COLUMBIA — **Steve Ferris**, a professor of finance and the senior associate dean for graduate studies and research at MU's Trulaske College of Business, has been appointed to serve as the Business School's interim dean.

Starting Aug. 22, Ferris will replace **Joan Gabel**, who is leaving MU to become the provost at the University of South Carolina. The school hasn't announced a timeline for permanently filling the job.

Along with his new duties as dean, Ferris will be teaching a doctoral seminar on corporate finance this fall. Ferris said despite his new administrative duties, it was important to him to continue teaching. "That is our core product," he said. "Educating our students is why we're here."

Ferris has been with MU for 22 years. During that period, he has served as the director of the university's Financial Research Institute and as the chair of the department of finance. He has been the senior associate dean for three years.

"I've always been firmly committed to Trulaske College's excellence," Ferris said. "I didn't hesitate when offered the position."

Ferris said one of his priorities was continuing the growth of the new Applied Learning Center. In May, Gov. Jay Nixon announced the state would match $10 million in private funds for the new center.

"Dean Gabel created a lot of momentum," he said. "I want to keep the ship moving forward."
Ferris earned a bachelor's degree in French and mathematics from Duquesne University. He earned his MBA and doctorate in finance from the University of Pittsburgh. He has a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

Ferris has a diploma with distinction from the U.S. Naval War College, according to a statement from the provost's office. He retired with the rank of commander in the U.S. Navy Reserve after 23 years of service.

Ferris said he will stay on as interim dean for long as he is needed while the search for a permanent dean goes on.

"This is not an interruption," he said. "We're going to keep on moving forward."

Mizzou Online offers tuition award to community college students

August 10, 2015  BY Alex Jacobi

MU now offers a 10 percent tuition reduction for community college graduates who want to pursue an online bachelor’s degree.

The Mizzou Online Community College Tuition Award is available to Missouri residents who have graduated from a community college in the state and are pursuing one of MU’s undergraduate distance programs. The reduction will count toward the student’s base tuition and can be used for up to 150 cumulative hours of classes.

“We look forward to serving recent community college graduates as well as those nontraditional students seeking to pursue a bachelor’s degree,” Chuck May, MU admissions director, said in a press release.
Ron Chesbrough, chair of the Missouri Community College Association’s Presidents and Chancellors Council, said that Missouri community college graduates are some of the most prepared for attaining a four-year degree.

“We are pleased to count the University of Missouri among our four-year partners, and we welcome this announcement of a tuition award for these highly sought after students,” Chesbrough said.

“This tuition award makes our online bachelor’s programs even more accessible to students across our state,” said Jim Spain, MU vice provost for undergraduate studies and e-learning.

MU has an Internet access agreement with the MCCA, which lets community college graduates continue to use on-campus computers to pursue online degrees from MU.

In June, MU began a 10 percent online tuition discount for active-duty military personnel. This discount can be awarded to those seeking a graduate or undergraduate degree and applies to a maximum of 150 undergraduate hours or 75 graduate hours.

Mizzou Online has nine undergraduate degree options: Early Childhood Education in a Mobile Society, Educational Studies, General Studies, Health Sciences, Hospitality Management, Interdisciplinary Studies, Nursing, Radiography and Respiratory Therapy.

Tuesday: Missouri’s undocumented college students face higher tuition, loss of scholarships

By AINE O’CONNOR - AUGUST 10, 2015

A small but critical addition to a Missouri budget bill may keep the children of undocumented immigrants from attending state public universities by raising their tuition to the amounts international students pay. Now, those students are fighting the law by asking Governor Jay Nixon for help.

New language affects ‘Dreamers,’ who are covered under the federal government’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The program allows undocumented individuals who came to the country as children to stay in the United States so long as they meet certain requirements. Missouri’s bill changes the state legal status of DACA students, preventing universities from offering them in-state tuition or scholarships.

The language has local universities scrambling to figure out where they stand. While the University of Missouri-Kansas City has scraped together private money to fund the
tuition gap many DACA students will experience this school year, other UM campuses are struggling to find ways to help. With school start-dates only about two weeks away, “St. Louis on the Air” will discuss whether the bill is an unfair barrier to higher education.

Guests

Karissa Anderson, president and manager of advocacy, The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis

Naomi Carranza, executive assistant, Latinos and Axión; student, St. Louis Community College—Meramec

Vanessa Crawford Aragón, executive director, Missouri Immigrant & Refugee Advocates (MIRA)

This interview will be on "St. Louis on the Air" at noon Tuesday; this story will be updated after the show. You can listen live.

