McCaskill Takes Fight Against Sexual Assault To Campus

BY DALE SINGER

After working to reduce problems with sexual assault in the military, U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., is turning her attention to the same issue at the nation’s colleges and universities.

Both settings, she said Thursday, have ways they are alike in how such cases are treated.

“People feel they’re under the microscope,” she told reporters after sitting in on a training session for personnel at Saint Louis University. “They feel that if they come forward, not only could there be repercussions in terms of their being challenged, but how they’re viewed by their colleagues and peers on campus or on base.

“There were so many similarities that I realized all of the problems we were addressing in the military system, we needed to take a look at all of those issues on college campuses.”

Issues of sexual assault on campus have drawn increased attention at the University of Missouri because of the case of Sasha Menu Courey. The one-time swimmer on the Columbia campus committed suicide in 2011; it later surfaced that she had said she was raped, possibly by a football player, more than a year before she took her life.

Tim Wolfe, president of the four-campus university system, has moved aggressively to make sure that the proper procedures and attitudes are in place so that students feel comfortable reporting such incidents. A recent report commissioned by the Board of Curators said the university may not have done anything illegal, but it did not have the mechanisms in place that federal law calls for.

McCaskill, who cited her experience both as a prosecutor and as an auditor, said that under federal Title IX, colleges and universities need to have a process in place that makes it easy for students to report any problems and be confident that the school will follow through, thoroughly and with sensitivity.
She has sent a lengthy survey to schools asking about their personnel and procedures in such cases. Answers will be confidential, she said, so she is confident that it will be accurate.

“This is about good data,” she said. “This is not about 'gotcha'. None of these universities is going to be exposed for any of the information they give us. So the good, the bad and the ugly is only going to allow us to make better decisions. It’s not going to call anybody out.”

After getting the information back, she said, laws may have to be strengthened to make sure the goals of Title IX are met.

“It’s complex,” McCaskill said, “and that’s why it’s really important that we don’t shoot from the hip on this subject. You could come up with some provision that you want to change the law about and get a lot of attention around it, and frankly that’s probably not going to change much.”

The problems, she added, are varied, involving schools, communities and the students themselves.

“One of the big challenges,” she said, “is jurisdiction, the conflict between university policy departments and municipal police departments. The fact is that most of these cases are not stranger cases. The defense in these cases is consent. So you have the issue of incapacitation with alcohol. You have the issue of self-doubt with victims.

“So a lot of it is making sure that victims get to the right place, get the right information and the right support services, and then that there is a seamless communication between law enforcement and public safety on campus and law enforcement and public safety that’s responsible for prosecutions.”

Among the student body, McCaskill said, changes also are needed.

“A lot of this is educating young women, and young men, about what the crime is,” she said, and that just because they maybe had bad judgment about how much they drank, that doesn’t mean somebody can commit a felony. That’s not a free pass.”

Once that hurdle is overcome, McCaskill said, anyone who wants to press a claim needs to be able to navigate the system easily.

“It really comes back to the basic notion of do victims know where they can go, do they know where they can get good information and are they getting the support they need to encourage them to come out of the shadows and hold their perpetrators accountable,” she said.

**Too much whack-a-mole**

When college athletes are involved, she added, the issue takes on a whole new dimension.

“There’s no question that there have been some ugly episodes around protecting athletes at some universities around the country,” she said. “But I think it’s more likely that most universities are hampered by frankly not taking all of this as seriously as they should, in terms of reporting.

“And there are problems with the collision of state laws and federal laws that sometimes conflict with one another. You might have a state law that says you can’t share that information, and then you have a federal law that requires
that you share that information. So sorting all that out is what we’re trying to do. Can we do the structure of laws and regulations in a way that will help universities do a better job.”

McCaskill said she thinks schools are generally sincere in trying to address the problem.

“I don’t think there’s really any competent university that wants to sweep this problem under the rug,” she said. “Because in the long run, when you do that, the problem just gets bigger. Kids on campus know, and their families know. So you don’t really hide it. All you do is wait for it to break out in a very ugly way that reflects poorly on the institution.”

Asked whether harsher penalties are needed, perhaps in terms of money, McCaskill said any sanctions have to be realistic.

“I don’t think when you threaten a university that you’re going to take away all of their student loan funding, that is taken very seriously,” she said. “Because you’re not going to punish thousands of innocent students by taking away their student loans because the university mishandled something or because there was a case that wasn’t reported accurately.”

