Missouri bans college aid to undocumented students

July 15, 2015  •  By Koran Addo

Just one month before classes start, dozens, and possibly hundreds of Missouri college students are suddenly finding out their tuition is about to more than double because of a rule change passed by Missouri lawmakers.

The new rule says public colleges and universities must charge so-called DACA students the highest rate of tuition available — either the out-of-state or the international rate.

DACA students are those who are brought to the U.S. as young children and are undocumented through no fault of their own. They are legally allowed to stay in the country under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, known as DACA.

The new rule is a victory for certain lawmakers who’ve been fighting for years to make it harder for undocumented students to attend college.

House Budget Committee Vice Chairman Scott Fitzpatrick, R-Shell Knob, called the rule change an issue of fairness. He said undocumented students shouldn’t be eligible for the same benefits as legal residents.

But a number of college leaders, including University of Missouri-Columbia Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, oppose the new rule.

“I personally believe human capital shouldn’t be wasted,” Loftin said. “We value every person we have here at the university.”

Before the rule change, DACA students in Missouri were eligible to receive scholarships. Those who graduated from high school had the added benefit of paying in-state tuition once enrolled in a state college.

But language inserted in the state’s budget bill forbids public colleges and universities from extending those benefits to DACA students.

The rule change is an issue of wording. Previously, schools were forbidden to offer benefits to students who had an “unlawful presence” in the U.S. But because DACA students are legally protected from deportation, that language didn’t apply.
This year, Missouri’s Legislature tweaked the wording to say “unlawful immigration status” — a change that recognizes DACA students as being here legally but not having permanent resident status.

At least that’s how the state’s institutions are interpreting the bill. Others, including Gov. Jay Nixon, argue that because the language referring to DACA students was written into the introduction but not the meat of the bill, the language is not legally binding.

Nevertheless, students throughout the state began receiving letters this month informing them that they would no longer be eligible for the tuition relief many were counting on.

More than 20 students at the University of Missouri-St. Louis got their letters last week. It means that the $9,500 tuition they were expecting to pay has ballooned to $25,000, said Alan Byrd, dean of enrollment services.

Byrd said UMSL is currently trying to raise enough money in private donations to pick up the slack for their seven returning DACA students. Meanwhile, the 15 incoming students affected by the rule change are out of luck.

“If we would’ve kept it how it was, the Department of Higher Education would’ve done nothing,” said Fitzpatrick, one of the legislators pushing for the rule change.

“This is to prevent the department from giving scholarships or a better rate of tuition to undocumented students,” he said.

An undocumented student living in Missouri, should not get a lower tuition rate to go to St. Louis Community College than a legal resident who lives outside the city, he said.

“The more you reward illegal immigration, the worse the problem gets,” Fitzpatrick said.

Others see the issue as one of wasted potential and discrimination against students who have legal permission to live, work and study in the country — at least 20 states allow certain undocumented students to receive in-state tuition.

“What this means is that we don’t value or support individuals who made the mistake of being born somewhere else,” said Faith Sandler, executive director of the nonprofit Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis.

She added that the new rule does little more than attempt to snuff out the potential of people who could be contributing members of society.

There are roughly 1,200 DACA students living in Missouri. It’s unclear how many are in college or planning to attend.
Vanessa Crawford Aragón, executive director of Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates, said the new policy is particularly bad because it doesn’t affect enough people to have a large impact on the state, but it’s life-changing for the ones who are affected.

“Discrimination,” she said, “is the only reason to implement this policy.”

Over-eager university lobbyist puts Rowden in tight spot on hospital plan

By Rudi Keller

Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at 11:44 am

The University of Missouri-led lobbying campaign prior to Monday’s Health Facilities Review Committee vote on the proposed 10-bed hospital on South Lenoir Street was more successful than the application itself, with one notable exception.

The committee received virtually identical letters of support from state Reps. Travis Fitzwater, R-Holts Summit and Chuck Basye, R-Rocheport, state Sen. Jeannie Riddle, Mayor LeRoy Benton of Fulton, Mayor Gene Rhorer of Ashland, the Callaway County Commission and Rusk Rehabilitation Center CEO Larry Meeker.

