Enrollment up at University of Missouri campuses

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
10/06/2014 4:04 AM

COLUMBIA, MO. - Enrollment at the four-campus University of Missouri system is on the rise.

The Columbia Daily Tribune (http://bit.ly/1vy2CTu) reports that a record 35,441 students are taking on-campus or online classes this fall at the flagship campus in Columbia, an increase of about 2 percent. MU Chancellor R. Bowen says freshman enrollment was up 5 percent to 6,518 students.

The Missouri University of Science and Technology had about 8,650 students enrolled for the largest increase at 6.3 percent. The Kansas City campus had about 16,000 students enrolled, a 2.6 percent increase.

The St. Louis campus had slower enrollment growth than the other system schools. Officials there blamed it on tensions in Ferguson after the shooting death of a black 18-year-old by a white officer.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/news/state/missouri/article2529557.html#storylink=cpy
Enrollment grows at University of Missouri campuses; MU sets record

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, October 4, 2014 at 12:00 am Comments (7)

The University of Missouri reported record enrollment Friday with official numbers showing 35,441 students taking on-campus or online classes this fall.

MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin announced the numbers Friday morning at the Board of Curators meeting while fielding questions with the leaders of the University of Missouri System’s three other campuses. Each leader reported an enrollment increase.

The increase in total enrollment on the flagship campus was about 2 percent. At MU, freshman enrollment was up 5 percent to 6,518 students, 25 percent of whom are first generation college students, Loftin said. The new figure was higher than MU’s unofficial first-day enrollment of 34,935, which also broke a record.

The largest decline at MU was in first-year professional students — 1,222 students for a 2.6 percent dip. Loftin attributed the change almost entirely to decreased enrollment in the MU School of Law, saying the “too many lawyers” messaging that went out in several national publications this past year appears to have stunted enrollment.

MU set a record for minority students enrolled at 5,486, a 5.6 percent increase, and international students — 2,417 students for an 8.1 percent increase. The largest increase, which broke a campus record, was an 11 percent jump in out-of-state undergraduate students, who now number 7,557.

While the number of graduate students broke a record, Loftin said the increase is tied to the array of online graduate programs.

“That’s fine, but we need to focus on recruiting on-campus graduate students that form the backbone of this research institution,” he told the board.

Loftin also said he wants to improve the university’s 86.2 percent retention rate to somewhere in the 90s during the next several years.
The Missouri University of Science and Technology had about 8,650 students enrolled for the largest increase at 6.3 percent. The Kansas City campus, which hosted the curators Thursday and Friday, had about 16,000 students enrolled, a 2.6 percent increase. The St. Louis campus had slower enrollment growth than the other system schools.

UMSL Chancellor Tom George presented a half-percent increase in total enrollment with drops in new transfer students and international students. He attributed the decline in those statistics and the lack of a large increase to the tensions in Ferguson after the shooting death of Michael Brown more than a month ago.

George said to outsiders looking in, it appeared “St. Louis was going down in flames,” which made some people skeptical about showing up this fall.

McCaskill to visit MU for campus sexual assault conversation tour

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, October 5, 2014 at 12:00 am Comments (1)

U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill kicks off a tour of some of Missouri’s college campuses this week to talk about sexual assault, an issue that University of Missouri administrators have attempted to tackle with recent policy changes.

McCaskill’s tour stops this week include MU’s Reynolds Alumni Center at 9 a.m. Tuesday, where she hopes to hear from students and other campus community members from MU and neighboring higher education institutions, both public and private, two-year and four-year. The meeting will be a reverse townhall setup so McCaskill can ask questions of the audience.

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe said Friday that he welcomes the senator to the flagship campus to talk about an issue that his staff has worked on for the better part of the year. Wolfe recently issued a series of executive orders, which were ratified by the Board of Curators on Thursday, that provided some clarity on sexual assault and discrimination reporting.

