Missouri students, football players strike over racial incidents


The University of Missouri's governing board is holding an emergency meeting this morning to address growing calls for the school's president to resign. A group of students that includes dozens of football players is upset at the way racially charged incidents are being handled, and the players say they will not play again until the president is gone. NBC's Jacob Rascon reports for TODAY.

No Justice, No Football on a Missouri Campus

COLUMBIA, Mo. — Students at the University of Missouri have been demonstrating for weeks for the ouster of the university president, protesting the school’s handling of racial tensions. But their movement received a boost over the weekend when dozens of black football players issued a blunt ultimatum: Resign or they won’t play.

Fueling the anger were a series of on-campus incidents: racial slurs hurled at black students and feces smeared into the shape of a swastika on a wall in a residence hall. What many students viewed as a sluggish response from the administration gave rise to calls for the removal of the president, Timothy M. Wolfe.

The Legion of Black Collegians, which administers campus groups that primarily serve black students, posted a photograph to Twitter on Saturday night of more than 30 football players linked in arms with a graduate student who is staging a hunger strike.
“The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe ‘injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,’ ” a message accompanying the photo said, quoting a line from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The protesting players received the backing of their coaches and many of their white teammates, and on Sunday evening two groups representing graduate students and graduate student workers said they would stage walkouts on Monday and Tuesday in solidarity with the activists and in protest of Mr. Wolfe’s response.

The Board of Curators, the nine-member governing body of the University of Missouri, said it would hold a closed-door meeting on Monday morning.

The strike reflected a growing willingness among black college students at predominantly white institutions to demand quick action and stronger responses from officials to reports of racial antagonism. Their efforts dovetail with broader pushes against inequality and injustice like the Black Lives Matter movement, which arose in response to a string of fatal police shootings of unarmed black civilians, including the death of Michael Brown last year in Ferguson, Mo.

The boycott could cost the university more than $1 million if the team forfeits a game scheduled for Saturday. Mr. Wolfe said in a statement on Sunday that his administration was working to address the students’ concerns, including a list of demands from a campus activist group spearheading the demonstrations, and promised to share the next steps as soon as they were confirmed.

“My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters,” he said. “We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change.”

His response did not quell frustration among demonstrators, both black and white, who were camped out in tents on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle at the center of the campus. Storm Ervin, a senior, said Mr. Wolfe’s refusal to resign showed that he was out of touch.

“We’ve had departments supporting us. We’ve had faculty supporting us,” she said. “People who he leads are standing in solidarity with us.”

Ms. Ervin pointed out that Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin brought food to the campsite and spoke with students Sunday afternoon. Mr. Loftin was an early target of the demonstrations before criticism shifted to Mr. Wolfe.

A prolonged strike could have costly consequences for the players, some of whom depend on athletic scholarships, and the university, which draws revenue from ticket sales and the sale of television distribution rights. If Missouri forfeits Saturday’s game against Brigham Young University in Kansas City, Mo., it would be required to pay $1 million to B.Y.U., according to a copy of the contract between the schools published by The Kansas City Star in January.
Sixty of the 124 players on the Missouri football roster are black, although it is not clear whether all of them are participating in the strike, according to The Columbia Missourian, a newspaper published by faculty members and students.

The players’ boycott follows a decision by a black graduate student, Jonathan Butler, to go on a hunger strike over what he said in a letter to the Board of Curators were “a slew of racist, sexist, homophobic, etc., incidents that have dynamically disrupted the learning experience” of minority groups at Missouri.

Some people on social media applauded the players for taking a stand, and the players received support from the athletics department as well as the coaching staff, their teammates and some public officials in Missouri. After a meeting with the football team on Sunday at the school’s athletic training complex, Coach Gary Pinkel declared his support for the demonstrating players with a team photo on Twitter.

In a joint statement with Mack B. Rhoades IV, the athletic director, Mr. Pinkel said practices and team activities scheduled on Sunday had been canceled to focus on resolving the impasse.

Missouri’s attorney general, Chris Koster, urged the university to set up a task force to address the students’ concerns. Claire McCaskill, the senior United States senator from Missouri and an alumna of the Columbia campus, said the Board of Curators needed to “send a clear message” to the students that they would address racism. Gov. Jay Nixon also issued a statement urging officials to address the students’ concerns “to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion.”

But the players also saw a backlash, including some calls for scholarships to be revoked for players participating in the protest.

The campus was set on edge after Mr. Brown, an unarmed black teenager, was fatally shot during a scuffle with a police officer in Ferguson, about 110 miles from Columbia. About 8 percent of the 27,654 undergraduates on campus were black in 2014, according to enrollment figures. And a number of the black students come from Ferguson, where about two-thirds of the population is black, to Columbia, where nearly 80 percent of residents are white.

Frustrations have mounted since September when Payton Head, the president of the Missouri Students Association, who is black, said a man had called him a racial slur as he walked on campus. Students protested for a week before Mr. Loftin, the chancellor, responded to the incident.

In October, members of the Legion of Black Collegians reported that someone had yelled a racial slur as they rehearsed for a play in a campus plaza. Later that month, someone used feces to draw a swastika in a bathroom in a new dormitory. At the homecoming parade last month, students formed a human chain to block Mr. Wolfe’s car in an attempt to speak with him after officials did not respond to earlier requests to talk to him, the students said. Mr. Wolfe, who did not get out of the car, later apologized.
The tensions prompted a group of 11 student activists to form Concerned Student 1950, named for the year the university began admitting black students.

Mr. Wolfe took office in 2012 and oversees the system’s four campuses in Columbia, Kansas City, St. Louis and Rolla. Missouri’s Board of Curators voted last year to extend his contract. A board document showed that the contract, scheduled to expire in 2018, included a base salary of more than $450,000, as well as potential performance bonuses.

In response to the demonstrations, he has met with Mr. Butler and the leaders of Concerned Student 1950. In a statement on Thursday, Mr. Wolfe expressed concern for the graduate student’s health and said racism at the school was “unacceptable.”

On campus on Sunday, many Missouri football players declined to comment on the boycott. But Jason Reese, a tight end, said the players would end their strike “after all this gets resolved.”

“I feel great,” he said. “And I love my teammates.”

November 8, 2015 by Andy Thomason

U. of Missouri Chief Resists Calls to Resign After Football Team Joins Protest of Racism

[Last updated (11/9/2015, 12:12 a.m.) with news of calls for a walkout by graduate-student workers.]

Timothy M. Wolfe, president of the University of Missouri system, responded to increasing calls for his resignation by saying on Sunday that “change is needed” and that his administration was working “around the clock” to deal with concerns raised by protesters angry over the university’s handling of racial controversies. But his remarks, in a statement released by the university, made no mention of resigning and did little to satisfy the protesters.

“Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses,” Mr. Wolfe said. “We
want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed.”

The statement came as cries of support for a graduate student’s hunger strike over racism at the flagship campus, in Columbia, reached a fever pitch. Opposition to Mr. Wolfe’s leadership reached a new peak on Sunday, when the university’s head football coach, Gary Pinkel, tweeted a statement of support for football players who said they would not play until the president stepped down:

The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players.
#ConcernedStudent1950 GP

Heightening the drama, the university system’s Board of Curators announced on Sunday evening that it would hold a special meeting Monday morning, and the first agenda item is to meet in executive session. It was not made explicit whether the meeting was set to discuss Mr. Wolfe.

Meanwhile, two graduate-student organizations have called for their members to walk out of classes on Monday and Tuesday “in solidarity with anti-racism activists.” The groups said that they were “outraged” by Mr. Wolfe’s statement on Sunday and that their “fight against labor exploitation has common cause with campus fights against other forms of systemic inequality and oppression.”

Students at Missouri have for months protested what they say is Mr. Wolfe’s failure to deal with a culture of racism at the university. The protests, driven by several racist incidents, have ramped up significantly since last Monday, when Jonathan Butler, a graduate student, began a hunger strike, saying he would not eat until Mr. Wolfe resigned.

Organized under the name Concerned Student 1950, the protesters rejected Mr. Wolfe’s words on Sunday:

We are tired of dialogue! We want action! @UMPrez

Mr. Butler also said he was disappointed in Mr. Wolfe’s response:
Extremely unsatisfied. He still has no true plan for change. We deserve a leader who actually cares.

The football team is scheduled to play Brigham Young University in a home game on Saturday. According to a copy of the university’s contract with Brigham Young, posted by The Kansas City Star, Missouri stands to lose $1 million if it forfeits the game.

What Is Going On at the University of Missouri?

[Last updated at 9:30 a.m., 11/8/15, with new details.]

A University of Missouri at Columbia graduate student, Jonathan Butler, entered the fifth day of his hunger strike on Friday, giving his Twitter followers the following update:

I woke up this morning w/ about the same amount of pain I did yesterday but a little more lightheaded. So I will be taking things very slow

Mr. Butler says he will not eat until the University of Missouri system’s president, Timothy M. Wolfe, resigns. Why? The president’s failure, Mr. Butler and his supporters say, to deal with a culture of racism on the Columbia campus. Anger over the issue has been brewing for months, and has recently spawned an organized movement that calls itself Concerned Student 1950 — which refers to the year the university admitted its first black student.
That outcry followed other controversies that have tested the campus’s morale and leadership in recent months, most notably over graduate students’ access to health insurance and the university’s relationship with Planned Parenthood.

‘Racism DOES have a place here, and it’s quite comfortable’

One night in September, Payton Head, the university’s student-body president, says he was walking on the campus when he heard the N-word screamed at him from inside a pickup truck that was driving by. “I really just want to know why my simple existence is such a threat to society,” Mr. Head wrote in a Facebook post that went viral. “For those of you who wonder why I’m always talking about the importance of inclusion and respect, it’s because I’ve experienced moments like this multiple times at THIS university, making me not feel included here.”

Less than a month later, members of the university’s Legion of Black Collegians said they were accosted on the campus by a man shouting racial slurs. That incident and others prompted condemnations from the campus’s chancellor, R. Bowen Loftin, who also announced that, starting in January, all students would be required to undergo diversity training.