Email your question to talk@stlpublicradio.org, or tweet us at @STLonAir.

St. Louis on the Air discusses issues and concerns facing the St. Louis area. The show is produced by Mary Edwards and Alex Heuer and hosted by veteran journalist Don Marsh. Follow us on Twitter: @STLonAir.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

David Spear's painting of 'Blind' Boone selected for commemorative poster

JOHN CLEMENT BAT, 21 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — When local artist David Spear found out his painting was selected for this year's commemorative poster to benefit the arts, he was more than ready to tell a story about a local music legend.

Spear started working on his painting in February, and entered it in the Office of Cultural Affairs' poster competition in March.
The painting depicts ragtime musician John William "Blind" Boone playing his piano amid a tornado in front of his historic downtown house on Fourth Street, Spear said.

The poster of his oil painting will be unveiled Sept. 3 at the annual Poster Party for the Arts at the Missouri Theatre.

Each year, the winning commemorative poster highlights an important slice of Columbia's history, culture, business or local fare.

Since December 2014, Spear spent time at the State Historical Society of Missouri researching Blind Boone.

"He was really a remarkable man that overcame a lot of adversity," Spear said. "His eyes were taken out because of health complications, but he saw it more as a blessing than a curse."

Spear said the painting couldn't come at a better time as the J.W. "Blind" Boone Heritage Foundation Board looks to complete renovations of Boone's historical home.

Once the foundation finishes fundraising, it plans to complete interior renovations and build a memorial garden adjacent to the house.

Spear used oil paints on an old coffee table as his canvas for the artwork. He noted the similarities between the idea of his piece and the home renovations: taking something discarded and repurposing it.

"When you do that you resurrect his soul. His house had an open door policy, and he was always playing and you could always hear music coming out of there," Spear said.

Proceeds from the party and poster sales will go to the Columbia Arts Fund. The fund was created in 2012 by the Office of Cultural Affairs.

The arts fund aims to augment funding to local arts and culture organizations like the Columbia Art League and the Missouri Symphony Society.
Program specialist Sarah Dresser said the poster party is intended to speed up the fundraising process for the arts fund. She said another reason for the party is to recognize the importance of the organizations that receive funding, and all they give back to the community.

**MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and Karin Loftin will host the event from 6 to 9 p.m. Sept. 3. Contact the Office of Cultural Affairs at 874-6386 by Aug. 28 for tickets, which start at $50 and include a poster signed by Spear.**

The unveiling of the 2015 poster will take place at 7:30 p.m.

The city's commemorative posters and poster parties began in 1992.

Dresser said an estimated 400 people showed up to last year's party, and she expects an even larger turnout at the Missouri Theatre.

*Spear's artwork* is based in Columbia, and often depicts scenes of recognizable architecture and people of the city. Some of his artwork can be seen downtown painted on a utility box on Ninth Street and Broadway. He also has a couple of painted murals in Wabash Station.

**MU fraternities ask for more time to install fire sprinkler systems**


COLUMBIA, Mo. - *Two University of Missouri fraternities asked the Columbia City Council for more time to install fire sprinkler systems.*
In 2009, the city put a new law into effect stating all fraternities and sororities in the city must have fire sprinkler systems, Brad Fraizer with the Columbia Fire Department said.

That year, six Greek houses asked for an extension to install the sprinklers. The deadline for those six houses is March 16, 2016. Last Monday, representatives from Sigma Nu and Delta Tau Delta asked the city council for more time.

Delta Tau Delta House Corporation President Breck Anderson asked the city council for three more years. The fraternity is working to raise $3 million to build a new house, he said.

"The house is 55 years old I think and a little outdated, Anderson said. "The maintenance of keeping that house up is going to be far more expensive over the next 15-20 years than building a new one."

Installing a new sprinkler system in Delta Tau Delta would cost about $150,000 to $350,000, which would set back the timeline of building a new house even more, Anderson said. But board members are looking at other options to keep fraternity members safe.

"We're looking at what it would cost us, and obviously it would be far less to implement a system in the kitchen," Anderson said. "But the bottom line is we're concerned about their safety, absolutely."

Sigma Nu also asked for an extension until the the end of the 2016 spring semester. The current house is set to be demolished after the spring semester, and construction of a new house will start Fall 2016, Sigma Nu House Corporation President Doug Hacker. Adding a new sprinkler system to the existing house would just act as a band-aid on an aging house with multiple issues, Hacker said.

