MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

May 20, 2014
Baltimore—The number of public college presidents earning more than $1 million more than doubled in the 2012-13 fiscal year from the year before, according to a new survey.

The Chronicle of Higher Education study found that nine college presidents earned more than $1 million in total compensation in 2013, compared to just four in 2012. That included Texas A&M President R. Bowen Loftin, who is now the chancellor at MU. He was the second-highest paid.

Public college presidents first exceeded the $1 million total compensation mark in 2006-07, according to the survey.

Gordon Gee topped the list, earning $6.1 million as the head of Ohio State University. Gee resigned that post last year after making comments about Roman Catholics, the University of Notre Dame and Southeastern Conference schools. He is now president of West Virginia University.

The study took into account base salary, bonuses, retirement, severance and deferred pay — an incentive offered to presidents who stay in their positions for an agreed-upon period of time.

Four of the college presidents on the top 10 list have retired. Two others have accepted positions at other universities.
The top 10 earners in the fiscal year 2012-13 were:

**Gordon Gee, president of the West Virginia University**
Gee's compensation total is based on payments he received at the Ohio State University, from which he resigned in June 2013 after six years as president. Gee earned $6.1 million in 2013, which includes $3.3 million in deferred pay and $1.55 in retirement and severance pay.

**R. Bowen Loftin, president of Texas A&M University at College Station**
Loftin earned $1.6 million and resigned from his position in January after **three years**. Loftin's $425,000 base salary did not change from 2012 to 2013, however in 2013, he was paid $950,000 in severance and retirement pay. Loftin's total compensation is for the 2013 calendar year, not the university's fiscal year.*

**Hamid Shirvani, president of North Dakota University system**
Shirvani earned roughly $1.3 million in 2013. He retired in June 2013, after less than a year in his position overseeing the 11-campus system. He was paid $962,095 in severance and retirement pay — more than double his $349,000 base salary.

**Renu Khator, University of Houston main campus**
Khator earned roughly $1.26 million in 2013. She has served in the position since 2008. Nearly 45 percent of Khator's total compensation comes from bonus pay and deferred pay on top of her $700,000 base salary.

**Sally Mason, University of Iowa**
Mason earned roughly $1.14 million in 2013. She has served in her position since 2007. More than half of her total compensation is made up of deferred pay on top of her $493,272 base salary.

**Michael McRobbie, Indiana University at Bloomington**
McRobbie earned approximately $1.1 million in 2013. He has served as the university's president since 2007. McRobbie earned $567,076 in deferred pay, bonuses and other benefits, and $544,848 in base pay.

**Michael Adams, University of Georgia**
Adams earned about $1.1 million in 2013 and retired from his position in July. His base pay for the year was $258,760; the vast majority of his total compensation is made up of deferred pay.
Gordon Moulton, University of South Alabama
Moulton earned about $1.1 million in 2013. Moulton retired in January 2013 and died in September. Moulton earned $666,046 in severance and retirement pay, on top of his $406,075 base salary.

Mary Sue Coleman, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor
Coleman earned about $1 million in 2013 and has served as president since 2002. On top of her $603,357, Coleman earned $200,000 in bonus pay and $234,000 in deferred pay and retirement pay.

Mark Yudof, University of California system
Mark Yudof, the only top-earning president whose compensation is shy of $1 million, served as president from 2008 until September of 2013, when he retired. Yudof's total compensation accounts for his base pay of $591,084 and $266,000 in retirement pay.

MU's Loftin lands on million-dollar list
Chancellor among 9 highly compensated public college leaders.

By STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Monday, May 19, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (3)

The new chancellor of the University of Missouri was among nine public college leaders who raked in more than $1 million in 2013.

The number of public college presidents earning more than $1 million more than doubled from the year before, according to a Chronicle of Higher Education study. Nine college presidents earned more than $1 million in total compensation in 2013, compared to just four in 2012, the study reported.
R. Bowen Loftin, who took over as the top administrator at MU in February, earned $1.6 million in 2013 at Texas A&M University according to the study, making him the second-highest-paid president. Much of that — $950,000 — was from severance and retirement when he resigned after three years as president of the school. His base salary at College Station was $425,000, which increased to $450,000 at MU.