Students’ demands for change continued. On October 20, students uniting around the name Concerned Student 1950 presented a list of demands to Mr. Loftin and Mr. Wolfe, which included a request that the president be removed.

Much of the tension has been exacerbated by racist messages on Yik Yak, the location-based, anonymous messaging app. Mr. Head tweeted screenshots of such messages on Thursday:

These are students @Mizzou. This is how they feel about their peers.

A back and forth ensued between the student-body president and the chancellor:
Mr. Wolfe responded to Mr. Butler’s protest by saying that he is concerned about the graduate student’s health, and that he wants to have more meetings with the Concerned Student 1950 group.

Mr. Wolfe released another statement on Friday, saying he had met with Mr. Butler again, and offering what he said was a “long overdue” apology for an incident that occurred at a homecoming parade in October. Members of Concerned Student 1950 surrounded Mr. Wolfe’s car at the parade before police intervened. Some observers said Mr. Wolfe’s car bumped a few of the protesters as it drove away.

“My behavior seemed like I did not care,” Mr. Wolfe wrote Friday of the incident. “That was not my intention. I was caught off guard in that moment. Nonetheless, had I gotten out of the car to acknowledge the students and talk with them perhaps we wouldn’t be where we are today.”

Supporters of Mr. Butler were not satisfied with Mr. Wolfe’s apology, taking to Twitter in protest:

R. Bowen Loftin  
@bowtieger  
@MSAPresident Sad to see more hate speech hiding behind anonymity. Racism, bias, discrimination have no place here

Payton Head  
@MSAPresident  
@bowtieger I think the problem is that racism DOES have a place here, and it’s quite comfortable when students hide behind anonymous media.

3:07 PM - 5 Nov 2015 · Missouri, USA, United States

149 Retweets 211 Likes
The turmoil intensified on Saturday night, when the Legion of Black Collegians tweeted out a statement asserting that “athletes of color” on the Missouri football team would “no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences.”
The administration responded by distributing this statement:

**Mizzou Athletics**

**@MizzouAthletics**

**STATEMENT (1):** The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes.

10:03 PM - 7 Nov 2015

**Mizzou Athletics**

**@MizzouAthletics**

(2): We must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our athletes right to do so.

10:03 PM - 7 Nov 2015
Other controversies

The uproar over racism followed other flare-ups. In August the university suddenly announced it would discontinue its subsidies for graduate students’ health care, saying that they violated a provision of the Affordable Care Act. Protests ensued, and Mr. Loftin backtracked, apologizing for the short notice and saying graduate students’ insurance would be subsidized for the foreseeable future.

State politics have also been a thorn in the side of the university’s leadership. Amid intense scrutiny from Republican state lawmakers, the university in the fall effectively barred a Planned Parenthood doctor in Columbia from performing abortions. It also canceled 10 agreements it had for students to gain experience at Planned Parenthood clinics, saying they were no longer being used.

Those developments prompted protests on the campus and criticism from Democrats (and even speculation that the dustup would cost Mr. Loftin his job). The university announced last month that it would sign three new contracts with Planned Parenthood.

And in September the Missouri legislature enacted a law prohibiting students who had entered the country illegally, typically those brought to the United States as young children, from being eligible for a scholarship that would let them avoid high tuition rates. A group of such students has sued the university and others in response.

The many issues seem to be straining the campus’s confidence in its chancellor. On Wednesday the university’s English department voted no confidence in Mr. Loftin, citing the university’s response to “outside political pressure,” among other things.

“Campus morale among faculty, staff, and students is at a low point,” the department wrote.
Racial Tensions Escalate

At Missouri, football players will boycott games and hunger striker vows to fast until system president quits; at Yale, protests grow over letter questioning focus on offensive Halloween costumes.

November 9, 2015

By Scott Jaschik

Racial tensions at the University of Missouri and Yale University have escalated dramatically in the last week.

At the University of Missouri, a student at the flagship campus at Columbia is approaching a week on a hunger strike to demand the resignation of President Tim Wolfe, who has not done enough, minority students charge, to deal with racist incidents on campus. In a highly unusual move, the black players on the football team on Saturday announced that they would boycott games in the future unless Wolfe resigns.

He has not done so, but has vowed to do more to improve race relations and he has apologized for his role in one disputed incident. Sunday evening, the university system scheduled a meeting for today, in executive session, "for consideration of certain confidential or privileged communications."

At Yale, the last week saw widespread condemnation of an alleged racial incident at a fraternity, but also debate over whether an associate master of a residential college showed insensitivity to minority students when she sent out an email encouraging less of a focus on offensive Halloween costumes. In addition, some are saying that Yale students protesting the email are effectively shutting down alternative perspectives.

U of Missouri: Incidents and Anger

At Missouri at Columbia, a series of racial incidents took place on campus, while many black students remained upset over the 2014 killing of an unarmed black man by the police in Ferguson, Mo. Black students reported being on the receiving end of racist slurs. Many said that not enough was being done to recruit and retain black students.

Some students have also pushed for the removal from campus of a statue of Thomas Jefferson, who they say held racist and sexist views such that he should not be honored
on campus. Last month, a swastika -- apparently created with feces -- was left on a university dormitory hall, and many students started saying that the university appeared indifferent to the situation.

Then last week, Jonathan Butler, a black graduate student, announced he was going on a hunger strike (consuming only water) until Wolfe agreed to leave the system presidency.

Students are angry with Wolfe both because he heads the university system and because when minority students approached his car during a homecoming parade, he declined to talk to them. Some students say the car struck them and asked the university police department to investigate. John Fougere, chief communications officer for the system, said via email that "after conducting an investigation that included reviewing video footage and interviewing eyewitnesses, [the police] determined that there was nothing to indicate that the driver did anything to cause the car to strike anyone and that they did not commit any traffic violations."

Then Saturday a group of black football players announced on Twitter that it would not play for the rest of the season -- unless Wolfe quits. More than 30 football players appear to have joined the boycott -- a highly unusual step for big-time college athletes. The attached statement says: "The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe 'Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere.' We will no longer participate in any football-related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experiences.

WE ARE UNITED!"

The Missouri athletics department responded with two tweets. First: "The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes." Second: "We must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our athletes' right to do so."

And the football coach expressed support for the players' boycott.

Wolfe issued three statements in the last week. In the first, he said he met with the graduate student on a hunger strike and said, "We must rise to the challenge of combating racism, injustice and intolerance. ... I am very concerned about Jonathan [Butler]'s health. His voice for social justice is important and powerful. He is being heard and I am listening."

In the second statement, issued Friday, before the football players' boycott, Wolfe reiterated his concern for Butler's health and also apologized for not engaging with the students who approached his car during the parade.

"I regret my reaction at the MU homecoming parade," Wolfe wrote. "I am sorry, and my apology is long overdue. My behavior seemed like I did not care. That was not my intention. I was caught off guard in that moment. Nonetheless, had I gotten out of the car to acknowledge the students and talk with them perhaps we wouldn't be where we are today. I am asking us to move forward in addressing the racism that exists at our university -- and it does exist. Together we must rise to the challenge of combating
Then on Sunday -- after the football players announced their boycott -- Wolfe issued another statement. He noted that the university has already endorsed many recommendations of student groups, and is committed to discussions on remaining concerns. "It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns. My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters," he said.

Sunday's announcement that the system board would meet today sparked more speculation about how the university system would respond to the growing protests. Also Sunday, The Kansas City Star reported that two Republican legislators have called for Wolfe to resign, with one saying that "the lack of leadership Mizzou has been dealing with for months has finally reached the point of being a national embarrassment."

And two graduate student groups issued a call for their members to stage a walkout today and tomorrow to support those pushing for more change to improve the racial climate on campus.

Yale's Halloween Aftermath
Halloween parties set off racial tensions at many campuses, just about every year, with some students using blackface or racially oriented costumes in ways that offend. This year was no different; consider this controversy over white students at the University of Wisconsin at Stout dressing up in blackface as members of the Jamaican bobsled team.

Yale has seen two Halloween party controversies this year. One has been over allegations that members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity barred minority women from attending a Halloween party, telling them that "white girls only" were wanted there. Some SAE members have denied the charges, which resonated with many because of the large number of racist incidents nationally involving SAE chapters. So while there was some dispute over what happened at the party, there was a wide consensus at Yale that the conduct alleged (if true) was terribly wrong.

But there hasn't been consensus about another Halloween issue at Yale. As at many colleges, people and organizations distributed information to students in advance of Halloween about how to avoid costume concepts that would offend. The Yale advice (available here) stressed the importance of not basing costumes on race or ethnicity, and the problems with using blackface or wearing clothing that reinforces stereotypes.

On Friday before Halloween, Erika Christakis, who is an associate master of a residential college at Yale, sent a mass email in response to what she said were student concerns over being told not to risk offending people with costumes. She wrote, in part, "Even if we could agree on how to avoid offense -- and I'll note that no one around campus seems overly concerned about the offense taken by religiously conservative folks to skin-revealing costumes -- I wonder, and I am not trying to be provocative: Is there no room anymore for a child or young person to be a little bit obnoxious ... a little bit inappropriate or provocative or, yes, offensive?"

"American universities were once a safe space not only for maturation but also for a certain regressive, or even transgressive, experience; increasingly, it seems, they have
become places of censure and prohibition. And the censure and prohibition come from above, not from yourselves! Are we all OK with this transfer of power? Have we lost faith in young people's capacity -- in your capacity -- to exercise self-censure, through social norming, and also in your capacity to ignore or reject things that trouble you?"

Her full email may be found here.

Hundreds of Yale students have now signed an open letter to Christakis taking issue with her analysis.