And, she added, the issue has to be addressed on a more coordinated basis, not piecemeal.

“The way they’re doing this now is a little bit like whack-a-mole,” McCaskill said, “where the resources at the Department of Justice and the Department of Education are limited enough that they’ll go to one university and get a result, and then they’ll go to another university and get a result. Meanwhile, there’s this undercurrent at lots of universities where they don’t even have a Title IX officer identified.”

Underlying everything, she emphasized, is the need for victims to know they will be taken seriously and for schools to make sure the structure is in place to make victims feel heard.

“There’s no question,” McCaskill said, “that one of the biggest hurdles we have is making sure that young women and young men who come to college campuses understand what rape really is, and when they have been raped. There’s this notion that I don’t want anything to happen, I just don’t want to ever have to see him again.

“Very rarely does someone rape only one time. For every victim who decides to keep it a secret, there’s probably going to be another victim that’s going to keep it a secret. That may go on for a long time until someone has the courage to step out of the shadows. What my work is is to try to make sure we give them every tool possible to give them the confidence to step out of the shadows.”

McCaskill takes aim at campus sexual assaults

By Elisa Crouch ecrouch@post-dispatch.com 314-340-8119
U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill has turned her attention to sexual assault on college campuses, saying the challenges at some universities are much like those she encountered when pushing to overhaul military policies involving rape.

“It’s been a problem for decades,” McCaskill, D-Mo., said Thursday after a meeting about the issue at St. Louis University.

“A closed environment. People who feel they’re under the microscope and if they come forward not only could there be repercussions in terms of them being challenged, but how they’re viewed.”

Last week, an independent report said the University of Missouri-Columbia failed to act on information about the alleged 2011 sexual assault of Sasha Menu Courey, a former swimmer who later committed suicide.

Courey had alleged she was sexually assaulted during her freshman year by as many as three football players, 16 months before she died.

University officials learned of those allegations in November 2012, but the Title IX coordinator was never notified. Title IX prohibits schools with federal funding from discriminating on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment and assault.

The report found the University of Missouri system lacked a policy advising employees of their responsibilities to report suspected sexual assault and harassment.

McCaskill made no mention of the Mizzou case. She did, however, say St. Louis University is a university “trying to get it right” when it comes to training Title IX staff and directing help to students who have reported assault.

To ensure safe campuses anywhere, colleges and universities “have to put the victim at the center of the process,” said Gina Maisto Smith, a former sex crimes prosecutor and Title IX expert from Philadelphia.

Under McCaskill’s direction, the Senate Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight has sent an 18-page survey to 350 colleges and universities on what is taking place on campuses when these cases are reported. Eventually, McCaskill hopes to draft legislation that improves and clarifies the responsibilities, she said.
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

Missouri basketball coach Frank Haith reportedly will take Tulsa job

April 17

BY TOD PALMER
The Kansas City Star

COLUMBIA — Missouri men's basketball coach Frank Haith’s tenure with the Tigers has been a roller coaster, and the ride is expected to end Friday when he is announced as the new coach at Tulsa, according to multiple reports.

Haith wasn’t a popular hire among Tigers fans in April 2011 but led MU to a 30-win season in his debut. Last season, however, the program took a step back after missing the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2008.

Tulsa ordinarily has been a job for coaches on the way up, including their last coach, former KU star Danny Manning, who led the Golden Hurricane to the NCAAs before leaving for Wake Forest. KU coach Bill Self and former Arkansas coach Nolan Richardson also coached at Tulsa before winning NCAA championships.

It appears Haith will try for a fresh start at Tulsa.

Around 3:50 p.m. Thursday, Haith arrived at Columbia Regional Airport after meeting with MU players, driving himself in a black SUV. Haith, wearing a black sweatsuit, carrying a black backpack and rolling a small black suitcase, did not speak to reporters. He shook hands with the pilot of a plane sent from Tulsa, Okla., boarded it and took off.

After receiving permission from MU to interview Haith, Tulsa’s school president and athletic director Derrick Gragg, a former MU athletic administrator, met with Haith on Thursday night. Later in the evening, the Tulsa World reported that the school would announce Friday that Haith had accepted the job.

Before he coached a game at Missouri, Haith was embroiled in controversy for his alleged role in a booster scandal at the University of Miami. He was suspended the first five games of the 2013-14 season by the NCAA as punishment.
Still, Haith’s tenure started strong in 2011-12 when he won several national coach of the year awards after guiding the Tigers to a 30-5 season, including a runner-up finish in the Big 12 regular season. The Tigers, months after announcing they would be joining the Southeastern Conference, won the Big 12 Tournament at the Sprint Center.

