Nearly one in four female students at schools that participated in a national survey about sexual conduct on college campuses reported experiencing nonconsensual sexual contact by force, threat of force or while incapacitated since they enrolled at their university, according to data released Monday.

At the University of Missouri in Columbia, close to one in three female students who are seniors reported such experiences, according to the survey.

The University of Missouri System on Monday released the results of sexual climate surveys done in April at all four of its campuses — Kansas City, St. Louis, Rolla and Columbia.

The Columbia campus was the only one of the schools in the system to participate in campus climate research conducted by the Association of American Universities.

Its survey estimated that 30.8 percent of MU’s senior females have been incapacitated or forced into nonconsensual sexual contact that ranged from unwanted kissing to sexual assault since enrolling at the school.

MU was one of 27 AAU-member institutions involved in the association’s national survey.

The three other Missouri campuses, which are not AAU members, participated in a similar survey designed by the National Center for Higher Education Risk Management and administered by the Assessment Research Center.

The university system released all the campus results on Monday.
In a statement, MU officials said they were seeking to “understand the prevalence of sexual assault and misconduct occurring on MU’s campus, to gauge student views related to MU’s climate surrounding sexual assault and misconduct, and to assess student knowledge of MU’s resources and procedures when responding to instances of misconduct.”

All of the campus surveys focused on understanding student views and attitudes regarding consent and sexual conduct and were designed to give university officials a clearer picture of how students are affected by Title IX issues of gender discrimination.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual assault and harassment, on campus.

The surveys also were intended to let school officials know how much students know about campus resources and procedures when responding to instances of misconduct. According to the AAU survey, about a quarter of the student respondents generally believe they were knowledgeable about the resources available related to sexual assault and misconduct.

The University of Missouri-Kansas City sexual climate survey found that 55 of the 1,672 respondents — mostly female undergraduates who live in nonuniversity housing — said they have experienced nonconsensual sexual contact, and 38 said they experienced nonconsensual intercourse.

The UMKC survey said 40 students experienced violence from a sexual partner or someone they were dating.

The largest number of students, 68, said they had been sexually harassed on campus by another student, faculty or staff member. Three percent of them said the harassment was in the form of “severe sexist remarks or jokes about a particular gender,” according to survey results. It also said that the most prevalent forms of stalking reported were text messages and phone calls.

Only 24.8 percent of more than 6,000 UMKC students who had access to the survey participated.

“We are pretty pleased with the response rate. It gives us a baseline,” said Mikah Thompson, UMKC’s Title IX coordinator, responsible since February for monitoring gender discrimination on the campus.
Thompson said she was concerned that less than half the survey participants said they would intervene to stop sexual misconduct. “That means that we need to teach students to step up and speak out when they see or hear something inappropriate,” Thompson said.

The national survey found that rates of sexual assault and misconduct were highest among undergraduate females and those identifying as transgender, queer or nonconforming, or questioning. The risk of the most serious types of sexual assault, due to physical force or incapacitation, declined among upper-class students, the AAU report said.

The AAU survey found that overall, 11.7 percent of more than 150,000 female and male respondents across its participating member universities reported experiencing nonconsensual sexual contact by physical force, threats of physical force, or incapacitation since they enrolled at their university.

Among the one in four female undergraduate respondents who experienced such incidents, 10.8 percent experienced penetration, the survey said.

Survey results showed, too, that this type of sexual assault interrupts a student’s learning.

The UMKC survey report said that of the students involved in a nonconsensual sexual contact experience or nonconsensual sexual intercourse experience, 40 percent of both groups reported missing class, assignments or exams as a result. And “after nonconsensual sexual contact, approximately two-thirds of respondent victims reported experiencing anxiety and anger,” the survey report said.

The University of Missouri System has committed $2.2 million in recurring funding for addressing gender-based violence.

The Columbia campus and UMKC are establishing teams of peer educators who, once properly trained, would go out among the student body and teach other students about consent and sexual misconduct and how to report it.

“Students learn from each other,” said Ellen Eardley, the Title IX coordinator at MU. Eardley said the MU survey “shows we have a lot of work to do educating students about what consent is” and about resources available on campus.
At the four system campuses, students are required to participate in an online sexual conduct training. UMKC puts a hold on students’ accounts until they complete the online training.

Last week, the University of Missouri released its first accounting of the number of possible incidents of sex discrimination reported to its Title IX office.

The report covered August 2014 through July 2015, during which time MU logged 300-plus reports of possible sex discrimination that ranged from rape to dating violence to bullying. Of those, 33 complaints moved forward and three were still being investigated at midsummer. MU has vowed to collect this information in an annual record to track Title IX cases.

How often is sexual assault happening at MU?


COLUMBIA, Mo. - **On Monday the results of a survey on sexual assault and misconduct were released by the University of Missouri.**

The University of Missouri was one of 27 Association of American Universities that participated in the "2015 Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct."

Results show 30.8% of senior women have been victims of nonconsensual sexual contact involving force or incapacitation, that means anything from unwanted kissing to sexual assault, since enrolling at MU.

Ellen Eardley, MU’s Title IX administrator says this shows the University still has work to do.

MU Provost Garnett Stokes says, "The “The fact that an estimated 30.8 percent of our senior female students say that since they entered MU, they have been victims of some kind of unwanted sexual conduct is very disturbing to me, as I’m sure these results are to every administrator of every institution participating in the survey."
MU is in the process of putting together a task force to use this information to further examine, clarify and elaborate as well as identify opportunities for improved interventions, services and prevention efforts.

The survey was sent out last April and 15.7% of students actually filled it out. The results also show that an estimated 21.2% of female victims who experienced penetration by force did report a sexual assault to MU officials. It also says 64.7% of MU students think it is likely that their report would be taken seriously by campus officials.


The Association of American Universities (AAU) has released a report on sexual assault and sexual misconduct on college campuses, including the University of Missouri-Columbia.

There were 4,750 MU students who took part in the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct

30.8% of MU senior female undergraduates reported they were the victims of non-consensual sexual conduct, which ranges from unwanted kissing to assault.

27.2% of the female undergraduate respondents said they had unwanted sexual contact after being physically forced or incapacitated. 12.3% said they had been raped.

Male students also reported unwanted sexual contact. 5.9% of male undergraduate students responded they were forced into sexual contact or it happened when they were incapacitated.

Only 21.2% of the women who said they were raped reported a sexual assault to MU officials.

The study also reveals 64.7% of students believed any report of sexual assault or misconduct would be taken seriously by campus officials.
The majority of the students surveyed were aware of MU's resources available to the victims of sexual assault. 92.2% were aware of the MU Student Health Center's resources, 77% were aware of the MU Counseling Center. 58.1% knew about the Title IX Office. 54% knew about the services offered by the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP).

The results are part of a wider survey carried out in April and May of 2015 at 27 universities across the country. The survey was conducted by the Association of American Universities.

AAU, MU release results of sexual misconduct survey

Approximately 30 percent of University of Missouri female seniors have been subject to unwanted sexual contact during their time in college, according to a recent survey.

MU Assistant Vice Provost and Title IX Administrator Ellen Eardley said the survey’s results are not surprising.

“The ... results I think show that sexual assaults and sexual misconduct ... is unfortunately all too common on university campuses across the country,” Eardley said.

The Association of American Universities (AAU), of which MU is a member, on Monday released the results of its Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. Westat, a social science research firm, conducted the survey of 26 AAU and one non-AAU public and private institutions.

In response to the survey, MU Provost Garnett Stokes is creating a Sexual Violence Prevention and Campus Climate Task Force, which will include staff from MU’s Relationship & Sexual Violence and Prevention (RSVP) Center. The task force will examine and elaborate on survey results, according to an MU news release, and will identify ways MU can improve services and prevention.

MU’s response rate to the survey was 15.7 percent — 4,750 of MU’s about 35,000 students participated, including 3,464 undergraduate students and 1,286 graduate and professional students. The mean response rate of all 27 AAU institutions was 19.3 percent.
Westat emailed students asking them to take the survey and sent three additional emails reminding them, MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said.

When asked if the survey results were an accurate representation of MU, Eardley said she thought the survey’s methodology was sound based on her conversations with faculty and staff on campus.

“We have a lot of work to do across the country,” Eardley said.

While about 30 percent of MU’s female senior students in the survey said they were subjected to unwanted sexual contact during their time in college, the mean among institutions who participated in the AAU survey was 26.1 percent.

The survey’s nonconsensual sexual contact category included incidents ranging from unwanted kissing to sexual assault.

An estimated 21.2 percent of women who said in the survey they were raped reported a sexual assault to MU officials, according to the survey.

In the AAU survey report, the rates of reporting were low overall, according to the survey summary.

MU’s survey showed an estimated 64.7 percent of students think MU would take a report of sexual misconduct seriously. But both the MU-specific report and AAU report, Eardley said, indicate some students haven’t reported sexual misconduct to their campus because they didn’t believe the incident was serious enough for a report. Eardley said she encourages students to report all sexual misconduct.

“If they experience any kind of sex discrimination they should feel comfortable coming to our office,” Eardley said. “No form of sex discrimination is acceptable here.”