“The contents of your email were jarring and disheartening,” the open letter says. “Your email equates old traditions of using harmful stereotypes and tropes to further degrade marginalized people, to preschoolers playing make-believe. This both trivializes the harm done by these tropes and infantilizes the student body to which the request was made. You fail to distinguish the difference between cosplaying fictional characters and misrepresenting actual groups of people. In your email, you ask students to ‘look away’ if costumes are offensive, as if the degradation of our cultures and people, and the violence that grows out of it is something that we can ignore. We were told to meet the offensive parties head-on, without suggesting any modes or means to facilitate these discussions to promote understanding. Giving ‘room’ for students to be ‘obnoxious’ or ‘offensive,’ as you suggest, is only inviting ridicule and violence onto ourselves and our communities, and ultimately comes at the expense of room in which marginalized students can feel safe.”

While there has been much discussion about the various views of Halloween costumes, as argued in op-eds and mass email messages, there were incidents Friday in which some students angry over the Erika Christakis email confronted her husband, Nicholas Christakis, who is a professor at Yale and the master of Silliman College, the residential college where his wife is associate master. Nicholas Christakis has defended the email his wife sent. In the video below (warning: an expletive is shouted several times), a student questions the ability of the Christakises, in light of their views on the costume debate, to make the college a welcoming environment for all students.

A blog post by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, which posted the above video and others, said, “Yale students have every right to express their anger and frustration with Yale faculty. But FIRE is concerned by yet another unfortunate example of students who demand upsetting opinions be entirely eradicated from the university in the name of fostering ‘safe spaces’ where students are protected from hurt feelings. Practicing free speech does not merely entail the right to protest opinions you object to -- it also means acknowledging people’s right to hold those opinions in the first place.”

But some Yale students say the discussion about the party and the various costume emails -- including the video distributed by FIRE -- don't reflect the real sources of minority students' frustrations. Aaron Z. Lewis, a Yale senior, wrote online at Medium that Yale students shouldn't have to be organizing forums and pushing for officials to acknowledge their pain and the bias they experience. “The protests are not really about Halloween costumes or a frat party,” he wrote. “They’re about a mismatch between the Yale we find in admissions brochures and the Yale we experience every day. They’re about real experiences with racism on this campus that have gone
unacknowledged for far too long. The university sells itself as a welcoming and inclusive place for people of all backgrounds. Unfortunately, it often isn’t.

Three Cheers for Student Protests

November 8, 2015 - 9:55pm

By John Warner

Regarding the recent student protests at Missouri and Yale and other campuses around the country, I say...Yay!

I say “yay,” because to my mind, one of the most important parts of the college experience is for young people to make use of their human agency and exercise these freedoms in ways consistent with their own values.

This is the American Way, and I believe in it.

Disagree with their causes all you want (I don’t), but anyone who cares about the work of education should be excited by what’s happening. People from all political stripes complain about politicians and leaders failing to live up to their principles, and here are groups of citizens attempting to hold the more powerful to account for exactly that. Maybe it’s a little messy. So what?

If we believe in the American Way, we should not be afraid of people living according to it.

Perhaps the most delicious part of this whole thing is watching putative liberals, who think students are being “coddled,” clutch their pearls over alleged affronts to truth and
justice. Don’t these students understand that Yale house masters are the “good guys,” that they have only the best intentions?

Who, exactly, has spent too long being coddled, minority students at Yale, or Jonathan Chait (and his ilk)? Which group really gets to exist in a sinecure protected by political correctness?

(I say this not because I make common cause with conservative criticisms of liberalism but because I seek to challenge at least some of the hypocrisies of my own side. I’ll trade some of Rush Limbaugh’s scorn for the chance to pop the bubble of our own corrosive paternalism. Claim the inmates are running the asylum all you want, but recognize you’re admitting that you’re presiding over an asylum.)

I see a lot of young people – particularly young people in historically marginalized groups - taking risks for their principles. What more can we ask?

Yay!

If you are threatened by these student movements, you are too fragile, and what you likely fear losing is power, influence, and attention. Maybe you (we) don’t deserve these things.

People under 25 should have as much say about the direction of our country as those over 45, shouldn’t they? Isn’t this doubly true given the steaming crap sandwich we’re in the process of handing the next generation?

I’m surprised students have waited as long as they have.

The comfort of the already comfortable should never be a priority of protest, and if that makes us squirm (I’m doing a little myself), so be it. If we’re forced to listen to things we’d rather not hear, such is the price of freedom.

If the edifice of your university is so fragile that it can be crumbled by a strike by the football team, you have even bigger issues than you figured, the chief one being that your football team has leverage over your academic institution.
Kudos to the players at the University of Missouri for figuring this out, and kudos to their coach for supporting their choice.


There is no greater lesson from education than to know we have choices and when I see students exercising this right, I get excited.

So I say, "Yay!" and ask, what are people so afraid of?

Missouri protest is a sign of players' involvement as students, and that's good

The University of Missouri cancelled all football activities on Sunday, hours after coach Gary Pinkel tweeted out support of his players who are refusing to practice or play until school president Tim Wolfe is "no longer in office."

The issue centers on what some Missouri students believe is a slow and inconsequential response to some racially motivated incidents on the Columbia campus. One student is on a hunger strike. Others are camping out on Carnahan Quadrangle.

Folks on all sides of the debate are taking additional action, including 32 black football players (now backed by what appears to be all of their teammates) who decided late Saturday to do what they can. The Tigers' game Saturday against BYU is in jeopardy.

"The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe 'Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,'" the group said in a statement. "We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experiences."

Pinker, for one, supports his guys. He tweeted out a picture Sunday of black and white players, arms linked.

"The Mizzou Family stands as one," Pinkel wrote. "We are united. We are behind our players."
This is a good thing.

Good that the players feel they can act like college students should – free to participate in campus protest if they choose.

And it's a good thing their coach is willing to support them, that they aren't just hired guns, and winning games isn't their sole purpose for being in school.

So far the University of Missouri has not heeded the demands of the protesters. Its Board of Curators have not fired President Wolfe, nor has Wolfe resigned or indicated he will.

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns," Wolfe said in a statement. "My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

"Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed."

This, too, is a good thing.

Good that a university isn't immediately kowtowing to a high-profile protest. Good that the university isn't all of a sudden caving to a dramatic act like a hunger strike, or because football players are involved, or because of the threat of a cancelled game has turned this into a massive national media story.

"Our universities cannot be run by individuals' making demands or using extreme actions," Missouri Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder, who is running for governor, said in his own statement. "The Board of Curators is in place to make informed decisions and govern, and they must be free to do so. Otherwise chaos ensues, and no student is served by that."

This is absolutely true. You can't run anything that way – schools would be changing course by the day. College students, almost by definition, are inexperienced, impassioned, impatient and impractical. They have a million ideas. Some of them are inspired. Some of them are terrible.

Is removing President Wolfe inspired or terrible? Don't know. Don't know the man. Don't know enough about the situation on campus or what specifically the office of the president could have done to prevent it.

The issues are, no doubt, alarming and troubling when conveyed through media reports. They are also likely nuanced and complicated in real life. It's difficult to say. Many believe, with stunning certainty, that they know, one way or the other – that the president must go, or the players must be stripped of their scholarships. This is how America tends to work these days. Everything is hyper-partisan.
Yet there is nothing wrong or weak about saying you aren't sure, or that more needs to be discovered, or that just firing figureheads (or pulling football scholarships) is the only solution.

Maybe Wolfe is the worst guy in higher education. Maybe he isn't. Maybe the protestors have a point. Maybe they are missing it. Maybe the solution rests somewhere in the middle.

All of that is for the Missouri community to figure out, by careful and thorough analysis and investigation and reasoning, not because of howling students.

Which isn't to say those protests shouldn't occur. Those students have brought considerable attention to a serious issue: the remnants of racism that still exist on campus, which, ideally, should be free of such ignorance.

"Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding," Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon stated.

This situation may be particularly bad at Mizzou. It might be that way because of school leadership. Again, don't know.

Protestors have put the spotlight on Missouri and what it has done, hasn't done and, most important, will do. They've dragged the issue front and center. Whatever the path is toward calm and comity, Missouri's football players feel enough a part of the community to speak their mind.

At too many places, athletes like them are sheltered away from everyone else, living in specific dorms, taking specific majors, spending most of their time in the football facility where they can be segregated from other students, blissfully playing video games in plush lounges or lifting weights in mammoth facilities, all built for coaches to control their every movement in pursuit of victory and little else.

The Missouri players are part of the fray, part of the place. They may be right. They may be wrong. They may be imprecise. They may one day look back with pride. They may one day look back with embarrassment.

It doesn't matter because that's college. That's exactly what college is supposed to be, even if you're a big-shot football player. Maybe even especially.

University of Missouri football team and coach join protest to oust university leader
After a spate of racially charged incidents on and around the University of Missouri campus, the football team announced this weekend that it would not participate in football-related activities and would support a hunger striker’s demand that the university president leave or be fired.

The team’s black players announced their decision Saturday night. The white players quickly backed them up, as did football coach Gary Pinkel.

“The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe ‘Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,’” the players said in a statement. “We will no longer participate in any football-related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experience. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!”

Pinkel tweeted a photo of the team and the coaches locking arms and said on Twitter Sunday: “The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united.”

The coach used the hashtag #ConcernedStudent1950, invoking a campus coalition whose name reflects the year the university began accepting black students. (Even today, more than 75% of the university’s 35,000 students are white.)

Pinkel and Athletic Director Mack Rhoades issued a statement announcing that Sunday’s practice had been canceled and that the players would not resume practicing until the hunger strike ends.

The team is scheduled to host Brigham Young University next Saturday. Skipping the game would cost the school more than $1 million.

“Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue,” Rhoades said.

The university scheduled a meeting of its governing body, the Board of Curators, for Monday. The university did not say what the meeting would be about, but said part of it would be an executive session closed to the news media.

The campus furor is not just about race. But several black students have said some white students use the n-word, and last month someone drew a swastika on a residence hall wall, using human feces.

Wolfe, a former businessman, became president of the University of Missouri system in 2012. Protesters accuse him of not taking enough action or showing enough sensitivity to the problems.

Wolfe has issued a series of statements in recent days, including one Sunday in which he said, “It is clear to all of us that change is needed.” He did not indicate any intention to resign, but added that his administration is reflecting on how to address the situation and said that the university had been working on a “systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy” due out by April.
Campus tensions reached a boiling point during the Oct. 10 homecoming parade, when student protesters blocked the parade route by standing in front of a car containing Wolfe. The car inched forward and, according to communications professor Melissa Click, bumped into a protester. Wolfe did not speak to the protesters, and police took them off the street, threatening arrest.

