Mizzou suspends professor charged with assaulting journalist as school sinks into turmoil

Nearly three months after student protests at the University of Missouri forced the resignation of the school system president and spurred anti-racism demonstrations across the country, the college town of Columbia, Mo., remains in deep turmoil.

In the latest controversy to divide the community, Mizzou’s Board of Curators voted Wednesday to suspend Melissa Click, the assistant professor caught on camera pushing a student journalist and calling for “some muscle” to remove him from a protest camp.

“The Board of Curators directs the General Counsel, or outside counsel selected by General Counsel, to immediately conduct an investigation and collaborate with the city attorney and promptly report back to the Board so it may determine whether additional discipline is appropriate,” the board said in a statement.

The suspension came a day after the city prosecutor’s decision to file a misdemeanor assault charge against Click over the incident, but it fell short of state legislators’ demands that Click be fired.

The suspension also came on the same day the school’s ousted president, Tim Wolfe, issued a scathing letter slamming his successor as president, the Board of Curators, other university leaders and even the school’s football team, which backed the protests.

“The football team’s actions were the equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire,” Wolfe wrote, adding that the players’ boycott had hurt enrollment and cost the school more than $25 million. “The end result could be a financial catastrophe for our university.”

As with the protests and Wolfe’s ouster, Click’s suspension has stirred intense emotions on all sides.

Mark Schierbecker, the videographer whose camera Click grabbed, called the suspension “vindicating” but said he was frustrated that school administrators did not act more quickly or directly.

“The university seems to care more about protecting their own despotic faculty than looking after the welfare of its students,” he told The Washington Post on Wednesday night.
But Click’s supporters expressed outrage, claiming that the suspension was unprecedented and that the professor was a scapegoat.


Many of Click’s supporters said she had already paid far too stiff a price for a momentary lapse. The professor was widely criticized for impeding Schierbecker and another journalist, photographer Tim Tai. She also received a flood of angry, often threatening messages.

“I have been receiving rape and death threats and am concerned for my safety,” Click said in an email to her students.

She also apologized to the two journalists — although Schierbecker did not accept the apology — and resigned a courtesy appointment in Mizzou’s prestigious School of Journalism.

On Monday, before Click’s suspension, the professor’s conduct was the subject of an hour-long debate in the state senate.

Sen. Brian Munzlinger insisted that Click should be fired for violating university rules requiring employees “not to bring discredit upon the institution,” according to the Columbia Tribune.

“We’re the laughingstock of the country,” he added.

Sen. Maria Chappelle-Nadal, however, said Click’s critics were using the professor as a distraction from the real issue on campus: racism.

“We are reminded as people of color every single day that we are not treated as 100 percent human being,” Chappelle-Nadal said. “And that is why we are still dealing with it every single day is that we are not being treated equally. This conversation about Professor Click is just a cover-up, for real, for saying we don’t like black people talking out loud.”

The debate over Click’s future is just one of several issues still dividing the community in the wake of the November protests.

Many of those fault lines were again exposed in Wolfe’s letter. In the lengthy document, Wolfe slams students, football players, the team’s coach and university administrators while simultaneously appealing for support in his negotiations for severance pay.

“I resigned out of love for MU and the rest of the system and I felt that it was the right thing to do at the time to prevent further embarrassment and a potential Ferguson-like event on the MU Campus,” he wrote near the beginning of the letter. “What I haven’t shared with you or the general public is the series of events and circumstances and specific unconscionable behaviors that led to my resignation. Because there has been no resolution, I now have grave concerns about the future of the University.”
Writing that he had turned down multiple media offers, Wolfe lamented that his “silence has resulted in my name being attached unfairly to the issues of racism and incompetent leadership.

“As I have stated, I am willing to accept some of the responsibility for what happened,” he said, before blaming Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and the Board of Curators for caving “into politicians and special interest groups with agendas that are contrary to the mission of the university.”

Wolfe saved some of his harshest words for the football team, which refused to play until the president stepped down.

“The football team’s decision to strike is what actually brought most of the national attention to our university,” Wolfe wrote. “In hindsight, the $1 million penalty associated with forfeiting the game against BYU would have paled in comparison to the more than $25 million in lost tuition and fees MU will realize with reduced enrollment this Fall.” He did not explain how he arrived at the $25 million figure.

“It’s also a pittance of the threatened loss of state funding that could be as much as $500 million. Unfortunately, MU Athletic Director Mack Rhoades, Coach [Gary] Pinkel and Bowen Loftin all failed to communicate with system officials on this matter,” he wrote. “The football team’s actions were the equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire. Coach Pinkel missed an important opportunity to teach his players a valuable life lesson. The end result could be a financial catastrophe for our university.”

Wolfe also accused his replacement, interim president Michael Middleton, of having a “long-term” friendship with Jonathan Butler, the leader of the Concerned Student 1950 protest movement who went on a hunger strike to demand Wolfe’s resignation.

“Why did the Board of Curators decide to hire the leader who had failed miserable [sic] in his capacity as the long time leader on diversity issues on the MU Campus?” Wolfe asked. “Why did Michael Middleton choose not to stop the growing protest in spite of his relationship with Jonathan Butler and the minority students on the MU campus?”

The former president also accused the Board of Curators of using its position to leak details of confidential board meetings, “dig up dirt” and “further personal agendas.”

Finally, Wolfe complained that he had been stiffed on compensation compared with Loftin, who agreed to step down at the end of the year and who Wolfe accused of making a series of errors.

“Since my resignation over two months ago, I have been trying to reach an agreement with the Board as to what my role might be and the compensation that is appropriate based on my almost four years as president,” he wrote. “After the first month of minimal progress I had to engage an attorney and the Board of Curators suggested mediation — which proved unsuccessful. All negotiations with the board have stopped and I’m left with the options of either accepting a small fraction of the total compensation that I could have made if I had stayed through the end of my
Wolfe ended his letter by calling for the board to “do the right thing, not what is politically or legally correct,” and asking donors to “express your concern over the current situation and tell [board members] to resolve my contract negotiation so that I can continue to play a significant positive role in the future.”

Between the letter and Click’s suspension, the university found itself back in the national spotlight for all the wrong reasons Wednesday. (The embarrassment didn’t end there for Mizzou, however, as the football team’s quarterback, Maty Mauk, was suspended for a third time on Tuesday after a video surfaced allegedly showing him snorting a line of white powder, according to the Columbia Tribune.)

The university now finds itself in serious trouble, with a falling number of freshman applications and the prospect of funding cuts from angry state legislators. Its basketball and football teams, usually a source of pride, have played too poorly to offer locals a distraction from the protests and their fallout.

And while many students, particularly African Americans, argue that the protests exposed long-simmering issues of racism on campus, few people have emerged unscathed from the demonstrations.

Schierbecker’s video of Click, for example, has taken a toll on both sides of the camera. Since the clip went viral, Schierbecker has been accused of deliberately undermining the protests or of being racist. And while 117 state legislators signed a petition calling for Click to be fired, an equal number of MU faculty signed a petition supporting her. Among them was the head of Schierbecker’s own department, he said, leaving him with an awkward final 18 months at the school.

“Extremely divisive” is how Schierbecker described the atmosphere on campus. So much so, in fact, that it was only when he and Tai visited the University of Georgia last week to present on press freedom that Schierbecker felt accepted.

“It was kind of a relief,” he told The Post, “because half the people in the room didn’t hate me.”

**MISSOURIAN**

Foley announces raise for MU graduate students, calls for rebuilding trust
COLUMBIA — MU will answer graduate students' demand for a pay raise by increasing the minimum stipend over the next two academic years starting July 1, Interim Chancellor Hank Foley announced in Wednesday's State of the University address.}

Foley, who became interim chancellor after R. Bowen Loftin stepped down in November, spoke to a Memorial Student Union room crowded with faculty, staff, administrators and students, including a large group of graduate students wearing red shirts. Foley encouraged the audience to remember the university's accomplishments and keep an open mind about changes after a fall semester of tension and protests.

"Seeing your school, your alma mater, written up on page one and above the fold in national newspapers from the New York Times to the Wall Street Journal is painful, just painful," Foley said. "But I can assure you that we will recover."

In the fall, graduate students protested an announcement by administrators to cut graduate health insurance subsidies and some tuition waivers. Although these decisions have since been reversed, graduate students have argued for better wages and benefits.

Foley spoke to that sentiment.

"We want always to be among the group of top-flight land-grant universities," Foley said. "But we cannot be if we don't take care of our graduate students."

Minimum stipends for doctoral students with 20-hour assistantships will increase from about $12,000 to $15,000 starting July 1 and to $18,000 on July 1, 2017. Doctoral students with 10-hour assistantships will see the minimum stipend rise from about $6,000 to $7,500 on July 1 and to $9,000 next year.
In 2016, the minimum stipend for master's students who work 20 hours a week will be raised from about $11,000 to $13,700, and master's students with 10-hour assistantships will see an increase in base stipend from about $5,500 to $6,850.

The base stipend increase for master's students in 2017 was not immediately available Wednesday evening.

About 900 master's students and 580 doctoral students will see an increase in their salaries, according to MU spokesman Christian Basi. MU's total enrollment for master's and doctoral students is 6,481, according to the Office of Graduate Studies.

The funds for these raises will come from the reallocation of centralized university funds rather than from individual departments.

By increasing minimum stipends, the MU administration gave graduate students "more than we could have hoped for," said Hallie Thompson, president of the MU Graduate Professional Council.

Foley also announced that MU will expand its police force with a 25 percent increase in officers and 50 percent in dispatchers in the next three years.

Tension surrounding race relations also spurred the protests, Foley said, and, as a result, MU must be more inclusive. Foley announced that Chuck Henson, interim vice chancellor of inclusion, diversity and equity, is working to create a lecture series about the African-American experience in Missouri.

"Diversity is not just a buzzword," Foley said. "It's a component of learning to interact with other people, and it's a fundamental part of education. We are not seeking colorblindness or homogeneity. Quite the opposite. We seek understanding."

These initiatives stem from Foley's mission to open the flow of communication between students, faculty, staff and university leadership. Previously, students and faculty severely
criticized the administration for lacking transparency. The announcement that cutting graduate student insurance subsidies in August, for instance, came one day before the decision went into effect.

Foley also addressed concerns about MU's possible loss of funds from lower enrollment and state appropriations — early reports show that applications to MU for the upcoming fall semester dropped 4.87 percent, a total of 18,377 applications.

The university must rebuild trust with the state legislature, Foley said, particularly since the university receives part of its budget from the state legislature. MU received 36 percent of its operating funds from the state in fiscal year 2016.

"If at times our legislators become exasperated with us, as they are these days, let's not be too surprised," Foley said. "Let's do better. Let's regain their trust and respect. In fact, let's repair this breach not just with the General Assembly but with the people of Missouri, who pay our salaries and our wages."

But Foley seemed optimistic about money raised from donations, committing to raising $1 billion for MU's endowment and mentioning Rich and Nancy Kinder who donated $25 million to the university's Kinder Institute of Constitutional Democracy.

"When you think about Mizzou, think of us as your flagship university," Foley said. "I know we don't always make you proud. I wish we did, but if you look beyond the headlines, you'll see much for you to be very proud of, year in and year out."

An MU-produced video of the State of the University address can be found here.
MU to increase minimum stipend for doctoral students

By Megan Favignano

Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 4:40 pm

The University of Missouri will raise its minimum stipend for graduate doctoral students with 20-hour assistantships to $15,000 on July 1, interim Chancellor Hank Foley said Wednesday.

Foley revealed the change during his State of the University address, which the chancellor makes annually. Foley said MU plans to raise stipends again next year to $18,000 for doctoral students with 20-hour assistantships.

“We want to make sure that we’re treating you in a way you deserve to be treated,” Foley said during his speech, addressing graduate students. “It is a matter of values and priorities.”

Graduate assistants receive stipends and benefits in exchange for their work teaching and conducting research for the university. Foley said it’s imperative MU stay competitive with other universities in terms of compensation.

An increase in stipends was one of several recommendations included in a report released in early January by a graduate student experience task force. The task force, however, suggested MU make the increase by the 2019-20 school year.

The Graduate Professional Council issued a statement after Foley’s announcement praising the interim chancellor for implementing the task force’s recommendation in half the time suggested.

“Achievements such as this one are the result of graduate and professional students who step outside of their classrooms and labs to advocate for themselves, faculty who stand by our side, and administrators who listen to our needs and act,” the group said in the statement.

The Forum on Graduate Rights, a graduate advocacy group on campus, formed in August after MU told graduate students it could no longer subsidize health insurance premiums because of an IRS interpretation of the Affordable Care Act. The university later reversed that decision after faculty and student backlash. Foley said earlier this month that MU would continue to subsidize health insurance premiums for graduate assistants next school year.

The initial proposed change to graduate assistants’ insurance premiums sparked a larger campus discussion on graduate student benefits and the experience of graduate students.

Eric Scott, a doctoral student with the Forum on Graduate Rights, said graduate students continue to collect the signatures they need to hold a vote to unionize. He said a contract
negotiated by a union might help ensure graduate students receive adequate stipend increases in the future.

Throughout the summer and fall, members of MU Faculty Council frequently expressed concerns that low stipends, changes in tuition waivers and long-term health insurance uncertainty would negatively affect MU’s recruitment of graduate students.

Graduate student applications were done 19 percent compared to 2015, according to an internal MU memo dated Jan. 4. University officials had said they suspected the improving economy led to fewer graduate student applications.

MU Faculty Council chairman Ben Trachtenberg said he was happy to hear Foley’s announcement regarding stipend increases. Graduate students do a lot of work for the university, he said.

“This is a priority we can’t afford not to support,” Trachtenberg said.

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley Announces Graduate Student Stipend Increase

Today the University of Missouri Interim Chancellor, Hank Foley, delivered the annual state of the university address. Foley announced an increase in regarding graduate student stipends.

“Beginning in July, July 1, 2016, our minimum stipend will rise by three thousand dollars a year to 15 thousand dollars,” Foley said.

He said the stipend that graduate students currently receive is well below the average of other higher learning institutions.

Foley is hopeful that the increase will place the University of Missouri among the top flight land grant universities.
In order to receive the minimum a graduate student must be either a research assistant or a teaching assistant, and work a minimum of 20 hours a week.

