Almost five months into her role as vice chancellor of marketing and communications at the University of Missouri, Ellen de Graffenreid is tackling opportunities to make sure the university’s brand is reaching people inside and outside of the MU community at the right time and in the right places.

Building MU’s brand is chief among the charges MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin gave de Graffenreid when she started last fall.

“I have worked at a lot of big, public universities and I have to say, people really embrace the black and gold here and embrace the logo in a way that isn’t always true at other universities,” she said about her task.

Building a brand is not limited to the look and feel of an institution’s colors and logo, de Graffenreid said. It’s about the messaging surrounding the university.

MU’s brand, de Graffenreid said, is how the institution is perceived by current and future students, patients, scholars and researchers and those reached by the Extension operation. She started by reviewing market research from the last several years on how those audiences have responded to the university.

By reviewing public perception of MU from the last few years, de Graffenreid hopes to help the 40 people working in marketing and communication understand what they should focus on moving forward.

“There are a whole lot of amazing stories happening here, but there isn’t the flow of those stories to external audiences,” de Graffenreid said. Increasing that communication is one of the opportunities she saw when she came to MU. “I feel like I could come in and contribute to developing systems and staff to fix that, do team building and work with extended communication staff in the colleges. I enjoy that kind of work. Getting people to move in similar directions is the kind of work that appeals to me.”

Her department is working hard to determine what content formats — news releases, features, videos or social media quips — appeal to certain audiences, she said. They also want to know
what platforms certain groups are most receptive to and what time of day is ideal for capturing attention, she said.

After Traditions Plaza was unveiled earlier this year, marketing staff published a feature about several marriage proposals that were engraved in the plaza’s bricks. The story garnered more than 20,000 views in two days.

“That’s great because it resonated with people,” de Graffenreid said. “But we’re also trying to figure out how to make science cool, among the other things we’re doing here.”

Mary Jo Banken, longtime MU spokeswoman, said de Graffenreid “hit the ground running.”

“She and Chancellor Loftin are a motivating force for those of us across campus who care so deeply about how Mizzou is perceived locally as well as across the state, nation and increasingly around the world,” Banken said. “They have a clear vision for bringing together those of us who work to tell Mizzou’s story to our numerous constituents, and I am proud to be a part of their team.”

Civil rights activist touches on race relations in Missouri

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=27359&zone=2,5&categories=2,5

COLUMBIA - The community had the opportunity to come together to hear about issues of race relations in Missouri at the Missouri Theatre Wednesday.

The University of Missouri hosted its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Lecture to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy as well and other civil rights activists.

This year's speaker, Myrlie Evers-Williams, widow of civil rights activist Medgar Evers. Evers-Williams is a civil rights activist and the former chairperson of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Columbia NAACP President Mary Ratliff said the event relates to race relations in Columbia.
Ratliff said tactics such as a recent march from Ferguson to Jefferson City are examples of how times have not changed.

"I was outdone at what happened on that march, and the names that we were called and the ugly things that were said to us. And so I could imagine. Everything happened to us except the beatings," Ratliff said.

Ratliff said the issues and challenges that African Americans face today mirror the issues from the civil rights movement.

"When we were marching through, it mirrored for me. I felt like when I went to see the movie Selma after that march, I felt like I was in it," Ratliff said.

When it comes to race relations, Evers-Williams said the country has a lot of planning to do in hopes of making a difference together.

Evers-Williams said all of the recent murders have brought attention to racial issues.

"For myself, there are times when I feel as though I should buy a hoodie and go through neighborhoods in the dark of night, neighborhoods that are not accustomed to people of color. Being in them and see what kind of reaction I would get," Evers-Williams said.

She said racial issues that she and her late husband, Medgar Evers, experienced during the civil rights movement reflect on the issues of today.

She said the violence and police brutality in Ferguson is one example.

"The tears, in a sense have helped wash some of the brutality away. But then we are reawakened with Ferguson and other places," Evers-Williams said.

She said she has hope for the future progression of the country when it comes to race relations.

"As my late husband, Medgar Evers said, 'It's worth fighting for', and I still believe that," Evers-Williams said.

Civil rights leader comes to Columbia, speaks on race relations
COLUMBIA, Mo. - The celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. continued Wednesday night in Columbia as Myrlie Evers-Williams spoke to a crowd of nearly 1,000 people.

