MU enrollment exceeds 35,000 for first time

TIFFANY CROUSE, NATALIA ALAMDARI, YUAN YUAN. Updated 10 hrs ago

*This story has been corrected to reflect that there were 2,432 international students enrolled at MU on opening day.*

COLUMBIA — Students scattered across the MU campus for the first day of classes Monday morning, when the MU News Bureau announced that enrollment had exceeded 35,000 for the first time.

The news bureau reported preliminary enrollment of 35,050, up 0.3 percent or 115 students from last year. It also reported record enrollment of minority and international students, the fourth largest freshman class in history and the highest percentage of students who scored 30 or higher on the ACT.

Here are the highlights:

- Student body diversity increased 1.8 percent, with 5,485 students coming from underrepresented groups. That was 15.6 percent of total enrollment.
- There were 2,432 international students enrolled, a 4.7 percent over last year and 6.9 percent of total enrollment.
- A total of 1,086 freshmen enrolled with scores of 30 or higher on the ACT. The class’s mean ACT score was 26.
- The freshman class also included 602 Bright Flight Scholarship recipients and 236 Curators Scholars.

Barbara Rupp, interim vice provost for enrollment management, credited increased scholarships that target high achievers for progress in attracting and retaining them.

The study body, the news bureau said, includes:

- 6,211 freshmen.
- 27,589 undergraduates.
• 1,195 professional students.
• 6,266 graduate students.

• **MU sees record number of students, small increase in ACT scores**
  • COLUMBIA, Mo. - The University of Missouri Columbia opened the 2015-15 school year with the largest student population ever recorded and fourth-largest freshman class. MU also had a record number of international students, up 4.7 percent to 2,432.
  • Officials report early enrollment at 35,050, which is a 0.3 percent increase from the previous year, or 115 more students. That includes 6,211 freshman and 27,589 undergrads.
  • The average ACT score for the incoming body is 26, which is a small increase compared to the fall of 2014, when it stood at 25.9.
  • More people are also staying enrolled in classes. Mizzou's latest retention rate has hit its highest at 87.1 percent, up more than one percent from last year.

MU starts school year with record enrollment, threat of graduate student walkout

By Megan Favignano

Monday, August 24, 2015 at 2:00 pm
The University of Missouri resumed classes Monday with the largest student body in its history, a smaller freshman class than last fall and the threat of graduate students walking out midweek.

MU’s total enrollment this fall, according to preliminary figures, is 35,050 — 115 students higher than last fall’s record first-day total enrollment of 34,935.

Preliminary enrollment numbers show 6,211 freshmen in this year’s student body, down from 6,515 freshmen last fall.

Barbara Rupp, MU’s interim vice provost for enrollment management, said the size of high school graduating classes in the Midwest has decreased since about 2010, which has affected MU’s enrollment. There were 6,194 students in MU’s 2013 freshman class, 6,501 in the 2012 freshman class, 6,138 in 2011 and 6,089 in 2010, according to MU’s official fall enrollment report. The report uses fourth-week fall semester enrollment figures.

“You have to work harder to do the same thing every year,” Rupp said of the decreasing high school class sizes.

Graduating class size is expected to continue to mostly decrease until 2020, Rupp said. In response to that trend, MU started recruiting out-of-state students more heavily and focusing on retention.

Since 2010, the university has increased its percentage of nonresident students, Rupp said. In 2010, 28.2 percent of the incoming freshman class were not Missouri residents, compared to 39.7 percent in this fall’s freshman class.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said the university does not cap its enrollment and noted that nonresident students do not take spots away from students who live in Missouri.

MU’s retention rate has also increased to 87.1 percent this year compared to 84.5 percent in 2010, Rupp said. That rate measures how many freshmen return for their sophomore year. Improving retention contributes to MU’s ability to keep its total enrollment up when high school class sizes are down, Rupp said.

“We’ve been trying to gradually and slowly grow the size of the student body,” Rupp said.

Rupp said she is happy with MU’s retention rate and the number of high-achieving students at the university.

In an effort to attract more high-achieving students, MU created a $6,500 scholarship two years ago and increased two already existing scholarships geared toward students with high ACT scores. This school year’s freshman class, according to an MU press release, broke university records with an ACT mean score of 26 and an increased number of students scoring 30 or higher on the ACT.
MU kicked off the school year Sunday night with a 20-year-old tradition, Tiger Walk, during which freshmen run through the columns toward Jesse Hall. Students ran and walked through the columns screaming with excitement as a band played in the background. Freshman Betsy Smith said Tiger Walk helped ease her nervousness about starting school and got her pumped up for classes.

“You can tell there is a lot of energy in the air,” Smith said.

At Tiger Walk, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin encouraged students to get involved and reminded them what MU’s values of respect, responsibility, discovery and excellence mean.