"Building materials now are fire retardant," Hacker said. "It just didn't exist when the house was built. And for us to just put in a sprinkler system, we thought at least, we were doing a disservice to our undergraduates. And felt like if we were really going to keep them safe, we really needed to put a whole new structure together for them."

Other Greek Houses that must come into compliance by March 16 include Kappa Alpha, Theta Chi, Lambda Chi Alpha and Acacia, Fraizer said.

In 1999, freshman fraternity member Dominic Passantino was killed in a fire in the Sigma Chi fraternity, ten years before the city regulations.
Columbia Public Works warns drivers about College Ave. additions


COLUMBIA - The summer construction on College Avenue is coming to a close, and Columbia Public Works (CPW) says the results will bring a new challenges for drivers.

CPW built two H.A.W.K. pedestrian crossing signals, or high-intensity activated crosswalk, on College Avenue between University Avenue and Stadium Boulevard.

"We knew something needed to be done on College Avenue in order to keep pedestrians safe," said CPW Public Information Specialist Steven Sapp. "We created a median and two more controlled crossing areas for the public."

However, CPW is concerned about motorists not knowing how the crossing signals work.

"We know it will be a change, especially for motorists, so we are trying to demonstrate how the new signals will work through social media and press releases," Sapp said.

A H.A.W.K. crossing signal contains three lights, one yellow and two red. The yellow light and red light will work like a normal traffic light, yellow signalling to slow down and red signalling drivers to stop.

When the lights are a solid red, it means pedestrians are crossing the street. Once the two red lights begin to flash it means motorists can proceed with caution.

Some students and residents who live in east campus say they are concerned the new signals will cause more problems with traffic.

"I understand what they are trying to do," said MU senior Erin Waterhouse. "I would always watch other people crossing the road come close to being hit, so this could help with
pedestrian safety, but I'm worried it will cause more traffic accidents because of all the stops."

Sapp said, once the H.A.W.K. signals are up and running, CPW plans to watch how traffic flows in the area and adjust the timing of traffic lights.

"Like everything that is new, we understand that it is an adjustment for the community," Sapp said. "It will take some getting used to, but we are more focused on decreasing pedestrian fatalities on that street, and we think these lights will help that."

CPW predicts the construction and traffic signals will be completed by August 21.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Review Committee heads west to flesh out fairgrounds' future

WILLIAM SCHMITT, 1 hr ago

COLUMBIA — Despite fat-bellied clouds, there was no rain Monday during the Central Missouri Events Center Review Committee's trip west. There was a torrential downpour, but it wasn't rain — it was information.

Monday was an opportunity for Boone County Presiding Commissioner Dan Atwill to go west and try to extract a thorn yanking the county’s sleeve: the future of the Central Missouri Events Center, simply known as “the fairgrounds.” The county closed the events center in January after voters last year rejected a sales tax to keep it open. Since then, only the Boone County Fair has used the site — and officials have told the Boone County Fair Board to look elsewhere for next year.

A little more than two weeks after organizers cleared the last of the fair from its traditional digs, a delegation of prominent Boone County residents drafted by Atwill — along with a retinue of a
couple dozen county employees, city workers and members of the public — boarded a white MO-X bus for a field trip to suburban Kansas City.

The aim of the journey was to look at sports and entertainment venues that have generated enough revenue to sustain themselves in the hopes of bringing some ideas back to Boone County.

**The Independence Events Center**

The trip's first stop was the Independence Events Center, an 18-acre arena in Independence, Missouri, with 5,800 permanent seats. It opened in November 2009 and hosts home games for the Missouri Mavericks, a minor league hockey team affiliated with the NHL's New York Islanders.

The Independence arena hosts more than sports; in February it was the first location for singer Ariana Grande's world tour. September’s calendar features a Papa Roach concert and the “Independence Fire & Ice BBQ” competition, and the metal skeletons of boxing rings from last weekend's Ringside World Championships were being dismantled as the group entered the arena.

The arena was constructed at a cost of about $60 million, Independence City Manager Ron Heacock said. To build it, the city of Independence took on debt, which was financed by a community improvement district sales tax. First set at a half-cent, the tax was bumped up in August 2011 to three-quarters of a cent.