But that season ended with second-seeded Missouri bowing out against No. 15 seed Norfolk State in its opening game of the NCAA Tournament.

Transitioning to the SEC, the Tigers were expected to be a force in their new league.

Instead, Missouri struggled on the road in conference play and limped to the finish in the regular season before suffering another loss in its opening game of the NCAA Tournament, this time to Colorado State.

The Tigers endured similar late-season struggles in 2013-14 and saw a school-record run of five consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances end.

Missouri, which is 76-28 in Haith’s three seasons, finished 23-12 last season after losing at home against Tulsa’s former Conference USA foe, Southern Mississippi, in the second round of the National Invitation Tournament.

Some fans never bought into his transfer-heavy philosophy since taking over the Tigers. Haith brought in more than a dozen transfers from other programs.

Off the court, troubles also cropped up in recent months, with three players arrested since March 15 and assistant coach Mark Phelps leaving for Marquette.

Freshman guards Wes Clark and Shane Rector were arrested March 15 for suspicion of possessing less than 35 grams of marijuana.

Forward Zach Price, a transfer from Louisville, was dismissed from the team last week after multiple arrests for alleged domestic assault and assault. Charges are pending.

But Haith appears to be getting a fresh start with the Golden Hurricane, who are set to join the American Athletic Conference, the same league as national champion Connecticut. Tulsa finished 21-13 last season under Manning.

Under the terms of Haith’s contract with Missouri, he would owe the university $500,000 for terminating his contract early. Haith was scheduled to make $1.7 million for the 2013-14 season, including a $20,000 bonus for reaching 20 wins, and $1.75 million next season. His contract runs through 2016-17.

As reports spread that Haith was leaving, State Fair Community College guard Kevin Punter, who committed to Missouri on April 4, decided Thursday to reopen his recruitment, Roadrunners coach Kevin Thomas said.
Punter, a first-team junior college All-American who averaged 20.3 points last season, went through a ceremonial signing Wednesday, but he never sent a national letter of intent to MU athletics.

Thomas said Punter’s parents wanted to meet Haith first and the coach was supposed to fly to New York on Friday for that purpose.

“Obviously, I don’t think that will be happening now,” Thomas said.

Punter chose Missouri over UTEP, Western Kentucky and Missouri State. Thomas said he had heard from Alabama, Cincinnati, Gonzaga and Pittsburgh as reports circulated that Haith would leave Missouri.

Thomas, who said neither he nor Punter had heard from Haith, didn’t rule out the possibility that Punter would still consider Missouri.

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Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/04/17/4966163/report-mizzou-basketball-coach.html#storylink=cpy

Prosecuting sexual assault can be challenging, panelists say

Thursday, April 17, 2014 | 10:39 p.m. CDT; updated 10:49 p.m. CDT, Thursday, April 17, 2014
BY MADISON FELLER

COLUMBIA — Sexual assault victims can find it difficult to continuously retell their stories to police, to doctors, to lawyers, to family, to friends, to strangers — sometimes leading them to dismiss legal recourse as too painful, panelists at a sexual violence forum said Thursday.

If a victim breaks down before going to trial, a perpetrator can escape with a lighter sentence through a plea deal, especially if the alternative is acquittal, said Steve Concannon, coordinating attorney of MU Student Legal Services.
Concannon was one of four panelists who participated in the Sexual Assault Legal Panel held Thursday in Strickland Hall. He was joined by Donell Young, the director of student conduct at MU; Kayla Jackson, an intern at True North, the domestic and sexual violence resource center formerly called The Shelter; and Doug Schwandt, assistant chief of the MU Police Department.

Besides talking about how hard it is to resolve some sexual or domestic assault cases, the speakers also stressed that every circumstance is different and there is no cure-all.

UM System President Tim Wolfe issued an executive order April 8 compelling all university employees to report sexual violence unless they are legally barred from doing so. The order was prompted by a case involving MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey. A report released Friday concluded that MU failed to act on allegations that the varsity swimmer had been raped.

When dealing with sexual assault cases, Schwandt said, people need to remember that "everyone has different needs and we need to make sure we're not just treating them all the same."

Sometimes, Schwandt said, a victim doesn't want to go to the police or just needs someone to talk to.