First-day figures put the graduate student number at 6,266. Some of those graduate students are planning a walkout Wednesday to draw attention to concerns they want university administrators to address. The idea was spurred by an MU decision to stop giving graduate student employees about $3,000 per year to pay for health insurance premiums. The university reversed course Friday, when Loftin said MU would continue to pay the subsidies this year.

Graduate students have given MU administrators a list of demands that includes affordable graduate student housing, university-sponsored child care, a full tuition waiver for 10-hour and 20-hour assistantships, better compensation and the elimination of auxiliary fees.

Eric Scott, a graduate student with the Forum on Graduate Rights, said many graduate students still plan to walk out Wednesday, despite Loftin’s response Friday. Graduate students teach several undergraduate classes.

MU graduate students plan rally

COLUMBIA -- University of Missouri graduate students say they plan to demonstrate on campus Wednesday to draw attention to a list of demands for university administrators.

The rally, scheduled for noon Wednesday, follows the university's decision to reinstate graduate student health subsidies for this school year.
Graduate students say there are a number of concerns some student groups expressed to administrators.

"Students presented administration with a list of concerns that graduate students have here," said Kristofferson Culmer, a graduate student at MU. "[The list] is not just regarding insurance, but from issues that have been around for years including stipend levels, housing, childcare, things of that nature."

Culmer said the rally is meant to celebrate the importance of graduate students at the university. The rally is scheduled during normal school hours. Some graduate students serve as instructors of some undergraduate courses, but graduate student groups say they have the support of more than 50 of the university's academic departments.

University officials say they are continuing the discussion with graduate student groups to address the issues.

Graduate students told KRCG13, a group of students met with a panel of administrators, including Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, for three hours Monday.

MU graduate students prepare for walk-out Wednesday

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=30181&zone=5&categories=5

COLUMBIA - An MU graduate student organization, Forum on Graduate Rights, presented demands to MU administration regarding finances, housing and healthcare for graduate students.

If MU fails to meet the demands presented by the Forum on Graduate Rights, MU graduate students will participate in a walk-out Wednesday from 12-1 p.m. on Francis Quadrangle. A representative from the MU News Bureau said MU administration is currently reviewing these demands, but did not make further comment.
These demands follow the reinstatement of the graduate student health insurance subsidies for the 2015-2016 school year. The reinstatement of the subsidies violates a provision of the Affordable Care Act. Through this violation, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said the IRS could charge the university $100 per student per day.

The Forum on Graduate Rights demands include better wages and tuition waivers for graduate students, more affordable graduate student housing near campus after the demolition of University Village and a childcare center for graduate students because the old one was demolished along with University Village.

"This isn't simply about the health insurance. This isn't simply just about wages. It's about making sure the graduate students have a voice at the university that's commensurate with their role in the university," MU graduate student David Criger said.

KOMU received a tip that some MU undergraduate courses could be cancelled due to the walkout. Criger said that the sociology department told its graduate students to notify the students about any effect the walk-out would have on courses.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

T-shirts for graduate student walkout roll off the presses

**KATIE HOGSETT, 11 hrs ago**

COLUMBIA — Inside the Missouri Cotton Exchange on Monday, Isaac White screenprinted T-shirts bearing the slogan, "Graduate Students Mizzou United #GradInsurance."

The shirts were ordered by MU graduate students in preparation for a daylong walkout scheduled for Wednesday. The walkout was planned after MU's Aug. 14 announcement stating that graduate student employees would no longer receive health insurance subsidies due to an IRS decision.

The decision resulted in backlash from graduate students, and MU reversed its decision on health insurance subsidies on Friday. However, the walkout is still in the works, and the Forum on
Graduate Rights updated its statement of demands via email on Sunday. The list of unmet demands includes "a guarantee that no graduate student employees be paid at a rate below the poverty line" and "a guarantee that all graduate students employees receive full tuition waivers."

MU undergraduate student Ben Schweiss works at the Missouri Cotton Exchange; he didn't make the shirts, but he said he'd heard about the walkout.

"Although it doesn't affect me directly, I think if the university is going to make major changes like that then they need to let the students know ahead of time so they can make other plans if that's the case," Schweiss said.

Mizzou Suspends Plan to End Grad Student Insurance

August 24, 2015

Facing a planned graduate student worker walkout over its decision to drop health insurance subsidies for teaching and research assistants, the University of Missouri at Columbia on Friday announced it will reinstate the subsidies indefinitely. Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and other senior administrators said in a statement that the university consulted external experts and peer institutions in trying to “navigate a complex health insurance regulatory environment,” and ultimately decided to “defer implementation” of its plan. “As a result, the university will pay for health insurance for eligible graduate students,” they said.