Eardley emphasized the importance of education efforts and said MU’s Title IX Office works with the RSVP Center on sexual misconduct education initiatives. She noted a new initiative this year — a training program called “Not Anymore.”

Starting this fall, MU is requiring all new students, including undergraduate, graduate and transfer students, to take the video-based program online. The program includes information on sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, stalking, consent and campus resources.

More than 150,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students took the survey.

Hunter Rawlings, AAU president, said in a news release that participating in this survey and other climate surveys can help universities better address sexual misconduct on campus.
Survey confirms prevalence of sexual assault on Wash U and Mizzou campuses

By DALE SINGER • SEPT. 21, 2015

Updated 6:59 p.m., Sept. 21, with McCaskill comment: New research about sexual assault on college campuses shows Washington University in somewhat better shape than its peer institutions, but officials at the school admit they still have a lot more work to do to prevent problems for students.

National data released Monday by the Association of American Universities showed that 11.7 percent of all students responding reported that since entering college, they had experienced some form of non-consensual sexual contact involving physical force or incapacitation.

Among female undergraduate students, that number rose to 23.1 percent, according to the survey conducted this spring at 27 colleges and universities, including Washington U. and the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Figures reported by Washington U. showed 10.9 percent of all students reporting some form of nonconsensual sexual contact, including 22.6 percent of female undergraduates.

Provost Holden Thorp said the new data are in line with results of earlier surveys on campus. Washington U. is continuing to make sure students understand that such behavior will not be tolerated, he said, and that efforts at prevention and support are increasing.

“There’s not really any good news in the survey,” he said in an interview before the results were released. “It’s a serious problem. We are trying to be as transparent as we can about the fact that it’s here. We think that’s an incredibly important step to addressing it.

“And we feel really good about the fact that we did the survey with our peers. It’s clear we’re all going to have to work together in order to come up with the new ideas it’s going to take to address this.”
Other survey results showed that 69.7 percent of Washington U. students, and 62.9 percent of undergraduate women, thought campus officials would take reports of sexual assault or misconduct seriously. And 64.1 percent of all students and 76.1 percent of undergraduate women said they were somewhat, very or extremely knowledgeable about where to get help at the university if they or a friend experienced sexual assault or misconduct.

Those figures were better than or similar to the national data.

Asked whether they thought that Washington U. officials would conduct a fair investigation of a report of sexual assault or misconduct, only about half – 53.2 percent of all students and 48.6 percent of undergraduate women – answered they were very or extremely likely to think so.

Jessica Kennedy, who was named Title IX coordinator at Washington U. last year, said she feels that percentage will rise as students become more comfortable with the university’s procedures.

“As more students go through the process,” Kennedy said, “more students will feel, I think, confident that they will get a fair hearing in the process. Because they talk to their peers and they know someone who’s been a witness or has been an accused student or has been a complainant in one of those matters.

“It’s a new process that is more fair and more supportive than what existed previously. We in no way think we don’t have any more work to do. We see encouraging signs in these results, but in no way, shape or form are we resting on any laurel that might be here.”

Mizzou a focal point

Sexual assault on campus has become a larger issue in recent years. One case that spurred interest happened at Mizzou, when a student named Sasha Menu Courey committed suicide in 2011, after, it was later revealed, she had reported being raped.

The case drew attention from the public and from U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., who has conducted hearings and public forums on the issue. She welcomed the AAU effort when it was announced last year in the wake of reports that Congress might try to have schools respond to a government survey on campus sexual assault.

After the report was released Monday, she issued this statement:

“Today’s survey further underscores the need for our bipartisan legislation—including climate surveys, which are one of the strongest tools for understanding
and helping curb sexual violence. The results should be a wakeup call for all colleges and universities about this widespread, underreported crime on our campuses, and we've got to do a better job combating it.

"I'm pleased that so many schools participated in the survey and are committed to understanding and battling this crime, but we've got to continue working to get these surveys on every campus in this country."

The AAU survey prompted some resistance from members of the association, which includes the nation’s top research universities. About half of the members of the group chose not to take part, with many saying they would conduct their own survey instead.

Questions that the survey sought to answer included:

What is the campus climate around sexual assault and misconduct?
What do students know and think about resources available to them on the issue?
What is the frequency and nature of sexual assault?
What is the frequency and nature of misconduct because of coercion and absence of consent?
What is the frequency and nature of sexual harassment, intimate partner violence and stalking?

During a conference call to release the data, AAU President Hunter Rawlings said that he didn't have much sense of what the data would say, since research on the topic of sexual assault on campus is still relatively new. He also said he wasn't sure whether the organization would be doing a follow-up study.

And he emphasized what the goal of the research has been from the start.

"The purpose of this survey is to enhance the safety of students on our campuses," Rawlings said.

"It is our hope that these universities and others will be able to make use of these data on behalf of their students, not simply to reduce the incidence of sexual assault and sexual misconduct, but also to encourage reporting and to ensure that reports of sexual assault and sexual misconduct are handled with care, compassion and a commitment to fair, prompt and impartial review and resolution."

At the University of Missouri-Columbia, where efforts to combat sexual assault have accelerated in recent months, a report released last week said that 332 reports of
sex, gender or sexual orientation discrimination had been submitted in the year ending July 31.

Results of the AAU survey at Mizzou can be read here.

Based upon the survey results, it is estimated that 30.8 percent of MU’s senior females have been victims of nonconsensual sexual contact involving physical force or incapacitation since enrolling at Mizzou.

The survey revealed that 64.7 percent of MU students think it is likely that their report would be taken seriously by campus officials. This compares to the AAU mean of 63.3 percent. Also, 56.4 percent of MU students said it is very or extremely likely that the safety of those reporting incidents would be protected by university officials. The AAU mean was 56.5 percent.

“The fact that an estimated 30.8 percent of our senior female students say that since they entered MU, they have been victims of some kind of unwanted sexual conduct is very disturbing to me, as I’m sure these results are to every administrator of every institution participating in the survey,” MU Provost Garnett Stokes said.

“These results show us that we still have much work to do. I am encouraged, however, that a large percentage of our students know how and to whom they should report these incidents.

In addition to the AAU survey from Mizzou, other campuses in the UM system -- UMSL, UMKC and Missouri S&T -- released their own climate surveys.

UM system President Tim Wolfe, who has been active in Title IX issues, said in a statement:

“Our priority is more than just fostering safe and respectful environments on our campuses, it is to maintain the University of Missouri System’s national leadership role in terms of how we address the challenging, societal issue of sexual misconduct.

“It is highly encouraging that the surveys revealed that awareness of the myriad of resources available to our students is increasing due to our determined efforts. Engaging in detailed surveys that ask difficult questions, questions that we know may yield a number of negative responses, is absolutely necessary for us to learn how to make our campuses places of excellence that are safe venues to grow and learn.”

Alarming, but not surprising
At Washington U., Thorp said he saw clearly when he became provost two years ago that the issue would need more attention. Instead of handling student complaints through the university’s HR department, he hired Kennedy as Title IX coordinator. In addition, Kim Webb directs the campus’ Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) center.

Webb said the issue has become one of student well-being.

“We look at it as a community health issue,” she said. We know this problem is pervasive. The statistics are alarming, but not surprising.”

Kennedy said that as students become more comfortable with policies that Washington U. is emphasizing, reports of incidents of sexual assault and misconduct are likely to rise. The issue is largely one of changing culture on campus, she said, and demonstrating that the university can handle such cases in a fair and competent way.

“What we know about treating victims and survivors,” she said, “is that giving them control and giving them the power to decide for themselves how they’re going to proceed through the process is paramount. We leave it up to them.

“There are limited circumstances where we have to take action based on safety concerns, but generally speaking we leave it up to those individuals to decide how they want to proceed. We give them that information, and we’re there to support them every step of the way, whatever they decide.”

And, Kennedy added, the university has to be sensitive to the fact that in many cases, both the accuser and the accused are students.

“All of the accommodations that are available to our victim-survivors are also available to our accused students,” she said. “We will find them a new place to live. We will help them with academic support if they needed. We give them psychological help. We give them medical help if they need it, whatever that may be.

“It’s incredibly important that our process be fair to both parties as they they’re going through the process, and that’s something that we feel really strongly about.”

Asked whether students who may be victims worry about retaliation if they file formal complaints, Kennedy said retaliation is not tolerated, but the situation can be tricky.

“It is hard in a community like this one, where people are so close,” she said. “They live together. They eat together. They study together. They do all these things together. It is hard to prevent chatter, to prevent talk, to prevent gossip. But what
we will not tolerate is people being made to feel uncomfortable or being targeted because of their participation either in our judicial process or just by being identified as someone who has suffered sexual assault or received help for that.”

On some campuses, students follow step-by-step consent guidelines in intimate situations, to avoid misunderstandings or unwanted sexual behavior. Kennedy said Washington U. has an affirmative consent policy, but such guidelines aren’t always the answer.

“I think there’s a misconception about policies like that,” she said. “I think people think that I really means every 30 seconds you check in, or every time you move a body part someone needs to ask for consent, and that certainly is not the case at this university.

