Budget Chairman Rick Stream, R-Kirkwood, says that means, for now, that the DOR and DMV heads would be "working for free" during Fiscal Year 2015.

Governor Nixon denied any wrongdoing and last year signed a law banning the practice of scanning documents of driver's license applicants.

**No in-state college tuition for those "unlawfully present" in US, Teach for America not cut**

The Republican majority on the Budget Committee also added language to the Higher Education budget that would bar in-state tuition to colleges students who are found to be in the United States illegally.

"I'm one of the apparently crazy Republicans who think that we should reform immigration at the federal level, (but) we haven't done that yet and I don't know if that's gonna happen any time soon," said State Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia. "While I completely understand the emotional argument, the law is not an emotional thing...I think what this does is provide clarity to our higher education institutions as to how they conduct their business in this regard...whether we like it or not, these folks are not here legally."

Democrats opposed the amendment.
"This really gets in the way of a positive outcome that we want to see by trying to charge these students who for all intents and purposes have lived here, have grown up here, just like all of us have, and who want to participate and move themselves and their families forward," Schupp said.

Schupp, meanwhile, sponsored an amendment to the K-12 budget that would have cut $1 million from Missouri’s Teach for America program, which recruits people to teach in low-income communities for two years.

"That money goes for the administration of the program," Schupp said. "None of that money goes directly to any of our teachers to help with their salaries."

Stream defended the program, saying that Teach for America teachers were a great help to Normandy schools and outperformed the district’s tenured teachers.

Tourism, invasive species, etc.
Budget writers easily approved a less controversial amendment that would shift $200,000 from tourism to adoption resource centers in St. Louis and Kansas City. State Rep. Mike Lair, R-Chillicothe, summed up the feelings of most committee members when he said, "I hate to see it coming from tourism, but how can you go against kids?" It was sponsored by State Rep. Jeremy LaFaver, D-Kansas City.

A few amendments that deal with invasive species were approved. One would provide $500,000 for the eradication of the Asian Carp, which have been spreading through the Mississippi and Missouri river systems for years. Another would spend just over $413,000 on eradicating the multiflora rose plant, which was introduced to combat erosion but is now a threat to pastures. Both were included in the so-called MEGA amendment, which combined numerous budget items generally considered to be routine. That amendment also contained $60,000 for public radio and television stations in Missouri.

The full Missouri House is scheduled to take up the state budget when lawmakers return from their spring break, which begins Friday.

Follow Marshall Griffin on Twitter: @MarshallGReport
COLUMBIA — It was the challenge that caught his eye.

_Before the job of director was ever offered to him, David Rosenbaum wrote a 38-page report, "Toward Sustainability," to see if he could diagnose the University of Missouri Press' issues. The report included an assessment of the Press' publishing program and detailed recommendations moving forward, including a revised mission statement._

"This is merely a first step," Rosenbaum said in the introduction.

Since he started on Nov. 1, Rosenbaum, 44, has taken the next few steps in his pursuit to treat the Press' issues and bring it toward sustainability. In particular, he has focused on financial organization and the promotion of the Press' "backlist" of books published two or more years ago.

**Solving the backlist issue**

Currently, the Press issues a seasonal catalog that promotes its "frontlist" of forthcoming books and books that were published in the past year. This is the Press' only promotional catalog, something Rosenbaum saw as problematic.

"The life of some of these books goes on for many years," he said. "But when it's already been promoted once in the seasonal catalog, the book disappears. It's for sale ... but we're not promoting it, and that seemed to me to be a tremendous oversight."

About 80 percent of the Press' sales are already driven by the backlist, which includes about a thousand titles, Rosenbaum said.

"It's almost as though these titles have been a carefully guarded secret," he said.
Rosenbaum was also concerned about the seasonal catalog's lack of focus. He said most university presses are well-known for publishing in specific subject areas, though he couldn't figure out what the UM Press specialized in from looking at the seasonal catalog.

After Rosenbaum looked at the backlist, he found the Press does specialize in four main areas:

- History
- Literary criticism and journalism
- Missouri regional interest
- Political science and political philosophy

The Press will begin issuing subject-based catalogs that will re-promote books in these four areas. Rosenbaum said this will cover about 90 percent of the backlist.

The first catalog will feature about 443 new, forthcoming and backlist titles. It will be available in April, and the other catalogs will come by the end of the year, he said.

