Curators approve new Title IX policies; faculty push for legal representation

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

Friday, February 6, 2015 at 2:00 pm

New rules for addressing sexual harassment and discrimination complaints against University of Missouri faculty and staff are in place after the Board of Curators adopted several changes and additions to the UM System’s governing procedures.

At a meeting Thursday in Columbia, the curators unanimously approved changes to the way the system will handle complaints under Title IX — the federal law that prohibits gender discrimination.

The changes were adopted despite a letter, signed by some 200 faculty members, pushing to amend the new rules to allow accused faculty members to have an attorney, rather than an adviser, present at administrative hearings regarding allegations of gender discrimination or sexual abuse. The new rules do not allow for lawyers to represent faculty.

“Some of these” changes “are a little controversial,” said Curator John Phillips, acknowledging the faculty petition. “We do know there are faculty who feel they are giving up some rights.”

Phillips said he was convinced the faculty input into the year-long, ongoing process of developing new policies was valuable. He said that process had taken faculty and staff concerns into consideration.

Curator Ann Covington said she was also confident that faculty input was an important part of the process.

“I take much solace in the vetting process,” she said.

UM System President Tim Wolfe acknowledged the petition signed by faculty members and said he will “revisit and revise current rules as necessary.”

Last summer, independent investigators from the Dowd Bennett Law Firm told the university that administrators did not do everything they should have to investigate and report the alleged rape of former MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, who later committed suicide.
Wolfe created a task force charged with reviewing sexual assault and mental health service policies on UM System campuses.

Although mostly associated with women’s sports, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a broad civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that receives federal funding. That discrimination includes sexual assault.

The new policies add specific procedures to the complaint resolution process, which must be resolved within 60 days under a guideline passed down by the federal Office of Civil Rights.

Repercussions for faculty found in violation of Title IX range from loss of pay or counseling to a personnel warning or job loss.

“I think we’re now ahead of most universities,” Phillips said, adding that the process will include “a continuing review of this because it’s so important that we get it right.”

Wolfe said the policy changes were a result of a partnership among faculty, staff, students, consultants and other campus leaders.

“About a year ago we got a wake-up call, and we responded,” Wolfe said. He listed steps the UM System has taken to address campus sexual assaults and improve mental health services. He said the leadership was responsible for 77,000 students on four UM System campuses.

“We need to follow through on this initiative with intensity and abandon so that we can have the most safe and secure environment ... of any campus in the United States,” Wolfe said.

University of Missouri curators approve tuition, fee increases

By Alan Burdziak

Friday, February 6, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Students at all four campuses in the University of Missouri System can expect tuition costs and other fees — including housing — to rise beginning in the summer 2015 semester, after the Board of Curators approved the increases Thursday morning.
Curator David Steelman was the sole dissenter in the 6-1 vote to raise tuition, student housing and dining rates. Steelman objected, he said, because the university should look for ways to save more money before raising tuition. MU is slated to receive more than $400 million in state appropriations this year, but school leaders have complained that state funding hasn’t kept up with the cost of providing quality education. UM System President Tim Wolfe testified before legislators Tuesday about the university’s finances. Wolfe has said the system is saving $48 million annually through efficiencies.

“We cannot expect to do things the same way we did 10 years ago in our relationship with the General Assembly and the governor and expect the same results,” Steelman said. “Before we lower that onto the students, we have to take a look at ourselves.”

State law says public universities can’t raise tuition more than the increase in the consumer price index, which tracks price changes for consumer goods and services.

Under the approved hike, undergraduate resident tuition at all four campuses except the University of Missouri-St. Louis will increase by 0.8 percent. In St. Louis, it will increase by 6.2 percent. Nonresident undergrads will pay 3 percent more in Columbia and at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, 0.8 percent more in Kansas City and 2.9 percent more in St. Louis.

Professional school tuition rates will increase between 0.8 and 6 percent, depending on the program. Graduate resident student rates are slated to increase by 0.8 percent in Columbia and Kansas City and by 3 percent and 5 percent in Rolla and St. Louis, respectively. For nonresident grad students, tuition at MU will increase by 3 percent, 0.8 percent in Kansas City, 6 percent at Missouri S&T and 2.5 percent in St. Louis.

Curator Ann Covington said that although she agreed with much of what Steelman said, “We are faced with certain exigencies today that cannot be ignored.”

The main room-and-board plans will increase by 3.2 percent except at UMSL, where plans will increase by 0.8 percent.

In a second vote, the curators unanimously approved an increase in supplemental course and enrollment fees to be phased in over two years. All fees will increase at the rate of inflation, with 18 specific increases approved Thursday. The increases range from $25 per credit hour for all courses in the UMKC School of Biological Sciences to a $742.50 per semester clinical lab fee in the MU School of Medicine.

Curators discuss ‘year of the student,’ improving campus
Board of Curators Chairman Don Cupps’ focus for the Friday meeting of the board was on the “year of the student” theme for 2015.

**His report to the board touched on five issues affecting students throughout the UM System: advising, quality of instruction, graduating on time, mental health and campus safety.**

*Mental health support*

Cupps said society doesn’t do a good job talking about mental health, and recognized that college students frequently have mental health crises.

He said student representative Tracy Mulderig researched how long it takes students to have access to a mental health counselor and found that it can take up to three weeks.

“Lack of access to mental health resources for our students should never happen,” he said. “We need to identify all the impediments we have to access, diagnosis and treatment of our students.”

Cupps said Mulderig introduced him to the concept of mental health first aid, which is similar to physical first aid but deals with mental health issues. He called on the UM System chancellors to investigate the feasibility of getting mental health first aid providers in all campus residential buildings.

“At a very low cost, we could get mental health first aid to students,” he said. “We might avoid a suicide or get the student help in time that they can get back on track to complete their education.”

*Graduating on time*

Ensuring that students can graduate on time should be a priority for administrators, Cupps said, because an extra semester in school would mean an increase in tuition and fees for students and lost opportunity of employment.

“People joke about the five-year plan, but for a lot of families it’s not a joking matter,” he said. “We should make sure that we provide the opportunity for every student to graduate in eight semesters.”

Cupps asked the chancellors to report a description of issues that prevent their students from graduating in eight semesters by the curators’ June meeting.

“If a student is out for a semester or a year, they should be able to come back, get on track and receive a bachelor’s degree in eight semesters,” he said.
Quality of advising and education

Cupps began by emphasizing the importance of high-quality academic advising for students, and said various types of advising are required across various schools and departments.

“There are times when students don’t get the proper advice, and that should never happen in our system,” he said. “When the student follows the advice of the adviser and the professionals helping them, they should be successful.”

Cupps also highlighted the need for hiring well-qualified faculty members who are good teachers, and said plans should be developed to help those who could improve their teaching skills.

“We need to make sure they are skilled teachers and we need to evaluate their teaching ability in the classrooms,” he said.

Cupps asked the chancellors to draft a report with ideas for improving advising and instruction, as well as what the campuses need to be successful.