Evers-Williams is a civil rights activist and former NAACP chairperson who has been working since the 1960s on preserving her late husband Medgar Evers' legacy.

Even though her speech was more than a week after MLK day, leaders said it was timely because of the recent events in Ferguson.

Evers-Williams spoke about how Ferguson highlights the differences in race relations now compared to in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s time. She described racism in her childhood as a taboo topic.

"It was more of...less brutality than now," Evers-Williams said.

She said over the years, there has been good progress made in the way of racial equality....until recently.

"But then, we are reawakened with Ferguson. With the recent killings, it's almost as if we losing a part of that [progress] and coming back into the violent part of the struggle," she said.

She said despite the violence, protests, and lootings that have ensued, the fight is far from over and it can still turn around.

"I believe strongly that your generation will have more impact on this country and race relations than anything else," Evers-Williams said.

The event was sponsored by the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative at the University of Missouri.

All Around The World, Girls Are Doing Much Better Than Boys Academically

Girls are academically outperforming boys in many countries around the world -- even in places where women face political, economic or social inequalities.
A new report from Dr. Gijsbert Stoet of the University of Glasgow in Scotland and David C. Geary of the University of Missouri found that in 2009, high school girls performed significantly better on an international standardized test in 52 out of 74 studied countries.

The researchers set out to explore the connection between academic achievement and a country’s levels of gender inequality, speculating that girls might do worse on the Programme for International Student Assessment in countries where they are typically treated unfairly. On the contrary, researchers found that girls have been consistently outperforming boys for the last decade, regardless of countries’ treatment of women.

"In a lot of these countries women are not allowed to do a lot of things, but what's interesting is even in these countries girls are doing better in school," Geary told The Huffington Post over the phone. The study notes the results extend to strict Muslim countries where there tends to be a "lack of opportunities for girls and women."

PISA is a test that has been distributed around the world since 2000 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Researchers found that on the 2009 test, girls performed better than boys in reading, math and science in 70 percent of studied countries.

Geary noted that the top male performers tended do better in math on the exam than the top female test-takers, which feeds into a focus on the gender gap in STEM-related jobs. But at the same time, he said, there has been a lack of focus on the fact that girls seem to be performing better on the whole.

"All debate and fretting over STEM stuff, where boys go into STEM fields and do better at math, that is all at the upper end of achievement," said Geary. "But there’s a whole lot of other kids in the world that are never going to go into STEM. When you look at all of those other 95 percent of the world’s kids, we see boys falling behind girls pretty much everywhere."

Geary said he worried about the study's implications for an increasingly complex labor market. Especially in non-developed countries, he said, there's going to be "a lot of boys who are going to become young adults with few employable skills."

"If you have countries with a large percentage of these types of men, crime rates go up," he said, including violent crime.

Geary said he hopes the findings bring more attention to the issue of boys falling behind in school.

"The boys' problems are overlooked," said Geary. "It's an important problem and a worldwide problem, and potentially has some serious implications ... it just hasn’t been addressed and is not even on people’s radar to even figure out why this is the case."
Kids grow to resent mothers who overly control their child: researchers

A helicopter mother’s tendency to try to overly control how her 2-year-old plays predicted how the child viewed her as a fifth-grader, University of Missouri researchers found.

Toddlers given a longer leash by mommie dearest early in life are less likely to throw momma from the train later on, a study has found.

“A helicopter mother’s tendency to try to overly control how her 2-year-old plays predicted how the child viewed her as a fifth-grader, University of Missouri researchers found.”

“It looks like children just don’t like to be with their mothers as much if mothers are highly controlling,” said lead researcher Jean Ispa, a human development professor. “That is not a good thing. Ten-year-olds should enjoy being with mom.”

Ispa studied more than 2,000 low-income moms and kids enrolled in Head Start — first observing them play together when the children were 2 and then in a discussion when the kids were fifth-graders.

For the study, the kids sat with their moms and played for 10 minutes with a book, a cooking set and Noah’s Ark toys. Some moms told the kids exactly what to do while others let the kids play at their own pace.

New York moms — often saddled with a reputation for being controlling — said they strive for balance with their kids.