**Organizing financials**

Rosenbaum has also created documents to forecast the financial potential of books the Press is considering publishing, a system that was not being used when he took over. The documents calculate figures such as the gross margin – the difference between a book's sales revenue and its cost.

Rosenbaum said the target gross margin on each book is 60 percent to 70 percent, an industry standard. This means he wants 60 percent to 70 percent of the value of each book to contribute to the ongoing functioning of the Press and not to just cover the direct costs of publishing it.

He said this margin should be enough to move the Press away from requiring large subsidies and in the direction of self-sustainability.

"This will take years to bear fruit, but it will bear fruit," he said.

**Connecting personal past and future**
In the next few years, Rosenbaum said he wants to expand the publishing program into the sciences and professions (anything that would be considered a vocation, such as nursing). These are areas explicitly mentioned in the university's mission, but the Press has never published in them. Rosenbaum, however, does have professional experience publishing in those areas.

Despite majoring in history and political science at the University of South Alabama, Rosenbaum has almost exclusively worked in scientific publishing.

At his previous job as director of product development and project management at the American Heart Association, Rosenbaum managed domestic and international publishing lines in subjects such as advanced cardiovascular life support, basic life support and pediatrics. Before that, he worked as senior acquisitions editor for Elsevier, a publishing company that publishes medical and scientific literature, where he managed publishing lines in earth and environmental science.

Rosenbaum has worked at both commercial and nonprofit publishing companies in his 18-year career. He prefers to work for a nonprofit, he said.

"You can serve a mission that's bigger than making a few fast bucks," Rosenbaum said. "(Generating revenue) is part of our mission ... but our entire mission is to also make sure that good works of scholarship get published if they deserve to be published."

It is this half of the mission that makes university presses necessary, he said. They can hit the smaller niche markets that might not see the light of day at commercial publishing companies. Presses also provide peer review and help get authors tenured through publication, two processes Rosenbaum said he sees as extremely important.

Reaching out to authors
At the end of January, Rosenbaum sent a letter out to about 950 of the Press' authors to tell them about his plans in an effort to reassure them of the Press' viability. He said some authors didn't even know the Press was still around.

Gary Kremer, executive director of the State Historical Society of Missouri, was one of the authors that asked for their rights back when the Press almost closed in 2012. He said he has faith in the Press now and just signed a contract to publish his newest book, "Race and Meaning," with the Press in the fall.
Kremer also said the State Historical Society of Missouri recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Press to co-publish a new series of books called "Missouri Turning Points."

Ned Stuckey-French, an associate professor at Florida State University, echoed Kremer's sentiments. Stuckey-French was one of the leaders in the effort to save the Press in 2012 and has published one book, "The American Essay in the American Century," with the Press in 2011.

"I'm optimistic," Stuckey-French said. "I think that we all learned a lot (from the near closing), and I think the future looks good."

**Rosenbaum is also getting positive feedback from MU faculty and administration.** He said he got a strong reception at an MU Faculty Council meeting on Feb. 13.

"I think we have greater support now than this Press has ever had from the university," Rosenbaum said. "It's going to be a slow build, but we want to prove that we're a credible, sustainable university press with a strong program in areas that these authors care about. We just need to get that word back out."

---

**Third annual MU diversity awards recognize faculty, staff, students**

Wednesday, March 12, 2014 | 4:44 p.m. CDT; updated 1:25 a.m. CDT, Thursday, March 13, 2014

BY **ALYSON BEAN**

COLUMBIA — **Winners of the 2014 Inclusive Excellence Awards and Faculty Achievement Awards in Diversity were recognized Tuesday in Memorial Union's Stotler Lounge.**
This is the third year the ceremony has been presented as part of the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative.

The ceremony presented six Inclusive Excellence Awards in five categories to people or groups who, in the past two years, have made outstanding contributions to the MU community in any area of diversity.

Three Faculty Achievement Awards in Diversity were presented to faculty members who exemplified teaching diversity in the classroom and across MU’s campus.

More than 70 people or groups were nominated for the 2014 awards.

Each recipient of an Inclusive Excellence Award or a Faculty Achievement Award in Diversity received a glass award and a monetary prize.

