Barbara Shelly: MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin is learning the high price of appeasement

The faculty of the University of Missouri’s English Department voted overwhelmingly this week to express no confidence in the leadership of MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

“While we recognize Chancellor Loftin’s service, his twenty-one month tenure has been marked by dereliction of duty in maintaining the quality and reputation of graduate education, violations of the bedrock principle of shared governance, and failure to defend the University’s educational mission against outside political pressure,” the professors said in a statement calling upon university system president Tim Wolfe to replace Loftin.

This isn’t just a case of a few faculty members nursing a grievance. The Columbia campus is roiling, but neither Loftin nor Wolfe seem to know how to handle crises as diverse as black students alleging racism and graduate students protesting cuts in benefits.

And with a new legislative session approaching and 2016 statewide campaigns cranking up, the political pressure the professors spoke of is only going to grow.
Loftin made a huge mistake in September when he caved in to legislative bullying and revoked admitting privileges at MU’s hospital for a doctor who also performs non-surgical abortions at a nearly Planned Parenthood clinic. The admitting privileges are necessary for the clinic to comply with state law.

The chancellor also agreed to the cancellation of 10 contracts with Planned Parenthood for nursing and medical students to complete clinical hours at its health care facilities.

The chancellor’s appeasement had the effect of a sugar rush on anti-abortion lawmakers. They scrambled for more. This week brought a new attack by Missouri Sen. Kurt Schaefer, a candidate for Missouri attorney general who believes his role as Senate appropriations chairman has bestowed him with dictatorial powers.

Once a strong supporter of the university system, the senator from Columbia now spends a great deal of time sniffing out connections between the university system and Planned Parenthood. Loftin was subjected to hostile interrogations from Schaefer’s “sanctity of life” committee shortly before he canceled the clinical contracts and the doctor’s admitting privileges.

Now Schaefer is demanding documents related to a research project in which a doctoral student in the university’s School of Social Work is gauging the impact of Missouri’s new law requiring women to wait 72 hours before obtaining an abortion.

Schaefer had gotten hold of a consent form the student designed for women who agreed to participate in the study. The form is professionally drafted, assuring women that their participation is voluntary and confidential.

It also includes this sentence: “The information that you provide may help Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri improve its services to better meet the needs of women seeking abortions.”

That was all Schaefer needed to accuse the university and everyone connected with the study of violating a Missouri statute that bans state funds from being used to perform an abortion or encourage or counsel a woman to terminate a pregnancy. To him, the study looks like a “marketing aid” for Planned Parenthood.

That assertion is ridiculous. The study, which has undergone a rigorous academic review, is designed to assess whether the extended waiting period discourages women from having abortions. Missouri being the first state to pass such a draconian law, you
would think lawmakers would find that information valuable. If the waiting period turns out to be a disincentive, they can use the study for bragging rights.

Schaefer’s attack is a broadside on academic freedom. If Loftin won’t draw the line this time, he has no business leading a major university.

Things will get nasty. Schaefer has threatened to cut the university’s budget if leaders don’t do his bidding.

But to allow a politician to shut down a research project would undermine the foundation of any university and leave MU even more vulnerable.

Already, some extremist members of the Missouri General Assembly and candidates for office have their sights on a longtime embryonic stem cell research project taking place at the university. Missouri Right to Life, the influential anti-abortion group, has falsely compared research on microscopic embryonic cells to the destruction of human life.

I don’t claim to know what the future holds for Loftin or Wolfe, who reportedly are hopelessly at odds. But if they care about the future of the University of Missouri they will tell Schaefer and the other meddlers to keep their power-hungry hands away from academic research.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

GEORGE KENNEDY: MU is mired in complicated matters, but who's responsible?

GEORGE KENNEDY, 1 hr ago

So who do you think should resign or be fired? University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe? Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin? Both? Neither?

If you’ve been following the news lately, you know that one group of campus activists is urging the ouster of President Wolfe while others want him to stay, at least long enough to fire Chancellor Loftin.

You also know that neither the reasons nor the likely outcomes are completely clear.
To me, the situation in which we’re mired is so complicated that I struggle to identify even a few points of clarity. But there are a few.

As to President Wolfe, it seems clear in retrospect that he should have gotten out of his car when students blocked it during the Homecoming parade, should have spoken — and listened — to the protesters and then followed up.

The chancellor has done a number of things that have irritated various of his constituents and that even he might agree should have been more widely discussed beforehand and better explained afterward.

It also seems clear that a good many, at least, of the protesting students are justifiably angry and impatient that the people who run the place haven’t done more to overcome the vestiges of racial repression and bigotry that still deface the university.

That’s where it gets complicated, because while race is at the core of minority student unrest, issues as disparate as the threatened cut in graduate student tuition waivers and the obvious cave-in to right-wing pressure on Planned Parenthood also generate widespread angst among students, faculty and, I’m told, deans.

On Wednesday, I walked south past Jesse Hall and Traditions Plaza to the spot behind that iconic tiger statue where the group calling itself Concerned Student 1950 has pitched a half-dozen brightly colored tents.

I was hoping to talk with the most concerned student of all, Jonathan Butler, who has pledged to starve himself until President Wolfe resigns. “Oh, Jonathan’s not here,” another student said. “He doesn’t stay here. He has to take care of himself.” And so he should.

I was hoping to ask how he squared his do-or-die action with the seeming plea for patience he spoke about in one of the videos produced by the Faculty Council’s Committee on Race Relations: “Racism won’t be cured overnight because it wasn’t created overnight,” he said. “What we can do at each of our different levels is start to make an impact.”
He and his supporters are starting to make an impact, all right, but of just what sort remains to be seen.

The most important questions remain to be answered.

First among those, of course, is what the UM Board of Curators will do. So far, the silence has been deafening.

Then what will President Wolfe, assuming he survives, do? He has met at least twice, though belatedly, with the students, once in private and no more successfully in public with the chancellor in tow.

If he were to ask my advice, which he hasn’t yet done, I’d suggest that he issue the demanded apology, preferably in his own handwriting, as the students specify. I know of no evidence that he personally is any more a racist than I or any other born-and-bred white Missourian was raised to be. The institution he heads, however, has 150 years or so of sins for which apology is due.

He has said, it seems to me, a good many of the right things, including what he said Tuesday: “Racism is unacceptable; it’s absolutely unacceptable; and we have to eliminate it.” He added, to some skepticism, “My actions will support my words.”

The apology would be a start.

In Chancellor Loftin’s case, race relations may be the least of his problems. I’ll be surprised if the English Department's vote of no confidence long remains the only one. Thursday’s announced delay in implementing the cuts in graduate student tuition waivers is only a delay.

If I were a betting man, I’d bet Kim Anderson outlasts him.
Black grad student on hunger strike in Mo. after swastika drawn with human feces

By Michael E. Miller November 6 at 7:15 AM

Columbia, Mo., a city known for its cheeseburgers and college sports teams, is earning a much less savory reputation these days. Once ranked among the best places to live in America, Columbia has witnessed a flurry of racist incidents in recent months, culminating with the swastika scrawled in excrement on Oct. 24.

Now a graduate student says he is on hunger strike and willing to die unless the school’s president steps down.

“My body feels like it’s on fire,” Jonathan L. Butler, 25, told The Washington Post on Thursday night, four days into his one-man protest. “I have pain all over. I’m exhausted. Of course, I’m hungry. I’ve got an ongoing headache.”

Butler said he was just drinking water — no multivitamins, no painkillers — until University of Missouri president Tim Wolfe steps down. Butler and other black students blame Wolfe for what they say is the school’s failure to address the rising tide of racism on campus.

“I already feel like campus is an unlivable space,” said Butler, who is African American. “So it’s worth sacrificing something of this grave amount, because I’m already not wanted here. I’m already not treated like I’m a human.”
University Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said in a statement that his “heart is heavy” with concern for Butler’s health, and agreed that “racism has deep roots at our university.” He promised to “find solutions” to “make our university an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.”

Butler’s hunger strike may be the most dramatic recent action against racism on American college campuses, but it is far from the only one. In the 15 months since African American teenager Michael Brown was fatally shot by a white police officer in Ferguson, Mo., universities across the country have become home to protests the likes of which haven’t been seen since the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

Young protesters, many of them students of color, have swelled speakers circles and occupied quads to criticize cops, politicians and university administrators for allegedly prejudiced policies or practices.

But as the Black Lives Matter movement and others like it have drawn attention to lingering racism in the United States, they have also drawn a backlash.

Nooses have been left hanging on trees at Duke University and the University of Mississippi. Students at multiple schools have hosted “blackface parties.” The University of Southern California’s student body president was called an “Indian piece of sh–.” Even Yale, a supposed bastion of Ivy League etiquette, saw swastikas scribbled across its campus.

As in the 60s, colleges and universities have again become the front line of America’s culture war.

And in Columbia, Mo., Jonathan Butler soon could become a casualty.

Columbia is a quaint college town. It is the home of the University of Missouri-Columbia, also known as Mizzou: the state system’s flagship and the first state
university west of the Mississippi River. Every autumn, roughly 35,000 students — of whom seven percent are black — from across the state swell the city of around 115,000. Some come from the left-leaning urban centers of Kansas City and St. Louis, each around two hours away. Others come from the conservative-leaning countryside.

Lately, however, this diversity has become divisive.

Butler says the problems began in Ferguson, about two hours east, but quickly made their way to Columbia. When white police officer Darren Wilson fatally shot 18-year-old Brown on August 9, 2014, the incident shook the entire nation. But it also affected Columbia. Many Mizzou students come from the Ferguson/St. Louis area. Many others, including Butler, nonetheless drove to Ferguson to protest.

Butler was just starting a Master’s degree in educational leadership and policy analysis when protests erupted in Ferguson. He had attended Mizzou as an undergrad as well and liked it enough to stay.