Another challenge is the reality of social norms. Young said society is prepared for cases that deal with sexual assault between strangers, but when it comes to a victim who knows his or her assailant and there was previous consent, it "blows people's minds."

Missouri basketball coach Frank Haith reportedly will take Tulsa job
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Tiger Bytes: Mike Alden can't blow it ... again

BERNIE MIKLASZ bjmiklasz@post-dispatch.com

At the time I write this, it’s all conditional ...

But if the reports are true and if Frank Haith becomes the new basketball coach at Tulsa, Mizzou will set off on yet another frightening adventure in search for a new hoops coach. And the heat, the pressure, will be on director of athletics Mike Alden like never before.

Alden won’t be able to duckwalk and double-talk this time. He won’t be able to hide behind some feckless, politically correct search committee. Alden can’t meekly dish this off to an outside firm that screens candidates and recommends a choice for the job.

This is on Alden.

All of it.

The Missouri basketball program has deteriorated under Alden's watch. Alden is directly responsible for the decline. Alden was the boss who ran off the legendary Norm Stewart and hired (in order) Quin Snyder, Mike Anderson, and Haith.

Pardon my generalizations, but ...

Tiger fans initially were fired up about Snyder but didn't take long to lose that loving feeling.

The fans respected Anderson personally but never warmed up to CMA's preferred style of ball.

The fans didn't like the hiring of the relatively unknown Haith from the beginning, but began to have a change of heart when he did such a terrific job with Anderson's players in his first season. But this rising wave of goodwill crashed – abruptly – when No. 2 seed Mizzou was embarrassed and upset by No. 15 seed Norfolk State in the 2012 NCAA Tournament.

Looking back on it, that defeat was the beginning of a long, and frustrating descent for Haith, who could never recover from the lost opportunity. And then when Coach Haith turned MU into Transfer U, the unrest intensified.

The chaos under all three coaches turned off fans. As the attendance gradually dropped, empty seats became more prevalent and unsightly at Mizzou Arena. As MU moved closer to mediocrity and
irrelevance, a once proud, lively and passionate basketball culture settled into regrettable but understandable ambivalence.

As of now, this is a big part of Alden's legacy. If we are to credit Alden (rightfully) for having the foresight to hire Gary Pinkel and thereby launch the revival of Mizzou football, then he's also responsible for MU's fallen prestige in college basketball.

It was Alden who made the seminal hire that raised one important down-and-out football program up, and it was Alden that made three hires that caused extensive damage to a consistently successful basketball program.

If Haith as expected flees to Tulsa to avoid his seemingly inevitable firing at MU, this could be a net plus for Mizzou. First of all, if Haith goes he'll be doing Alden a huge favor for obvious reasons. And then it's on Alden to take advantage of it.

(Sidebar: even if the Haith/Tulsa dalliance falls through, how can Alden bring Haith back? Answer: Alden can't. So Haith will likely be leaving, one way or another.) Anyway... Mizzou can use a Haith departure as an impetus for change. But this can happen only if Alden makes an inspiring hire that can reinvigorate fan interest and give the program a strong leader that installs an unbending set of core principles.

If Alden strikes out again, then he should fire himself before his superiors can do it first. If Alden swings and misses again, Mizzou will plunge deeper into that blurry pool of programs that simply don't matter. And from a business standpoint MU will suffer from more severed connections with fed-up fans.

I don't know who wants the MU job. I'm not making any lists. (Go ahead, make your Matt Painter jokes. It's OK with me.) I don't know who Mizzou will target or how much they're willing to pay. I don't know how appealing this job is anymore. I mean, how attractive is this gig if Haith is jumping to Tulsa? And to think that the chance to become the MU coach once attracted the interest of John Calipari and Bill Self.

Two suggestions to the MU administration and its most ardent and affluent boosters/donors:

1. Give Alden what he needs financially to make an impact hire. If you aren't willing to step up—which was the case when John Belein was available at the time of the Anderson hiring—then just move to the side, be quiet and don't dare complain about what happens next. If you put Alden in a position of having to settle for a coach that excites no one, then you'll get exactly what you deserve. Again.