In addition, Foley says that beginning in July 1, 2017, an additional three thousand dollars will be added to graduate stipends, bringing the minimum stipend amount to a total of 18 thousand dollars.

Foley said the university is dedicated to working with graduate students in making sure they are treated fairly and shown appreciation for their hard work.

Additionally, Foley addressed some of the other issues the university has faced this past year, including protests over the lack of university responsiveness to racist incidents, and the university’s relationship with the Missouri general assembly.

Republican Representative Caleb Rowden, who was in attendance at today’s State of the University, said he thinks these past few months tested the relationship between the university and the state, but he’s confident in Foley’s abilities to drive the university forward.

“What I got out of that was that he gets it. He knows that we have problems but he also is familiar enough and knows enough about this university to know how we can move forward. I have a lot of confidence in Hank and I think that as long as he is here I think he is going to do things in a way that is going to allow us to move ahead,” Rowden said.

MU Chancellor Hank Foley: "We must adapt and we must adapt quickly"

COLUMBIA – University of Missouri’s Interim Chancellor, Hank Foley, addressed racial unrest, unhappy graduate students, faculty involvement and campus safety at his State of the University address on Wednesday afternoon.

He stressed the need to continue to work toward being an inclusive university in response to the rapid changes the university has seen in the last few months. Much of that change was triggered by protests by Concerned Student
1950, which lead former Chancellor Bowen Loftin and UM System President Tim Wolfe to step down.

He said student unrest came because the institution has not kept up with change.

“We must adapt and we must adapt quickly,” Foley explained.

He said, while the past must be respected, future change must be embraced.

“We are also a land grant university that seeks to be inclusive. That’s a challenge,” Foley said.

The administration, faculty and students are strengthening the Mizzou family to make it more inclusive and to embrace diversity, he said.

Foley also touched on the discontent of graduate students, who had their health insurance taken away and then restored and who now call themselves “graduate workers.” Foley said he is hopeful that MU can continue the insurance program for graduate students for many years to come.

“Beginning in July 2016, stipend will rise to $15,000 and in July 2017, minimum stipend will rise to $18,000 for graduate workers,” Foley said.

While he addressed concerns over student retention rates and future class applications, Foley said no one was worried about enrollment numbers when he first took the position, but things continued to change.

Since taking over the role of chancellor following the resignation of R. Bowen Loftin in November, Foley said he has, and will always, put academics first.

“The university is not the same as a corporation. The chancellor is not the same as a CEO,” Foley said.

Issues concerning safety on campus have been on high priority for Foley, as well. In order to ensure the safety of students, he plans to increase MUPD personnel and dispatchers.

Foley thanked donors who have set up scholarships and endowments for the university. He said endowment is the university’s savings account and during his time as interim chancellor, he wants to increase it to more than a billion dollars.
In order to open communication lines, Foley said he aims to reduce formality and is calling on faculty to take a hands-on role in improving the university. In terms of connecting with students, he asked all faculties to be more aware and mindful of the impact they have on students.

Foley urged faculty members to “pick up the pace” in recruiting faculty members of color to help diversify staff on campus.

“Diversity is not a buzzword,” Foley said. “It is about learning about other people.”

While unrest on campus has shaken the university, Foley said he cannot rewind the tape, but only move forward.

Missouri chancellor presses to mend race relations on campus

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The interim chancellor of the University of Missouri’s Columbia campus rocked by racial protests in November calls that publicized chapter "painful" but says the school's push toward more inclusivity is a priority.

Less than three months after taking the campus' helm, Hank Foley said Wednesday during his "State of the University" speech that addressing race matters at the school "is the right thing to do."

Foley took over after R. Bowen Loftin resigned Nov. 9, along with the system's president, Tim Wolfe, in the wake of racial unrest on the
campus. Foley on Wednesday called those departures "astonishing" but insisted the university would move ahead.

That included a student's hunger strike and members of the school's football team pledging to boycott the rest of their season until Wolfe was ousted.

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley delivers first-ever State of the University address

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley spoke to students, faculty and administrators about inclusivity, graduate student rights and goals for the future in the first-ever State of the University address Wednesday afternoon.

“It's no secret that our beloved flagship university has faced challenges most recently,” interim UM System President Mike Middleton said when introducing Foley. “What should also be no secret is the outstanding leadership that’s in place to ensure that moving forward, this university will learn, grow and become an even better place for our incredible students.”

Foley began his speech to a full crowd in Stotler Lounge in Memorial Union by introducing interim MU administrators who have taken positions since November. He then thanked faculty and staff for their work saying they are “people with great minds and big hearts.”

“We are committed to upholding (our academic values),” Foley said. “But we also must be responsible, accountable and accessible to the public.”

Foley questioned whether or not the university’s selectivity is more important than the school’s output of students. He then went on to recognize students’ accomplishments.
“Mizzou will be a part of your life for the rest of your life. Like any home, like any community, like any family, we’re not without some conflict,” Foley said. “Certainly the events of last semester underscored our pain points. We’ve experienced heated debates and difficult dialogues. We’ve experienced protests and even resignations.”

He recognized that students and alumni have been shaken by last November’s events and spoke of plans to improve the campus climate moving forward.

Foley said the graduate students’ health insurance program will be in place for another year, and he assured at a minimum, graduate students will have health coverage equal to that of other top land-grant universities in future years.

The first steps will be increasing the minimum graduate student stipend by $3,000 per year for the next two years resulting in a new minimum stipend of $18,000 per year.

The MU Police Department will also increase its police officers by 25 percent and its dispatchers by 50 percent over the next three years will also be established.

Foley further challenged university deans and chairs to recruit more faculty of color.

“We are taking steps to make matters of diversity, inclusion and social justice a real priority — not just because it’s what many of you have asked us to do, but because it’s the right thing to do,” Foley said. “We are not seeking to be colorblind or homogeneous; quite the opposite. What we are seeking is for all of us to be equal while at the same time we maintain our differences.”

He said that last week, MU held its first diversity education class created and presented by Stephanie Shonekan, associate professor of music and chair of black studies, and Joan Hermsen, associate professor of sociology and chair of women’s and gender studies.

When speaking of inclusivity, Foley said he was not just talking about underrepresented students, but the expectations of all students.

Foley said the rising expense of college is a reflection on the economy; the middle class is not expanding. Consequently, tax revenues drop along with government support.
Foley said as students’ tuition rises, they expect more and MU has not kept pace with change.

He said students want authenticity, personal involvement with faculty and staff, and the opportunity to learn skills that are applicable to their education. MU’s large size makes connectivity between students and faculty difficult, but it is a challenge the university is willing to accept.

“A university is not the same as a corporation; a chancellor is not the same as a CEO,” Foley said. “The chancellor’s job is not to make the right decisions alone; the chancellor’s job is to guide the institution to the right decisions together.”

Foley plans to hold weekly open chats with students, the first of which was held last Friday, in an effort to “reduce the perceived imperiousness” of the chancellor's office.

Foley said his goals at MU have been to foster collaboration, to make it easier to move MU’s discoveries to market, to grow entrepreneurs and innovators, and to bring practices to MU from other universities.

Foley also hopes to increase MU’s endowment to more than $1 billion to further invest in students, researchers and professors. He said that no decision is more important on this campus than a tenure: a lifetime contract.

Foley said MU is seeking public-private partnerships to construct and renovate academic buildings. State funds of $10 million matched with an additional $10 million of private donations have been raised for construction of the Applied Learning Center which will be part of the Trulaske College of Business.

Roughly one hour into his speech, Foley said, “I’m almost done.”

He paused, then said, “I may only get to do this once,” followed by audience applause.

Foley said he would be interested in being chancellor in the future.

“I’m often asked if I would like to do this job,” Foley said. “And the answer is I would. I love Mizzou and I would love to do this job. But that said, that’s for you all to decide, not me.”
Foley said he hopes MU will "step up (its) game" and live up to its ideals in the future.

“I can't rewind the tape,” Foley said. “I can only keep pushing us forward. But I can assure you we will recover. I'm asking our Mizzou family to come back together in love for this great university.”

**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**

Former University of Missouri system president lashes out at current leaders

1 hour ago • By Koran Addo

In a scathing letter sent to prominent donors, former University of Missouri President Timothy M. Wolfe rips into current university leaders, looking to correct the record on “unconscionable behaviors” that he says led to his resignation in November.

Wolfe says he stepped down in order to avoid another Ferguson-like scene on campus, fearing that the situation could have soon become dangerous. But he assigns the bulk of the blame for problems — including the escalation of racial tension — to others, chief among them, R. Bowen Loftin, the former chancellor of the Columbia campus.

“As I have stated, I am willing to accept some of the responsibility for what happened,” Wolfe writes. “I made the mistake of hiring Bowen Loftin and I trusted the Board of Curators to support my decisions and to do what is in the best interest of the University of Missouri System rather then to cave in to politicians and special interest groups with agendas that are contrary to the mission of the university.”

Wolfe stepped down amid demonstrations calling for his ouster, a student’s hunger strike and a pledge by university football players not to take the field again until Wolfe left office.

Students were upset over Wolfe’s perceived indifference to a number of racist incidents on campus. Critics say Wolfe refused to talk to protesters when confronted about the incidents.

Wolfe has been quiet since stepping down, refusing to respond to interview requests. The letter is the first glimpse into his thinking two months after he became a national example of how student activism can disrupt the highest reaches of a university.
In the letter, Wolfe casts himself as a fall guy. He suggests a number of campus leaders could have defused the protests. Instead, he argues, student anger was unfairly directed toward him.

But the letter might best be described as Wolfe’s plea to influential donors to support him in negotiating a severance package. At the end of the letter, he explicitly asks recipients to contact university board members on his behalf.

“My call to action for each of you is to pick up the phone, or at a minimum send an email to the board members … and express your concern over the current situation and tell them to resolve my contract negotiation,” Wolfe writes.

Wolfe paints himself as someone waging wars on different fronts — fighting off meddling board members and fending off legislators trying to influence university policies. He singles out Missouri Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, for meddling in matters related to a campus controversy concerning Planned Parenthood.

Wolfe vs. Loftin

The letter sheds further light on the power struggle that was already taking place within the system even before the campus protests, namely the hostility between Wolfe and Loftin.

Wolfe takes aim at Loftin on a broad range of issues: for “angering the Greek community, pressuring health system Vice Chancellor Hal Williamson to retire, stripping graduate assistants of their benefits and caving to members of the Legislature as lawmakers tried to restrict Planned Parenthood operations in Missouri.”

Wolfe accuses Loftin of shifting the focus of student anger over the racist incidents away from himself and onto the president.

For those reasons and more, Wolfe said he should have fired Loftin, but did not get the support he needed from the board.

On Wednesday night, Loftin said he hadn’t seen the entire letter, but wanted to respond to the part where Wolfe accused him of engineering student behavior.

“To imagine that I had the ability to manipulate students like they’re puppets is ludicrous,” he said. “They are bright people. How could I get them to do anything?”

In the days leading up to Wolfe’s resignation, he came under fire from protesters after refusing to get out of his car when confronted by student activists at a homecoming parade. Later, in speaking on the issue he appeared to blame black students for having a victim’s mentality.
Some of the same protesters said online Wednesday they targeted Wolfe because as president, he had more power than Loftin.

Faculty Council Chairman Ben Trachtenberg questioned the truthfulness of some parts of the letter, specifically where Wolfe accuses Loftin of directing student anger toward the president.

“That’s insulting,” Trachtenberg said. “These are intelligent people.”

Gas on the fire

Wolfe criticizes Mizzou’s Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Mack Rhoades and former football coach Gary Pinkel for failing to tamp down anger expressed by members of the football team.

Protests had been building for much of the fall, but they didn’t get national attention until the team threatened to strike.

“The football team’s actions were the equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire,” Wolfe writes. “Coach Pinkel missed an important opportunity to teach his players a valuable lesson.”

Instead, Wolfe writes, officials wanted to avoid losing $1 million if players forfeited a nationally televised game with Brigham Young University.

“In hindsight, the $1 million penalty associated with forfeiting the game against BYU would have paled in comparison to the more than $25 million in lost tuition and fees MU will realize with reduced enrollment this Fall,” he wrote. “It’s also a pittance of the threatened loss of state funding that could be as much as $500 million.”

Wolfe does not explain in the letter how he arrived at those estimates.

Officials on campus have long known about Wolfe’s anger toward Loftin and Pinkel, but it caught some off guard that he also took a shot at Interim President Michael Middleton, who has long been involved in university diversity and inclusion efforts.

Wolfe charges that Middleton had a “long-term” relationship with Jonathan Butler, the student who went on a nearly weeklong hunger strike calling for Wolfe to step down.

“The board and Michael have to answer the following questions,” Wolfe said. “Why did the Board of Curators decide to hire the leader who had failed miserable (sic) in his capacity as the longtime leader on diversity issues on the MU campus?”

“Why did Michael Middleton choose not to stop the growing protest in spite of his relationship with Jonathan Butler and the minority students on campus?” Wolfe continued.
Trachtenberg, the faculty leader, called Wolfe’s comments disappointing.

“It’s too bad,” Trachtenberg said. “When Tim Wolfe resigned, he gave a nice speech about doing what’s in the best interest of the university. But when you send a message like this letter, it’s not at all good for the university.”

Trachtenberg also defended Middleton as someone who worked hard to broker conversations between students and university officials at the height of the protests.

“Michael Middleton was doing tremendous work,” he said.

TARGETING CURATORS

Wolfe’s complaints didn’t end with university administrators. He also criticizes the Board of Curators, the governing body for the university’s campuses in Columbia, St. Louis, Kansas City and Rolla.

“A few of the members of the board of curators consistently called subordinate staff and faculty members to dig up dirt and use their curator role to further personal agendas,” Wolfe said.

Wolfe ultimately says he decided to resign to keep the campus safe. He said stepping down was motivated by a “pending event that was to occur on the campus” the day of his resignation.

A number of law enforcement agencies including the FBI were aware of a “significant Ferguson protestors” on campus and the threat of several more arriving later,” Wolfe wrote. “So as to prevent injury and further embarrassment on our campus, the only way to relieve the pressure and stop the momentum was for me to resign.”