Loftin’s MU contract included $135,000 as a one-time payment for unreimbursed moving expenses and loss of unvested deferred compensation payments, a one-time relocation expense as much as 10 percent of his base salary and annual deferred compensation of $50,000. His pay at MU didn't factor into Loftin's 2013 compensation total.

Public college presidents first exceeded the $1 million total compensation mark in 2006-2007, according to the survey.

Gordon Gee topped the list, earning $6.1 million as the head of Ohio State University. Gee resigned that post last year after making comments about Roman Catholics, the University of Notre Dame and Southeastern Conference schools. He is now president of West Virginia University.

The top earners in the fiscal year 2012-2013, in addition to Loftin, were:

**Gordon Gee, president of West Virginia University** — Gee's compensation total is based on payments he received at Ohio State University, from which he resigned in June 2013 after six years as president. Gee earned $6.1 million in 2013, which includes $3.3 million in deferred pay and $1.55 in retirement and severance pay.

**Hamid Shirvani, president of the North Dakota University system** — Shirvani earned roughly $1.3 million in 2013. He retired in June 2013 after less than a year in his position overseeing the 11-campus system. He was paid $962,095 in severance and retirement pay.

**Renu Khator, University of Houston main campus** — Khator earned roughly $1.26 million in 2013. Nearly 45 percent of Khator’s total compensation comes from bonus pay and deferred pay on top of her $700,000 base salary.

**Sally Mason, University of Iowa** — Mason earned roughly $1.14 million in 2013 and has served in her position since 2007. More than half of her total compensation is made up of deferred pay on top of her $493,272 base salary.

**Michael McRobbie, Indiana University at Bloomington** — McRobbie earned about $1.1 million in 2013 and has served as president since 2007. McRobbie earned $567,076 in deferred pay, bonuses and other benefits, and $544,848 in base pay.

**Michael Adams, University of Georgia** — Adams earned about $1.1 million in 2013 and retired from his position in July. His base pay for the year was $258,760; the vast majority of his total compensation is made up of deferred pay.
Gordon Moulton, University of South Alabama — Moulton earned about $1.1 million in 2013. Moulton retired in January 2013 and died in September. Moulton earned $666,046 in severance and retirement pay on top of his $406,075 base salary.

Mary Sue Coleman, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor — Coleman earned about $1 million in 2013 and has served as president since 2002. On top of her $603,357, Coleman earned $200,000 in bonus pay and $234,000 in deferred and retirement pay.

The number of chief executives at state colleges and universities earning at least $1 million more than doubled in fiscal year 2013, according to an analysis by the Chronicle of Higher Education published Sunday. Topping the list once again is E. Gordon Gee, from his tenure as head of The Ohio State University, where he made $6 million in total compensation. Texas A&M's R. Bowen Loftin took home $1.6 million in FY 2013, and North Dakota University system President Hamid Shirvani made $1.3 million.

But this year, a separate study released Sunday by the Institute for Policy Studies, is also noting the colleges with millionaire presidents are the same ones where students are more indebted and where adjuncts are more heavily relied upon.

The IPS report found that among the 25 state universities with the highest-paid presidents, student debt is rising faster than at state universities as a whole. In addition, spending on administrators outpaced scholarship spending by more than 2 to 1 and art-time adjunct increased more than twice as fast as the national average at all colleges. Adjuncts are paid much less than tenured and full-time faculty and typically do not have union representation.

"Presiding over a public university should not be a ticket to extreme wealth," said report co-author Dr. Marjorie Wood of the Institute for Policy Studies. "What's even more disturbing is that these highly-paid university presidents have performed worse than their lower-paid
peers when it comes to lowering costs for students and investing in the quality of instruction."

