Deputy Chancellor Michael Middleton announces retirement

ALEXA AHERN, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Michael Middleton, deputy chancellor since 1998, has announced his retirement, effective Aug. 31.

In a letter Thursday to deans, directors and other administrators, Middleton said he will stay part time with MU to improve inclusion, diversity and equity within campus activities.

As deputy chancellor, Middleton assists the chancellor in his day-to-day work, appoints the Campus Climate Task Force and heads the Conflict of Interest Oversight Committee, according to his website. Beyond his daily duties, he works with organizations and committees on campus that are focused on improving gender and race equality, such as the Black Faculty and Staff Organization, Tribute to MU Women and the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center.

"As I transition into my new role, I will be reaching out to individuals across MU to ensure that the progress made to date in making this a welcoming and productive campus for all is accelerated and intensified," he said in the letter.

Middleton enrolled at MU in 1964, amidst the chaos of the civil rights movement. He went on to be the first black graduate student to graduate from the MU Law School, according to Vox magazine.

After graduating, he pursued a career in civil rights law in Washington, D.C., and worked as a trial attorney for the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

From there, he worked for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as director of the Office of Systemic Programs and then as principal deputy assistant secretary for Civil Rights at
the Department of Education. He was director of the St. Louis district office of the EEOC before returning to MU in 1985 to join the Law School faculty, according to MU's News Bureau website.

Middleton has been deputy chancellor for 17 years. He has continued to work with minority rights throughout his career as an administrator at MU.

"It has been a pleasure to remain a part of the institution that has had so significant an impact on my life and the lives of my family, and I am delighted to have been able to participate in the process of doing the same for countless others," he said in the letter.

Missouri Senate, university investigating after two interns leave

May 22, 2015 • By Alex Stuckey

**NO MU MENTION**

JEFFERSON CITY • In March, a man and a woman interning for Missouri Sen. Paul LeVota abruptly ended their legislative internships and returned to the University of Central Missouri. Now, the university is conducting a Title IX investigation, though it’s unclear whether the Democrat from Independence is the one being investigated. The Senate also is investigating.

Title IX is a 1972 federal law that bars discrimination in federally funded education programs on the basis of sex. Often referred to when discussing equal access to opportunities in sports, Title IX includes bans against unequal treatment based on sex, along with sexual harassment and sexual violence.

In a statement, LeVota said Ron Berry, his chief of staff, received an email from the university stating those two interns “were needed back at school to work on other projects.”

The university’s Title IX guidelines stipulate it “can relocate students to another class, grant temporary absence from classes (and) make temporary alterations to work schedules” when a complaint is made. LeVota, 47, wrote that he was not informed of any problems those interns experienced — from the university or other interns. He had three other interns during the 2015 legislative session.

“I would be open to any university taking a further look at the experience of any of my legislative interns,” he wrote. LeVota declined to answer questions.
Jeff Murphy, university spokesman, would not say why the students left their internship because “the university does not respond to questions about campus investigations.”

In his statement, Murphy noted the university’s “strong support” of Title IX. When the Post-Dispatch asked to speak with someone about the school’s policy, Murphy referred to its policy Web page. That page states sex discrimination includes discrimination because of gender identity, pregnancy or “failure to conform to stereotypical notions of femininity or masculinity.” Things that would fall under a violation of Title IX could include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, rape or taping sexual activity without consent, for example, according to the policy.

A violation also could be more subtle, such as male interns being taken to dinner or a sporting event while the female interns are left behind, said attorney Ken Chackes. He added that a sexually charged environment also could quality.

But if someone involved in the Legislature is the one discriminating, the “school has no jurisdiction over that person to punish them” under Title IX, Chackes said.

The school could prevent other students from doing internships for or with that person, he said.

The Missouri Senate, also involved in an investigation, remained tight-lipped about the matter.

When asked for a list of interns working in Senate offices this year, Senate Administrator Marga Hoelscher, declined: “Due to the sensitive nature of a university Title IX investigation, we will not provide any further comment.”

The university had more than two interns in the Capitol this year, but others were not pulled out of the program.

Under the schools legislative internship program, students can work part-time or full-time in the Capitol. Full-time interns receive a 6 credit hour tuition scholarship and a $5,000 stipend. Part-time interns are reimbursed for transportation. Neither the Senate nor the House pays its interns.