The first step for Independence was a feasibility study in 2007, which found that Independence should be able to support a mid-sized arena. Heacock said the arena has brought the equivalent of 90 full-time jobs to the area and said it filled a niche because there were no other sheets of ice in eastern Jackson County. The city is guaranteed a minimum of $80,000 from the events center, with Spectra Venue Management absorbing the brunt if the arena were to lose money.

Heacock advised the review committee to "nail down an anchor tenant" if possible and to expect "pushback" if it decides to pursue a similar route to Independence's CID sales tax.
"Money for this kind of project always requires public participation and public funding," Atwill said later. While he has acknowledged putting another tax on the ballot is unpopular, he wouldn't rule out the possibility.

Across the border

After a barbecue lunch, it was back on the bus and west across the state line to explore the Scheels Overland Park Soccer Complex in Overland Park, Kansas. The venue has a dozen regulation soccer fields made of synthetic turf, video boards, administrative offices, cafes and locker rooms. It opened in September 2009 with a $32 million price tag.

Atwill indicated before the tour that he was particularly interested in the complex's "stay-to-play" arrangement with the Overland Park Convention and Visitors Bureau. It requires out-of-town teams to prove that they are staying in an Overland Park hotel. There are 35 hotels “within minutes” of the soccer park, according to the city’s website.

Complex manager Mike Laplante led the tour onto Field 1, the largest of the Overland Park dozen, while a young girl in a lavender tank-top dribbled a soccer ball through orange cones on the other side of the field. He estimated the soccer fields made up about 80 of the complex's 96 acres and said they have also been used for youth football, lacrosse and Ultimate Frisbee events.

After Laplante’s explanation, Alden walked over to a nearby concession stand to scope out the costs of hot dogs and sodas. He praised the decision to make fields available for multiple sports. And, he said as he photographed the menu, while synthetic turfs require more money upfront, they can provide more long-term benefits.

A trip to the farm

Next to the soccer complex is the Deanna Rose Children’s Farmstead, a museum designed as a tribute to Kansas at the turn of the 20th century. Its 12 acres host gardens, a fishing pond, an antiquated country schoolhouse and hundreds of animals.
The Boone group heard yet another presentation, this time from Overland Park assistant director of park supervision Bryan Toben and Farmstead Superintendent Virgil Miles. Toben said it's a popular destination for school field trips, with attendance often topping out at 4,000.

**Entry to the farm was free, though each visitor was counted by Jerry Browning, a former MU professor of physical therapy in his first year of volunteering at Deanna Rose. Browning was putting in a few of the 24,000 volunteer hours, to which Toben credits the farmette's success.**

**To the ballpark ... and back home**

The final stop was the 130-acre Blue Valley Recreation Complex. Complex manager Steve Herrig was on hand to discuss the sprawling collection of 24 ballparks and its almost 2,000 parking spaces.

Herrig said the complex hosted about 40 tournaments this year, including three college softball tournaments. While there were no hotels in the immediate vicinity, he said, the complex still had "a pretty good draw" outside of a 60-mile radius, including hosting Little League World Series games.

**Thoughts between stops**

While there might not be room for dozens of baseball fields at the fairgrounds, there are already five fields at nearby Atkins Memorial Park. Columbia Park Services Manager Gabe Huffington said the city plans to add two more if voters renew the city's Park Sales Tax in November.

Before the review committee goes after funding or starts drawing up designs, it has to determine a direction for developing the events center's 129 acres.

Paul Land of Plaza Commercial Realty was on hand Monday to brief the committee on zoning designations in the county and the city, as well as to present property values of nearby tracts on the market.
"At some point in time, you folks are going to have to get an appraisal done," Land said.

Chad Sayre of Allstate Consultants was also aboard the bus. In January, he presented a plan for "new net revenues" to a group of equestrian enthusiasts, and he revised his plan for the review committee. His plan hinges on cooperation between the city, the county and MU’s College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources to develop the land — and to provide a "financial backstop" similar to the Columbia Regional Airport's revenue guarantee plan.

Alden downplayed Sayre's notions for an equestrian facility, saying that equestrian sports have been mired as an NCAA "emerging sport" for over a decade. He emphasized creating venues that could have multiple purposes.

Just outside of Boone County on the way back, former Gov. Roger Wilson made sure to point out "before the press gets off the bus — the Boone County Fair is not being left in the dust."

Whether a consultant is hired or a feasibility study is commissioned has not been determined. Atwill said that a tour to the fairgrounds was in the near future. After 11 hours, the committee had no stated objective but had plenty of new information.