“We talk a lot about the fact that when you’ve had sexual contact with someone previously – either a week before, a day before, or even five minutes before – that doesn’t mean they are consenting to future activity.”

Still, she said, complaints most often result from actions between two people who know each other, not actions involving violence on the street.

“It’s not a stranger jumping out of the bushes,” Kennedy said. “It’s not physical force where someone’s head is slammed up against a wall, or where there’s a weapon used. So often, the cases that we see really do turn on that issue of consent. So, it’s something that we talk about all the time.”

Accounts of sexual assault on campus draw a lot of attention, but they are not always verified or verifiable – witness the story published in Rolling Stone magazine about a gang rape at the University of Virginia that turned out to be fabricated.

Do such examples tend to dampen students’ willingness to report the real thing? Webb said such cases highlight the need to reassure people that their complaints will be taken seriously.

“I think articles like that do have a chilling effect on our students,” she said “They are afraid they are not going to be believed.”

In the wake of the AAU survey and other reports, Thorp said that it is clear that the issue of sexual assault will be a key one for university administrators to face.

“The benefit of it has been that it’s out in the open that we need to deal with this,” he said. “There’s nobody who’s going to become a provost or a chancellor of a university any time soon who’s not going to realize that this is one of the things they really need to deal with.”
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Report shows prevalence of sexual assault at MU

EMMA VANDELINDER, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — About three in 10 MU female undergraduates reported being victims of nonconsensual sexual contact involving physical force or incapacitation by their senior year, according to a new MU Report on the Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct.

That number is higher than a 2007 national statistic that one in five women will experience rape during their college career.

"I think that number shows that we have a lot of education to do about what consent is and what kind of behaviors are appropriate on campus," said MU Title IX Administrator Ellen Eardley. "We would not want any of our students to experience that conduct, and the 30.8 percent of female senior undergraduates is too high."

MU’s survey results from female undergraduates who experienced nonconsensual sexual contact are higher than the average results of the Association of American Universities' survey, which compiled the data from participating universities in its report, also released Monday. The AAU report found 26.1 percent of senior females experience this type of nonconsensual sexual contact, which can range from nonconsensual kissing to nonconsensual sex.

MU was one of 27 universities to participate in the one of the largest surveys studying the climate of sexual assault and conduct at higher education institutions. The April 6 to 27 survey was conducted by Westat, a social science research firm with the AAU. Westat also compiled the survey results from the 27 universities in its 288-page report; all AAU surveys were done in April and May.
The MU and AAU reports estimated the prevalence of different forms of nonconsensual sexual contact, harassment, stalking and intimate partner violence; collected information about student views related to the climate on sexual assault and misconduct; and assessed student knowledge of school resources and procedures when responding to incidents of sex discrimination.

"Unfortunately we know that the numbers range on each campus, but all of the numbers are too high," Eardley said. "Our number is something that shows that we have work to do, and so do the other campuses."

The reports came less than a week after the release of the MU Title IX report, which focused solely on students’ experience of sex discrimination as reported to the year-old Title IX Office. The 133-page MU report includes faculty and staff in its analysis and surveyed any students on campus who would respond, so numbers in the two reports do not necessarily compare.

"The survey is an opportunity for us to take a closer look at what the climate actually is here and helps us as we think about moving to improve our prevention and education measures on campus," Eardley said.

**Numbers and trends**

National data by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that more than a third of female rape victims were first raped during their college-age years; about 37 percent of female rape victims were first raped between the ages of 18 and 24, according to a 2012 survey. About 19 percent of female undergraduate students experienced attempted or completed sexual assault since entering college, according to the survey.

Among the different demographics cited in MU’s report, female undergraduate students reported the highest rates of experience with sexual assault and misconduct by physical force and incapacitation. About 27 percent of female undergraduates reported experiencing completed or attempted nonconsensual sexual contact at MU, which is about four times higher than the male undergraduate rate. Female graduate students also had a rate that is about four times higher than their male graduate counterparts, according to the study.
In a single year, female undergraduate freshmen had the highest rates of sexual assault and misconduct. Those rates dropped significantly for sophomores. But seniors reported the highest rates of sexual assault and misconduct overall because they had been on campus longer.

About 12 percent of female undergraduate student respondents reported penetration involving force or incapacitation, which is considered to be the most serious type of sexual assault and misconduct, according to MU's report. For the 2014-15 academic year, about 1,700 students experienced this type of rape.

A startling 78 percent of the more than 1,700 female victims who experienced penetration by force did not report it to MU officials, according to MU's report.

This number is higher than the AAU average, which found 25.5 percent of victims of penetration by force did report it to an agency or program. The most highly cited reason for why students did not report the incident was: "I did not think it was serious enough to report."

"One thing that we saw both in the MU report and the AAU report about colleges and universities across the country is students don't understand that what is happening to them is important or severe enough to report," Eardley said. "They don't know that it's a policy violation. So our education and prevention measures need to do more to help students understand what sex discrimination really is."

Overall at MU, about 52 percent of students reported being victims of sexual harassment, which is about 4 percentage points above the AAU statistic. Female undergraduates reported most often (about 64 percent), and male graduate students reported the least amount of sexual harassment experienced (34 percent).

**Bystander reports**

About 55 percent of students reported witnessing a drunken person heading towards a sexual encounter — which is 10 percentage points higher than the overall AAU report — and more than 71 percent reported that they took no action.
"Unfortunately, we know students have drunk sex," Eardley said. "So we have to teach them about how to be responsible in any kind of relationship, how they can be sure that they are both consenting or the partners are consenting to any kind of sexual encounter and to make sure that they have the ability to establish their sexual health boundaries when they are drunk."

The two main reasons students did not take action, according to the report, were that students did not know what to do (21.7) and that they did nothing for another reason (49.6). These numbers are somewhat consistent with the overall AAU report.

"All of this is part of our education and we need to understand what students are thinking when they see someone else heading towards a sexual encounter when they're drunk," Eardley said. "Do they assume that that's what the parties both want? Have they had conversations with those people and they know they're in a relationship? What did that instance look like and why did a student not speak up? And what would it mean if they did?"

Only about 10 percent of students who witnessed a drunken person heading toward a sexual encounter directly intervened to stop the incident. Other students reported speaking to someone else to seek help or doing something else to prevent the sexual assault or misconduct from occurring.

About 23 of MU student respondents reported witnessing someone acting in a sexually violent or harassing manner. Female undergraduates reported this at higher rates (27.1 percent) than any other demographic.

Among bystanders who witnessed sexual violence or harassment, about 50 percent took no action.

"The sexual harassment numbers are also something that we need to take a hard look at," Eardley said. "If we have a climate where sexual harassment occurs and is accepted, then that is going to create a climate where sexual violence is acceptable as well."

"They're all intertwined," she said.
Types of victims

The study broke down sex discrimination victim demographics by graduate and undergraduate students, by gender — male, female, transgender, genderqueer, nonconforming, questioning or not listed — and by sexual orientation.

Nearly 6 percent of male undergraduates experienced nonconsensual penetration or sexual touching since they started at MU, and 4.5 percent of undergraduate males experienced nonconsensual sexual touching by force or incapacitation.

Non-heterosexual students also experienced victimization by physical force or incapacitation almost twice as often as heterosexual students (24.8 percent vs. 14.8 percent). These rates are somewhat consistent across gender and enrollment characterizations.

Students who registered with the university as having a disability also had a prevalence rate for victimization by force or incapacitation that was higher than those without a disability (25.3 percent vs. 15.1 percent). This rate was the same across gender and enrollment status groups, according to MU's report.

Prior surveys show that people who identify as transgender, genderqueer, nonconforming and questioning have significantly higher rates of victimization due to coercion or absence of affirmative consent. Overall, more such students reported being victimized since entering MU. They also reported higher rates of harassment, stalking and intimate partner violence.

Prevention and education measures

"We're going to take a harder look at our survey results as well as the AAU survey results and think about ways that we can improve our education and prevention efforts," Eardley said. She cited a developing task force as one way that would happen.

MU Provost Garnett Stokes recently created the Sexual Violence Prevention and Campus Climate Task Force, which will study the results of the survey and its report, develop focus
groups and outreach efforts and construct strategic plans to fight against sex discrimination at MU.

The task force will include the coordinator of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center, faculty members, student members, graduate members and staff members, Eardley said. The task force membership has not yet been finalized.

Current resources on campus include the RSVP Center, the Student Health Center, the MU Counseling Center and the Title IX Office. The RSVP Center hired three additional staff members this year to increase education and prevention efforts on campus.

An online education program developed and recently put in place by the Title IX Office is called Not Anymore. All incoming freshmen starting in the 2015-16 academic year are now required to complete the program, which provides basic training on what sexual assault looks like, what consent is and what healthy relationships look like. It also provides information about students' rights and options in combating sex discrimination on campus.

"One of the most important messages of Not Anymore is bystander intervention techniques," Eardley said. "That teaches students how to stand up and say something when they find themselves or their peers in a situation that's unacceptable."

The survey results will also be used to build on the Not Anymore training and future training of students.

Eardley also cited peer educators as a way that the university was educating.

