MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

Nov. 24, 2014
Faculty Council tackles concerns about tenure, academic freedom and sexual violence policies

By Ashley Jost

Friday, November 21, 2014 at 12:30 pm Comments (1)

Some University of Missouri faculty members are worried that new policies meant to combat sexual violence and discrimination could hamper academic freedom and how the rules will address accusations against faculty.

MU’s Faculty Council aired concerns related to the policies at a Thursday meeting.

Title IX is a federal law barring sexual violence and discrimination in public institutions. Sexual violence has been a major topic in higher education this year.

Faculty Council members said Thursday they want clearer policies in place that address what happens when faculty members are accused of a Title IX violation and how those policies could intersect with removal of tenure and dismissal procedures.

Dennis Miller, who is part of the intercampus council, a group looking at sexual discrimination and violence policies with UM System lawyers and consultants, with faculty from other UM System campuses, led the conversation.

Because the Title IX hearing process is mandated by university policy — ultimately guided by a U.S. Department of Education recommendation — to be completed in 60 days, faculty have concerns about how to create a realistic but timely procedure that takes into account the procedures for removal of tenure and dismissal for cause.

Miller said the “best-case scenario” is to draft policies that have been vetted by the intercampus faculty council by mid-December so faculty can provide input before the Board of Curators votes on the policies in February.

Several faculty members said they’re worried about a policy instituted by UM System President Tim Wolfe earlier this year that mandates all UM System employees report any information they receive about a possible violation to the campus Title IX office.
English Professor Karen Piper asked what happens to students in artistic fields such as creative writing, where sometimes darker subjects such as sexual assault might come out in writing or some other medium. Piper said a creative writing professor this semester has had to report several students because of the themes in their writing.

“This is one example of the challenges we face in ensuring that the University of Missouri is a national leader in the way we address Title IX issues and the safety and security of our students, faculty and staff,” John Fougere, UM System spokesman, said in an email. “The difficult balance of prioritizing our Title IX compliance while ensuring that issues of academic freedom are honored is why engaging in an ongoing discussion with faculty and staff is essential to this process.”

Other faculty said they’re worried about receiving information about their training as a mandated reporter — a status that kicked in April 9 — from MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin on Thursday, seven months after the announcement.

Loftin’s email includes directions for completing two training modules: “Harassment: What it is and how to stop it,” which is a 45-minute program, and “Mandated reporter training,” a 20-minute program. Each module includes a post-test.

Training must be completed by Jan. 30, Loftin said.

The UM System, under Wolfe, started taking steps to strengthen policies regarding campus sexual assault and mental health issues after questions about its handling of the alleged rape of swimmer Sasha Menu Courey. Loftin announced the appointment of an interim full-time Title IX coordinator and investigator to handle sexual assault reports. MU hired the investigator, Salama Gallimore, earlier this semester.

Tim Evans, student affairs chairman for the Faculty Council, said at the meeting that the search committee for the permanent Title IX administrator at MU will bring several candidates to campus for meetings and open forums in December.

MU Health to no longer hire nicotine users

Substance will be included in pre-employment drug testing.

By Ashley Jost and Jodie Jackson Jr.

Friday, November 21, 2014 at 10:30 am Comments (30)
University of Missouri Health Care announced Thursday that it won’t hire nicotine users and will test prospective employees for the drug starting Jan. 1.

The change is MU Health’s way “to lead by example,” according to a statement from Chief Executive Officer Mitch Wasden.

Current employees are exempt from the policy. However, beginning January 2016, all MU Health and University of Missouri System employees and their families will be offered a reduced medical premium if they are nicotine-free.

MU Health spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said the policy is “a natural progression” as the health system focuses on community health and disease prevention. Jenkins said administrators chose to exclude nicotine rather than tobacco so that it’s broad enough to include cigarettes, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, pipes, cigars, nicotine patches, nicotine gum and similar products.

“We want to improve the health of our patients and our community,” Jenkins said. “This feeds to our mission as an academic medical center.”

All new hires undergo pre-employment drug screenings, and starting Jan. 1, nicotine will be added to the screening list.

Applicants will also be asked whether they use nicotine products when they first apply. Those who say “yes” will receive cessation information. Applicants who use nicotine products can reapply for their jobs after 90 days if they’re nicotine-free.

Boone Hospital Center’s parent company, BJC HealthCare, has a similar policy that was enacted Jan. 1, spokesman Ben Cornelius said in an email. Employees hired before that date were exempt.

Stephen Gaither, spokesman for Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital, said in an email that the Department of Veterans Affairs has no policy prohibiting new hires or current employees from using nicotine. Any change would have to be made at the federal level.

UM System president outlines Ebola policy

COLUMBIA - The University of Missouri System notified employees Friday about its policies regarding Ebola.
University of Missouri System President Timothy Wolfe said in an email to the University of Missouri System community that, "to protect the health of the community, the UM System is prohibiting student, faculty and staff travel for university purposes (research, educational and business) to any nation identified in CDC Travel Health Notices, Warning Level 3, (currently Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea)," Wolfe said.

John Fougere, the chief communications officer of the UM System, said this policy means that those who do decide to travel will not be supported by the UM System.

"There's no restriction to anybody's freedom here, as far as if they want to travel somewhere," Fougere said. "Anybody in the university can travel to the nations mentioned in the CDC Travel Health Notice. What can't happen though, is if they go there, they will not be reimbursed for any university business."