2. Make sure to supervise Alden very closely. Ride shotgun with him. Whatever you do, don't let this man go out on his own, unchecked. Alden requires oversight. And I'm not talking about appointing some ineffectual, ceremonial “committee” to provide PR cover. No, the people in charge in Columbia had better be a half-step behind Alden during the entire process, keeping him within sight, just so they can determine exactly what he's up to and then intervene if necessary. You can't let Alden screw this up again. He's already had three strikes. How many does he get, anyway?
Missouri basketball's Frank Haith to take Tulsa job, reports say

Thursday, April 17, 2014 | 10:58 p.m. CDT; updated 7:47 a.m. CDT, Friday, April 18, 2014

BY JOSEPH TREZZA

COLUMBIA — ESPN and CBSSports.com reported Thursday that Missouri men's basketball coach Frank Haith had agreed to leave Missouri and become the next head basketball coach at the University of Tulsa.

The official announcement is expected Friday, according to a report from Tulsa World.

Neither Missouri nor Tulsa officials could confirm Thursday night that Haith had signed a contract.

A Tulsa spokesman declined to comment. Missouri spokesman Chad Moller said only that Missouri gave Tulsa permission to contact Haith.

"That's all we know at this point," Moller said in a text message.

Haith boarded a charter plane at Columbia Regional Airport en route to Tulsa, Okla., around 4 p.m. Thursday.

Tulsa World sportswriter Bill Haisten reported that Haith met with Tulsa University President Steadman Upham and athletic director Derrick Gragg.

Gragg has Missouri ties and worked in the university athletics department as the director of compliance and operations from 1995 to 1997.

About a half-hour after Haith boarded the plane, college basketball expert Jeff Goodman of ESPN reported that Haith and Tulsa had reached a verbal agreement.

Earlier in the day, Gary Parrish of CBSSports.com reported that Haith was involved in Tulsa's coaching search, which began April 4 when coach Danny Manning left for Wake Forest.
Haith just completed his third year of a six-year contract with Missouri. He led the Tigers to consecutive NCAA tournament appearances in 2012 and 2013, losing in the first round both times.

Missouri finished 23-12 this season and settled for the National Invitation Tournament, where it was eliminated in the second round by Southern Mississippi.

Haith has a $500,000 buyout in the contract he signed with Missouri in 2011.

He is coming off his worst year at Missouri, a year that started with an NCAA suspension and ended with the Tigers missing the NCAA Tournament for the first time in six seasons.

Haith's departure continues an exodus from Columbia for the Missouri basketball program in recent weeks.

The Tigers are set to lose more than 70 percent of last year's scoring, with Earnest Ross graduating and Jabari Brown and Jordan Clarkson declaring for the NBA draft.

Missouri also lost transfer forward Zach Price last week. Haith dismissed him after he was arrested twice in a span of 13 hours on April 3.

Assistant coach Mark Phelps left the program recently to take a job at Marquette.

If he agrees to terms with Tulsa, Haith will inherit a team anchored by three rising juniors that will switch to the American Athletic Conference, home of 2014 national champion Connecticut, on July 1.

The Golden Hurricane made the NCAA Tournament this season after winning the Conference USA tournament and finished with a 23-12 record. Tulsa lost to UCLA in the first round.

Ripples from the news had already affected Missouri's basketball recruits Thursday night.

State Fair Community College guard Kevin Punter, who averaged more than 20 points per game as a junior college prospect, confirmed that he will hold off on signing with the Tigers. His coach, Kevin Thomas, said other teams have been in contact about Punter.

Jakeenan Gant, a four-star forward and Gatorade Player of the Year in Georgia, also spoke with his parents and Amateur Athletic Union basketball program coaches, Gant's high school coach Donnie Arrington confirmed. The 6-foot-8 prospect has signed a letter of intent with the Tigers but could be released from that commitment if Haith leaves Missouri.
The Missourian's emails, text messages and phone calls to coaches of Namon Wright, another top-100 prospect who signed with Missouri, were not returned.

Haith came to Columbia in 2011 after seven seasons at Miami. He compiled a 76-28 record in his time with the Tigers, including two first-game losses in the NCAA tournament. He was named Associated Press Coach of the Year after his first season with Missouri, when the Tigers went 30-5 and won the Big 12 Tournament.

The North Carolina native also earned Big 12 Coach of the Year honors in that season, which was his best at Missouri. Next year, the Tigers went 23-10 and returned to the NCAA tournament but lost to Colorado in the second round.

Haith was the winningest coach in Missouri history at 53-16 after two years with the program, and he is the program's leader in winning percentage as a coach.

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**Tulsa set to hire Mizzou's Haith**

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

**COLUMBIA, Mo. •** Arriving by himself at Columbia Regional Airport, Missouri basketball coach Frank Haith boarded a private jet Thursday afternoon that was bound for Tulsa, Okla., where he met with Tulsa University athletics director Derrick Gragg to interview for the Golden Hurricane's head coaching position.