“I can be controlling, but I have to stop them from being too rough!” said Latricia Davis, 32, of Far Rockaway, Queens, whose sons are 4 years and 9 months old. “Coloring, cars — what they play doesn’t bother me.”

Staten Island mom Mayra Raiban, 23, said she and her husband are less controlling with their 2-year-old son Giovanni than her parents were with her.

“My parents were very overprotective,” Raiban said. “With my son we try to do the opposite. With us being more free, he’s more curious and adventurous.”
Children Feel Most Positively about Mothers Who Respect Their Autonomy

KSHB-TV (NBC) – Kansas City, Mo. “Kansas City Live”

See the video: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=e46b5ee4-ff82-46a4-91b8-f2af293392f4

New research out of Mizzou which is about autonomy and how it affects parental relationships. Do you let your kids be themselves or do you try to direct them in a certain way or make decisions for them? University of Missouri researchers have found that mothers who support their children’s need for independence tend to be viewed more positively by their kids.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

Women’s group digs into Missouri data to advocate for pay and child care

BY DIANE STAFFORD
01/28/2015 11:24 AM

Jacqueline Schumacher calls it “data with a soul.”

The public affairs policy analyst at the University of Missouri said an ambitious new collection of statistics about the status of women in Missouri
is, at first glance, just numbers. But behind those numbers are women trying to make better lives for their families.

Schumacher joined Wendy Doyle, president of the Women’s Foundation of Greater Kansas City, and other participants Wednesday to introduce an expansive and interactive database at communitycommons.org.

The site now offers a section tied to the Women’s Foundation that captures available statistics about employment, income, education, child care, health, poverty and public service of women in the state.

The Women’s Foundation and MU’s Institute of Public Policy intend to use the information to educate state legislators and county and municipal leaders about the shortfalls and needs of women.

For example, data indicate that women who work full time in the state, overall, make 29 percent less than men. The median annual income for women workers is $23,260 in the state, compared with $32,824 for men.

The income shortfall is a particular problem for single mothers, especially those who can’t afford or find good child care, the organizers said.

“The issues aren’t new,” Doyle said. “Our next role is to develop a policy agenda to tackle these issues,” starting with the 2015 legislative session in Jefferson City.

The website also allows individual counties to zero in on their own data to get the best available statistics about the status of women in their communities.

The website is part of the foundation’s shift in strategy — to research, invest in and develop a public policy agenda intended to raise the socioeconomic status of women.

To buttress data available from federal sources, the foundation sponsored focus groups in Kansas City, St. Louis and Springfield to hear from women and men across the income, racial and age spectrums about their situations, needs and goals.
“This is grounded not just with what we think should be done, but what women in Missouri have told us would mean success in their lives,” said Cynthia Atwood-Steinberg, president of Sounding House, which conducted eight focus groups.

The sponsors intend to continue updating the site as new statistics becomes available. They also intend to take geographically specific information out into the state to help community leaders understand their populations.

“Our goal is to improve the lives of women and their families,” Doyle said.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

FROM READERS: MU freshman self-publishes first book

Wednesday, January 28, 2015 | 6:27 p.m. CST; updated 9:29 p.m. CST, Wednesday, January 28, 2015

*Riley de Leon is an MU freshman who has self-published his book, "Life’s not always written in Times New Roman: The untold stories of people like you." Riley is a philanthropist, an author and a founder of two non-profit organizations.*

I think that somewhere between high school and reality, we were hurt a few times — somewhere along the way we became more bold. How great would it be to live without intimidation? Perhaps, live without the condition of inferiority that college and high-school students refer to as, FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out)?

These were but a few of the many thoughts running through my mind about a year ago when I was on the phone with my friend, Kayna. In that two-hour conversation (spanning halfway across the country), my sharpest friend coached me through a time that left me entirely numb for many months to follow.
Earlier that day, I had spent three hours in a coffee shop reading over the six chapters I had already written for my self-published book, "Life’s not always written in Times New Roman: The untold stories of people like you."

At the time, I was living in Springfield, Missouri, scorned by a breakup that had me convinced I would publish my first book by the time I graduated high school that spring. After re-reading those chapters four times, I realized that they were nothing more than bitter first drafts. I threw everything out.

My plan was to stop dreaming that I would publish a book in less than 6 months, accept the fact that she didn’t love me, and download Tinder (for the second or third time since its release).