Fougere said this policy was announced Friday to reinforce the policy currently in place for travel and CDC travel Health Notices.

"President Wolfe just wanted to reinforce what the travel policy is with regards to travel to some of the nations that are mentioned in the CDC travel health notices," Fougere said. "Specifically the three in West Africa where there has been Ebola."

Wolfe also noted that although it is very unlikely Ebola would come to Missouri, he explained it is important to be "vigilant and prepared" to ensure the community is safe.

He also said the restrictions could change with time.

"Additional countries may be added as the CDC advice changes," Wolfe said.

In October, KOMU 8 News reported University of Missouri Healthcare officials were preparing for the possibility of a threat in mid-Missouri.

To keep up to date on CDC warnings, visit the CDC website, which explains the different warning levels, as well as what countries are under warning currently.

Link to video: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=26519&zone=5&categories=5

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Ebola outbreak hits close to home for MU student

Sunday, November 23, 2014 | 8:25 p.m. CST
BY SHIVIA HARDIMAN
COLUMBIA — While many students traveled home for the Thanksgiving holiday, MU freshman Sandra Chrapah stayed in Missouri worrying about her family in Ghana and the threat of Ebola.

Although there were no confirmed cases of Ebola in Ghana, Chrapah still spent the semester worried about her family there. Every time she calls her family, she asks if Ebola has reached the country.

It's scary, she said. "I wouldn't like to lose a family member to Ebola."

According to the MU News Bureau, none of the university's 101 African students are from Sierra Leone, Guinea or Liberia, where Ebola outbreaks have killed more than 5,000 people, though five students are from neighboring countries. There have been no cases of Ebola in Ghana, though there was an Ebola outbreak in the neighboring country of Nigeria that the World Health Organization declared contained in October.

Chrapah said Ebola felt more dangerous than other, more-common diseases, like malaria, because of the amount of media coverage — the primary source of information about the virus for her family in Ghana. Chrapah has had malaria several times and an outbreak of the disease killed more than 562,000 people in Africa in 2012, according to the World Health Organization.

When she was 13, Chrapah contracted a case of malaria that could've killed her, she said. She remembers other patients at the hospital telling her how lucky she was to be alive, because people with the disease die every day.

But compared to Ebola, malaria is "nothing. It's not a big deal," Chrapah said.

"Malaria is something common. It’s deadly, but it’s common," she said. "Everybody’s just scared because you don’t know what might happen."

Media has a pervasive role in people's perception of risk, said Dr. Laura Scherer, MU assistant professor in the psychological sciences department. Chrapah and others could be perceiving the risk of Ebola as greater than it is because of the availability heuristic, a mental effect that makes a danger seem more important because it's nearby. In the case
of Ebola, the constant stream of media reports makes the virus seem too close for comfort, Scherer said.

"But this can become skewed in the case of something like Ebola, in which the availability of the risk is driven by the media, not by one's actual proximity to people who have Ebola," she said in an email.

In her research, Scherer has not studied any specific outbreak that parallels the Ebola outbreaks in West Africa, but she has studied how the probability and severity of situations dictate the feeling of risk, she said.

As exemplified by Chrapah and many others around the world, the emotional reaction people have about Ebola makes the virus seem riskier than it actually is, Scherer said.

According to a poll by Gallup, 23 percent of respondents in the U.S. said they were worried about contracting Ebola. There were four confirmed cases of Ebola in the U.S., three of whom recovered, according to the CDC.

“They pay attention to their feelings and they don't take numerical information into account nearly enough,” Scherer said. “Recently I've seen reports that there is a 1 in 33 million chance that an average American would contract Ebola. That chance is infinitesimally small. But the risk can feel greater when we don't take the actual probability into account.”

Ebola's high rate of death after contraction — about 50 percent, according to the World Health Organization — also heightens the fear of Ebola, even though it is relatively difficult to contract, Scherer said.

That fear and the way the disease has been hyped by the news, social media and local gossip has changed the way Ghanaians interact with each other, causing them to avoid hand shakes and hugs, Chrapah said. It's good that Ghanaians are taking precautions, she said, but sometimes "it becomes too much" for a disease that's not even in Ghana.

“Even me. I went to the market and a guy touched me,” Chrapah said. “I was like, 'Do not touch me, please. You know there is a disease outbreak.'”
Chrapah and her sister no longer take public transit in Ghana. They, like many other Ghanaians, started taking cabs so that they can avoid body contact.

And when she does touch someone, she makes sure to use hand sanitizer that is at least 60 percent alcohol, as advised by the CDC. Hand sanitizer was in such high demand in Ghana that supplies ran low, so Chrapah bought some in Ghana before she left for MU for her 10-year-old sister.

“I went to the store to get her hand sanitizer to go to school,” Chrapah said. “I really want my family to be protected.”

*Supervising editor is Katherine Reed.*

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**City to end contracts for bus service to complexes**

By [Andrew Denney](mailto:andrew.denney@columbia.edu)

**Sunday, November 23, 2014 at 12:00 am Comments (4)**

Starting next year, Columbia Transit will end its practice of negotiating contracts with south Columbia apartment complexes to provide students with city bus service to the University of Missouri campus, citing reduced bus service to the complexes because of recent changes to routes.

Before the city implemented CoMo Connect in August — replacing the old “orbital pulse” system that had a series of interconnected loops linked up by transfer points, starting and ending at Wabash Station — the bus system’s Black and Gold routes served the complexes and buses provided direct service to and from the complexes and the campus.