"Students want to learn from each other about how to interrupt and stop this behavior," Eardley said. "And when they can have really frank and honest discussions with one another — about how they have successfully intervened, how they have stood up for their peers, what they did to call someone out — I think it empowers them to take action on our campus."
The RSVP Center participates in peer education, along with the MU Interfraternity Council, which has a team of peer educators who teach fraternity men about sex discrimination. The Student Health Center also has a program called Sexual Health Advocate Peer Education that informs students about healthy sexual boundaries and relationships.

"We will want to monitor the climate on campus," Eardley said when asked about possible future surveys. "We'll have to determine whether we'll participate in an AAU survey like this. But that's one of the tasks of the task force is to determine what the next steps are in terms of evaluating our climate as well as metrics that we can use to monitor for progress.

The Chronicle of Higher Education

September 21, 2015

1 in 4 Female Undergrads Experienced Sex Assault or Misconduct, AAU Survey Finds

By Katherine Mangan

NO MU MENTION

Nearly one in four female undergraduates responding to a survey conducted by the Association of American Universities said that they had been the victim of sexual assault or misconduct, according to eagerly anticipated findings released on Monday. At the same time, fewer than a third of the respondents reported the incidents, even when they involved rape, to campus or local authorities. The most common reason? The students who didn’t come forward didn’t feel their experiences were serious enough to warrant such a report.

At first glance, the association’s report on its survey would seem to validate the one-in-five figure that other studies have found for the prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses. But most of those previous studies arrived at that statistic looking only at rape and attempted rape, according to several sexual-assault experts
interviewed on Monday. The AAU reached that number by including other behaviors, including unwanted touching and kissing.

So it’s unclear whether the new study will put to rest some skeptics’ persistent questions about the one-in-five statistic or whether, instead, it will raise even more questions about how to define, and measure, unwanted sexual contact.

The survey represents one of the largest efforts to gauge the attitudes and experiences of college students with respect to sexual assault and misconduct, AAU officials said on Monday. And they said the 288-page report does, in fact, provide a more-nuanced look at one of the most vexing problems campuses face today, at a time when their responses are being sharply scrutinized by the federal government and criticized by both accusers and the accused.

More than 150,000 students at 27 universities — 26 AAU members and one nonmember, Dartmouth College — responded.

In a call with reporters, the association acknowledged the study’s limitations. With a 19-percent response rate, it left out the experiences of many students, and those who did respond were probably slightly more likely to have experienced sexual violence or misconduct.

Fewer than half of the association’s 62 member institutions participated, with many opting out because they planned to conduct their own studies.

AAU researchers pointed out that the report and its accompanying tables separate the behaviors that some have accused them of lumping together in their findings.

The report provides separate estimates of two types of nonconsensual sexual contact — penetration and sexual touching or kissing. It also looks at four tactics employed by sexual aggressors — actual or threatened physical force, drugs and alcohol, nonphysical coercion, and absence of affirmative consent. And it examines incidents of sexual harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence.

Tailored or Blurred
Breaking behaviors down in that way will allow campuses to tailor their responses more appropriately, the researchers said.

Still, some outside scholars said those distinctions are blurred by one of the association’s key findings and its version of the one-in-five statistic — that 23 percent of undergraduate women experienced sexual assault or misconduct.
When the casual reader sees that, "they’ll think that means rape, but they don’t realize it might mean some guy rubbed up against you and might have touched your breast with his shoulder,” said Mary P. Koss, a professor of public health at the University of Arizona who is a veteran sexual-assault researcher.

Combining so many behaviors in a single statistic makes it hard to compare the AAU’s findings with others, like her own, that produced similar statistics after looking more narrowly at rape and attempted rape, she said. Among the specific findings in the AAU report:

- Overall, 11.7 percent of respondents reported having experienced "nonconsensual sexual contact by physical force, threats of physical force, or incapacitation" since they enrolled at the university. For females, the rate was 23.1 percent, including 10.8 percent who experienced penetration.
- Only 5 percent to 28 percent reported such an incident to law-enforcement or other authorities. Aside from thinking the problem wasn’t serious enough, students often said they had been embarrassed or ashamed or had felt it would be too hard emotionally to talk about. Many also said they didn’t think anything would be done about their complaint.
- Still, more than six in 10 believed campus officials would take their complaints seriously and 56 percent felt confident that those officials would take steps to keep them safe.
- The rates of sexual assault and misconduct were highest among undergraduate females and those identifying as "transgender, genderqueer or nonconforming, or questioning."

Among those closely watching the results was Jennifer J. Freyd, a professor of psychology at the University of Oregon who conducted a campus-specific study that found that 13 percent of undergraduate women at her university said they had been raped while at the university and more than a quarter had experienced at least one nonconsensual sexual encounter.

She is among dozens of sexual-violence researchers who criticized the AAU study for releasing only aggregate data, not campus-specific findings, and for not, in their view, making the process transparent enough.

Although she disputed the survey’s methodology, Ms. Freyd said she hoped its conclusions would "put to rest this constant chatter of denial" about the prevalence of sexual assault.
One researcher who’s familiar with how touchy statistics can be is John D. Foubert, a rape-prevention advocate and professor of higher education and student affairs at Oklahoma State University.

He helped form a nonprofit organization, One in Four, based on a study that found that that many women survived rape or attempted rape in college. "When we throw ‘unwanted sexual contact’ into the mix, we risk equating a forced kiss (which is a bad thing obviously) with rape (which is a fundamentally different act)," Mr. Foubert wrote in an email to The Chronicle on Monday.

A Worse Alternative

One reason the association pushed ahead with the survey despite resistance from some of its members is that it felt the likely alternative — a one-size-fits-all survey, developed and mandated by the federal government — would be worse.

The association’s survey was conducted by Westat, a social-science research group, in April and May at 10 private and 16 public universities. Westat hired Bonnie S. Fisher, a professor of criminal justice at the University of Cincinnati, to provide oversight.

They were assisted by a multidisciplinary research team assembled by the AAU and led by Sandra L. Martin, associate dean for research at the Gillings School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The survey was administered to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, but not to faculty members or administrators. Campus-specific data were provided to each participating institution, which could decide whether, or how, it wanted to disseminate the information.

Universities that have been in the spotlight recently over their handling of sexual-assault allegations were among some of those colleges that released their findings on Monday.

The University of Oregon’s results were similar to the national picture, while the University of Virginia’s painted a bleaker picture, with nearly twice as many students at Virginia viewing sexual assault or misconduct as a serious problem at their institution as the rate reported in the national study. (Also on Monday, UVa resolved a long investigation by the Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights, which found that the university had a sexually "hostile environment" as recently as 2012 but had since taken steps to correct that situation.)
UVa’s president, Teresa A. Sullivan, said in an interview that the AAU’s findings might have been influenced in part by the Rolling Stone debacle and the university’s subsequent efforts to improve procedures for handling complaints.

The AAU survey was based, in part, on the survey instrument developed by a White House task force to protect students from sexual assault.

**One in Four?**

September 22, 2015

*By*

Jake New

**NO MU MENTION**

Nearly one-quarter of female undergraduate students who responded to a survey created by the Association of American Universities said they have experienced a sexual assault of some kind since enrolling in college. While the survey includes a broader definition of sexual assault than some researchers on the topic advocate using, it also breaks down types of sexual assault and found that 11 percent of female students reported that the sexual assault involved penetration.

The survey found that 11.7 percent of students of all genders at the 27 institutions who participated in the study said they have been assaulted, with the highest rates being among undergraduate women and students who identify as gay or transgender. About three-quarters of sexual assault cases were never reported to law enforcement or university officials.

More than 24 percent of undergraduate students identifying as gay or transgender reported experiencing a sexual assault, as did about 5 percent of male students. Half of all respondents said they have been sexually harassed.

In addition, the survey asked students about incidents of sexual assault specifically involving a lack of affirmative consent, a definition of consent that a growing number of colleges are adopting. The survey asked if students experienced "penetration or oral sex
More than 11 percent of female undergraduate students said they had been assaulted in this fashion, as well as nearly 15 percent of students identifying as gay or transgender.

"We didn't have a clear sense what the results would turn out to be," Hunter Rawlings, president of the AAU, said Monday. "This whole area is new in terms of real research, so we're trying to add to a body of research that's really just beginning to be understood. I do think most presidents and chancellors did not have clear expectations of what students would actually say. That's why we're appreciative of the extent of these questions, and particularly by the very careful definitions."

The AAU announced in November that it had contracted with a research firm, Westat, to develop and carry out the campus climate survey for any of its member institutions that wanted to participate. The association said at the time that one goal of the project was to fend off congressional efforts to require colleges and universities to annually survey their students about the prevalence of sexual assault.

When the survey was first announced, it was criticized by several dozen scholars who study sexual violence as well as some victims’ advocates for, among other things, not pledging to release campus-by-campus data and instead sharing only aggregate data. The majority of those institutions do plan on releasing individual survey results in the coming weeks, and several colleges released their results on Monday.

Critics also said the process lacked transparency and input from enough scientists who study sexual assaults on campuses. The survey's design committee did include several researchers from participating institutions. Students at some institutions complained that the survey questions were too detailed and sexually explicit, though other sexual assault researchers generally supported the use of the more specific language.