The university told graduate student workers earlier this month, with one day's notice, that it had to stop providing health care subsidies to the workers because their Aetna health care plan was a market plan, not an employer-sponsored plan as other, unaffected university employees at Missouri and graduate student workers on many other campuses have. A recent Internal Revenue Service interpretation of the Affordable Care Act prohibits large employers from giving workers subsidies specifically to buy health insurance on the individual market, the university said. It planned to give student workers stipends to close the coverage gap in the fall, but graduate student workers would have had to seek coverage on their own after that.
The university faced intense criticism for its approach and the late notice it afforded students. Graduate student workers planned a walkout over this issue, among others they outlined in a letter delivered to the university last week, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported. The university said Friday that “continuing the previous practice will allow time for a clearer understanding of federal guidelines and consideration of options and incorporation of input” from a new task force that includes students.

Senator Claire McCaskill, a Democrat from Missouri and a graduate of the university, reportedly intervened on behalf of the graduate students, asking the chancellor to change course. She is also asking policy makers in Washington to find ways for graduate student workers to be covered that are in compliance with the Affordable Care Act. In a letter to the Treasury Department sent before Missouri announced its reversal, McCaskill said there are graduate students who aren’t eligible for Medicaid under Missouri law but who don’t make enough money to qualify for federal subsidies under the health care act. “These students are now in danger of losing access to affordable, quality health care without a viable alternative,” she wrote. “Therefore, I request that you act expeditiously and come up with a solution to allow universities to comply with IRS regulations and the Affordable Care Act, while ensuring that health care is accessible for all students.”

Louisiana State University reportedly sent similar notices to their graduate students in late July. But several other universities that provide health insurance subsidies to graduate students haven’t moved to revoke them.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

Graduate students' rally sparks professors' support

**EMMA VANDELINDER, RUTH SERVEN, NANA NASKIDASHVILI, 11 hrs ago**

**COLUMBIA —** The return of health insurance coverage for graduate assistants announced Friday has not calmed a storm around graduate students' rights at MU. A rally and all-day walkout planned for Wednesday and focused on graduate rights appears to be drawing support among faculty.

“I think the graduate students have had a long list of grievances,” said Lois Huneycutt, associate professor of history and director of the Department of History’s graduate studies program. “It's not just health care — they’ve had issues with child care, housing and pay.”
On Monday, the first day of classes for the fall semester, Huneycutt canceled class Wednesday in anticipation of speaking at and attending the rally, which is scheduled to begin at noon at the columns on Francis Quadrangle.

Dennis Kelley, an associate professor of religious studies, said Monday that he will cancel his Indigenous Religions class Wednesday in support of the graduate assistants and to raise awareness.

“My class has two (teaching assistants) covering four sections,” Kelley said. “They are hard-working students, and so I wanted to make sure they are supported, and also so that my undergraduates know what is going on because it impacts them as well.”

Susan Langdon, chairwoman of the Department of Art History and Archaeology, supports the walkout and plans to attend the rally. Like Kelley, she sees it as an important way to educate undergraduates about the role of the graduate assistants.

“It’s important for the university to remember again and have it demonstrated again how integral graduate students are to operations,” Langdon said. “There has been a trend to see them more as a revenue stream instead of recognizing how important their teaching and research is.”

While some professors have canceled class, others have given that option to the graduate instructors “as a show of their … power and impact upon the university’s daily business,” said Sarah Senff, a graduate instructor and the associate director for the Center for Applied Theatre and Drama Research.

“There are a lot of general frustrations we have as students,” said Rachel Zamzow, a fourth-year neuroscience doctoral student and a graduate research assistant. “And the elimination of the subsidies was the straw that broke the camel’s back.”

Zamzow said insurance is only one of their concerns.
“We’re advocating for rights for graduate students,” she said. “We also want the university to increase stipends for students, and we want every student to be paid at or above the poverty line.”

According to a post on the Graduate Student Walkout Facebook page, the rally will start at noon at the MU Columns. After speeches, the demonstration will continue with a march past Jesse Hall and on to Traditions Plaza near the Business and Law schools.

“We will continue the celebration of all the contributions that grads made to make Mizzou great,” Senff said.

According to an updated statement of demands from the Forum on Graduate Rights dated Saturday, graduate students will be invited to step out of their classrooms, laboratories and offices as an act of solidarity.

The rally will focus on numerous demands that have been made by the Forum on Graduate Rights, including wages for graduate assistants that are above the poverty line, on-campus child care, affordable housing, tuition waivers and a guaranteed, fully subsidized health care plan.

“In general, I’ve heard from a lot of faculty who believe that now that insurance is reinstated, this issue is over and done with,” Zamzow said. “But this is really only the beginning, not the end.”

A number of departments have expressed their support in emails and on their websites. For example, on Thursday the Department of Religious Studies posted that faculty members “are unanimously in support of the graduate student movement for health care, tuition waivers, and respect. The department will place no sanctions on those who participate in next week’s planned walkout.”