But federal transit officials said city buses shouldn’t be used as shuttles to transport riders directly between the complexes and campus, said Drew Brooks, the city’s multi-modal manager. He said, though, that since the buses were still picking up riders at bus stops along those routes that the city didn’t violate any rules.
“We were still within the letter of the law, but we were really kind of skirting the edges of it the way we were doing it,” Brooks said.

Additionally, with the CoMo Connect overhaul, the Black and Gold routes became “connector” routes, spanning the city north-south and east-west, respectively, thus limiting service to the apartment complexes to the Black route. The Black route goes as far south as Nifong Boulevard and stops in front of the MU Student Center.

At one point within the last several years, the city had contracts with at least six complexes, and that number has dwindled to three this year.

Brooks said Columbia Transit will continue to sell packages of bus passes to complexes for distribution to residents of the complexes.

The Pointe at Rock Quarry Park, located on Rock Quarry Road just south of Grindstone Parkway, has purchased 265 bus passes from the city for its residents, said Dale Lynn, the city’s transportation superintendent.

With the city discontinuing direct service to campus, the private sector has stepped in to fill the demand — specifically Green Way Shuttles, which has grown the number of complexes it serves from three in 2007 to 19 this year, said Doug Dickherber, owner of Green Way.

“We’ve taken pretty much everything,” Dickherber said. He recently told the Columbia City Council that his shuttles, which provide “safe rides home” from downtown bars on weekends as late as 2 a.m., provide about 5,000 rides to campus daily.

Report: Mold at MU library not cause for concern

COLUMBIA, MO. - University of Missouri officials say tests found no cause for concern after mold was found on a vent at Ellis Library on the University of Missouri campus.
Dennis Elmore, with the university's Environmental Health and Safety office, says in a report that air sample tests didn't indicate that the mold had spread to other locations in the building.

The mold was found last week on a heating and cooling vent in a special collections area on the fourth floor of the library.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports Elmore's report says no spores of the dangerous black mold were found.

Elmore says mold is naturally present in the environment but tests didn't show levels higher than normal in the library.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/news/article4045606.html#storylink=cpy

International students boost Missouri economy

COLUMBIA - More foreign students are attending college in Missouri than ever before, boosting the state's economy.

The Institute for Higher Education counts a record 18,205 students from other countries are enrolled at Missouri higher education institutions in 2014. This number marks an 8 percent increase since 2013.

The National Association of Foreign Student Advisors reported that foreign students spent more than $500 million in Missouri during the 2013-14 academic year.
Almost two-thirds of international students come from China, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, India or Brazil. China alone makes up 40 percent of the international students in Missouri.

"I work in the Writing Center, and most of my students are Chinese students," said Meng Ren, a graduate student from Beijing studying English at the University of Missouri - Columbia. "And that's instead of Koreans and Japanese students, which is kind of interesting to see."

NBC News reports earlier this month, President Obama announced a new visa agreement plan with China's government. Obama said Chinese student visas will be extended to five years, and business and tourist visas to 10 years. The move will also apply to U.S. citizens in China.

Ren said she understands why the United States would make such a deal with China.

"I would think the politics of China being a rising economic power helped with that foreign policy change," Ren said. "Now more rich people can afford to come abroad, and especially with a longer extended Visa, they can deal with less troubles."

Previously, visas were granted on a year-at-a-time basis.

Link to video: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=26544

MU student government hopes to change religious observance policy

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, November 23, 2014 at 12:00 am

A series of anecdotes and personal experiences motivated University of Missouri student Thalia Sass to reach out to the student government about the school’s religious observance policy.

Sass is the president of the Jewish Student Organization at MU, and when she came to the Missouri Student Association, the governing body of the undergraduate population, she wanted to see how to ensure that professors would accommodate those students who have to miss class for a holiday.
Currently, MU’s Faculty Council encourages professors “excuse students who have a conflict with a class period, test or activity because of these obligations.” MSA leaders who came to faculty council this month to advocate for their proposed policy change pointed out that encouraging isn’t mandating and some students still have issues with their professors.

The new policy drafted and approved by the legislative arm of student government makes it an obligation for faculty to allow students to miss class, tests or activities in the event of a religious observation while making it a responsibility for students to provide notice to professors about possible absences toward the beginning of each semester.

Ben Vega, MSA academic affairs chairman, said the proposed language was written after he and other student government members reviewed policies at dozens of other institutions, including all Missouri schools.

“The wording we chose is representative of the best parts of policies from all of those schools,” Vega said.

Faculty Council members were receptive to the proposal.

Nicole Monnier, academic affairs committee chairwoman for the council, said Thursday she was impressed with the MSA representatives who proposed the policy and that her committee will be working with Vega and other students to develop the policy language starting in January. The policy has already received approval from MSA, the graduate and professional student governing body, the Legion of Black Collegiates and several other government bodies on campus.

Sass said she is proud of how open to diversity MU is when it comes to race, but there is still change needed to be more open minded about religious diversity.

“I think with this bill we’re really building an understanding of struggles that religious minorities face, which is good,” she said.

**Universities preparing for Ferguson decision**

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. -

As the wait continues for the grand jury decision in Ferguson, universities in Mid Missouri are preparing.
ABC 17 News checked in with University of Missouri and Lincoln University police about how they are getting ready for the verdict.

MU police said they have been meeting with Columbia police and Highway Patrol about possible protests and protocol.

However, are not worried about anything becoming violent.