Mollie Benz Flounlacker, AAU's associate vice president of federal relations, said that the association's results demonstrate the importance of campus climate surveys, but that the AAU and its members are still worried about federal efforts that would mandate such surveys.

"We have concerns with the way current legislation would basically mandate the Education Department, without any outside expertise, to develop one survey for all of higher education across the country," Flounlacker said. "We want to make sure at the end of the day that any reference in the legislation to surveys is such that it's credible, accurate and useful for the public."

Only 26 of the 60 AAU member campuses decided to participate in the survey, as well as Dartmouth College. Even with just 27 participating institutions and a response rate below what the researchers had hoped for (less than 20 percent of students responded), the survey still collected responses from more than 150,000 students, making it one of the largest research efforts of its kind.

While some, including Arne Duncan, the U.S. secretary of education, praised the large undertaking, others pushing for changes in how campuses handle sexual assault were less impressed.
“I read any study with a healthy dose of skepticism, in order to avoid any knee-jerk reaction on my part if what I know currently is being validated or questioned,” said John Foubert, a professor of higher education and student affairs at Oklahoma State University and founder of the sexual assault prevention program One in Four. “By design, an AAU report is taken only from schools in the AAU. This biases the findings toward more elite, large institutions.”

The AAU and Westat researchers similarly cautioned against viewing the results as a national or random sample. Foubert also criticized the survey for its low response rate and for “throwing unwanted sexual contact into the mix,” adding that he believes doing so "risks equating a forced kiss with rape."

The survey used a broad definition of sexual assault -- referred to as “nonconsensual sexual contact” -- that included sexual touching or kissing, as well as penetration. Like other surveys that use this definition, the results bolster the widely used though often debated one-in-five statistic. Separate surveys at the University of Michigan and Rutgers University recently reached similar conclusions.

Unlike many other campus climate surveys, however, the AAU report also includes data specifically about sexual assault involving penetration.

About 23 percent of female undergraduate students across the 27 institutions reported experiencing “nonconsensual penetration or sexual touching by force or incapacitation” since enrolling. Nearly 11 percent reported experiencing sexual assault involving penetration.

“This confirms that when doing these kinds of surveys, it’s important to make those distinctions when publishing victimization rates,” said David Cantor, vice president of Westat. “Providing this level of detail is fairly unique among campus climate surveys. We had requests from the universities to try and differentiate between incidents that are clearly quite different in nature.”

While the aggregate data for the 27 campuses point to nearly a quarter of undergraduate women experiencing sexual assault of some kind while enrolled in college, results varied by institution. The AAU report does not list individual survey results, but it does state that rates of sexual assault for undergraduate women at the participating institutions ranged from 13 percent to 30 percent.

About half of the institutions reported rates of 19 to 24 percent.

Several of the participating colleges also released their campus-specific data this week, with many saying that the results were “disturbing” and that the information would be used to guide prevention efforts moving forward. Officials stopped short of announcing any new policies based on the survey’s findings.

“The data from these surveys are critical to our work,” said Holly Rider-Milkovich, director of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center at the University of Michigan, where 30 percent of women reported experiencing nonconsensual sexual contact. “The more we know about our community, the better we are able to tailor our programs to be most effective.”
Laura Dunn, founder of victims’ advocacy group SurvJustice, said it is “heartening” to see a survey measure rates among different types of students on campus, such as those identifying as gay and transgender. Dunn said the survey falls short, however, in helping institutions know more about one particular group: the students committing sexual assault.

Focusing on just victimization, she said, only reveals information about the "symptoms rather than the cause of sexual violence," so surveys should also include questions about who is committing the assaults, as well as when and where.

"Noticeably missing for collected data was information about perpetrators, which is an essential data point for fashioning effective prevention education efforts," Dunn said. “That data would also have implications on necessary training for campus investigators and adjudicators. Unfortunately, the AAU survey, like several studies before it, focuses squarely on victims to gain information on sexual assault. We should invest in addressing this epidemic at its roots rather than merely pruning the limbs of its aftermath."

University of Missouri professor sues over gun prohibition on campus

A University of Missouri professor is filing a lawsuit against the school for prohibiting guns on campus, in what is aimed to be one of the first tests of the state’s newly amended constitution that provides for “strict scrutiny” of gun restrictions.

Royce de R. Barondes, who is an associate professor of law at the University of Missouri, is challenging the campus’ policy that “the possession of firearms on university property is prohibited except in regularly approved programs or by university agents or employees in the line of duty.”

The lawsuit, being accepted in state court Monday, claims the university’s policy is unconstitutional under a 2014 strengthening of its state “second-amendment” provision. The amendment declares that the right of every citizen to keep and bear arms, ammunition and accessories in defense of his home, person, family, property or “when lawfully summoned in aid of civil power” cannot be questioned and is “unalienable.”

The law change made Missouri the second state in the nation, after Louisiana, to provide for so-called “strict scrutiny” of gun restrictions, which is the strongest level of protection.
“This case is an opportunity for good constitutional jurisprudence with us passing an amendment to our constitution last year,” said Jennifer Bukowsky, who is representing Mr. Barondes in the lawsuit. “The university’s rule is so obviously in violation of our state’s constitution, we see this case as being the best vehicle to protect one of our nation’s very first freedoms — our freedom to self-defense.”

Lawmakers in 14 states are currently pushing bills to allow concealed carry on a college or university, and in June, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed his state legislature’s bill into law. Last year Missouri lawmakers passed a bill allowing specially trained school employees to carry concealed guns on campuses.

But Ms. Bukowsky thinks students’ and professors’ right to carry is implicit through the state’s amended constitution, and therefore is challenging the university’s code prohibiting it.

“We aim to act to give actual content and impact to our amended constitution, so we’ll have more vibrant gun rights in the eyes of the law and give the actual voters what they voted for in amending the constitution,” Ms. Bukowsky said. “We need to get the facts before the court so they can be interpreted more favorably toward those who lawfully possess firearms.”

Mr. Barondes is a concealed carry permit holder in the state of Missouri. He also teaches a course on firearms law and has received extensive training on the safe handling and use and tactics of lawfully using a handgun, Ms. Bukowsky said.

The University of Missouri spills into the township of Columbia and owns many properties around town, making it unlawful to carry in much of Columbia, Ms. Bukowsky said. In addition, the area has seen its fair share of crime, with people wanting to arm themselves for self-defense, she said.

In April, Mark Adair was shot and killed by law enforcement in a university parking garage. In the 24 hours before, he had attacked three women in three different places. Mr. Adair hid in the backseat of his first victim’s car while she was shopping for groceries. When she came out, he “displayed a gun and pressed the gun against the side of her chest,” according to a Columbia Police Department Offense Report of the incident.

It was only after the first woman “pulled a Smith and Wesson Model 642 handgun out of her purse,” and displayed her firearm, that the “assailant disengaged and ran away,” according to the police report.

“The university is trying to disarm law-abiders and, in doing so, is making them more vulnerable to the lawbreakers,” said Ms. Bukowsky. “They’re making this [self-defense] choice for me, and we can’t make that choice for ourselves.”

Shannon Watts, the founder of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, disagrees, and says that more people being allowed to carry on campus won’t reduce crime, but may increase it.
“If you ask the real experts — those who will be impacted by dangerous campus-carry laws — 78 percent of students, 95 percent of college presidents, and 89 percent of police chiefs agree that more guns on campuses are not the answer to keeping women safe,” she argued in a February editorial. “That’s because campuses are rife with alcohol, drugs, and depression: a dangerous recipe that may be made deadly by adding guns to the mix.”

However, since the fall semester of 2006, Utah has allowed concealed carry on its nine public colleges, and one public technical college, with no uptick in gun-related violence.

In addition, concealed carry has been allowed on the two Colorado State University campuses — in Fort Collins and Pueblo — since 2003 and 14 Colorado community colleges since 2010. All Mississippi public colleges have allowed campus carry since 2011 and, as of last year, all Idaho public colleges have allowed it, with no major incidents.

“No state has seen a resulting increase in gun violence as a result of legalizing concealed carry (all 50 states now allow some form of concealed carry), despite the fact that licensed citizens regularly carry concealed handguns in places like office buildings, movie theaters, grocery stores, shopping malls, restaurants, churches, and banks,” according to the group Students for Concealed Carry, which advocates for concealed carry rights on campuses.

According to studies by the National Academy of Sciences and the Harvard Injury Control Research Center, no evidence has been found that licensed concealed carry leads to an increase in either violent crime or gun deaths.

The latest victory for Students for Concealed Carry was when Mr. Abbott signed the Texas bill in June despite some top universities pushing back against the policy. The bill contains a carve-out that allows schools to create “gun-free zones.”

Back in Missouri, Ms. Bukowsky feels confident in her case.

“Faculty, staff, citizens, everyone on the University of Missouri isn’t armed, and the bad guys know that,” Ms. Bukowsky said. “It’s a target-rich environment. We’ve seen a lot of developments, statutes such as in Texas — and passing campus carry laws in other places. So there’s been others before us.”