Earlier in the day, Mizzou’s administration granted Haith permission to interview for the job, according to a university source. Haith also met with MU players at Mizzou Arena before leaving for the airport.

Dressed in a black track suit and sneakers, Haith declined to answer reporters’ questions as he lugged a backpack and a rolling suitcase across the tarmac to the plane. They very well could have been his final steps in Missouri as Mizzou’s coach.

CBSSports.com, ESPN.com and several outlets in Oklahoma reported that Haith agreed in principle to become Tulsa’s next coach. The Tulsa World reported Thursday night that the school will formally announce Haith as its new coach today.

Tulsa athletics spokesman Eric Hollier declined to confirm those reports Thursday. “The University of Tulsa will not discuss nor confirm any possible candidates for the position of head basketball coach,” he shared in a text message.
Earlier in the day, CBSSports.com quoted an anonymous source saying, “Frank is looking for a way out of Missouri. This might be it.” Later, a source close to the MU program told the Post-Dispatch that it was “very likely” Haith was leaving for Tulsa.

Tulsa, which moves from Conference USA to the American Athletic Conference on July 1, is in the market for a new coach after Danny Manning left earlier this month for Wake Forest.

Haith is three years into a six-year contract at Missouri that pays him a guaranteed salary of $1.6 million. His original deal was through April 2016 with an additional year automatically added after his first season. According to his contract, Haith owes Missouri $500,000 for terminating his deal between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015.

Haith led Mizzou to the NCAA Tournament in his first two seasons after replacing Mike Anderson, but the Tigers struggled down the stretch this year and settled for the National Invitation Tournament. Mizzou finished tied for sixth in the Southeastern Conference and ended the year 23-12 with a second-round exit in the NIT.

Haith is 71-28 in three seasons at Missouri, which does not include five wins this past season when Haith served an NCAA suspension stemming from the investigation into recruiting allegations during his time at the University of Miami. Haith was charged with failure to promote an atmosphere for compliance.

Haith’s departure comes three years and 14 days after he was athletics director Mike Alden’s surprise hire to replace Anderson, who had taken Mizzou to three consecutive NCAA Tournaments. Haith had spent the previous seven years at Miami, where he guided the Hurricanes to one NCAA Tournament appearance and was just 43-69 in conference play.

But Haith was an instant success at Mizzou as a team comprised of holdovers from Anderson’s regime went 30-5 in his debut season, including a Big 12 tournament title. The Tigers earned a No. 2 seed in the NCAA Tournament but suffered a shocking loss to No. 15 seed Norfolk State. The next year, relying heavily on a never-ending parade of Division I transfers, the Tigers finished 23-11 and tied for fifth in their inaugural SEC season. Again, Haith’s team was one and done in the NCAA Tournament, losing to Colorado State in its opening game.

The Tigers began this past season 10-0 but stumbled at the start of conference play and finished just 9-9 against SEC competition during the regular season.

Fan apathy appeared to set in as attendance at Mizzou Arena fell 26.2 percent from the previous year. The average crowd of 8,856 was MU’s smallest since the 2007-08 season.

Expectations for next year grew dim when Jabari Brown and Jordan Clarkson, the team’s two leading scorers, made themselves eligible for this summer’s NBA draft. Mizzou returns six scholarship players who accounted for less than 25 percent of last season’s scoring. Two more Division I transfers will be eligible next season, and the Tigers signed two high school recruits ranked among the nation’s top 100 players, though both Namon Wright, a guard from Los Angeles, and Jakeenan Gant, a forward from Springfield, Ga., could opt out of their letters of intent with Haith’s departure.
Kevin Punter, a guard from State Fair Community College in Sedalia, Mo., was expected to sign with Mizzou in the coming days but will instead open his recruitment, State Fair coach Kevin Thomas said Thursday.

If there was one common theme to Haith's time at Mizzou it was the constant stream of turnover. He had seven assistant coaches in three seasons — and was in the middle of hiring another to replace the latest coach to depart. Six players transferred under his watch. He kicked two more off the team this year: senior Tony Criswell, who was suspended multiple times for rules violations, and Louisville transfer Zach Price, who was arrested twice on the same day earlier this month on suspicion of assaulting teammate Earnest Ross and his girlfriend.