But even as he and his friends were holding signs and chanting on Ferguson’s streets, he was surprised, as he sees it, to see his university do little to address the racial tensions simmering in the same state.

“There was national coverage, so for the school to not cover that or really address that, and we are only two hours away, I think was a huge mistake on their part and contributed to the current cultural environment that we have,” he said. “It just shows that there are racially motivated things – murders, assaults, other things – that happen and we are just going to sweep them under the rug.”

Mizzou has its own history of racism. When the university was founded in 1839, Missouri was a slave state. The state capitol was built by slaves and the university also used slave labor. Several of its founders were ardent slavery supporters.
Butler is well aware of this history. He is also aware of an incident in 2010 when cotton balls were strewn around Mizzou’s Black Culture Center because he was an undergrad at the time.

But nothing prepared him what would happen this semester.

This summer was another tense one for race relations in America. On June 17, self-declared white supremacist Dylann Roof slaughtered nine African American parishioners in Charleston, S.C., setting off a several month-long debate over the Confederate flag. Then there was the anniversary of Brown’s death and more protests in Ferguson.

The problems in Columbia began on September 11. That’s when Payton Head, the Missouri Students Association president and an African American, was racially abused as he walked home.

“Last night as I walking through campus, some guys riding on the back of a pickup truck decided that it would be okay to continuously scream N—-R at me,” Head wrote on Facebook the next day. “I really just want to know why my simple existence is such a threat to society.”

African American students became upset when it took university chancellor R. Bowen Loftin nearly a week to respond to the incident. After several other black students experienced similar abuse, Butler and others organized a rally.


Not everyone was happy with the protest.
“If you are not comfortable at MU please leave,” wrote a commenter on an article covering the protest. “This racist issue is sure getting old and tiresome.”

Barely a week later came another ugly on-campus incident.

Shortly after midnight on Oct. 5, members of the Legion of Black Collegians (LBC) were in a campus plaza rehearsing for a play the following night when “an inebriated white male” called them “n—-rs.”

This time, the university responded more promptly, with Loftin issuing a statement denouncing the incidents. “We support free speech in the context of learning, spirited inquiry and intellectual discussion, but acts of bias and discrimination will not be tolerated at Mizzou,” he wrote.

“It’s happened again,” he said in a video address. “Hate and racism were alive and well at Mizzou.”

A few days later, the white student was identified and “moved from campus,” according to the university.

The removal of the student did little to make Butler or his friends feel better. He told The Post of other recent incidents, including an instance when black journalism students were called the n-word and threatened with comments about the Ku Klux Klan.

“The culture on campus has been deteriorating really fast,” he said. “It’s just gotten to the point on campus where it’s really not safe for black students or really all marginalized students. Me personally, I won’t feel safe on campus until there is an urgency that things need to change and be taken seriously.”
“It’s just a very hostile environment for black students,” he said. Although some Mizzou administrators responded to black students’ complaints, Butler felt the school wasn’t going far enough.

“We are facing a lot of negativity and oppression on a daily basis,” he said. “And then you students go to a diversity forums, you see them write letters, you see them write emails and send tweets and do all these things, we bare our souls and tell very painful stories but… our lives are still not valued. At some point, after spending all that energy telling people that I deserve to be recognized as a human, like my existence matters, at a certain point you are putting people in a corner and you keep poking them with a stick, things escalate until people feel like they are hurt.”

Another group of student protesters covered a statue of Thomas Jefferson with sticky notes with words such as “racist,” “rapist” and “hypocrite” in protest, Fusion reported.

But Butler and his friends took another route. They were hurt, so they hatched a plan to make University of Missouri system president Tom Wolfe pay attention to their pain.

On Oct. 10, with the LBC abuse still fresh in their minds, Butler and ten other African American students interrupted Mizzou’s homecoming parade by surrounding Wolfe’s gleaming red convertible.

“We will be here until we are heard,” Butler shouted into a megaphone as Wolfe and his wife sat awkwardly on top of the back seat, “and our people are protected and they feel safe on this campus.”

Butler and his fellow students chanted until Columbia Police pushed them out of the way, threatening to arrest them and rattling cans of pepper spray in their faces. (Cops did not spray anyone and nobody was arrested, Butler said.)
“We had drunk bystanders come and push us around, curse us out, say some really disgusting things,” Butler said of the demonstration. “Tim Wolfe allowed his driver to rev his engine, and by revving his engine and going back and forth, he ended up bumping one of us twice. The Columbia Police Dept threatened to arrest us even though we were being peaceful. You can see in the photos, we had our hands up and just wanted to do our demonstration and leave."

When Wolfe didn’t hear them out, Butler became even more frustrated.

“I thought, ‘What else do I have to do to prove my humanity’?” Butler told The Post. “What else do I have to do, just because I’m a black person, to prove to you that I deserve to have a good experience on campus? That’s when I started to think about the action of the hunger strike.”

Then, two weeks later, Mizzou’s racial tensions flared again when someone used their own feces to smear a swastika on a communal bathroom wall in a brand new residence hall. The incident seemed to capture the college’s predicament: each attempt at a fresh start besmirched by old prejudices.

“This individual used a symbol that targets cultural and religious minorities in a place where students call their home,” wrote Residence Halls Association president Billy Donley in a press release, adding that the vandalism was “an act of hate.”

A university spokesman downplayed the incident, however.

“It was some vandalism that was discovered several days ago in a residence hall in a restroom,” Christian Basi told the Columbia Missourian.

For Butler, the disgusting incident, and the university’s response, was the last straw.

On Nov. 2, he tweeted out a letter announcing that he was going on hunger strike.
“You may or may not know me,” it began. “Since Mr. Wolfe joined the UM system as president in 2012, there have been a slew of racist, sexist, homophobic, etc., incidents that have dynamically disrupted the learning experience for marginalized/underrepresented students at the University of Missouri.”

“The revolting acts that are occurring at Mizzou are a result of a poisonous infestation of apathy that has been spawning from University of Missouri system leadership,” Butler wrote. “Starting today... I will be embarking on an indefinite hunger strike in opposition to Tim Wolfe as the University of Missouri system president. During this hunger strike, I will not consume any food or nutritional sustenance at the expense of my health until either Tim Wolfe is removed from office or my internal organs fail and my life is lost.”

Butler said he didn’t consult with his fellow activists ahead of time because he “didn’t want to bring undue concern to them.”

For the past four days, he has consumed nothing but water.

“I’m going about my regular daily life, only as of recently a lot slower, just ‘cause I don’t have the energy,” he told The Post.

The response to his hunger strike has helped keep up his spirits, even as his body has lagged. Butler said he has received prayers and messages of support from people across the country and even a group of students in South Korea.

Most importantly, Butler’s hunger strike drew a response from Wolfe — but not the one Butler hoped.

“We have got to create an environment on this beautiful campus and the other three campuses that we have where all students can be successful regardless of where they came from, their race, or their degree program,” Wolfe told a group of students on Tuesday. “We have got to maximize everything that we can do focusing on student
success and I can only do that through conversation and understanding the hurdles and obstacles that are in front of Jonathan or anyone else.”

Wolfe told the students that he would like to meet with Butler and said he was open to arranging a meeting between the hunger striker and the university’s board of curators, according to KBIA.

But Butler said he will only eat when Wolfe is gone and the university takes other steps to address racism on campus.

“I don’t think Tim Wolfe is worth my life,” he told The Post. “But I do believe that when it comes to fighting for justice, you have to be willing to have a level of sacrifice.”

Asked if he was really prepared to die, Butler claimed he was.

“It’s a very real reality,” he said. “It’s a very real reality.”

KRCG-TV (CBS) – Jefferson City, Mo.

**UPDATE: Hunger Strike at MU**

11/5/15 – 10:04 p.m.

[Watch the story](http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=f81aa66a-5227-4ba9-bd92-9468497240b2)
Schaefer objects to MU study on effect of 72-hour abortion wait period

By RUDI KELLER

Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 2:00 pm Comments (17)

A study seeking to understand why a state law requiring a 72-hour waiting period for abortions is effective is the latest target of Sen. Kurt Schaefer's effort to force the University of Missouri to sever its ties to Planned Parenthood.

Schaefer, R-Columbia, sent a letter to Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin accusing the university of violating state law making it illegal to use public funds to perform abortions not necessary to save the life of the mother or to “encourage or counsel a woman to have an abortion not necessary to save her life.”

“The study does not appear to be designed as an objective, unbiased research project, but rather as a marketing aid for Planned Parenthood — one that is funded, in part or in whole, by taxpayer dollars,” Schaefer wrote.

Schaefer is the chairman of the Senate Interim Committee on the Sanctity of Life and a candidate for the Republican nomination for attorney general. The committee has looked at whether Planned Parenthood is providing fetal tissue from abortions for research and the Columbia clinic's abortion license.

Since the investigation began, the university has eliminated the form of clinical privileges granted to the clinic's doctor that allowed the clinic to be licensed and canceled agreements allowing students from the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing to study at Planned Parenthood clinics, though new agreements have taken their place.

In an email to the Tribune, the university defended the study and said it does not violate state law by providing abortions or encouraging women to have abortions not necessary to save their life.
Loftin supports and “and will continue to strongly support academic freedom and the intellectual property of MU’s students and faculty,” the email from MU spokeswoman Mary Joe Banken said.

The research is designed to find out what happens to women who decide not to have an abortion, not to figure out better ways to persuade them to have one, said Mary Kogut, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri. The study is being conducted at that affiliate’s clinic near Forest Park.

“I also think what Sen. Schaefer is doing is intimidation of the higher education institutions of our state,” Kogut said. “This is about academic freedom for students and the university.”

In September 2014, lawmakers passed the law requiring a 72-hour waiting period for an abortion over the veto of Gov. Jay Nixon. Under the law, a woman must be counseled on alternatives to abortion, be given an ultrasound examination to check on the gestational age of the fetus and sign a form consenting to the procedure.