Campus safety

Cupps said the system has taken many steps to improve campus safety, but could still do more.

Cupps stressed the importance of every student having access to a smartphone to use as a resource for campus safety. He said all students should have an application where they can get information on confidential counseling and how to report violence, assault or a dangerous situation.

President’s report

In his report to the board, UM System President Tim Wolfe said there are three main strategies to move the UM System from good to great: leadership, creativity and having resources to invest in priorities.

Wolfe emphasized the importance of serving all 6 million Missourians and partnering with them, especially citizens, businesses and political leaders. He specifically discussed the importance of state funding for higher education, with data showing that Missouri ranks 44th in state funding for higher education funding per student.

“We have to get the message of value out to all Missourians,” he said.

Wolfe said there has to be a positive sense of urgency to move forward and create change.

“We have to stop looking at the rearview mirror and look at the windshield,” he said. “We’re changing people’s lives in a positive way, and it should inspire us all to focus on that.”
Letter to the Editor: Appointees to Board of Curators are blocked because of partisan politics

February 07, 2015 12:00 am

The Missouri Senate is blocking two appointees to the University of Missouri Board of Curators because confirming all of Gov. Jay Nixon’s recent appointments would mean eight of the board’s nine members are attorneys, Sen. Kurt Schaefer said last week.

These two appointees are Mary Nelson, an African-American lawyer with vast governmental experience, and Maurice “Marcy” Graham, one of the most respected lawyers in our state.

What is this anti-lawyer argument all about? Well, politics, what else?

There are three Republican lawyers already on the board: David Steelman, Ann Covington and Pam Hendrickson. They are all doing an outstanding job of serving our state and using their analytic skills and depth of knowledge to enhance higher education opportunities for our students.

Nelson and Graham are Democrats. No one has questioned their qualifications but only their professional credentials, i.e. they are lawyers.

I would argue that we are fortunate to have these appointees confirmed as they have tremendous abilities to contribute to our citizenry. They honed their knowledge at our state law school and are now volunteering their time for the good of all of us. And they are willing to forgo personal pecuniary interests to give of themselves.

The work of the board would only be enhanced by these two worthy appointees. We have never set limitations of the number of lawyers permitted in the legislative or executive branches. If the Legislature passes a bill limiting the number of lawyers on the board, then Schaefer’s argument would be very appropriate. Until then, it smacks of partisan politics.

Let’s not mix politics with the need for the best and brightest appointees.

Susan Block • Clayton

MU says ‘Not Anymore’ to sexual assault
The program will require every student to complete an hourlong online training.

Every MU student will soon be expected to complete an online training aimed at preventing future sexual assaults.

The program, entitled “Not Anymore,” will educate students on topics including sexual assault, consent, dating and domestic violence, bystander intervention and stalking. Requiring students to complete the training will educate them on interpersonal violence behaviors and give them resources to help a friend in certain situations, interim Title IX coordinator Linda Bennett said.

“We want to have our campus culture and climate move to a place where everybody’s knowledgeable about not only what they’re studying as a major, but about the expectations of important sexual discrimination behaviors,” she said. “The reason we expect people to do it is that it makes everyone responsible for the safety of our campus.”

The training, which includes short videos and related questions, will take about an hour to complete, Bennett said.

Bennett said she plans to send a mass email to all students next week to announce the new program. The email will include contact information for resources such as the the Title IX Office, Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center, Student Health Center and Counseling Center.

Students who do not complete the training weeks after the initial email will receive a reminder email. Bennett said though initially there will be no real consequences for students who do not complete it, that could change after the first several weeks if program coordinators deem it necessary to spur participation.

The program requirement is in part a response to calls from the White House to curb sexual assaults on college campuses nationwide.

“(Not Anymore) is our campus’ way to say we’re training all of our students to know what behaviors are and are not acceptable,” Bennett said.

She said students who are also paid MU employees will be expected to complete both the “Not Anymore” training and the mandatory employee training.

The cost of purchasing the program, which was created by a prevention training firm called Student Success, is covered by a grant the RSVP Center and Women’s Center received three years ago.

The RSVP Center has been searching for a program that best meets the needs of the MU community over the past two years, center coordinator Danica Wolf said. She said the center has used “Not Anymore” for its voluntary training program over the past year.
“I hope that using this program will help establish a baseline of knowledge for our campus community,” Wolf said. “I also hope that this program will increase awareness of campus services and resources for survivors."

Bennett said she has collaborated with administrators, the Division of Information Technology and the registrar’s office to handle technical aspects of the training. She said MU is also discussing ways to incorporate newly enrolled students into the program.

UM-Kansas City received the same grant used by the RSVP Center and has used “Not Anymore” for the last few years, Bennett said. She said the goal is for all four UM System campuses to use the program in the 2015-16 school year.

“Education is knowledge, and knowledge helps people enact skills that help them be safe,” Bennett said. “If we have more people aware of our surroundings and saying certain behaviors are not okay, we have more people buying in and helping encompass that support network for victims. Education is the power to make good choices.”

Editorial: Wolfe vs. Schmitt

The president’s role in Jeff City

By Henry J. Waters III

Friday, February 6, 2015 at 2:00 pm

When University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe traveled to Jefferson City to ask for more state funding, Sen. Eric Schmitt told him to go back to Columbia and do “a thorough review of the system.”

It was a condescending remark in reaction to Wolfe’s criticism of state funding priorities. Wolfe was quoted in a St. Louis Post-Dispatch editorial as saying, “If we don’t change, we will be in a race to the bottom and we will win the race.” He appeared before the House Higher Education Appropriations Committee urging lawmakers to increase the 1.3 percent hike for the university recommended in Gov. Jay Nixon’s budget.
Wolfe made a good case, citing the university’s fiscal efficiency and low state funding relative to other states, but Schmitt, R-Glendale, who is a candidate for state treasurer in 2016, accused Wolfe of getting off the reservation and advised him to leave tax policy to lawmakers.

It’s easy for anyone seeking a more progressive state role to criticize. Missouri is a notoriously low-tax, low-spend state, 44th in 2014 per-capita funding for higher education and 32nd in 2011-2012 public school funding. Wolfe noted Missouri imposes the lowest per-pack cigarette tax in the nation and is tied for the most executions. “Is that what you want to be known for?” he asked.

Wolfe wants all Missourians to “rise together and challenge each other to prioritize on education and fund it at appropriate levels. What we don’t want to do is continue to trend toward the bottom,” he said.

This assault on state budgeting priorities angered Schmitt. “That’s an insult to working families out there,” he said.

Schmitt is a tax hawk. He sponsored a 2013 tax cut vetoed by Gov. Jay Nixon. Apparently he accurately represents his constituents who, like many across the state, might vaguely disdain the university and don’t mind its budget restraints. The fact Schmitt is running for statewide office prompts him to present himself at the bully pulpit whenever a chance arrives.