Captain Weimer said Thanksgiving break started Friday for many students, which means less students on campus.

Lincoln University is also prepared for the decision.

Misty Young in public relations at Lincoln University said they plan on holding a large group discussion when the verdict comes.

"We are going to have a forum here on campus that will allow our students, faculty and staff members as well to kind of voice their concerns and or opinions about whatever the decision ends up being. So this is just a chance to kind of talk about the process and whatever the outcome is," said Misty Young.

Students will get an email notification about where the discussion will be held depending on what time of day the decision is made.

Lincoln University is also making sure counselors are available to meet with students who may be angered.

"We do recognize we have a student population from that area so this hits very close to home. So if for some reasons they are feeling emotions that are a little bit stronger than normal then there are counselors services available," said Young.

Lincoln University's Thanksgiving break begins Tuesday.


COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Memorial service will note Dr. Franklin Mitchell's impact on trauma medicine

Friday, November 21, 2014 | 6:23 p.m. CST

BY JENNA FEAR
COLUMBIA — The memorial for trauma surgeon Dr. Franklin Mitchell who died Nov. 14 will reflect his contributions to trauma medicine.

Kara Camp, administrative assistant at Memorial Funeral Home, said a fire truck, an ambulance and a helicopter will acknowledge Mitchell's cutting-edge innovations in trauma and emergency care.

The service will be at 11 a.m. Monday at Memorial Funeral Home, 1217 Business Loop 70 W.

According to an MU Health Care news release, Mitchell, who was born and raised in Missouri, secured a grant in 1968 to train hospital ambulance personnel in a time when many ambulances were operated by funeral homes.

In 1974, he began the first paramedic training course in Missouri after realizing the benefit of more consistent, specialized training for emergency responders.

In 1980, Mitchell initiated a study that found 40 percent of trauma victims who died from serious injuries might have lived had they received rapid medical intervention. This led to the establishment of University Hospital's helicopter service in 1982.

In a lifestory by the Missourian, Dr. Mitchell was said to not only be an innovator, but a mentor. He made waves in trauma medicine and deeply affected the lives of those around him.

"He was very well known in the community," said Derek Thompson, MU Health Care spokesperson. "So I think there will be quite a wide range of people at Dr. Mitchell's service."

Donations in his memory may be made to the Frank L. Mitchell Jr., MD, Trauma Center at University Hospital, 1 Hospital Drive, DC205.00, Columbia, MO 65212.
Columbia offers life sciences startups a place to grow, but keeping them around more difficult

By Alicia Stice

Saturday, November 22, 2014 at 12:00 am Comments (10)

When Brian and Katie Thompson launched a company with roots in University of Missouri research, they found all the resources they needed to get it off the ground in Columbia.

But as the couple gets ready to expand their company’s research efforts and commercialize one of its first products, it seems the business, Elemental Enzymes, might have outgrown Columbia.

Katie Thompson said Elemental Enzymes eventually will need a larger lab space than it has at its current home in the Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place. That kind of real estate is precious in a city the size of Columbia. Building a lab from the ground up is expensive, so finding a place the company can rent is its best bet.

But as Katie Thompson has looked around the city, contacted other research companies and reached out to her business support network in hopes of finding such a space, she has come up empty.

“I think there is sort of a lack of that for the companies coming out of the incubator,” Thompson said. “They might need something a little larger than the incubator space, but they might not be ready to build their own space.”

In the past five years, Columbia has seen a boom in life sciences companies. These companies are seen by many as a boost to the local economy. They tend to offer higher-paying jobs and attract a better-educated workforce than many startups, but they also require a great deal of infrastructure and investment that mid-size cities don’t always have.

As some life sciences companies leave their startup phase, the city faces the challenge of keeping them around. Some Columbia life sciences companies have been able to find the resources and space they need within the city. ABC Labs and its hundreds of jobs is just one notable success.
But some are looking at opening supplementary facilities in larger cities, and some have left altogether.

“There’s a point where it takes investment capital to go from that startup lab company, one you might have at the life sciences incubator, and you get to the point now we need to get a 20,000-square-foot building, and we need a supply chain,” Columbia Mayor Bob McDavid said. “That’s one of the things that is a challenge for Columbia. To go from that lab idea to full production, it takes capital.”

Mike Brooks, the outgoing Regional Economic Development Inc. president, said Columbia’s focus on life sciences companies sharpened about five years ago when REDI and MU partnered with the Kansas City Area Development Council for the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor.

The new push for life sciences companies continued with the opening of the Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place in 2009.

The University of Missouri, its research reactor and the city’s highly educated workforce make Columbia an appealing option for life sciences companies in need of a place to recruit employees and grow, Brooks said. And having a community of similar companies in the city can help grab the attention of other similar businesses looking for a new home.

“There’s a lot to be said for the creation of clusters when it comes to local economies,” Brooks said. “The stronger a cluster becomes, the greater strength it has recruiting potential employers and potential employees.”

This fall, REDI, the Missouri Department of Economic Development and city officials have celebrated the opening of BioPharma USA, a medical research company, and Nanova Biomaterials Inc., a nanotechnology-based company that has started manufacturing dental varnish.

Toronto-based BioPharma does early-stage drug testing and bioequivalence studies. Nanova uses nanotechnology, which means it manipulates material on a molecular and atomic scale to produce particles with new properties. It already has started manufacturing its dental varnish, which contains more flouride than other products on the market, and now is developing a bone screw. Both companies received state incentives to hire full-time employees.