The case Royce de R. Barondes v. Timothy M. Wolfe and the Curators of the University of Missouri was electronically received at Cole County Circuit Court on Saturday and accepted into the court Monday.
Missouri colleges would freeze tuition for funding hike

Sept. 21, 2015  •  By SUMMER BALLENTINE

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Leaders of Missouri's public community colleges and universities said Monday that they will freeze undergraduate tuition next school year as part of a deal with Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon to ramp up funding from the state, although the extra spending needs legislative approval.

Nixon is recommending a $55.7 million increase in performance funding next fiscal year, which would bring total state higher education funding to $985 million. That would be a 6 percent increase, and state budget director Dan Haug said that would be the most ever budgeted for higher education.

Haug said state funding for public colleges and universities reached a high of $968 million in fiscal year 2002, before a series of cuts.

"This significant investment would enable Missouri's community colleges to freeze tuition next year and to continue delivering the quality, affordable education our students need and deserve," said St. Charles Community College President Ron Chesbrough, who is chairman of a Missouri Community College Association council of presidents and chancellors. Chesbrough and the head of a public university council touted the agreement during an announcement outside the governor's mansion in Jefferson City.

The proposal requires legislative approval, and Nixon said he's "extremely optimistic" lawmakers will approve the plan during the session that starts in January.

"I feel very, very deeply that we have got to prepare our students for jobs of the future," Nixon said. "I'm confident that this is the right priority to have, and I'm looking forward to working to get it passed."

But House Budget Committee chairman Rep. Tom Flanigan, R-Carthage, expressed doubts about the passage of such an increase. Requests for comment from the Senate budget leader were not immediately returned Monday.
"The State of Missouri does what it can with scholarships and caps on tuition increases," Flanigan said in a statement. "However, such a significant recommended increase by the governor is likely to take a back seat to necessary spending increases on health care.

College boards also would need to approve the tuition freezes endorsed by college and university presidents.

Performance funding is awarded based on student retention, graduation rates and other measures.

Higher education leaders also agreed they would set aside more than $9 million of the proposed increase for science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs.

Nixon proposes $55.7M increase for colleges
Sept. 21, 2015  •  By Alex Stuckey

JEFFERSON CITY  •  Gov. Jay Nixon on Monday proposed a $55.7 million increase in higher education funding.

If the Legislature agrees, that will mean more scholarships at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, the university chancellor said. The increase “is just a proposal, this is the first stage of this, but I’m optimistic,” Chancellor Thomas George said.

Even without additional scholarship money, the increase could help make college education slightly more affordable by allowing public higher education institutions to freeze tuition next year — the fourth time for such a freeze since Nixon took office in 2009.

“This tuition freeze is good for students, families and our economy as a whole,” Nixon said at a news conference. “Because the less debt students take on when they’re in school, the more they can spend when they graduate — buying a car, starting a business and pursuing their dreams.”

The proposed increase would be funneled to four-year and two-year public higher education institutions based on performance. Each institution’s board would have to agree to the tuition freeze and lawmakers have to sign off on Nixon’s proposal during the 2016 legislative session that starts in January before it can become a reality for students.

As part of the proposal, institutions agreed that at least $9.2 million of that increase would be dedicated to science, technology, engineering and math, a concentration of fields known as STEM.

Nixon signed the performance funding model into law in 2014, requiring public higher education institutions to use five performance criteria to determine how much extra money they would receive when the state increases funding.

Higher education institutions also must implement criteria for job placement statistics related to a student’s degree or pursuit of a graduate degree under the law. However, job placement statistics as a performance
measure may not be used during years when the state unemployment rate is higher than the previous calendar year’s rate.

This model of funding has been controversial, with some concerned that the criteria are too easily met.

In the current budget year, the Legislature appropriated a $12 million increased based on performance funding.

Senate Appropriations Chairman Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, said he would take a look at the governor’s proposal. “If it’s feasible, we’ll evaluate whether it’s a good thing to do,” Schaefer said.

Ron Chesbrough, president of St. Charles Community College, applauded Nixon’s proposal at a news conference Monday.

Nixon proposes funding boost, tuition freeze for Missouri universities

By JASON ROSENBAUM · SEPT. 21, 2015

Flanked by the heads of two-year and four-year colleges and universities, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon announced Monday in Jefferson City that the heads of Missouri’s higher education institutions have agreed to freeze tuition for the 2016-2017 school year. He then said he was proposing a $55.7 million increase in higher education performance funds for the 2017 fiscal year.

This is the fourth time since 2009 that the governor paired a tuition freeze with a boost in higher education funding.

“That’s good for students, good for families and it’s good for our economy,” Nixon said during his press conference. “Because the less debt students take on when they’re in school, the more they can spend when they graduate. Buying a car, starting a business and pursuing their dreams.”

Boards of the various public colleges and universities have yet to set tuition rates for the next school year.

Earlier this year, curators of the four-campus University of Missouri systems increased tuition by 0.8 percent for the 2015-16 school year.

State law limits the system’s tuition increase to the national Consumer Price Index, unless the school wants to seek a waiver from the Department of Higher Education. Preliminary figures discussed by the curators at their meeting in St. Louis last
December had pegged the likely tuition hike next year at 1.8 percent, the projected CPI increase. But when the actual numbers were released by the Labor Department, the index had risen just 0.8 percent in 2014. The department highlighted the sharp decline in gasoline prices as a major factor in the year-to-year drop.

Additionally, Nixon said the colleges and universities agreed to dedicate more than $9 million of the proposed funding increase to programs and initiatives related to science, technology, engineering and math projects.

“And quite frankly, with all they’ve got going on, that’s the very natural step for all of these folks,” Nixon said. “That’s where the fastest growing, highest-paying jobs are. So we’re putting more dollars toward helping students earn degrees in these fields.”

Ultimately though, the Missouri General Assembly has the final say in whether to appropriate any additional higher education funds. And Chris Dunn – a staffer for House Budget Chairman Tom Flanigan, R-Carthage – tweeted that the governor’s announcement may be premature:

St. Louis Public Radio’s Dale Singer contributed information to this story.

University of Missouri Board of Curators hold closed session

The University of Missouri Board of Curators held a closed session Sunday, meeting from 7:45 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.

The session was not one of the board’s regularly scheduled meetings. UM System Spokesman John Fougere said he was unable to comment on what curators discussed Sunday during the board’s executive session.

The meeting’s agenda said the closed session was held for “consideration of certain confidential or privileged communications with university counsel, negotiated contracts and personnel matters.”

The university must make any closed session votes public 72 hours after the meeting ends.
The curators did not release any statements or announcements after Sunday’s meeting.

The Board of Curators’ next regularly scheduled meeting is Oct. 1-2 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City campus.

Webber calls for protecting research from attacks by abortion foes

A major anti-abortion group’s call to end embryonic stem cell research at the University of Missouri is a threat to academic freedom, state Rep. Stephen Webber said in a news release calling on other area lawmakers to protect two projects from legislative encroachment.

Webber, D-Columbia, and Rep. Kip Kendrick, D-Columbia, signed a letter denouncing the effort by Missouri Right to Life to enact new restrictions on research in response to videos showing Planned Parenthood officials discussing the donation of fetal tissue for research. Missouri Right to Life was one of the major opponents of the 2006 initiative that added protections for stem cell research to the state constitution.

“Extreme special interests are attacking the University of Missouri’s ability to conduct life-saving research utilizing embryonic and somatic stem cells,” Webber wrote in the letter. “These extremists demand the Missouri Legislature interfere with ground-breaking research that could potentially save thousands of lives.”

Webber released the letter along with a news release from his state Senate campaign. Webber, who is in his fourth term in the House, is seeking the 19th District seat held by Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia. His only announced opponent is Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia.


Webber would not discuss what his colleagues told him about why they would not sign.

“I think the Boone County delegation has a responsibility to stand up for the ability of scientists to do research that can help thousands of Missouri women,” Webber said. “If we don’t stand up, I am not sure who will.”
Rowden, Jones and Basye did not respond to messages seeking comment. Kendrick said he signed the letter because he sees a threat from lawmakers deciding which research can be conducted at the university.

“The university is in the cross-hairs right now of the General Assembly, and I believe it is a very real threat,” Kendrick said. “I believe this is going to be a recurring theme throughout the 2016 session.”

On Sept. 8, Missouri Right to Life issued a news release announcing it would seek restrictive legislation to “ensure that the University of Missouri does not use our tax dollars for abortion services of any kind, human cloning, embryonic stem cell research or research on aborted babies.”

The university became a target because MU Health Care granted privileges to a doctor working for the Planned Parenthood clinic in Columbia, allowing abortions to resume after a three-year suspension. The university has defended its actions as required by federal law and, in an attempt to placate abortion foes, canceled all contracts with Planned Parenthood.

Two embryonic stem cell projects are underway at the university using five lines of stem cells that have existed for more than a decade.

Each of the stem cell lines was approved for federally funded research under standards set by President George W. Bush in an August 2001 executive order. That order barred the destruction of embryos to create stem cell lines but allowed research using existing lines to continue.