LeVota, who got his bachelor’s degree at what is now University of Central Missouri, first was elected to the House in 2002. He served as House Minority Floor Leader from 2007 to 2010 and was elected to the Senate in 2012. He is up for reelection next year. He lives in Independence with his wife, Nancy, and two daughters.

LeVota’s brother, Phil, is a Kansas City attorney and lobbyist who sometimes works out of LeVota’s Senate office.

Last week, John Diehl, a Town and Country Republican, resigned his seat and his role as House speaker following a Kansas City Star report that he exchanged sexually charged text messages with a 19-year-old intern.
Protein snacks can improve appetite control, diet in teens

Researchers found that teenagers who either had a healthier snack or no snack at all benefited greatly from skipping a snack that is not high in fat.

By Stephen Feller  |  May 21, 2015 at 6:02 PM

COLUMBIA, Mo., May 21 (UPI) -- A small study by the University of Missouri suggests that high protein snacks improved the diet of teenagers, in addition to decreasing their appetites and improving their attitudes.

Researchers conducted a three-day study with 31 teenagers to find the different effects of high protein snacks, high fat snacks, or no snacks all. They found that the high protein snack and no snack were the ideal options, as the extra protein reduced confusion and bewilderment and skipping a snack reduced tension and anxiety.

"Standard meals tend to go to the wayside for kids this age -- particularly from mid-afternoon to late evening -- and many of the convenient 'grab-and-go' snacks are high in fat and sugar," said Heather Leidy, an assistant professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at MU, in a press release. "When kids eat high-protein snacks in the afternoon, they are less likely to eat unhealthy snacks later in the day, which is particularly important for kids who want to prevent unhealthy weight gain."

The study is published in The Journal of Nutrition.
Missouri Medical School Focuses on Students' Mental Health

By HOPE KIRWAN - 19 HOURS AGO

Listen to the story: http://cpa.ds.npr.org/kbia/audio/2015/05/HWSHOW_1.mp3

Last weekend, around 100 students graduated from the University of Missouri School of Medicine.

But four times that many doctors will commit suicide this year in the United States.

Many believe problems with depression and anxiety in medical students is a leading cause for the mental health issues among physicians. Rep. Keith Frederick, R-Rolla, said these issues can also effect a doctor's ability to practice.

"Some doctors end up taking their own lives, but many go on practicing in a state where they're not as effective as they would be if they were completely healthy," said Frederick, who is also an orthopedic surgeon. "The healthcare provided by those physicians in training and future physicians will be much better if they aren't themselves suffering from depression.

And some medical schools are starting to study this problem. Dr. Stuart Slavin, Associate Dean for Curriculum at Saint Louis University School of Medicine, said he never thought the medical students at SLU were experiencing mental health problems.
"They seemed happy," Slavin said. "They were satisfied with their medical education, they were satisfied with administration."

But after reading about the growing prevalence of depression and anxiety in medical students, Slavin decided to anonymously survey the medical students at SLU about their mental health. He said the results were devastating.

“We saw depression rates between 25 and 30 percent. As many as 60 percent of our medical students in some classes had moderate to severe levels of anxiety," Slavin said.

After SLU’s administration realized how many medical students were suffering from mental health issues, Slavin said they began making curriculum changes to reduce students’ stress. These changes included decreasing the amount of time spent in classes and creating stress management courses for first year students.

After a year with the new system, the rate of depression in medical students had decreased to 11 percent and the rate of anxiety was cut in half.

While the curriculum adjustments cost the school less than $5,000 to implement, Slavin said SLU would not have considered changing their system without evidence that the mental health of their students was a problem.

“It is much easier to ignore the problem when you don't have data," Slavin said. "If other schools saw similar numbers to the ones we had initially, I think it would be very hard for them to ignore."

Rep. Keith Frederick worked this legislative session to encourage Missouri medical schools to face the problem head on.

Frederick introduced a bill that would have required medical schools in the state to provide an optional screening program to students. The survey would identify students who are depressed or at high risk for depression. Then several years later, the information would be used to report the rate of depression at each school to the public, similar to the way average scores on licensing examinations are made public for each school.

“If they have an option to go to a school where the prevalence of depression in the second year of med school is 30 percent versus one that's 10 percent, I
think they should have the right to know that information ahead of time and make a choice based on the health risks," Frederick said.

Although the bill failed to make it to Gov. Nixon's desk, Frederick says he hopes medical schools will be motivated to study the mental health of their students.