“It takes smart people to work at these avant-garde businesses, and what we have here is, of course, close to 8,000 graduates every year,” McDavid said. “You’ve got a city with an average age of 28, and you have 8,000 college graduates every year. That is a terrific pool from which to attract smart people for any new industry.”
When the Thompsons were starting Elemental Enzymes, they turned to city and university resources to help move their fledgling company to the next phase.

Elemental Enzymes develops small proteins that are stable outside of organisms, making them useful in different industries. Right now they are working on an enzyme that can help foster seed growth, which hopefully could be used to improve crop yields. The company ran hundreds of field trials on crops this summer.

On campus, they found the Missouri Small Business & Technology Development Center, where staff helped the couple fine-tune their business plan. The SBTDC is part of the University of Missouri’s Extension Business Development Program.

The centers, found in locations across the state, offer professional business analysis, consultations, access to technology resources and training opportunities.

At the Missouri Innovation Center, the Elemental Enzymes founders got help finding angel investor groups to help fund their budding company. And they were able to find a low-cost lab space at the innovation center’s Life Science Incubator at Monsanto Place.

“There is that network here in Columbia,” Katie Thompson said. “There’s different people at” Regional Economic Development Inc. “I took some classes there. Brian took some classes with SBTDC. I felt like there were a lot of resources.”

EternoGen, another company at the life sciences incubator, is getting ready to start manufacturing a collagen-like injection that it will sell in Europe and Asia for cosmetic surgery.

The solution, which can be used to treat wrinkles, acne and scars, differs from traditional synthetic or collagen injections because it adapts once it is in the body.

“It’s a liquid that upon injection converts into skin,” President Luis Jiminez said. “That’s how it’s very innovative. You can inject collagen that’s already formed, but that has a shortened longevity. Or you can inject toxins like Botox, but nothing on the market replenishes what was lost.”

Although Columbia has been home to the company as it develops this solution, it will have to look outside the city next year as it starts manufacturing the product.

Jimenez said the company plans to keep a space in Columbia for research and design, but it will likely manufacture the product in a larger city, such as Kansas City or St. Louis, sometime next year.

We need “someone who’s a certified manufacturer of medical devices,” he said. “We have not yet really found any entities like that in Columbia.”
Nanova co-founder Hao Li decided to stay in Columbia as the company began manufacturing its first product.

The company attracted investors from Chinese venture capital firm SummitView Capital, which invested $7 million. The Chinese government put together an $8 million loan package the company can tap into.

“It takes a lot of work to do that,” McDavid said about keeping companies in the city after they have received heavy investments from afar. “If somebody’s going to invest $10 million, $20 million, $30 million dollars and doesn’t live in Columbia, it’s in their best interest often to keep the company near them so they can keep track of it. It’s their money, right?”

That’s when he said the city has to lean on the fact that it has a high percentage of college graduates qualified to take jobs at those companies as well as the resources a research institution such as MU can provide.

Li said he wanted to stay in Columbia because his job teaching at MU tied him to the city and having access to the brain power at MU was good for his business. He now is working with Richard White, physician in the MU department of Orthopaedic Surgery, to develop a bone screw using nanotechnology.

“We can also find collaborators with expertise in many different areas,” Li said about working in Columbia. “For example, for medical devices, you want to have access to doctors, right? And also you want to talk to engineering professors who can help you make things. And it’s fairly easy to find people with complementary expertise and then put them together to make a team.”

MU's graduate student council boosts national involvement efforts

By Ashley Jost

Sunday, November 23, 2014 at 12:00 am

The University of Missouri graduate and professional students made 285 calls during National Call Congress Day, with 269 calls going to one of Missouri’s U.S. senators or congressional representatives.
Those students wanted to talk about issues that affect them now and when they graduate, ranging from student loan interest rate inequality for graduate students versus undergraduates to the elimination of the subsidy on federal loans that allowed graduate students not to collect interest until after they graduate.

It’s the second time this year that MU’s Graduate Professional Council took part in a national call day with their peers nationwide to voice their concerns.

The call day took place all day Wednesday in the MU Student Center. Of all participating institutions nationwide, MU students had the largest showing of participants.

“I would say that particularly in the position we’re in now, GPC is really the national leader as far as this advocacy effort is concerned,” GPC President Hallie Thompson said. “We see ourselves, at this time at least, being a really important part of that national energy level. We want other schools feeling as invested as we feel.”

Thompson said the group’s heavy involvement in programs like this, in addition to a similar event last month to contact representatives via social media, is garnering good feedback from GPC’s represented population.

“Involvement in these types of things is 100 percent to the benefit of our constituents, we think,” she said. While participation is increasing, Thompson said there is room for improvement.

Future plans will aim to reach out to the undergraduate population for call campaigns, since “they are the graduate and professional students of tomorrow,” Thompson said.

MU GPC students are heavily involved in multiple national issues with a GPC executive member, Jesse Kremenak, who also serves on the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students as the director of legislative affairs.

Among Kremenak’s other projects is a database that logs input from U.S. senators and representatives on four platform issues: student loans, funding for graduate education, student visa renewal and open access for federally-funded research. The issues are broken down into questions that are sent to each representative. Their responses are then logged into the database.

A similar database exists for Missouri’s state delegation on issues related specifically to the UM System. That was a project Kremenak said he worked on with the Associated Students of the University of Missouri, which sparked the national idea.

With a 10 percent national success rate of getting responses from members of Congress, Kremenak said there is room for improvement in future years.