“The purpose of this study is to better understand why a significant number of women sign the 72-hour consent form to have an abortion, but then never return to the clinic to have the abortion procedure,” the participant consent documents state. “Additionally, this study aims to understand how the new 72-hour waiting period in Missouri is impacting women and their decision whether or not to have an abortion.”

Schaefer’s major objection to the study is based on a statement in the patient consent form about how the information will be used.

“The information you provide may help Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri improve its services to better meet the needs of women seeking abortions,” the form states.

The study will help find out if women who decide not to have an abortion are getting prenatal care and if they have decided to keep the baby or offer it for adoption, Kogut said.

The study is being conducted by a graduate student in the School of Social Work and supervised by the director of the school, Marjorie Sable. In 2013, Sable became a member of the Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri Board of Directors and was selected as secretary in 2014.

“I am all for unbiased academic research,” Schaefer said. “This does not appear to be unbiased academic research.”
The study has been underway since it was approved in April by the MU Institutional Review Board. The student conducting the study is a staff member at the St. Louis clinic, pays her own tuition without scholarship support and is paying any expenses for the study from her own pocket, Banken wrote.

MU says it will keep grad tuition waivers for next school year

COLUMBIA – The University of Missouri said Thursday it will not make any changes to the tuition waiver policy for graduate students in the 2016-2017 school year.

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies said, “Implementing changes now has created too much uncertainty regarding recruitment of graduate students for Fall 2016.”

Programs will be asked to make a plan for tuition waiver policies for the following school years.

Senior Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies Hank Foley said the policies will need to be in place by July 1, 2016, in time for fall recruitment.

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies said it will announce clear expectations for the tuition waiver policies by Jan. 2016.

The new plans will not affect current graduate students or those receiving offers for admission in Fall 2016.

Graduate students walked out on Aug. 26 in protest over losing benefits like tuition waivers and health insurance.
Full tuition waivers extended to graduate students through next academic year

ERIN QUINN, RUTH SERVEN, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — All graduate students at MU with assistantships will receive full tuition waivers for the 2016-17 academic year, reversing a decision made in June.

This includes students admitted next fall, the associate vice chancellor for graduate studies announced in a statement sent to members of the graduate community on Thursday.

The announcement delays action that would have changed the tuition waiver policy for graduate students with 10-hour appointments. That change would have cut their waivers in half beginning in fall 2016.

"Implementing changes now has created too much uncertainty regarding recruitment of graduate students for fall 2016," the vice chancellor, Leona Rubin, said in the statement.

Each program on campus will be asked to develop a plan for its tuition waiver policy by July 1, the statement continued. The policy will be "one that recognizes both unique disciplinary conditions and the campus expectation to use tuition waivers to support excellence in graduate education." Expectations for those plans will be announced no later than January, Rubin said.

The new plans will not affect current graduate students or those with offers for admission next fall.

Those with 10-hour appointments totaled 617 of the 2,692 graduate students with assistantships at MU, the Missourian reported last summer. Of those 617, most are assigned to the School of Journalism, the School of Music and the College of Business, Rubin said at the time.
Dan Willett, associate director of the School of Music, said Thursday that professors can now plan accordingly for next year's students and will have a year to make decisions.

"We still face a potentially difficult situation a year down the road, but at least this will allow ample time for discussion at all levels," Willett said.

In the School of Music, faculty teach private lessons but cannot meet all of the demand, which is often handled by graduate students, said Julia Gaines, director of the Music School.

"Graduate students pick up the extra teaching load, but they simply cannot teach across disciplines," Gaines said, referring to their ability to teach different instruments.

Esther Thorson, associate dean for graduate studies with the School of Journalism, said the delay provides a "critical breather" for the graduate program. While she said she applauded the announcement, she also said the backlash from faculty, students and alumni after the original decision suggests "better management planning and depth discussion with faculty should return to MU decision-making."

Anahita Zare, outreach chair of the Forum on Graduate Rights, called it "a step in the right direction and proof that by standing together, we can produce results."

"Unfortunately, this is only a temporary delay being provided, and FGR will continue to pursue a permanent solution to this issue, and all issues in our demands," Zare said in a statement sent Thursday afternoon.

The announcement in June to change the tuition waiver policy was an effort to be more competitive with other public universities, such as the University of Michigan and the University of Iowa, Rubin said. Graduate programs would have to offer more competitive funding to students they want to recruit, she said.

She called it not so much a budget cut as a reallocation of resources. The change would save a potential $3 million a year, based on current graduate enrollment, she said.
MU delays changes to graduate assistant tuition waivers

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 3:34 pm Comments (1)

The University of Missouri has decided to delay changes to its tuition waiver policy that were set to halve waivers for incoming graduate assistants with 10-hour appointments starting in fall 2016.

In a letter to MU faculty and staff, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies Hank Foley, Provost Garnett Stokes and Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies Leona Rubin said any change to the tuition waiver policy would be delayed for the 2016-17 school year.

"Implementing changes now has created too much uncertainty regarding recruitment of graduate students for fall 2016," the letter said.

MU officials said this summer that incoming graduate students with a full stipend, or 20-hour appointment, would receive a full tuition waiver, and students with a half stipend, or a 10-hour appointment, would receive half a tuition waiver starting in 2016. All graduate assistants have traditionally received full tuition waivers.

Eric Scott, a doctoral student with MU's English Department, said the delay in the tuition waiver policy was good news because many incoming students seeking master's degrees would have suffered in the fall. He said the proposed changes hurt graduate student recruiting.

"I'm glad to hear that," he said of the delay. "On the other hand, it's only a reprieve for a year."

Scott said he hopes university officials will change their minds about the policy change but that it might simply be a delaying strategy.

"It's great that we have a short-term fix," Scott said. "What we need is a long-term guarantee."
A little more than 600 students have 10-hour appointments, and about 2,100 have 20-hour appointments. Three programs give half of the 10-hour appointments: music, business and journalism. MU officials have said the move could save the university up to $4 million in five years.

Each program at MU will be asked to develop its own tuition waiver policy, the letter said. The university will announce clear expectations for the plans no later than January 2016, and departments will be asked to finalize their plans no later than July 1.

The new plans will not affect current graduate students or those who are admitted to MU in fall 2016, according to the letter.

"Our tuition waiver policy has been and will continue to be crucial to our support of graduate students," the letter said. "We look forward to working with all of you to ensure that we have a tuition waiver policy that provides us the best opportunity to support excellence in graduate education."

MU finalizes new Planned Parenthood clinical site agreements

By MEGAN FAVIGNANO
Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 2:00 pm Comments (2)

The University of Missouri now has four active clinical site agreements with Planned Parenthood after three new agreements recently were finalized with the Sinclair School of Nursing.

At the beginning of the school year, MU canceled eight of its nine site agreements with Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri and Planned Parenthood clinics in Florida, Tennessee and Arkansas. The agreements allowed nursing students or medical trainees to complete their clinical rotations at the clinic and receive training in women’s health.

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin asked schools with the agreements to review the agreements and discontinue any that were inactive. His request came after the state Senate Interim Committee on the Sanctity of Life scrutinized MU’s relationship with Planned Parenthood. The School of Social
Work, which had a student work with the Columbia clinic last school year, was the only school that kept its agreement active.

MU created the three new agreements at the request of students who wanted to complete their advanced practice nurse training at the clinic. MU Health Care spokeswoman Teresa Snow said the language in the new agreements requires student duties to be in line with federal and state law. Students will not perform or assist in abortions and will not counsel women who are considering abortions, MU spokesman Christian Basi said in an email.

Religious leaders will deliver thousands of letters Friday to University of Missouri Chancellor Bowen Loftin supporting his role in ending contracts between Planned Parenthood and the university.

The letters will also ask university president Tim Wolfe to support Loftin, as well as giving them both credit for revoking the medical privileges at the University Hospital, which would enable the facility’s doctor to perform abortions at the Columbia Planned Parenthood affiliate.

“These life affirming leaders and the Missourians they represent, support MU’s actions to abide by Missouri law which prevents tax payer money from being used to assist or promote abortions, while protecting women and giving dignity to all human life,” wrote Kathy Forck, an anti-abortion advocate, in a statement.

Several entities at the Columbia campus, including student organizations and professors have criticized the decision for the college to end its contracts with the reproductive health care organization, calling it a cave to political pressure.
36 organizations send letter to Loftin about anti-Semitic incident

Posted: Nov 5, 2015 3:51 PM by Alyssa Casares, KOMU 8 Reporter

Updated: Nov 5, 2015 8:54 PM

COLUMBIA - Thirty-six organizations sent MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin a letter concerning the safety and well-being of Jewish students at the University of Missouri Thursday.

The letter said, "We are writing to you today because we are troubled by reports of a swastika drawn out of feces, which was found on the wall of a bathroom in Gateway Hall on October 24."
The letter applauds Residence Halls Association President William Donley, for releasing a statement strongly condemning the vandalism and labeling it antisemitic and "an act of hate."

Although the RHA president addressed the issue after it occurred, Loftin still has not.

The letter said: "We are dismayed that neither you nor any other MU administrator has yet to publicly address this act of blatant antisemitism, which clearly targets Jewish students and causes them to feel threatened and unsafe."

Chantelle Moghadam is the president of Students Supporting Israel (SSI) at the University of Missouri and said her organization decided to take part in the letter to push administration to make an official statement on the issue.

"There is not a lot that I feel we as students can do besides bring it to the attention to other students," Moghadam said. "The administration has been unfortunately ineffective in dealing with this."

The letter acknowledged that Loftin quickly issued a vigorous condemnation of another incident in which MU students were harassed by someone using racist and hateful speech.