“One of the biggest challenges we’ve got is making sure students are aware of this societal problem,” Wolfe said, adding that he hopes students communicate their understanding and awareness of what sexual discrimination, banned on campuses under Title IX, entails and what resources are available to them.
Once students are aware, efforts can focus on what students can do to prevent further assaults, he said.

McCaskill recently filed legislation called the Campus Accountability and Safety Act. So far, the bill has received bipartisan support.

Provisions of the bill address training standards for campus employees, support systems for sexual assault victims, transparency requirements and enforceable penalties for Title IX and Clery Act violations. The Clery Act requires campus police nationwide to disclose information about crimes on or near school property. McCaskill’s bill would increase the penalty for violating the Clery Act from $35,000 to $150,000.

For Title IX, the penalty could be up to 1 percent of the institution’s operating budget. For MU, that would be about $14 million, Wolfe said during the curators’ meeting.

“This bill represents a rare thing in Washington — a truly collaborative, bipartisan effort — and that bodes well for our shared fight to turn the tide against sexual violence on our campuses,” McCaskill said in a news release.

After the bill was filed, Wolfe sent a letter to McCaskill with a list of comments and clarifications on behalf of the UM System. Among the questions posed in Wolfe’s letter was whether there would be any “leniency for a university that complies in a reasonably, good faith manner but is later found as noncompliant.”

The majority of the comments were small language change suggestions.

A news release from McCaskill’s office said representatives from the Boone County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, the Columbia Police Department and eight Mid-Missouri colleges and universities will attend.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Sen. Claire McCaskill to discuss campus rape culture at MU

Friday, October 3, 2014 | 4:15 p.m. CDT
BY ALEXA AHERN

COLUMBIA — Sen. Claire McCaskill will visit MU on Tuesday to discuss sexual violence on campus with law enforcement and students, faculty and staff from eight local colleges. The discussion will start at 9 a.m. at the Reynolds Alumni Center.
The visit is part of the statewide "Claire on Campus" tour to receive feedback on her [Campus Safety and Accountability Act](https://www.missouri.edu/policy/2014112101), which was introduced in July, according to a news release from her office.

The act includes new standards for training, data collection and best practices at universities, as well as stiff penalties for non-compliance, according to McCaskill's website.

The campus tour comes to MU after recent changes in sexual assault policy have been made throughout the University of Missouri System. At the UM System Board of Curators meeting Thursday, curators unanimously approved updates to the Collected Rules and Regulations, changing the way the system handles Title IX reporting.

National attention to the issue has also come from initiatives such as the White House's "It's On Us" Campaign that aims to shift the culture around sexual assault on college campuses.

UM System ratifies changes to sexual misconduct policy

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The University of Missouri Board of Curators has ratified changes to how sexual misconduct and discrimination allegations will be handled on the university system’s four campuses.
In a meeting in Kansas City, the curators voted Thursday to approve changes suggested last month by President Tim Wolfe, The Columbia Daily Tribune reported (http://bit.ly/1viusTN). Sexual assault, stalking, dating violence and harassment are prohibited under Title IX, the federal anti-discrimination law.

The changes would set a tentative 60-day period for the school to investigate sexual harassment or discrimination cases. The new rules also implement new ways to handle students or organizations accused of discrimination.

Wolfe has said he wants the University of Missouri system to become a leader in preventing sexual misconduct on campus. He signed an executive order in April that requires most employees to report violations, though workers with a legal obligation or privilege of confidentiality – such as health care providers, counselors and lawyers – were exempt.

The changes approved Thursday would require most employees to promptly report Title IX violations to the campus coordinator.

The Missouri system has spent more than $1 million to address the issue, including $495,000 for a consultant and $515,000 for the four campuses to begin implementing the changes, university officials said.

Those who violate Title IX could face penalties ranging from a reprimand to expulsion if found guilty. Throughout the process, the victim and accused would each be allowed to have one adviser with them, which could be a parent, attorney or a trained adviser provided by the university.

Wolfe told the curators more than 100 people have received training across the UM system, including Title IX coordinators, deputy coordinators and investigators. Other mandated reporters will be trained in the future.