In her welcoming statement, Noor Azizan-Gardner, MU’s chief diversity officer, thanked the Chancellor’s Diversity Initiative team, the selection committee and the student ambassadors who were present. She introduced Deputy Chancellor Michael Middleton, who introduced the Inclusive Excellence Awards and presented them alongside Azizan-Gardner and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

The Inclusive Excellence Award winners were:

- **Undergraduate category:** Bridget Botchway Bradley, a senior in journalism.
- **Graduate category:** Elizabeth Hunt, a master’s student in educational and counseling psychology, and Jiangyun Zhu, a master's student in chemical engineering.
- **Faculty category:** Kathleen Quinn, acting associate dean for rural programs and programs director of the Area Health Education Center in the MU School of Medicine.
- **Staff category:** Robert Ross, coordinator of affinity relations for the Mizzou Alumni Association.
- **Group category:** Community 360, a student organization at MU. Kyle Gillespie accepted the award on the group’s behalf, dedicating it to the MU campus.

Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for student affairs, presented the Faculty Achievement Awards in Diversity to Chris Lee, assistant teaching professor of biochemistry; Mar
Soria, assistant professor of Spanish; and Srirupa Prasad, assistant visiting professor of women’s and gender studies and sociology.

MU researcher studies effects of starting kindergarten early

A University of Missouri researcher has found that the youngest kindergartners are about five times more likely to be held back, compared to the oldest students.

“Research on retention has been somewhat more consistent in suggesting that holding children back a year is not the most effective practice,” said Francis Huang, assistant professor at MU. “Requiring children to repeat a grade is not only expensive for parents and school districts, but it also can affect children’s self-esteem and their ability to adjust in the future.”

Huang suggested that schools should continue to be more flexible in assisting kindergarteners of varying ages so that they can proceed normally, rather than requiring them to repeat the grade.

“The youngest students in a classroom can be nine to 12 months less mature than their oldest peers,” Huang said. “Teachers need to meet students where they are developmentally and adjust instructions based on a student’s ability. Studies have shown that only a small number of teachers modify classroom instruction to deal with a diverse set of students.”

Huang analyzed data from the nationally-representative “Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99” and found that, on average, the youngest kindergarteners were about five times more likely to be retained compared to the oldest kindergartners. However, Huang found that children with higher attentiveness, task persistence, and eagerness to learn were less likely to repeat a grade.

In addition, Huang also noticed that a child’s height was associated with the likelihood of a child being retained. This relationship existed even after accounting for differences in children’s academic abilities, socioeconomic status, age and fine motor skills.
“If two children are having the same difficulties in the classroom and one child happens to be shorter than the other child, then the smaller, younger child has a much higher likelihood of being retained,” Huang said.

Huang’s study, “Further Understanding Factors Associated with Grade Retention: Birthday Effects and Socioemotional Skills,” was published in the *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*.

---

**Why We Need College Ratings**

March 13, 2014

**BY**

*Carrie Warick*

**NO MU MENTION**

The more expensive a purchase, the more important it is to be a smart consumer. Many Americans value labeling and rankings from food (nutrition labels) to appliances (energy ratings) to vehicles (gas mileage and crash safety) to health plans (Obamacare’s bronze, silver, gold, and platinum). Yet for one of the most expensive purchases a person will ever make – a college education – there is a dearth of reliable and meaningful comparable information.

In August, President Obama directed the U.S. Department of Education to develop a federal college ratings system with two goals: (1) to serve as a college search tool for students and (2) to function as an accountability measure for institutions of higher education.

Under the president’s proposal, ratings will be available for consumer use in 2015, and by 2018, they would be tied to the colleges’ receipt of federal student aid. Many colleges and universities have been protesting ever since, especially about the accountability goal.
But improving the information imbalance about higher education outcomes is a key step toward improving graduation rates and slowing the rise in student loan debt. Although accountability mechanisms are a complex issue that may well take somewhat longer than 2018 to develop, student advocates agree on the following: We must move forward now with the multifactor rating information that higher education consumers desperately need. Furthermore, the administration’s rating system should provide comparable data on several factors relevant to college choice so that students can choose which are most important to them, rather than imposing the government’s judgment about which handful of factors should be combined into a single institutional rating.

As we evaluate the case for federal consumer ratings, let’s first set aside the 15 percent of college students who attend the most selective institutions and enjoy generally very high graduation rates. They may feel well-served by rankings like Barron’s and U.S. News, which emphasize reputation, financial resources, and admissions selectivity.

But for the 85 percent of students who attend non- or less-selective institutions, the institution they choose has far greater consequences. For these “post-traditional” students, college choice could mean the difference between dropping out with an unmanageable debt load or graduating with a degree and moving on to a satisfying career.