The letter said: "You also described substantive steps, including educational initiatives, that your administration would be taking to address the problem of racism on your campus. We commend you for your prompt, vigorous and comprehensive response to this act of racism. At the same time, we urge you to treat blatant acts of anti-Jewish bigotry, such as a swastika smeared in feces on a dormitory wall, no less promptly, vigorously and comprehensively."

Hannah Turner is the PR chair for SSI and said she was angry that Loftin and MU's administration failed to address this incident. She sent Loftin an email and tweeted at him before the letter was sent.

![Hannah Turner](https://themaneater.com/stories/2015/1...@bowtieger Are you ever going to say anything? This is a hate crime too! We demand safety for Jews on campus.

10/30/15, 10:58 AM
He responded in a direct message on Twitter saying:

R. Bowen Loftin
@bowtieger

Hannah, I also got your email and we will set up a meeting as soon as we can. Please understand that I was unable to make a public statement initially because of the investigation that is underway. We will aggressively pursue finding the one(s) who did this. I have and will continue to denounce acts of hate and discrimination. Racism is present at Mizzou, but we will strive to make this a campus where you and all students will always feel and be safe.

Friday 7:07 PM

Turner met with Loftin on Wednesday, and asked him why he still hasn't released an official statement.

"He said that he didn't release a statement because he was told it would interfere with the MUPD investigation," Turner said. "But when I asked him why not release it now, he said that he had it written up but if he released a statement about every racists thing that happened, no one would listen."

The letter sent Thursday morning asked the Chancellor to consider the following recommendations:

We encourage you to demonstrate unequivocally your commitment to protecting Jewish students no less than other students on your campus, by doing the following:

- Swiftly, forcefully and publicly acknowledge that swastika graffiti is an act of antisemitism and will not be tolerated on campus.
- Publicly commit to educating University staff, including campus police, in identifying antisemitism and antisemitic hate crimes.
- Formally adopt the U.S. State Department’s definition of antisemitism to fully and accurately identify all future acts of hate toward Jews and draw the distinction between acceptable
criticism of Israel's policies and calls for the destruction of Israel which are unquestionably antisemitic and breed additional antisemitism.

- Allocate resources and publicly commit to educating students about antisemitism and anti-Jewish discrimination.

The 36 organizations that sent the letter to Loftin include: Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity (AEPi), Alums for Campus Fairness, AMCHA Initiative, American Institute for Jewish Research, Americans for Peace and Tolerance, BEAR: Bias Education, Advocacy & Resources, Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, Club Z, Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA), CUFI on Campus, David Horowitz Freedom Center, Davis Faculty for Israel, Eagles Wings, Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET), Fuel For Truth, Hasbara Fellowships, Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel, Iranian American Jewish Federation, Israel Peace Initiative (IPI), Jewish Law Students Association at UCLA, Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa (JIMENA), National Conference on Jewish Affairs, Proclaiming Justice to the Nations, Project Genesis, Scholars for Peace in the Middle East, Sigma Alpha Epsilon Pi, Simon Wiesenthal Center, StandWithUs, Students and Parents Against Campus Anti-Semitism, Students Supporting Israel at UCLA, Students Supporting Israel at University of Missouri, The Israel Christian Nexus, The Israel Group, The Israel Institute, Training and Education About the Middle East (T.E.A.M.), and Zionist Organization of America.

KOMU 8 News reached out Chancellor Loftin for an official statement, but was forwarded the following response he sent to the letter's organizer, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin.

Ms. Rossman-Benjamin,

Ms. Stromer,

Thank you for reaching out to me.

Racism is multi-dimensional and takes many forms. As we have seen over the past two months, racially-motivated speech and actions continue at Mizzou. As you noted our campus experienced another instance of racism and hate, this time directed at our Jewish students. While the students and staff in the residential community responded to this incident, the university did not immediately react to this latest incident in order to give law enforcement time to investigate and possibly identify the perpetrator(s). Their work continues. Our stance has not and will not change—the University of Missouri seeks to be a welcoming and inclusive campus to all students, faculty, staff and visitors. We are committed to mandatory training of our people in inclusion and diversity and will continue to work with all to build the framework necessary to achieve our goal.

I met yesterday with a Jewish student leader who is arranging for me to sit down with three Jewish
student groups soon and obtain their input on how best to respond to these events in the future as well as how we can improve the campus climate for all.

Bowen Loftin

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Faculty Council expresses 'growing uncertainty' about leadership

SARAH WYNN, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Members of the MU Faculty Council emerged from a closed session Thursday expressing their “deep concern” about communications within the university and "growing uncertainty" about its leadership.

Turmoil on campus is causing instability among the faculty that is beginning to affect their work, said Nicole Monnier, director of undergraduate studies for the German and Russian Studies Department. Monnier read the council's statement aloud after the meeting:

“The University of Missouri Faculty Council and University policy expresses deep concern with regard to the lack of communication and the growing uncertainty about the leadership of the University of Missouri system and MU campus. This unresolved situation erodes our ability to perform faculty duties of teaching, research and outreach.”

Since protests during the Homecoming Parade, tension has ramped up on campus between black students and top administrators UM System President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. In the past week, graduate student Jonathan Butler went on a hunger strike, demanding Wolfe's removal from office, according to previous Missourian reporting.

Butler’s supporters met with Wolfe and Loftin this past week, demanding that Wolfe resign. Activists are also camping on Carnahan Quadrangle to show their support.
Angela Speck, chair of the Faculty Council's Diversity Enhancement Committee, discussed Butler’s supporters and the camping.

“Regardless of whether we are approving of this method of getting action, these are our students and they need our care,” Speck said. She asked that faculty members go and talk to demonstrators and listen.

After the meeting, Monnier addressed the council's decision to go into a closed session after 40 minutes of open discussion.

Monnier said the council would like to be "transparent and communicative." She said faculty is concerned about the lack of that in administrations and believes it is "affecting the stability of our institution."

Monnier said the Faculty Council will soon respond further to events on MU’s campus.

“We are actively discussing further measures that we are likely to take in the near future,” Monnier said.

OTHER FACULTY COUNCIL ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

• The planned location of the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy has changed.

According to previous Missourian reporting, MU received $25 million in October to expand the Kinder Institute and install it on the fourth floor of Ellis Library. The institute will now be moved to the fourth floor of Jesse Hall.

Ann Riley, the acting director of MU Libraries, said, “The libraries are delighted that this is moving to Jesse Hall. We look forward to working with the Kinder folks, supporting their research needs.”

• A study about salary differences among male and female faculty members, which was presented at the previous faculty council meeting two weeks ago, will be the subject of a forum
at 1 p.m. Nov. 12. Ben Trachtenberg, chair of Faculty Council, said that Robert K. Toutkoushian, the author of the study, will speak via Skype or another form of digital communication.

• It was announced Thursday that all graduate students at MU with assistantships will receive full tuition waivers for the 2016-17 academic year, reversing a decision made in June.

• Riley announced that the library fee election will be on Tuesday during the Missouri Students Association elections, which run from Monday at 5 p.m. to Wednesday at 5 p.m.

• The council voted to revise MU's final exam policy to state that a student cannot take more than two exams in a 24-hour period.

• MU's Internet Technology Department is looking to improve its organizational structure to make it more efficient. They plan to form campuswide IT teams based on “similar support needs and geography” and to hire an IT director to lead the teams. From 1 to 3 p.m. Monday, there will be an open forum on the matter in Memorial Union's Stotler Lounge.

• Tim Evans, an associate professor in MU’s College of Veterinary Medicine, noted that students cannot go on MU-sponsored study-abroad programs to countries that have travel warnings for the entire country. Evans said James Scott, director of the MU International Center, would like to start a committee to study the policy and serve as its chair.

He said MU faculty members, the MU Finance Department, the Office of the UM General Counsel and UM Office of Risk and Insurance Management would be represented in the committee. Two goals of the committee would be to change the policy so that students can study abroad in specific regions of countries under travel warnings and to ensure students’ health, safety and emergency preparedness, Evans said. He moved that the Faculty Council endorse these changes.
Faculty Council releases statement of concern regarding university leadership

“This unresolved situation erodes our ability to perform faculty duties of teaching, research and outreach,” the statement read.

By Taylor Blatchford

Nov. 5, 2015

Faculty Council released a statement after its meeting today expressing “deep concern” over the “lack of communication and the growing uncertainty” about university and UM System leadership.

“This unresolved situation erodes our ability to perform faculty duties of teaching, research and outreach,” the statement read.

Vice Chairwoman Nicole Monnier read the statement aloud after the council held a closed session. The council also discussed student Jonathan Butler’s hunger strike and the upcoming library fee vote in open session.

MIZZOUHUNGERSTRIKE

Angela Speck, chair of the Diversity Enhancement Committee, encouraged council members to support the students camping out on Carnahan Quad in support of Butler’s hunger strike against UM System President Tim Wolfe. She suggested bringing students food, blankets and camping supplies.

“Regardless of whether we approve of this method of getting action, these are our students and they need our care,” Speck said. “Showing up and talking to the students out there and listening to them would be fabulous.”

LIBRARY FEE

Ann Riley, the interim director of MU Libraries, presented information on the proposed library fee that students will vote on Nov. 9-11.
“Pass or fail, the fee has raised the issue of library support on campus and we have had very many wonderful expressions of support,” Riley said. “We are very thankful for all these clear expressions of the centrality of the library’s role with students and scholars.”

OTHER UPDATES

Faculty Council Chairman Ben Trachtenberg announced that graduate students with quarter-time appointments that began this fall would receive full tuition waivers.

Trachtenberg also announced that the Kinder Institute would be moving from Ellis Library to the fourth floor of Jesse Hall.

The council approved a revision to MU’s final exam policy to change the words “calendar day” to “24-hour period” in the policy that allows students to consult with instructors to reschedule exams if they have more than two exams scheduled in one day.

Tim Evans of the Student Affairs Committee proposed a rule change for faculty-led study abroad trips that would allow trips to go to countries even if they have U.S. State Department travel warnings.