In a large, dispassionate view of state funding, Wolfe’s critique is germane. When requesting funding for his particular special interest, such wide-ranging criticism of legislative budget priorities might have been a political bit too much.

Wolfe wants to talk with Schmitt. Wolfe has gotten rather good at this sort of back and forth, but with Schmitt he will be up against a hard place. Wolfe might want to say he is not there to criticize the amount of the cigarette tax or the death penalty but just wants more funding for the university. Good luck.
Hard times keep getting harder for Missouri House members. First their leader told them they couldn’t hold any more committee meetings at country clubs. Now Speaker John Diehl has banished lobbyist-provided food from committee meetings altogether.

It’s rough, all right, but other groups have it rougher. Read on.

Worst week in a capitol

Kansas teachers, hands down. Gov. Sam Brownback cut $45 million from the funds that school districts had anticipated receiving this year. A Senate committee recommended slashing even more. A different legislative committee wants to restrict teachers’ collective bargaining rights to just pay and hours worked.

Then there’s Senate Bill 56, being pushed by Republican Mary Pilcher-Cook of Shawnee, which would make teachers liable for prosecution if they exposed minor children to material deemed “harmful.” That’s a hazy area that some educators fear could include classics such as “Huckleberry Finn” and “Red Badge of Courage.” Sex education classes would be fraught with peril.

Hey Kansas, you want to attract the best and brightest teachers to your classrooms? Here’s a tip: Stingy pay, inadequate job protections and the threat of being busted on misdemeanor charges for doing one’s job is not your smartest recruiting strategy.

Say what?

University talking heads ran into trouble on both sides of the state line.

In what is very likely the stupidest bill proposed in either legislature so far this year, a Kansas measure seeks to stop professors and other employees of state colleges and universities from using their official job titles on newspaper opinion pieces or letters-to-the-editor if the work concerns a Kansas officeholder or an issue pending before a public body.
In the bullying style typical of the Kansas Legislature, House Bill 2234 directs the governing boards of universities and colleges to draft policies telling employees not to fully disclose their identities. Though the bill doesn’t name an individual sponsor, legislative staff told the Garden City Telegraph it was initiated by Virgil Peck, a Republican from Tyro.

Kansas lawmakers as a group are control freaks, but this bill is obnoxious and likely unconstitutional.

Over in Missouri, Tim Wolfe, the president of the University of Missouri system, has been touring the state pointing out that Missouri ranks near the bottom of the states in spending for important things like higher education and health, and consequently it appears at the top of the lists for conditions like hunger, poverty and low educational attainment.

Wolfe’s tour, and an editorial about it in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, irked Sen. Eric Schmitt, a Republican from Glendale. “I think it is appalling the University of Missouri president is so opposed to people keeping more of their own money,” said Schmitt, and suggested that Wolfe mind his own business.

Schmitt, who is already running for treasurer in 2016, misses the point. A well-educated and healthy population is very much the business of a state university system president. And state investment in the health and education of citizens generally means higher salaries down the road and more money in people’s pockets.

Missouri ethics update

A Senate committee debated a measure that would require lawmakers to cool their heels for two years before taking jobs as lobbyists. But the sponsor, Republican Ron Richard of Joplin, said he would kill his own bill if anyone succeeded in amending it to require limits on campaign contributions.

Some lawmakers argued in favor of capping or even banning gifts from lobbyists. But Sen. Bob Dixon, a Republican from Springfield, deflected that with a novel argument.
Allowing unlimited gifts from lobbyists, he reasoned, gives voters an opportunity to judge their lawmakers’ character by checking to see how much largess they accept.

Hmmm. We never looked at it quite like that.

With lobbyists feting Missouri lawmakers to the tune of about $1 million a year, we suspect many legislators aren’t especially worried about passing this particular character test.

MU opens free tax assistance sites

Sunday, February 8, 2015 at 12:00 am

The University of Missouri and MU Extension have opened their Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites around the state for residents interested in getting help with their tax returns.

The two MU campus sites, which offer free tax preparation help to households that earn less than $53,000, served nearly 1,800 families last year, according to a release.

Andrew Zumwalt, an assistant extension professor for financial planning and a member of MU Extension faculty, said in a news release that students who help clients prepare their taxes have gone through IRS training and certification. Zumwalt noted this year could be particularly confusing for tax filers as this is the first year Americans must have health care under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or face tax penalties.

MU’s VITA sites are at Room 162 in Stanley Hall and the law library in Hulston Hall.

The Stanley Hall site will be open from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturdays. The Hulston Hall site will be open from 4 to 7:30 p.m. Mondays. MU will also operate a site at the Family Impact Center, 105 E. Ash St., from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesdays.

The service is first come, first served on a walk-in basis.
International students, scholars get training on life in Columbia

Visiting scholar died in pedestrian accident last month.

By Ashley Jost

Saturday, February 7, 2015 at 12:30 am

International students and visiting scholars get training to acclimate them to life in Columbia before and after they arrive at the University of Missouri, no matter how long they are staying.

Jim Scott, director of the MU International Center and associate vice provost of international initiatives, said training covers all of the essentials, from traffic safety to health-related information.

“There’s a mandatory orientation program for students and scholars that actually starts well before they arrive on campus,” Scott said. “Once they arrive here, we have orientation sessions that are two-day intensive programs where we introduce them to a range of support offices available to them.”

A visiting scholar, Kui Zou, was struck and killed in an off-campus accident while walking east across Providence at Carter Lane about 7 p.m. on Jan. 22. The accident was one of three pedestrian-vehicle accidents that day, which authorities called an anomaly.

Zou, a doctoral student from Beijing, was at MU on a China Scholarship Councils Fund for a one-year research project in the mechanical and aerospace engineering program, Scott said.

Scott said students learn about the police, emergency response crews, accessing health care options like the Student Health Center and MU Counseling Center. They also get a primer on student organizations they can join or lean on for support, he said.

The MU Police Department helps facilitate safety-related orientation sessions.

“We go over anything that will get them into trouble or what will help them if they’re in trouble,” MU police spokesman Scott Richardson said.
Training includes dialing 911 and explaining emergency procedures, as well as safety procedures for pedestrians and cyclists.

Richardson said MUPD is called to about 350 to 400 accidents per year, with 10 or 11 of those accidents involving a pedestrian.

“Typically those are severe, where somebody has been hit while they’re trying to walk on campus,” he said.

In response to a Tribune open records request, Columbia police only released an incident report that revealed no details about the incident other than what had already been released publicly.

“It's a tragic situation,” Scott said. “But there were, what, three accidents that day involving pedestrians? This is not an issue that just affects international students.”

Scott said the hardest part of the orientation programs for visiting scholars and international students is that “it’s an awful lot of information,” so finding the balance between informing and inundating is a struggle. Language barriers create obstacles, but translators are available.

Xiaoyu Guo, a graduate student at MU, said many of the safety-related lessons were not difficult for him to understand because some basic traffic laws and similar safety issues mirror laws in his home country of China.