“The projects are investigating pregnancy disorders, and the researchers are searching for a way to eliminate these disorders,” MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken wrote in an email.

The research is being done within the Bond Life Sciences Center, and Webber addressed his letter to Jack Schultz, director of the center. All the research is done within the bounds of current federal and state law and efforts to shut it down in the legislature would be an attack on academic freedom, Shultz said.

“Worse than that, it would be interference with progress toward solving some serious health problems,” Shultz said.

“I think it would be a horrible decision.”
A University of Missouri associate law professor has filed a lawsuit contending that the school's ban on concealed weapons on campus violates his constitutional rights.

The lawsuit filed Saturday by Royce de R. Barondes against the Board of Curators and President Tim Wolfe also argues the ban conflicts with a state law that allows guns to be stored in the passenger compartment of a vehicle by an adult with a permit.

His attorney, Jennifer Bukowsky, also argues the ban violate Barondes' right to keep and carry weapons on campus for self-defense. Barondes is licensed to carry a concealed firearm.

The lawsuit also cites an amendment approved last year by Missouri voters that said state residents have an unalienable right to bear arms and any gun regulations must be subject to "strict scrutiny."

University spokesman Christian Basi declined to comment because the lawsuit is pending, the Columbia Daily Tribune reported.

"This is a sensitive subject to many people, but it doesn't change the fact that it is a constitutional right for Mr. Barondes," Bukowsky said. "He should be able to exercise that right, and the university shouldn't be able to violate it."

The lawsuit cites three incidents near the Columbia campus this year, including an officer-involved fatal shooting in a parking garage of a suspect in several violent crimes. It also recalls the 2005 death of assistant professor Jeong Inn, who was killed and stuffed in his car, which was set on fire, in a parking garage.

Barondes, who has worked at the university since 2002, fears he will lose his tenured job and be arrested if he conceals a gun in his car or on his person, according to the petition.

Bukowsky said Monday the lawsuit can provide a test case to interpret how far the amendment approved last year in Missouri goes in expanding gun rights.
University of Missouri professor sues over campus gun ban

COLUMBIA, Mo - A University of Missouri associate law professor has filed a lawsuit challenging the university's ban on guns on campus.

The lawsuit filed Saturday by Royce de R. Barondes contends the ban violates a state law that allows guns on campus if they are stored in the passenger compartment of a vehicle. His attorney, Jennifer Bukowsky, also argues the ban violate Barondes’ right to keep and carry weapons on campus for self-defense. Barondes is licensed to carry a concealed firearm.

Barondes also cites a constitutional amendment passed last year that strengthened gun rights in Missouri.

The lawsuit names the University of Missouri Board of Curators and system President Tim Wolfe.

University spokesman Christian Basi declined to comment because the lawsuit is pending.

MU law professor sues university over gun policy

COLUMBIA - A lawsuit involving guns on UM system campuses moved forward Monday.

MU associate law professor Royce de R. Barondes is suing the university for prohibiting guns on campus.

The current policy prohibits the possession of firearms on university property except regularly approved programs or by "university agents or employees in the line of duty."

Barondes is seeking to challenge the university's gun ban after new language was added to the Missouri Constitution's 2nd Amendment. The Amendment states the right to bear arms is unalienable and subject to strict scrutiny.

A UM system representative said they just received this lawsuit and will be reviewing it. He said they have no further comment at this time.

"I think it was a well-intentioned rule meant for the safety of individuals on campus. The problem is that the bad guys don't care about the rules," Barondes' lawyer, Jennifer Bukowsky said.

Barondes has a conceal and carry permit. He also taught a course on firearms law.

"There has been a number of incidents in Columbia where dangerous things have happened and the university or the curators shouldn't be making a decision for individuals on how they chose to defend themselves," Bukowsky said.

Royce de R. Barondes v. Timothy M. Wolfe and the Curators of the University of Missouri was electronically received at Cole County Circuit Court on Saturday and accepted into the court Monday.

MU law professor challenges campus gun ban

Citing an amendment voters added to the Missouri Constitution last year, a University of Missouri School of Law professor has initiated a lawsuit challenging MU’s campus gun ban.
Columbia attorney Jennifer Bukowsky electronically filed the lawsuit Saturday in Cole County Circuit Court on behalf of Associate Professor Royce de R. Barondes. The suit contends a board of curators rule prohibiting firearms on campus violates a state law that allows for a gun to be stored in the passenger compartment of a vehicle.

The ban also violates the state constitution and the second and 14th amendments to the federal Constitution by not allowing Barondes to carry a gun with a valid concealed carry permit or in his car while on campus, the lawsuit alleges. Barondes is licensed to carry a concealed firearm, the lawsuit says.

The suit names the UM Board of Curators and UM System President Tim Wolfe as defendants. Bukowsky cites recent events on or near campus and Barondes’ desire to be able to carry a concealed weapon lawfully for self-protection as reasons for filing the suit.

“This is a sensitive subject to many people, but it doesn’t change the fact that it is a constitutional right for Mr. Barondes,” Bukowsky said Monday. “He should be able to exercise that right, and the university shouldn’t be able to violate it.”

Amendment 5, passed in August 2014, strengthened gun rights in Missouri and added language that subjects any future restrictions on the right to “bear arms, ammunition, and accessories typical to the normal function of such arms” to “strict scrutiny.” Anders Walker, Lillie Myers professor of law at Saint Louis University, said Amendment 5 will require the university to show a compelling interest served by the gun ban. He expects the university to argue that interest is public safety. He said the case “could go either way,” but added that courts have traditionally upheld gun bans at public universities, though Amendment 5 makes it possible a court could strike down MU’s prohibition.

“They’re going to assess it based on strict scrutiny,” Walker said. “If the school could make a case on safety, they could save the ban, but it’s not 100 percent certain that Mizzou will be able to do that, given the way we’ve moved toward liberalizing the right to bear arms.”

People are allowed to carry weapons on public university campuses in eight states, Walker said: Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin.

Another possible argument MU could use against the ban is that guns on campus will have a “chilling effect” on free speech by frightening people.

“That argument, in my opinion, is not as strong as the safety argument,” Walker said.

MU spokesman Christian Basi declined to comment because the suit is pending. UM System spokesman John Fougere did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment.

Bukowsky said the lawsuit can help clarify how far Amendment 5 goes in expanding gun rights.

“This is a great opportunity to bring the new amendment to court for an interpretation,” Bukowksy said.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Law School professor files lawsuit over MU's gun ban

TIFFANY CROUSE, 19 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — A law professor has filed suit against the UM Board of Curators and UM System President Tim Wolfe, saying an MU policy that prohibits concealed weapons on campus infringes on his constitutional rights.

Attorney Jennifer Bukowsky filed the lawsuit on behalf of associate professor Royce de R. Barondes.

In the suit, Bukowsky and Barondes invoke Amendment 5, a measure that Missouri voters passed in August 2014 stating that any gun regulations be subject to "strict scrutiny" and that Missouri residents' right bear arms is "unalienable." Sixty-one percent of voters in the August 2014 election approved the measure.

Barondes' petition says MU is failing to follow the law.

"The Defendants maintain a gun ban using methods that make law-abiders more vulnerable to attack by law-breakers — a ban that unlawfully and unconstitutionally violates Plaintiff's individual rights to keep and carry a firearm for self-defense," the opening paragraph of the petition states.

MU's policy for all workers prohibits them from possessing or discharging a firearm anywhere on campus. This would include any parking structures and buildings that MU owns.

Barondes fears the loss of his job if he conceals a gun in his car or on his person, according to the petition.
Bukowsky cites the existence of MU’s emergency alert system and a history of crimes at MU to argue that MU is not free of crime and therefore should not be above the law.

Barondes, who has worked at MU since 2002, teaches a course at the law school on firearms law and has "extensive knowledge and training on the lawful use and safe handling of a firearm," the petition states.


There where 13 states that allowed conceal-and-carry on campuses as of May 2015, according to the Crime Prevention Research Center. And 20 states, including Missouri, have laws explicitly banning conceal-and-carry on campuses, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

“That puts Missouri in the minority,” Bukowsky said.

Bukowsky noted that Lott’s book indicates “concealed carry holders are extremely law-abiding,” and she said an argument can be made that people with conceal-and-carry permits are better trained to handle guns than some government officials, such as police officers.

Also, “there has been no up-ticks in crime since concealed carry has been put in place," Bukowsky said.

Barondes hopes to be able to carry his gun on his person and in his car when he is on campus if he wins the lawsuit, Bukowsky said, adding that the lawsuit will be a great test case for the state with the new gun laws in place.
Graduate students reflect on their experiences at MU

Students discuss roles as activists, advocates, colleagues and teachers

RUTH SERVEN, 1 hr ago

*Here is a look at four students at MU, their challenges and expectations in the wake of policy changes that affect their graduate education.*

**COLLEEN YOUNG: THE ACTIVIST**

Graduate student Colleen Young has become active with the Forum on Graduate Rights, partly as an outlet for frustration stemming from some of her own negative experiences at MU.

Last month, she called for an all-day walkout and rally in response to the abrupt cancellation of health care coverage for all graduate student employees. The insurance subsidies have since been reinstated.