University of Missouri department: no confidence in Loftin
University of Missouri English Department votes no confidence in chancellor’s leadership

POSTED: 02:54 PM CST Nov 05, 2015

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Members of the University of Missouri Department of English say they don’t have confidence in Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin’s leadership.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports (http://bit.ly/1NQBOZ5 ) 26 members cast no-confident votes and two others abstained during a department meeting Tuesday.

University spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken says Loftin was not aware of department concerns. She says Loftin is working to listen to concerns expressed on campus.

A letter from associate professor Samuel Cohen to university system President Tim Wolfe and others says faculty members feel Loftin is disrespectful of shared governance. It says there's low morale among faculty, staff and students.

The vote came as students were protesting and calling for Wolfe to be removed from office.

KRCG-TV (CBS) – Jefferson City, Mo.

UPDATE: MU English Department Vote of No Confidence

11/6/15 – 5:33 a.m.

Watch the story: http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=34f19054-238e-42d6-bf47-bc63fbd33c43
Activism going strong at Mizzou, students critical of top leadership

2 hours ago  •  By Koran Addo

What could be described as the autumn of discontent at the University of Missouri-Columbia continued on Thursday as a group calling itself Concerned Student 1950 marched through campus, a few hundred deep, calling for systemic changes in leadership and how the university is run.

In addition, there’s a group of students boycotting university dining and retail services, one student’s hunger strike, dozens of aggrieved graduate students and controversy over the school’s relationship with Planned Parenthood.

Of all the turmoil currently going on, what has gotten the most attention is the hunger strike graduate student Jonathan Butler embarked on at 9 a.m. Monday.

Butler, who is pursuing a master’s degree in educational leadership and policy analysis, has promised to forgo all food and nutrition until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe steps down.

Butler is making a case that the buck stops with Wolfe — the man in charge of overseeing the University of Missouri’s network of campuses in St. Louis, Columbia, Kansas City and Rolla.

Specifically, Butler has criticized Wolfe for inaction after a series of racial incidents on campus, dating to last fall.

More recently, student body president Payton Head, who is black, said he was walking down a street one day in September when a group of men driving by yelled racial slurs at him repeatedly.

In October, a black student group said they were confronted by a man in Traditions Plaza on campus who used a racial slur.

Also last month, someone used human feces to draw a swastika in a bathroom inside Mizzou’s Gateway Hall.

Students first confronted Wolfe on Oct. 10 by blocking his car during Mizzou’s homecoming parade. The hunger strike and the boycott followed closely behind.
UM System spokesman John Fougere said on Thursday that Wolfe has met with Butler, members of Concerned Students 1950 and others to hear their complaints. He also plans to meet with Butler again in the next few days, Fougere said.

“Racism is pervasive and systemic in our society, unfortunately, and our campuses are reflections of society,” Fougere said. “It is very concerning to the president when any student feels fearful, unwelcome or uncomfortable.”

Working toward a campus with a pervasive culture of respect is an ongoing priority of Wolfe’s, Fougere added.

Before Wolfe became the target, students and some faculty were directing most of their anger toward Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. That continued this week when more than two dozen members of the university’s English Department gave their bow-tied chancellor a vote of no confidence during a Tuesday staff meeting.

While the issue of race has been the most heated, students were also angered after Mizzou discontinued the clinical privileges for a Planned Parenthood physician and terminated multiple relationships with different Planned Parenthood affiliates in September.

On top of that, graduate assistants — student’s pursuing doctorates who grade papers, conduct research and teach classes — have also been very critical of campus and UM System leadership after the university scaled back their tuition waivers and stripped them of their health insurance subsidies in the hours immediately before fall classes began.

In the weeks since the turmoil began, Mizzou has mandated diversity training for students, faculty and staff; extended privileges for some students to work with Planned Parenthood on a limited basis; restored the health subsidies to graduate assistants; and on Thursday, announced that all graduate assistants will continue to get full tuition waivers through the 2016-17 school year.

NOVEMBER 5, 2015

University of Missouri student on a hunger strike to oust system president

He is protesting racial attacks on the MU campus
University of Missouri officials are working to resolve a four-day hunger strike by a graduate student accusing them of failing to respond to racism and intolerance on the Columbia campus.

Jonathan Butler, a candidate for a master’s degree in education, began the hunger strike Monday and in a letter to the board of curators called for the ouster of system president Tim Wolfe.

Butler wrote that he would not eat again “until either Tim Wolfe is removed from office or my internal organs fail and my life is lost.”

A university spokesman said Wolfe spent time talking Thursday with Butler and that administrators have another meeting set with Butler to try to address his concerns.

“We all believe we must never cease to move against racism and intolerance,” said spokesman John Fougere.

Besides accusing the university of failing to respond to racial slurs on campus and anti-Semitic graffiti, Butler in his letter cited the abrupt removal of graduate student health care subsidies this summer and the end to university contracts with a Columbia Planned Parenthood clinic earlier this year.

Those issues have been embroiling the campus since the start of the school year. Butler is drawing support from other students, who are camping out across from Jesse Hall and holding protest marches questioning the university’s leadership.

This week, members of the department of English also raised concerns, sending a letter to Wolfe expressing frustration with another university leader: the chancellor of the Columbia campus, R. Bowen Loftin.

The Columbia Tribune reported that 26 members voted that they have no confidence in Loftin’s leadership. No one voted that they have confidence in him, and two abstained.
In a letter to Wolfe and the curators, associate professor Samuel Cohen cited concerns with the treatment of graduate students, disrespect of shared governance and “failure to defend the University’s educational mission against outside political pressure.”

Fougere said Wolfe has talked with members of the Columbia community and leaders of the other three campuses — in Kansas City, St. Louis and Rolla — about “how to approach diversity and inclusion so we can put together best practices” that would change the campus climate some have called hostile and unwelcoming.

“The president wants to lead on this issue,” Fougere said. “He wants to be available to address the most difficult of issues, and this is the most difficult of issues. We are talking about an issue that is pervasive in our society.”

Contacted Thursday by The Star via email, Butler said he was unable to talk because he was “exhausted.”

Butler’s strike has sparked several other student-led protests on the campus.

Members of the black student group Concerned Student 1950, which was launched in September by Butler and 10 other students, have been camping out at Traditions Plaza, in the heart of the Columbia campus.

The group calls itself Concerned Student 1950 after the year MU admitted its first black graduate student, Gus T. Ridgel.

“We are a collective of student organizers,” said Ayanna Poole, a member and friend of Butler’s. The title, she said, is a statement. “Every single black student on the MU campus is Concerned Student 1950.”

Members said they want Wolfe gone because he has failed to act against racial attacks that targeted MU students. Earlier this year, a racial slur was yelled at MU student body president Payton Head as he walked through campus. And later, students practicing for homecoming experienced a similar verbal attack.

Concerned Student 1950 in a statement released Thursday said that less than a week ago, a swastika drawn in human feces was found in an MU dormitory.

Concerned Student said it had requested a meeting with the system president but got no response until after an act of nonviolent protest in which all 11 members blocked a car the president was riding in during the university homecoming parade. They were removed by police.
“We initiated that meeting, and he told us he had no intentions of meeting with us,” Poole said, adding that Concerned Student does not believe Wolfe understands its concerns.

She said when the group met with Loftin, “He listened. Tim Wolfe is our target.”

In a campuswide memo this week, Loftin said he has already started action to address the racial issue, “including creating the position of Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity, requiring training for all incoming students, committing to a campus climate survey, and requiring search committees to complete training aimed at diverse and inclusive hiring — all of these steps have been taken with the full support and endorsement of UM System President Tim Wolfe.”

University spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said Loftin had not received a copy of the letter from the English instructors and was unaware of department criticism. She says Loftin is working to listen to concerns and continues to “work toward solutions for some of the issues we are currently challenged with.”

Board of curators chairman Don Cupps did not return messages left at his office Thursday. Curator John Phillips of Kansas City said he wasn’t surprised problems with intolerance had boiled up on the Columbia campus. He said he protested against similar issues when he was a student there in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and his daughter protested against them when she was an MU student in the 1980s.

“I think there is a small element on any campus that harbors hateful feeling against minority groups, not just race but foreign students and LGBT. This is a pretty good opportunity now for the campus to take a hard look.

“I have every confidence that Tim Wolfe will lead the board toward a position responsible to the current situation.”

MU students take part in walkout over campus race issues
University of Missouri students held a walkout Thursday afternoon to draw attention to race issues on campus.

Students met in front of the Student Center at 11:30 a.m. Thursday for the walkout, which came less than 24 hours after the Missouri Students Association and Concerned Student 1950 called an emergency town hall meeting on campus.

The group calling itself Concerned Student 1950 says it represents every black student admitted to MU since 1950 — when the university accepted its first black student. The group formed after 11 students protested race issues by blocking UM System President Tim Wolfe’s car during MU’s homecoming parade last month. Students have criticized Wolfe for not contacting the student protesters who were removed from the parade. Concerned Student 1950 has called for Wolfe to resign or be fired.

Organizers barred media from Wednesday’s meeting to create a “safe space” for students. After the two-hour meeting, organizers asked all students present to not speak with the media about the meeting.

Concerned Student 1950 and the Missouri Students Association offered no comment immediately after the meeting.

The Missouri Students Association said on Twitter on Thursday that the town hall focused on “education on what the UM System is and involvement into the movements taking place on our campus.”

Concerned Student 1950 held a press conference Wednesday afternoon to explain their request for Wolfe’s immediate removal.

“Wolfe has consistently shown inadequacy in his presidency since 2012. There have been several racist, sexist, homophobic and a number of other incidents that have dynamically disrupted the learning experience for marginalized students at this institution,” a student with Concerned Student 1950 said on behalf of the group. “Tim Wolfe constantly perpetuates suppression on this campus by remaining silent.”
The group asked students to boycott buying items and food on campus. Stephanie Shonekan, chairwoman of the Black Studies Program at MU, is coordinating food donations for students camped out in the quad near Traditions Plaza. Students have said they will continue to camp out until Wolfe is no longer president.