CURATOR RESIGNS

Wolfe’s letter became public on the day of continued leadership changes at the university.

Curator Yvonne S. Sparks, who had been named to the board in November after Wolfe’s departure, wrote a letter of resignation Wednesday to Gov. Jay Nixon.

Sparks had yet to be confirmed by the Missouri Senate. She said that after “careful consideration” she could not devote the time necessary to the position.

Also on Wednesday, Mizzou’s new interim chancellor, Hank Foley, delivered his State of the University address.

Without directly mentioning Wolfe’s letter, Foley said Mizzou needs to adapt and address racial tension brought to light during protests.
He urged those who protested in the fall and those who were embarrassed by the national attention the protests garnered to find common ground.

“Whether you’re driven by enthusiasm for progress, equity, for movement, or by the desire to protect and preserve great traditions and a world-class reputation, what each of you expects and wants is an even stronger and better university,” Foley said, “and we can do that, together.

Ex-Mizzou system President Tim Wolfe: Football team threw ‘gasoline on a small fire’

Former University of Missouri System leader discusses fall’s events in an email to supporters

He says team’s support of campus protesters made the problem much larger

BY BLAIR KERKHOFF
bkerkhoff@kcstar.com

Two months after his resignation, former University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe is not happy. And part of his anger is directed at the football team’s strike last year.

In an email obtained by The Star through a public-records request, Wolfe said political pressure led to his decision to step down Nov. 9 after weeks of student protests that eventually involved the football team. The email, dated Jan. 19 and labeled confidential, was addressed to friends. The Columbia Tribune first obtained the email.

One of six bullet-point sections in the email was titled MU Football Team Strike and read:
“The football team’s decision to strike is what actually brought most of the national attention to our university. In hindsight, the $1 million penalty associated with forfeiting the game against BYU would have paled in comparison to the more than $25 million in lost tuition and fees MU will realize with reduced enrollment this Fall. It’s also a pittance of the threatened loss of state funding that could be as much as $500 million. Unfortunately, MU Athletic Director Mack Rhoades, Coach (Gary) Pinkel and (MU Chancellor) Bowen Loftin all failed to communicate with system officials on this matter. The football team’s actions were the equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire. Coach Pinkel missed an important opportunity to teach his players a valuable life lesson. The end result could be a financial catastrophe for our university.”

The protests were led by the group Concerned Student 1950, which accused Wolfe of not reacting adequately to race issues on campus.

The protests drew national attention when the Missouri football team became involved. On Nov. 7, black players said they wouldn’t practice or play until Wolfe was removed, and the next morning they were joined by white members of the team and Pinkel.

Pinkel said he didn’t communicate with Wolfe before supporting the player boycott. But Rhoades said during a joint news conference with Pinkel on the day of the resignations that he’d been in contact with Wolfe.

Rhoades and Mizzou athletics declined to comment about Wolfe’s email.

But sources told The Star that Missouri senior associate athletic director of strategic communications Ryan Bradley and Rhoades were in communication with University of Missouri System administrative personnel several times throughout the weekend before Wolfe and Loftin resigned.

Pinkel announced his resignation before the end of the season and said he had been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma.
Timothy M. Wolfe, the former president of the University of Missouri system who stepped down last year amid fierce protests over racism at the Columbia flagship, says in a newly disclosed “confidential” letter that many other parties were to blame for his resignation.

In the letter, sent by Mr. Wolfe to supporters and obtained by The Columbia Missourian, Mr. Wolfe blames R. Bowen Loftin, the former flagship chancellor, Gary Pinkel, the flagship’s head football coach, and some system board members for acting inappropriately and hastening his decision to resign.

“I resigned out of love for MU and the rest of the system,” Mr. Wolfe writes, “and I felt that it was the right thing to do at the time to prevent further embarrassment and a potential Ferguson-like event on the MU campus.”

Also in the letter, Mr. Wolfe:

- Alleges that Mr. Loftin “shifted the focus” of student protesters “to me from him once he discovered his job was in jeopardy.” (Mr. Loftin told the Missourian that characterization is “inaccurate.”)
- Writes that the football team’s protest, which drew national attention to Columbia, was “the equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire.”
- Asserts that some members of the Board of Curators attempted to “dig up dirt” to “further personal agendas.”

The Missourian reports that the letter was forwarded to officials in the system a week ago, and that the interim chancellor, Henry C. (Hank) Foley, has passed it out to his staff. A system spokesman acknowledged to the newspaper that discussions about a “financial agreement” with Mr. Wolfe are in progress.
The twin resignations of Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Loftin were seen as a significant victory for the protesters, known as Concerned Student 1950, and galvanized similar efforts on campuses across the country.

Ex-Missouri President Lashes Out in Confidential Email

Two months after his ouster as president of the University of Missouri System amid protests over race, Timothy Wolfe has told his side of the story in a confidential email to a group of supporters, which was obtained by The Columbia Missourian.

In an email to a group called the Missouri 100, Wolfe accused the former chancellor of Missouri's Columbia campus, R. Bowen Loftin, of stirring up controversy to try to protect his own job, and criticized the football team's decision to go on strike. He also urged supporters to "pick up the phone" or email members of the university's governing board to urge them to provide Wolfe with more compensation in his resignation agreement, so he can "continue to play a significant positive role in the future."

In email, former UM President Wolfe attacks MU officials over fall turmoil

By Megan Favignano and Rudi Keller

Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 11:14 am

In an email addressed to friends and labeled confidential, former University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe lobbed accusations of bad leadership and bad faith and called
In the emailed letter, Wolfe wrote about political pressure from Sen. Kurt Schaefer, curators using their positions to advance personal agendas and power plays by former Columbia campus Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

“I believe the University of Missouri is under attack and current leadership from the Board on down is frozen,” Wolfe said in the email the Tribune obtained Tuesday. “They are at risk of being defunded by the General Assembly — over $500 million — and you have already read about the drop in enrollment projections. Without change, the odds of the Board’s ability to attract decent candidates for the next president are very low.”

Wolfe resigned Nov. 9 after weeks of student protests led by the group Concerned Student 1950 calling for his ouster. The group said Wolfe had inadequately addressed race issues on campus. Upon resigning, Wolfe, an MU alumnus, said he did so out of love for MU and the rest of the UM System.

Wolfe confirmed he was the author of the letter but declined to comment further.

In his email to friends, Wolfe said his sudden resignation was “largely motivated” by an event that was set to occur on MU’s campus the day he resigned.

Wolfe said the FBI, Missouri State Highway Patrol, Columbia Police Department and MU Police Department were aware of a “significant Ferguson protester” who was on MU’s campus and said there was a threat more Ferguson protesters would be on campus for a “significant protest” Nov. 9.

Maxwell Little, an MU graduate student with Concerned Student 1950, declined to give specific details about what actions the group had planned if Wolfe did not resign. However, he said what protesters had planned was similar to other peaceful protests Concerned Student 1950 held leading up to Wolfe’s resignation.

“We were going to push to get our demands met in the same fashion that we did previously, through peaceful demonstrations on campus,” Little said. “Everything we’ve done has been peaceful.”

Concerned Student 1950’s protests at MU and the demonstrations the group inspired on other college campuses across the country did not include riots and were all peaceful. Little said he was unaware of any Ferguson protesters planning to be on campus that day.

Wolfe’s email questions why curators selected Mike Middleton to work as interim UM System president, criticizing Middleton for failing in his prior role as MU deputy chancellor to fix diversity issues on campus. In the email, Wolfe also questions why Middleton, who knew students involved in organizing the protests, including hunger striker Jonathan Butler, did not try to stop the protests.
Middleton was not available for comment before the Tribune’s deadline.

The email also said Loftin, who resigned the same day as Wolfe, shifted the Concerned Student 1950 protesters’ ire to Wolfe after learning his own job was at risk in late September.

Loftin said Wednesday he had not seen Wolfe’s letter but had heard about it. When asked about Wolfe’s claim, Loftin shifted the focus of Concerned Student 1950’s protests to Wolfe, Loftin said that’s inaccurate.

“I’m flabbergasted by those kinds of comments,” Loftin said. “I respect our students very much. They’re highly intelligent people. The allegation that I could have directed them seems unbelievable.”

Nine deans met with Wolfe on Oct. 9 and met again with Wolfe, Loftin and Provost Garnett Stokes on Oct. 13 to talk about their concerns about Loftin’s leadership. Those nine deans sent the Board of Curators a letter outlining concerns Nov. 9. In the days leading up to Loftin’s resignation, faculty members in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and the Department of English sent letters to the curators saying they had no confidence in Loftin’s leadership.

Schaefer influenced at least one curator to keep Loftin in the chancellorship, Wolfe said. Wolfe’s email further said Schaefer worked with Loftin to shape his testimony before a legislative committee investigating the university’s relationship with Planned Parenthood.

Loftin and Schaefer said Wolfe’s claim Schaefer guided Loftin’s testimony in front of the Sanctity of Life committee is not true.

Wolfe also said Schaefer pressured him to deny law school Associate Professor Josh Hawley’s leave of absence to run for public office. Hawley and Schaefer are seeking the Republican nomination for attorney general. Schaefer denied pressuring Wolfe but admitted talking to officials about Hawley’s leave.

Wolfe’s email also criticized athletic department officials for not communicating with top administrators when members of the football team backed Butler’s hunger strike, bringing national spotlight to demands that Wolfe step down.

On Tuesday, MU Athletics Director Mack Rhoades declined to comment on Wolfe’s letter. At a Nov. 9 news conference former football Coach Gary Pinkel said he did not alert Wolfe before publicly supporting the player boycott, but Rhoades said he had kept in contact with Wolfe the previous two days to keep him informed.

Wolfe’s email asked recipients to call and email members of the Board of Curators to express their concerns over the state of the university and to urge Curators to resolve his contract negotiations.
Wolfe said he would like to “continue to play a significant positive role in the future.” Wolfe received $266,531.35 in salary from July 1 to Nov. 30, according to the UM System’s custodian of records. On July 1, he also received $18,750 in deferred compensation. Since resigning, Wolfe has not received any compensation from the university other than his salary for the month of November. The university has not paid Wolfe since Nov. 30.

UM System spokesman John Fougere said the university is aware of Wolfe’s letter.

“Since Mr. Wolfe resigned voluntarily last November, discussions have been on-going aimed at reaching an acceptable post-resignation agreement, including the use of a well-regarded and well-known mediator,” Fougere said in an email. “Our position has been that any agreement would have to be consistent with the legal constraints within which a public institution such as the university operates.”

Curator David Steward declined to comment on Wolfe’s letter. Curators Don Cupps and John Phillips deferred to the board’s chairwoman. Chairwoman Pamela Hendrickson did not respond to a message seeking comment.

State Rep. Caleb Jones, R-Columbia, said the worst aspect of the letter is an attempt to “armchair quarterback” university issues that Wolfe was in a position to affect while president of the school.

“Everyone, legislators, Mizzou alumni, employees of the University of Missouri, supporters of Mizzou and every taxpayer of Missouri has an opinion on what should have happened,” Jones said. “I think that to air grievances after you resigned from a position is very unprofessional.”

Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia, said he didn’t have enough information to determine whether Wolfe’s statements are true. But the tone of the letter and its focus on past events will not help as he seeks to talk about the university’s future, Rowden said.

“I think generally the university is not going to benefit at this point from a lot of name-calling and blame-game type of antics,” Rowden said.

Jones said the airing of the complaints will not help the university as the General Assembly shapes the state budget. Some lawmakers have threatened to cut UM funding what happened last fall.

“No, to systematically, negatively dissect every action and every person that has been involved with Mizzou for the past year is very disingenuous and self-serving and does not hold the future of Mizzou in regard,” Jones said.
Wolfe accuses Schaefer of 'pressuring' him to block Hawley from AG race

By Rudi Keller

Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 11:41 am

Before Josh Hawley entered the Republican race for attorney general in July, state Sen. Kurt Schaefer tried to persuade the University of Missouri to prevent Hawley’s candidacy or make him choose between politics and his faculty appointment, former UM System President Tim Wolfe charged in a confidential letter written to undisclosed recipients.

Hawley is a 2011 addition to the School of Law faculty who has ties to religious conservative legal activists. He prepared the groundwork for his candidacy by setting up the Missouri Liberty Project, a not-for-profit religious rights advocacy group, and visiting local GOP gatherings across the state.

Under UM System rules, he could continue to teach — and receive his salary — until he files for office in February. After filing, the rule would allow Hawley to take unpaid leave and keep his job.

“Kurt Schaefer had several meetings with me pressuring me to take away Josh Hawley’s right to run for Attorney General by taking away an employee’s right to ask for an unpaid leave of absence when running for public office,” Wolfe wrote in the letter dated Jan. 19.

Hawley announced his candidacy and went on unpaid leave July 23, the day before the UM Board of Curators voted to amend the policy on employee leave for political reasons. The new policy requires candidates to go on unpaid leave when they announce their candidacy or create a committee to raise money, whichever happens first, but it will not take effect until April 1. All university employees who run for office this year may do so under the old rules.

The section on Schaefer is one of many detailing Wolfe’s complaints about behind-the-scenes political dealings and the motives of players in the dramatic events at the university that have played out on a national and international stage.

Schaefer denied pressuring Wolfe. He only wanted a fair contest that made Hawley choose between his public salary and his political ambitions, Schaefer said Tuesday.

“When I was informed they intended to pay him with tax dollars to take a year off to run for public office, I told him that was not permitted,” Schaefer said.

In an interview Tuesday, Hawley declined to comment on whether he was told by Wolfe or other university officials that Schaefer was working to prevent his campaign. The letter does, Hawley said, expose the political machinations he opposes.
“This is exactly the kind of corrupt politics that people are so sick of in Jefferson City,” Hawley said. “I decided a long time ago that I was not going to let dirty tricks deter me from launching a campaign about changing the culture of corruption in our state.”

Schaefer accused Wolfe of bitterness in the wake of Wolfe’s Nov. 9 resignation. The letter includes two lengthy paragraphs about Wolfe’s negotiations for a salary or severance package and calls for help pressuring curators to provide it.

“It is a bizarre letter,” Schaefer said. “He attacks everybody in a kind of a series of disconnected things. The call to action is to get a golden parachute. If he didn’t try to make a deal before he left, he’s got no one to blame but himself.”