Wolfe “allowed his driver to try to drive around us, even hit one of us,” said Shelbey Parnell, 20, a black studies major who participated in the demonstration. In an interview, she said police threatened protesters with pepper spray and pushed them, and Wolfe “did not intervene whatsoever.”

“His silence is violence,” she said.

On Friday, Wolfe said in a statement that he regretted his reaction and acknowledged the existence of racism on campus. “My behavior seemed like I did not care,” he said. “That was not my intention. I was caught off guard in that moment. Nonetheless, had I gotten out of the car to acknowledge the students and talk with them perhaps we wouldn’t be where we are today.”

Butler, a black graduate student, began his hunger strike Nov. 2, pledging to consume only water until Wolfe is removed. Grad students were already unhappy with Wolfe because of changes to their healthcare.

Students also confronted Wolfe on Friday night outside a fundraiser in Kansas City and challenged him to define “systematic oppression.”

A video clip shows him replying, “Systematic oppression is because you don’t believe that you have the equal opportunity for success,” before he is cut off by a chorus of people upset that he characterized oppression as a perception rather than a reality.

“Did you just blame us for systematic oppression, Tim Wolfe?” someone off-camera shouts as Wolfe walks away. “Did you just blame black students?”

Parnell said Wolfe failed to understand the problem and is therefore unfit for his position.

Wolfe’s office did not respond Sunday to a call and email seeking comment.

Sunday night, as temperatures dropped into the upper 30s, dozens of students milled around a small tent city on the university's southern quad. More than a dozen tents were ringed by signs commanding the media to stay out and declaring the site a safe space. Earlier in the day, a truck sporting a Confederate flag drove by in what protesters saw as a likely attempt at intimidation.

Three of the founding members of Concerned Student 1950 — after ducking inside the nearby lavish student center, where it was warmer — said the truck's passing was only one in a series of racist incidents.
Ayanna Poole, 22, a senior from Tyler, Texas, recalled how she was kicked out of a fraternity party her freshman year as a man used the n-word and said, “All you ... girls have to leave.”

Andrea Fulgiam, 21, a junior studying psychology and sociology, said when she sat down in a lecture class freshman year, the student next to her muttered, “I'm not about to sit next to this black girl.”

Fulgiam said a professor once told her she was only at the university because of affirmative action.

Parnell said when she transferred to the university last year, other black students warned her, “Don't walk through Greektown,” the cluster of fraternities and sororities just off campus.

The three eventually became founding members of Concerned Student 1950, which they describe as a “movement.” They were part of the group that confronted Wolfe during the homecoming parade.

“We need you to say something, and he said absolutely nothing,” Poole said of Wolf's response to racial issues on the campus.

It is not clear what will happen next, but the governor has taken notice.

“Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state,” Gov. Jay Nixon said Sunday in a statement. “These concerns must be addressed.”

**The Washington Post**

**Missouri football players threaten to boycott season amid racial tension**

In response to mounting racial tensions at the University of Missouri and an administration’s perceived failure to address students’ concerns, members of the school’s football team have threatened to boycott its remaining games, leaving administrators reeling and emboldening student activists who have been demanding a change in leadership.

Anthony Sherrils, a sophomore defensive back for the Tigers, said on social media late Saturday night that a group of African American players — including several starters — were joining an on-campus movement, posting a photograph that included 31 football players alongside a statement that called for school president Tim Wolfe to resign or be fired.
Players say they won’t return to football-related activities until Wolfe is gone, and coaches had no choice but to cancel the Tigers’ practice Sunday, casting doubt on whether Missouri will be able to field a team Saturday against Brigham Young — or in any of its three remaining games.

“The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe ‘Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,’” Sherrils tweeted, sharing a statement from the activist group Concerned Student 1950. “We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!”

The football team is perhaps the most popular — and certainly most visible — student group on campus, so the players’ surprising decision has drawn the national spotlight to a series of incidents that had cast an ominous cloud over the school’s fall semester and made Wolfe a controversial figure on campus. Student groups at the center of the movement have taken issue with Wolfe’s reaction to these incidents and what they perceive as the president’s unwillingness to engage when they have attempted to broach the issue with his administration. They view the president as so nonresponsive that his resignation is now warranted.

Wolfe did not publicly address his job status Sunday but did concede that dialogue is needed at Missouri, the state’s largest school with an enrollment of more 35,000.

“It is clear to all of us that change is needed,” Wolfe said in a statement, “and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns. My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.”

The campus controversy is unfolding in the backdrop of larger state-wide discussions of race, social justice and cultural understanding. Fifteen months ago, Michael Brown, an 18-year old black man, was killed by a white police officer in Ferguson, Mo., which sparked protests, looting and a wide-ranging dialogue that spread across the nation but has been particularly taut across the state of Missouri.

“The demonstrations by these students are a reflection of where things are going nationally in terms of people being fed up with intolerance,” said the Rev. Traci Blackmon, a St. Louis minister heavily involved in the Ferguson protests. “The notion that the administration would not take a very strong no-tolerance policy toward hatred of any kind is just unconscionable. And the response to the absence of that is what you’re seeing now.”

Concerned Student 1950 has organized various demonstrations in the past month, centering on Wolfe’s failure to respond appropriately following what Missouri graduate student Jonathan L. Butler described as a “slew of racist, sexist, homophobic” incidents on the university’s Columbia, Mo., campus.

Butler entered the seventh day of a hunger strike Sunday and has expressed a willingness to die if Wolfe is not removed. He was pictured alongside Missouri football players in the photograph released Saturday.
“I already feel like campus is an unlivable space,” Butler, who is black, told The Washington Post in an interview last week. “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.”

The school released a statement Sunday evening from Missouri football Coach Gary Pinkel and Athletic Director Mack Rhoades confirming that no practice or football-related activities took place Sunday. According to the statement, athletic department officials met with players earlier in the day and “it is clear they do not plan to return to practice until Jonathan resumes eating.”

Tensions have been mounting campus since the start of the fall semester. On Sept. 12, Payton Head, the school’s student body president and an African American student from Chicago, wrote in a Facebook post about being called racial slurs “multiple times” during his time at Missouri. On Oct. 5, while members of the Legion of Black Collegians rehearsed a homecoming skit, a white student walked onto the stage and shouted racial epithets. And on Oct. 24, a student scrawled a swastika in human feces on the floor and wall of a dormitory.

“Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state,” Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon said in a statement Sunday. “Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion.”

A call for change has been mounting for several weeks, and the football team’s surprising protest gave the issue a much bigger platform.

“At this point, I think it is essential that the University of Missouri Board of Curators send a clear message to the students at Mizzou that there is an unqualified commitment to address racism on campus,” said Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), an alum of both Missouri and its law school.

The brewing controversy has increasingly focused on Wolfe and his leadership. Last month, during Missouri’s homecoming parade, demonstrators surrounded Wolfe’s car in an apparent effort to get the president’s attention. Police dissolved the demonstration, and Wolfe — sitting in the back seat of a convertible — barely reacted. He has since apologized for his reaction and acknowledged that discrimination is a problem on the university’s campus.

“Racism does exist at our university, and it is unacceptable,” Wolfe said in a statement circulated last week. “It is a long-standing, systemic problem which daily affects our family of students, faculty and staff. I am sorry this is the case.”

On Sunday, Wolfe said school officials are still determining “the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change.” He said the university has been working on a “diversity and inclusion strategy,” which it had intended to announce in April 2016. The plan, he said, would address many of the concerns voiced by Concerned Student 1950.
“We had anticipated providing specificity and detail to the plan over the coming months,” he said. “In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community.”

Missouri, which lost to Mississippi State on Thursday, did not have a game Saturday. The team has three more games scheduled, including a date against Brigham Young on Saturday in Kansas City, Mo., an evening contest set to be broadcast on the SEC Network. According to the Kansas City Star, the game contract calls for Missouri to pay BYU $1 million if the game is canceled.

Pinkel took to Twitter on Sunday to voice his support for his protesting players. He included a group photo of Missouri football players and coaches, all locked arm-in-arm.

“The Mizzou Family stands as one,” Pinkel wrote. “We are united. We are behind our players.”

Charles Harris, a redshirt sophomore defensive end, tweeted Saturday that the football team is united, and John Gibson, a redshirt junior cornerback, posted he never expected to be part of a racial protest.

“This goes way beyond football,” redshirt freshman defensive back Finis Stribling IV tweeted.

An athletic department spokesman did not immediately respond to an e-mail from The Post, but the department issued a statement Saturday in response to the players’ involvement in the movement.

“The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes,” the statement read. “We all must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our student-athletes’ right to do so.”

Mizzou football players join campus racial protest

By Dave Matter

Nov. 8, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Racial tension on the University of Missouri’s campus could soon impact Mizzou athletics. MU football players say they will stop participating in team activities until university system president Tim Wolfe resigns.
A message circulated on Twitter on Saturday night featuring a photo of 32 African-American Mizzou football players, some locked arm in arm along with the following message: “The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe ‘injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere’ We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!”

On Sunday, head coach Gary Pinkel expressed solidarity with his players on Twitter by posting a picture of the team and coaches locking arms. The tweet on Sunday read: "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players."

Most Missouri players declined comment on the situation when leaving the team facility after a 90-minute meeting with coaches that started at 10 a.m. Sunday. After the meeting, team spokesman Chad Moller said the team would eventually release a statement on the situation.

While walking out of the facility, tight end Jason Reese said the team was originally scheduled to practice Sunday but will not practice. Asked when the team will resume practicing, Reese said, “After this gets resolved.”

Later Sunday afternoon, Pinkel and athletics director Mack Rhoades issued a joint statement saying that practice and other team activities were cancelled on Sunday. The statement linked the return of the protesting football players to the end of a hunger strike by Jonathan Butler, a black graduate student who has vowed to not eat until Wolfe is gone.

"Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue,” the statement said.

Other players politely declined comment and said they’d address the situation at another time.

Defensive end Charles Harris told reporters, “We're going to hit you all up for sure."

Players are scheduled to meet with reporters for interviews at 4 p.m. Mondays for their regular media availability, following Pinkel’s weekly session at 3:30.

Defensive lineman Harold Brantley declined to answer questions, saying only, “Concerned Student 1950.”

A few players entered the building after the team photo was posted and apparently hadn’t attended the meeting, including tight end Sean Culkin, quarterback Eddie Printz, tailback Tyler Hunt and linebacker Michael Scherer. Scherer, a junior linebacker who attended MICDS, asked reporters why they were here and said he was here for practice. Scherer later left the building.

On Saturday night, the Twitter account for the school's Legion of Black Collegians posted the message and photo. Several players in the photo have since retweeted the photo.
Among those players in the photo are star linebacker Kentrell Brothers, defensive end Charles Harris, tailbacks Russell Hansbrough and Ish Witter and several other starters and backup players.

Several players tweeted about the protest Saturday, including cornerbacks John Gibson and Finis Stribling, safeties Thomas Wilson and Anthony Sherrils and linebacker Clarence Green among others. In response to another tweet, Gibson wrote the boycott "has nothing to do with our coaches. Our coaches are 100% behind us. Including the white ones." He later deleted the tweet.

Linebacker Grant Jones, the son of running backs coach Brian Jones, tweeted, "If anyone's mistaken the 32 players that are in the picture are not the only players participating in the boycott"

Missouri’s football team played Thursday, losing to Mississippi State to fall to 4-5, and does not play again until Saturday’s game against Brigham Young in Kansas City.

Mizzou student Jonathan Butler has been staging a hunger strike since Monday, saying he won’t eat until Wolfe steps down. Butler has been critical of the system president for the way he’s handled several racial incidents on campus. Butler was pictured in the photo featuring the 32 Mizzou players. Wolfe met with Butler and representatives of several student organizations Friday, The Associated Press and other news outlets reported. In a statement released Friday, Wolfe called Butler an important voice for social justice and said he was concerned about Butler's health.

Here is more background on the Mizzou situation from a story by Post-Dispatch education writer Koran Addo:
Wolfe, who oversees the University of Missouri campuses in Columbia, St. Louis, Kansas City and Rolla, has drawn fire from students angered over what they say is his failure to address at least two incidents where black students have been called racial slurs.

In another incident, someone used human feces to draw a swastika inside Mizzou’s Gateway Hall.

While much of the anger was initially directed toward Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, students have since shifted their focus toward Wolfe.

Early last month, a group of students formed a human chain and blocked Wolfe’s car during Mizzou’s homecoming parade.

In response, Wolfe has met with Butler at least twice, expressing concerns over the student’s health. He has also apologized for not being more active in engaging students.

Late last week, Wolfe released the following statement.
“Racism does exist at our university and it is unacceptable. It is a long-standing, systemic problem which daily affects our family of students, faculty and staff. I am sorry this is the case. I truly want all members of our university community to feel included, valued and safe.”

BenFred: Mizzou football protest proves players have power now

By Ben Frederickson

Nov. 9, 2015

Gary Pinkel can be found near the center, arms wrapped around the young men at his side.

"The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players," the longtime Mizzou football coach posted to Twitter alongside the image of his staff and his team.

Some celebrated Pinkel's message. Others condemned him. But understand, this was his only choice.

The Tigers canceled practice Sunday, and the athletic department says the team won't practice or play until Jonathan Butler ends his hunger strike.

Butler, a black MU graduate student, says he won't eat until UM system president Tim Wolfe resigns.

Butler, a group called Concerned Student 1950 and dozens of black Mizzou football players want Wolfe to walk due to, among other things, his lack of and/or delayed response to signs of intolerance on campus.

Pinkel is backing his players. His players are backing the group calling for the president's job. The drama is drawing national attention.

We are witnessing the power of today's college athletes. Agree or disagree with them, you would be foolish to ignore them.

They are no longer nameless figures in video games from which they don't profit. They don't have to stick to sports. They have more ways than ever before to spread their message. And they are becoming increasingly aware of their power, especially when it comes to issues of race.

Consider, with the help of the Columbia Missourian's timeline of events, what occurred before this story resulted in a wave of reporters descending on the college town:
• Butler didn't eat for five days.
• Since September, on-campus incidents have included an N-word directed at a student government class president, racial slurs aimed toward a Legion of Black Collegians meeting and a swastika drawn in feces on a dorm room wall.
• Wolfe remained silent when protesters blocked his car at an Oct. 10 homecoming parade, made no substantial progress in subsequent meetings with the Concerned Student 1950, a reference to the year black students were first admitted to MU, then last week bungled the definition of "systematic oppression" before walking away from protesters who confronted him last week.
• Concerned Student 1950 issued a statement with demands, started a camp on the quad, began a boycott of all MU services and held a demonstration during Meet Mizzou Day, the campuses' primary recruiting event for high school students.

Almost all of these events occurred off the national radar. Then came two photos on Twitter. One of black Mizzou football players and Butler. Then another of Pinkel, his staff and the majority of the team. And here we are.

Wolfe comes across like a suit of a system leader whose favoring of day-late, no-substance statements over genuine human interaction contributed to this predicament. His press releases say he's sorry. But has anyone seen it?

Embattled MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin at least had the sense to do something. The bow-tied self promoter's job security doesn't seem to be nearly as strong as his Twitter presence, but he announced diversity training and has engaged in the dialogue. He visited with protesters on Sunday. That matters.

Wolfe could be out as early as this morning's Board of Curator's meeting. And if he is, it's worth asking the question: Was one cancelled football practice, combined with the threat of paying $1 million to BYU if Saturday's game in Kansas City had to be canceled, more effective than a student saying he's willing to starve himself to death?

"Never thought I would be in place or time like this to actually make a difference," Mizzou running back Russell Hansbrough posted to Twitter this weekend.

I wonder if he and his teammates were aware of how fast things would move once they joined the call for Wolfe's ouster. I hope they understand the responsibility that comes with such power.

Meanwhile, some are asking why Pinkel didn't pull dozens of scholarships and align himself with Wolfe.

Pinkel, whose world view was in some ways shaped by four college years on a Kent State campus still reeling from the shooting of unarmed students by the Ohio National Guard, will hopefully give a nuanced answer at some point.

But the most obvious answer would be that he enjoys coaching and wants to continue to be good at it. Perhaps the only thing more crippling than aligning yourself against your president is aligning yourself against your
players. Mizzou’s undergraduate student body is 8 percent black. Mizzou’s scholarship football roster is 69 percent black.

Look ahead and this issue, without a doubt, will be used against Mizzou in recruiting regardless of how it is resolved. "Are you sure you want to go to the school where the players had to strike against a racist president?" opposing recruiters will ask. Facts won't matter. But imagine how much worse it would be if Pinkel remained indifferent or took Wolfe's side.

Have you heard of the Black 14?

Forty-six years ago, a successful college football coach had to decide how he would respond to a player protest as a game against BYU neared.

Wyoming's Lloyd Eaton, winner of 31 of 36 games and three consecutive Western Athletic Conference championships at Wyoming, had coached his Cowboys to a 4-0 start and a 12th-place ranking.

Then Eaton bootred 14 black players who planned to wear black armbands during a game against BYU to protest the blocking of black men from priesthood by the Church Of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The decision blew up in Eaton's face.

He finished the season 10-4, won just one game the following season, then lost his job. It took Wyoming years to thaw the recruiting freeze the coach's actions created with black prospects.

And people thought the Tigers' current 4-5 record is unbearable ...

Mizzou, like the St. Louis area that provides the bulk of its students, has a long, sad history with racism.

I go back to what former Mizzou basketball player Kim English, now a director of player development at Tulsa, told me in February of 2011. A student had just been arrested for painting racist graffiti outside of a dorm. The incident happened almost a year after two students scattered cotton balls outside of the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center.

"We've come such a long way and still have such a long way to go," English, a Baltimore native, said. "It's a conservative state, close to the South, I wasn't blinded to the fact coming out here. I hope they catch those guys and kick them out of school, because what that guy does doesn't represent what most people at the University of Missouri, or the state of Missouri, feel."

Flash forward to 2015 and the football team is pushing a president out the door.

Pinkel was wise to link arms with his team.
His players have the power now, and it's better to be a passenger on their push for change than the one standing in its path.

University of Missouri protests grow after athletes jump in

By SUMMER BALLENTINE and ALAN SCHER ZAGIER
Nov. 9, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Long-simmering protests at the University of Missouri over matters of race and discrimination got a boost over the weekend when at least 30 black football players announced they will not participate in team activities until the university system's president is removed.

For months, black student groups have complained of racial slurs and other slights on the overwhelmingly white, 35,000-student flagship campus of the four-college system. Frustrations flared during a homecoming parade Oct. 10 when black protesters blocked system President Tim Wolfe's car and he would not get out and talk to them. They were removed by police.

On Saturday night, black members of the football team joined the outcry. By Sunday, a campus sit-in had grown in size, graduate student groups planned walkouts, politicians began to weigh in, and a special meeting of the university system's governing body was set for Monday morning in Columbia.

Wolfe hasn't indicated he has any intention of stepping down, but agreed in a statement Sunday that "change is needed" and said the university is working to draw up a plan by April to promote diversity and tolerance.

The athletes did not say explicitly whether they would boycott the team's three remaining games this season. The Tigers' next game is Saturday against Brigham Young University at Arrowhead Stadium, the home of the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, and canceling it could cost the school more than $1 million.

"The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe 'Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,'" the players said in a statement. "We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experience. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!!"
Head football coach Gary Pinkel expressed solidarity on Twitter, posting a picture of the team and coaches locking arms. The tweet said: "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players."

Practice and other team activities were canceled Sunday, Pinkel and Missouri athletic director Mack Rhoades said in a joint statement. The statement linked the return of the protesting football players to the end of a hunger strike by a black graduate student who began the effort Nov. 2 and has vowed to not eat until Wolfe is gone.

"Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue," the statement said.

The protests began after the student government president, who is black, said in September that people in a passing pickup truck shouted racial slurs at him. In early October, members of a black student organization said slurs were hurled at them by an apparently drunken white student.

Also, a swastika drawn in feces was found recently in a dormitory bathroom.

Many of the protests have been led by an organization called Concerned Student 1950, which gets its name from the year the university accepted its first black student. Its members besieged Wolfe's car at the parade, and they have been conducting a sit-in on a campus plaza since last Monday.

Two trucks flying Confederate flags drove past the site Sunday afternoon, a move many saw as an attempt at intimidation. At least 150 students gathered at the plaza Sunday night to pray, sing and read Bible verses, a larger crowd than on previous days. Many planned to camp there overnight, despite temperatures that had dropped into the upper 30s.

Also joining in the protest effort are two graduate student groups that called for walkouts Monday and Tuesday.

Concerned Student 1950 has demanded, among other things, that Wolfe "acknowledge his white male privilege," that he is immediately removed, and that the school adopt a mandatory racial-awareness program and hire more black faculty and staff.

One of the sit-in participants, Abigail Hollis, a black undergraduate, said the campus is "unhealthy and unsafe for us."

"The way white students are treated is in stark contrast to the way black students and other marginalized students are treated, and it's time to stop that," Hollis said. "It's 2015."

Columbia is about 120 miles west of Ferguson, the St. Louis suburb where tensions erupted over the shooting death of unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown last year by a white police officer.
The school's undergraduate population is 79 percent white and 8 percent black. The state is about 83 percent white and nearly 12 percent black.

Wolfe, 56, is a former software executive and Missouri business school graduate whose father taught at the university. He was hired in 2011 as president, succeeding another former business executive who also lacked experience in academia.

He said Sunday that most of the group's demands have already been incorporated into the university's draft plan for promoting tolerance.

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed," he said.

Already, at Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin's request, the university announced plans to require diversity training for all new students starting in January, along with faculty and staff.

Lawmakers and elected officials began to weigh in Sunday. The chairman of a Missouri House higher education committee, Poplar Bluff Republican Rep. Steven Cookson, said in a statement that Wolfe "can no longer effectively lead" and should leave his post. Joining him in calling for Wolfe's resignation was Assistant House Minority Leader Gail McCann Beatty, the highest-ranking black member of that chamber.

Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon said the university must address the concerns so that the school is "a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion."

U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, a Missouri graduate, said the governing board needs to "send a clear message" to the students at the Columbia campus that they'll address racism.

The Board of Curators, the system's governing body, said in a statement that it planned to meet Monday morning. According to an agenda, part of the meeting will be closed to the public.

Missouri law allows the group to meet in a private "executive session" to discuss topics including privileged communications with university counsel or personnel matters, the statement said. A system spokesman didn't respond to questions about the meeting.

The racial issues are just the latest controversy at the university in recent months, following the suspension of graduate students' health care subsidies and an end to university contracts with a Planned Parenthood clinic that performs abortions.

Status of Mizzou's next game up in the air
COLUMBIA, Mo. • With his team on the brink of turmoil, Missouri football coach Gary Pinkel and his assistant coaches gathered with a majority of their players Sunday for a team meeting unlike any he’s overseen.

On Saturday, 32 Mizzou players announced they will not take part in team activities, including games, until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe steps down or is removed from office, joining voices with a campus movement to oust Wolfe in response to several racial incidents on campus.

With a game to play in six days against Brigham Young in Kansas City, Pinkel, his coaches and players met Sunday morning for about 90 minutes at the Mizzou Athletic Training Complex, then posed for a team photo in the dining hall, with many teammates and staff members locked arm in arm. The photo was posted on Pinkel’s Twitter account with the message: “The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players. #ConcernedStudent1950”

Concerned Student 1950 is the name of the student activist group that this fall issued the university a list of eight demands stemming from a series of racially fueled incidents on campus.

At the center of the protest is MU grad student Jonathan Butler, who began a hunger strike last Monday, pledging not to eat until Wolfe is removed from office.

Wolfe released a statement Sunday with no indication he plans to step down.

Pinkel’s photo and Twitter message created a stir throughout social media platforms but left more questions than answers. Was the photo Pinkel’s tacit approval of the players’ strike? Are Pinkel and his coaches also demanding that Wolfe step down? Will the players and coaches resume team activities any time soon?

Later Sunday afternoon, Pinkel and athletics director Mack Rhoades issued a joint statement: “Today, Sunday, there will be no football practice or formal team activities. Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue. After meeting with the team this morning, it is clear they do not plan to return to practice until Jonathan resumes eating. We are continuing to have department, campus, and student meetings as we work through this issue and will provide further comment (Monday) afternoon.”

Most Missouri players declined to comment on the situation when leaving the team facility after the meeting with coaches. While walking out of the building, sophomore tight end Jason Reese said the team was originally scheduled to practice Sunday but decided not to practice. Asked when the team would resume practicing, Reese said, “After this gets resolved.”
“I feel great,” he added. “I love my team.”

There could be some resolution Monday. The University System Board of Curators will hold a meeting at 10 a.m. in Columbia. The closed session will be “for consideration of certain confidential or privileged communications with university counsel, negotiated contracts, personnel matters, and records protected from disclosure by law,” the board announced Sunday night.

Defensive end Charles Harris told reporters, “We’re going to hit you all up for sure.”

Defensive lineman Harold Brantley declined to answer questions, saying only, “Concerned Student 1950.”

Other players declined to comment Sunday and said they’d address the situation at another time.

Players are scheduled to meet with reporters for interviews at 4 p.m. Monday for their regular media availability, following Pinkel’s weekly session at 3:30.

A few players who hadn’t attended the meeting or taken part in the team photo — including tight end Sean Culkin, quarterback Eddie Printz, tailback Tyler Hunt and linebacker Michael Scherer — entered the building after the meeting.

There are sure to be financial ramifications if Missouri can’t field a team for Saturday’s game in Kansas City, not to mention the postseason implications for the Tigers (4-5, 1-5 Southeastern Conference). Mizzou must win two of its final three games to secure bowl eligibility.

According to the contracts agreed upon by MU and BYU, if one team cancels any game in the two-game series, the defaulting school owes $1 million in liquidated damages to the other school for each canceled game to be paid no later than 30 days after the scheduled date for the game, regardless of whether alternative agreements can be made for a replacement game.

Also, the defaulting team shall not be entitled to any guaranteed payment and must pay all attorney fees and collection costs the other school incurs in collecting the damages. The home team in the two-game series pays the visiting team $250,000 for each game.

Missouri is scheduled to play BYU in Provo, Utah, on Nov. 7, 2020.

The contract does have a clause allowing for a mutual agreement to cancel a game or games in the series that would absolve Missouri from paying liquidated damages. But on such short notice, it’s doubtful BYU would agree to that clause.

The game is scheduled to air on SEC Network.

“I have been in touch with University of Missouri athletics officials today and will remain in communication as necessary,” SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey said in a statement given to the Post-Dispatch. “I respect
Missouri’s student-athletes for engaging on issues of importance and am hopeful the concerns at the center of this matter will be resolved in a positive manner.”

Missouri football players pressure school leaders over race

By SUMMER BALLENTINE and ALAN SCHER ZAGIER

Nov. 9, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Student protests over racial incidents at the University of Missouri escalated over the weekend when at least 30 black football players announced they will not participate in team activities until the university system's president is removed.

President Tim Wolfe gave no indication he has any intention of stepping down, but agreed in a statement Sunday that "change is needed" and said the university is working to draw up a plan by April to promote diversity and tolerance.

For months, black student groups have complained of racial slurs and other slights on the overwhelmingly white, 35,000-student campus. Their frustrations flared during the homecoming parade Oct. 10 when black protesters blocked Wolfe's car and he would not get out and talk to them. They were removed by police.

On Saturday night, black members of the football team joined the outcry, and by Sunday, state lawmakers were weighing in.

The athletes did not say explicitly whether they would boycott the team's three remaining games this season. The Tigers' next game is Saturday against Brigham Young University at Arrowhead Stadium, the home of the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, and canceling it could cost the school more than $1 million.

"The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe 'Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,'" the players said in a statement. "We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experience. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!!"
Head football coach Gary Pinkel expressed solidarity with the black players on Twitter by posting a picture of the team and coaches locking arms. The tweet said: "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players."

Practice and other team activities were cancelled on Sunday, Pinkel and Missouri athletic director Mack Rhoades said in a joint statement. The statement linked the return of the protesting football players to the end of a hunger strike by a black graduate student who has vowed to not eat until Wolfe is gone.

"Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue," the statement said.

The protests at the campus began after the student government president, who is black, said in September that people in a passing pickup truck shouted racial slurs at him. Days before the homecoming parade, members of a black student organization said slurs were hurled at them by an apparently drunken white student.

Also, a swastika drawn in feces was found recently in a dormitory bathroom.

Butler, who participated in the homecoming parade protest, began his hunger strike on Nov. 2 to call attention to racial problems at the state's flagship university.

Many of the protests have been led by an organization called Concerned Student 1950, which gets its name from the year the university accepted its first black student. Its members besieged Wolfe's car at homecoming last month, and they have been conducting a sit-in on a campus plaza since last Monday.

At least 150 students gathered Sunday night to pray, sing and read Bible verses. Many planned to camp there overnight amid temperatures that had dropped into the low 40s.

Concerned Student 1950 has demanded, among other things, that Wolfe "acknowledge his white male privilege," that he be removed immediately, and that the school adopt a mandatory racial-awareness program and hire more black faculty and staff.

One of the sit-in participants, Abigail Hollis, a black undergraduate, said the campus is "unhealthy and unsafe for us."

"The way white students are treated is in stark contrast to the way black students and other marginalized students are treated, and it's time to stop that," Hollis said. "It's 2015."

Wolfe said Sunday that most of the group's demands have already been incorporated into the university's draft plan for promoting tolerance.