The language barrier is the biggest problem for international students going through orientation, Guo said.

As students often have only been in the country for a few days before these lessons, he said they sometimes have to ask instructors to repeat themselves.

**NBC's Brian Williams Problem**

Brian Williams’s admission that he didn’t take fire aboard a helicopter in Iraq in 2003 puts NBC Universal in a difficult position about how to handle the fallout.

Firing Williams, who’s sat behind the anchor desk of the top-rated “NBC Nightly News” since 2004, raises the risk that the show will lose viewers and advertising dollars for the broadcaster, owned by Comcast Corp. Keeping him on could bruise the network’s credibility, which might also hurt ratings.
The program’s audience -- 9.3 million viewers a night compared with 8.7 million for ABC’s “World News Tonight” and 7.3 million for the “CBS Evening News,” according to Nielsen data -- means NBC is able to charge more for advertising. A 30-second spot on NBC goes for about $48,000, while ABC charges $37,000 and CBS $33,800, according to Nielsen. Firing a lead anchor is no small matter, said Al Tompkins, senior faculty for broadcasting at the Poynter Institute.

“Anchors become iconic,” Tompkins said in an interview on Friday. “They’re expected to influence the culture of that network. The investment in any anchor is huge, that’s why they get paid millions of dollars.”

Williams’ salary is $13 million a year, according to the website Celebrity Net Worth.

Williams apologized on the air on Wednesday for incorrectly saying last week that a helicopter he traveled on, while reporting on the Iraq War in 2003, had been forced down after being hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. Williams made the same assertion in a 2013 interview on the “Late Show With David Letterman.”

Fact Gathering

NBC is “gathering the facts to help us make sense of all that has transpired,” said Deborah Turness, president of NBC News, said in a memo to staff on Friday. “When we have something to communicate we will of course share it with you.”

Williams anchored “NBC Nightly News” on Friday evening as usual and didn’t mention the controversy.

NBC’s first priority should be transparency, and provide answers as soon as possible, Tompkins said.

“The hole’s going to get deeper if NBC doesn’t respond pretty clearly and pretty forcefully with some facts,” he said. “We have a bunch of people telling wildly different stories,” he said. “It’s a knowable fact what happened.”

The imbroglio was among the top 10 trending topics Friday on microblogging site Twitter. Under hashtags #BrianWilliamsMemories and #BrianWilliamsMisremembers, users pretending to be the anchor tweeted about fake acts of heroism.

**NBC will probably take time to thoroughly ascertain the facts, said Barbara Cochran, a professor at the University of Missouri’s journalism school and a former executive producer of NBC’s “Meet the Press” program.**

Changing anchors can lead viewers to switch loyalties and sample other media outlets, said Cochran, who also served as a vice president at CBS News.
“For an anchor to establish trust takes a long, long time,” said Cochran. “With the investment the network has made, they’re not going to back away in a big hurry.”

24-hour hotline number added to student ID cards

The MU Counseling Center added a new 24-hour crisis hotline at the end of January.

The phone number of the MU Counseling Center will now be printed on the backs of new student ID cards.

The new 24-hour hotline number for the center began appearing alongside the numbers for the MU Police Department and STRIPES late last week.

“We’re very pleased they chose to do that,” Counseling Center Director David Wallace said. "The fact that the phone number is on something that students have with them all the time really heightens the usefulness. Any time a student is in distress or crisis, they can call 24/7.”

The push to add the number to IDs began with Active Minds, a mental health awareness organization on campus, which wanted to connect students to helpful resources.

Senior Michael Della Fave of Active Minds said this step was "extremely important."

"The addition of the Counseling Center number provides students with the power to take charge of their mental health by providing easily accessible mental health resources through de-stigmatized channels,” he said in an email. “(This) potentially decreasing the amount of students suffering alone at the University of Missouri, truly creating a safe space and fully supporting the One Mizzou ideology.”

Della Fave said it is easy for students to forget information about resources introduced to them on tours, and he is glad it is now more easily accessible to students.

"Through our work as Active Minds peer educators, (project co-leader) Keisha Bailey and I knew that there was an increase in the prevalence and severity of mental health issues among students," he said. "We spent the majority of fall semester meeting with people, discussing the importance of our campaign. We even had petitions signed to gain enough support ... to move forward, and here we are. It was hard work, but we cannot accept all the credit; we just wanted to do the right thing for the students and for Mizzou."
Della Fave credited Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Cathy Scroggs, the ID center, all members of Active Minds and the Missouri Students Association Campus and Community Relations Committee for helping implement the idea.

"I think it's huge," CCRC Chairman Chad Phillips said. "I didn't know some of those services were available until my sophomore year, so making sure it's on one of the first things you get in the summer is huge and will make a big impact. Hopefully, if anyone needs help, they can just flip it over and call the number."

Letter to the Editor: Praise to Mizzou for giving athletes an opportunity to get an education

February 08, 2015 12:00 am

After reading the editorial in Friday’s paper regarding “the secret guilt of college football,” I was a bit upset. I am a huge Mizzou fan and a Tiger Scholarship Fund member and am very excited that Terry Beckner Jr. has committed to Mizzou. Kudos to Mizzou and other schools for giving athletes an opportunity to pursue their sports dreams while getting an education. The bigger story is, how many college students need to work to afford college? I would imagine it is quite a few.

While Mr. Beckner might be “working” on the D-line, all his tuition is being paid for so that he can get an education; and I am confident that he will as Mizzou is second only to Vanderbilt in the SEC in the percent of student athletes they graduate. So hats off to Mizzou for giving athletes an opportunity to succeed on and off the field. I wish I had that opportunity back in 1965 but Title IX had not been passed yet.

Sandy Diamond • University City

Depleted Tigers extend losing streak; Two players suspended

February 07, 2015 10:05 pm • By Dave Matter

COLUMBIA, Mo. • It’s been a month since Missouri’s basketball team celebrated a victory, but coach Kim Anderson made it clear Saturday that his purpose transcends wins and losses.
Before the Tigers lost their ninth consecutive game and extended the program’s longest losing streak since 1967, Anderson suspended freshman guards Montaque Gill-Caesar and Namon Wright for violating undisclosed team rules.

The Tigers, 7-16 after Saturday’s 83-61 loss to Texas A&M, have as many victories as players suspended during Anderson’s first season coaching his alma mater.

And he’s not about to apologize for sticking to his principles, even if it means depleting his roster against one of the SEC’s better teams.

“We are going to have a basketball program that this university can be proud of,” Anderson said after his team fell to 1-9 in the SEC, keeping the Tigers a game behind South Carolina for last place in the conference. “There are certain things that you must be accountable for. When you aren’t accountable then there are consequences. It wouldn’t have mattered if we were 20-3 or 7-16, I would have done the same thing. So, we are going to do the right thing.”

It was Missouri’s fifth straight home loss. The last time that happened, the Tigers were shooting baskets at Brewer Fieldhouse: The 1965-66 team lost eight in a row at home.