To share a real example, consider three Philadelphia universities: a suburban private, a Catholic private, and an urban state. These institutions are all within 30 miles, enroll students with similar academic characteristics, and serve similar percentages of Pell-eligible students. If you are a local, low-income student of color who wants to attend college close to home, how should you decide where to go?

What if you knew that the suburban private school’s graduation rate for underrepresented minority students (31 percent) scored much lower than the Catholic private (54 percent) and urban state school (61 percent)? Or that the urban state and private Catholic schools have lower net prices for low-income students? Would that affect your choice? (Thanks to Education Trust’s College Results Online for these great data.)

A rating system with multiple measures (rather than a single one) could greatly help this student. Armed with facts about comparable graduation rates, admissions criteria, and net prices, she can investigate her options further, ask informed questions, and ultimately make a stronger decision about which institution is the best fit for her.

A ratings system designed for the 85 percent of students going to less-selective institutions will help students get the information most important to them. Many consumer rating schemas include multiple measures. Car buyers can compare fuel efficiency, price and safety ratings as well as more subjective ratings of comfort or “driver experience” from a variety of sources. Some buy Honda Civics for gas mileage and safety, others choose more expensive options for luxury features or handling.

Similarly, prospective college students need to know not just about accessibility/selectivity (average GPA, SAT/ACT scores), but also about affordability (net price by income tier, average student loan debt, ability to repay loans) and accountability (graduation rates by race and by income). The information should be sortable by location (to aid place-bound students) and by institution type (two-year, four-year, public, private) for students to compare side by side.
The data to fuel the rating system are for the most part already available, although some are in need of improvement. As is now widely acknowledged, we must change the federal calculation of graduation rates as soon as possible to account for part-time and transfer students, and we must collect and report institutional Pell Grant recipient graduation rates as part of the federal data system (IPEDS). Over the long term, we should also find a valid way to assess work force outcomes for students.

But let’s not delay a ratings system that will serve students any further. Once the system is up and running, we can turn to the more complex and politically difficult question of how to use federal financial aid dollars to incentivize better institutional outcomes.

the maneater

Resident-permit parking probable for East Campus

The quest to solve congested parking on East Campus has hit a speed bump without a solution in sight.

Many residents in the area have difficulty parking in front of or near their house, and commuters are at the root of the issue. MU students and employees often park and walk to campus, leaving their cars on residential streets and blocking already narrow roads. Residents have proposed some solutions, such as parking permits tied to license plate numbers or metered spaces, but after two brainstorming meetings at City Hall, residents and the city are still having a difficult time agreeing on an answer.

Defining the problem

Longtime East Campus resident Anne Halferty said the problem is one involving students who do not live on East Campus but who park there and walk to class.

“East Campus isn’t a parking lot for people who aren’t willing to pay to park in one of the commuter lots or pay to live on East Campus,” Halferty said.

Halferty lives next to students. If there’s a parking issue, she can knock on their door and get them to move their car. If it’s a commuter, she can’t ask them to move their vehicle when they’ve blocked her in.

“There are enough parking spaces for students on this campus,” East Campus resident and MU professor Clyde Bentley said. “The problem is they’re a long way away. Students don’t want to make the hike or take the shuttle.”

Richard Stone, the city of Columbia traffic engineer spearheading the project, said the call for permit parking was initiated by residents in contact with their councilwoman, Barbara Hoppe. Residents asked that the city take a look at its parking problem, and City Council asked the Public Works Department to evaluate the issue.
“For the most part, my perspective is that there’s not much of a problem,” East Campus landlord Wendy Warnken said. “People who commute and park there on the streets have been doing that for as long as I can remember.”

Warnken said her parents have owned property on East Campus for years. She lived on Anthony Street during her college years and used to see the same commuters park in front of her house daily.

Warnken said she thinks the city is unaware that it is working to help homeowners outside the problem area. She said the city is not recognizing the area is mostly populated by students.

“We’re participating in this because I’m pretty sure this will be a done deal if we don’t all speak up now, and I’d love to see student voices in the mix,” Warnken said. “That could change everything. I’d rather be participating so that our residents are able to park freely because this is the neighborhood they live in.”

Junior Sam Dicke said it doesn’t bother him to have students parking in front of his house on East Campus.

“Normally, if you have a house on East Campus, you have a parking lot or place to park. I don’t see it as a problem,” Dicke said. “It’s a student area, close to campus and a public street.”

Potential problem solvers

To the frustration of many residents, potential parking solutions are as numerous as the problems they intend to solve.