Wolfe makes several other allegations related to Schaefer:

- He sought to interfere with Hawley’s tenure consideration after being told the rules would not be changed.
- He “was working directly with” former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, “shaping his testimony” for the Senate Interim Committee on the Sanctity of Life as it investigated the abortion license granted to the Columbia Planned Parenthood clinic.
- He influenced “at least one member of the Board of Curators” to retain Loftin as chancellor.

If Hawley had not run for office, he would have been granted tenure this fall. If he loses the primary, he will be allowed to return to work in September with tenure. Wolfe wrote that Schaefer tried to interfere with Hawley’s tenure when told the rules would not be changed to his liking.

“When I questioned the fairness of this and I refused to budge on his right to run for office, he then asked me to get in the middle of the tenure decision for Mr. Hawley, which I refused as well,” Wolfe wrote.

When Hawley announced his candidacy, university officials refused to disclose whether he was being considered for tenure. Loftin appeared Aug. 26 before the Joint Committee on Education on Aug. 26 and told lawmakers that Hawley was granted tenure on July 31, effective only if he returns to work.

The reluctance to respond on Hawley’s tenure showed the university’s arrogance, Schaefer said.

“Any inquiry on their accountability they took as an assault,” he said.

The letter’s statements about Schaefer and Loftin refer to Loftin’s Aug. 25 appearance before the Sanctity of Life Committee, which Schaefer chairs. The university granted hospital privileges to Colleen McNicholas, a St. Louis obstetrician and gynecologist, allowing the Planned Parenthood clinic in Columbia to resume medication-induced abortions.
The Department of Health and Senior Services issued the license in mid-July, at the same time the anti-abortion Center for Medical Progress released videotapes the producers claimed to show national Planned Parenthood officials negotiating the illegal sale of fetal tissue. Schaefer’s committee was set up to investigate whether the practice was occurring in Missouri. He expanded it to include how the Columbia clinic was licensed to resume abortions.

In letters to the committee Aug. 18 and Aug. 21, Loftin wrote that McNicholas was granted “refer and follow” privileges on Dec. 14, 2014, by MU Health Care. He also reported on agreements with Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri, which operates the clinic, for students to do clinical and social work.

During his testimony, Loftin promised that the university would review McNicholas’ privileges and the agreements with Planned Parenthood.

The university moved to end the privileges granted to McNicholas and cancel the contracts, precisely what Schaefer had requested. Schaefer said it was “absolutely false” that he coached Loftin in his testimony.

“I could have talked to Bowen about his testimony before he testified, and there would have been nothing wrong with it,” Schaefer said.

The committee wanted Wolfe to appear but was told he could not because he was too busy, Schaefer said. “I later found out that he was on the golf course that day.”

Planned Parenthood stopped offering abortion services at the clinic on Nov. 23, leaving Missouri with only one location in St. Louis where abortions are available. The committee has found no evidence showing tissue from Missouri abortions by Planned Parenthood is routinely used for research. Attorney General Chris Koster investigated and reported that all tissue from Missouri abortions is sent to a pathology lab and then destroyed.

When Wolfe referred to Schaefer’s efforts to influence the curators on Loftin’s behalf, he was writing about an Oct. 21 closed meeting called on short notice.

About four hours before the scheduled start of the meeting, state Rep. Caleb Jones, R-Columbia, sparked a wave of speculation about Loftin’s future by posting on Twitter that Wolfe called the meeting in an attempt to fire Loftin “for his ‘role’ in shutting down” Planned Parenthood.

Wolfe’s bitterness and dislike of Loftin show in other sections of the letter, Schaefer said. The accusations show “the level of hatred between the president and the chancellor,” he said.

The letter swings between personal justification and attacks on people Wolfe believes are his enemies, Schaefer said.

“Whoever his intended audience is, his call to action is to help him get more money,” he said.
A significant campus threat apparently motivated Tim Wolfe to resign from his position as the University of Missouri System President this past November.

In an email marked confidential and addressed to friends, Wolfe addressed events that led to his resignation.

In a section of the email titled 'Campus Safety', Wolfe wrote, "My sudden decision to resign was largely motivated by a significant pending event that was to occur on the campus the day I resigned."

The FBI, Columbia Police Department, MU Police Department, and Missouri State Highway Patrol were aware of a "significant" Ferguson protestors on campus, according to Wolfe's email. "There was a threat that more were coming in for significant protest that day. So to prevent injury and further embarrassment on our campus, the only way to relieve the pressure and stop the momentum was for me to resign. This was the right decision that was vetted with trusted advisors and board members," Wolfe wrote.
The MU Police Department would not comment on the alleged threat Wednesday afternoon. The Columbia Police Department has yet to respond to KRCG13’s comment request as of Wednesday night. The Missouri State Highway Patrol’s General Headquarters would also not comment on the significant campus event mentioned in Wolfe’s email.

Blistering Tim Wolfe email attacks Bowen Loftin, MU football, others

COLUMBIA - A confidential email sent by former UM System president Tim Wolfe attacked the Board of Curators, Mizzou football, Bowen Loftin, and others. The email was intended for “a select few friends” who Wolfe said he believes are “passionate enough about MU, the City of Columbia and the University of Missouri System to do something to improve our future.”

In the email, Wolfe said he resigned out of love for MU and the rest of the system. He said he felt that it was the right thing to do to prevent “further embarrassment” and a potential “Ferguson-like event on the MU Campus.”

In regards to Loftin, Wolfe says the former chancellor angered Greek life over proposed changes and angered graduate students by taking away their health insurance then reinstating it. Wolfe said Loftin shifted the focus of Concerned Student 1950 to Wolfe once Loftin discovered his job was in jeopardy.

Wolfe also said the football team’s tweet showing support of the protestors was the “equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire.” He said $1 million penalty that would’ve been a result of forfeiting the BYU game pales in comparison to the $25 million in lost tuition and fees MU will realize with reduced enrollment in the Fall.

Wolfe wrote that MU Athletic Director Mack Rhoades, Bowen Loftin and Coach Pinkel failed to communicate with system officials and he sees the
events as a missed opportunity for Pinkel to teach his players a “valuable life lesson.”

Wolfe accused the Board of Curators of calling subordinate staff and faculty members to “dig up dirt” and using their curator role to further personal agendas.

Wolfe said he requested support from the Board of Curators to terminate Loftin and quoted the Board Chair as saying, “You have been telling me for four months of the poisonous situation on the MU campus and I have been slow to act.”

Wolfe said his resignation was the only way to “relieve the pressure” and prevent “injury and further embarrassment on our campus.”

The email also questioned interim President Michael Middleton and suggested Middleton should have used his relationship with hunger striker Jonathan Butler and the minority students on the MU campus to stop the growing protest.

Wolfe also accused Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, of influencing at least one member of the Board of Curators to keep Loftin in place.

The email said Wolfe has been contacted by a large number of national media including Anderson Cooper, Bill O’Reilly, the New York Times, and others, but he has refused to give any interviews to protect the brand of the university and the state. Wolfe said he believes his silence has resulted in his name being unfairly attached to the issues of race and incompetent leadership.

Wolfe said he accepts some responsibility and that hiring Bowen Loftin was a mistake.

At the end of the email, Wolfe asked for a “call to action” to express concern over the current situation and to tell the Board of Curators to resolve his contract negotiation. He said all negotiations with the board have stopped and he can either accept a small fraction of the total compensation or to litigate. He said that would involve him going public with “the reasons as to why I was the target of Concerned Student 1950.”

Wolfe said the board wants him to agree to a “gag order” in which he will not criticize the board or anybody else that was involved in the events leading up
to his resignation. He accused the curators of being neither “fair nor consistent” with him in comparison to the treatment Loftin and Pinkel received.

Wolfe called it “embarrassing in light of which leader did the right thing to help the university and which leader was only looking out for themselves.”

Not many of the people called out in the letter could be reached for comment.

However, Loftin said many of Wolfe’s accusations are inaccurate, specifically that he had any influence over Concerned Student 1950.

“That is categorically not true. MU students are very intelligent people,” Loftin said. “To imagine that I could use them like puppets and manipulate them in some way is absurd.”

Loftin said Wolfe’s attacks on his decision-making don’t make sense, since the two communicated often.

“We met at least once a week, sometimes more than that, spoke on the phone frequently,” Loftin said. “Everything I knew I communicated to him. Every major decision I made was also communicated to him before I made it.”

Wolfe stating it was a mistake for him to hire Loftin came as a surprise to Loftin.

“We had our annual evaluation for the second time in August of 2015. He responded with a letter which praised me, gave me a pay-raise and paid ninety percent of my performance incentive for the fiscal year of 2015,” Loftin said.

The UM System released a statement on Wolfe’s letter:

“We are aware that former President Tim Wolfe recently has made public to some university supporters a letter containing his thoughts about the events of last autumn and his desire to reach what he regards as an acceptable financial agreement between himself and the university. Since Mr. Wolfe resigned voluntarily last November, discussions have been on-going aimed at reaching an acceptable post-resignation agreement, including the use of a well-regarded and well-known mediator. After discussions which included mediation on December 18 left Mr. Wolfe's situation unresolved, discussions have been on-going including another mediation recently. Our position has
been that any agreement would have to be consistent with the legal constraints within which a public institution such as the university operates.”

**Former UM system president fires back after November resignation**


COLUMBIA, Mo. - *A new email has surfaced from former University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe calling out the UM Board of Curators, former MU Chancellor Bowen Loftin, state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, Interim UM President Mike Middleton and other officials, including Mizzou former head coach Gary Pinkel, and its athletic director, Mack Rhoades.*

ABC 17 News obtained a copy of the letter Wednesday, which Wolfe claimed he sent because he now has "grave concerns about the future of the University," two months after resigning under pressure during protests.

Wolfe said his decision to step down was "largely motivated" by a pending event that was supposed to happen on the day he left office. He claims the FBI, the Highway Patrol, and city and campus police knew there was an important Ferguson protester at MU and more were expected to arrive in Columbia for a larger protest later that same day.

ABC 17 News contacted FBI spokeswoman Bridget Patton regarding former UM System President Wolfe’s comments. Patton told ABC 17 News the FBI provided limited support to local law enforcement in November, to ensure open lines of communication should any type of civil rights violations occur.

On Wednesday evening, ABC 17 News also reached out to Columbia Police about Wolfe's comments on campus safety.

CPD Chief Ken Burton said, "The Columbia Police Department was made aware via intelligence sources that people who were significantly involved in the Ferguson, Missouri protests may be coming to Columbia to participate in the protests on the MU campus. We were also made aware
that additional protesters may be coming to Columbia from outside Boone County in order to participate in the events on the MU campus. This information was provided in order to help us prepare to support the MUPD and the MSHP should they require our assistance. "

Wolfe also decided to speak out now after talks with curators failed about his pay and future role. At the moment, Wolfe has only been offered what he would get if he was fired without cause. In comparison, he pointed to Loftin, who is getting "75% of his former salary after he was forced to resign as Chancellor" and Pinkel's new contract, which pays him $350,000 for the first two years and $250,000 in the third year. The board also wanted to sign a gag order, barring him from casting curators or other officials in a bad light.

Wolfe said he has not spoken publicly about the circumstances surrounding his resignation since November, but believes MU is currently under attack. He said "current leadership from the Board on down is frozen. They are at risk of being de-funded by the General Assembly" and urged action now or the odds would be very low for attracting a decent candidate for the next UM president.

**Concerns over Loftin**

Wolfe said during Loftin's short time as chancellor he managed to anger the student Greek population, MU healthcare system, graduate students, faculty members over Planned Parenthood testimony. Wolfe claims every dean at Mizzou demanded Loftin's removal. He also believes he shifted the focus of the protest group, Concerned Student 1950, from Loftin to Wolfe after discovering his job was in danger in late September. Wolfe says he has been blamed for racism issues and "incompetent leadership" during his silence with the media. He accepts "some of the responsibility for what happened," but Wolfe said he "made the mistake of hiring Bowen Loftin", and he believes the Board of Curators decided to "cave into politicians and special interest groups with agendas that are contrary to the mission of the University."

**Pressure from Schaefer**

Wolfe claims state Sen. Kurt Schaefer pressured him to get rid of Josh Hawley's right to run for Missouri Attorney General using an unpaid leave of absence. After he refused, Wolfe claims Schaefer also asked him to get involved in the decision for Hawley's tenure. Wolfe said Schaefer worked directly with Loftin to shape his testimony during state hearings on Planned Parenthood, and influenced at least one UM curator to keep Loftin employed.

**Middleton's involvement with protesters**

Wolfe also raises several questions about the involvement between campus protesters and Interim System President Mike Middleton. Wolfe claims Middleton had a "long-term relationship with Jonathan Butler, the leader of the Concerned Student 1950." Wolfe said there are two important questions UM Curators still have to answer: why did they choose to hire Middleton, who had been in charge of MU diversity and inclusion for 17 years right before demonstrations erupted in Columbia, and why didn't Middleton work with Butler to bring an end to the protests?
Miscommunication on team strike

Wolfe said the football team's decision to strike was the "equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire," which ended up bringing national attention to MU. He believes the $1 million penalty from not playing in the BYU game will ultimately pale in comparison to the more than $25 million loss from tuition and fees after enrollment drops this fall. Wolfe said MU Athletic Director Mack Rhoades, Coach Pinkel and Loftin failed to communicate this information with officials, ultimately risking a "financial catastrophe for our university."

UM Board of Curators slow to react

Wolfe also put blame on the University of Missouri Board of Curators, after turning to them to fire MU Chancellor Bowen Loftin, based on his performance. Wolfe claims curators routinely asked their staff and faculty members to "dig up dirt and use their curator role to further personal agendas." Wolfe said the board's chair later admitted to him "you have been telling me for four months of the poisonous situation on the MU campus, and I have been slow to act."

Tim Wolfe resignation heavily influenced by campus safety concerns


COLUMBIA, Mo. - In an email ABC 17 News obtained Wednesday, former UM system President Tim Wolfe said his "sudden decision to resign was largely motivated by a significant pending event that was to occur on campus."

Wolfe said they university, the FBI, Missouri State Highway Patrol, Columbia Police Department, and University of Missouri Police Department were all aware of a prominent Ferguson protestor on campus.