“I think that medical schools in general across our country need to embrace the concept that it is an important measure of the performance of the medical school should be the mental health of the students that complete their program," Frederick said. "Because they're getting high board scores but at what cost?"

KRCG-TV (CBS) – Columbia, Mo.

Mizzou to Receive Advanced Weather Radar

Watch the Story: http://mms.tveyses.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=e578702b-cfa3-4798-84e5-8309341fa92b

Emerald ash borer advances on trees here

May 22, 2015 • By David Hunn

ST. LOUIS • Tree trimmers found the little green beetle along Emerson Avenue.
Crews were pruning power lines in the Walnut Park East neighborhood north of Interstate 70 earlier this month, and came across a strand of sickly ash trees. One worker found the telltale D-shaped holes in the bark; another saw the S-shaped tunnels, or galleries, in the wood.

The trimmers, from Nelson Tree Service, called Ameren electric, who called the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Then the crew cut down the trees. And, sure enough, in the bark of one, they found the sparkling metallic beetle.

The state sent it to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

And, earlier this week, the federal Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service confirmed it:

It was an emerald ash borer, here in St. Louis.

“It’s pretty hard to find them critters,” Hank Stelzer, a University of Missouri agriculture professor and chairman of the forestry department, said of the beetle itself. Usually they just find dying trees, and beetle trails.

“Now it needs to get on homeowners’ radars,” he continued, “and really on community radars.”

Tree lovers have been dreading this day for years. The beetle has slowly marched south from Michigan and Canada, where it was discovered in 2002, likely imported from China or Russia via wooden shipping crates and packing supplies.

Its larvae burrow into bark, and have destroyed tens of millions of ash trees in 25 states.

Last year, the state identified the borer in trees at a St. Charles County industrial park.

“There was no preventing it. There was no way they weren’t coming,” said Susan Trautman, executive director of the regional Great Rivers Greenway trails district. “It was just a matter of time.”

In anticipation, some have taken drastic measures. The National Park Service, for instance, cut down all 800 ash trees on the Gateway Arch grounds this fall and winter, part of the $380 million park renovation.

“On one hand, we’re sort of vindicated that we did that,” said Tom Bradley, superintendent of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, home of the Arch.

But, he said, the park isn’t the issue now: There are thousands of ash trees along the streets and in the backyards of St. Louis.

Stelzer, the University of Missouri forester, said city planners and homeowners need to “seriously consider their options.”

Kansas City residents, he said, are “seeing an explosion of dead and dying ash trees.” The trees there make up about 10 percent of the forest canopy.

“It can be pretty dramatic in some places,” Stelzer said. “Communities that hadn’t prepared, it’s starting to pinch them.”

Stelzer said St. Louis is two years behind its western neighbor. Homeowners need to start identifying ash trees now; other species are not affected. Important trees — ones shading houses, or planted as memorials, for instance — can be treated with pesticides. But the treatment is expensive and laborious. Other ashes should be chopped down.
The only way to make up for the annual suffering caused by “Pomp and Circumstance” is to condemn a single band to play it at every graduation in the nation, and to force the musicians—murderers, thieves, and ex-governors who opposed state higher education funding—to play it continuously as they march along the lonely verges of old state highways to their next gigs. Is it too much to ask that the woodwind instruments be fashioned from the bones of Sir Edward Elgar, and the brass have no spit valves?

It was risking my equilibrium to attend the commencement ceremony for LSU’s Manship School of Mass Communication last week, knowing I’d hear the unspeakable song again two days later at my own grad students’ ceremony, but the Manship address was to be given by politico James Carville, who’d been promising in the local press he’d give Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal hell from the pulpit for damaging state higher ed.

Carville famously got his undergrad, his JD, and an honorary doctorate from LSU, and he appeared in his academic gown and an LSU ball cap with a tassel hanging from its squatchee to greet members of the audience before the procession.

Even those with only brief exposure to James Carville’s media persona would recognize standing jokes and references in his speech, such as how he had a 4.0 when he was a student at LSU—his blood alcohol content, not grade point. (When Dean Ceppos did the introduction, he repeated a version of the old bit about Afghanistan and Louisiana being similar, at which the crowd chuckled.)