Wolfe said he has been criticized for moving too fast on the policy changes.

“T will gladly take the criticism if we can save one more person from being sexually assaulted,” Wolfe told the curators.
Round up: Title IX changes and other curator meeting need-to-knows

Happy Saturday! Here’s to a beautiful fall weekend.

Also, go Cards!

Inside the system:

- Happy FOIA Friday! OK, so it’s Saturday, but FOIA Friday sounds so much better.

This week we have the “red-line” documents for the executive orders issued by President Wolfe and ratified by the Board of Curators related to Title IX. The red-line document basically shows all of the Collected Rules and Regulations changes that were made as indicated by the red markings.

In case you missed it, here is the story we ran after the curators approved the changes, and another story with more details about the executive orders right after they were issued.

- Anyone following the events in Ferguson has likely noticed that the University of Missouri-St. Louis campus has had quite a few faculty members featured in the ongoing discussions. The campus’ blog categorized all of the media reports involving professors. Handy!

- The newest curator, David Steelman, was appointed last Friday and sworn in Thursday.

- The most recent Legislative Update from the UM System highlights veto session triumphs for the institution.

- Attached to this blog are two advertisements that ran in the Sept. 5 Chronicle for Higher Education from MU and the Missouri University of Science and Technology. Both are looking for a few administrators. MU is highlighting the journalism school and engineering school dean positions in particular.

Outside the system:

- This is almost a month old now, but in case you missed it, Southeast Missouri State President Kenneth Dobbins is retiring.
- An update: The Coordinating Board for Higher Education approved during its September meeting the amendment to internal rules related to expanding the A+ Scholarship Program to those students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival status. In case you’re unfamiliar with the subject, here’s the most recent story.

- Huffington Post ran an interesting column from education consultant David Smith this week on the role of community colleges in the social justice conversation, sparked by Ferguson. Very interesting read.

- Stephens College unveiled a new logo for its athletics teams, the Stephens Stars, late last month. Nice little blog post with a few pictures of the new logos.

- Speaking of Stephens, the college now has a “campus pack” on the social media site Pack where dog owners/lovers can share photos and information about their dogs.

- The stakes have risen in this whole video game challenge that Columbia College President Scott Dalrymple created. In addition to Dalrymple paying for the winner’s textbooks - if a student can beat him, that is - an Ohio-based pizza company is now throwing in some incentive too. Mama Rosa’s announced last week that the company will offer a year of free pizza to the winner of the Madden 25 video game tournament. Sign me up.

---

Curators OK money for projects on Columbia, St. Louis campuses

By Ashley Jost

Friday, October 3, 2014 at 11:45 am

The University of Missouri Board of Curators on Thursday approved capital project matching grants for the Columbia and St. Louis campuses.

The two grants include $3 million for the Missouri Orthopaedic Institute in Columbia for a fourth floor addition and $750,000 for laboratory updates in a science building on the St. Louis campus. The curators’ stamp of approval means the UM System can file the matching grant request with the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

Brian Burnett, UM System chief financial officer, said the two requests for fiscal year 2015 “fall in behind” the four matching grant requests for fiscal year 2015 that were approved by the
legislature but were ultimately withheld by Gov. Jay Nixon pending state revenue outcomes. Among the handful of projects awaiting released funding includes $10 million for the Applied Learning Center for the MU business school.

Burnett said UM System administrators are optimistic at least some, if not all, of the matching funds for the current fiscal year will be released.

The fourth-floor addition to the Orthopaedic Institute has been part of MU Health Care administrative discussions for months and is in the design process. The $3 million matching fund request already has been met with a $3 million donation.

In a presentation to the Boone County Commissioners last week, MU Chief Operating Officer Gary Ward told the commissioners the institute’s addition would be used primarily for classroom and laboratory space. The addition will be connected to the existing academic part of the building tied to the School of Medicine’s Orthopaedic Department.