The Surprising Thing Exercise Can Do For Your Brain

Why do some people love working out, while others loathe it? If rats are any indication, the will to be active is at least partly genetic, according to a 2013 University of Missouri finding. And according to new research published online in the Journal of Physiology, those rats with a genetic predisposition toward being active are also more mentally mature than rats bred to be lazier.

Exercise geneticist Frank Booth, Ph.D., of the University of Missouri, is part of the research group that published both findings.

"What we're finding is that physical activity is linked to the maturing of neural networks in the brain," said Booth to The Huffington Post. There are at least two possible explanations for this: Either the genes that encourage physical activity also cause the brain to grow, or exercise itself helps to develop those neural pathways in young, pliable brains.

Booth's team took dozens of rats and identified the 26 best runners and the 26 worst runners. They bred the active rats with each other and the lazy rats (he called them "couch potato rats") with each other. After 10 generations of repeating this breeding process, the rats who were descended from the exercise-prone line chose to run 10 times more than the couch potato descendants.

Then, he examined the brains of the runner rats and lazy rats and found that the runner rats had more mature neuron cells in them, which means the neural pathways in their brains developed more quickly than the lazy rats.

Other recent genetic studies show that people may be genetically predisposed to procrastinate, be more anxious, be obese and even hate cilantro.
But, like those other genetic predispositions, laziness genes don't have to be destiny. For example, Booth notes that rats born from "couch potato" rat parents were actually able to stave off their genetic destiny when he gave them a running wheel very early in life.

"Most complex behaviors are never determined 100 percent by genetics or 100 percent by environment," said Booth. "How the brain is used may make pathways in the brain that might be more fixed for life." Additionally, exercise has also been shown to change one's DNA by altering the expression of genes.

Booth notes that more research is needed, but he is excited about the implications his research could have on encouraging more adults to have active lifestyles. Namely: Start 'em young.

"If we keep kids active instead of letting them sit in front of a computer, would that have an effect on adult health?" Booth mused.

**Five Things Every Woman Gets Wrong**

**Body weight**

We have bad news, ladies - according to research studies, we're all fatter than we think! A British government survey found that we are all guilty of underestimating our size, with women misjudging their weight the most. The study found that the average woman is 5lbs heavier than she thinks she is, and for women in their late 30s this goes up to 8lbs. Furthermore, nearly half of all parents of obese children thought their child was the right weight. These results corroborate findings by Columbia University researchers which showed that overweight mothers tend to underestimate their own and their children's weight. Experts believe many of us underestimate our weight in a bid to convince ourselves we're not too far off our ideal size, while the lead author of the study of Columbia University believes it may also be because perception of weight has become skewed as obesity and being overweight are becoming the norm.

**Body shape**

Not only do many of us believe we weigh less than we actually do, according to research we are also not quite as curvaceous as we think. A study of about 3000 women commissioned by the Vitality Show showed that 27% of women believed they had an hourglass figure - one of the most sought after body shapes - while only 21% believed they were the less coveted apple shaped. However, in reality more than half had an apple shaped figure and far fewer women were hourglass shaped than they thought.

In fact, experts believe that just 8% of women have the coveted hourglass shape, which is not only thought to be desirable to the opposite sex but is also believed to have health benefits including increased fertility and intelligence levels. Experts believe that the lifestyle of modern working women is to blame for the decline in the hourglass shape as stress increases the distribution of fat around the abdomen.
Reading material

You might not think your choice of novel has any implications on your wellbeing, however research by Virginia Tech has found that reading chick lit could be bad for your health. It is well-documented that many modern women (and men) suffer from body image issues and feel under pressure to look a certain way. However, while many put this down to the influence of underweight celebrities and models, the study suggests that fictional icons could be just as bad for your self-esteem.

The study looked at the effect of chick lit protagonists with low self esteem on readers, and found that reading about characters with low body confidence made female readers more aware of their own size. The participants reported feeling significantly less attractive when they read about a slim character and significantly more worried about their weight when they read about one with low self esteem. While this doesn't mean you need to ditch chick lit entirely, choosing novels with characters with normal or high body confidence could help to give your own a boost.

Self-worth

Research shows that many women underestimate themselves both physically and intellectually, while men are more likely to overestimate their virtues. Research results published in the journal Psychological Science found that, when participants were placed in a setup described as "speed meeting" with members of the opposite sex and asked to rate the sexual interest of their partner, the men were more likely to overestimate their attractiveness and the interest of their partner, while most women underestimated their partner's sexual interest.