The email goes on to say there was a "threat" that more protestors were coming on November 10.

The Missouri State Highway Patrol had no comment on what was said in Wolfe's email.
Major Brian Weimer with MUPD said the department usually doesn't discuss about its specific intell. Chief Doug Scchwandt declined further comment.

CPD Chief Ken Burton said, "The Columbia Police Department was made aware via intelligence sources that people who were significantly involved in the Ferguson, Missouri protests may be coming to Columbia to participate in the protests on the MU campus. We were also made aware that additional protesters may be coming to Columbia from outside Boone County in order to participate in the events on the MU campus. This information was provided in order to help us prepare to support the MUPD and the MSHP should they require our assistance."

FBI spokeswoman Bridget Patton told ABC 17 News the FBI provided limited support to local law enforcement in November, to ensure open lines of communication should any type of civil rights violations occur.

ABC 17 News also reached out to Concerned Student 1950 by email, but had not heard back as of Wednesday night.

Missouri AG candidates respond to former UM System President's claims


COLUMBIA, Mo. - In a released letter by former UM System President Tim Wolfe Wednesday, Wolfe claimed one state senator pressured him to make it impossible for one Missouri Attorney General candidate to run for office.

According to Wolfe, Sen. Kurt Schaefer, (R)-Columbia, pressured him to take away an employee's right to ask for unpaid leave when running for public office.

That would prevent Joshua Hawley from running against Schaefer in the Attorney General Republican Primary.

"To have the president or former president of a major university say that he was pressured, bullied by a state senator about a potential opponent is shocking," Hawley said to ABC 17 News.
"And again we elect public officials to go and to confront the huge challenges that we're facing as a state."

Sen. Schaefer told ABC 17 News he just spoke to Wolfe about accountability.

"The only thing that I ever told him was, they should follow their own rules," Schaefer said. "They give him leave in May of 2015 to stay on at the university but do nothing but run for office, you know that's an issue."

Wolfe also said Schaefer asked him to, "get in the middle of the tenure decision of Mr. Hawley."

"I think that President Wolfe has laid out a scenario where you have allegations that look like abuse of office," Hawley said.

But Schaefer said he thought Wolfe's comments were inappropriate.

"I think what he says about me is not true and wrong and I don't see anything truthful in that letter," Schaefer said.

Reacting to Wolfe's letter was not the first time Hawley and Schaefer butted heads. Earlier this month, Hawley criticized Schaefer and his committee about not hold Planned Parenthood accountable in a timely manner.

The primary election for Missouri Attorney General will be August 2, 2016.

Sen. Schaefer, lawmakers react to Tim Wolfe's letter on resignation


JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. - ABC 17 News was at the state Capitol Wednesday working to find out what kind of impact Tim Wolfe's letter explaining his resignation has on lawmakers.
ABC 17 tracked down Senator Kurt Schaefer on Wednesday. Wolfe blasted Schaefer, accusing him of abusing his position of power. Wolfe called out Schaefer by name, accusing him of various unethical behaviors.

Schaefer told ABC 17 News, "The only person that he doesn't seem to reference as having any issues is himself. His issues are a result of his inability to communicate with people."

Schaefer accuses Wolfe of wanting more money, and claims what Wolfe says in the letter is completely untrue.

"I think the issue is accountability. They don't like accountability, they don't like responsibility."

ABC 17 also reached out to Senate leadership to find out if and how they will address Wolfe's claims against Senator Schaefer.

We were told by staff members they were unable to make a comment at this time.

MU has been a main point of discussion this legislative session, with regards to funding as well as administrative ethics.

Representative Caleb Jones of Columbia said Wolfe's letter was in no way positive for the University or the state and it was not something he expected.

"I personally am disappointed to see that letter. I think the public is going to be if they actually read the letter. I think the legislature is disappointed. I think the University is disappointed. This is not what this is about. This is not who Mizzou is. This is not someone who represents the University of Missouri should act," said Jones.

Former UM System President Tim Wolfe criticizes current administration in confidential letter to system supporters

Former UM System President Tim Wolfe and former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin haven't spoken to each other since they both resigned Nov. 9.

Wednesday morning, though, a letter from Wolfe to an undisclosed group of supporters was made public by the Columbia Daily Tribune. The recipients include the Missouri 100, a group of prominent UM System supporters.
In the letter, Wolfe made numerous accusations against former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, the UM System Board of Curators, Athletics Director Mack Rhoades, former head football coach Gary Pinkel and interim UM System President Michael Middleton.

“I made the mistake of hiring Bowen Loftin and I trusted the Board of Curators to support my decisions and to do what is in the best interest of the University of Missouri System rather than to cave into politicians and special interest groups with agendas that are contrary to the mission of the university,” Wolfe wrote.

In an interview Wednesday, Loftin said he had not read the letter. He had heard earlier that Wolfe had written a letter to prominent donors, but “didn’t think too much about it and hadn’t worried about it at all.”

“He never spoke to me about the letter,” Loftin said. “I never got a copy of it. We haven’t seen each other or in any way communicated since Nov. 9 when he resigned.”

Loftin said his relationship with Wolfe was “very professional” until their resignations, and they met at least once a week. He said he did his best to keep Wolfe informed of his decisions, and until a meeting they had “just a short time before all this blew up,” he had no idea there were any problems.

“I thought things were behind us now, but apparently not,” Loftin said. “It is what it is.”

Wolfe also wrote that Loftin “shifted the focus of Concerned Student 1950 to me from him once he discovered his job was in jeopardy in late September.”

“MU students are very intelligent people and I respect them a great deal,” Loftin said in response. “To believe that I could manipulate them in some way is unbelievable. It’s absurd.”

Wolfe wrote that Loftin angered the Greek community, a reference to proposals by the Fraternity Alumni Consortium that circulated in June 2015. The consortium suggested a restriction on women in fraternity houses. Loftin was subject to backlash after the proposals circulated. Wolfe resigned Nov. 9 following weeks of protests by student group Concerned Student 1950 calling for his resignation. The group said Wolfe had not handled race issues on campus appropriately following a series of racial incidents on
In the letter, Wolfe wrote that he resigned to “prevent further embarrassment and a potential Ferguson-like event on the MU Campus.” Wolfe also wrote that the curators and Middleton have to answer why the curators hired an interim system president who “failed miserable (sic) in his capacity as the long time leader on diversity issues on the MU Campus” and why Middleton did not stop the growing campus protests “in spite of” his relationship with minority students on campus and graduate student Jonathan Butler, a leader of Concerned Student 1950 who went on a hunger strike in November. On the sixth day of Butler’s hunger strike, the black players of Missouri’s football team announced a boycott of all football-related activities until Wolfe resigned. The rest of the team joined them the next day.

Wolfe wrote that the football team’s protest was “the equivalent of throwing gasoline on a small fire.” The events that led up to the football boycott include racial slurs yelled at both Missouri Students Association President Payton Head and the Legion of Black Collegians’ homecoming court, several “Racism Lives Here” rallies, sit-in protests at Jesse Hall, Concerned Student 1950 demonstrations at the homecoming parade and Meet Mizzou Day, the hunger strike and a walkout by students and faculty in support of Butler.

“Coach Pinkel missed an important opportunity to teach his players a valuable life lesson,” Wolfe wrote. “The end result could be a financial catastrophe for our university.”

Wolfe addressed Sen. Schaefer, saying that he was placing pressure on a board member.

“He also was influencing at least one member of the Board of Curators to keep Bowen Loftin in place,” Wolfe wrote in the letter. Wolfe wrote that the board was following agendas contrary to the university’s mission.

“A few of the members of the board of curators consistently called subordinate staff and faculty members to dig up dirt and use their Curator role to further personal agendas,” Wolfe wrote.

UM System spokesman John Fougere said in a statement that the board was aware of Wolfe’s letter.
“We are aware that former President Tim Wolfe recently has made public to some university supporters a letter containing his thoughts about the events of last autumn and his desire to reach what he regards as an acceptable financial agreement between himself and the university,” the statement read.

According to the statement, discussions have been ongoing between representatives of the UM System and Wolfe regarding a post-resignation agreement.

“After discussions which included mediation on December 18 left Mr. Wolfe's situation unresolved, discussions have been on-going including another mediation recently,” the statement read. “Our position has been that any agreement would have to be consistent with the legal constraints within which a public institution such as the university operates.”

University of Missouri professor suspended in wake of assault charge

The University of Missouri on Wednesday suspended an assistant professor who was charged with assault in a campus fracas with student journalists during protests in November.

Melissa Click was charged Monday morning with third-degree assault, the Columbia city prosecutor’s office confirmed to Fox News. If she is found guilty her penalty would ultimately be up to a judge, but would likely require paying a fine, a spokesman from the prosecutor’s office said.

A YouTube video shows Click confronting videographer Mark Schierbecker during a campus protest on Nov. 9 and apparently trying to block him from shooting video on a public quad. At one point, Schierbecker asks to speak with Click, who promptly tells him to leave.

No, you need to get out,” she says, pointing away and then seeming to grab Schierbecker’s camera. “You need to get out. You need to get out.”
When Schierbecker refuses to leave, Click yells to a group of nearby demonstrators: “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here.”

The board of curators ordered its general counsel to conduct an investigation so it can determine whether additional discipline "is appropriate," Pam Henrickson, chair of the board, said in a written statement.

Click "is suspended pending further investigation," the statement said.

Earlier Wednesday, the interim chancellor at the University of Missouri’s Columbia campus spoke about the November protests during his “State of the University” speech, calling that chapter painful, but declaring that the student’s push toward more inclusivity is a priority.

"One way to regard student unrest is a sign that the institution has not kept pace with change, especially with students’ and the public's expectations," Hank Foley, who took the helm at the campus less than three months ago, said. "The tension around race relations and the campus climate shows that we need to do more to be fully inclusive.”

Foley said having the system's troubles draw national scrutiny was difficult but added, "I'm asking our Mizzou family to come back together around a love for this great institution."

Foley took over after R. Bowen Loftin resigned Nov. 9, along with the system's president, Tim Wolfe, amid discord that included a student's hunger strike and members of the school's football team pledging to boycott the rest of their season until Wolfe was gone.

Foley's address and Click's suspension came the same day several newspapers reported that Wolfe, in an email to supporters and donors after his resignation, criticized most officials involved in the turmoil leading to his exodus.

Wolfe insisted the university is "under attack" by the Missouri Legislature, rendering the board of curators "frozen" by the pressure, and asked the email recipients to press the board to sweeten a financial package for him that he's negotiating the university.

Click has since issued an apology and resigned a courtesy appointment at the Missouri School of Journalism. That appointment allowed her to serve on graduate panels fro students from other academic units, the Columbia Missourian reported.

Also Wednesday, board of curators member Yvonne S. Sparks resigned. She did not mention the turmoil at the Columbia campus in a statement released by the board.

"After careful consideration of the demands of my professional obligations and those required to engage in the work of the Board at the level that I expect of myself, I have concluded that it is not possible to do both well," said Sparks, who works in the banking industry and who was appointed to the board by Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon last year. "This is an important and demanding time for the System, the role deserves a representative that is able to that devote."
Melissa Click, the University of Missouri communications professor who tried to block student journalists from covering a campus protest in November, has been suspended by the university system’s Board of Curators. In a statement posted after a special meeting of the board on Wednesday night, the board said Ms. Click had been suspended “pending further investigation,” with the possibility of “additional discipline.”

Since she was caught on camera last fall calling for “some muscle” to remove student journalists from the scene of a protest, Ms. Click, who apologized for her behavior, has drawn the ire of free-speech advocates nationwide. More than 100 Republican state lawmakers signed a letter last month demanding that Ms. Click — and another employee who confronted the journalists — be fired. More than 100 faculty members at Mizzou responded with a letter of support for Ms. Click, saying the video incident was “at most a regrettable mistake.”

Earlier this week, Ms. Click was charged with misdemeanor assault in relation to her actions at the protest, which concerned racism on the campus, among other things, and was a factor in the ouster of top Mizzou leaders. She has pleaded not guilty, and has not responded to media requests for comment.

The Columbia campus’s interim chancellor, Henry C. (Hank) Foley, had said on Monday that the university would resist “hasty action” and “allow due process to play out.”

After the board announced Ms. Click’s suspension, on Wednesday night, Ben Trachtenberg, an associate professor of law who is chair of the campus’s Faculty Council, called the curators’ move “tremendously unfortunate” and said it would set back efforts to heal the rifts caused by the racial unrest and administrative turnover in the fall.
“The president and chancellor are supposed to be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the university, and they should have been allowed to do their job under the rules that govern the university,” he said.

A complaint should have been brought in writing, and Ms. Click should have had the opportunity to present evidence and see the charges against her before her case went through the proper academic channels, he said.

Ms. Click’s suspension comes amid continued turmoil for the University of Missouri and its flagship campus. Since the system’s president, Timothy M. Wolfe, and the flagship’s chancellor, R. Bowen Loftin, were forced out at the height of the protests, the campus has been trying to chart a way forward.

But controversy around the ousters has persisted. Soon after the resignations, The Chronicle reported that the departure of Mr. Loftin was a long-engineered coup by deans at the flagship. And Wednesday saw the disclosure of a letter from Mr. Wolfe in which he took to task several current and former university leaders for acting inappropriately, he said, and forcing his resignation.

Meanwhile, protests inspired by the activists in Missouri continue across the country.

Controversial U of Missouri Professor Suspended

The University of Missouri Board of Curators announced late Wednesday that it was suspending Melissa Click, who teaches communications at the university’s flagship campus in Columbia. Click was recently charged with misdemeanor assault in relation to her videotaped blocking of a student journalist during last fall’s campus protests. She has apologized for the action, but many Republican legislators have called for her dismissal. Faculty members, while not defending her actions during the protests, have said she should not be fired.

The statement from the university board said: "The Board of Curators directs the general counsel, or outside counsel selected by general counsel, to immediately conduct
UM board suspends Melissa Click

Melissa Click, an assistant professor at the University of Missouri who gained national attention last year stemming from a run-in with student journalists, was suspended by the UM Board of Curators late Wednesday night.

In a prepared statement, UM Board of Curators chairwoman Pam Henrickson said the board had directed the university’s general counsel to conduct an investigation to determine whether more discipline was necessary.