“This academic space will serve to bring together world class scientists and clinicians so that progress can be achieved efficiently and effectively,” the board proposal states. “The mission is to strive for relentless pursuit of discoveries and advances in orthopaedic diagnostics and treatments aimed at saving quality of life through improvements in healthcare training and delivery.”

The curators, including newly inducted Curator David Steelman, unanimously approved the motion 9-0.

Loftin's book reveals inside look at realignment

By Joe Walljasper

Saturday, October 4, 2014 at 11:00 pm

R. Bowen Loftin’s new book, “The 100-Year Decision: Texas A&M and the SEC,” is a victory lap celebrating the greatest athletic achievement in the school’s history: outmaneuvering bitter rival Texas in the game of conference realignment.

Not only did Texas A&M land in the nation’s most athletically dominant — and soon-to-be richest — league, it left the Longhorns to lord over a diminished Big 12. Loftin, formerly the
president of Texas A&M and now the chancellor of the University of Missouri, tells the story of how a career academic with little interest in sports was thrust into a position of authority during the tumultuous period of conference swapping. He quickly developed a taste for the back-channeling, bluffing and media manipulation required of a true master of the realignment universe.

“I believe history will reflect that we at Texas A&M acted thoughtfully, proactively, strategically, judiciously, and bravely in ultimately making the move to the SEC,” Loftin wrote. “But we did not act antagonistically toward longtime rivals in our home state. We didn’t draw a line in the sand, and we didn’t set out to cause a national commotion or to break off regional rivalries that dated back more than a century.”

The book is written for Aggies and likely will not disappoint them — given the juicy insider tidbits and the potshots at the Longhorns — but it holds some interest for Missouri fans, too. The issues that drove Texas A&M and Missouri from the Big 12 into the arms of the SEC were the same. And the book offers some insight into Loftin’s management style. Spoiler alert: He is not opposed to getting very involved in athletic decisions.

Loftin, a graduate of Texas A&M, was into physics more than phys ed as a student. He was the vice president and CEO of tiny Texas A&M University at Galveston when Robert Gates left his position as Texas A&M’s president to become the U.S. secretary of defense in January 2008. Gates was succeeded by Elsa Murano, but, after just 18 months and one scathing performance review, she resigned. To his surprise, Loftin was tabbed as the interim president in June 2009, just as the realignment wheel was about to spin. Had either of his predecessors — who had little involvement with the athletic department — still been in charge, the college landscape might be very different today.

“Back in 2010, for example, the path that others would have chosen for us would have led Texas A&M to the Pac-10, just as the University of Texas had attempted clandestinely to arrange it,” Loftin wrote. “The ripple effect of that move, however, would have created the equivalent of a tsunami sweeping across college athletics. If Texas A&M would have merely accepted the Longhorns’ 2010 plans, it would have paved the way for the Pac-10 to add Texas, Texas Tech, Colorado, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, and A&M, becoming the Pac-16. In all likelihood, the powers-that-be in the new league would have pushed to expedite the expansion details in order to begin play in time for the fall of 2011.

“Think about the consequences. This would have gutted the Big 12 Conference, potentially leaving its remaining members scrambling to find another conference affiliation. It is quite possible that the expansion of the Pac-10 could have ushered in the era of four super-conferences of sixteen teams each, as the SEC, ACC, and Big Ten would have likely felt pressured to respond to the Pac-16’s expansion into Middle America.”

Although conference realignment seemed to come out of nowhere as an issue in 2009, Loftin noted that the seeds of dissatisfaction in the Big 12 were growing from the start of the conference in 1996, when the old Big Eight schools merged with four remnants of the disbanding Southwest Conference: Baylor, Texas, Texas A&M and Texas Tech. There was immediate uneasiness about
the concessions made to Texas, from the rules on academic qualifiers to revenue sharing to the location of the league office in Dallas. Loftin called the Big 12 “a shotgun wedding and a dysfunctional mess from day one.”

In the spring of 2010, new Pac-10 Commissioner Larry Scott flew to College Station, Texas, and met with Loftin and A&M Athletic Director Bill Byrne about his plans for expanding his league to keep pace with Big Ten Commissioner Jim Delaney, who also had expansion on his mind. Loftin wrote that he got the feeling from Scott that Texas was already onboard with the plan to jump from the Big 12.