The national database is available at nagps.org/candidate-assessment, and the Missouri-focused database is at nagps.org/missouri-candidate-assessment.
Missouri agriculture bill to get second chance

By SUMMER BALLENTINE

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri lawmakers plan to make a new push next session to pass an agricultural package that could help dairy, cattle and crop farmers — this time, without a contentious deer-ranching provision that doomed the measure.

Senate President Pro Tem Tom Dempsey said the bill will be on a fast-track to passage without the captive-deer measure when legislators convene in January.

Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon vetoed this year's version of the bill, citing concerns about shifting the authority to regulate deer farms and hunting preserves from the Department of Conservation to the Department of Agriculture. The Republican-led Legislature fell one vote short of the necessary two-thirds majority in an attempt to override the veto.

But supporters are hopeful it has better chances without that contested provision.

Sen. Brian Munzlinger — a farmer and Republican from Williamstown — said he plans to draft a new bill with almost identical wording, including state-funded insurance subsidies for dairy farmers.

The measure would require the state to offer to pay 70 percent of dairy producers' federal insurance premium payments. The program reimburses farmers if the cost of feed for cows rises too high and starts cutting into their profits.

Larry Purdom, chairman of the Missouri Dairy Association, said it would make expensive insurance more accessible to farmers and could help some continue operating in rough years.

"I think we could be a leader in the industry with that legislation," he said.

The bill also would require the University of Missouri to conduct annual research on the sales tax revenue generated from dairy products and to create a plan for boosting the Missouri dairy industry.

Students in agricultural degree programs who pledge to work in the industry would have access to 80 scholarships worth $5,000 if the legislation passes.
Cattle farmers would get benefits as well.

The measure would protect them from lawsuits if people are injured by their herds. Weight restrictions on trucks carrying cattle also would be lifted.

The Conservation Federation of Missouri, which opposed the effort to shift regulatory authority over deer farms, said it would support a new version of the agriculture legislation lacking the deer provision.

"We were put in a hard spot fighting against a number of agricultural bills we thought were good and should have passed on their own," federation Executive Director Brandon Butler said.

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**Gang Rape in 2012, Furor Today**

November 24, 2014

By Scott Jaschik

**NO MU MENTION**

A student's story of being gang-raped at a 2012 fraternity party at the University of Virginia, recounted in detail in an article in *Rolling Stone* last week, has shaken the university and prompted renewed debate over campus culture, the fraternity system and U.Va.'s response to allegations of sexual assault.

The article is not the first report of rape at a Virginia fraternity, or the first instance of a woman coming forth to talk about feeling that the institution did not respond adequately to a rape allegation. And similar reports have been made, of course, about many other universities. But the *Rolling Stone* article -- perhaps because of the detail both about the assault and the way the victim felt deserted by the university and many
of her classmates -- has had a major impact.

In the five days since the article appeared, the campus has seen multiple protests, vandalism of the fraternity named in the article, statements from multiple campus and political leaders, the scheduling of a board meeting to discuss sexual violence at the university, and the suspension of all fraternities until Jan. 9. Further, more women have come forward to say they were raped at the university. The article has set off intense scrutiny of whether university leaders are doing enough.

Two statements released by President Teresa A. Sullivan illustrate how discussion has changed at the university in a short period of time.

On the day the article was released, Sullivan released a statement in which she defended the university's efforts on sexual assault issues and stressed its commitment to protect all students. That first statement announced that she would call for an investigation of the incident described in the article, but many on campus criticized her tone for what some saw as a lack of empathy with the violence that a U.Va. student had experienced.

Wrote Sullivan in the first statement: "I am writing in response to a Rolling Stone magazine article that negatively depicts the University of Virginia and its handling of sexual misconduct cases. Because of federal and state privacy laws, and out of respect for sexual assault survivors, we are very limited in what we can say about any of the cases mentioned in this article. The article describes an alleged sexual assault of a female student at a fraternity house in September 2012, including many details that were previously not disclosed to University officials. I have asked the Charlottesville Police Department to formally investigate this incident, and the university will cooperate fully with the investigation."

Many comments on the university's Facebook page were negative. Sullivan was criticized for failing to use the word "rape" in her statement and for instead using the phrase "sexual misconduct." Some said that her reference to details that the university didn't previously have suggested that she was blaming the victim. Many comments called for immediate stronger action.
Sullivan's statement on Saturday had a different tone. It referenced the article in ways that suggested it was correct, used the word "rape," and expressed much more personal anger.

"The wrongs described in Rolling Stone are appalling and have caused all of us to reexamine our responsibility to this community. Rape is an abhorrent crime that has no place in the world, let alone on the campuses and grounds of our nation’s colleges and universities. We know, and have felt very powerfully this week, that we are better than we have been described, and that we have a responsibility to live our tradition of honor every day, and as importantly every night," she wrote. Sullivan added: "I write you today in solidarity. I write you in great sorrow, great rage, but most importantly, with great determination. Meaningful change is necessary, and we can lead that change for all universities. We can demand that incidents like those described in Rolling Stone never happen and that if they do, the responsible are held accountable to the law. This will require institutional change, cultural change, and legislative change, and it will not be easy. We are making those changes."

She also announced that she was suspending all fraternities and their social activities until January 9. A spokesman for the university said that the suspension covers all social events and programming, but does not require those living in Greek houses to move. He noted that the university does not own the fraternity houses.