IPS came up a list of the worst offenders, which includes Gee’s Ohio State. (Gee resigned last summer and now leads West Virginia University.) The top 5 on IPS’ shame list:

1. **Ohio State University**
   From FY 2010 to FY 2012, Ohio State paid its top executive $5.9 million while driving up student debt 23% faster than the national average. During the same period, the university hired 670 new administrators, 498 contingent and part-time faculty, and only 45 permanent faculty.

2. **Pennsylvania State University**
   In FY 2012, Penn State’s Board of Trustees awarded $2.9 million in salary and severance pay to Graham Spanier – who was terminated “without cause” for his handling of the Jerry Sandusky sex abuse scandal. From FY 2006 to FY 2012, the Board approved another $4.8 million in executive compensation while average student debt on campus grew by 49% to $35,100. During the same period, non-academic administrative staff increased by 224 while permanent faculty grew by only 32.

3. **University of Minnesota**
   From FY 2010 to FY 2012, the University of Minnesota increased non-academic administrative staff 200% from 762 to 2,384. While the president pulled in $2.1 million, permanent faculty decreased 9% and the ranks of adjuncts grew 223% to nearly half of all instructional staff. From FY 2006 to FY 2012, expenditures per student on non-academic administration more than doubled from $2,574 to $5,790. Meanwhile, expenditures per student on scholarships dwindled from $1,424 to $914. By 2012, average student debt reached $29,702.

4. **University of Michigan**
   From FY 2010 to FY 2012, the University of Michigan paid its top executive over $2.6 million. While the ranks of contingent and part-time faculty increased by 1,536 or 55% over the same period, permanent faculty grew by only 99 or 4%. From summer 2006 to summer 2012, average student debt rose 18% to $27,815 as expenditures on non-academic administration outpaced scholarships by almost 3 to 1.

5. **University of Washington**
   From FY 2010 to FY 2012, the University of Washington decreased permanent faculty by 19% - more than any other school in the top 25. Over the same period, the university increased part-time faculty by 801 or 239% while paying its top executive $2.3 million.
From summer 2009 to summer 2012, average student debt rose 26% faster than the national average at four-year public universities.

The Chronicle noted the pay for public college presidents is growing for the entire sector, not just those millionaires at the top. The median pay overall grew 5 percent to $478,896 pay for 2012-13.

So does that mean every college president has to be paid more in order to take these jobs? Not necessarily. The Chronicle explains how University of Arizona President Ann Weaver Hart took a 23 percent pay cut leaving Temple University to head west. Hart earned $560,500 in 2012-13, and that's just fine with her. "Nobody is starving at my house," Hart said.

The Chronicle of Higher Education survey was based on information about 256 leaders from 227 public colleges and systems.

And just to be clear about which public colleges refused to provide information on salaries, the Chronicle released the names of schools declining to cooperate with their study: City Colleges of Chicago, Colorado School of Mines, Colorado State University system, Louisiana Community and Technical College system, Massachusetts Community Colleges, Morgan State University, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, San Mateo County Community College District, South Carolina State University, South Carolina Technical College system, Tennessee State University, and University of Idaho.

**Texas A&M's R. Bowen Loftin was second highest paid university leader of 2012-2013**

May 19

R. Bowen Loftin received $1.6 million in compensation in his last year at Texas A&M, making him No. 2 in pay among the nation’s public university leaders, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education.
The chronicle’s 2012-2013 pay report puts only Gordon Gee, who resigned as president of Ohio State University, ahead of Loftin. Gee received more than $6 million.

Loftin, now the chancellor at the University of Missouri, received a $950,000 severance and retirement package on top of his base salary and other compensation from Texas A&M.

At MU, Loftin’s base salary is $450,000.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/05/19/5033602/r-bowen-loftin-was-second-highest.html#storylink=cpy

Senate Warning on Sexual Assault

May 20, 2014

BY Michael Stratford

NO MU MENTION

WASHINGTON -- Senator Claire McCaskill, one of several lawmakers leading a new effort to combat sexual assault on colleges campuses, said Monday that she’s eyeing stiffer penalties for institutions that violate federal rules on reporting and handling sexual assault cases.