“Texas was ‘already gone’ and fully prepared to sing their victory song,” wrote Loftin, who apparently is an Eagles fan. “While UT president Bill Powers and athletic director DeLoss Dodds may not actually have mapped out Scott’s Pac-16 flight plan, I came to believe they were its copilots, at the very least. That is the only conclusion I can draw from Bill Powers’s statement to me on two different occasions: ‘Don’t worry. Whatever happens, we will take care of you.’ ”

Loftin wasn’t wild about the idea of joining the Pac-10. He worried about the increased travel, thought that conservative Texas A&M would be out of place among the liberal institutions of the West and was “not content to blithely board the Bevo Express.” So he placed a call to SEC Commissioner Mike Slive to gauge his league’s interest in Texas A&M. The SEC was interested, but Loftin ultimately decided to let the drama unfold without playing a role in the demise of the Big 12. He knew the Aggies would have a good home regardless of the outcome.

As it turned out, the Big 12 survived the 2010 drama, although it lost Nebraska to the Big Ten and Colorado to the Pac-10. Texas got some credit for saving the Big 12 by deciding to stay, although Loftin suspected the decision boiled down to UT’s refusal to give up the Longhorn Network. The Texas version of the story took root, though, because it was reported — through anonymous sources — on the website Orangebloods.com, which became the go-to source for realignment chatter.

The fragile peace in the new 10-team Big 12 lasted less than a year. This time the flash point was the Longhorn Network, which suddenly was going to have content — including high school football games — that wasn’t part of the original bargain. To Loftin, it was yet another example of Texas overplaying its hand and of Big 12 Commissioner Dan Beebe doing nothing about it. Loftin got back in touch with Slive and started building consensus for a move to the SEC among the Aggie faithful by working with a handful of selected reporters.

“To the fans of the maroon and white, LHN was a villainous lightning rod, the equivalent of the light saber-wielding Darth Vader, the flesh-eating Hannibal Lecter and the ruby slipper-coveting Wicked Witch of the West all rolled into one rules-bending antagonist,” Loftin wrote. “We needed a dragon to slay, and LHN became our fire-breathing, claw-bearing, wing-flapping serpent in burnt orange.”

If Loftin’s public-relations campaign unified the Aggies in favor of the SEC, it didn’t win over many others. Baylor President Ken Starr became a pain, threatening to sue the SEC if Texas A&M joined.
“The audacity of Starr — perhaps in cahoots with Beebe to save the Big 12, Beebe’s job, and Starr’s reputation — was more than I could take,” Loftin wrote.

Regardless, in September 2011, the SEC accepted Texas A&M. Loftin compared his feeling to that of Edmund Hillary when he became the first to reach the summit of Mount Everest. A few months later, Missouri joined the Aggies in the SEC.

Although Loftin had some trusted allies in his “100-year decision,” he left Byrne out of loop. Loftin suspected Byrne didn’t want A&M to go to the SEC, and he wasn’t a big fan of his AD in the first place. Loftin ordered Byrne to fire football Coach Mike Sherman against Byrne’s wishes and spearheaded the decision to replace Sherman with Kevin Sumlin. Soon, Loftin convinced Byrne to accept a buyout and replaced him, without much input from a search committee, with Eric Hyman.

“Bill and I had merely coexisted for quite some time,” Loftin wrote.

As you can tell from the above quotes, Loftin is a colorful writer who doesn’t pull any punches. The book was originally scheduled to be published by Texas A&M University Press, but the school changed its mind, and Loftin and co-author Rusty Burson wound up self-publishing. It’s available online through the usual sources, including Amazon.com. At 200 pages, it’s an easy and entertaining read, particularly if you followed college realignment with interest or are looking for some insight into MU’s aggressive new leader.