A week after Ole Miss drubbed Anderson’s team by 20 at Mizzou Arena, the Aggies (16-6, 7-3) dealt the Tigers their largest margin of defeat in a home game since Iowa State beat Mizzou 82-58 on Jan. 25, 2006, which was Quin Snyder’s final season as coach.

The day began with Mizzou’s latest roster turmoil as Gill-Caesar and Wright joined the list of players held out of games, announced before tip-off with a three-sentence press release. Anderson declined to say why the freshmen were suspended and said he’ll reevaluate their status this week. Missouri plays at South Carolina on Tuesday.

Also, freshman guard Tramaine Isabell did not play for a third straight game. He’s been held out for what Anderson has described as ongoing attitude and behavior problems with coaches and teammates.

All five Mizzou freshmen have now been suspended or held out of games for disciplinary reasons. Forwards D’Angelo Allen and Jakeenan Gant were suspended before the season after getting arrested on suspicion of assault, stemming from a fight with other students on campus. Both were later charged with a reduced misdemeanor count of peace disturbance. Gant later sat out nine games under investigation for receiving impermissible benefits. Sophomore guard Wes Clark was suspended for the Dec. 2 game against Southeast Missouri State for a rules violation. Junior guard Deuce Bello missed five games for an academic suspension.

All but four of Anderson’s scholarship players have been suspended or held out of games for punitive reasons this season: guard Keith Shamburger, forwards Johnathan Williams III, Ryan Rosburg and Keanau Post.

“It’s really disappointing as a coach, but part of our job as coaches is obviously to win basketball games,” Anderson said. “But part of our job is to help these guys grow up and help them understand. I’ve had some great conversations with Tramaine Isabell. Great conversations. I don’t know where we’re going with him. I don’t know.”

With his father, Keith, a retired P.E. teacher and coach from Sedalia, Mo., sitting in the back of the interview room, Anderson drove home his message Saturday.

“I want to win basketball games,” he said, “but I said this when I was hired and I say this today: I am a teacher. I am a teacher. I want to help these kids grow up. And if this is the way I can help them, whether we win or lose, that’s the way I’m going to do it.”
After trailing by seven at halftime in front of a crowd of 8,970, the Tigers watched Texas A&M pull away in the second half and feast on turnovers with easy baskets in transition. Led by Danuel House’s game-high 20 points, Texas A&M shot 70.4 percent in the second half and 58.9 overall, their best single-game shooting percentage in conference play since a 62.0 percent performance against Missouri in 2009.

Despite missing nearly 16 points a game from Gill-Caesar and Wright, the Tigers managed their best shooting performance (43.8) and highest point total in eight games, since their 85-79 loss at Auburn on Jan. 10. Clark finished with 15 points and Gant added 10.

But with Gant and Allen forced to play in unfamiliar positions on the wing, and Clark and Shamburger stretched to 37 minutes apiece, the Tigers were no match for A&M’s fresh legs in the second half. Anderson tried to preserve his depleted lineup with a 1-2-2 matchup zone, but its effectiveness was fleeting.

“Losing is always tough,” Clark said. “Losing by five, losing by 20, it still counts as one loss. It just got rough for us.”

Many St.Louis area high school graduates are playing catch-up in college

February 07, 2015 10:30 pm  •  By Jessica Bock

Two years ago, Beni Kimuene was surprised to find himself struggling to pass half of his courses.

He had not developed any study habits at Carnahan High School in St. Louis because they hadn’t been necessary. Preparing for tests was as easy as reading the textbook. Kimuene graduated with a 3.4 grade-point average.

Once at St. Louis Community College, it didn’t take long for Kimuene to realize that he wasn’t in high school anymore.

“When you graduate high school, it feels like you can take on the world,” he said. “Going into college, academically, it’s a real smack in the face with reality.”

Kimuene’s struggle to adjust speaks to one of the nagging problems facing higher education here and across the nation — one grounded in broad deficiencies in K-12 schools.

More than a third of Missouri high school graduates who attend the state’s public colleges and universities are deemed unprepared as freshmen. To catch up, they enroll in remedial classes, earning no college credits in the process and delaying the quest for a diploma.

One estimate suggests that 1.7 million students nationwide need such remediation, at a collective cost of $7 billion.
“It is a huge national problem,” said Bruce Vandal, vice president of Complete College America, a national nonprofit group. “There is a significant percentage of students who will apply and be placed in remedial and think, ‘Wow, maybe I’m not college material.’”

Preliminary data shows a slight uptick in the percent of high school graduates who require remediation at a Missouri public college or university. The total was 36.2 percent for 2013 graduates, after small decreases during the previous four years.

Illinois does not release matching data, but one 2012 national report estimates that nearly 20,000 community college students in the state needed remedial help.

And the crisis is far worse for graduates of struggling high schools.

More than two-thirds of Kimuene’s fellow 2012 Carnahan graduates found themselves having to take remedial courses in math, reading or English skills before they could register for regular college courses at Missouri public campuses, according to data from the state department of higher education.

Among Missouri high schools that fare worst in preparing students for college, most are in the St. Louis area. At Beaumont, Normandy, Hazelwood East, Vashon and Riverview Gardens, more than 75 percent of 2013 graduates who went to state schools needed remedial courses.

At Sumner High in St. Louis, each of the 18 graduates in 2013 who went to a public college in Missouri needed extra help when they got there.

But that’s not to say the problem is limited to urban areas.

At Wright City High, 94 percent of 2013 graduates enrolled in Missouri public colleges and universities needed remedial classes.

It’s a problem even at elite public high schools in affluent St. Louis suburbs, where more than 15 percent of 2013 graduates who landed at the state’s public universities needed extra help. At Brentwood High, that rate was 44 percent; at Parkway North and Rockwood Summit, it was 34 percent. Clayton had 32 percent, and Lindbergh had 31 percent. The only high school in the region with a rate lower than 20 percent was Metro High in St. Louis.

To be fair, those figures don’t account for the large numbers of graduates of those high schools who attend private universities and out-of-state schools. And the numbers are magnified at smaller schools such as Brentwood, where its highest-performing students often head out of state or to private schools on scholarships.

Even so, the numbers show that even the best high schools are failing many of their college-bound students.

**RUDE AWAKENING**

Data show that even when students complete the extra courses, their likelihood of finishing a four-year degree is slim nationwide. Nearly two-thirds fail to earn a bachelor’s degree in six years, according to a 2012 study by Complete College America.

If students leave high school thinking they are college ready and then find themselves placed in a remedial course, some may stop there, Vandal said.

They think, “I don’t belong here,” he said.

In Kimuene’s first semester at St. Louis Community College at Meramec, he needed a remedial math class, elementary algebra. After that, he had to take another, intermediate algebra, before he could finally take the college algebra course.
“I thought of myself as cocky, and I ended up getting a C in the class,” he said. “And I failed my first English class. Academically, two out of my four classes were terrible.”