The announcement that graduate student employee health insurance subsidies would be reinstated for the year came Friday afternoon from Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, Provost Garnett Stokes and Hank Foley, senior vice chancellor for research and graduate studies. The statement
said other concerns could be addressed through the Graduate Student Experience Task Force and the recently formed Budget Allocation Advisory Council.

However, a letter dated Saturday from Hallie Thompson, president of the Graduate Professional Council, and Kenneth Bryant Jr., president of the Graduate Student Association, stated that the shared governance approach will not work because the problems are numerous, multifaceted and longstanding. The structure of the approach does not allow for enough student input and it favors administrators and their priorities.

"All efforts to support graduate student success and quality of life should be taken to ensure our success as an institution of higher education," the letter stated. "Where this involves shared governance, such mechanisms must be critically examined."

CARL KENNEY: Adjunct professors have fewer options than grad students

CARL KENNEY, 1 hr ago

COLUMBIA — Adjunct professors are often treated like Walmart employees.

At Walmart, those pulling the strings are most concerned with making money. Consumers flood the retail giant because of those amazing low prices.

"Always low tuition" is the desired slogan of your favorite university.

Higher education feels more like Wall Street than a community concerned with preparing young people for the future. Education isn’t what it used to be. Early retirement, state cutbacks, bigger stadiums and capital campaigns have become buzzwords that label most colleges and universities.
As an adjunct professor, I often feel like one of those self-checkout machines. What happened to the people who do the hard work of taking money, returning the proper change and stuffing items into a bag — will that be plastic or paper — as part of the deal that comes with shopping? Are adjunct professors relegated to watching students pay for their education from a self-checkout with as little output as possible?

Is my job to stuff shelves with new students after the former group goes to Blackboard to check out their most recent efforts? I feel like a discount store with low-cost professors pointing in the direction of the customer service area.

“Go to the professor in aisle three for instructions on that,” I feel like murmuring in the middle of every class I teach. “That’s not my department.”

Walmart employees are encouraged to stay in their lane. No, don’t go over there. Stop!

Adjunct professors have few options. They lack a union and other forms of leverage to demand more than the outlandish compensation they receive to assure profitability.

Graduate students are like Target employees.

Graduate students at MU are like the grass on the other side. They are fed up with being mistreated. They are willing to skip class and pick up big signs with statements like “Heck no, we won’t teach no more.”

Graduate students know the deal. They enrolled fully aware that a load would be dumped on their schedule. They considered the benefits related to their decision. They pondered the cost for housing, provisions for childcare and medical benefits before coming to the university.

They had the type of options that made it easier to say no to a job with adequate compensation and benefits. It was part of the negotiation that made it easier to say yes to graduate school. You simply can’t take stuff away after a person has signed his or her name on the dotted line. At Walmart, you suck it in and take what’s given.
Target is a classier option.

Graduate students didn’t suck it in when the university announced it would discontinue their health insurance benefit. The decision to give the benefit back wasn’t enough to absolve the issue. On Wednesday, graduate students will not be showing up for class.

The Forum on Graduate Rights sent a list to university administrators with a deadline for them to respond. Friday’s reversal was not enough to satisfy the group. The can of "whip that behind" has been opened, and MU has some decisions to make. Don’t be surprised if they take a month to make their point.

MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin has offered to form a task force to address the other concerns of the graduate students. This is the point where finger-pointing and name-calling begins. Graduate students brought their items to the check-out line prepared to place them in the bag of their choice.

They bring the type of punch that gets things done.

No walkout is planned for adjunct professors at the university. They will continue to prepare, teach and grade papers while singing the blues like B.B. King crying “The thrill is gone.”

They receive no benefits for their labor. Many teach because their livelihood is dependent on the low wages they receive for teaching. Some teach for the students. Others do it because they have no option. Many come back because baby needs a new pair of shoes.

As graduate students wave their signs and cry for better treatment, adjunct professors will show up to teach. They will come with no demands for benefits or increased compensation. They won’t complain about the difficulties they face economically. They will come back, over and over again, because they lack the clout needed to bring attention to their place in the corner near the checkout line.
Big business has a way of making profit on the backs of low-wage employees. The consumer benefits from the low-priced education that comes from paying people as if they’re an afterthought. Who should we blame for treating adjunct professors like Walmart employees?

The consumer wants low prices.

Employees deserve a livable wage, and the boss wants to make as much money as possible. Something has to be sacrificed to make everyone happy.

Syllabus complete. Writing assignments for the next week are in the can. How many students this semester? Eighteen. Check. It’s time to start the semester, and I’m ready to go.

One last note before heading to class.

Don’t forget to support the graduate students on Wednesday. It’s too bad there are no benefits and adequate pay for adjunct faculty.

Thank God I have money to buy baby those new shoes.

Resveratrol does strange things to dog’s immune system

A compound found in grape skins and red wine called resveratrol is thought to improve heart health and reduce stroke risk in people, but scientists don’t yet fully understand how it works.