Solutions suggested by residents included limiting permit parking to working hours, tying permits to tag numbers so they cannot be sold to nonresidents or installing meters across the neighborhood.

“I kind of do agree that maybe we want to look at an (resident-permit parking-only system) that spans the entire area, but I want to do that with knowledge going into it,” Stone said.

Residents said they worry commuters and illegal parkers will continue to move further back into the neighborhood. Many were also concerned about the aesthetics of potential meters.

Stone said one benefit of meters is that they allow those without parking permits, mainly guests and friends, to park in the area temporarily. According to numbers presented at the Nov. 20 interested parties meeting, there is room for an estimated 372 to 380 metered spaces in the area.

“It isn’t that I want to be a parking meter salesman, but meters can provide a way to answer some of those questions. I think they could still be a component,” Stone said.

But residents still are not convinced.

Halferty said meters don’t solve the issue. If students know there are meters in the area, they will still speed through the neighborhood to find a place to park, despite having to pay.

“If there were a meter on my street, it would be a nightmare because there would be that many more cars coming through,” Halferty said.
She said there were times when her grandmother, who lived on Ross Street, needed emergency care, but an ambulance couldn’t get to her because cars were parked too far over, blocking the street. The family had to carry Halferty’s grandmother down to the end of the street to the ambulance.

“East Campus needs a solution that benefits all residents, both homeowners and the students who pay to live there,” Halferty said. “A parking permit, perhaps combined with some strategically placed parking meters, will help protect students who pay to live in the East Campus area as well as protect the homeowners who raise and care for their families in the same neighborhood.”

Bentley said he thinks the meters will play a role in the solution, but they are not completely the answer to the problem.

“The (solution) that will end up making sense will be the resident-paid hang tag and a small number of parking meters in areas close to campus,” Bentley said.

**Steps to a solution**

Even though progress has been made, Stone said there is still work to be done.

“We intend to have one more meeting where we take that feedback from the interested parties meetings and put all of it into a thought process to try to come up with a program that is as close to census as we can get,” Stone said.

Stone said many ideas were generated at the meetings, and city staff has been able to decipher some things that could be done in a sustainable manner.

“We’re going to have to do something, as you get more student apartments far out,” Bentley said. “We’re going to have to find a way to accommodate those cars or trade the cars for something else.”

A final meeting is scheduled for 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. March 19 in City Hall. After that meeting, staff could present information to City Council for review. There is potential for City Council to send the plan back for revision.

If the council approves a measure, the possible course of action involves passing an ordinance in the spring, preparation in the summer and implementation in fall 2014.
Hinkson Creek group discusses process for draft report

Officials likely to visit in May.

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 2:00 pm

A local committee of Hinkson Creek stakeholders — landowners, farmers and representatives of the city, county, school district and developers — is in the process of drafting a report that outlines steps that have been taken to improve the creek.

The stakeholders committee, along with science and action teams, is part of a two-year-old project that is using an approach called collaborative adaptive management to address pollution-control by alleviating stormwater runoff into Hinkson Creek.

"A lot of what we've done is building an understanding" of stormwater issues "so people can make wise decisions" when it comes to improving the health of the Hinkson, said Joe Engeln, water quality specialist with the Department of Natural Resources. Engeln also is part of the science team.

Among other things, the committee has advocated for ongoing work to expand wetlands at the Forum Nature Area and redirecting overflow of Twin Lakes from the creek to the nature area. The stakeholders group also has called for riparian or stream bank improvements — planting trees — to stabilize stream banks and to monitor the effects on aquatic life.

The progress report is required by a five-party agreement reached in March 2012 that includes Boone County, the city of Columbia, the University of Missouri, DNR and the Environmental Protection Agency. Those parties agreed to use the collaborative adaptive management process to address Hinkson Creek water quality issues in incremental steps rather than impose strict stormwater runoff requirements called for by a pollution-control plan outlined in a Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, document established by DNR and EPA.

Shawn Grindstaff, EPA facilitator for the stakeholder committee, said the committee needed to have "a sense of urgency" to file its report considering that EPA Regional Supervisor Karl Brooks and DNR Director Sara Parker-Pauley want to attend an upcoming meeting to mark the second anniversary of the agreement.

"It's very positive they want to come help and be part" of the process, Grindstaff said. That meeting likely will take place in May.
Hank Ottinger, the Sierra Club's local representative, offered to write the first draft of a report that will outline field trips, committee discussions, actions taken and other background information.