Click pleaded not guilty this week to a misdemeanor assault charge after she was caught on video in a confrontation with students.

On Nov. 9, University of Missouri-Columbia students had assembled to celebrate the resignation of then-UM System President Timothy M. Wolfe.

Wolfe had angered students over the perception that he was indifferent to a number of racist incidents on campus.

Click was captured on video blocking student journalists and calling others for “muscle” to keep the student journalists from taking photos and videos of the celebration. In the days afterward, a number of legislators and others called for Click’s resignation.

This week, interim Mizzou Chancellor Hank Foley resisted calls to fire Click. He said he would wait for due process to play out.

Click is scheduled to be back in court on Feb. 16.
University of Missouri suspends professor in assault case

University of Missouri suspends an assistant professor charged with assault in a campus run-in

Melissa Click had a confrontation with a student photographer and a student videographer

Board of curators orders an investigation to determine whether additional discipline 'is appropriate'

BY JIM SUHR AND AMY SHAFER
Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, MO. - The University of Missouri on Wednesday suspended an assistant professor who is charged with assault in a campus run-in with student journalists during protests in November.

The university system’s governing board of curators announced the move in a statement after a special meeting Wednesday night.

Melissa Click was charged Monday with misdemeanor assault and has pleaded not guilty through an attorney. Click had a confrontation with a student photographer and a student videographer on Nov. 9 during protests at the Columbia campus over what some saw as university leadership’s indifference to racial issues. Click called for “some muscle” to help remove the videographer from the protest area on the campus. She later said publicly that she regretted her actions.

The board of curators ordered its general counsel to conduct an investigation so it can determine whether additional discipline “is appropriate,” Pam Henrickson, chair of the board, said in a written statement.

Click “is suspended pending further investigation,” the statement said.

Click did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press.
Earlier in the day, the interim chancellor at the University of Missouri’s Columbia campus spoke about the November protests during his “State of the University” speech, calling that chapter painful, but declaring that the school’s push toward more inclusivity is a priority.

“One way to regard student unrest is a sign that the institution has not kept pace with change, especially with students’ and the public’s expectations,” Hank Foley, who took the helm at the campus less than three months ago, said. “The tension around race relations and the campus climate shows that we need to do more to be fully inclusive.”

Foley said having the system’s troubles draw national scrutiny was difficult but added, “I’m asking our Mizzou family to come back together around a love for this great institution.”

Foley took over after R. Bowen Loftin resigned Nov. 9, along with the system’s president, Tim Wolfe, amid discord that included a student’s hunger strike and members of the school’s football team pledging to boycott the rest of their season until Wolfe was gone.

Foley’s speech did not mention Click. Amid calls by a system administrator and Republican lawmakers to fire the professor, Foley told reporters this week that the university “must allow due process to play out.” He said he would not rush when it comes to determining her future at the school, including a decision on tenure.

Foley’s address and Click’s suspension came the same day several newspapers reported that Wolfe, in an email to supporters and donors after his resignation, criticized most officials involved in the turmoil leading to his exodus.

Wolfe insisted the university is “under attack” by the Missouri Legislature, rendering the board of curators “frozen” by the pressure, and asked the email recipients to press the board to sweeten a financial package for him that he’s negotiating the university.

Messages left Wednesday with the board and Concerned Student 1950, an activist group that led the November protests, were not immediately returned.
John Fougiere, a spokesman for the university system, said the university is aware of Wolfe’s email, adding that since Wolfe’s resignation, the matter has been in mediation “aimed at reaching an acceptable post-resignation agreement.”

“Our position has been that any agreement would have to be consistent with the legal constraints within which a public institution such as the university operates,” Fougiere said without addressing other elements of Wolfe’s email.

Also Wednesday, board of curators member Yvonne S. Sparks resigned. She did not mention the turmoil at the Columba campus in a statement released by the board.

“After careful consideration of the demands of my professional obligations and those required to engage in the work of the Board at the level that I expect of myself, I have concluded that it is not possible to do both well,” said Sparks, who works in the banking industry and who was appointed to the board by Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon last year. “This is an important and demanding time for the System, the role deserves a representative that is able to that devote.”

MU professor Melissa Click is suspended days after assault charges

Communication professor is accused of pushing a student journalist during race-related protests

A Columbia prosecutor charged her on Monday

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

mdwilliams@kcstar.com
The University of Missouri professor charged with assault after being accused of pushing a student journalist who was documenting a race-related student protest on campus in November has been suspended.

Following a special board meeting Wednesday afternoon, Pam Henrickson, chair of the university Board of Curators, announced that Melissa Click “is suspended pending further investigation.”

In a teleconference that lasted nearly three hours, curators called for the university general counsel, or outside counsel selected by general counsel, “to immediately conduct an investigation and collaborate with the city attorney and promptly report back to the Board so it may determine whether additional discipline is appropriate,” Henrickson said in a statement released Wednesday evening.

It was not determined whether Click’s suspension would be without pay.

Click, an MU communications professor, was charged Monday with third-degree assault, a misdemeanor that carries a possible 15-day jail sentence.

The charges stem from an incident on Nov. 9, when Click was caught on video calling for “muscle” to remove a student journalist who was photographing a race-related student protest that had drawn national news crews to the Columbia campus.

Mark Schierbecker, an MU student and videographer, accused Click of grabbing his camera and pushing him while he was making the video. His video also included a confrontation between another student journalist, Tim Tai, and Janna Basler, the assistant director for Greek life and leadership at MU. Basler was later put on administrative leave.

The protests eventually led to the resignations of University of Missouri System president Tim Wolfe and Mizzou chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. During a news conference this week, university interim chancellor Hank Foley said a task force consisting of faculty members, students, administrators and staff has been formed to look into what happened at the protest site that led to the Click charges.

Wednesday evening’s suspension announcement followed a series of events at MU, including the release of a scathing and controversial letter written by former
UM System president Tim Wolfe and the state of the university address made by Foley.

The curators’ announcement was then topped with the resignation of curator Yvonne S. Sparks of St. Louis.

Sparks, who was appointed to the board in 2015 by Gov. Jay Nixon, said the job required more time than she had anticipated. Her resignation is effective immediately.

“After careful consideration of the demands of my professional obligations and those required to engage in the work of the Board at the level that I expect of myself, I have concluded that it is not possible to do both well,” Sparks said.

University of Missouri assistant professor suspended

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - The University of Missouri's governor board says it's suspended an assistant professor accused of assault stemming from a campus run-in with student journalists during protests in November.

Pam Henrickson, chair of the University of Missouri system's Board of Curators, said in a statement after a special board meeting Wednesday night that Melissa Click is suspended "pending further investigation."

The board called for its general counsel to conduct an investigation so the board can determine whether additional discipline "is appropriate."

Click had a confrontation with a student photographer and a student videographer on Nov. 9 during protests at the Columbia campus over what some saw as university leadership's indifference to racial issues. Click called for "some muscle" to help remove the videographer from the protest area on the Columbia campus.

Click has pleaded not guilty to a misdemeanor assault charge.
UM curators suspend MU Professor Melissa Click pending investigation

By Megan Favignano

Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 7:58 pm

University of Missouri Professor Melissa Click is suspended pending further investigation, Board of Curators Chairwoman Pam Henrickson said Wednesday.

“The Board of Curators directs the general counsel or outside counsel selected by the general council to immediately conduct an investigation and to collaborate with the city attorney and promptly report back to the board so the board may determine whether additional discipline is appropriate,” Henrickson said.

UM System spokesman John Fougere said in an email that Click was suspended with pay. Fougere was not sure who will teach Click’s courses during her suspension.

Click, an assistant professor in MU’s Department of Communication, on Monday was charged with misdemeanor assault for her confrontation with student journalists at a demonstration on campus Nov. 9 after former UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned. She pleaded not guilty to the charge, a Class C misdemeanor punishable by as much as 15 days in jail and a $300 fine upon conviction.

Footage of Click’s confrontation with Mark Schierbecker, a student videographer, and Tim Tai, an MU student and photojournalist, during the demonstration went viral. Click can be heard on video ordering Schierbecker and Tai to leave the area and saying, “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here!”

Henrickson announced Click's suspension after the curators met in closed session for nearly four hours Wednesday afternoon and evening. Henrickson declined to take questions from reporters.

Interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley held a news conference Monday regarding Click’s charges and said the assistant professor would keep her job at least through the tenure review process, which Click is about halfway through. The university will tell everyone who applied for promotion and tenure this year of their decisions by Aug. 1.
More than 100 Republican state lawmakers have called for MU to fire Click. In response, more than 100 faculty members released a letter in support of Click. UM Curator David Steelman also has said Click should be fired for her actions in November.

The board also announced Wednesday the resignation of Curator Yvonne Sparks of St. Louis. Gov. Jay Nixon appointed Sparks to the board on Nov. 14, and the Senate had not confirmed her term. Her resignation was effective immediately.

“After careful consideration of the demands of my professional obligations and those required to engage in the work of the Board at the level that I expect of myself, I have concluded that it is not possible to do both well,” Sparks said in a news release. “This is an important and demanding time for the System, the role deserves a representative that is able to that devote.”

Sparks is assistant vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank in St. Louis.

She was appointed to represent the First Congressional District for a term ending Jan. 1, 2021. She took the seat previously held by Wayne Goode, who served on the board from July 2009 until January. The seat was left open when Goode’s term ended without a replacement because a Senate committee rejected Mary Nelson during the confirmation process, citing a concern Nixon was appointing too many lawyers.

MU professor Melissa Click suspended pending further investigation

ALLISON COLBURN, 9 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — MU assistant professor Melissa Click has been suspended pending further investigation by the UM System Board of Curators.

“The Board of Curators directs the General Counsel, or outside counsel selected by General Counsel, to immediately conduct an investigation and collaborate with the city attorney and promptly report back to the board so it may determine whether additional discipline is appropriate,” Board Chairwoman Pam Henrickson said in a statement released after a curators' meeting that began at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday.
On Nov. 9, Click was recorded in a video calling for "some muscle" to remove MU senior Mark Schierbecker from a human circle surrounding the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle after the resignation of former UM System President Tim Wolfe.

The suspension came two days after City Prosecutor Steve Richey filed a misdemeanor assault charge against Click in connection with the Nov. 9 events. In the court document, Richey says the "defendant knowingly caused physical contact" with Shierbecker.

Shierbecker said on Nov. 11 that he filed a municipal simple assault complaint against Click with the MU Police Department, saying Click grabbed his camera "attempting to knock it from his grasp." Click pleaded not guilty to the assault charge on Tuesday.

Earlier this month, 117 Republican lawmakers called for Click’s dismissal in a letter addressed to MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley, UM System Interim President Mike Middleton and the Board of Curators.

Foley said in a news conference Monday that the assault charge would factor into the decision to grant Click tenure. She's about halfway through the tenure process.

Click could not be reached for comment Wednesday evening. The Board of Curators declined to further comment on the suspension. Foley was at the meeting but also declined to comment.
COLUMBIA, Mo. — Melissa Click has been suspended by the University of Missouri System Board of Curators pending further investigation.

The decision to suspend the embattled Associate Professor of Communications was announced following a closed session board meeting on Wednesday.

Board Curator Pam Henrickson gave the following statement Wednesday night:

"The Board of Curators directs the General Counsel, or outside counsel selected by General Counsel, to immediately conduct an investigation and collaborate with the city attorney and promptly report back to the Board so it may determine whether additional discipline is appropriate."

KRCG 13 reached out to Melissa Click’s attorney, Christopher Slusher, Wednesday night by phone and email.

Those calls and emails haven't been returned.

The board also announced the immediate resignation of Curator Yvonne S. Sparks of St. Louis.

Sparks was appointed to the board in November of 2015 by Governor Jay Nixon.

"After careful consideration of the demands of my professional obligations and those required to engage in the work of the Board at the level that I expect of myself, I have concluded that it is not possible to do both well," Sparks said. "This is an important and demanding time for the System, the role deserves a representative that is able to that devote."

The decision to suspend Click comes just days after Columbia’s city prosecutor charged Click with third-degree assault.

The charges come after an incident with a reporter during the protests on campus in November of 2015.
The photographer was filming after the university system's president and the Columbia campus' chancellor resigned amid protests over what some saw as indifference to racial issues.

Videos of Click confronting student reporters went viral, and have been viewed nearly three million times.

In the video, Click was seen yelling at a student journalist and calling on people around her to bring in "some muscle" to help remove the reporters.

One of the students filed a complaint with University of Missouri Police and the complaint was forwarded to Prosecutor Steve Richey in November.

Earlier in January, University of Missouri faculty members voiced their support of Click in a letter.

The faculty made public a letter of support that had been sent in December to university leadership after more than 100 Republican Missouri lawmakers and 18 members of the Senate Majority Caucus called for Melissa Click's firing.

In a signed letter, the lawmakers wrote "As a professional representing our University, Click failed to meet the obligations she has to her supervisors, fellow professors, University students, and the taxpayers of Missouri. As an academic professional, her first goal should have been to promote a safe and stable learning environment for all students, and to represent the University to the public in a way that strengthens the image of our flagship state institution of higher education. Instead, Professor Click's comments served to inflame an already caustic situation that was clearly out of line."

Lawmakers urged the Board, Interim President Mike Middleton and Interim Chancellor Hank Foley to take immediate actions to address Click's actions, and send a strong message that the leadership "can and will act quickly and decisively to root out bad behavior".
The whole situation continued to escalate after a member of the UM Board of Curators called for Click to be fired.

Curator David Steelman of Rolla described Melissa Click as "an embarrassment."

But speaking before a meeting, Steelman noted that he's not chairman of the board and isn't able to put her continued employment on a future agenda.

In an interview with KRCG 13, Steelman said he was not surprised by the assault charge filed against Click.

"My only disappointment is that I think the University should have been ahead of local law enforcement in trying to protect the rights and safety of the students, not waiting for them to act first," Steelman said.

Ben Trachtenberg is an associate law professor who chairs the Columbia campus' Faculty Council on University Policy.

He says Melissa Click doesn't have tenure but is being considered for that promotion.

Trachtenberg says "it seems like there are a lot of little scuffles and shoving in this country that don't lead to the involvement of the criminal justice system."