That kind of rude awakening, many say, is endemic of a system that too often allows students to progress through school without mastering core subjects.

College is a kind of reckoning, with a host of measures determining whether a student is prepared for college-level courses.

Such decisions are typically based on SAT or ACT scores, high school grades, high school end-of-course exams or a college’s own placement tests.

Critics of these measures say too many students wind up in remedial courses.

Vandal said instead of placing students in remedial courses, colleges should give students extra support to complete the college-level classes. “There are actually many, many students who are placed in remediation who could be successful in college-level courses,” he said.

Some local school administrators wonder whether their capable high school graduates are being counseled into remedial courses — particularly at community colleges, where such courses are common and even encouraged.

Beth Johnston, a spokeswoman for Lindbergh schools, said some students may simply feel more comfortable taking the courses.

“But even though they’re really good students, they might make a decision because they don’t want to be worried about if math will be too hard,” she said.

But setting aside that debate, experts agree that the best approach to addressing the problem of college remediation is to focus on preparation in high school and earlier.

LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS
Proponents of the Common Core standards, which have been controversial in Missouri and elsewhere, say they are designed to better prepare children for college and careers and to reduce the likelihood that students will waste time and money on postsecondary remediation.

Others say those standards are of little use if struggling students are allowed to advance to the next grade without mastering the one below.

Missouri auditors slammed St. Louis Public Schools last year, citing the district for promoting failing students to the next grade. According to the audit, 750 third- and fourth-graders were identified in May 2011 as “at-risk” for reading failure in state exams. Of that group, only two were later held back a grade.

The problem of advancing unprepared students to the next grade isn’t limited to St. Louis schools. Statewide, the vast majority of students who fail state standardized exams move forward each year.

Since the auditors’ findings, St. Louis schools officials say they have adopted several new policies. Danielle Harris, an administrator who is leading much of the effort, said the changes include conducting reading assessments for first- through eighth-graders three times a year. That information is used to develop academic plans for improvement that continue through high school.

At Bayless High School, teachers and counselors are trying to prevent remediation by working through the challenges of poverty and a large percentage of students who speak English as a second language.
“It will make a huge difference for them if they are able to start in college-level classes when they get to college,” said Suzanne Richardson, Bayless’ director of secondary counseling, a new position.

The district also is seeking to introduce students to the rigor of college courses earlier.

Bayless has nearly tripled the number of courses students can take for dual credit in high school and college. It is incorporating college placement tests in the school year, timing them so the information is fresh. The district has added extra algebra classes for students who are college bound but struggle in math. They hope to layer in another next year so students can earn credit for taking a remedial college course while in high school.

Even so, the school has a long way to go. About 60 percent of 2013 Bayless graduates who went to Missouri’s public colleges needed remediation. That represented a slight improvement over the prior year.

The 2012 report by Complete College America said one key to addressing the problem lies in giving students the right kind of tests early in high school to determine if they are on track to cut it in college. If not, those students should get extra help.

That approach is being tested in California, North Carolina, Ohio and Oklahoma. Tennessee goes one step further, targeting high school juniors to take college remediation classes while they are still in high school.

**FILLING THE GAP**

Until high schools improve college readiness, the campuses that enroll their graduates will need to fill the gaps.

Those needs are most pronounced at community colleges and other universities that accept all or nearly all applicants. Nationwide, 51.7 percent of students at two-year community colleges enrolled in remediation, according to the Complete College America report.

Kimuene credits the TRIO Student Support Services program at the Meramec campus with setting him on track. A friend dragged him to a meeting, and a professor he admired talked him into giving it a chance.

The federal program supports first-generation or low-income students, and those with disabilities. It offers a private tutoring center, along with workshops that help students with financial aid, applying for scholarships, gaining leadership experience and deciding on a career path.

“I think that once students realize what they’re working toward, it’s easy to get through it semester by semester,” program director Sanela Mesic said.

About 70 percent of the students in TRIO are in at least one remedial class.

Kimuene now has a solid B average and is a TRIO tutor.

Remedial classes could add a year or more to college programs for many students. However, Kimuene will have to take only one extra semester. He will graduate this summer with plans to transfer to a four-year college to major in film production and business.

“We all have dreams, but you never have a clear vision of what your dreams are going to be until you take that first step,” he said. “I decided that I didn’t want to be another face in the crowd. I wanted to succeed. One way or another, I’m reaching for the top.”
LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Medicaid expansion is a matter of life and death

Friday, February 6, 2015 | 2:33 p.m. CST

BY HARLY MOORE

Harly Moore is an undergraduate student majoring in social work at MU and secretary of the Council of Student Social Workers.

As a social work student and advocate at the University of Missouri, I feel that it is my duty to address an issue that is literally life or death for many working Missourians.

While many see the issue of Medicaid expansion as a political issue, I know from personal experience that this is not simply a political issue but a matter of moral integrity.

For the majority of my life, I have not had health insurance, so I know what it is like to suffer through sleepless nights of worry about what the next day might bring.

Fortunately for me, I make the required yearly income to receive a health insurance subsidy through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace, and I have health insurance for the first time since I was a young child.

However, there are around 300,000 Missourians who do not make the required yearly salary of over $11,000 but make too much money to receive Medicaid.

It is often said in this country that those who work hard will see the rewards of their hard work, but this is not happening for many Missourians.

I spent time at the Capitol on Feb. 4 listening to the stories of those who fall into the coverage gap and was astonished at the hardships that many of these Missourians have faced.
The crippling medical expenses imposed on these individuals are a burden that should not be placed on anyone suffering from chronic illnesses.

I encourage all of my fellow students and community members to reach out to our representatives, such as Senator Schaefer, to do what is morally right and to ensure that all Missourians, regardless of socioeconomic status, are provided with equal access to health care.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

FROM READERS: Columbia author talks derby names and secret identities

Friday, February 6, 2015 | 2:09 p.m. CST

**BY TRUDY LEWIS/MISSOURIAN READER**

*Trudy Lewis is the director of creative writing at MU. Before writing "The Empire Rolls," she wrote the novel "Private Correspondences" and the short story collection, "The Bones of Garbo," and her fiction has appeared in* Atlantic Monthly, *Best American Short Stories, Cimarron Review, Meridian, Prairie Schooner and others. The Daniel Boone Regional Library will host a discussion of "The Empire Rolls" at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Friends Room.*

When I decided to write a roller derby novel, I started with the names: Britney Spearhead, Courtney Foxhole, Gigi Haddist, Raven Pillage. I wanted to capture the humor and violence of the CoMo Derby Dames and the bouts I’d seen at the Empire Roller Rink. I loved the fact that roller derby, like fiction, feeds off puns and secret identities.

Names have an interesting status in fiction. Many novelists, from George Eliot to Elena Ferrante, have used pseudonyms to disguise their identities. And unlike a memoir, a novel does not rest on its author’s name. This disconnection from social identity allows the fiction writer a certain space of freedom to explore alternative paths and secret affinities. So here's the paradox: a novel is both true and untrue. It is both impersonal and intimate.
To be honest, it is quite difficult for me to write in a nonfiction form, without the mask of character. Recently, a friend asked me about my roller derby name and I had to admit I didn’t have one. That is, I am not one person in the story. I am distributed throughout, bits and pieces of my experience in every character.