But why? When did I become the kid who stopped wanting to play and start becoming the kid who stood on the sidelines? When did I become the heartbroken? The outlier? The suppressed? It was as if a great wave had washed over me, and as I viciously scribbled on sticky notes surrounding my desk, I decided that I was no longer going to tell my story. Instead, I decided to let my close circle of friends tell their stories — I would be merely the interpreter.

As our world becomes increasingly noisy, Millennials, or Generation Y, as we are commonly referred, is bathed in insincerity. For this reason alone, I chose to self-publish my first book. It was the most authentic representation of the content within the writing. There were no bigwig editors involved, there was no publishing firm from New York, and there was no thousand-dollar contract.

There was me, my best friend, and six other people who had a story to share — joined together by a phone call, an email, or a cup of coffee. Maybe its publication and recent popularity is a stroke of good luck that I have had, or maybe everything simply happens for a reason. I truly believe that this book has resonated with so many people my age because it’s real. It proves that there are people who "get it."

In its evolution from a woe-is-me novella to a quick guide for how to deal with the quarter life crisis in all of us, the writing of this book taught me that life is a journey, as much as it is finding your place in the world.
Along the way, it’s the places that you have been, the stories that you hear, and the people that you meet that shape you. In life, it is important to be, as Jon Lovett said, “confident in your potential and aware of your inexperience.”

So you, the reader, fellow illustration of Generation Y, have to decide how you feel about this. Because when you really think about it, our memories, our hopes, our fears, and our ideas synthesize so that we may write our stories in any font other than Times New Roman.

Public invited to discuss new higher education plan

NO MU MENTION

JEFFERSON CITY - The Missouri Department of Higher Education will meet in Jefferson City Thursday to discuss a new higher education plan. It is the third public hearing the department has held since December and will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m at the Harry S. Truman State Office Building.

The focus of the Jefferson City hearing is "state government and higher education: issues and remedies." Speakers at the hearing will include the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Missouri Department of Economic Development, Health and Senior Services, Corrections and Social Services.

"The speakers present what they have seen work in the past and what they think will work in the future in regards to higher education," Liz Coleman, the director of communications for the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE), said.

A steering committee will consider these suggestions before submitting its final plan. The committee consists of business, education and government members working with the MDHE.
The committee will also open the floor to public comment starting at 3 p.m. The public can comment on any part of higher education and will not be restricted to the hearing's individual focus.

Anyone unable to attend the hearing can submit comments on the MDHE website. The committee will look at the submitted comments after the public hearings are completed.

The MDHE will hold a total of nine public hearings through June. The committee will present its final plan to the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education in December.

Vanderbilt rape verdicts signal support for assault victims

By SHEILA BURKE

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The gang-rape conviction of two former Vanderbilt University football players sends signals out in every direction.

To the two young men, Tuesday's verdicts show that being drunk out of your mind doesn't excuse criminal behavior.

Once doted on as potential Southeastern Conference football stars, Cory Batey and Brandon Vandenburg could be sentenced to decades behind bars. Even as first-offenders, they could spend the prime of their athletic lives in a Tennessee prison.

The two remaining defendants who allegedly joined Batey and Vandenburg in the dorm room attack, former players Jaborian McKenzie and Brandon Banks, probably helped themselves by cooperating with authorities, but their consequences loom much larger now that their former teammates have been found guilty.

University officials, experts on sex crimes and survivors of sexual assault at Vanderbilt and all over the country hope the verdict's loudest signal goes out to women suffering in silence — telling them that justice is possible without destroying their own lives in the process.

Most college sex assaults don't turn out this way. A recent Justice Department study found 80 percent of campus rapes went unreported between 1995 and 2013, compared to 67 percent in the general population.

The victim said she hopes her experience will encourage others to discuss how to end campus rapes.

"I want to remind other victims of sexual violence: You are not alone," she said in a statement read by her attorney. "You are not to blame."
In this case, the evidence was overwhelming. Jurors saw university surveillance video and the players' own graphic cellphone images that put them at the scene. Vandenburg could be heard laughing and encouraging the attack on video he shared while it was happening.

It didn't matter that no DNA evidence linked them to the June 23, 2013 attack, perhaps because one of the players testified that Vandenburg had passed out condoms.

The trial provided a very good and rare opportunity to see what rape really looks like, experts on sexual violence said.