**Recognition, awareness main prongs in MU's concussion-management plan**

By [David Morrison](https://example.com)

**Sunday, October 5, 2014 at 12:00 am**

**Missouri hopes team effort can protect its players’ long-term health.**

Missouri has one piece of locker-room décor at all of its campus facilities, for both the home and visiting teams.

It’s a plastic placard produced by the SEC, adorned with logos and pictures of conference athletes past, as well as the word “CONCUSSION” printed in large, bold letters at the top.
Rex Sharp, Missouri’s associate athletic director for sports medicine, wants to make sure everybody can see it.

“So that our student-athletes are constantly reminded — every single time they walk in and out the door — of the importance of reporting if you have any kind of head injury,” Sharp said. “As I’ve said a thousand times, a head injury is not an ankle sprain. It’s a whole different deal. We want to make sure our student-athletes understand the importance.”

To Sharp, recognition and understanding are the most important facets of concussion management. It’s nearly impossible to avoid head trauma in a sport such as football, when the action is predicated on players running into each other every play.

What Sharp and other health professionals hope, though, is that the participants — trainers, coaches and players — know better than to overlook brain health.

No more bells rung. No more walking it off. No more euphemisms.

If you see something, say something.

“People are competitive,” said Dr. Tom Martin, the University of Missouri Health System director of adult neuropsychology. “You can’t see the inside of your brain. And there’s a lot of areas of your brain that don’t have nerve fibers, that can’t signal pain. So if you can’t see it and can’t really feel it, and you’re a competitor, you’re going to try and keep moving. That’s why you need to be able to count on the other people in the huddle. You need those peers to be able to look and say, ‘Your eyes are not with it, man. You’re not right. You’ve got to go and get evaluated.’ ”

Concussions have been especially prevalent in the national discussion this week. A Boston University study found that, of 79 brains of former NFL players examined, 76 had evidence of degenerative brain disease. A joint Boston University/Harvard University survey found that six suspected concussions went undiagnosed for every one that is among 730 FCS players polled.

Michigan came under fire after sophomore quarterback Shane Morris returned to the Sept. 27 loss to Minnesota after suffering what was later diagnosed as a concussion. Morris took a shot to the chin on a throw and struggled with his balance after he stood back up, at one point using offensive lineman Ben Braden to prop himself upright.

Running back Justice Hayes motioned to the sideline for medical attention. Morris waved it off, indicating that he was fine. He remained in the game for another play before being replaced by Devin Gardner. Then, after a short break on the sideline, he came back in on the same drive.

Coach Brady Hoke declined to say whether Morris was given a concussion exam on the sideline. Athletic Director Dave Brandon said Morris was diagnosed with a “mild, probable concussion” on Sunday and that the Michigan sideline encountered a “serious lack of communication” in diagnosing Morris’ injury during the game.
Sharp, who was a classmate of Hoke at Ball State and said he is friends with members of the Wolverines’ training staff, did not want to comment on the Morris situation.

Martin, who helped Sharp draft the Missouri athletic department’s concussion-management plan, said he did not see the game live but watched replays of the incident.

“You would hope that that would be enough of an indication to people on the field that they would have seen that, and, if they had seen that, you’d hope that would be an indication this player may need to be looked at,” Martin said. “We don’t know if they did see it or didn’t see it. I would certainly say that most people who would see that would say that this is a person who, at this moment, needs to be evaluated for a concussion.”

Sharp said the starting point for him in determining whether a player should be evaluated is keeping an eye out for the “mechanisms” of a head injury, such as helmet-to-helmet hits, late hits around the head area or helmets to the chin. After that, there are numerous symptoms to signal a concussion. Missouri’s concussion-management plan lists 18, most of them dealing with nausea, loss of memory, motor control or behavioral changes.

Sharp said he or his staff will ask a player simple questions and gauge their answers. They’ll test balance and coordination.

“That player can’t go back on the field until” Sharp “tells me he’s OK to go,” Coach Gary Pinkel said. “What I do is I tell the whole staff on my headset, get both offense and defense, and say, ‘John Smith’s out. Right now, he’s indefinitely out. We don’t know when he’s going to be back.’ Then the medical staff makes a decision over whether he goes in. I’m not even a part of that, and I shouldn’t be.”