Furthermore, an analysis of 25 studies by a professor at University College London showed that, although men and women tend to have the same average IQ, women also underestimate their intelligence while men overestimate theirs. Also, not only did female participants give a lower estimate of their own intelligence, both men and women tended to think their male relations were more intelligent than their female ones.

Workouts

While your workouts may keep you fit and slim, research suggests that women are failing in one key aspect when it comes to exercise - improving strength. In fact, studies suggest that women are weaker than they have ever been, which may be because many focus purely on weight loss rather than strength. Concerns that muscles aren't feminine are also a key factor in our dwindling strength. However, while you may not care about gaining muscles, poor muscle strength has many implications for our health, including increased risk of osteoporosis and back and joint pain.

Another mistake women make when it comes to workouts is following the same regimes as their partner. A new study by researchers at the University of Missouri shows that women and men respond to exercise and diet in different ways, and that women need to do a lot more exercise and pay more attention to their diet to reap the same results as men. While exercising with your partner is a great way to stay motivated, try to tailor your workout to get the results you want.
Editorial: Missourians support ethics reform. Why won't Legislature act?

By the Editorial Board

Occasionally, we wish we weren’t so prescient. Last December, for example, as the 2014 legislative session was getting ready to start, we said this about the prospects of meaningful ethics reform being passed:

“It’s hard to believe that lawmakers who benefit from sleazy ethics and campaign finance laws can summon the integrity to enact serious reform. Ultimately, voters probably will have to do it for them by passing a ballot measure.”

You rarely lose any money betting against good government in the Legislature.

Despite many sincere and meaningful bills from both Democrats and Republicans being filed to reduce the pernicious influence of money in the legislative process, legislation to undo Missouri’s status as the only state in the nation with no limits on either lobbyist gifts or campaign donations appears stuck in mud.

A Senate debate this week over a proposal from Sen. Brad Lager, R-Savannah, intended to reduce lobbyist gifts and end the revolving door between lawmaking and lobbying, gave a strong indication that state lawmakers just don’t have the courage to police themselves.

Some still want their free lunches and dinners. Others, like Mr. Lager, want to continue collecting six-figure checks from mostly anonymous donors. Some, knowing their time in the Legislature is almost up, don’t want to give up the possibility of sliding into a lobbyist gig or a gubernatorial appointment.

The sweet lure of quick cash is hard to ignore.

Here’s what should also be hard for those reticent lawmakers to ignore: Missourians want ethics reform. Badly.

A new poll conducted by The Wickers Group on behalf of the Missouri Liberty Project shows broad-based support, among Democrats, Republicans and independents, for serious ethics reform in the Show-Me State. The poll, conducted in March among likely general election voters, found that between 70 and 80 percent of likely voters supported five different elements of ethics reform:
• Banning free tickets from lobbyists for professional or college sporting events, hunting and fishing trips and golf outings.
• Limiting the number of meals lawmakers can accept from lobbyists.
• Barring lawmakers’ staff from working as paid political consultants.
• Requiring lawmakers to wait several years after retiring before becoming lobbyists.
• Creating a new unit in the attorney general’s office to fight abuse and corruption in state government.
• In each question, the support was highest among Democrats, but similarly high among both Republicans and independents.

A huge majority of Missourians support ethics reform. It ought to scare lawmakers unwilling to deal with the problem themselves; if a private group like the Missouri Liberty Project is willing to spend money polling on the issue, it’s an indication that ethics reform will be eventually coming to a Missouri ballot.

Keep in mind, the liberty project is run by Josh Hawley, a conservative University of Missouri law professor who is involved in the Hobby Lobby lawsuit against contraception mandate in the Affordable Care Act. We don’t agree with him much. And we would point out that in using a 502-c-4 to obscure his organization’s funding (he would not tell us who funds the Missouri Liberty Project), he is part of the greater problem in national politics.

Dark money is allowing a select rich few to control the nation’s political system with little to no transparency. But that doesn’t mean he’s wrong on ethics.

He rightly, if ironically, points out that as lawmakers are improperly influenced by money, there is a real deleterious effect on the political system.

“It’s about the right to participate in one’s government,” Mr. Hawley told us. “It’s a vital part of what it means to be free.”

Missourians want ethics reform because they want to believe in their government again. That is true of liberals and conservatives, city-dwellers and farmers, Democrats, Republicans, and everybody in between.

What is the Missouri Legislature waiting for?