Jonathan Butler, a graduate student who started a hunger strike Monday, said he will not eat until Wolfe is no longer president. Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin released a statement about Butler’s hunger strike Wednesday, voicing concern for Butler’s health.

“Mr. Butler is a person of principle who is dedicated to raising awareness of and finding solutions for the pernicious problems of racism, discrimination and bias,” Loftin said. “While I cannot encourage him to put his health at risk, I support his right to peaceful protest and his efforts to raise awareness of the injustice that he and other people of color face in their everyday lives and at the university.”

Loftin said MU has made some steps toward improving race issues on campus. He mentioned the creation of a vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity, required diversity training for all incoming students, a commitment to a campus climate survey and having search committees take training on diverse and inclusive hiring.

“All of these steps have been taken with the full support and endorsement of UM System President Tim Wolfe,” Loftin said in his statement.

UM System spokesperson John Fougere said Wolfe is facilitating a meeting with members of the UM System Board of Curators and Butler, a recommendation students made Tuesday when they visited Wolfe’s office.

The UM System president’s role is to assist chancellors and provide whatever resources each campus needs to address problems, Fougere said.

Wolfe has directed chancellors and diversity officers on all four UM campuses to assess policies and practices at their university that work to combat racism and promote diversity and inclusion. Fougere said those assessments will be used to identify areas that need to be strengthened and provide each campus with resources from the UM System budget to make improvements.
UPDATE: Student group announces MU boycott, leads demonstration through campus

MARIAH BRANNAN, Updated 16 hrs ago

Clarification
The story has been updated to clarify that the Associated Students of the University of Missouri did not host a meeting Wednesday night. An earlier version of this story indicated that the Missouri Students Association and the Graduate Professional Council hosted a meeting "in conjunction with the Associated Students of the University of Missouri."

COLUMBIA — A group of MU students which calls itself Concerned Student 1950 organized a demonstration Thursday in which about 200 people walked through campus and chanted phrases including, "Join us in the revolution."

A woman speaking through a megaphone urged participants not to speak or give their names to reporters and to identify themselves only as "Concerned Student."

At Speakers Circle, another member of the group reiterated its demand for the removal of University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe.

On Wednesday, the group announced a boycott of university services including merchandise, retail dining services and ticketed events at a news conference at Traditions Plaza.

Also, the Missouri Students Association and the Graduate Professional Council hosted a meeting on Wednesday night. The purpose of the emergency meeting was "in regards to the removal of Tim Wolfe," according to a tweet from the MSA Twitter account, @MSAmizzou.

"Concerned Student 1950" host press conference following hunger strike and boycott from Columbia Missourian on Vimeo.
Wednesday night marked the third night that Concerned Student 1950 and its allies camped on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle in solidarity with Jonathan Butler, the MU graduate student who pledged to continue a hunger strike until he either dies or Wolfe leaves his position.

At the news conference Wednesday, Concerned Student 1950 talked about Jonathan Butler’s hunger strike and announced future actions, including the boycott and raising awareness of the protest through committees. They also answered questions concerning the strike and the petition to remove Wolfe from his position.

The boycott will officially start Thursday.

“Mizzou is a business. ... We have to understand the business aspect behind this,” Rachael Owens, an organizer for Concerned Student 1950, said. “I think this is one of our first homework assignments — what does it take to get (Wolfe) fired?”

Owens was forming an outreach committee at the conference to target celebrities and members of the MU Board of Curators. The group wants to influence those in power by informing people of the boycott and strike.

"Black students are only taken seriously when captured by the media," a member of Concerned Student 1950 read from a prepared statement.

TELL US: How do you encounter racism? Some readers have said they don't think it's still a problem. What perspective would you offer?

The group asked those at the conference to join them in educating people about the strike, as well as the campout.

The campout has garnered campuswide attention. On Wednesday night, former Missouri football player Michael Sam was spotted dropping off water to the students.

The group is using Twitter to push its message using the hashtag #BoycottUM. They have also started a Change.org petition to remove Wolfe from office.
“We are happy we have this force behind us,” Concerned Student representative DeShaunya Ware said. “Because it doesn’t end with us. Honestly, Concerned Student 1950 stands for every student who has come through the university since 1950, and we are breaking the silence.”

Mostly students and a few faculty and staff members attended the emergency MSA meeting Wednesday night. The meeting was closed to the media, and students were asked not to talk with the media after the meeting.

Spokeswoman for Concerned Student 1950 Imani Simmons-Elloie declined to comment about the meeting. She said she had no comment because "students need to process emotionally."

Concerned Student 1950 derives its name from the year Gus T. Ridgel was admitted to MU, becoming the first black graduate student admitted.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Two hours in a cold, dark tent on the Carnahan Quadrangle

JACOB BOGAGE, 6 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — When the wind blew, which was often, it kicked water and mud off the tarps and tents.

The fabric rippled in the stiff breeze. The temperature dropped as the rain fell. Tarps came loose as the wind blew, and as more water and mud flew.

At 8 p.m. Thursday, Missouri football kicked off against Mississippi State. Two hours later, close to 100 civil rights organizers convened in the basement of the MU Student Center to plan a protest. Citing security concerns from a lack of possible protesters in attendance, the organizers from Concerned Student 1950 scrapped the event and led members outside to their ramshackle, yet well-stocked encampment on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle. The group has camped there since graduate student Jonathan Butler embarked on a hunger strike on Monday.

On Thursday, the camp staked its claim to legitimacy in the cold, dark Missouri night.

Rain poured in buckets and protesters remained, reassembling tents downed by gusts. Spectators walked by and hollered, but they were ignored.

"Go home," said one man, wearing a Missouri jacket and ball cap. "Basketball is not a sport."

"Cultural racism," AnDrea Jackson said, shaking her head. "We see it here every day."

Volunteers nearby picked up the remnants of lawn signs that marked the camp's borders, worn out and scattered around the tent village by the elements. Coolers and lawn chairs sat in mud,
which bubbled up underfoot to suck heels into puddles, yet somehow rejected stakes to support tents.

There were a dozen structures on the quad. Ten of them for sleeping, one to store food and one for water.

The largest is made of two tailgating pavilions shoved together and covered on all sides with tarps, some just by scraps. A brown tarp is the only material that separates campers from the ground. People step on it as they grab supplies: scissors and zip ties and rope to repair tents. This is Concerned Student 1950’s headquarters.

Four smaller tents sit inside the big tent. People sleep there, though there isn’t much room inside, with blankets, pillows and sleeping bags occupying most of the space.

That’s the idea, campers say: to cocoon themselves inside and wait out the night, then return in the light of day and study. A dog, Ed, is bundled inside three blankets and lies on top of a pillow on a lawn chair, trying to fall asleep. Campers come by to pet the edge of his head, the only part of his body that sticks out, for encouragement.

Faculty members have circulated a list of supplies needed by the campers. The water tent is half water and half orange Gatorade. Empty bottles of blue Hawaiian Punch are loaded into trashcans and hauled off for recycling. One professor brought Jimmy John’s for lunch yesterday, Jackson said.

Morale remained high, though the patience of the protesters was repeatedly tested. Hymns took the place of political cries after the group formed a circle in front of the tiger statue on Rollins Street.

"Please continue to show us the way, God," Darius Thurston shouted in the prayer circle, tears trickling into his beard.
"Pray for our mental strength. Pray for our physical strength," Curtis Taylor Jr. added. Glossolalia spewed from his lips as women around him latched on to his shoulders whispering, "Hallelujah."

A stiff wind blew from the north. Water splashed across the spotlights off Jesse Hall. Tarps lifted off the ground. Campers dashed back into tents to gather rope to secure their sleeping quarters.

Others went home in search of sleep. There was supposed to be music, Maxwell Little said. Not tonight, organizers told him. It was 11:30 p.m.

The remaining 20 or so members stood around headquarters with the group's largest tarp. Stakes rebelled, ropes refused order, water leaked into the structure, wind disrupted construction plans. The structure wasn't to be secured until midnight.

Time for bed.

Concerned Student 1950 organizers and supporters trek across campus in walkout

The walkout drew criticism on the anonymous messaging app Yik Yak.

By Peter Baugh and Tessa Weinberg
Nov. 5, 2015

"Who shut shit down? We shut shit down," was one of the many chants over a hundred students, faculty and staff shouted during Thursday's Concerned Student 1950 walkout in support of graduate student Jonathan Butler's hunger strike calling for the removal of UM System President Tim Wolfe.
The walkout started at 11:30 a.m. outside the Student Center. The group made their way through the Mizzou Store and passed through Memorial Union, Lowry Mall, Speakers Circle, Jesse Hall and Reynolds Alumni Center, concluding by the tents on Carnahan Quad where Butler’s supporters are camping out for the hunger strike.

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin made an appearance at the start of the walkout as demonstrators made their way out of classes. He recently responded to the hunger strike on campus in a statement.

Before the students began marching, Concerned Student 1950 leaders informed participants to refrain from speaking to media and demonstrated what to do if the safe word was said. Organizers said students should lock arms in a line of at least six people. If attempts to remove students were made, then students should cross their legs and sit down.

“Raise your hand high if you do not know why we’re in this space right now,” one of the Concerned Student 1950 organizers said while the walkout occupied Bengal Lair in Memorial Union.

A few surprised students who had been working at tables in Bengal Lair raised their hands as walkout organizers explained why they were there. Since Missouri Student Association president Payton Head’s Facebook post sharing his own personal experiences with racism went viral in September, students, faculty and staff have shown a strong response with multiple “Racism Lives Here” rallies, and demonstrations from Concerned Student 1950, which can be viewed on The Maneater’s interactive timeline.