But I’ve always liked my given name, Trudy, which I inherited from a second cousin who died in a car accident. Sally LaChance, the protagonist of my novel, is haunted by the memory of her sister Sharee who died in similar circumstance.

Sharee's exotic name is the mirror image of Sally’s plain one. In a way, Sharee is the roller derby name, and Sally is the ordinary identity. Sally, who works as a park ranger by day and a roller derby emcee at night, has been playing a bit part for many years. But when extreme circumstances force her to act, she responds with the confidence of her departed sister and the ferocity of those roller derby girls with their powerful names.

Since writing "The Empire Rolls," I’ve become a Buddhist. Buddhists would say that identity is an illusion, and a name is only convention. But I prefer to think of identity as a fiction, and fiction, itself, as a door into our secret collective experience.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

**Brainstorm on future of fairgrounds site leaves the starting gate**

Sunday, February 8, 2015 | 6:00 a.m. CST; updated 6:42 a.m. CST, Monday, February 9, 2015

BY WILLIAM SCHMITT

COLUMBIA — A Hallsville engineer has a mind to reopen the Central Missouri Events Center. To do that, he’ll need to harness money, solidarity and horsepower.

Chad Sayre of Allstate Consultants has formulated a future for the property, also known as the Boone County Fairgrounds. He envisions a regional hub for entertainment, research and private enterprise. He’s giddy about the possibilities, saying Boone County's opportunity to redevelop the events center, which was shut down on Jan. 1, gives the county a chance to be the envy of the region.
The events center isn't just a clean slate for development, he says. It's an open tract of land with highway access and existing infrastructure, and it's no longer saddled with contractual obligations.

Sayre grew up on an Angus cattle farm in rural Linn County, and he's lived in Boone County for 30 years. Like his parents, he and his wife have been heavily involved with 4-H, as have his two daughters.

He earned a master's degree in engineering from MU in 1995, and he's a vice president and engineer at Allstate Consultants. Although Sayre worked with other Allstate employees to draft his proposal for the events center, he said it's more of a pet project than an official Allstate Consultants undertaking.

"I don't know that Allstate Consultants will be involved as a company," Sayre said, adding about his coworkers that "almost every individual is involved, or their kids are involved, in equestrian activities, in 4-H or FFA."

His plan, which he first publicly presented to members of the equestrian community Jan. 18 at the Peachtree Center, focuses foremost on identifying "new net revenues" for a "sustainable, economically viable plan."

He points to the downfall of Proposition EPIC — a proposed eighth-cent sales tax to fund the events center that voters soundly rejected in August — as proof that money has to come from places besides countywide taxes. Sayre voted for EPIC but said he understands how the lack of a coherent vision for how the county would have spent the sales tax revenue led to its defeat.

"Taxpayers have to support it. That's America, right?" he says. "And they didn't, and I respect that, because there wasn't really a detailed plan to move forward."

Sayre said he used data from TAG Events, the last company to manage the fairgrounds, to estimate annual operating costs of between $400,000 and $525,000. He proposes several new strategies for raising money:

- Forming a new community improvement district for the events center and Atkins Park, which together comprise 214 acres, and levying a sales tax on retail purchases within the district.
- Leasing 12 vacant acres on the northwest corner of the property to private developers and businesses who could build hotels, restaurants, gas stations and similar things.

- Attracting corporate advertising and branding. Sayre envisions ads depicting themes promoting a simple, rural life.

- Advertising the center to planners of equestrian events such as horse shows, rodeos and activities for young people.

Sayre likens his revenue ideas to that of a stool: the more legs it has for support, the steadier and more reliable it will be over time. Until a proper blueprint and budget are drawn up, however, the events center is just a promising block of wood.

He said that although the county wouldn't have to spend the kind of money it has before on the property, he believes it should provide a "financial backstop" — such as the fund intended to guarantee profits for American Airlines at Columbia Regional Airport — as a temporary measure to keep the events center solvent until it becomes self-sustaining. Sayre suggests using "existing tools in the toolbox" — in this case the money the county was spending on its contract with TAG Events, to provide a safety net. Boone County Auditor June Pitchford said the county contracted with TAG to manage the events center from late 2011 to 2014, paying TAG $200,000 per year and reimbursing half the utility bill.

**His proposal also suggests updating the name to the "Mizzou Agricultural Exposition and Equestrian Events Center." It's a mouthful, and he acknowledges that the name likely won't go the distance.**

Sayre does believe MU needs to be heavily involved. He said potential benefits for MU would include new opportunities for internships and academics, growth for agricultural clubs and the creation of new NCAA equestrian sports teams. Sayre hasn't spoken to anyone at MU about if it might become involved.

Besides horse shows and college equestrian activities, Sayre's proposal includes horse trails and walking paths around the perimeter of the property.
Boone County Northern District Commissioner Janet Thompson said rebooting the events center will be time-consuming and challenging.

"(Sayre) started the conversation," she said, adding that his written proposal looks refined and final, "but it’s still a brainstorm."

Thompson said corporate money might not come immediately; after all, companies won’t be quick to put their name on an empty field.

"Events in and of themselves will help to draw those corporate sponsors," Thompson said.

Both Sayre and Thompson hope the brainstorming will create a domino effect. Sayre in particular said he expects interested parties to add their own ideas to the mix.

Thompson emphasized the need to involve as many people as possible, not just those who own horses, in order to create "a critical mass of ideas."

"If it's coming from the people, it'll have that long-term sustainability," she said.

Besides finding investors, Sayre said, upgrading the events center from a dusty swath to something that creates regional pride will take cooperation between major local organizations: the city, the county and MU.

A week after Sayre’s Jan. 18 presentation, Thompson and Judy Werner, who owns Redwing Saddlebred Farm in Waterloo, Illinois, spoke to an assembly of horse admirers about the need to unify. Thompson introduced herself as president of the Missouri Horse Shows Association, not as a county commissioner.

Thompson is a horse geek in her own right. She starting riding at age 7 while living with her family in Spain. She introduced Werner to speak to a lack of unity in the local equestrian community, particularly in light of conversation about future uses of the fairground and its place in Boone County’s economy.

"You may do barrel racing and I do polo, and you may not even know that I exist," Thompson said.
Werner didn't waste time nagging her audience, calling on the local horse community to avoid becoming "isolationists" and "dinosaurs," lest they go extinct. For the equestrians to dodge the meteor, they'll need a stable place like the events center to come together.

"If you want the Boone County Fairgrounds to open up for horse shows, we're going to need everybody," Werner said.

Sayre said about 30 people — mostly from the equestrian community — have contacted him for more information about his ideas. Thompson said she's aware of three or four groups developing their own proposals, "and they've said, 'OK, we'll holler when we're ready.'"