The exception was state Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia, who submitted a letter of support that made many of the same points as the form letters but was otherwise original. And Rowden withdrew his letter on Thursday, just days before the vote, telling the committee he had never intended to get involved in the first place.

“Due to a misunderstanding between my office staff and representatives of MU Health Care, a letter of my support for the Fulton Medical Center expansion was submitted to the CON Committee without my approval,” Rowden wrote.

He wasn't aware he had endorsed the proposed hospital until last week, Rowden wrote.

In an email, Rowden said the letter was drafted by his legislative aide, Stuart Murray, and Craig Stevenson, the registered lobbyist for the university who handles health care issues. Nueterra does not have a registered lobbyist in Missouri.
“My assistant Stuart presented a draft to one of MU’s health care lobbyists, Craig Stevenson,” Rowden explained in an email to the Tribune. “It was Stuart's intention to have him look over it before getting it approved by me and officially submitting it to the CON committee. Mr. Stevenson submitted the draft without mine or Stuart’s knowledge.”

The Health Facilities Review Committee voted 5-2 against the proposed joint venture between MU Health Care and Nueterra, a Leawood, Kan., based medical management company. MU and Nueterra purchased Callaway Community Hospital in December and announced the Columbia joint venture in February.

The proposal drew immediate opposition from Boone Hospital Center, the county-owned facility leased by BJC HealthCare of St. Louis, one of the largest health care management companies in the U.S. In his letter to the committee withdrawing his endorsement, Rowden wrote that the proposed hospital was not in his district and his district had been “well served” by both Boone Hospital and the university and he would not take sides in their dispute.

“It was never my intention to get formally involved in this process,” Rowden wrote in the email to the Tribune. “I have heard from both sides and understand the issues well. I expect the CON committee to make the decision that best serves the people of mid-Missouri.”

Both letters bear identical signatures, which is simple to explain, Rowden said. He did not personally sign either.

“Like most representatives, I have an electronic signature that our assistants have access to,” he wrote. “Given how infrequently most reps are in Jefferson City, it would be impossible to conduct the official business of the office without having that option available to us.”

Exercises could reverse bone loss in middle-aged men

COLUMBIA, Mo., July 14 (UPI) -- If healthy, middle-aged men do certain types of weight-lifting and jumping exercises, for at least 6 months, they can reverse age-related bone loss.

Researchers said that targeted exercises for 90 to 120 minutes per day were enough to facilitate bone growth.

"Our study is the first to show that exercise-based interventions work to increase bone density in middle-aged men with low bone mass who are otherwise health," said Pam
Hinton, an associate professor in the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology at the University of Missouri, in a press release. These exercises could be prescribed to reverse bone loss associated with aging."

In the study, researchers tracked 38 physically active, middle-aged men who completed a six-month weightlifting or jumping program for a year. They measured the men's bone mass at the beginning of the study, six months after the program ended, and 12 months after the program ended.

The researchers found that bone mass of the whole body and lumbar spine significantly increased after six months and that the increase had maintained at the 12-month check as well.

Hinton said the study also showed that not all exercises would result in increasing bone mass, but rather targeted ones that put pressure on bones to promote growth.

"Individuals don't typically have to know they have heart disease, high blood pressure or prediabetes to start exercising – they do it as prevention," Hinton said. "Similarly, individuals don't have to know they have osteoporosis to start lifting weights."

"The interventions we studied are effective, safe and take 60-120 minutes per week to complete, which is feasible for most people. Also, the exercises can be done at home and require minimal exercise equipment, which adds to the ease of implementing and continuing these interventions."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Commission to vote on Confederate rock relocation

ANDREW KESSEL, 19 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — The Confederate rock memorial outside the Boone County Courthouse may soon have a new home.

The Boone County Commission on Tuesday discussed whether to relocate the memorial to the Centralia Battlefield. A second reading and vote will be held at 1:30 p.m. Thursday.

Jack Chance, president of Friends of the Centralia Battlefield, said he doesn't want to see the memorial relocated. "To move the monument somewhere else is not preserving history," he said.
If the memorial is moved, Chance said, the privately owned battlefield near Centralia is an ideal location.