August 11, 2015

Colleges Under Investigation for Sexual Assault
Wonder What Getting It Right Looks Like
By Robin Wilson

NO MU MENTION

Five years into a federal review of how it handles sexual assault, Ohio State University is still trying to get it right.
The Education Department announced in 2010 that, under the gender-equity law known as Title IX, it was opening a compliance review of all of Ohio State’s policies and procedures related to sexual harassment and assault, allegations of which had swirled around its marching band.

Over the next four years, investigators from the department’s Office for Civil Rights made several visits to the campus, and Ohio State turned over thousands of pages of documents. Last September university and federal officials reached a resolution agreement that lays out 100 separate steps the institution must take to comply with Title IX, including about a dozen requirements of its Title IX coordinator. The university must, for instance, measure the effectiveness of the changes it makes under the agreement, but not before assembling a focus group of students and employees to discuss how such a climate check should be carried out. Any plans for that must be approved by the civil-rights office before the university can proceed.

The dizzying list of requirements is typical of agreements the OCR, as the office is known, is slowly striking with colleges it investigates under Title IX. The investigations frequently follow complaints by alleged victims that colleges mishandled their cases or other accounts of problems on particular campuses. By the time the office finishes monitoring Ohio State, it will be 2017 — seven years after the government began its review.

With campus sexual assault drawing tremendous attention nationally, how colleges respond is under scrutiny from students and advocates, as well as state and federal lawmakers. So when the civil-rights office asks a college for changes it says will make the campus safer, the college typically tries to do what it is told. But requirements are sometimes inscrutable.

No one argues with the goal of preventing sexual assault, but it’s unclear what exactly that should look like. When, campus officials wonder, will they have done as much as they can?

At a meeting of college lawyers in June, Ted Mitchell, the under secretary of education, called changes in how institutions handle sexual assault "a national experiment." Some administrators, and consultants who help them keep up with the government’s guidance, say that made them feel like guinea pigs.

Catherine E. Lhamon, who heads the civil-rights office, says colleges have more discretion than they think. "There is tons of wiggle room," she says, in how they set their policies.
Beyond trying to protect students, administrators say, the demands on colleges to reform their policies and procedures are enormous. Student-affairs officers particularly, they say, are buckling under the pressure of trying to meet the government’s approval with their prevention and adjudication efforts.

Because the stakes are so high — colleges found to have violated Title IX can theoretically lose all federal money — several administrators would not allow their names to be used in sharing their frustrations with the process.

Ohio State officials did question the OCR about some details in the agreement, including how the office had come up with some of its directives. But getting an answer can be difficult, and the university must move ahead to meet the requirements nonetheless.

"You can go through several rounds of conversations with the OCR to make sure your policy language matches what you’ve agreed to," says Kellie Brennan, Ohio State’s Title IX coordinator. "It has been a while for us to get to a place where we are even comfortable with a draft."

‘Onerous’ Reviews
The higher-education cases the civil-rights office closed in 2014 took an average of 1,469 days — nearly four years — to complete. And the list of institutions under investigation is growing at a faster rate, from 55 in May 2014, when the office first made the list public, to 128 today. In the two years since Ms. Lhamon took over as assistant secretary for civil rights, the office has settled just seven investigations.

In a letter to several senators in April, the office explained why the process takes so long. "While OCR’s goal is to resolve all complaints within 180 days, sexual-violence investigations tend to be complex and may involve systemic, campus-, and institution-wide issues," the letter says.

The OCR, it says, "comprehensively examines the campus culture with respect to sexual violence, reviews the institution’s response to complaints of sexual violence over a period of years, interviews students who filed sexual-violence complaints, interviews school officials involved in responding to sexual-violence reports and complaints, and meets with individual students and student groups."

While the Obama administration has asked Congress for money to hire 200 more investigators, Ms. Lhamon says the job is so large that the office could actually use 500 more people.
"A review is onerous," Ms. Lhamon says. "I don’t love how much time it takes for my staff, and I don’t love how much time it takes for schools. But I do love ensuring safety for all students on campus."

While colleges are under investigation, they must conduct business as usual: fielding reports of sexual assault, hearing cases, training students, faculty, and staff. They must also decide whether to change their policies along the way or wait until the investigation is complete.

The University of Connecticut has been on the investigation list since 2013, first for one set of cases, and since this past winter, for another. Elizabeth Conklin, Connecticut’s Title IX coordinator, says that after a federal complaint against an institution, the OCR tends to look not only at the case of the individual who filed the complaint, but at all reports of sexual assault, policies, communication with students who report incidents, and prevention campaigns.