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed," he said.
Already, at Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin's request, the university announced plans to require diversity training for all new students starting in January, along with faculty and staff.

State lawmakers began to react Sunday. The chairman of a Missouri House higher education committee, Poplar Bluff Republican Rep. Steven Cookson said in a statement that Wolfe "can no longer effectively lead" and should leave his post. Joining him in calling for Wolfe's resignation was Assistant House Minority Leader Gail McCann Beatty, the highest-ranking black member of that chamber.

Late Sunday, the university system's governing body, the Board of Curators, announced a special meeting had been set for Monday. A statement indicated part of the meeting will be closed to the public. A system spokesman didn't immediately respond to questions about the meeting's agenda.

Wolfe, 56, is a former software executive and Missouri business school graduate whose father taught at the university. He was hired in 2011 as president of a four-campus system that includes Columbia, succeeding another former business executive who also lacked experience in academia.

The campus in Columbia is about 120 miles west of Ferguson, the St. Louis suburb where tensions erupted over the shooting death of unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown last year by a white police officer.

The school's undergraduate population is 79 percent white and 8 percent black. The state is about 83 percent white and nearly 12 percent black.

It's the latest controversy at the university in recent months, following the suspension of graduate students' health care subsidies and an end to university contracts with a Planned Parenthood clinic that performs abortions.

Two graduate student groups have called for walkouts by graduate student workers on Monday and Tuesday in solidarity with the protesters.

Mizzou football players say they won't play until president is ousted over race issues

By Koran Addo

Nov. 8, 2015

A group of Mizzou’s black football players pledged Saturday to boycott all football-related activities until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe either steps down or is removed from office.
Some university students have been critical of Wolfe in recent months over several racial incidents on campus this year.

The protest was announced on Twitter on Saturday evening, when the university’s Legion of Black Collegians released a statement criticizing what the group described as Wolfe’s disregard for issues facing black students.

“We will no longer participate in any football-related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences,” the statement said.

Running back Russell Hansbrough, safety Anthony Sherrils, cornerback Finis Stribling and linebacker Clarence Green all retweeted the statement.

Shortly before 9 p.m., cornerback John Gibson III tweeted that the boycott “has nothing to do with our coaches. Our coaches are 100% behind us. Including the white ones.”

He later deleted the tweet.

It was unclear how many players are participating in the boycott, but a photo tweeted by several members of the football team shows at least 30 players standing with their arms interlocked in support.

Mizzou’s athletic department released a statement late Saturday in response to the players but did not address what the strike would mean in terms of scholarships or for the team going forward should players refuse to practice this week or play Saturday against BYU.

“The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes. We all must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues, and we support our student-athletes’ right to do so,” the statement said.

Attempts to reach Wolfe were unsuccessful Saturday night, and a spokesman for his administration did not return a call seeking comment.

News of the football players’ protest is the latest blow to an embattled president who, earlier in the day, was confronted by students outside a fundraiser in Kansas City.

A video of the confrontation shows a resigned-looking Wolfe talking to students as they prod him to give his definition of systematic oppression.

“I will give you an answer, and I’m sure it’ll be a wrong answer,” he said.

“Systematic oppression is because you don’t believe that you have the equal opportunity for success,” he added.

Wolfe’s answer was met with angry shouts as students accused him of blaming them for injustice.
“Did you just blame us for systematic oppression, Tim Wolfe? Did you just blame black students?” one woman yelled as Wolfe walked away.

Saturday’s incidents are on top of a boycott of university dining and retail services announced by the activist group Concerned Student 1950 and a hunger strike by graduate student Jonathan Butler, now headed into its sixth day.

Butler has promised to forgo all food and nutrition until Wolfe resigns or is fired.

Wolfe, who oversees the University of Missouri campuses in Columbia, St. Louis, Kansas City and Rolla, has drawn fire from students angered over what they say is his failure to address at least two incidents where black students have been called racial slurs.

In another incident, someone used human feces to draw a swastika inside Mizzou’s Gateway Hall.

While much of the anger was initially directed toward Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, students have since shifted their focus toward Wolfe.

Early last month, a group of students formed a human chain and blocked Wolfe’s car during Mizzou’s homecoming parade.

In response, Wolfe has met with Butler at least twice, expressing concerns over the student’s health. He has also apologized for not being more active in engaging students.

Late last week, Wolfe released the following statement.

“Racism does exist at our university and it is unacceptable. It is a long-standing, systemic problem which daily affects our family of students, faculty and staff. I am sorry this is the case. I truly want all members of our university community to feel included, valued and safe.”

Dave Matter of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report.

Mizzou Football Players Pledge A Strike, Citing Systemic Racism

University of Missouri football players have pledged to go on strike until university President Tim Wolfe resigns. They’re joining several other student groups criticizing the way he has handled a string of
racially charged incidents. Koran Addo, a reporter for the St. Louis Post Dispatch, explains the situation.

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Transcript

MICHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Now we want to take a look at how one American campus is dealing with some racial tensions. Football players at the University of Missouri have announced a strike, with 30 athletes pledging to stop participating in games or football-related activities until university President Tim Wolfe resigns or is replaced. They object to his handling of several racially charged incidents on campus. School officials have pledged to create a diversity and inclusion training program, but student activists say that is not enough. Koran Addo has reported on this story for the St. Louis Post Dispatch, and he is with us now. Welcome. Thanks so much for joining us.

KORAN ADDO: Thank you for having me.

MARTIN: What are some of the incidents that gave rise to this? Can you give us a sense of what sparked this whole thing?

ADDO: Well, what you have is a campus of roughly 30,000 students, and only seven percent African-American. And so you have had several small incidents. And two of the big incidents - you had a - the student body president, Payton Head - he was walking on campus in October. And a group of men in a pickup truck drove by, yelling racial slurs at him. That kind of really sparked things because if it could happen to him, you know, it's happening to everybody 'cause he's a very visible person. You had another incident where, you know, students were preparing for a presentation for homecoming - a black student group. And a student walked by and directed some racial slurs towards them.

So what have here is students saying that, you know, we're very small. This is a very segregated campus already. Black students kind of stick together. They stick to each other. They don't feel welcome in the overall community. They say that they can't even walk near the fraternities on campus because racial slurs are being directed at them at all times. They say they can't go to certain restaurants on campus or even closely off campus because, you know, they feel this sort of hostility towards them. So it's a general feeling of black students feeling unwelcome on the Mizzou campus. And their concerns have not really been heard by the administration. The administration is aloof. The administration is not taking their concerns seriously.

MARTIN: And what does the administration say about that? I understand that the university president, Tim Wolfe, has responded with a statement today. What is he saying, and what has he been saying?
ADDO: He's acknowledged that racism is a problem, specifically on campus. He's saying that it's intolerable, that it's not acceptable, but, really, that's been about it. I mean, it's been a bunch of press releases. He's met with some students, either the student on campus right now - there's a graduate student who's been on a hunger strike. Today's his six day, and he says he's going to forgo all nutrition until the president resigns. But really all we've gotten is a bunch of statements that say, you know, racism is bad. We need to do something about it. There really hasn't been anything concrete.

MARTIN: Today there's another statement from the governor of Missouri, Jay Nixon. He commented, saying that, quote, "racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state," unquote. Apart from that, though, can - do you have any sense of how the broader student body is responding to this?

ADDO: Well, people are frankly amazed. There have been different student groups on campus that have really been at the forefront of this. And what's happened is they've been calling for the athletes to get involved. You know, they say the athletes have a lot of clout. The athletes have a lot of attention on them. The athletes can make a difference. So there's been this call, mostly on social media, you know, for - why aren't our athletes saying anything?

And last night, I guess you could say the athletes, you know, answered the call and really gave a pretty stunning decision that they're not going to participate in any sort of football activities until the present designs. Now, this is a football school. The football team has a lot of attention on it. They bring a lot of money to the university, so now there's a sense that, you know, this is real. You know, this is real. This is not just, you know, a group of disaffected students that are making noise. This is something that people need to sit up and pay attention to.

MARTIN: Koran Addo is a reporter for the St. Louis Post Dispatch. Koran, thanks so much for speaking with us.

ADDO: Thank you for having me. Transcript provided by NPR, Copyright NPR.

Missouri football players threaten boycott

By David Morrison

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 12:00 am
Missouri’s black football players joined the Concerned Student 1950 protest effort Saturday night, sending out a message via social media that said they would no longer participate in “football related activities” until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe is no longer in office.

“The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe ‘Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,’ ” the statement read. “We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!!”

Multiple Tigers football players sent out the statement along with a picture of about 30 of them linking arms with Jonathan Butler, the MU graduate student who began a hunger strike Monday, pledging he would not eat as long as Wolfe was still the president.

Members of Concerned Student 1950, which draws its name from the year the first black student was accepted to MU, also began camping on the Carnahan Quadrangle, demanding Wolfe resign.

Senior linebacker Kentrell Brothers, the nation’s leading tackler, was in the picture, as well as defensive end Charles Harris, the team’s sacks leader. So were defensive starting safeties Anthony Sherrils and Ian Simon, cornerback Aarion Penton and defensive tackle Rickey Hatley, as well as backup linebackers Clarence Green and Grant Jones — a Hickman grad who is the son of Tigers running backs coach Brian Jones — defensive end Spencer Williams, safety Thomas Wilson, and cornerbacks John Gibson and Finis Stribling IV.

Top running backs Russell Hansbrough and Ish Witter, starting wide receivers J’Mon Moore and Nate Brown and co-starting tight end Jason Reese were also in the picture, along with backup quarterback Marvin Zanders, running backs Trevon Walters and Chase Abbington, receivers Cam Hilton, Keyon Dilosa and DeSean Blair and offensive lineman Kevin Pendleton.

Football players who were contacted did not comment. Two responded that they will answer questions about their involvement with the movement at Missouri’s regularly scheduled media day Monday.

“We’re black. Black is powerful. Our struggle may look different, but we are all #ConcernedStudent1950,” Sherrils tweeted.

Missouri athletic department spokesman Chad Moller released this statement Saturday: “The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes. We all must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our student-athletes rights to do so.”