Without naming Jindal more than a couple of times, Carville began to make his case. He said sometimes it seemed as if there were two views on how state higher ed has fared since 2007 (the year Jindal was elected Governor), since some op-ed pieces say, “‘Everything is fine, we’re gonna work this out,’ [and] the Board [of Supervisors] says, ‘We’re gonna supplant [reduced state funding] with better purchasing power.’“
This, Carville said, “Kinda reminds me of the greatest movie ever made about higher education: Animal House.” Technicians to the side of the stage cued a clip on two enormous screens, and Carville said Kevin Bacon, in the parade-riot scene at the end of the film, represented the official take on higher ed problems, and that “the people of the LSU community” were represented by the stampeding crowd. “Remain calm! All is well!” he said, imitating Bacon just before he’s flattened.

“That’s us,” Carville said, after the clip played. “And we’re not calm. [...] All is not well.” From there his speech began to swell and was often rousing, though he never laid out much of the context or specifics of state cuts, so it would have been possible for members of the audience who weren’t there to hear him rip on Jindal, and who didn’t know exactly how or to what degree LSU was threatened, to have been puzzled. “History is relentless,” Carville said. “History seeks the truth; it seeks it as relentlessly as the River seeks the Gulf. He [Bobby Jindal, presumably] can no more escape history than a raindrop or a snowflake that falls in a river in Minnesota can escape endin’ up in the Gulf.”

“You know,” he said, a rhetorical tic he used to start new sections, which I found strangely stirring, “I hear politicians and everybody today talks about the Judeo-Christian tradition. Well, I live a block from the Jewish Temple, and a block from a Jesuit university; I was educated by the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Brothers of Sacred Heart. And I know something about the Judeo-Christian tradition.

“You know what the biggest day on the Jewish calendar is? Not celebratin’ some victory at Masada, or the Ten Commandments. It’s the Day of Atonement. The last request that the Christian Jesus [sic] made on the cross was not to strike all the gay people dead. It was a request for forgiveness. And I ask your forgiveness for not speakin’ out sooner. ‘Cause this has gone on too long. Gone on too long. And I went along with it for too long. But, you know: The best time to plant an oak tree is 25 years ago; second best time is right now. Second best time is right now.”

Carville pointed to “heroes on our side,” including F. King Alexander, LSU President and Chancellor; the staff of The Daily Reveille, “which has covered itself in glory”; and Professor Bob Mann (whose excellent blog I follow, and who helped me find the info for the commencement).

Carville said there’s a debate, and “on one side you’ve got Bobby Jindal and a man named Grover Norquist...and they say education is a commodity. You can commoditize it, you can charge for it, you can raise tuition; it’s just another thing out there—it’s a barrel of oil, it’s an ounce of gold, it’s a stock, it’s anything.

"On the other side—on the other side of history—lies Thomas Jefferson, who was the founder of the first public university in the United States, who insisted on his tombstone it not record that he was the third President [of the United States], but was the founder of the University of Virginia.

“John Adams...was so conservative he’d make Ronald Reagan look like Franklin Roosevelt. He was conservative to the core, but the one thing he agreed [on] with Jefferson...[was] a public institution on every square mile, because they wanted everybody to have access to public higher education.
“And the father of all—ALL!—public higher education in the United States is a minor historical figure by the name of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln in 1862 in a country [that] had a few more problems than soft oil prices signed something called the Morrill Land-Grant Act, of which we’re sitting on....

“So I can tell you, in this historical struggle, I’m seeking my guidance and my inspiration from Thomas Jefferson and John Adams and Abraham Lincoln.” Carville said Louisiana doesn’t have a Mississippi State or a Clemson, and that there is no university as indispensable to the state as LSU. While this is mostly true, those at Louisiana’s other colleges and universities might wish for a more concerted and inclusive political response or plan to devastating budget cuts; organizers for the recent rally in Baton Rouge to save higher ed never contacted my campus or suggested people bus in from around the state to add unified voices to the protest. But locale is not all that divides Louisiana when it comes to education.

“Now I know what a lot of you are thinkin’,” Carville said, “and I’m gonna address that. You’re sayin’, ‘Ohh, this is Carville, it’s the same red and blue thing we always have in this country. He just doesn’t like it because Jindal’s a Republican, and it’s all politicized. This is not red and blue. This is not. This is purple and gold. This is purple and gold.”

A photo of a check from Carville’s account was shown on the big screens, “undated and made out for five-thousand dollars,” to be given to the next Governor of Louisiana, regardless of party affiliation, who helps pass a constitutional amendment that guarantees LSU funding at the SEC public average. “This place is my passion,” Carville said.