Now, a new study shows that resveratrol affects the immune systems of dogs in odd ways. The finding may be a first step in determining how the chemical causes immune systems to react.
“This study makes it clear that resveratrol does cause the immune systems of dogs to change, but the changes it causes have created more questions,” says Sandra Axiak-Bechtel, assistant professor of oncology at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Missouri.

“We found that resveratrol simultaneously causes dogs’ immune systems to increase and decrease in different ways. If we can better understand why resveratrol makes these changes and learn to control them, the chemical may have valuable uses in treatments of cancer and other diseases in dogs and humans.”

What is resveratrol doing?

For the study, published in the journal *Veterinary Immunology and Immunopathology*, researchers added resveratrol to canine blood and measured innate immune system function.

Resveratrol caused the stimulated white blood cells to release more pro-inflammatory and fewer anti-inflammatory cytokines, which are signals cells use to communicate with each other during infection and inflammation. These cytokines point to a stimulated immune system.

However, researchers also observed a decrease in the ability of neutrophils, which are immune cells that help fight diseases, to kill bacteria. This points to decreased immune system strength, Axiak-Bechtel says.

“Seeing a decrease in neutrophil function typically means an immune system is losing the ability to kill invaders like bacteria. Combining this loss of bacteria-fighting ability with an increase in inflammatory cytokines creates a very interesting mixed message in terms of what resveratrol is doing to the immune system.

“It is clear that resveratrol is having a distinct effect on how the immune system reacts, but we still don’t fully understand how this reaction can be best used to fight disease. Once we have a better understanding of this process, resveratrol could be a valuable supplementary treatment in fighting diseases like cancer.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Michael Middleton: Creating a campus, country that 'ought to be'

ALEXA AHERN, 1 hr ago
COLUMBIA — The story of Michael Middleton might have begun more than a century ago.

In 1884, having taught himself the law, a former slave named Samuel Alfred Beadle applied for the Mississippi Bar. After a grueling examination, he passed, becoming one of the state’s first black lawyers.

His practice was successful, but even the kindest of clients fell victim to the threats of racist neighbors. It soon became too difficult, even life-threatening for Beadle to continue practicing law in the state. He moved to Chicago and began writing.

In 1912, he published "My Country," a poem that 40 years later would intrigue and inspire his great-grandson, a black boy growing up in white-dominated Jackson, Mississippi.

Beadle wrote:

*My Country God bless thee! God bless thee, my home!*

*With harvest and plenty, thy dark fertile loam;*

*The brooklet that bickers from hills far above,*

*And dances and dallies through vales that I love,*

*Go purling on, may it, the sun on its sheen,*

*The cress and the fern on its banks growing green,*

*The mead ever verdant where graze gentle kine,*

*And wide roam the herds of my neighbor and mine.*
The poem baffled the boy — how could a former slave, forced by racism to leave his career, home and family be so patriotic? Middleton asked in a speech he gave about his great-grandfather in 2003. Eventually, he began to admire that patriotism for a country that, though negligent of some of its citizens, aspired to be a land of equal opportunity.

"Anticipating that some would criticize his naive optimism, and knowing that there were those who would eliminate him under the prevailing racist doctrine, he respectfully requested that they not further deprive him his right to imagine the America that ought to be," Middleton said in the speech.

Like his great-grandfather, Michael Middleton grew up during a cultural revolution — during a confusing time when anger swelled, violence was common and change was mostly elusive.

Middleton started college at MU amid the Civil Rights Movement in 1964. He was the first black student to enroll as a freshman and graduate with a law degree.

He then became a civil rights lawyer in Washington, D.C., before returning to MU in 1985 to teach criminal law and employment discrimination. He was the first black professor in the School of Law.

In 1998, he was named deputy chancellor. On Aug. 31, Middleton will retire from that position after 30 years of service to the university.

He will leave a legacy as a generous, resilient leader who forged the way for equality and the rights of minorities on campus. His life, as a student and later as a professor and administrator, has been devoted to improving race relations on campus through kindness and reason.

The former he learned from his parents. The latter, during a career in law.

"You change people's hearts and minds one by one, on an individual relationship basis," Middleton said. "When you try to embarrass people or challenge people or beat it into their
heads, it seldom works. But when you develop a relationship with somebody and treat them with respect and kindness, I think they generally come around and do the same thing back."

**BEHIND MAJORITY LINES**

"Oh, Country of mine! may thy humblest son be

Ever true to thy genius, 'brave, happy and free.'"

Although less overt and increasingly more anonymous than during his years as a student, racism has been a persistent presence on campus since Middleton started as a professor in 1985.

Five years ago, two students were arrested after cotton balls were scattered on the lawn in front of the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. More recently, the N-word was spray-painted in front of a residence hall.

This past year, the tension in Ferguson sparked protests on campus.