Click resigned her courtesy title with the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

Click issued a statement on November 11, 2015, confirming that she was resigning from her courtesy appointment with the university’s School of Journalism, and stepping down from Chancellor's Student Publications Committee.

In her statement, Click said she regrets that her "involvement in the Concerned Student 1950 protests had an impact on the University of Missouri School of Journalism".
"Effective today, I have resigned my affiliation with MU's School of Journalism and the Chancellor's Student Publications Committee to allow them to continue their important work without further distraction," Click's release stated.

David Kurpius, the dean of the Missouri School of Journalism said they are proud of the way Tai handled himself.

"The news media have First Amendment rights to cover public events. Tai handled himself professionally and with poise."

The statement also clarified that Click is not a faculty member with the Missouri School of Journalism, but a member of the Communications Department, and in that capacity, held a courtesy appointment with the School of Journalism, and never taught at the School.

Melissa Click suspended pending investigation

COLUMBIA - The UM Board of Curators has confirmed assistant communication professor Melissa Click is suspended pending further investigation.

Click faces third-degree assault charges for an incident that took place on November 9 following the resignation of UM System President Tim Wolfe. She pleaded not guilty to the third-degree assault charges on Tuesday.

Video showed she grabbed a student journalist's camera while he was trying to cover the student protests on Carnahan Quadrangle, and she called for "muscle" to help her remove the student from the area.
In the weeks and months since the incident, Click has come under fire from those who say she violated the First Amendment. Click resigned her courtesy appointment to the University of Missouri School of Journalism following the incident.

The UM Board of Curators said an investigation would be conducted in order to determine if further discipline is necessary.

No timetable has been set for the investigation, but the UM Board of Curators said the investigation will be conducted by the General Counsel, or outside counsel chosen by General Counsel, and they will report back "promptly" to the Board of Curators with a recommendation.

MU professor Click suspended after protest video


COLUMBIA, Mo. - **ABC 17 News has confirmed MU's controversial assistant communication professor, Melissa Click, has been suspended with pay after getting caught grabbing a student's camera during November protests on campus.**

The University of Missouri System Board of Curators announced the decision around 7:15 p.m. after meeting behind closed doors for nearly four hours Wednesday. The Board said Click's suspension will remain in place depending on further investigation. It will also "collaborate with the [Columbia] city attorney" to see if more discipline is necessary.

On Monday, ABC 17 News was the first to report Click was charged with third-degree assault.

Here is the full statement by UM Board chair, Pam Henrickson of Jefferson City:
"The Board of Curators directs the General Counsel, or outside counsel selected by General Counsel, to immediately conduct an investigation and collaborate with the city attorney and promptly report back to the Board so it may determine whether additional discipline is appropriate."

Also during Wednesday's meeting, the board confirmed Curator Yvonne Sparks from St. Louis is resigning, effective immediately. She was just appointed last year by Gov. Nixon, but said it was too difficult to effectively balance her professional duties with her role as curator, especially during this crucial time with the university system. A full term for curators lasts six years.

Melissa Click suspended by UM System Board of Curators pending further investigation

MU communications professor Melissa Click, who blocked photographer Tim Tai from taking photos and who famously called for “some muscle” to remove independent photographer Mark Schierbecker during the Concerned Student 1950 protests, has been suspended by the UM System Board of Curators.

UM System Board of Curators Chairwoman Pam Henrickson made the announcement Wednesday night upon the conclusion of a four-hour, closed-door special board session.

“MU Professor Melissa Click is suspended pending further investigation,” Henrickson said in the news release.

The news release also stated that the Board of Curators will work with a General Counsel to conduct an investigation in collaboration with the city attorney so that the board can determine whether Click needs to be punished further.

Click’s suspension comes after being charged with third-degree assault on Jan. 25 by Columbia city prosecutor Steve Richey. The punishment if found guilty could be up to 15 days in jail and up to a $300 dollar fine.

The viral video, which has received nearly three million views, is what put Click into the national spotlight. She has since apologized for her actions.
“I regret the language and strategies I used, and sincerely apologize to the MU campus, community, and journalists at large, for my behavior, and also for the way my actions have shifted attention away from the students’ campaign for justice,” Click said in her apology.

Students reproach Haden Gomez during open forum at MSA senate meeting

Nothing seemed out of the ordinary on the agenda for the Missouri Students Association full Senate meeting Wednesday night. Announcements would be made, proposed legislation would be discussed, and committee chairs would give updates. Business as usual.

**Four hours and two resignations of prominent MSA leaders later, it became clear that the first full Senate of the semester was anything but ordinary.**

The Senate meeting focused on the misconduct of former President-elect Haden Gomez and former Vice President-elect Chris Hanner. Several screenshots of a group message in GroupMe between Gomez, Hanner and former campaign managers Natalie Edelstein and Josh Boehm revealed that Gomez and Hanner knowingly worked with the Pocket Points app to send mass campaign notifications, which is prohibited by the Board of Elections Commissioners.

Gomez and Hanner resigned after a tense meeting and chaotic open forum, and Payton Head became interim president until MSA holds a special election on an undecided date. Former Budget Committee Chairman Bill Vega was appointed interim vice president.

“I will apologize and own up to the many mistakes that I made during the campaign,” Gomez said. “Never once did I want to slander another person because that’s not who I was.”

After Gomez resigned, Hanner was sworn in as MSA President. In his first and only order of business, Hanner made Head his vice president and then announced his own
resignation, effective minutes later at 10 p.m, leaving Head to move into the interim president role.

Hours before Gomez and Hanner resigned, Sen. Joshua Tennison introduced Act 55-23, which would have nullified the 2015 MSA presidential election. Initially, two other proposed pieces of legislation offered different solutions for nullifying either the election or the Gomez/Hanner candidacy, but both acts died in committee. The act was tabled when it became apparent that Gomez and Hanner were preparing to resign.

MSA senators, former 2015 MSA presidential candidates, students affiliated with Concerned Student 1950 and other student spectators filled every seat and the back of the room in Leadership Auditorium to discuss the misconduct of Gomez and Hanner during the election.

Students involved in the Concerned Student 1950 movement condemned the Gomez/Hanner campaign for “buying the election,” using the messages posted in the GroupMe as evidence.

“The student body has the power,” one of the students said. “When the power is taken away and sullied by money, what does it say when the Senate does not have the power to reclaim that vote?”

They also pointed to Gomez’s apparent lack of concern for students with marginal identities. In one of the screenshots, Gomez, Edelstein and Boehm discuss what to post on social media regarding Concerned Student 1950.

“I most definitely never wanted to tweet something or share something or say something as a matter of not sensationalizing something,” Gomez said in the meeting. “I didn’t want to be a member of that political game.”

Another member affiliated with the Concerned Student 1950 movement said that Gomez misrepresented the Greek community, pointing to the screenshot in which Edelstein suggested posting something about Concerned Student on social media.

Senate Clerk Leslie Parker disagreed with Concerned Student 1950’s assessment of Gomez.
“Haden and Chris have always expressed a very deep interest in Concerned Student 1950,” Parker said. “I mean that knowing what I know now.”

Former MSA vice presidential candidate Heather Parrie spoke on Gomez’s personal character. She recalled Gomez making a sexual advance toward her at a Tour Team social, but she chose not to report it because she didn’t have faith in the Title IX system.

In addition to Parrie, other people focused on the personal qualities of Gomez and Hanner. The open forum lasted for an hour.

“We lost focus of why we were doing this,” former MSA presidential candidate Jordan McFarland said in an interview after the meeting. “We were talking about personal attacks, things that may have happened to us in other settings that, yes, they are indicative of the character of the person, but not of the question of the matter which was conducted during the election.”

Parrie said that what was discussed in the open forum was necessary for understanding the character of Gomez and Hanner.

“I felt that they needed to be said because I think it was getting lost in the translation that we’re not just talking about by-laws, we’re not just talking about positions, we’re talking about human beings that have a lot of power and no one wants that,” Parrie said of her comments during open forum in an interview after adjournment.

Former Vice BEC Chairs Mark McDaniel and Bridget Everson blamed the BEC for allowing the situation to come this far. Everson also said she didn’t think the infractions against the Gomez/Hanner campaign were given the attention they deserved.

“If we had the information that we had today back in November, Chris, Haden...you would have been removed from the election,” McDaniel said.

“If I can just leave you with one message, it’s do not let your personal bias get in the way of progress for students, because I’ve seen a lot of that in this chamber,” Hanner said in his closing statement before resigning.
Haden Gomez and Chris Hanner resign, Payton Head and Bill Vega are interim leaders
By Katherine Knott and Katherine Rosso, Jan. 27, 2016

**Senators succeeded in removing MSA President-elect Haden Gomez and Vice President-elect Chris Hanner from office.**

Their efforts began late Tuesday night after former Gomez/Hanner campaign manager Natalie Edelstein gave screenshots of conversations within the Gomez/Hanner campaign staff’s group message on the GroupMe application. Gomez, Hanner and co-campaign managers Josh Boehm and Edelstein were members of the GroupMe. The screenshots showed conversations between the campaign staff regarding mass texts Edelstein planned to send and the campaign’s use of the Pocket Points application. Edelstein gave the screenshots to Senate Speaker Kevin Carr, who shared them with The Maneater.

The path to their resignations was convoluted. MSA Senate released a statement Wednesday night describing the meeting.

“MSA Senate met at its normal time,” the statement read. “Deliberations occurred between MSA and several members of the student body expressed their concerns with the leadership of Haden Gomez and Christopher Hanner took over full responsibilities as president. Christopher Hanner then appointed Payton Head as the vice president. Christopher Hanner then resigned. Payton Head has taken over as interim president, for the time being. A special election will be held at a to-be-determined date.”

**MU student president-elect resigns**
COLUMBIA, Mo. - The University of Missouri's Students Association met Wednesday night at its normal time. However, several resignations would soon follow.

During the meeting, presidential-elect, Haden Gomez resigned over students' concerns about his and vice-president elect, Christopher Hanner's, leadership abilities.

Hanner briefly took over full responsibilities as president, before appointing former MSA 2105 president, Payton Head, vice president. Hanner then formally resigned from the position.

Head is now taking over as president on an interim basis. Head had to apologize last fall for mistakenly tweeting that members of the KKK were seen on campus during protests and unrest that followed Tim Wolfe's resignation one day earlier.

The MSA announced they hold a special election to fill the positions. A date has not been set.

UM System Curator Yvonne Sparks resigns after two months in her position

RUTH SERVEN, 10 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Two months after her appointment to the UM System Board of Curators, Yvonne Sparks resigned from her position Wednesday, effective immediately.

“After careful consideration of the demands of my professional obligations and those required to engage in the work of the Board at the level that I expect of myself, I have concluded that it is not possible to do both well,” Sparks said in a statement released by the curators Wednesday.

She added that the UM System deserves a representative who can devote enough time to the position.

Sparks represented District 1, which includes the St. Louis area. She was appointed to the position on Nov. 13 by Gov. Jay Nixon but had not yet been confirmed by the Senate.
She serves as an executive for the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and was one of two curators who was not a lawyer by trade. The curators, which comprises nine members, oversee and supervise operations at the UM System's four campuses.

Sparks said Wednesday evening that she decided to resign so that she could better perform her job at the Federal Reserve and continue to serve low-income communities.

She said the decision was not related to upheaval on campus this fall or a letter written by former UM System President Tim Wolfe on Jan. 19, which fired accusations at the curators. In the letter, Wolfe said a few curators asked staff and faculty to “dig up dirt and use their Curator role to further personal agendas.” He also criticized UM Interim System President Mike Middleton.

Sparks was appointed four days after Wolfe stepped down.

The curators met for three hours in a closed session Wednesday afternoon and announced Sparks' resignation and the suspension of MU assistant professor Melissa Click at the end of the meeting. MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley and Middleton were at the curators’ meeting but declined to comment.

After the meeting, the curators declined to comment further on the resignation, the suspension or the letter.

Newest curator Yvonne Sparks resigns

The UM System Board of Curators announced the resignation of recently appointed curator Yvonne Sparks this evening. Sparks was appointed this past November to represent the First Congressional District until Jan. 1, 2021, following the departure of Mary Nelson.

“After careful consideration of the demands of my professional obligations and those required engaging in the work of the Board, I have concluded that it is not possible to do both well,” Sparks wrote in a letter to Gov. Jay Nixon.
At this time, it is unclear who will be appointed to serve the remainder of Sparks’ term. Board chairwoman Pamela Henrickson had nothing but praise for her contributions on the board.

“Yvonne brought a valued perspective to the group,” Henrickson said in a statement. “I regret to hear of her resignation as I know her experience would have contributed a great deal to the university as a board member.”

Sparks is the assistant vice president and community development officer for the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. She graduated from UM-St. Louis with a bachelor’s degree in administration of justice and later earned a master’s degree in management and leadership from Webster University and a master’s degree in public administration from St. Louis University. She also attended the Harvard Kennedy School of Government’s Program for Senior Executives in Government.

Lawmakers consider audits of University of Missouri System

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Lawmakers say last fall’s campus turmoil has made them question whether the four-campus University of Missouri System needs annual state audits.

System officials told a Senate panel Wednesday they don’t oppose state audits and already conduct at least 50 internal audits a year along with a broad external audit. The system’s Vice President for Finance Brian Burnett said that’s comparable to other university systems.

Republican Sen. Eric Schmitt, of Glendale, questioned the effectiveness of internal audits. Burnett says other state universities should receive state audits if the four-campus UM system has to undergo them.

Legislative leaders have said the University of Missouri will be under heightened scrutiny this year because of the handling of protests at the Columbia campus over what some students say was indifference to racial issues.
Plea of not guilty entered for Hunter Park in Yik Yak threat

NICK JORDAN, 23 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — An attorney for the 19-year-old who was arrested in November for making a terroristic threat entered a not guilty plea for his client in Boone County Circuit Court on Tuesday.

Hunter Park, who was a student last semester at the Missouri University of Science and Technology, did not appear in court on Tuesday afternoon, but his attorney, Jeffery Lee Hilbrenner, entered the plea and asked that Park’s formal arraignment be waived, according to Missouri Casenet. The charge is a class C felony, Hilbrenner said.

A hearing was scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on Feb. 1 in the case.