Southern District Boone County Commissioner Karen Miller has called the agreement "historic" because the plan brought together both regulators and regulated entities.

Stormwater managers for the county, city and university, which jointly hold a permit that allows discharge of stormwater runoff into local streams, warned that implementation of the TMDL document's call for a nearly 40 percent reduction of runoff into the creek would require hundreds of millions of dollars in retention ponds, rain gardens, bioswales and other structures without evidence that runoff reduction would solve the creek's problems.

The process that started in 2012 came 14 years after a federal lawsuit was filed against the EPA to clean up Hinkson Creek and more than 200 other lakes and streams that are considered "impaired" for violating the federal Clean Water Act.

Preliminary results of ongoing water quality monitoring of the Hinkson will be presented to the stakeholders group at its next meeting.

---

**Ryan Ferguson civil case has precedent**

Law professor: Success is rare.

By [Alan Burdziak](https://example.com/alan-burdziak)

*Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 2:00 pm* Comments (13)

To win a civil wrongful-conviction lawsuit against a governmental entity or an official in his or her supervisory capacity is a tall order because plaintiffs have a large burden put in place after years of U.S. Supreme Court cases, University of Missouri Law Professor Rodney Uphoff said Tuesday.

Ryan Ferguson, who was released in November after being locked up for almost a decade on murder and robbery convictions, filed a civil suit this week against 13 defendants, including seven Columbia police detectives, former Boone County prosecutor and now Circuit Judge Kevin Crane and former Columbia police Chief Randy Boehm, as well as the county and city. Ferguson's attorneys are seeking $100 million in damages on nine counts, including four alleged constitutional violations, false arrest, defamation, and fabrication and suppression of evidence.

Winning these civil suits is difficult but not unheard of, Uphoff said.
"Across the country there are some criminal defendants who have been wrongfully convicted who have won some sizable jury awards, and in some instances there have been some sizable settlements, but that's a minority of cases," Uphoff said.

When it comes to Crane, who is only listed in the suit as a defendant in the defamation claim, he can't be sued in his capacity as prosecutor because of a 1976 U.S. Supreme Court decision that provides prosecutors with absolute immunity, Uphoff said. The Supreme Court used that precedent in a controversial 5-4 decision in 2011 that reversed a jury trial verdict that awarded a Louisiana man $14 million for being wrongfully convicted of robbery and murder. John Thompson was found innocent 18 years later because prosecutors deliberately withheld evidence, a violation of another precedent-setting Supreme Court case, Brady v. Maryland, decided in the 1960s. That case enshrined in federal law that prosecutors and defense attorneys must share all evidence material with the other side.

Brady violations are what got Ferguson out of prison, specifically one by then-Boone County investigator William Haws, a defendant in Ferguson's suit. Ferguson was convicted in 2005 of second-degree murder and first-degree robbery for the 2001 death of Tribune Sports Editor Kent Heitholt. A judge vacated the conviction last year.

With the reversal of Thompson's fortunes, the Supreme Court made it more difficult for plaintiffs in wrongful conviction suits to take on a public office. For Ferguson, that comes into play in suing the city and county as indemnifiers for all other defendants.

"Unless the plaintiffs can show there is negligence on the part of the city in their training or supervision," winning will be unlikely, "or sometimes it's cast as a negligent hiring case," Uphoff said. "The plaintiff has to show it's more than one employee acting wrongfully."

In Connick v. Thompson, the case of the Louisiana man, the district attorney in the case admitted his office needed better training and that he didn't understand "the duty he was supposed to impart," which led to an office with one of America's worst records in failing to share evidence, according to a 2011 New York Times editorial.

Justice Clarence Thomas, writing for the majority, said Thompson failed to prove that "the office 'disregarded a known or obvious consequence' of its inaction," the Times' editorial board wrote.

Because of that decision, Uphoff said, Ferguson's main attorney, Chicago-based Kathleen Zellner, and her colleagues are going to have to show not only did the police and investigators purposefully fabricate reports and evidence and bullied or coerced witnesses into making incriminating statements, as the complaint alleges, but also that Boehm and Crane knew about it but did nothing.

The evidence supporting their claims is not laid out in the complaint, and Uphoff said it is possible that Zellner and her team either have evidence not yet filed or they expect witnesses mentioned in the complaint will be able to make a convincing case come trial.

However, Uphoff said, "It's impossible for me or for you to know whose version of the truth is the real version of the truth."