"It is the full landscape of what a university is doing," she says. "It is a very 50,000-foot view down to the weeds and everything in between."

Nicole Fournier Geltson, general counsel at Connecticut, says satisfying the government’s requests can be challenging because universities are so decentralized. “A single student complaint at UConn could involve multiple offices responding,” she says. "That student may have filed a report with [the campus] police, probably had assistance from our dean of students in changing classes or a dorm room, and may have had assistance from the women’s center or a professor."

During its investigations, Connecticut has continued to modify how it handles students’ reports to keep up with what’s considered most effective. "We are constantly making changes large and small to policies, procedures, protocol, and prevention," says Ms. Conklin. "My reading is that this can’t wait."

Ruth Jones, Title IX coordinator at Occidental College, says sexual-assault policies on campuses nationally are "continually evolving." That means institutions are always tinkering, even while a review is underway, which has been the case for two years at Occidental.

"We keep reading and thinking and trying to figure out the most effective way to do things," says Ms. Jones. Many of the changes her office makes are small but important, she says. One is in its communication with students on both sides of a case: how many updates to send them while the college is investigating a report.
"Right now, we give one for every stage," Ms. Jones says. "But we are still trying to decide, Would an update once a week be more appropriate?"

For now, the national experiment is still playing out, as colleges try to both protect students and comply with Title IX. It was the Obama administration that made enforcing the 1972 law a priority in responding to sexual violence. With so many investigations pending, a change in administration could bring a different approach.

Eventually, Ms. Lhamon says, campuses will reach the standards the civil-rights office is aiming for. "I really hope we don’t need to sustain this level of attention to this issue," she says. "I really hope that we turn a corner, and this is no longer a flash point."

Robin Wilson writes about campus culture, including sexual assault and sexual harassment. Contact her at robin.wilson@chronicle.com.

As the Face of the Student Body Changes, State and Campus Policies Lag Behind

By Eric Kelderman

Higher-education officials often mention the nation’s changing demographic makeup as one challenge colleges face. But that concern usually comes in the middle of a long list of problems, far below issues like declining state and federal dollars. And mentions usually amount to vague references to the growing number of minority, low-income, and first-generation students enrolling in college, or to the amount of assistance they need to complete their degrees.

The changing makeup of the student population, though, was in sharp focus during last week’s meeting of the State Higher Education Executive Officers. Also discussed at length were some efforts underway to deal with those changes.
Even as policy makers recognize the significance of demographic change, conferencegoers said, few are making the hard choices necessary to meet the needs of current students, let alone future ones.

The title of a report presented by Lindsey E. Malcom-Piqueux, an assistant professor of higher-education administration at George Washington University, spelled out the theme: "America’s Unmet Promise: The Imperative for Equity in Higher Education." The report, which was written by Ms. Malcom-Piqueux and several co-authors and was published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, argues that colleges need to try to move beyond diversifying the student body and instead seek to achieve broader equity in educational offerings.

*It’s Over for Anglos*

The sense of urgency at this year’s conference reflected basic facts: The potential college students of the future will be mostly Hispanic, and a growing number of them will require academic and financial assistance.

Steve H. Murdock, a demographer and professor of sociology at Rice University, laid out the enormous scope of the country’s ethnic shift during a fast-paced presentation dense with charts and numbers. The average age of white Americans is rising, and the birth rate falling, Mr. Murdock explained, while nearly all of the country’s population growth is coming from Hispanic families.

At the same time, the earnings of most of the country’s workers have declined over the past decade, even as the price of college has increased, said Sara Goldrick-Rab, a professor of educational-policy studies and sociology at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

A college degree is considered a ticket to the middle class, she said, yet it is still difficult for students in low-income families to afford to get into college and stay there long enough to earn a degree. "Poor people are running in place," she said.

In the meantime, she added, wealthier students who are less academically inclined have a far greater chance of completing college than do poor students who perform well in school. "We have to worry about what happens when academically talented students from low-income families can’t afford college," Ms. Goldrick-Rab said.

*Too Little, Too Late*

None of that information is new to anyone in higher education. But what was on display at the state-policy conference was a recognition, and even some frustration,
that efforts to deal with inequity have largely fallen short, undermined by a lack of financial support and the kind of institutional self-preservation that pushes colleges to pursue rankings and prestige.