"Those students got tired of the way it was," he said. "It was time to protest. Not unlike the way we did in Mississippi in the '50s and '60s."

New challenges in the battle against racial bigotry on campus arose when the protests triggered racist remarks, often surfacing online and hidden behind anonymous user names. Middleton said he still hasn't figured out how to address racism online.

At what point can you tell a student they can't express themselves through speech? he asked. The line is drawn when words incite violence. When a student feels threatened or uncomfortable on campus, it's the university's responsibility to change that, he said.

"The university does have a responsibility to make this place a place where young people can thrive," he said. "So you need to do something with that which causes discomfort, but what can you do? You find it, take it down, educate people. But the solution is elusive."
His legal training gave him the tools of logic and reason to sway opinion through well-crafted arguments. Likewise, he relies on the lessons he learned as a child in the South.

"What I try to tell students is what my father and mother and grandfather and grandmother told me, ‘don’t let the ignorance of other people detract you from what you are trying to do,’” he said. "You’ve got to be strong enough and confident enough to focus on getting your degree here, and then, use your own creativity to deal with the distractions."

**ACTIVISM 101**

> "And freedom, my Country's great boon to the world,

>  

> Let me die on the day that thy banners are furled."

Middleton grew up in Jim Crow-era Mississippi. His dad, a chaplain with the Army, couldn’t be politically active, but other family members inspired Middleton to get involved in civil rights. He often tagged along with aunts and uncles who were active with the NAACP.

Middleton remembers attending a conference of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in the early 1960s, along with Ted Kennedy, Thurgood Marshall and Martin Luther King Jr.

“It was affirming and encouraging to see people that were as outraged as I was,” Middleton said. “It validated what I was feeling and thinking.”

In his early years at MU, he participated in civil rights protests and anti-war sit-ins on campus.

He remembers a community in which he had to watch his back. You never knew when someone might throw rocks or water at you while you were walking downtown, he said. Racial slurs were common, and no one wanted to room with him, he said, because of the color of his skin.
At football games, he remembers sitting in the seats reserved for Kappa Alpha Psi, the only black fraternity on campus. In front of them sat members of Kappa Alpha, a fraternity founded in Virginia that promoted Southern pride.

When Marching Mizzou took the field at halftime to play "Dixie," Kappa Alpha would hoist a Confederate flag and wave it in front of the black students.

One day, Middleton and other black students came to a game with a black sheet. When the Confederate flag went up, so did the black sheet.

A police officer promptly entered their section and confiscated the makeshift flag, but it was one of Middleton's first acts of courage and resolve.

"We were kids doing what they were doing — expressing ourselves," he said.

Growing up in Jackson, Mississippi, and then Waynesville, Missouri, in the 1950s and '60s, he said he was used to insults and humiliation.

“I went to school. I studied. I got a very good education. It was a way of life I was accustomed to,” he said.

Since then, Middleton has made his mark at MU in a number of ways.

"I was influenced by lawyers in the south from New York and D.C. like Thurgood Marshall," he said. "They were always making change. I thought that would be better than protesting and being chased by police. Frankly, it wasn't all that fun."

BREACHING THE SYSTEM

"I love thee, adore thee, my Country, I do;

Thy faults, though, are many, 'in pulpit and pew,'"
A gifted saxophone player, Middleton started MU on a music scholarship. Studying law had been his dream since he was a child, inspired by his great-grandfather's career. He entered the MU School of Law in 1968 and graduated in 1971.

Thirty-two years earlier, Lloyd Gaines fought for — and eventually won — the right to attend the law school at MU. The 1938 Supreme Court ruling in the Gaines v. Canada case declared that states where there was only one school, black students were to be admitted or the state must create a new school.

Missouri created the Law School at Lincoln University in St. Louis, but while waiting for classes to start, Gaines mysteriously disappeared, dismissing the case against the new Law School's adequacy. Others attended but under different circumstances. According to Middleton, seven students finished their legal education at MU, but were awarded Lincoln University degrees after the school's official closing in 1955. Harold Holliday, Jr. and Lynwood Evans graduated in the '60s.

Middleton was a Tiger from start to finish.

He was one of the founders of the Legion of Black Collegians, a governing body for black organizations on campus. He and his fellow students presented the university a list of demands to bring more diversity to the university — hire more black faculty, fund scholarships for black students, create a black culture center and start a black studies program.

He was instrumental in fulfilling some of them. As a student, he was a member of the committee that hired Arvarh Strickland, who became the first black tenured professor at MU.
A year after he graduated, the black culture center was established and later replaced with the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. Strickland went on to shape the black studies program. Along with the women and gender studies program, Middleton saw it through to recognition as a department in 1999.

While an administrator, Middleton also helped establish and successfully defended multiple scholarships for black students, an initiative that faced serious opposition and was taken to court as reverse discrimination against white students.