"There's no shortage of rape and sexual assault cases being put out in the media, but very rarely do we hear all the graphic details of a sexual assault," said Rachel Freeman, vice president of programs at the Sexual Abuse Center of Nashville.

And unlike so many other rape cases, this wasn't a matter of "he-said/she-said." The video made it obvious she was unconscious and totally incapable of consenting, so it was impossible to suggest that she was somehow to blame, Freeman said.

The woman testified that the last thing she remembered was Vandenburg giving her drinks at a Nashville nightspot — and that she woke up the next morning in his dorm room, feeling sick and injured. To this day, she has no memory of the attack, she told jurors.

Rumors swirled around campus, but she didn't learn what happened until well after police came to her. The players had tried to cover it up by erasing the images. Testimony showed at least five other Vanderbilt athletes saw her in distress and did nothing to help her or report it.

Only when Vanderbilt officials stumbled across closed-circuit TV showing players carrying an unconscious woman through the dormitory and into the room did they begin asking questions and summon the police, who recovered the digital evidence that made all the difference in court.

Seeing the case through wasn't easy. The woman cried quietly throughout the trial, and doubled over and appeared to vomit at one point when Batey was testifying.

But The Associated Press and other news organizations preserved her privacy, and she endured the proceedings as a Vanderbilt graduate. The attack didn't keep her from finishing her degree, and she's now pursuing a Ph.D. in neuroscience at an out-of-state university.

That a victim of gang rape managed to keep her academic career on track is a real achievement, advocates say, something Vanderbilt officials hope students everywhere will consider.

Beth Fortune, Vanderbilt's vice chancellor of academic affairs, called the victim's response "forceful and brave," and said sexual violence will never be tolerated at the school.

"Incidents will be investigated, victims will be supported, and perpetrators will be punished. We will also continue our comprehensive ongoing efforts to raise awareness of the importance of every Vanderbilt student intervening when another student is at risk or in distress."
A New Faculty Challenge: Fending Off Abuse on Yik Yak

By Peter Schmidt

The three Eastern Michigan University professors had no idea that they were under attack by the Honors College students seated before them.

The three women knew that many of the nearly 230 freshmen in the auditorium resented having to show up at 9 a.m. every Friday for a mandatory interdisciplinary-studies class. But whatever unhappy students previously had said directly to them seemed mild in comparison to the verbal abuse being hurled at them silently as they taught one Friday morning last fall.

Students typed the words into their smartphones, and the messages appeared on their classmates’ screens via Yik Yak, a smartphone application that lets people anonymously post brief remarks on virtual bulletin boards. Since its release, in November 2013, the Yik Yak app has been causing havoc on campuses as a result of students’ posting threats of harm, racial slurs, and slanderous gossip.

After the class ended, one of its 13 fellows—junior and senior honors students who were helping teach—pulled a professor aside and showed her a screen-captured record of what she and her colleagues had just gone through. Students had written more than 100 demeaning Yik Yak posts about them, including sexual remarks, references to them using "bitch" and a vulgar term for female anatomy, and insults about their appearance and teaching. Even some of the fellows appeared to have joined the attack.

In an email to administrators later that day, one of the three, Margaret A. Crouch, a professor of philosophy, said, "I will quit before I put up with this again."

Eastern Michigan is hardly alone in grappling with how to tame abusive behavior on Yik Yak, which has designated bulletin boards for more than 100 campuses. But the episode at Eastern Michigan is significant because it highlights the potential for
anonymous online comments to sour relationships among students, faculty members, and administrators. Instructors who once felt in charge of their classrooms can suddenly find themselves at students’ mercy.

Sites such as Yik Yak and other forums for anonymous online comments give speech "scope and amplification" it did not have before, which "changes the quality of the community," says Tracy Mitrano, director of Internet culture, policy, and law at Cornell University. Although offensive speech posted to Yik Yak generally disappears from the site within a few hours, on other sites, Ms. Mitrano says, often "it remains there, and the individuals don’t have any power to remove it, and it hurts."

**Rallying the Faculty**

Administrators at Eastern Michigan refused demands to track down and punish the offending students, saying it was logistically and legally impossible to do that. And so the Yik Yak episode has escalated into a broader labor dispute. The professors sought the help of their union, which has pressed the administration to do more to guard faculty members from harassment by students on anonymous social media.