“Do you know why we want to get Tim Wolfe out of here?” a Concerned Student 1950 walkout organizer asked. “Because marginalized students belong on this campus. Because marginalized students should not be marginalized."

Her statements were met with cheers and claps as supporters chanted, “Tim Wolfe means we’ve got to fight back.”

“This is absolutely beautiful,” one organizer said after leaving Memorial Union. “Continue to stand in your power.”
When the walkout reached Speakers Circle, graduate student and organizer Reuben Faloughi said that people could get involved by learning what is happening around them and asking uncomfortable questions.

The walkout maintained intensity as it went on, with demonstrators eventually entering Jesse Hall. Organizers stood on top of the information desk chanting as demonstrators filed in. Eventually demonstrators moved upstairs and circled the balcony on the second floor where the chanted and listened to organizers speak through a megaphone.

Afterward, walkout demonstrators attracted attention from passersby as they entered the Reynolds Alumni Center and chanted in front of offices and meeting rooms and a window on the lower floor where meetings were taking place.

Yik Yaks posted anonymously from people around campus wrote things such as, “Why don’t black people like blow jobs? Black people don’t like any jobs,” and “Warning to visitors of Mizzou: Do not feed the protestors. If you do they’ll keep coming back for more and leave their natural habitat.” Head posted screenshots of the Yik Yaks on his Twitter during the walkout.

The official MU account and Loftin responded on Twitter expressing regret at seeing hate speech on campus and stating such speech has no place on campus.

When the walkout reached Carnahan Quad near the tents occupied by Butler’s supporters, organizers called demonstrators into a tight circle where they wrapped their arms around each other and recited an Assata Shakur poem.

“It is our duty to fight for our freedom,” a student leader chanted. “It is our duty to win. We must love and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.”

Senior Syed Ejaz, a Missouri Students Association presidential candidate, attended the walkout and communicated his views to The Maneater. His statements reflect his own views, not necessarily those of Concerned Student 1950.

“I think this walkout proved that this movement is very serious,” Ejaz said. “It’s not something that’s going to lose steam, it’s not something that the administration can sweep under the rug. It’s something that’s very substantive and has been bubbling for a very long time.”
Ejaz was not the only MSA presidential hopeful at the walkout. Junior Jordan McFarland and his vice presidential candidate Jonathan Segers were also at the event.

Concerned Student 1950 provided a one-page press release after the walkout.

The statement called for the resignation of the Wolfe. In part, it read, "Experiencing unmitigated and constant subordination at MU and being ignored by those in the highest positions of authority calls for immediate change or death fighting for it."

Demonstrators embraced each other and shed tears at the end of the walkout. Concerned Student 1950 said during the next walkout, they plan to fill all three floors of Jesse Hall.

**MU students participate in walk out**

Posted: Nov 5, 2015 12:21 PM by Haley Hughes, KOMU 8 Reporter

COLUMBIA - **MU students gathered outside of the student center** Thursday afternoon dressed in all black for a walk out in protest of racism.

Chancellor Bowen Loftin attended the event. "I am here in support of Jonathan L. Butler," Loftin said. He would not speak about any issues.

Butlers said he will stay on a hunger strike until either the University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe resigns or his organs fail.

One leader of the walk out told participants not to speak to journalists. "They are here for a story, they do not care about our voices," she said.
She started the walk with the words, "What is peace? We don't have peace on this campus."

Students proceeded walking through campus chanting and calling for a shutdown. It lasted more than three hours.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Activists put football night protest on hold, plan event for Monday

JACOB BOGAGE, 7 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Student protesters canceled a planned protest at a Missouri football game Thursday, citing security concerns resulting from a lack of protest participation.

About 100 protesters with the Concerned Student 1950 group met at 10 p.m. in the basement of the MU Student Center to plan a protest at Memorial Stadium at the end of the Missouri football game against Mississippi State. At 10:15 p.m., organizers scrapped those plans. Group spokespersons said members did not want to mix with "drunk white people" after a Tigers' loss.

Leaders instead urged supporters to be ready for an event on Monday. Details about the event were not disclosed Thursday night.

Concerned Student 1950 has campaigned the past week for the ouster of University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe, citing a lack of communication about a string of racist incidents at MU. Group members have camped out on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle in support of graduate student Jonathan Butler, who began a hunger strike Monday. Butler has said he will forego food until Wolfe's removal or his own death.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Deputy director of NORML is blunt about marijuana reform
COLUMBIA — Over $1 trillion has been spent in the past 40 years to fight the war on drugs, "but the federal government admits that none of this works," said Paul Armentano, deputy director of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, citing the Associated Press.

Armentano spoke to over 30 people Thursday in MU's Arts & Sciences Building, delivering a presentation titled "The Fight For Cannabis." He condemned federal drug prohibition efforts and said that the federal policy on marijuana is a "culture war."

"It has to do with the image in people's minds as to who uses marijuana and singling them out because they engage in behaviors where they look a certain way where a minority of the population doesn't like," Armentano said. "And that's what the war on marijuana is about."

According to its website, the mission of NORML is advocating responsible use of marijuana by adults through changing public opinion and making marijuana “safe, convenient and affordable.”

Armentano cited the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, saying that "44 percent of the public age 12 and older acknowledge having consumed cannabis" and "an estimated 11 percent of the national public acknowledge presently using cannabis."

"That's why we're having this conversation in 2015," Armentano said. "Cannabis consumption remains popular despite federal prohibition."

Using "marijuana" as a keyword search on PubMed, Armentano found more than 22,200 scientific journal articles. He compared this number to searches of other drugs including Tylenol, ibuprofen and Ritalin — 18,911, 11,439 and 7,620, respectively — and argued that the amount of research that has been done on marijuana is higher than these and other drugs.
"I don't want to hear we don't know enough about cannabis to change public policy," Armentano said.

Armentano said more is known about marijuana than "the majority of substances we as human beings consume everyday."

"When we have these discussions, people get bogged down in the weeds," he said.

Marijuana across the country

Armentano’s discussion came two days after voters in Ohio voted against Issue 3, which would have allowed people 21 and over to use, grow and purchase marijuana. It also would have allowed people with a chronic medical condition — for example, a person with epilepsy but not a person with the flu — to use it for medicinal purposes. About 65 percent of Ohio voters opposed the measure.

Opponents of the bill dubbed it a “marijuana monopoly.” Only 10 predetermined farms would have been able to grow and sell marijuana, which means all purchasing of marijuana in Ohio would have come from these farms.

In Missouri, there are two marijuana-related initiatives among the initiative petitions approved for circulation for possible votes in 2016. One, submitted by Columbia attorney Dan Viets, would amend Article 1 of the Missouri Constitution to "allow the production, sales, distribution, and consumption of marijuana and hemp products" by people 21 or older. The other would "legalize marijuana for personal, medical, and commercial purposes" as well as releasing from prison all nonviolent offenders who committed marijuana-related crimes.

Show-Me Cannabis, an organization in Missouri that believes “cannabis prohibition is a failed policy,” is supporting two other initiatives filed on Oct. 8 by campaign committee New Approach Missouri. If the initiatives are approved by the Missouri Secretary of State's office, New Approach Missouri may start collecting signatures.
Democratic presidential candidate and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders added to the cannabis conversation on Wednesday by filing a Senate bill that would let states determine whether to legalize recreational marijuana, as well as decriminalizing marijuana at the federal level.

For Armentano, the debate isn't only about marijuana — it's about freedom.

"The state can come to your house and say, 'We're going to arrest you and put you in a cage for what you put in your body if it alters your mood temporarily and it's not alcohol,'" Armentano said. "That to me is ultimately what we're talking about — the freedom to control our bodies."

Students with disabilities struggle to find housing

When freshman Christopher Olszewski’s options for MU housing dwindled down to two options, he had to put his disabilities into consideration.

By Allyson Sherwin
Nov. 5, 2015

Freshman and journalism major Christopher Olszewski was confronted with limited options when considering his choices for on-campus housing.

As a Walter Williams Scholar, he was left with two options of residence halls to choose from: Schurz or Mark Twain.

Olszewski was born with the condition spastic right hemiplegia, a form of the congenital disorder cerebral palsy. Due to his condition, Olszewski has limited fine motor skill in his right hand, and his right leg doesn’t function as well as his left. In addition to other CP symptoms, he also has epilepsy.

Olszewski said that when his options for freshman housing dwindled down to two options, he had to put his disabilities into consideration.
“My CP limits my ability to walk for long stretches of time, and as I'm sure you are aware, Schurz is a long distance from the center of campus,” Olszewski said in an email. “I decided to live in Twain because it was quite a bit closer to my classes and to downtown.”

Still, he said, Mark Twain isn’t perfect.

“The bed’s height is difficult to change; once they are lifted there is no easy way for someone to get up there,” Olszewski said in an email. “I know the frames are supposed to act as a ladder, but it just feels very unwieldy and unsafe. Despite the fact that they might be fire hazards, even just providing students with foldaway ladders would greatly improve the experience of simply getting in and out of bed.”

Olszewski said that because he lives on the sixth floor, having elevator access was a necessity, and has made the daily trek to and from his room less burdensome.

MU Disability Center Director Barbara Hammer said incoming freshmen with disabilities should not have to make accessibility their primary concern when assessing their housing options. Instead, students with disabilities should focus on what will allow them to gain the most out of their experience as a freshman.

“Residential Life has done an outstanding job of designing spaces that accommodate students with all kinds of disabilities, so issues of access really are not a concern,” Hammer said.

The MU Disability Center does not have a specific role in assisting students with disabilities in finding accommodating housing. Most of the on-campus freshman housing process is handled by the Department of Residential Life, and the application process is identical, Hammer said.