His sister, Jeanne Middleton-Hairston, remembers her brother, the closest to her in age among her three brothers, as kind and protective when she was younger. She speaks proudly of her brother’s accomplishments.

“He’s a really good model of what a good man is like,” said Middleton-Hairston.

“He’s able to bring such clarity to difficult issues,” she said.

**RESISTANCE IN RETIREMENT**

"But thou art my Country, still grand and sublime,

The noblest in genius, the fairest in clime."

“When Mike retires, there will be a big gap,” said Gary Myers, dean of the Law School. “I don’t know how anyone could fill his shoes as an inspirational leader.”

Middleton’s retirement is part of the chancellor’s voluntary separation program, which gave incentives to eligible tenured faculty members.

He said he will miss serving a university that meant so much to him. But meetings and advising will be replaced by golf and grandchildren.
“I’d like to improve my golf game, and I’d like to connect with my seven grandchildren. I want to spend time traveling with my wife of 44 years, Julie. Other than that I will keep it open. I think I’ll have enough to do in the community, but I’m not making plans.”

Retirement does not mean he will stop fighting. He said he will continue to work part time with the chancellor’s office on issues of diversity. In that position, he will work on recruiting more minority students — not just black students — diversifying curricula and improving the way the university deals with marginalization, such as issues with Title IX and LGBT students.

"I believe that we are making progress, over the long and cyclic run," he said in his 2003 speech, "in creating the America that we can imagine."

Hamras' gift will provide Steinway piano for MSU recital hall

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - A gift to Missouri State University by Sam Hamra will pay for a Steinway grand piano for the recital/lecture room at Ellis Hall, which will soon undergo renovation. The room will be named for his wife, June Hamra, who was a member of the Southwest Missouri State University (now MSU) Board of Regents from 1979 - ’85 and is actively involved in the arts community.

“We are so pleased to be able to support the great things happening in the music program at Missouri State,” said Hamra, chairman of Hamra Enterprises.

This instrument will accompany every music student who performs a junior degree recital or takes part in a master class. MSU music students’ lesson fees have already purchased 10 Steinway-way built Boston upright pianos and one Boston seven-foot grand piano. As the music department continues to replace its piano inventory, both students and faculty will have access to the best quality instruments in achieving their maximum technical and artistic priorities.
“With this gift, we will have the ability to purchase our first new Steinway Grand piano as we move closer to attaining All-Steinway status as a school. Mr. Hamra’s generosity will provide the industry standard in grand pianos for not just our piano majors to perform on, but also will help recruit the very best music and musical theatre students,” said Julie Combs, head of the music department.

The university did not disclose the amount of the gift.

The Hamras recently donated $100,000 to the University of Missouri, where they attended in the early 1950s, for planning, design and construction of a proposed School of Music building.

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=30183&zone=5&categories=5

COLUMBIA - Drivers on College Avenue saw how new traffic signals performed on MU's first day of classes.

The High-Intensity Activated Walk, or HAWK, beacons were first activated on Friday with hopes of making pedestrians and drivers safer.

One driver, Alexia Watson, said she doesn't think the lights will help because people don't know what the signals mean.

"I think the signals could be helpful at night when there's not a bunch of traffic, but when it's a lot of traffic it can be confusing and someone could get hit," Watson said.

John Grandstaff was riding his motorcycle this morning and he said he sat in traffic for a long time because of the signals.

"The light just seem to change a lot, you know, stopping us all the time," Grandstaff said.

He said he thinks the lights need to be adjusted to keep traffic from backing up.

"Traffic needs to move a little bit faster then it was this morning because it causes people to get more antsy, you know, get in a bigger hurry, which causes accidents," Grandstaff said.
Watson said the city of Columbia needs to advertise what the signals mean to avoid some of the confusion.

"I think they should definitely communicate to the students on campus so they're aware because when I first pulled up to it I didn't know what was going on, I thought there was something wrong with the street," Watson said.

The two mid-block crosswalks using the HAWK signals on College Avenue were approved after a report indicated that around 19,000 cars pass through that part of the street and 2,500 pedestrians cross the street everyday.

The Federal Highway Administration reported that mid-block crosswalks are responsible for 70 percent of deaths among pedestrians and the use of HAWK beacons have shown a 69 percent decrease in pedestrian-related incidents.

Drivers and students getting used to new signal on campus


**COLUMBIA, Mo -** Classes started Monday for University of Missouri students. Both pedestrians and drivers have a new light signal to adjust to on a busy street.

MODOT crews were out monitoring the traffic on campus, especially near the new HAWK pedestrian signals on College Avenue.

"First day of school, we just want to watch to see what's going on," said John Schaefer, Senior Traffic Studies Specialist. "As everybody is aware traffic levels and volumes are going to be higher with the student population being back."

Schaefer said the new lights are a pedestrian signal and work differently than a traffic signal.