Susan Moeller, president of Eastern Michigan’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors, this month urged faculty members in an email "to get the EMU administration to take this issue seriously." She called cyberbullying "an issue of classroom safety" and said it "can pose a serious threat to faculty members’ work environment and ability to conduct their classes."

Ms. Crouch and another target of the online attack, Elisabeth Däumer, a professor of English, say they see the Yik Yak incident as part of a broader deterioration of students’ discipline and respect for female instructors. Their students’ hostility appeared fueled, they say, by unhappiness over being required to devote nearly three hours every Friday morning to an experimental honors course, "Interdisciplinary Exploration of Global Issues: The Environment: Space/Place, Purity/Danger, Hope/Activism."

The professors characterized the online abuse as part of a hostile work environment. In a confidential report on the Yik Yak incident issued last month, Sharon L. Abraham, the university’s director of diversity and affirmative action, said the professors had "described a classroom environment where students talked during lecture, responded aggressively to requests to stop inappropriate behavior, and were generally disrespectful." It said the professors had "felt threatened when dealing with students in the class who were physically large and male."

Some Yik Yak posts about the professors suggested racial and cultural divides.
After one of the professors described a topic as too complicated to get into, one student wrote, "Are you calling me stupid? I’m an honors student bitch!"

Another Yik Yak post said, "She keeps talking about Detroit. Bitch, yo white ass probably ain’t never been in Detroit."

Ms. Däumer recalls reading the Yik Yak posts directed at her and asking herself, "Just who the hell did they think they are?"

Ms. Crouch says the Yik Yak posts "wrecked the class" and "made it impossible for us to appear in front of the 220 students again." The instructors did not confront their students about the remarks, she says, because "we did not really feel we had any authority anymore."

**Limited Options**
The professors and Eastern Michigan’s administration offer sharply conflicting accounts of what happened after the incident.

For example, Geoff Larcom, a university spokesman, said two of the three faculty members had asked to be relieved of classroom responsibilities for the remainder of the semester. Ms. Crouch, however, denies any suggestion that instructors abandoned the course, saying its syllabus had called for students to stop attending lectures in the auditorium and to split up to work on group projects.

In an email to the instructors two days after the Yik Yak incident, Rebecca Bowers Sipe, director of the Honors College, expressed fear that the offending students had harmed her efforts to raise money for the college. She said she wanted to ensure that the students involved did not feel a sense of impunity. "I do not want these students to feel they have ‘won’ anything," she wrote.

Ms. Abraham’s report says administrators considered trying to block access to Yik Yak but determined that doing so would be technologically impossible.

Steven D. Krause, a professor of English, subsequently argued on his blog, EMUtalk.org, that Yik Yak represents a potential teaching tool and banning it would be "shortsighted." He questioned whether the students’ comments were anything but protected free speech, and argued that the union should focus its energy elsewhere in contract talks.
The professors focused their energy on urging the administration to try to identify the students who had written the offensive posts and to punish them for violating the code of student conduct.

But while the company that offers Yik Yak helps law-enforcement agencies identify the perpetrators of certain crimes—a policy that has led to the arrest of people who have anonymously posted threats of violence at colleges—the company does not otherwise identify anonymous posters unless ordered to do so by a court. Experts say it is hard to persuade judges to subpoena such information, and Eastern Michigan’s lawyers decided not to go that route.

The only student so far punished in connection with the Yik Yak incident is one who stepped forward and confessed.

Statements issued by the university’s administration through Mr. Larcom, the spokesman, say it "takes all concerns regarding safety, student and staff conduct, and harassment very seriously." They say several administrative offices looked into the Yik Yak incident, and "there is no indication that any further conduct of this nature occurred."

For her part, Ms. Moeller, the faculty union’s president, said in her email the three professors had been "stonewalled" by an administration that "has refused to determine which students are responsible for the sexual harassment."

Ms. Crouch says pushing for new contractual protections against harassment is her only available recourse. "If anything happens," she says, "it is going to be because we make it happen."

Top US colleges push for more diverse students from China

By MICHAEL MELIA

Yupei Guo does not fit the mold of the traditional Ivy League student from China: Her journalist parents are neither rich nor members of the governing elite.
Growing up, she thought the cost would make it impossible for her to attend one of the famed American universities. But by the time she applied to Yale, it was among the U.S. schools investing in more economic diversity among their growing ranks of international students.