Sharp said he could tell it was time to yank James Franklin from the Syracuse game in 2012 just by talking to him on the sideline. Running back Marcus Murphy took a big hit in the first half against Florida last year and did not return to the game.

Fellow back Russell Hansbrough took a hit high against UCF earlier this year and came off the field looking woozy. Sharp said Hansbrough, who did not go back into the game, did not undergo concussion testing and was just “dizzy for a few seconds.”

“If he is healthy and he misses two series, it’s not a big deal,” former Missouri wide receiver T.J. Moe said. “If he’s not healthy and he plays two series, that’s a huge deal.”

Moe, now a host on CBS Sports Radio 920 in St. Louis, said he never had to go through concussion testing during his career because, he joked, of his “thick skull.”

But he could tell symptoms in his teammates.

“A lot of times, you don’t know that you have a concussion,” Moe said. “Sometimes you don’t know. It’s not like, ‘I’m going to be out here. I don’t care about my future.’ A lot of times, it’s like, ‘I don’t know. I’ve been hit in my head 400,000 times since I started playing football when
I was 7 years old. What makes this hit any different? I’ll be fine. Shake it off.’ That’s why people have to keep an eye out for it.”

Missouri’s concussion-management plan mandates that, once an athlete is diagnosed, he or she has to pass four different levels of testing before a return to play.

They have to be symptom-free for 24 hours and get clearance from the team physician before they can begin light aerobic work. If they go a day without a relapse, they progress to noncontact, sport-specific activity then practice, then they’re cleared to play.

If they experience a recurrence of symptoms within a day during any of those steps, they revert to the previous one.

The training staff also tries to monitor the other areas of the athlete’s life, Sharp said, as outside forces can also affect recovery.

“Maybe we might hold them out of class. They’re not allowed to use a computer. We try to tell them not to watch television a whole lot. Don’t be around a phone. No video games. Bright lights, sometimes, will even irritate somebody,” Sharp said. “Just stay in, just rest. When I was in school way back when and someone would sustain a head injury, they’d use to want to wake them up in the middle of the night to make sure they were OK. We don’t do that.”

Underlying all of this is the hope that the more people who know about the risk of head injury and its possible repercussions in the future, the more levels of support athletes can rely on when they experience one.

“The brain is the part of your body that tells you, ‘Wait, whoa, something’s wrong. I better step back,’ ” Martin said. “If your brain is injured, you might not be getting that feedback. That’s really the big battle.”

Hundreds of hackers taking part in MU hackathon

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Hundreds of college students deprived themselves of sleep for 48 hours over the weekend in a computer hacking marathon at the University of Missouri that has tripled in size since its inaugural weekend last year.

HackMizzou, which ran through Sunday, was a “hackathon” in Columbia at which roughly 350 students competed for a $4,000 technology prize pack, the Columbia Daily Tribune reported.
Organizers said the event would yield some “amazing projects,” like Bully Finder, software created by one student hacker at last year’s event that allows parents to access their child’s social network profile and search for abusive behavior.

“The best way I can describe a hackathon is an invention competition,” said Mike Swift, commissioner of Major League Hacking, the governing body of all things hacking. “It’s a celebration of building.”

University of Missouri senior Gabrielle Perdieu, a business major who organized HackMizzou, said nearly half of the weekend’s participants were from Mizzou, while others came from the University of Illinois, Purdue University and other colleges.

---

Theater group to put Salem witch accuser on trial

Saturday, October 4, 2014 at 12:00 am

The Historical and Theatrical Trial Society at the University of Missouri is hosting a mock trial to prosecute Thomas Putnam, the accuser during the Salem witch trials, for his role in the infamous 1692 events.

The mock trial, which is free and open to the public, is at 6 p.m. Sunday in the Missouri Theatre, 203 S. Ninth St.