Kicking off the first of three Capitol Hill roundtable discussions on the issue, McCaskill previewed some of the issues she plans to tackle in legislation she is drafting with Senators Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut.

The bill, she said, would aim to simplify the “complex labyrinth” of rules that govern campus sexual assaults: the Clery Act, the federal antidiscrimination law known as Title IX, and a patchwork of state laws that define consent.

But McCaskill also indicated that the lawmakers are seeking to take a harder line against colleges that violate those rules. The lawmakers, she said, are considering a revised penalty structure for the Clery Act and Title IX.
She said that the complete removal of federal funds -- the most severe sanction federal officials can currently impose on institutions -- is unrealistic for the government to impose without unfairly harming large numbers of innocent students. But at the other extreme, the maximum $35,000 fine that can be levied under the Clery Act is essentially a slap on the wrist for many institutions.

“We’re looking at a variety of things, including larger fines,” she said. “I feel very strongly that fines would need to be based on the size of the institution.”

She said she was still considering whether an institution’s size should be measured by its budget, its enrollment, or the degree to which it receives federal aid.

McCaskill said she also wanted to codify in the legislation a requirement that colleges use the “preponderance of the evidence” standard in adjudicating sexual assault cases on campus. The Obama administration has told colleges that it believes such a standard is required by Title IX, but McCaskill said that it should be written into law.

Another part of the legislative effort, McCaskill said, will be focused on ways to incentivize states to change their rules regarding consent. She said she was disappointed to learn that 16 states do not recognize a person’s incapacitation as a reason why he or she cannot provide consent.

In addition, the legislation will include a requirement that colleges conduct anonymous surveys on their campus to learn about the “climate” surrounding sexual assault and harassment on their campus. The White House has asked colleges to consider using such surveys this year and also floated the notion of making them mandatory.

McCaskill, who has already sparred with the main higher education lobbying association over how it was counseling members to respond to a survey she sent to colleges about sexual assault, said Monday that she had received some pushback from colleges over making climate surveys mandatory.

“We’re going to look at the annual cost of doing an annual climate survey, but I think that with this problem and with the attention that it is finally receiving, I think many universities are going to be reluctant to shirk away from the responsibility of finding out the actual extent of the problem they have on their campus.”

Monday’s roundtable was focused specifically on the Clery Act, which requires colleges to report the crimes that happen on their campus, including sexual assault, rape and dating violence.

Participants told McCaskill and Senator Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin that many of the current reporting requirements are confusing or solicit information that is not complete or useful to students who want to know the relative safety of a given campus.
Several of the university-affiliated panelists called for the government to publish model policies and best practices for institutions. Others said the federal government should step up its oversight of how colleges are handling sexual assault cases, a concern that McCaskill echoed.

Laura Dunn, executive director of SurvJustice, told the panel that “if you’re going to spend money somewhere, please spend it on enforcement.”

Lynn Mahaffie, who directs policy in the Education Department’s Office of Postsecondary Education, said the agency has assigned 13 people to a special Clery Act compliance unit, which completes about 20 audits under that law each year. Departmentwide, there are about 300 such cases each year, she said.

McCaskill said that level of staffing seemed too low to handle thousands of colleges.

May 19, 2014

Colleges Hard-Pressed to Explain Variations in Price

By Eric Kelderman

NO MU MENTION

To the casual observer, the University of Connecticut at Storrs and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill look a lot alike.

Both are public flagship institutions, research universities that enroll about the same number of undergraduates (around 18,000), and both have popular and successful basketball teams for men and women.

Notably, they get roughly the same amount of money from their respective state legislatures, according to the most recent federal data—about $486-million each in the 2011-12 academic year.
There are, of course, plenty of differences between the two campuses, but one that stands out is the price. The average in-state, full-time student at UConn paid about $5,000 more per year in the 2012 academic year than a similar student paid at Chapel Hill, according to federal figures.