Guo, 19, is now a Yale sophomore, happily settled among the school's Gothic buildings. Most would never guess university grants cover much of the Beijing native's tuition, at least not judging by the questions she gets around New Haven.

"I did get asked if I were some sort of distant royal family member, which I'm not," she said.

Top U.S. universities that worked to overcome reputations for serving only children of the American elite are now pushing to do the same with their international students. With more undergraduates coming from overseas than ever, Yale, Harvard and other schools — with help from the U.S. State Department — are trying to attract students of more varied financial backgrounds.

No country is receiving more attention than China, which sends far more students to the U.S. than any other country. Nearly 275,000 students came from China last year, 31 percent of all international students, according to the Institute of International Education.

As China has grown more prosperous, many U.S. colleges have stepped up recruiting there, seeking revenue-generating students who can pay their full way. A small number of schools pledge, like Yale, to meet the full financial need of admitted international students, and for them it is a matter of making that known around the country of 1.3 billion people.

A student-run organization at Harvard University holds college-style seminars annually for dozens of Chinese high school students, offering financial aid to help draw from all the country's provinces. At Yale, which in 1854 graduated the first Chinese person to earn a degree from a U.S. college, international students are deputized as "ambassadors" to talk with students while home on break. Admissions officers from both schools regularly travel to China.

Yale extended its need-blind admissions policy to international students in 2001, and Dean of Admissions Jeremiah Quinlan said the makeup of students from China and other countries has since changed dramatically. International students have gone from representing 3 percent of the student body, mostly from high-income families, to 11 percent, with greater diversity.

"The diversity of our international student body has really exploded, frankly to a greater extent than our U.S. socio-economic diversity has over time," Quinlan said. He said most of the dozens of Chinese undergrads receive financial aid at Yale, where tuition, room and board cost nearly $60,000 a year.

Guo attended a selective public high school in Beijing and learned from upperclassmen the names of U.S. schools with need-blind admissions — Yale, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, Dartmouth and Amherst. She visited Yale during high school — on a U.S. visit for model United Nations — and felt energized by the posters advertising campus activities.

At home, her departure was met with a mix of admiration and scorn.

Yale is a celebrated name in China, where her acceptance prompted calls from reporters. But Guo said there is also a stigma that comes with attending college in the U.S., as though those leaving failed to fit into the Chinese system. And there is bitterness: Financial concerns prevent many of her friends from going to college at all.

Two Chinese real estate moguls, Pan Shiyi and Zhang Xin, are prodding American universities to do more by giving them money to support low-income students from China. Through their SOHO China Foundation, they so far have awarded $15 million to Harvard and $10 million to Yale.
The admissions directors at Yale and Harvard say the gifts align with their goals of encouraging more Chinese students to apply. The universities say it's about promoting empathy and creating the diversity sought by students and faculty.

"We want to make sure that we get the most talented students from every corner of the world, and it's just that simple," Harvard Dean of Admissions William Fitzsimmons said.

Finding candidates outside China's elite circles is not easy. The affluent have access to the best schools — even more than in the United States — and admissions officers say many students assume they must have political connections.

There are also language and logistical hurdles: The SAT has limited availability in China and applicants must be fluent in English. Guo learned English as a child when her parents were posted in the United Kingdom by their Chinese newspaper for three years. For the SAT, she had to travel to Hong Kong.

To help address such difficulties, the State Department's EducationUSA program created a $1 million fund to provide aid for costs like application fees, said Evan Ryan, an assistant secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

"The State Department thought, 'Wait, we're really losing a whole population of the students that are important to the U.S. higher education system and important to our relationships around the world,'" Ryan said.

EducationUSA has eight advisers in Beijing and is sending four more — to Chengdu, Guangzhou, Shanghai, and Shenyang — to reach students beyond the capital.

The agency has been important to recruiting, Yale officials say, because it makes referrals knowing the school has the resources to cover students' need.

Guo said Yale did not cover her airfare to the U.S., but she has taken advantage of a hotel made available for international students unable to return home during breaks. With so many Chinese students traveling, she said flights are particularly expensive.