At one session, half a dozen students from the University of Southern California — most of whom grew up in neighborhoods around Los Angeles plagued by poverty, drug abuse, and violence — discussed the institution’s mentoring program and the support they have received to help them succeed despite the social and financial barriers they faced.

George Sanchez, vice dean for diversity and strategic initiatives at USC’s Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, mentored the students as part of a special program. But faculty members at many colleges, including USC, say they find it hard to spend time mentoring because it is not built into their workload, Mr. Sanchez said.

Raymund Paredes, Texas’ commissioner of higher education, said such programs were simply too small to have a broad impact. "Mentoring programs are for a tiny portion of the students at those institutions," he said at a different session, on state tuition policy. "The level of mentoring for programs like the one at USC is rare."

Another session, on higher education’s "civic and moral responsibility to foster communities of success and tolerance," highlighted apprenticeships provided by the "Earn and Learn" program at Tulane University’s Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives. The program offers young people, ages 16 to 24, an opportunity to work 20 hours a week on Tulane’s campus while attending 20 hours of classes at nearby Delgado Community College.

Dwaun J. Warmack, president of Harris-Stowe State University, a historically black college in St. Louis, said such programs were nice to have but limited in their scope and unable to deal with systemic issues of inequity.

"We’re putting Band-Aids on gunshot wounds," said Mr. Warmack, whose college enrolls nearly half of its students from Ferguson, Mo., where the black teenager Michael Brown was killed by a white police officer a year ago, sparking national protests.

*Putting Money in the Right Places*

For many at the conference, though, the core issue was not only a lack of money to support efforts to build equity. It was also how that money is distributed.
Patrick Kelly, a researcher at the National Center of Higher Education Management Systems, echoed others in pointing out that the lion’s share of state appropriations go to the institutions with the fewest disadvantaged students.

"How do we get the guts to redistribute money to help low-income students?" Mr. Kelly asked during a session on college affordability.

For Mr. Paredes, colleges also bear part of the responsibility to use the money they get more efficiently and effectively. "We simply have to rethink higher education," he said. "There is no institution that’s more unlikely to embrace disruptive innovation than a college or university."

Too many colleges have driven up their own costs by pursuing the prestige of college rankings and research, he said, becoming more selective and focusing their financial-aid programs’ dollars on merit scholarships rather than need.

"You never hear a university say they want to be the top institution in the country for graduating poor students," Mr. Paredes said.

A Bigger Federal Role

August 11, 2015

By
Michael Stratford

NO MU MENTION

Hillary Clinton’s higher education plan announced Monday highlights the growing consensus among Democrats on how to tackle rising tuition: send federal money to states that agree, in return, to lower or eliminate tuition at their public colleges -- and enact other reforms.
Clinton’s proposal to provide grants to states that promise to create no-loan tuition plans for students at public, four-year institutions follows similar plans by fellow candidates Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders and former Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley, as well as the progressive hero (and current noncandidate) Senator Elizabeth Warren. It also comes after the Obama administration has proposed a similar approach to making community college tuition-free, which Clinton has adopted as part of her plan.

Aside from the price tags -- Clinton’s would cost $350 billion over the next decade, her campaign said -- these proposals would also significantly expand the federal government’s role in financing higher education.

Proponents see that as a welcome, needed expansion of federal support to combat what they view as states’ failing in their responsibility to fund higher education. Many conservatives, though, object to the approach, saying they don’t like the idea of the federal government expanding its reach into higher education.

“It looks like it’s moving toward cutting out students as the main way that federal dollars are delivered to colleges, especially public colleges,” said Neal McCluskey, director of the Cato Institute’s Center for Educational Freedom. “This goes back decades: Is it the federal government’s job to allow students to pick schools or to make schools cheap?”

McCluskey, who has argued that federal student loans and grants are driving up college tuition, said he was encouraged that the campaign said it wants to avoid having federal dollars subsidize things like athletic facilities. The plan doesn't describe how that would happen, and McCluskey was skeptical about how and whether such a mechanism might work.

“Even if this does a better job of controlling college costs, there are big costs to giving the federal government the power to do those things,” he said. “It will apply uniform rules and regulations, and if you have a single payer of higher education making all the controls, there goes competition. There goes innovation.”

Jeb Bush, the former Florida governor who is seeking the Republican nomination, blasted Clinton’s higher education plan as not only “fiscally irresponsible” but also a heavy-handed approach from the federal government.