Comments about the Saturday statement were generally more supportive than were the comments on her first statement. But efforts to investigate the report on what happened in 2012 have been difficult to get off the ground.

The university's rector (board chair) on Thursday announced that, in consultation with the state attorney general, the university would name Mark Filip, an alumnus and lawyer who formerly was a prosecutor, and deputy U.S. attorney general, to lead an independent investigation into what happened in 2012. But only a day later, the university and attorney general agreed that they would need another candidate to lead the review because Filip had been a member of Phi Kappa Psi, the fraternity described in the Rolling Stone article.

The fraternity, meanwhile, has given up its charter with the university, effectively suspending itself. In a letter the fraternity published in The Cavalier Daily, the student
newspaper, the fraternity said that it did not have knowledge of what happened at that 2012 fraternity party. But the letter added: "Make no mistake, the acts depicted in the article are beyond unacceptable — they are vile and intolerable in our brotherhood, our university community and our society."

Several student protests have focused on a culture in which some say women are degraded by the fraternity system. A "slut walk" protest (modeled on those at other campuses) made the point that women do not consent to sex by dressing in any particular way or by attending fraternity parties.

Some at the university haven't been satisfied to wait for formal punishment of the fraternity. People spray-painted comments such as "Suspend Us!" and "UVA Center for Rape Studies" on the Phi Kappy Psi house.

An anonymous student group sent letters to local news organizations claiming responsibility for the vandalism, and defending the actions.

"We wish that the recent Rolling Stone article regarding the culture of rape in the university’s Greek system had come as a shock. Unfortunately, as students, we are all too familiar with the rape and assault that is ubiquitous on Rugby Road," said the letter, referring to the area that houses many fraternities. "We have been assaulted, our friends have been assaulted, and the university -- students and administrators alike -- continue to minimize the problem. The administration has consistently failed to take the drastic steps that are necessary to halt the epidemic, and the students go about their lives complacently, tolerating the abuse. Rapists go unpunished and wander our campus -- our campus, where they haunt their victims and even openly mock them. We are fed up with it."

The letter included several demands, including "an immediate revision of university policy mandating expulsion as the only sanction for rape and sexual assault."

The issue of appropriate punishments for sexual assault (as determined by colleges, not the judicial system) has been debated at many colleges. At U.Va., as at many colleges in recent years, the university is considering changes to its rules involving sexual assault. A current draft says that, in all cases in which someone has been found guilty
by a university panel, the punishments of suspension or expulsion must be considered.

But the new draft does not mandate those punishments, and others could be community service, completion of educational programs, evaluation by a mental health professional or financial restitution.

Part of the controversy at Virginia is that the university, famously, has an honor code for which expulsion is the "sole sanction" for lying, cheating or stealing.

The contrast between "sole sanction" for nonviolent offenses and a range of punishments for sexual assault is part of what has drawn attention to the university, as opposed to other institutions. The Rolling Stone article quoted the mother of a U.Va. student who reported a sexual assault as saying this: "Think about it," she said. "In what world do you get kicked out for cheating, but if you rape someone, you can stay?"

The Chronicle of Higher Education

November 22, 2014 by Jeffrey R. Young

UVa Temporarily Suspends Fraternities in Response to Rape Allegations

NO MU MENTION

The president of the University of Virginia on Saturday suspended all fraternal organizations until early January, the latest in the institution’s response to a Rolling Stone article alleging a “cycle of sexual violence and institutional indifference” at the elite public college.

The magazine article, which was published on Wednesday, describes a gang rape of a first-year student in a UVa fraternity house in 2012. Earlier this week the university commissioned of the incident and other allegations in the article, and called in Charlottesville, Va., to investigate the 2012 assault.
By Saturday morning, UVa’s Inter-Fraternity Council had already announced plans to suspend all social activities by fraternities that had been scheduled for this weekend.

In a statement issued on Saturday, Teresa A. Sullivan, UVa’s president, said that “meaningful change is necessary” at the institution, and at all colleges.

“We can demand that incidents like those described in Rolling Stone never happen and that, if they do, the responsible are held accountable to the law. This will require institutional change, cultural change, and legislative change, and it will not be easy. We are making those changes.”

The statement noted that UVa’s Board of Visitors would meet on Tuesday to discuss the university’s sexual-assault policies.

Ms. Sullivan also called on students and others in the university community to take time over the Thanksgiving holiday to review a recently published Student Sexual Misconduct Policy that is up for public comment.

The fraternity suspension is set to run through January 9, the start of the spring semester.

New Jersey looks at 'yes means yes' college policy

By MICHAEL CATALINI Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. • You think the attractive woman at the party who has been chatting you up all night is ready to take things to the next level. She seems to be throwing all the right signals.

But if things turn sexual, are you sure that will hold up under legal scrutiny?
That’s a question at the center of a national debate surrounding “yes means yes” — more accurately called affirmative consent — the policy that requires conscious, voluntary agreement between partners to have sex.

A proposal in New Jersey makes it the latest state moving to require college campuses to define when “yes means yes” in an effort to stem the tide of sexual assaults.

Whether the policy will reduce assaults remains unclear, but states and universities across the U.S. are under pressure to change how they handle rape allegations.

California adopted a similar measure in August, and New York’s governor directed the State University of New York system to implement a similar standard. New Hampshire lawmakers are also considering it.

Supporters and critics agree the measure could encourage students to talk openly and clearly about sex and that a culture of “yes means yes” — an affirmative agreement compared with the “no means no” refrain of previous decades — could help address the issue of campus sex assaults.