Despite some uncomfortable questions about her background, Guo said she does not feel out of place at Yale, where the Chinese students are increasingly diverse with several freshmen coming from inland cities.

"This place," she said, "is amazing."
replacement for higher education’s gold standard has emerged, and getting rid of it right now would be risky.

That’s the central theme of a high-profile report from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. In response to growing concerns about reliance on the credit hour, the foundation two years ago formed a 27-member committee to “consider how a revised unit, based on competency rather than time, could improve teaching and learning in high schools, colleges and universities.”

The Carnegie Report on 'This Week'

The long-awaited study will be discussed Friday on "This Week," Inside Higher Ed's free news podcast. Sign up here to be notified of new "This Week" podcasts.

The report, which the foundation released today, stops well short of calling for a competency-based standard. One key reason, it said, is the deeply ingrained role the time-based credit hour plays.

“The Carnegie Unit continues to play a vital administrative function in education,” the study said, “organizing the work of students and faculty in a vast array of schools or colleges.”

Loosely defined, a credit hour in higher education typically refers to an hour of faculty instruction and two hours of homework, on a weekly basis, over a 15-week semester.

This standard can be a barrier to more flexible forms of academic programs, many critics say, such as ones that award credits based on learning achievements rather than time in class. The report also cited criticism that the credit hour prevents transparency in higher education by masking the quality of student learning and discouraging educators from closely examining students’ strengths and weaknesses.

The study said those concerns are valid. The most notable example of a problematic use, it said, is how federal financial aid is doled out based on the credit hour as a proxy of student progress.

Yet these problems can be overcome, according to the report.

Colleges “already have considerable flexibility in the format and delivery of instruction,” it said. “Our research suggests that the Carnegie Unit is less of an obstacle to reform than it might seem.”
Just as importantly, it’s unclear which standard could replace the current one.

The report cites a few promising initiatives to measure and set standards for student learning. In particular, it applauds the Lumina Foundation’s Degree Qualifications Profile and the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) campaign by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU). Both efforts seek to define what students should know and be able to do.

But alternatives to the credit hour remain experimental, according to the study, and began with institutions that serve fairly narrow groups of students. The report said more work is needed to see if those alternatives could work throughout K-12 and higher education.

“We don’t have the systems in place to identify quality in learning,” said Elena Silva, a senior associate at the foundation and one of the report’s three coauthors.

Wishing for More

Several experts praised the study for its broad look at the credit hour’s role and history. But some said they wished the foundation had pushed harder to find a way to move beyond the standard. After all, the foundation created the unit, and at times has been a driving force for change in higher education.

Amy Laitinen is one of those experts. Laitinen, the deputy director for higher education at New America, a liberal thinktank, wrote an influential 2012 report that said the credit hour is to blame for several of higher education’s root problems. She wrote that it contributes to colleges rejecting transfer credits, for example, which wastes students’ time and money.

Laitinen, who was on the study’s advisory committee, said the report does a good job of describing challenges around reliance on the credit hour. But she would have liked to see Carnegie use its clout to call for different learning standards.

“It’s an excellent diagnosis of the problem without any prescription for change,” she said.

Carol Geary Schneider, AACU’s president, was also on the committee. She said the time isn’t right to kill the credit hour, in part because competency measures are an inadequate replacement.

Even so, Schneider agreed with Laitinen that the report was too conservative in advancing the debate.
“It didn’t answer what could be added to the credit-hour ecology,” she said.

In response to those critiques, the foundation said it recognizes that “this is where the hardest work begins.” It stands by to help educators study how to innovate, revise policies and develop new standards.

“Ultimately, new measures of learning rest on our ability to test more effectively what students know,” said the foundation in a written statement. “The education field has just begun that work, and it needs to continue before we can craft a new common unit of student progress.”

Marc Singer, vice provost for Thomas Edison State College’s Center for the Assessment of Learning, was quoted in the foundation report. Like Schneider and Laitinen, he was let down by the study’s passive conclusion.

For one thing, Singer said, the credit hour increasingly fails to be tied to actual hours, which is what it is supposed to do. As evidence, he points to research finding that the amount of time students spend working on their classes has declined steadily over the past few decades.

Yet Singer also said he understands the need for caution in seeking a replacement to the ubiquitous credit-hour standard.

“It’s like taking away the framework of a building and expecting it to stay up,” he said.