**Originally, the rock was located beside Speakers Circle at MU. The Legion of Black Collegians protested, and in 1975 the county agreed to place the rock outside the courthouse.**

Scott Orr, who was involved in having the memorial moved off of the campus, was the only other citizen to comment.

He told commissioners that he supports another move.

"I think it's clearly the right thing to do," Orr said. "If it offends anyone on our campus, it ought to be moved." Moving the memorial doesn't "denigrate the honor of the people who died," he said.

A petition to remove the rock was started by MU alumnus Tommy Thomas III of Columbia. Thomas had not submitted his petition before the county commission took up the issue on Tuesday, but it had 221 signatures at the website MoveOn.org.

Thomas said a battlefield is a more appropriate location.

"It's not appropriate to have it at the front lawn of a place of law," Thomas said. "People who support this want it moved, not just me, not just the black people."

A plaque on the rock reads: "To honor the valor and patriotism of Confederate soldiers of Boone County."

Before the petition, Northern District Commissioner Janet Thompson said she was not aware of what the rock memorial said.

"I am ashamed I didn't know," Thompson said. "I think a person of color has a totally different perspective."
County commissioners are expected to decide on a move when they meet at 1:30 p.m. Thursday in the County Government Center. Presiding Commissioner Dan Atwill said there will be no opportunity for public comment at the Thursday meeting.

If the commission decides to relocate the memorial to Centralia, Atwill said, the move will happen "by November."

Op ed: Does history suggest we should eye the Tigers?

By NOEL A. CROWSON

Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at 2:00 pm

In reading recent articles concerning the effort by Tommy Thomas III to have the granite rock with the small plaque honoring the men from Boone County who served in the Confederacy during the Civil War removed from the courthouse grounds, I became incensed with the complete lack of knowledge of our history. I began to wonder at what point this ridiculous effort to wipe out our nation’s history will stop.

Thomas might want to look to the University of Missouri website, click on the box “History and Tradition” and read the following article on the history of the mascot and colors: “Soon after Missouri’s first football team was formed in 1890, the athletic committee adopted the nickname ‘Tiger’ in official recognition of a local Civil War militia called ‘The Missouri Tigers.’ Their fighting spirit is now embodied in MU’s official mascot.”

For further documentation, you might go to the 1882 “History of Boone County,” which contains additional documentation on this militia unit.

Even the most amateur Civil War historian, in reviewing the names of the men in this company, will find several of them came from slave-holding families and were Confederate sympathizers. In fact, their commander, Maj. James Rollins, was from a slave-holding family and owned slaves until 1865. This prompts the question: Are we going to get rid of the MU mascot because its origin comes from a group of Southern sympathizers?
In addition, the MU tiger is named “Truman” after the “second Confederate president,” Harry Truman. Truman was a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and even attended some of the ex-Confederate reunions of Quantrill’s guerrillas in Kansas City. He spoke on their behalf in several of his documented public speeches. We certainly do not want anything that would remind us of the Civil War, and I could list many more examples. But because much of Columbia’s commerce is dedicated to the support of the university’s athletic programs, I thought we should consider the possibility, based on Thomas’ logic, that the Tiger must go as well as the name, and the Missouri Tigers must be banished from our community. It seems their name and origin would be equally upsetting.

History is embedded in our daily lives regardless of whether we realize it. We walk by historical items every day and never give them another thought until they are brought to our attention. If those items never offended us before we were aware of them, then they are probably not really offensive. These objects should simply make us remember the reasons for their historical significance so we will not repeat the mistakes of our past while continuing the positive lessons we have learned.

By the way, those Confederate soldiers honored by that rock are considered American veterans by the U.S. government. “Confederate Soldiers are legal veterans ... by Public Law 85-425, May 23, 1958 (H.R. 358) 72 Statute 133 states – “(3) (e) for the purpose of this section, and section 433, the term ‘veteran’ includes a person who served in the military or naval forces of the Confederate States of America during the Civil War, and the term ‘active, military or naval service’ includes active service in such forces.”