Laura Dunn, executive director of the sexual assault survivors’ organization SurvJustice, said she was raped as an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin in 2004, after a night of drinking at a party, by two men and fellow members of the crew team. She agreed to be identified by The Associated Press.

Dunn believes such a standard could have helped her case during campus judicial proceedings, which failed to find wrongdoing. Her experience led her to become an advocate for sexual assault survivors, she said.

“Had they had an affirmative consent standard they would have realized I would never have consented,” she said.

But skeptics of the policy raise questions — many of which have yet to be settled because the standard is new and it is unclear how many cases have been subjected to the standard — about whether it offers enough protections to the accuser and accused alike.

Affirmative consent standards could unfairly shift the burden of proof to the accused, critics say, pointing out that any sexual contact could then be ruled inappropriate absent some proof of consent.

Some critics also say they could prove to be unfair to victims, who may themselves face a heavier burden during campus tribunals under Title IX — widely known as the law governing the role of men and women in athletics, but which also aims to protect students from sexual discrimination — which currently defines the standard as “unwelcome and offensive touching.”

Yes means yes “sounds so darn good,” said Wendy Murphy, an adjunct professor at New England Law and an attorney handling sex assault cases. “(But) it doesn’t get better than ‘unwelcome and offensive.’”
Some students, though, express skepticism over the “unwelcome and offensive” standard, saying it fails to convey the seriousness of sexual assault. Student groups at Harvard started a petition to get their university to adopt affirmative consent language.

“We certainly agree with the university’s desire to address a wide range of behaviors through their policy,” said Jessica Fournier, a member of Our Harvard Can Do Better, one of the groups organizing the petition. “However, we believe referring to these acts simply as ‘unwelcome’ does not encapsulate the severity of these actions.”

Nationally, reports of forcible sexual offenses on campus rose from 3,443 in 2011 to 4,062, according to the Education Department. In New Jersey, the figure rose from 78 in 2011 to 83 in 2012, the most recent year available. That’s because of increased reporting of crimes due to a culture change and greater support for victims, said Paul Shelly of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities. Indeed, only 13 percent of forcible sexual assault victims reported the crime to police or campus authorities, according to a 2007 National Institute of Justice study.

What changed, experts said, are students’ attitudes.

The Chronicle of Higher Education

November 24, 2014 by Charles Huckabee

Review of Campus Judicial Systems Finds Light Sanctions for Serious Offenses

NO MU MENTION

The Columbus Dispatch and the Student Press Law Center investigated campus judicial systems at colleges across the country and found that most operate in secret and that they often impose light sanctions for serious infractions, including sexual assaults, physical assaults resulting in injuries, robberies, and other violent crimes. What’s more, many of the institutions fail to comply with state and federal crime-reporting laws, the investigation found. The authors of a report on the investigation, published in the Dispatch on Sunday, say that both victims and students accused of violations think the system is unfair and broken.
Artist Eric Sweet talks about inspiration and his evolving vision
Sunday, November 23, 2014 | 6:00 a.m. CST
BY ISABELLE GUSTAFSON

COLUMBIA — MU adjunct art professor Eric Sweet recently found an old test from fourth grade.

"I had drawn in all of the margins," Sweet said. "The teacher wrote, 'You better grow up to be an artist.'"

He did. Sweet, who grew up in La Belle, a small town in northeast Missouri, graduated from MU with a master of fine arts degree in printmaking in 2011. He has been an adjunct art professor at the university since 2012.

He has several works on display right now: one in Omaha, Nebraska, one in Moberly, and a third, solo show that just ended at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois. His work was recently featured at Columbia College's Greg Hardwick Gallery, in an exhibit that was part of the inauguration events for new college President Scott Dalrymple.

The work featured at Columbia College, the work Sweet said he's most proud of, is a "hand-pressed low relief blind embossment." Embossing involves raising in relief a design printed on card stock or heavy paper by an uninked block or die. Blind embossing does not include the use of ink or foil to highlight the embossed area. The process result is a clean and subtle image.

"These works straddle the line between printmaking and drawing," Sweet said.

Sweet said the drawing process takes about two hours, and the preparation takes between 120 and 160 hours. The display consisted of three pieces of Sweet's series on
the theme of failed utopias. His favorite, he said, is called "Ideal City (Birkenau)," named for the Auschwitz concentration camp.

"I guess I'm interested in the failure of idealism," Sweet said. "From one perspective, it's a perfect place, but from every other perspective, it's hell. I think this piece does a great job of illustrating the contradictions inherent any time someone tries to impose their personal vision of the world onto the rest of us."

Danielle Langdon, assistant professor of art at Columbia College, went to graduate school with Sweet and is one of the coordinators of Greg Hardwick Gallery. She said she appreciates the way Sweet takes a 2D design and translates it into a 3D space. "No matter where you are in the room, it draws you in," Langdon said. "When you get closer, you can see more of that fine detail in the work."

Sweet said his work is always evolving.

"If you had asked me five years ago if I'd be doing white work with minimalism, I'd say you were out of your mind," he said.

He said he enjoys the opportunity to display his art and to teach at MU.

"I really like being able to engage with students and help them find the avenues for themselves," Sweet said. "My idea is that good teachers make themselves irrelevant to their students."

Sweet said that his goal is to be a tenured professor and to continue practicing his art, focusing on the things that interest him.

"I want to look at art that I have to think about, so that's the art that I want to make," Sweet said. "I hope it's been well-received."