His bond conditions also were clarified, allowing him to leave his home for work unaccompanied by a parent.

Park was arrested on Nov. 11 in his dormitory on suspicion of making terroristic threats on the social media application Yik Yak. He was brought to Columbia and booked into the Boone County Jail.

The Yik Yak threats prompted an MU Alert and led to some class cancellations at MU.

MU organization to celebrate its first-ever India Day event on Saturday

ERIN BORMETT, 13 hrs ago
COLUMBIA — **With performances and speeches, the Cultural Association of India at MU will celebrate the 67th anniversary of the country's adoption of its constitution.**

The organization will host its first-ever India Day from 2 to 6 p.m. Saturday in Conservation Auditorium at MU’s Anheuser-Busch Natural Resources Building. Speeches will highlight the academic and intellectual success of students, faculty and staff with connections to India.

"We have such a large number of faculty and students that have connections to India and have great scholarly accomplishments," said Shivendra D. Shukla, faculty adviser for the Cultural Association of India and professor of medical research at MU.

A program showcasing India's cultural heritage will follow. The program will feature the Indian and American national anthems, along with children's songs and performances by students. Republic Day, which remembers the adoption of the country's constitution, was officially celebrated in India on Tuesday.

In the 2014-15 academic year, 224 international students and 72 international scholars from India were part of the MU community, according to the 2015 MU International Center annual report.

The Cultural Association of India has organized an annual student-led event called India Nite for the past 24 years involving music, dance, costumes and storytelling that represents traditional and modern Indian culture. The organization hopes to turn India Day into a tradition that highlights a different area of academic study each year.

"This is a student-centered program that involves faculty and administration input," Shukla said. "That is the uniqueness of this India Day."

There's no charge to attend the event, which is open to anybody. Shukla said he expects people from MU as well as members of the Columbia community.

"It is not only a showcase but also a forum for new ideas and innovations to come together," he said.
JEFFERSON CITY, MO. - Missouri lawmakers have begun discussing whether colleges and universities must allow people to carry concealed weapons on campus.

A Senate committee heard testimony Wednesday on two bills that would expand gun access on campuses. One bill would permit a school to ban concealed firearms only if it posts armed guards and metal detectors at every entrance to every building on campus. The other would allow anyone with a concealed carry permit to bring a gun to campus, but certain areas, such as large stadiums and places of worship, would still be exempt.

The bills' sponsors say they intend their proposals to apply to public schools as well as private schools that receive state money. Similar bills are awaiting committee hearings in the House.

Administrators are currently allowed to remove someone from campus for carrying a concealed weapon, though it's not a criminal offense if the person has a concealed carry permit.

Sen. Brian Munzlinger, the Williamstown Republican who sponsored one of the bills, said a mass shooter can kill someone every few seconds. Law enforcement typically takes a few minutes to arrive, he said, while a law-abiding citizen with a gun and the proper training can take immediate action.
Republican lawmakers also criticized schools that don't allow their uniformed security officers to carry guns.

"Making good people helpless doesn't make bad people harmless," said Sen. Bob Dixon, the Springfield Republican who sponsored the other bill.

University officials testified against the bills, though some students voiced support.

Missouri State University President Clif Smart said binge alcohol drinking and mental health crises are more common in college, and adding guns to that mix would be a bad idea. He estimated it would cost his school $45 million to station guards and metal detectors at every door.

Southwest Baptist University President C. Pat Taylor said he worried more guns on campus would lead to more suicides.

A better way to prepare for threats is more training for students and staff, said Kenny Mayberry, the assistant director of the Southeast Missouri State University's police department. Few people with concealed carry permits practice shooting as often as law enforcement, he said, and police typically miss most of their shots in an active situation.

Eight states allow people to carry concealed weapons on campuses, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, a nonpartisan research organization. Nineteen states have banned concealed weapons on college campuses as of October 2015, and 23 states leave the decision to the schools, according to the NCSL.

MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: Missouri House committees release report on Planned Parenthood investigation

ELISE SCHMELZER AND RACHEL TREECE, Updated 13 hrs ago
COLUMBIA — After months of jointly investigating Planned Parenthood operations in the state, two Missouri House committees released a report Wednesday calling for new regulation of abortion facilities and increased legislative oversight of abortion providers in Missouri.

Among other suggestions, the Ways and Means and the Children and Families committees recommended:

- More stringent tracking and inspection of aborted fetal tissue, from the abortion clinic to destruction.
- Annual unannounced inspections of all abortion providers in addition to the regularly scheduled yearly inspection.
- Designation of an existing House committee to oversee abortion providers and ensure they are complying with regulations.
- Reallocation of state funding for women's health from Planned Parenthood to other health facilities that don't provide elective abortions. In fiscal year 2015, the state allocated $56,458 to Planned Parenthood.
- Changing the term "products of conception" to "remains of a human fetus" in Missouri law and regulations.

The committees, along with the Senate Interim Committee on the Sanctity of Life, attempted to determine whether Planned Parenthood sold aborted tissue for profit in Missouri, which is illegal. The three committees began investigating Planned Parenthood after an anti-abortion group released videos in July purporting to show representatives of the health care provider selling aborted fetal tissue. The videos have since been discredited and two of its creators were indicted Monday in Texas on a felony charge of tampering with a government record and a misdemeanor charge related to trying to buy human organs. Neither the House or Senate committees have ever acknowledged that the videos have been discredited.

The House committees' investigation was incomplete because employees of Planned Parenthood in Missouri did not respond to requests to testify before the committees, according to a letter signed by Rep. Diane Franklin, R-Camdenton, and chairwoman of the Children and Families

"It is inconsiderate to Missourians and a great disappointment that those with the most knowledge on procedures and processes under review put up roadblocks, leaving in the end inconclusive results of the investigated issue," the representatives wrote in the letter.


Meredith said she didn't sign the report because she was not given the opportunity to read it or offer her input. She said she disagreed with the committees' goals.

“I think the whole thing, in my opinion, was a farce,” Meredith said Wednesday. "The people who started the whole thing in Texas with the video have been indicted. The whole thing in the first place is made up. You can’t sell body parts. That’s illegal. Planned Parenthood watches the line."

Meredith also said she did not believe the recommendations would become law.

Newman previously criticized the committees' investigation, calling it a "witch hunt" in an Oct. 14 news release. In the release, she said the committees' hearing on Oct. 14 was "an insult to constituents who expect the legislature to focus on serious issues, not bogus fishing expeditions designed to attack Planned Parenthood." She did not respond to requests for an interview Wednesday.

Since the legislative session started earlier this month, Franklin and Koenig have introduced four bills regarding abortion:

- **HB 2069** would protect employees of facilities that handle aborted tissue should they report that the facility was violating state or federal regulations. It is sponsored by Franklin.
HB 2070 would change the definition of "remains of a human fetus" to “remains of the dead offspring of a human being that has reached a stage of development so that there are cartilaginous structures or fetal or skeletal parts after an abortion or miscarriage, whether the remains have been obtained by induced, spontaneous, or accidental means.” It is sponsored by Franklin.

HB 2071 would require that all aborted tissue be sent to a pathologist, instead of a sample of the tissue as currently required, and more stringent tracking of aborted tissue. It would also require the Department of Health and Senior Services to create an annual report for the the General Assembly. It is sponsored by Franklin.

HB 2371 would make unannounced inspections of abortion facilities an annual requirement and make all inspection and investigation reports of abortion facilities public record. It would also make it illegal to pay a woman to conceive a child for the purpose of aborting it for its fetal tissue. It is sponsored by Koenig.

Koenig said he was unsure if all of the bills will pass. He said his biggest priority was making sure aborted tissue was tracked from the abortion clinic to its destruction and to ensure that it wasn't being sold for profit.

“We live in an environment where we have a pro-life legislature, so I think it’s very probable that these will go into law,” Koenig said. “If it doesn’t happen this year, it will probably happen next year."

Ryan Hobart, a spokesman for the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, said the department had received the committees' report and was reviewing it Wednesday afternoon but had no further comment. The department inspects Missouri abortion facilities and would enforce the committees' proposed regulations should they become law.

In September, Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster announced that his office found no illegal activity during an investigation into how fetal tissue was disposed of at Planned Parenthood in St. Louis, the only clinic to offer surgical abortions in the state.

The Columbia clinic offered medical abortion services until Nov. 23, when MU discontinued the hospital privileges that allowed its abortion doctor to provide non-surgical
abortions in Columbia. The clinic in St. Louis became the only abortion provider in Missouri.

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Students’ Demands Go Beyond Black and White

By Katherine Mangan JANUARY 28, 2016

No MU Mention

When Mi Gente, a group that represents Latino students at Duke University, announced that it would boycott a spring recruiting weekend for Latinos because its members were tired of simply being "poster children for brochures," black and Asian-American student groups took to social media to pledge their support. Meanwhile, they were busy with their own demands. All three wanted safe spaces where students could feel comfortable talking about their problems and an accelerated timeline for hiring minority professors.

The Asian and Latino activists demanded centers that celebrated their cultures, and the black students wanted a crackdown on hate speech and the addition of "institutional racism and anti-oppression" topics in the freshman curriculum.

'Diversity, just measured in terms of numbers, is not the point. Creating an environment that's truly inclusive is the hard part.'

Outwardly, the groups fed off one another’s momentum as they presented their demands to the administration. But behind the scenes, some stresses were emerging.

In November a Korean-American student wrote an open letter to Duke’s president, Richard H. Brodhead, saying that racial slurs and other acts of discrimination weren’t being taken as seriously when Asian-Americans were the targets. The slights against
them, she wrote, are considered "lower on the hierarchy of pain" than the discrimination faced by black students because of the nation’s history of slavery.

"Moreover, society tells us we are the ‘model minority,’ so what do we have to really complain about?" Elizabeth Kim wrote. "We learn to be silent."

What’s happening at Duke isn’t unusual as students confront difficult questions about racial identity and their place in higher education. But the convergence of demands, and the ways in which student groups have responded, offer insights for universities struggling to accommodate increasingly diverse student bodies.

Last year a number of racially charged incidents at Duke frayed nerves on the campus, including one in which a student admitted he had hung a noose from a tree. Similar incidents in recent months have touched off protests at campuses nationwide.

But while many of the campaigns have been attributed to "students of color," they have tended to be led by black students, and primarily dominated by their concerns. That’s due, in part, to the influence of the Black Lives Matters movement and its campaign to combat violence against African-Americans in the wider society.

Claremont McKenna College, where controversy over how Latino students were described in a clumsily written email led to a dean’s resignation, is an exception.

At Duke, said Henry Washington, president of the university’s Black Student Alliance, collaboration is a worthwhile goal, but "engaging across these communities gets tricky because the reality is that student experiences are so specific to our ethnic groups, and sometimes our needs are different." Even within black, Asian, and Latino groups, students’ ethnicities and concerns vary widely.
Inclusivity, Not Numbers

Administrators who have been accused of dragging their feet in meeting students’ demands say they’re trying to help students find common ground, talk across racial lines, and identify reasonable and attainable goals they can all work toward.

"Diversity, just measured in terms of numbers, is not the point," Stephen Nowicki, dean and vice provost for undergraduate education, said in an interview. "Creating an environment that’s truly inclusive is the hard part."

From 2013 to 2015, the proportion of Latino first-year students at Duke grew from 7 percent to 10 percent, while the proportion of black students remained at 11 percent and Asian students at 27 percent.

Meanwhile, many Latino students have grown impatient as the percentage of faculty members hasn’t caught up. The number of Latino faculty members inched up from 1.8 percent of the faculty in 2005 to 2.6 percent in 2015.

In a letter to the university published this week in the campus newspaper, Mi Gente said the dearth of Latino faculty members is one reason the group will no longer work with the admissions office to organize and help run a four-day recruiting weekend for Latino students.

The group said it no longer felt comfortable encouraging Latino students to enroll.

"It is time that Duke recognize that its students of color should not bear the burden of being academics, educators, poster children for brochures, panelists regarding diversity, Latinx student recruiters, party planners, and students," the group said. Instead Mi Gente "will channel our energies into demanding that our voices be heard and that our community be represented."
The letter called for the creation of a Latino cultural center, more Latino faculty members, an office, and a Latino-studies department with a major, minor, and tenured faculty members. The students also demanded a public apology "for the routine negligence" accorded to Latino issues at Duke.

Mi Gente requested a cultural center and more Latino faculty members and administrators back in 2005, and the requests haven’t been met, the group said.

"This boycott of the Latino Student Recruitment weekend is the medium through which Mi Gente is demanding that the Duke Latinx students are invited to the table with administration as they make changes to make this university a safer space," Gloria Tomlinson, a senior who is co-president of the student group wrote in an email to The Chronicle.

‘Privileges’ and ‘Burdens’

Duke’s Asian and Asian-American student groups also want to be sure their voices are heard.

"We bear the privileges of not being black in America, but we also carry the burdens of not being white in this country," Christine Lee, a sophomore and student leader in Duke’s Asian Students Association, wrote in an email to The Chronicle.

Protests by black and Latino students haven’t kept her from speaking up but instead "have helped me to develop and empower my own voice."

But what happens when those voices are reverberating among like-minded students?

Mr. Nowicki said he’d like to have a better understanding of what students mean when they demand safe spaces.
"We need to find a balance between providing that safe place and asking students not to always feel the need to be in that space. We fail our students if we don’t challenge them," he said.

"I know a fabulous student who’s a gay, black Muslim. OK, so which is his safe space?” Mr. Nowicki asked. The Muslim life center, the Black Student Alliance, the LGBT network? "I don’t want that student to feel like he has to choose, because our students have multiple identities" that add to the richness of the student experience, he said.

Mr. Nowicki described a dinner he hosted recently for a diverse group of students at his house. They started by talking about how they tended to view different racial groups. "For the next 45 minutes, it was black, Hispanic, Asian, and white kids opening up about how ‘I’m not really good at math just because I’m Asian’ or ‘I’m not good at basketball just because I’m black.’"

He conceded that that’s just one small step the university can take.

Duke will continue a series of get-togethers at faculty members’ homes as one way to stimulate the kinds of discussions that need to take place. The administration, he said, "can’t simply mandate increased engagement in a top-down fashion. Fundamental change needs to be embraced by the students themselves."