That difference turns out to be difficult for college administrators to explain.

"There's not one answer, as far as I can tell you," said Lysa D. Teal, associate vice president for budget and finance at Connecticut, about why the university's average price per student was different from others in its peer group, including the University of North Carolina.

James W. Dean Jr., executive vice chancellor and provost at the Chapel Hill campus, said, "I'm not sure I have a great answer for that."

The difficulty is due, in part, to the complexity and number of variables that go into determining how much students will pay at a given college.

But another reason it’s difficult to explain differences in price is that colleges are not good at measuring how much it actually costs to deliver a higher education.

William F. Massey, a professor emeritus of higher-education administration at Stanford University, said most universities "don’t really know" why their costs and prices are different from those of other institutions.

"They can’t make the comparisons with other institutions," because they don't have enough detailed information about what it costs to educate students, said Mr. Massey, who is a consultant on higher education for the Pilbara Group. And if they don’t understand those costs, he said, it is hard to control prices without sacrificing quality.

Maria R. Anguiano, vice chancellor for planning and budget at the University of California at Riverside, said colleges understand the costs of running academic departments compared with their peers. But they don't have a good handle on how much it costs to deliver a single course, per student, she said. (She is also the author of a report from the Bill & Melinda
Gates Foundation that argues for a system of accounting to better determine the costs and effectiveness of instructional activities.)

Instead, the price per student is based largely on what colleges think they can charge in their markets, as well as the amounts they want to put into financial aid, Ms. Anguiano said.

"There doesn't necessarily have to be a correlation with the cost of running the university."

**Tuition Redux**

That idea might come as a surprise to students, parents, and policy makers, who worry about tuition increases and the fast-rising amounts of student loans being used to finance college educations. The public’s concern is often in response to the increases in the published sticker price—the full cost of attendance, which only a small fraction of students typically pay.

Public higher-education officials usually argue that cuts in state appropriations are to blame for rising tuition. But that answer masks a much more complex story about how institutions set their prices and what tuition really pays for.

A more reliable number to consider when looking at the price of college is the average net price—the mean price that resident students pay after all discounts and financial aid have been applied to the full cost of attendance—as reported by the U.S. Department of Education.

In the 2011-12 academic year, the average net price at Chapel Hill was $11,092, and at the University of Connecticut $16,357.

The decision about tuition pricing does not usually begin with a discussion about how much the university should charge individual students, said George Pernsteiner, president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers and a former chancellor of the Oregon University System. The No. 1 question, he said, is how much overall revenue the institution needs to generate from tuition. For a public college, it’s the amount of revenue needed after considering state appropriations, philanthropy, and other sources of income that it can use to pay for education and related expenses.
Second, a public college has to decide how much of that money will come from in-state students, Mr. Pernsteiner said, and how much from nonresidents, who typically pay something closer to full price and essentially subsidize the cost for in-state and low-income students.

At that point, colleges begin the intricate process of choosing an incoming class that meets the institution's financial needs as well as its academic requirements, and adds to the socioeconomic diversity on campus.

"It's part art and part science," said Wayne Locust, vice president for enrollment planning and management at the University of Connecticut.

About 20 percent of students at both Connecticut and North Carolina came from low-income families and were eligible to receive Pell Grants in the 2011-12 academic year.

At the upper end of the income scale, nearly 16 percent of incoming in-state students at UConn who used federal aid (and were tracked on that basis by the Education Department) came from families that earned more than $110,000 in 2011-12. Those students paid an average net price of nearly $23,000, 10 percent less than the full listed cost that year, according to federal data.

At North Carolina, fewer than 9 percent of the freshman class was in that highest income category. Those students paid an average of about $20,000, 5 percent less than the sticker price.

The process is also heavily influenced, or even controlled, by state politics. In North Carolina, for example, the state restricts the number of nonresident students at its universities.

Just 18 percent of the students at Chapel Hill are from outside the state, said Mr. Dean, the provost.