Sayre believes the events center could start seeing new development by the end of 2015.

Presiding Commissioner Dan Atwill said he appreciates Sayre's work in starting a conversation, but he added that there is no timeline or plan for the events center. Thompson is excited by Sayre's optimism but reiterated that nothing about his plan is set in stone.

"Chad's a dynamo, and I hope he's right."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

'Speaking of Culture' series shines light on Hugh Hefner for Valentine's Day

Sunday, February 8, 2015 | 6:39 p.m. CST

BY KATIE KULL

COLUMBIA — Setting the mood for Valentine's Day, MU history professor Steven Watts spoke Sunday afternoon at Orr Street Studios about the "profound" impact of Hugh Hefner on the modern American consumer and political culture.

The talk, attended by about 35 people, was part of the MU Honors College's monthly "Speaking of Culture" series. The series features MU faculty discussing topics including music, art, poetry and literature.
Watts specializes in American intellectual and cultural history. He has published several books including biographies of Walt Disney and Henry Ford. His most recent book focused on a more controversial figure: Hugh Hefner. "Mr. Playboy: Hugh Hefner and the American Dream" was published in 2009.

"I had already done two big books, and I just wanted to do someone more modern," Watts said. "I was just fishing around, and somehow Hefner just floated to the top."

Watts conducted hours of interviews, spent weeks at the Playboy Mansion and attended a number of "infamous" Playboy parties. He also looked at countless documents, including Hefner's personal 1,800 volume scrapbook, to collect information to write the book.

In his talk, Watts explained that Hefner was not only a controversial political figure, identifying with counterculture by making strides in the sexual revolution, but he was also an influence on the modern American consumer psyche.

"He has helped to define the pursuit of happiness and what the pursuit of happiness even means," Watts said. "What he promoted, very profoundly, in American culture is self-realization, self-fulfillment and self-gratification."

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

**Rock Bridge earns national bid in second Missouri High School Ethics Bowl**

Saturday, February 7, 2015 | 8:25 p.m. CST; updated 10:59 p.m. CST, Saturday, February 7, 2015

BY JACK WADDELL

COLUMBIA– Rock Bridge High School’s ethics bowl team is North Carolina-bound after a victory Saturday afternoon over six area high schools at the 2015 Missouri High School Ethics Bowl at Columbia College.

Rock Bridge High School defeated Battle High School in the championship match, earning a bid to the National Ethics Bowl April 10-11 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Each match began with one team staking out its position for up to five minutes on a given ethical issue. The opposing team took one minute to prepare questions for the first
team and three minutes to ask those questions. The first team then had a minute to prepare a three-minute speech addressing the questions from the opposing team before judges asked questions of both teams. The process was then repeated with the team asking questions in the first round taking a position in the second.

After two rounds of ethical discussion, the judges chose a winner.

In the championship match, Rock Bridge High School spoke first and took the position that forcing members of the Army to meet haircut regulations fosters uniformity, not unity. Their main argument against the regulations was that they discriminate against women and African Americans.

Battle High School's team discussed a dilemma that doctors at Memorial Medical Center in New Orleans faced with the approach of Hurricane Katrina.

Knowing the hurricane would knock out the hospital's backup power, doctors prioritized evacuating infants and patients in the intensive care unit first and left those with do not resuscitate orders for last.

Battle's squad sided with the doctor's "sickest-last" approach, arguing that it was better to sacrifice some lives to save as many as possible.

Lea Brandt, a judge and an associated clinical professor at MU's School of Health Professions, said that the ways Rock Bridge structured its argument and kept its points consistent were key in its victory.

"I think what we're all looking at is not the responses, but how the teams structure their arguments, and were consistent with those arguments, and Rock Bridge did an excellent job of doing that today," she said.

Jefferson City High School and Hickman High School joined Battle as runner-ups behind Rock Bridge, which took home a trophy in addition to its the National Ethics Bowl bid.

Rock Bridge's Michael Pennella said he was "super stoked" about the win, especially since his team was missing two of its regular members.
“Overall, we only had three weeks to prepare, we were kind of thrown into this,” Pennella said. “We’re really proud that despite everything that happened, we were able to manage to pull through and win.”

Rock Bridge’s Humera Lodhi said the team had received a list of the 15 possible cases judges would choose from for competition beforehand, and practiced for the bowl with mock trials.

The purpose of the competition is to teach students to engage in civic dialogue to discuss community issues instead of resorting to violence and hostile debate, according to Melanie Johnson-Moxley, an instructor of philosophy at Columbia College.

“(The Ethics Bowl) cannot only help the students going into to college but moving forward forever in their lives is to help foster this habit of engaging in effective dialogues to talk about difficult issues,” Johnson-Moxley said.

February 6, 2015

Obama Says Students Should ‘Get the Best Skills Possible,’ Quickly and Cheaply

By Katherine Mangan

Middle-class college students should have more opportunities to "get the best skills possible," as quickly and cheaply as possible, and making community-college tuition free would help achieve that goal, President Obama said on Friday during an address at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis.

Speaking and answering questions from students at the headquarters of one of the nation’s largest statewide community-college systems, the president touted his free-
tuition proposal and said that heading straight to a four-year college isn’t for everyone.

"We have this image in our heads that you go through high school and then, right away, you go to a four-year university," he said. "Instead, we should be thinking about, from the time you are in ninth grade until you get a job, how do we make sure you get the best skills possible at the cheapest cost. If there are faster pathways or opportunities to use technology, let’s do that."

After two years, students might have the skills to jump into a job immediately, or they might transfer to a four-year institution, he said, but either way, they would save a significant amount of money by starting at a community college.

Asked whether making community-college tuition free would hurt four-year colleges by cutting into their enrollments, the president said there would still be plenty of students heading straight to baccalaureate institutions.

But students shouldn’t have to take on staggering debts, he said, especially if they’re going into fields, like teaching, that pay modest salaries.

On speculation that his free-tuition plan is dead on arrival in a Republican-controlled Congress, he had this to say: "If Republicans disagree with the way I’m trying to solve these problems, they should put forth their own plans, and I’ll be happy to look at them. But what we can’t do is ignore the problems."

It’s time, he said, for everyone to roll up their sleeves and work together, and "not to turn everything into a Washington food fight."

Mr. Obama said he had talked to many employers who say that they can’t find graduates with the skills they need, and that colleges working closely with area employers can help fill the so-called skills gap.
Some educators have questioned whether that gap is partly the fault of employers who have reduced their commitments to on-the-job training and so shifted more of the responsibility for specialized skills training to community colleges.

Apprenticeship programs, which received an infusion of funds from the administration last year, can be part of the solution, Mr. Obama said. On average, he said, graduates of apprenticeship programs earn $50,000 a year. He empathized with a student who bemoaned the soaring cost of textbooks and said that, in the first 10 years of his marriage, the Obamas paid more on student loans than on their mortgage.