As a result of this law, the last surviving Confederate veteran received a U.S. military pension until his death in 1959, and from that day until present descendants of Confederate veterans have been able to receive military monuments to place on graves from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their ancestors. A Confederate veteran should therefore be treated with the same honor and dignity as any other American veteran. If you move the rock, you are disrespecting a monument to American veterans.

Noel A. Crowson of Auxvasse is commander of the Elijah Gates Camp 570 of Sons of Confederate Veterans.

NASA spacecraft flies by Pluto

COLUMBIA, Mo. - On Tuesday, the farthest spacecraft sent on a mission by the U.S. reached its closed point to Pluto and did a very close fly-by.

**Dr. Angela Speck, an astrophysicist and Director of Astronomy at the University of Missouri, said it has taken more than 9 years for the spacecraft New Horizons to reach Pluto.**

New Horizons captured the clearest images of Pluto ever seen by humans. The detailed images and other data collected hinted at a much more active surface than expected.

Speck said it would take about a year or more for the data to be transmitted back to earth.

"There's this image of Pluto where it's so fuzzy that you don't know where the edges are, so you've only got an approximate size, and with the new image you can really see the edges and you know how big it is, so now we've got a size that's good to within about 10 miles," said Speck.

**New images of Pluto after New Horizons flyby**

Watch story: [http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=29693&zone=5&categories=5](http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=29693&zone=5&categories=5)

COLUMBIA - Photos of Pluto before Tuesday were nothing but a pixelated blur; but after the New Horizons flyby, pictures of the dwarf planet are clearer than ever before.

*The flyby was launched while Pluto was still considered a planet over 9 years ago according to MU Professor of Astrophysics Angela Speck.*

Since Pluto is so far away, it was hard for anyone to get a clear view of the dwarf planet until Tuesday.

"Pluto is very small and at a large distance, it's a teeny weenie little thing that is hard to see," Speck said. "So even with the Hubble Space telescope, this is the best we could do."
Speck said even though the Hubble Space telescope is very advanced, Pluto is just too far away to get a clear image with it.

The closest the flyby got to Pluto was at Tuesday 7 a.m. central time, but the flyby may have occurred hours earlier, Speck said.

"Because it takes so long for radio signals to get back (from the probe), it takes hours for it to get back," Speck said. "So they (NASA) celebrated when they knew it was going past."

New Horizons will continue its mission through the Kuiper belt and to get a view of Pluto's moons.

Scientists discovered one thing about the Pluto they weren't expecting:

"We didn't expect that it's ever so slightly bigger than we originally expected," Speck said.

With the clearer images, the edges are more visible in pictures and scientists are able to see an extra 10 or so miles.

"This has some really big implications for understanding what's going on because it's less dense," Speck said. "That's going to have some impact on models and what's going on with it."

Other things scientists have noticed with the new images are the dark patches, active geology, craters and the fact that Pluto doesn't hold on to objects in its atmosphere.

July 15, 2015

Making Transcripts More Than 'a Record of Everything the Student Has Forgotten'

By Katherine Mangan

NO MU MENTION

Stanford University’s registrar, Thomas C. Black, isn’t surprised that fewer employers are asking for college transcripts these days.
The old-school version, with its list of abbreviated course titles, credit hours, and grades, might as well broadcast, "Here is a record of everything the student has forgotten," says Mr. Black, who is also associate vice provost for student affairs.

"There’s a clamor," he says, "for something more meaningful." That "something" is a form of extended transcript or digital portfolio that captures more of what students are learning both inside and outside the classroom.

There could be links for study abroad and internships, robotics competitions and volunteer activities. An electronic portfolio could include examples of creative writing or artwork, or an engineering prototype a student developed.

And at a time when everyone, it seems, is looking for evidence of "competencies," students could highlight the specific learning outcomes they gained in their courses.

Institutions like Stanford and Elon Universities have been experimenting with some of those ideas, which created a springboard for brainstorming sessions here this week at a meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, or Aacrao. The Lumina Foundation has provided $1.27 million for the association to work with Naspa — Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education in developing ideas for more-robust student records.