Although that limits the amount of overall revenue the university can generate from tuition, it also creates fierce competition among nonresidents to get into the university, Mr. Dean said.
And the high academic level of those nonresident students, in turn, attracts high-achieving students from within the state.

**What Price?**

Even in times of financial distress, though, students aren't just paying for a college’s current operations. While colleges express their commitment to controlling costs and maintaining affordability, students are often helping to meet the institution's aspirations for the future.

For example, a four-year plan to raise tuition at Connecticut is meant to help pay for hiring more faculty members and thus significantly lowering the university's student-to-faculty ratio.

The university also needs new and refurbished classrooms and laboratories, said Sally M. Reis, vice provost for academic affairs.

"Nobody wants to come to a university where facilities are coming apart. Without those things, we would be pedaling backwards," she said.

Several other factors also have an effect on how much students pay at UConn and Chapel Hill. One in particular is the endowment, which is more than $2-billion at Chapel Hill and a little more than $300-million at UConn. Assuming that each university uses about 5 percent of its endowment annually, the Chapel Hill campus could spend $111-million for financial aid, compared with about $15-million at UConn.

At the same time, Chapel Hill spent far more on instruction and research, according to federal data. It is also more selective, accepting fewer than 30 percent of applicants compared with Connecticut’s rate of more than half. Both of those factors would typically indicate that the University of North Carolina is more expensive.

But changes in Connecticut’s state pension rules will heap costs on the public university for the next 20 years, said Ms. Teal, the budget official. Last year the university used more than $30-million from a reserve to cover its increased responsibility for employee pensions. And
administration officials have been quoted as saying that tuition revenue will have to be considered to fill that hole in the future.

All of those conditions certainly have some effect on the price that students pay.

But without better accounting methods, colleges cannot really hope to understand and manage their costs, said Mr. Pernsteiner, of the association of state higher-education executives.

Current accounting models, he said, hide the costs of instruction by lumping together a lot of things not directly related to delivering education, such as facilities and maintenance, some research costs, fund raising, even athletics.

Ms. Anguiano, at the University of California, said that for colleges to maintain quality and remain cost-effective in the long run, they need a more detailed understanding of specific educational costs.

"There is almost a complete lack of visibility on how much it actually costs to deliver postsecondary education, and how those costs compare with the outcomes achieved," Ms. Anguiano wrote in her December 2013 report for the Gates foundation.

As a result, colleges may not make the best choices when it’s necessary to cut the budget as a result of a decline in state revenue or a drop in enrollment.

"Nonstrategic cuts," she wrote, generally achieve only marginal savings and can often lead to higher total costs and poorer delivery of services."
How 2 Flagship Public Universities Earn and Spend Their Money

The University of Connecticut and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are both flagship campuses of their states' public-university systems, have similar enrollments, and receive nearly the same amount in state funding, but there the likeness ends. Many factors contribute to the overall financial picture that leads to an average net tuition that's $5,000 higher at UConn than at Chapel Hill, but state support isn't one of them.

Revenues

- Tuition and fees
- State appropriations
- Gifts
- Investment income

Expenditures

- Instruction
- Research
- Public service
- Academic support
- Student services
- Institutional support
- Auxiliary enterprises

Endowments

- U. of Connecticut: $306,301,007
- U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: $2,239,238,601

Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2011-12 fiscal year
MU team gets grant for Alzheimer's quest

Monday, May 19, 2014 at 2:00 pm

A $1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health will help a University of Missouri research team look for clues into the causes of Alzheimer's disease.

The NIH grant will fund work by James Lee, an associate professor of bioengineering in the College of Engineering, and his collaborator, Grace Sun, a professor in the MU Department of Biochemistry, studying cell function using biophysical engineering techniques, according to a university news release.

The research team focuses on a particular protein, amyloid-beta peptide, "which is present at toxic levels in the brains of Alzheimer's patients," Lee said in the news release. Researchers hope to find links between the protein and damage to capillaries in the brain, he said.