HATTS is an organization made up of MU School of Law students and faculty that looks at the intersection of law, history and theater. The society conducts an annual mock trial, applying modern law to a historical case. The mock trial is neither scripted nor rehearsed, according to a news release.
The federal government needs to revamp its oversight of higher education so that colleges and universities are held more accountable for the federal funds they receive, according to a new policy paper published today by a prominent conservative think tank.

The report, by the American Enterprise Institute, also calls on federal policymakers to do a better job of promoting a transparent higher education market, which would allow consumers to reward good colleges and punish bad ones. The federal government, it says, should provide far better information about a program’s graduation rate and the earnings a student can expect.

The authors, Andrew Kelly and Kevin James, both of AEI, write that while growing questions about the return that taxpayers are getting on their multibillion-dollar investment in higher education each year may be appropriate and worthwhile, the proposals that have been inspired by such scrutiny are not. In particular, they criticize efforts to beef up federal regulation of higher education, such as the Obama administration’s ratings proposal, which they see as well-intentioned but misguided.

“The intensifying drumbeat for reform has created a window of opportunity to improve quality assurance,” the authors write. “Fortunately, policymakers do not need to completely dismantle the building blocks of the current system, but they do need to think more broadly about how to modernize them.”

Among the changes they propose is having a more effective regulatory regime at the Department of Education. The federal government, while steering clear of judgments
about a program’s academic quality or value, should set bright-line standards that actually stop taxpayer dollars from flowing to the worst-performing colleges.

In calling for this revamped accountability scheme, the paper echoes some of the proposals that Senate Democrats have offered recently. For example, the authors argue that the Education Department should hold colleges accountable for the rate at which their former students are making progress in repaying their student loans. That metric, they argue, would be more straightforward than the current loan default standards, and less susceptible to manipulation by colleges.

In his draft plan to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, Senator Tom Harkin, the Democrat who chairs the Senate education committee, has also called for using a loan repayment rate. Unlike the AEI paper, however, Harkin’s bill would use the loan repayment rate as a complement to default rates, not a replacement.

Kelly and James also propose a risk-sharing system so that colleges have more “skin in the game” when it comes to their students’ loans. Under the system, colleges would be held responsible for a share of their former students’ loan defaults. Such a proposal, they say, would put pressure on all institutions to improve, not just the worst-performing colleges.

A handful of Senate Democrats and other student aid reformers, like the Institute for College Access and Success, have similarly called for risk-sharing mechanisms in federal loan policy. The Democrats’ bill in Congress would require colleges with high student loan default rates to pay a penalty to the government that is proportional to the defaulted debt.

**Boosting Transparency and Improving Accreditation**

Revamping the federal government’s direct oversight of higher education is only one component of improving federal higher education policy, the paper argues. Federal policymakers also need to “fundamentally reshape” the accreditation system and take steps to improve access to consumer information in the higher education marketplace.

On accreditation, the authors echo previous calls for the federal government to open up the accreditation system to new entities, like states or groups of employers. But they also highlight the need to make sure new authorizers grant access to federal aid
responsibly. For example, they suggest that the Education Department give these new entities the ability to grant different tiers of access to federal student aid (accreditors are currently only allowed to either allow access to federal aid or not).

In addition, they propose a risk-sharing mechanism for these new alternative accreditors, so that they have a more direct stake in the student outcomes at the institutions they allow to receive federal aid. These new accreditors would be held financially responsible for a share of the delinquent loans at institutions they monitor. "Just as all colleges and universities would bear some of the risk of student failure under a new risk-sharing policy, so too would authorizers that were recognized via the alternative path," they write.

Finally, the paper calls on the federal government to collect and publish better data that consumers can use in making decisions about where to attend college. For example, the government should make available the information it already has on the earnings and enrollment rates of students who have received federal aid.

“Data collection and transparency are areas where the federal government is poised to contribute substantially, far more than any other actor — public or private — in the system,” the authors write. “This is particularly true when it comes to the kind of information that would be very valuable to prospective students who are about to make one of the biggest investments of their lives.”