“The one difference would be when/if they require accommodations to live in the residence hall or apartment, such as a wheelchair-accessible bathroom,” Hammer said. “In that case, students go through our office to request and be determined eligible for the accommodations and that information is then conveyed to Residential Life for assignment to an appropriate room.”
For next year, Olszewski is looking to rent a house or live in an apartment that remains close to his classes.

“I still don’t have my (driver’s) license due to my seizures, so I still have to walk or bum a ride from somebody,” Olszewski said in an email. “The place where I live would have to be within reasonable walking distance of campus.”

Hammer maintains that in terms of accessibility, all Residence Halls are created equal.

“I don’t think there is any reason to consider one residence hall to be better than another,” Hammer said. “They all provide access so it’s really a matter of which hall works best for the student with respect to their particular access requirements, as well as other factors, such as involvement in a FIG or learning community.”

Author Joe Klein writes about veterans who work to help others — and themselves

4 hours ago  •  By Harry Levins Special to the Post-Dispatch

"Charlie Mike" is the military way of saying the abbreviation "CM." In journalist Joe Klein's new book, "Charlie Mike" stands for "continuing the mission" — for veterans doing good works and also helping fellow vets heal from the psychological wounds of war.

Much of his book centers on St. Louisan Eric Greitens, a Navy SEAL officer who came home from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan with a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart and a determination to help fellow vets in need of a boost. (Klein talks about his book at 7 p.m. Nov. 6, at Spencer Road library in St. Peters.)

Other such groups sprang up elsewhere. One helped a vet afflicted with "corrosive emotional bends, the too-fast decompression that came from leaving the Marines, a tight-knit organization with a sense of higher purpose, and being dumped, alone, in a society with no organized purpose at all except to make money and have fun."

Groups of these vets are put to work at do-good jobs — cleaning up after tornadoes, for example. And cleaning up their own acts. As Klein puts it, "The work now wasn't just about helping people suffering through natural disasters; it was, equally, about helping veterans to find a sense of purpose."
Given Greitens' prominent role in the veterans' movement, much of Klein's book unrolls in St. Louis. Before Greitens started his group, The Mission Continues, he was a White House fellow in Washington. So why choose St. Louis as a home base?

"Washington was overstuffed with organizations," the book says, adding that Greitens thought it "would be distinctive to run it in St. Louis. And he had other moneymaking opportunities back home: a teaching fellowship at the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri . . . Washington University in St. Louis had agreed to have him teach a course on citizenship in its political science department. He was even given free office space in a downtown library building."

Although other St. Louisans crop up in "Charlie Mike," author Klein visits similar groups elsewhere by roving across the nation, from New England to the Pacific Northwest. Everywhere he stops, he finds groups of vets helping others — and themselves — by doing good works. (They also enjoy the camaraderie and the military sense of working together to accomplish the mission.)

Alas, not all of Klein's vets square themselves away. Some fall victim to psychological funk, to drugs and alcohol, even to suicide. They will depress readers, who may already be a bit confused by Klein's relentlessly chronological account, which bounces from place to place, from character to character.

But mostly, Klein's vets set a good example for the rest of us, even if we persist in making money and having fun.

By the way Greitens is an old hand at doing good. Klein writes that as Greitens grew up in Maryland Heights, he was "the sort of kid who actually said that he wanted to be President of the United States. He said it in third or fourth grade, when a teacher asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up. 'I want to be President,' he said, 'because I want to help people, and the President gets to help the most people.'"

This year, in late September, Greitens announced his candidacy for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in Missouri. Maybe Jefferson City could be a way station to the White House.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

FROM READERS: How we ought to celebrate Indigenous People's Day and end Columbus Day

PATTIE QUACKENBUSHER/MISSOURIAN READER, 1 hr ago
Pattie Quackenbush is a doctoral student in the School of Natural Resources and is the treasurer of Four Directions: Indigenous Peoples and Allies.

November is Native American Heritage Month. We need to celebrate the perseverance and survival of indigenous peoples and remember the history of atrocities that have befallen these peoples.

It’s a miracle that there are at least 566 federally recognized, state recognized and unrecognized Native American tribes in the U.S. today, but none of us live as a large community in our ancestral homelands. We have listened to the stories of our elders and our ancestors. We carry the historical trauma of generations before us in our bones. We survived the arrival of Columbus and other Europeans who tried to destroy us and enslave us. We survived the doctrine of Manifest Destiny and several presidents who wanted us forcibly removed and isolated so we would die out. We survived the terror and abuse of the boarding school systems that tried to forcibly assimilate us into American culture by stripping us of our names, our cultures, our languages and our customs.

TELL US: How do you encounter racism? Some readers have said they don't think it's still a problem. What perspective would you offer?

Today, Native Americans experience higher poverty, higher infant mortality, lower life expectancy, increased domestic abuse and violence, increased human trafficking, increased suicide rates, increased dependency and mental health issues, very limited access to reliable health care and limited access to education compared to other races in the US.

While there are no reservations in Missouri, there are many urban Native communities, especially in Kansas City and St. Louis. At MU, there isn’t much listed in terms of Native American student presence. In the late 1990s, a group of Native American students was successful in getting MU to repatriate the remains of over 1,800 individuals with the assistance of the Iowa Tribe. However, there has been a consistent decline in the enrollment of Native American students at MU. Also, there are limited faculty and staff who identify as Native American.
The need is greater than ever to get more Native American students to attend educational programs after high school, whether that’s community college, vocational schools or major universities. The opportunity exists to put a community in place to encourage Native American students, staff and faculty to come to MU, but we must acknowledge the history of Missouri with its treatment of indigenous peoples, the institutional racism and oppression that is present at MU that promotes stereotypes and micro-aggressions and the whitewashed history and societal portrayal of Native Americans in the media and American culture.

We are not to be romanticized, fetishized or portrayed as costumes or party themes that the Greek organizations on campus and off-campus groups need to host. We are not honored by our names and likenesses used as logos or mascots by sports teams, automobile manufacturers or the military. We are not the noble savage as portrayed by Hollywood.

Native Americans have a rich history, vibrant culture and oral traditions that were almost erased by the actions of the U.S. Let’s not continue to celebrate the erasure of indigenous peoples by celebrating Columbus. Let's celebrate Native American Heritage month. Let’s work together to change history as time moves forward so that seven generations from now, our descendants will be proud of the strides we made.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Missouri House committee toughens intern, harassment policy
8 hours ago  •  By Alex Stuckey

JEFFERSON CITY • When Taylor Hirth received text messages she considered inappropriate from then-state Rep. Paul LeVota five years ago, the last thing she would have done was discuss it with someone required to report the complaint.

“I had no desire to talk to anyone who might take our conversation to anyone else without my consent,’’ Hirth said at a House Administration and Accounts Committee hearing Thursday.
But the committee nonetheless approved on Thursday changes to the House sexual harassment and college intern policy to expand the list of people required to report complaints. It also requires annual sexual harassment training for House members and staffers, and it bars romantic relationships between House members and staffers or interns.

The policy changes, which take effect immediately, come after two lawmakers resigned this year because of inappropriate dealings with interns.

First, former House Speaker John Diehl, R-Town and Country, resigned in May because of sexually charged text messages he exchanged with a 19-year-old intern from Missouri Southern State University. A few months later, Sen. LeVota, D-Independence, resigned amid sexual harassment allegations from Hirth, who interned for him in 2010 when he was House minority leader, and Alissa Hembree, a University of Central Missouri intern in his Senate office this past session. LeVota denied these allegations.

Hirth was one of several individuals to take issue with requiring more people to report complaints lodged by interns.

“The biggest thing I want out of (the policy) is mandated reporting,” Hirth said. “I feel like it will push a lot of people back into silence.”

Robynn Kuhlmann, the University of Central Missouri’s state government internship coordinator, said interns should have a confidant to talk through what has happened to them without fearing that the complaints will become public.

“I understand they’re all young adults, but they’re still young,” Kuhlmann said. “There should be a resource appropriate for them ... if they don’t feel they want to (report it) or are (not) ready for the onslaught of statements they may have to make during the investigation process.”

But Rep. Jay Barnes, R-Jefferson City, pointed out that having a House employee who doesn’t have to report harassment complaints would contradict the House’s aim for these changes.

“The goal of the policy is for the House to take all complaints seriously,” Barnes said. “We can’t have that as a goal, but then say that an employee doesn’t have to refer the complaint further.”

Adam Crumbliss, House chief clerk, agreed.

“Victims’ advocates are very clear: There needs to be a safe harbor reporting place, but it can’t be a House employee who is shielded from reporting,” Crumbliss said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., who has said she was harassed while working as an intern in the state Capitol decades ago, suggested setting up a hotline that Capitol interns can call when they need help.
“I continue to want to see that interns have somewhere to go for reliable information — outside of the capital — when they’re targeted with harassment, and I’m working with outside advocacy groups to achieve that goal,” she said.

The policy also requires annual conduct and ethics training. Crumbliss said the House would probably seek outside guidance in developing such a program. He wants it to include 21st-century issues, such as texting and social media.

The full House in January will have to approve one aspect of the changes, mandating that sexual harassment complaints be investigated by outside counsel.

Under the new policy, committee members also will review each university’s intern policy and a panel will review intern placement in House offices. They can deny any recommended placement, but such a decision can be appealed.

Rep. Kip Kendrick, D-Columbia, testified Thursday that committee members might want to consider publicly releasing final investigation reports involving House members as long as the victim’s identity was protected. As written, the policy would keep such a report confidential.

But Barnes said that would have an “incredible chilling effect” on victims who came forward and that decision should be left up to the victim.

“My concern with this is: The primary purpose is to protect interns and make sure they feel comfortable,” Barnes said. “The person they’re complaining about is a pillar of their community, someone who people tend to believe.”

The committee did not change the wording.

Democrats on the committee expressed concern about adopting the policies so quickly, but Chairman Mike Leara, a Republican from St. Louis, said any issues with the policy could be addressed at a later hearing.