The NIH grant begins this year and lasts until 2019. Lee's work was recently published in the journals Molecular Biology, PLoS One and Nanomedicine: Nanotechnology, Biology, and Medicine.

MU researcher gets $1.5 million grant to study Alzheimer's

Monday, May 19, 2014 | 1:54 p.m. CDT

BY CHRIS JASPER

COLUMBIA — The National Institutes of Health provided an MU researcher and bioengineering associate professor with a $1.5 million grant to study vascular factors in Alzheimer's disease.
James Lee's research — which focuses on the link between a protein, amyloid-beta peptide, and damage to blood capillaries in the brain — could lead to a treatment for the disease, according to a news release from the university.

"A lot of research programs lack funding, and this obviously will be a big boost for my lab," Lee said.

He also said the grant, which was provided by the national Institute on Aging, would allow his lab to do bigger, more substantial research on Alzheimer's.

Hearing tonight on College Avenue pedestrian barriers

Opinions mixed on the project.

By Andrew Denney

Monday, May 19, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (3)

The Columbia City Council will hold a public hearing Monday night for pedestrian safety improvements to a section of College Avenue abutting the University of Missouri campus.

The improvements include the construction of a barrier between University and Bouchelle avenues. The barrier would cut off left turns from and onto College Avenue for that section of the roadway.

It's common to see students take their chances and cross College Avenue between the crosswalks, even during peak traffic hours. According to a city council report, from June 2005 to June 2012, there were 20 pedestrian-related accidents in the project area that have been reported to police.
The project also includes the construction of two intrablock crosswalks outfitted with HAWK pedestrian safety signals.

According to the council report, there were about 7,500 pedestrian crossings counted in the project area during a 2009 study, of which 5,000 were outside of crosswalks.

The project is estimated to cost $823,750, of which $659,000 is being covered by a grant from the Missouri Department of Transportation. The city and the university will split the rest of the cost.

GetAbout Columbia Manager Cliff Jarvis said the city has outlined some future projects that might make up for the loss of left turns in the project area, including the construction of a dedicated turn lane on Rollins Street just east of its intersection with College Avenue; intersection improvements at College Avenue and Ashland Road to allow U-turns; and prohibiting parking on William Street south of Ross Street.

Jarvis said the city also is considering reversing the one-way directions on Lee Street and Bouchelle Avenue so that the streets flow south and east, respectively. He said, though, the city will need to study how the loss of left turns in the project area affects traffic flow before it comes forward with a mitigation plan.

"It's kind of a wait-and-see," Jarvis said.

The East Campus Neighborhood Association opposes the construction of a barrier along College Avenue. Janet Hammen, president of the association, said residents have raised concerns about pedestrian safety along College Avenue for years, but that East Campus residents' input was not taken into account when plans for the project were drawn up.

"Frankly, the city and the state and the university came up with the plan and wrote up a grant," Hammen said. "They had no input from people who live here."

In response to opponents' concerns about the loss of left turns, Jarvis noted that the Missouri Department of Transportation, which has jurisdiction over College Avenue, believes that allowing left turns in the project area is a detriment to pedestrian safety.

Hammen said, though, that East Campus residents support the installation of the HAWK lights at intrablock crosswalks and educational programming to increase awareness for students.

Comment forms submitted at interested-parties meetings in November and February indicate mixed feelings among residents.

Annette Triplett, executive director of the PedNet Coalition, wrote in support of the project, suggesting that the city integrate some landscaping along the wall to make it more aesthetically pleasing. Carrie Gartner, executive director of the Downtown Community Improvement District, wrote that the proposed barrier makes it look as if MU is building a barrier between itself and the
city and suggested that landscaping be placed in the project area instead to soften "the boundaries between town and gown" and to green the street.

E15 arrives in Missouri, though consumers may have to look hard to find it

8 HOURS AGO • BY JACOB BARKER JBARKER@POST-DISPATCH.COM 314-340-8291

It’s hard to find a gas station these days that doesn’t sell a 10 percent ethanol blend. A 15 percent mix, now that it’s available, probably won’t become as common anytime soon.