“We don’t need more top-down Washington solutions that will raise the cost of college even further and shift the burden to hardworking taxpayers,” he said in a statement. Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, another Republican presidential hopeful, said on Fox News Monday that Clinton’s plan would “pour a bunch of money into a 20th-century outdated model” of higher education.

Meanwhile, some liberal groups that had been pressing Clinton to put debt-free college on her higher education agenda praised her announcement Monday.

Mark Huelsman, a senior policy analyst at Demos, said Clinton’s plan “is consistent with what we’ve been designing from a policy perspective.”
Adam Green, co-founder of the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, said that debt-free college enjoys “stratospheric popularity” in the group’s polling and he thinks the proposal would motivate young voters.

U.S. Senator Brian Schatz, a Democrat from Hawaii, who has pushed for debt-free college, told reporters Monday that voters expect federal candidates to have a solution to college affordability.

“If you don’t think the federal government has a role, then that’s your prerogative,” he said. But, he added, the vast majority of voters are going to want their candidates for federal office “to have a solution set here.”

Given the political opposition to greater federal spending, the Clinton campaign has said it has contemplated the possibility that some states might opt out of the plan. “If a state refuses to participate, we would work with the Department of Education so public universities could apply directly for the grant aid,” a Clinton campaign adviser, who declined to be named, told Inside Higher Ed Sunday.

Dangling federal dollars over states to promote certain action, of course, isn’t a new political strategy. It’s been used in higher education before, too, perhaps most directly with a short-lived federal requirement that states accepting federal stimulus money maintain their spending levels on higher education.

And, on a smaller scale, the Obama administration has chastised states it believed weren’t taking seriously enough their role in overseeing colleges and universities or holding colleges’ teacher preparation programs to sufficiently high standards.

In both those cases, the administration has pushed regulations that essentially cut off some federal aid to colleges in states that don’t agree to improve their authorization processes or overhaul their criteria for evaluating teacher preparation programs.

But the plans to reduce or eliminate some college tuition, including Clinton’s, would put far more federal dollars on the line -- mostly for public colleges.

“Philosophically, it dramatically expands the nature of federal aid away from being mainly, if not near exclusively, based on a system of vouchers to something that supports states and institutions more directly,” said Michael Dannenberg, a former senior adviser in the Obama administration’s Education Department, who also advised the Clinton campaign. “That’s the right path. If we want to bend the college cost curve in a significant way, we have to direct resources and policy at the states and institutions.”

Dannenberg said that he was encouraged that the Clinton plan not only embraced more federal resources for higher education but coupled that increased spending with accountability measures to make sure the new money is directed toward colleges with better student outcomes.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Perseid meteor shower will dazzle this year

SARAH FINE, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Break out the coffee: Columbians who can keep their eyes open past midnight Wednesday can catch the best of the annual Perseid meteor shower, which, if the weather cooperates, will appear particularly brilliant this year.

"The best results are from midnight until as late as you can stay up," said Steve Bertels, president of the Central Missouri Astronomical Association.

The Perseids are an annual meteor shower made up of debris from the Comet Swift-Tuttle; as Earth passes through the comet's trail, bits of comet debris, called meteors, fall to Earth. The debris burns up as it passes through the atmosphere, creating tails of bright light that are visible from the ground. The shower's name comes from the constellation Perseus, where the meteors appear to originate.

This year, the Earth began passing through the comet's trail on July 17 and will come out Aug. 24, but the shower is visible in the northern hemisphere for only a few days — this year, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and early Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

Columbians missed the full effect of last year's shower because it coincided with the "supermoon," making the meteors difficult to see. This year's shower, however, will concur with the new moon, so skies will be darker. Bertels said this will help increase the meteors' visibility.

The Perseids shower is known for being fairly fast. Bertels said that at the shower's peak, about 3 a.m. Thursday, people may be able to see about 80 meteors per hour. Meteors will be visible as early as Tuesday evening, albeit in fewer numbers.
Stargazers should look to the northeast after midnight Wednesday to catch the shower's peak. Bertels said the best way to view is from a lawn chair in a place where a lot of the sky is visible, preferably away from urban areas where light pollution can decrease visibility. He said that though the Perseids can be seen with the naked eye, viewers may want to bring binoculars to stargaze between meteors.

"They come in spurts," Bertels said. "There are some five to 10 seconds apart, and then you get to wait three minutes for another."

**MU’s Laws Observatory will be open to the public from 8 to 10 p.m. Wednesday evening, weather permitting.**

According to the National Weather Service, Tuesday and Wednesday overnights are expected to be mostly clear.