Schaefer explains no light or a "dark light" acts like a normal green traffic light. Once a pedestrian hits the walk button, flashing yellow lights will appear telling drivers the pedestrian cycle has started and they will soon need to slow down. A solid yellow light will appear followed by a solid red light, indicating drivers to stop. The walk signal will then appear for pedestrians.
They will have about 22 seconds to cross the street.

"So as of right now, it's going to be a about a minute before you get that indication up again," said Schaefer. "We're in the process where we're trying to get these to where they will coordinate with the corridors, so it may take a little longer than that once it's in coordination."

Some students said they didn't like the new crosswalks and they especially didn't like the new pedestrian wall that acts as a barrier on College Avenue.

Other students said they were mostly pleased with the new system.

"It's kind of hard driving and pulling out from our parking lot, so that's probably the only down fall I really have with it," said John Rhea, sophomore at MU. "But besides that the safety of the students is definitely a top priority and I definitely appreciate that. And also you don't have to dodge cars like it used to be in the past."

"People are still getting used to it," Schaefer said. "You see a lot of pedestrians that will push the button and go to the median instead of waiting for the walk indication and then they'll continue on. My advice is just to be patient and wait at the curb where it's safer."

MODOT was also monitoring heavy traffic areas like at the Stadium and Providence intersection. Schaefer said they'll continue to watch the traffic and HAWK signals for the next couple weeks.

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**Lewes man applies old solutions to new drones**

*Jeff Mordock, The News Journal  8:06 a.m. EDT August 24, 2015*

A future filled with widespread drone usage has raised some serious questions about the safety of unmanned aircraft.

However, a Lewes man has a solution that combines old-school mechanics to rapidly evolving robotics.
"It's a marriage of old technology and new technology and modifying both to work together," said Mark Ryan, founder, president and CEO of Seespan, a company that uses tethers to control aerial drones.

Seespan uses a high-strength deep sea fishing line, or tether, to anchor a drone. The line is attached to a winch powered by foot pedals. A pilot can operate the drone either through a hardwired remote control or through pedals at their feet.

By using a winch and tether to control the drone, it makes the aircraft immune to a hacking threat, an issue that could plague a device operated by remote control through Wi-Fi.

It also enables Ryan and his team to quickly harness a runaway drone in the event of high wind or thunderstorm. The tether can pull back a drone in a 70-mile per hour wind at a rate of 400 feet in 12 seconds.

Typically, a drone moving at 50 miles per hour can cover 500 feet in less than seven seconds.

"The drone technology is a very valuable thing for society and if they are controlled properly the benefits are extraordinary, but you have to control them to provide a high-level of assurance than what a radio controlled device can offer," Ryan said. "That's where we come in."

In 2013, Mark and his son, Kyle, began looking to launch a hyper-local news service similar to Comcast's EveryBlock or American Online's Patch.com. But those properties struggled and Comcast shut down EveryBlock later that year.

With that avenue seemingly shut off, Mark and Kyle began to look at other ways to gather content and pass that information to customers. They decided to use drone technology to take photographs of outdoor events, such as concerts or sports, on a contractual basis for news outlets, including CNN.

Drones are already being integrated by media outlets into everyday news reporting since the president of the Federal Aviation Administration began finalizing rules for operating drones. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Missouri are studying the use of drones in journalism. At an event in June, the New York Times, Associated Press and Washington Post tested news-gathering drones at a Virginia military base.

However, that also proved to be problematic. Mark and Kyle did some test runs of drones for the purposes of news gathering at Cape Henlopen State Park, but the drones unexpectedly took off.
"A lot of things can go wrong with a drone and we experienced most of them," Mark said about their experiments.

The Ryans decided to address the issue of preventing runaway drones. Mark realized the solution to such a modern problem lies in hardware from the past. The started using tethers – like the ones used to control hot air balloons – to pilot the drones.

But there are some modern components. The Ryans developed a hardware apparatus that can be attached underneath a drone that is lightweight enough to keep it airborne but sturdy enough for the operator to maintain control.

"There is a deep and thoughtful science around tethers," Mark said. "We explored that for the past year and now we have a tethered system that works. We are one of the few players out there with a tethered system."

The Ryans have submitted their system to the FAA for approval in May and expect to learn of the agency’s decision in the early fall. While they are waiting, they are preparing their tethered drone system for news gathering purposes.

Mark said they have already had conversations with media outlets. He declined to identify the news organizations, but characterized the talks as "encouraging."

Under Seespan's business plan, the company would be the primary journalist, but it would sell or lease its image gathering capabilities to its clients. The tethers also provide branding opportunities for media outlets to attach a flag with their logo.

"Our hope is the news industry can adopt this technology and integrate it into their business now," he said.

With FAA approval pending, Mark said an old concept like tethering can bring the future at a faster pace.

"Problems such as hacking or loss of control are not going to be solved for a long time," he said. "Tethers are the solution. They will bring the technology here much sooner."