Here's an example of the enhanced transcripts that Elon is trying:
The registrars also heard from the leaders of three entrepreneurial businesses who said they never looked at college transcripts.

While the business leaders said they appreciated efforts to highlight specific skills, piling too much information into an electronic portfolio could overwhelm employers, they suggested. Many of the skills they’re looking for may also be hard to spell out.

"What we value are people who can adapt to environments that are constantly changing," said Cam Houser, chief executive officer of 3 Day Startup, a company that runs hands-on entrepreneurship programs for students at more than 50 colleges. "We want to see what they tried and failed, and what they learned from it. We don’t hire anyone with a five-year plan."

A Proxy for Elimination

The college degree has also become a screening tool for employers who are deluged with applications for jobs, like receptionist and office clerk, that previously didn’t require a postsecondary education. Transcripts that show only courses and grades may shortchange disadvantaged and first-generation college students who got a shaky start
academically but have relevant experiences that don’t show up on a traditional transcript.

"They may have skills, but they’ll never be chosen because the proxies employers are using eliminate them," Mr. Black said. "The transcripts don’t help."

When designing new transcripts, it’s crucial for colleges to understand that students are eager to highlight their skills and want to get into the workplace as fast as they can, he said.

Listening to their skepticism about the value of college transcripts, Mike Reilly, executive director of Aacrao, expressed the frustration many in the audience were having in trying to communicate with local employers.

"Some people might think we’re crazy trying to map our outcomes to you guys, who are changing so quickly," he said.

Those who are educating students in the heart of Silicon Valley know that concern only too well.

Stanford plans to open an office in September that will help students create digital portfolios that highlight the skills they’ve acquired.

"The people who get jobs are those who know what they know and can articulate it clearly," Mr. Black told his colleagues at the meeting here.

The university has also created a prototype for what it calls "scholarship records," which help students highlight specific learning outcomes in more than 1,600 courses. Participating faculty members outlined the learning outcomes they expected their students to master.

Not everyone was sold on the idea; some faculty members aren’t convinced that every course should be broken down into measurable and marketable outcomes.

But Mr. Black said it was helpful to see how a philosophy student and a computer-science student both acquired "formal reasoning" skills in their respective courses — "which sets up the argument that you can have very marketable skills in disciplines that don’t have a vocational path."
A Curb on Grade Inflation

Another problem with transcripts, according to conference participants, is that in an era of widespread grade inflation, they don’t provide any context for the high marks students are chalking up.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has learned the hard way just how hard it is to change that.

Faculty members approved a plan in 2010 aimed at curbing grade inflation by allowing for more contextual information to be added to undergraduates’ academic records. The additional information would show the students’ grades compared with others in the same section.

A student with an A-minus in one course where the average grade was an A wouldn’t look so impressive, while someone who had earned a C-plus in a course where 60 percent of the students fared worse might be somewhat redeemed.

A transcript would also feature a student’s "schedule-point average" alongside the grade-point average. It would be calculated by averaging the median grades in the student’s schedule to give a sense of its strength.

Students have pushed back against the proposed changes, arguing that if other universities aren’t reflecting the same information on their transcripts, the contextualized scores could hurt their chances of getting into graduate school or landing jobs. If professors have created a problem with their grading policies, they reasoned, students shouldn’t have to suffer.

"Our undergraduate students felt they’d been blindsided, and it created tension on campus," the university’s registrar, Christopher Derickson, told fellow registrars here.

The plan has been repeatedly delayed, most recently for another year of study. When asked by an audience member, Mr. Derickson predicted that the contextualized transcript wouldn’t survive as an official transcript, but that it would prove a useful tool for departments to compare grading patterns and students to see how they had performed relative to their classmates.
Faculty Salaries

"Faculty Salaries" is Inside Higher Ed's latest print-on-demand compilation of articles. It contains a report on the annual faculty compensation survey from the American Association of University Professors and explores such topics as gender and racial pay gaps and adjunct unionization.

This compilation is free and you may download a copy here: https://www.insidehighered.com/booklet/faculty-salaries.