When Young completed her undergraduate degree at the University of California, Berkeley, she searched for a school that would focus on biological anthropology. MU is one of the few schools to focus on humans within an evolutionary and ecological context. Young’s research focuses on what happens to human body sizes when they move to an island.

She receives about $32,000 a year from a three-year grant from the National Science Foundation, and uses the money to cover research costs and living expenses. The foundation recommends that Young focus on research rather than teach, but she often steps into the classroom when the department is short-staffed.

Many qualified bio anthropology teaching assistants work in the Biology and Anatomy departments, which typically pay more than anthropology, she said.
"I'm basically the pinch hitter, and whenever (the Anthropology Department) has no qualified TAs left, my adviser asks me to help out," Young said.

She has been in and out of the hospital all summer, she said. A case of rhabdomyolysis — a syndrome caused by excessive exercise — landed her in the hospital for multiple days with acute pain and the danger of muscle and kidney failure.

Young said Aetna, the university's health insurer, declined to cover her expenses, declaring that she hadn't demonstrated organ failure, chronic pain or muscle failure.

"It was pretty hilarious because all three reasons were why I was there," Young said.

She said she receives frequent letters from Aetna demanding payment, and she is in the process of appealing the fees and charges. She said her effort to receive adequate health care and compensation has caused her to consider leaving MU.

"When the university is cutting so many resources, it makes it so hard for me to stay. I have a portable grant, and I could take it anywhere," she said.

"I'm being paid money from the government to do research, and I'm wasting money here on things that at another university I would be paid for. It's a pretty difficult situation."

Young followed her adviser, assistant professor of anthropology Libby Cowgill, also a graduate of California, to MU.

Cowgill currently advises four graduate students, and each has either a teaching assistantship or receives a fellowship or a grant.

"I am lucky enough to have only graduate students who had outside funding or a Mizzou internal scholarship," Cowgill said. "All of my students are on scholarships. And that was because I personally did not want to live with the guilt of watching someone go into a massive amount of debt to work with me in a field where they may not get a job when they get out."
She said she looks for high-quality students who almost always have options at other institutions, many of them well-funded.

"So just imagine me trying to talk to these students and trying to tell them what we can offer them, when we can't even offer them insurance," Cowgill said. "Not only can we not fully fund them on a livable wage, but we can't even offer them insurance."

Cowgill completed her master's and doctoral degrees at Washington University in St. Louis. Even though her own education and living expenses were paid by the school, she said small, unforeseeable expenses, such as a car repair or a hospital bill, required her to take out loans. She emerged from school with debt and said she has many friends who graduated with massive credit card debt.

She said her most important piece of advice for prospective graduate students is this: "Go where the best funding option is."

**JESSICA PHILBROOK: THE ADVOCATE**

Jessica Philbrook didn't expect her doctoral research on the rights of adjunct professors to apply so directly to her own life.

Living on a farm in North Dakota for several years heightened her awareness of the need for good work at a fair wage, she said.

"I think I've always been a labor activist at heart," Philbrook said. "I grew up watching my parents work really hard to provide for our family, and at times that meant working odd hours, picking up part-time jobs and relocating. So I've always been really aware of how working conditions impact living conditions."

After she and her husband moved to Columbia, she became an adjunct professor at Moberly Area Community College.

"I got my master's degree thinking, like a lot of people do, that I wanted to be a teacher. I love students, and I love learning," she said.
It turned out the only work she could get was pieced together in three different places, much as her parents did. She was an adjunct, teaching four classes a semester in Moberly; she taught a class at MU and GRE classes for the Princeton Review; and she worked as a writing tutor.

"I was working like 70 hours a week. I was exhausted, I was an insomniac, and it was terrible," Philbrook said. It was then that she decided to pursue a doctorate at MU, and she decided to do her dissertation research on adjunct workers and the rhetoric surrounding their rights.

As she works on her Ph.D. in English with a focus on rhetoric and composition, she juggles assistantships in her department and a position in the campus Writing Center. She also must find odd jobs to cover the gaps. During the summer, she and her husband, also completing a doctorate, must find additional work to cover their expenses.

Finances were tight even before Philbrook was notified on Aug. 14 that her health insurance would abruptly end, she said.

"I just sat in my chair and cried all day," she said. "I couldn't believe that would happen after I'd been here for four years."

Now, Philbrook said, when friends ask her about the program, she can't honestly recommend it.

"I really loved Mizzou when I first came here, and I really loved being here, and I felt supported and cared for," she said.

"I don't feel that way anymore. I feel exploited, and I feel like my labor is being used and not fairly compensated. I feel like I'm not being respected and acknowledged for the work that I do."

**RONNIE LACOMBE AND DAWN CORNELISON: APPRENTICE AND MENTOR**

When Ronnie LaCombe became interested in studying childhood cancer, she asked Dawn Cornelison, an associate professor of biological sciences, if she could work with her.
In Cornelison's lab, LaCombe researches proteins involved in cell-to-cell communication in skeletal muscles stem cells. If she determines how these signals promote cancer, she hopes the miscommunication that causes a childhood cancer called rhabdomyosarcoma could be intercepted and halted.

"It's pretty daunting because there's so much left to know, and there's not a lot of background to go off of," she said. "But it's really cool because anything we find is new and exciting."

LaCombe helps supervise seven undergraduates and four graduate students who rotate through the lab. The ratio requires LaCombe to spend more time supervising undergraduates than normal for a third-year graduate student. She said she usually works 50 to 60 hours a week.

Cornelison said she regards LaCombe and another graduate research assistant she supervises as colleagues. She said they provide vital support and manpower for the research accomplished in her lab.

"'Student' is not really a good word for what they do," Cornelison said. "In the life sciences, it's really more of an apprenticeship."

In addition to her appointment in the Division of Biological Sciences, Cornelison is also affiliated with the Molecular Pathogenesis and Therapeutics Graduate Program. In Cornelison's departments, graduate students participate in designing and executing experiments that make up the basis of both papers and grants and might be involved in writing the papers and grants.

"I'm not in the lab doing most of this stuff because unfortunately, there are a lot of other things I have to do as a professor," Cornelison said. "So the competition for very good graduate students is very, very tight. And grad students and prospective grad students understand you're going to be immersing your whole life in the place you do your Ph.D."

Cornelison came to MU after completing her doctorate at the California Institute of Technology and postdoctoral work at the University of Colorado. She said she was impressed with the structure of the Bond Life Science Center and its emphasis on collaboration.
"I was really impressed with the enthusiasm of all the people I talked to here, with their willingness to collaborate with other groups across departments and colleges," Cornelison said. "These are people I might not ever meet if I were at a more traditionally structured university."

Cornelison said she backed the students in her department and across campus who protested after their health subsidies were cut. Both of the departments she is affiliated with have sent statements of support to their students and to the administration.

Before the subsidies were reinstated, Cornelison offered to redirect a portion of her funds to students to cover their health insurance costs.

Still, the lack of a long-term resolution for health insurance worries LaCombe, who will be ineligible for her parents' health insurance coverage next year. Her four-year fellowship will also end, and she will need to teach to fund her final year at MU.

LaCombe, who is on the steering committee for the Forum on Graduate Rights, said she doesn't regret coming to the university, but when her brother was thinking about graduate school, she was relieved when he chose the University of Iowa.

"Right now it seems really chaotic and hectic," LaCombe said. "I just have to keep in mind that I'm in a good environment, and I get to work with Dee, and I'm going to graduate, and it's going to work out. It's just hard to remember that sometimes. But I'm still happy I made the decision to be here."

**Jagini is a master's degree candidate of business administration**

Business Administration masters candidate Aashish Jagini is an international student from Hyderabad, India.

**AASHISH JAGINI: THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT**

Aashish Jagini's parents have been in the restaurant business in Hyderabad, India, for 25 years. For a year, Jagini managed his parent's newest restaurant, which serves a variety of Indian and Asian food, before deciding he wanted to learn entrepreneurship and managerial skills.
He is in the second year of a master's degree in business administration at MU. In order to qualify for a student visa, Jagini said he had to prove he could pay his first year's tuition, fees and living expenses, the equivalent of five years' wages in India. His parents took out a loan to cover the cost.

"You don't want your parents to sell their estate to pay for your education because you're an adult and you should be able to take care of yourself," he said.

His younger brother, Anvesh, left home at the same time to enroll in a graduate program in science in South Carolina. Jagini said his parents did not want both of them to leave home at the same time, but they believe their children's education is necessary.

"Society is changing, the environment is changing," Jagini said. "You have to leave your family sometime to make something of yourself."

He said he plans to return to India after working in the U.S. for a few years in order to repay his parents for the loans. He is currently looking for an employer who will sponsor a work visa so he can remain in the U.S.

In April, he was elected secretary of the Graduate Professional Council. Jagini said he wants to use his position at the council to help students at the university. The council is the official student government body for all graduate and postgraduate students at MU.

"Even when I was in India, giving back to the community was one thing I always wanted to do," he said. "Coming here, I'm really thankful for this country because it's providing me with such a good education, and I'm not paying for all of it. I thought this would be a good opportunity, and GPC is an excellent community."