New rules that take effect at the end of the month mean Missouri will join 12 other states that allow their gasoline retailers to sell the higher-ethanol blend of fuel. Whether it takes off depends more on commodity markets, federal policy and carmakers’ blessing than a change in state rules allowing E15 at the pump.

While not mandatory, the new regulation created a combustible mix of controversy in the state, with the corn lobby and the convenience store lobby throwing their considerable political clout on opposing sides of the issue.

Biofuel trade groups and state corn growing associations say E15 is just another blend of fuel that gas stations can offer price-conscious motorists. Despite auto industry groups warning of the fuel’s impact on engines, the Environmental Protection Agency has approved it for use in vehicle models 2001 and newer.

“It’s bringing in another low-cost fuel to consumers,” said Bradley Schad, director of market development with the Missouri Corn Growers Association. “It’s actually helping drive the economy here in Missouri because we produce ethanol in Missouri.”

AAA, the national motor club federation, has pushed back against the E15 standard, saying that 90 percent of the cars on the road are not approved by automakers to use the fuel. That could void warranties and cause engine damage, the group says.

If a vehicle that uses E15 is damaged, the gas station that supplied the fuel could be liable, said Ron Leone, the director of the Missouri Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association. Gas station operators could also face trouble if the equipment they use to store and dispense the fuel isn’t specifically insured or licensed to be used with E15, he said. He’s telling all his members not to offer it until some of those liability issues are resolved.
“For those few marketers that may start dipping their toes in this, there’s so many pitfalls,” Leone said.

The 12 states that have approved the sale of E15 to consumers are almost all in the Midwest and grow a lot of corn, but they still have seen few stations adopt the blend. With more than 120,000 gas stations in the country, the last count by the Renewable Fuels Association, in January, put the number offering E15 at 59.

Illinois retailers have been long allowed to sell the blend to motorists, said Bill Fleischli of the Illinois Petroleum Marketers Association and the Illinois Association of Convenience Stores. He estimates only about 12 to 15 of his members sell the blend, largely due to a state tax credit that benefits a 10 percent blend of ethanol but hasn’t been expanded to E15.

But many stations are being held back by the same concerns over liability and worries about E15 damaging engines and voiding auto warranties.

“We’re three to five years away from it, because it’s going to take that long to make the vast majority of automobiles to run on this and still keep their engine warranties,” he said.

The bigger driver may be the Renewable Fuel Standard, the reason there’s ethanol in gasoline to begin with. It requires an increasing amount of renewable fuel be blended with the nation’s gasoline, which hit 16.55 billion gallons in 2013.

The vast majority of that comes from ethanol, but with flat to declining gasoline consumption expected, meeting the renewable fuel standard, or RFS, with only a 10 percent blend of ethanol looked like it would soon become impossible, what the industry refers to as “the blend wall.” Raising the allowed blend to 15 percent would let the industry continue to hit renewable fuel targets.

Instead, the EPA, which administers the RFS, has for the first time proposed reducing the amount of renewable fuel required to be blended into gasoline this year.

That could reduce a lot of the incentive retailers and auto manufacturers have to move toward a higher-ethanol blend, said Pat Westhoff, the director of the Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Beyond that, oil would have to approach $200 a barrel and corn prices would have to drop to make higher blends of ethanol look attractive to retailers.

“Given where prices are right now, it would probably take a pretty big change in prices or a change in policy,” Westhoff said.

Stations that are selling the blend now have mostly been in rural areas, something Westhoff and Schad, of the state corn growers association, both said probably arises
from their desire to support rural economies. Schad expects Missouri to mirror that trend starting off, although a blend allowing for E15 likely won’t be available until after the summer. “They have a captive audience who wants to see E15 where it benefits them,” he said of rural stations.

Here in St. Louis, it may take a pretty fundamental shift before the fuel is as attractive as the conventional blend.

“You’re not going to get people interested to buy E15 in large quantities as long as ethanol is expensive relative to gasoline,” Westhoff said.