Then he turned the address back to the graduates, since it was their day, he said, “and really the last thing you should want or needed was for some old political guy to stand up and rant and rave about what’s goin’ on in the state.” But he cautioned them against thinking they were the last class “across the burning bridge” and could take their degrees and head for Houston or New Orleans without caring what happened to their alma mater.

He insisted they remember for the rest of their lives one word from the school song: “moulder” (“All praise to thee, our Alma Mater, / moulder of mankind”), since “there are two kinds of people in life: there are the moulded, and there are the moulders.” He wanted each of them to be an “active participant in life, and active participant for what goes on.” He said that even in financial straits, the faculty had taught them well and they, he implied, like himself, had learned something “that not a lot of people get from a university,” that “there is something bigger than myself.” The quarter of their hearts they would leave at LSU would “draw ya back, it’s gonna give you passion, it’s gonna give you purpose in life.”

He asked them to come back in 2060, the 200-year anniversary of LSU, when he wanted people to be saying that, in 2015, graduates and others “symbolically drew a line in the rich alluvial soil of the state they love, and refused to write the last chapter of a declining university, but wrote the first chapter of the resurgent, wonderful, center of learning that we have today. That’s what I want. That’s what we’re gonna be able to do.”
I took my elder son with me to the commencement, a two-hour drive in subtropical rain and coastal traffic. It felt necessary. We've been in Louisiana three years now, nearly a quarter of his life, and he's begun to forget that prayer circles before acting class is different from what we knew in Illinois. The other day at a McDonald’s he pointed to the ubiquitous TV tuned to Fox News and may have said Bill O'Reilly is a great man; the incident is hazy, as I was left Heimliching the Big Mac from my astonished throat and ran up an oxygen debt. Starbuck is old enough to pimp me, so I can't discount that, and there’s a possibility he was confused by O'Reilly plugging his book that has Abe Lincoln in the title. Starbuck is a great fan of history, especially Lincoln and the Civil War. But through the school year he's around local friends and teachers as much as he is around me and my wife, and I engaged in a little teaching moment that day, and again over Red Zeppelin pizza in Baton Rouge after Carville’s address. Though I suspect Carville ignored the rest of Louisiana (and US) public higher education that day for rhetorical and political means, aiming to win the battle he can help fight, I was comforted he’s here at all.

The Chronicle of Higher Education

2 Rivals in College-Application Industry Chart
New Courses
May 22, 2015
By Eric Hoover

NO MU MENTION

Just as applying to college is a rite of passage for millions of students each year, delivering all those applications to campuses is a big business. Now, as one admissions cycle gives way to another, the industry’s two most-prominent operators are poised to move in new directions.

The players: CollegeNet Inc., a technology company that builds application-processing systems for colleges, and the Common Application, a nonprofit organization that runs a standardized online admissions form used by 548 institutions worldwide. The two entities, well known in higher education, are no strangers to each other: Last week, a federal judge in Oregon ruled against CollegeNet, which had filed a lawsuit against the Common Application, claiming its agreements with member colleges violated U.S. antitrust laws.
That ruling ended one chapter in the unfolding story of two rival entities, each with a large stake in the college-admissions process. Under new leadership, the Common Application, in Arlington, Va., has redefined its mission and terms of membership while planning for further expansion. Meanwhile, as The Chronicle first reported last fall, dozens of highly selective colleges plan to create a shared application.

The group has since asked CollegeNet, in Portland, Ore., to build it, according to admissions officials and college counselors with knowledge of the plan. Supporters of the new platform, still in a preliminary stage, say it would provide a welcome alternative to the Common Application, which now dominates the field.

Following decades of consolidation, during which many colleges ditched their own applications to hop onto the Common App’s big-name bandwagon, some experts see another shift coming: more differentiation, more options for students. "A multitude of apps," said Richard A. Clark Jr., director of undergraduate admission at the Georgia Institute of Technology. "I think other groups will be right behind this, trying to get colleges to come onboard, making a different case for who should be involved."

A ‘Coalition’ System

Soon, college applicants are likely to have at least one new application to consider: "The Coalition Admissions System." That is the name of the platform CollegeNet intends to design, according to copies of a brochure that two admissions officials provided to The Chronicle. "The Coalition," which includes "highly respected" public and private institutions, the brochure says, wants to "recast the nature of applying to college in the 21st century."

How, exactly? For now, many details remain unclear. Jim Wolfston, the company’s founder and president, was traveling this week and unavailable to comment. Yet Jeremiah Quinlan, dean of undergraduate admissions at Yale University, shared some thoughts in a recent interview. For one thing, he said, the group intends to change the application timeline by allowing students to start building a "digital portfolio" — perhaps including video and examples of their work — well before their senior year of high school.

"There’s a future in which the application is not as transactional as it is now," Mr. Quinlan said, "where a student can be engaged for a longer amount of time."

As described in the brochure, the new system would include a "collaboration platform," allowing students to invite college counselors, teachers, mentors, and advisers to view their portfolios and offer advice along the way. An application
dashboard would help students keep track of their applications, with reminders about deadlines.

The pitch to colleges: control. Coalition members, the brochure says, could customize their member pages and applications, allowing each college "to personalize its admissions criteria and identify applicants with the strongest fit."

Membership apparently would not be open to just any institution. Participating private colleges, the brochure says, meet the "full demonstrated need" of all first-year domestic students; public universities "make attendance affordable for large numbers" of in-state students. The six-year graduation rate for participants: at least 70 percent. The coalition, the brochure says, "represents a commitment to access and outcomes, creating a name that can be trusted."

Mr. Clark, at Georgia Tech, thinks the application could help colleges get a better sense of an applicant’s "fit" with their campuses. "It’s a chance for students to make themselves more distinct," he said. He thinks a platform used by prominent colleges would also help institutions distinguish themselves, which is one reason he expects to participate. "Institutionally, we need to be associated with the University of Chicago and Yale," he said. "I don’t think we can be left out of that company."

Like several college counselors, Ralph Figueroa described himself as intrigued by what he’s heard about the new application — but not sure what to make of it. "I’m both wary and optimistic," said Mr. Figueroa, director of college guidance at the Albuquerque Academy, in New Mexico. "One problem is that it’s not a joint application but concurrent applications. It doesn’t do the same thing that the Common App does. It’s promising, but whether or not it’s an empty promise, whether it makes things easier for students, remains to be seen."

**New Roles for the Common App**

As a new application takes shape, the Common App has its eye on the future. Established by a handful of private colleges 40 years ago, the organization recently changed its membership requirements in ways that allow a broader array of institutions than ever before to join.

Previously, the group required member colleges to conduct "holistic" reviews of applicants; institutions that did not require essays or recommendations couldn’t join the club. But after drafting a new mission statement last year, participating colleges are now free to waive essay requirements and the like.
That’s one way the organization, long criticized for policing colleges’ admissions practices, is taking a step back from its traditional role. "I’d love to have everybody in the world do holistic review — the most humane way to judge humans — but that’s not my job," said Paul Mott, the organization’s interim chief executive. "The Common App feels that it’s just not its place to dictate to members what they shall do."

Yet Mr. Mott wants the organization to define new roles for itself. By providing colleges with better data, for instance. The Common Application, which sits on a trove of data, has begun to explore more-sophisticated analyses of application patterns that, a spokeswoman for the organization said, could help members meet their enrollment goals.

And in an interview this week, Mr. Mott, a former college counselor, described an emerging plan for the Common App’s members to help educate middle- and high-school students in underserved communities about the admissions and financial-aid process, both virtually and in person.

"We’ll have approximately 600 members next year, we cover a large swath of this country, we can get boots on the ground," he said. "I’ve got an army that could go on a mission."

As for other changes, the organization is considering how to integrate more information about financial aid and scholarships into its application system. And it, too, is considering ways of engaging students online, well before they are ready to start applying to college.

"We’re hearing from our members, Can you bring some innovation into this process?" Mr. Mott said.

How will an organization bracing for continued expansion and diversification compete with a new application defined, in part, by the exclusivity of its high-profile membership? And how many application platforms does higher education really need?

Joshua J. Reiter would not hazard a guess. He is the founder of the Universal College Application, a shared platform used by 46 colleges. When it comes to processing applications, he believes, most colleges still want the same things they always have: efficiency, reliability, and value.
"With tightening budgets, an increasing need for broader, more differing kinds of applicants," he said, "whoever can help these institutions craft the incoming class, in the least expensive way possible, is what they’re looking for. I don’t think that’s changed since 1995."

Eric Hoover writes about admissions trends, enrollment-management challenges, and the meaning of Animal House, among other issues. He’s on Twitter @erichoov, and his email address is eric.hoover@chronicle.com.