Late Saturday, a group of protesters formed a circle on Carnahan Quad and locked arms, then prayed together for about 15 minutes.

After, they repeated the mantra, “It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.”
Gibson, in a response to a mention on Twitter, wrote the players’ actions have “nothing to do with our coaches. Our coaches are 100% behind us. Including the white ones.”

On the field, Missouri has lost four in a row after a 31-13 home defeat against Mississippi State on Thursday night. The Tigers are 4-5 overall and 1-4 in the Southeastern Conference. Their next scheduled game is against BYU at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City on Nov. 14.

“It’s about more than just football for me and my team,” Wilson tweeted.

**Tensions high as MU students continue protests, hunger strike**

By Caitlin Campbell

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 12:00 am

*Students marched across the University of Missouri campus again Saturday with a string of protests and chants as the group Concerned Student 1950 demonstrated for a sixth day.*

“Racism lives at the University of Missouri,” a protester with Concerned Student 1950 yelled while protesting across campus.

“And so do we,” was the reply from several dozen students, who with linked arms were protesting a university climate they feel has been exclusionary and violent toward minority students.

Last month, the student group issued a list of demands after a series of racially charged issues on campus that the group says did not elicit an appropriate response from MU administrators.

The demands include the resignation of UM System President Tim Wolfe and the creation of a racial awareness and inclusion curriculum.

On Monday, student protester Jonathan Butler began a hunger strike, pledging he would not eat as long as Wolfe was still the president. Members of Concerned Student 1950, which draws its name from the year the first black student was accepted to MU, also began camping on the Carnahan Quadrangle, demanding Wolfe resign.
On Saturday, protesters took to some of the campus’ most heavily trafficked buildings — dining halls and student unions — to protest. Protesters recounted a history of racism and timeline of recent events on campus in an attempt to bring awareness of their concerns to onlookers.

“Two black, female students — including myself — were called the N-word by four white males while being recorded outside of the rec center,” one protester yelled at dining hall Plaza 900 while standing on a chair.

The incident, which happened Friday evening, sparked a response on Twitter by MU Chancellor R. Bowin Loftin, who said he contacted the MU Police Department and responded to students who were concerned about the incident.

Protesters have said Loftin’s interactions with the students have been more supportive than Wolfe’s.

“Last night’s act demonstrates” a “need for mandatory training” which begins in January and “other actions that we have announced,” Loftin wrote in a tweet.

Concerned Student 1950 protesters said the uncomfortable climate for minority students on campus has only become more apparent in the past few days. Wolfe has met with protesters several times now, but a Friday evening interaction in Kansas City caused a stir on social media.

A group of protesters traveled to Kansas City to protest at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts while Wolfe attended a fundraiser.

In a 30-second video of the encounter that a protester posted to Twitter, students asked Wolfe what he thinks systematic oppression is. Before providing an answer, Wolfe said the students might not like his response.

“Systematic oppression is because you don’t believe that you have the equal opportunity for success —” Wolfe said, his statement cut short by yelling from protesters.

“Did you just blame us for systematic oppression, Tim Wolfe?” one protester can be heard yelling at Wolfe as he walked away from the group. “Did you just blame black students —”

A few of those protesting — who declined to give their names — said their interactions with Wolfe on Friday are demonstrative of why he should resign despite a written apology. Wolfe issued an apology Friday afternoon, acknowledging racism exists as a systemic problem at the university and expressed regret for not getting out of his car when protesters blocked its path during MU’s Homecoming parade last month.

MU Faculty Council chair Ben Trachtenberg released a statement late Friday on behalf of the council, which offers support to protesters.

The letter stated the faculty will continue to work with students and administration through the Race Relations and Diversity Enhancement committees “to pursue justice.”
“To our students who are hurting, please know that you are not alone,” Trachtenberg wrote in the faculty council’s letter. “Your faculty stand with you in desiring a more perfect university, and we will stand with you in working to make that desire real.”

Support for protesters has spread to the larger community. After their day of protests on campus, members of the group huddled under blankets at a camp set up on the Carnahan Quadrangle on Saturday night as people dropped off flashlights, blankets, coffee, food and tents to show support.

Student protester Baylin Petrillo said she has been touched by the courage Butler and protesters have shown, as well as the support the community has given. She said the group of campers and protesters has only grown during the past week.

“This is bigger than us, and this is bigger than” the protests, Petrillo said. “This is for all the students who have felt very unsafe on this campus.”

Recap of MU football team's support to protest against racism


COLUMBIA - MU Football Coach Gary Pinkel is supporting his football players as they put all football-related activities on hold in a show of solidarity with students protesting racism on campus.

Pinkel tweeted a photo of the team, coaches included, all interlocking arms inside Sells Dining Hall. Pinkel included the caption, "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players. #ConcernedStudent1950".

Moments later, Media Director Chad Moller met reporters outside the Mizzou Athletics Training Complex (MATC) to say the football team would release a statement Sunday evening. Moller said he was aware of the photo, but didn't know Pinkel had tweeted it. He said Pinkel and his staff support the protest.
"You saw the photo," Moller said.

Moller and Pinkel sent out a news release shortly after 4 p.m. which said, "Today, Sunday, there will be no football practice or formal team activities. Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue. After meeting with the team this morning, it is clear they do not plan to return to practice until Jonathan resumes eating. We are continuing to have department, campus, and student meetings as we work through this issue and will provide further comment tomorrow [Monday] afternoon."

Pinkel did not meet with media members after the team got together. Several Missouri football players and coaches filed in and out of the training complex, declining comment on any issues related to the meeting.

Missouri redshirt sophomore tight end Jason Reese expressed his pleasure the team made an organized decision.

"I feel great," Reese said. "I love my team. Love them."

Several African American members of the football team took a picture Saturday night with campus activist Jonathan Butler, who is on a hunger strike. Defensive back Anthony Sherrils tweeted out the photo, and an explanation the team would not play or participate in anything football related until UM President Tim Wolfe resigned or was fired.

Reese said he didn't know when the team would practice again.

"Whenever this gets resolved," Reese said.

Both Sherrils and running back Russell Hansbrough said there was no practice. Sherrils said the coaching staff originally planned one, but decided to cancel it in place of a team meeting. The players met on their own around 9:30 a.m. before Pinkel and the staff joined them at 10 a.m. Reese said the team wouldn't talk until it issued a statement.

"I can't speak on that subject. I'm sorry," offensive lineman Nate Crawford said.

"We're not allowed to say anything," said Connor McGovern, another offensive lineman.

Several players expressed satisfaction with how the meeting went. Former Missouri wide receiver L'Damian Washington met with players outside the MATC. Senior linebacker Michael Scherer had a positive response for how united he felt the team was.

"Very," he said, pumping his fist in the air.

The Kansas City Star reports if Missouri does not play against Bringham Young University at Arrowhead Stadium on Saturday, their contract would require MU to pay $1 million.
MU football coaching staff shows support for players amid boycott

By David Morrison

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 1:29 pm

A tweet from the Twitter account of Coach Gary Pinkel showed a photo of the Missouri football team and its coaches, including Pinkel, locking arms on Sunday morning.

“The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players #ConcernedStudent1950 GP,” said the tweet from Pinkel’s verified account.

That tweet came after 32 of Missouri’s black football players joined the Concerned Student 1950 protest effort Saturday night, sending out a message via social media that said they would no longer participate in “football related activities” until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe is no longer in office.

When asked if the photo tweeted from Pinkel’s account means the coaching staff supports the boycott, team spokesman Chad Moller said "you saw the picture."

While the tweet announcing the boycott that was posted Saturday night included only black players -- linebacker Kentrell Brothers, who leads the nation in tackles, and starting running back Russell Hansbrough were among them -- the tweet from Pinkel’s account Sunday included what appeared to be most of the team, including starting quarterback Drew Lock, who is white, along with numerous other Tiger players who are white.

“This isn't about just race or football and the Mizzou family stands together #ConcernedStudent1950 #MizzouMade” wide receiver Keyon Dilosa tweeted.

Missouri linebacker Grant Jones wrote in a tweet Saturday night that the 32 players included in Saturday's photo "are not the only players participating in the boycott." Jones, a Hickman grad, is the son of Tigers running back coach Brian Jones.

Missouri players and coaches met at the Mizzou Athletics Training Complex for a little more than 90 minutes starting at 10 a.m. Sunday morning. The meeting adjourned around the time Pinkel sent out his tweet with the team picture.
Some players, including linebacker Michael Scherer, tight ends Sean Culkin and Clayton Echard, running back Tyler Hunt and quarterback Eddie Printz entered the complex after the meeting had ended.

Players offered little comment to reporters at the MATC on Sunday. Tight end Jason Reese said the team had practice scheduled for Sunday but will not practice until "when this gets resolved."

"We're not allowed to comment on much, so we're just trying to all stay together as a team," Reese said. "But we all made this decision as a team not to talk to the media."

Wide receiver J'Mon Moore indicated that players will address their involvement in the movement at the team's regular media day Monday afternoon.

ESPN.com quoted an anonymous white Missouri player who said not all of the Tigers' players and coaches are on board with the boycott.

"As much as we want to say everyone is united, half the team and coaches -- black and white -- are pissed," he told ESPN. "If we were 9-0, this wouldn't be happening."

"Just because everyone wasn't in the picture doesn't mean that we don't all stand together as a family," Scherer tweeted Sunday night. "Whoever is speaking against our unity as a family and team is not apart of the same family that I am."

"By that I am saying that I don't believe that anyone in our locker room would ever say that and the 'mystery informant' isn't reliable."

Missouri is scheduled to play BYU on Saturday in Kansas City.

Wolfe released a statement Sunday afternoon that indicated he is not resigning.

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into sharing concerns." Wolfe said in his statement. "My administration has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

"Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed."

Tension has been high around the campus for days. Students marched across campus again Saturday with a string of protests and chants as the group Concerned Student 1950 demonstrated for a sixth day.

Last month, the student group issued a list of demands after a series of racially charged issues on campus that the group says did not elicit an appropriate response from MU administrators.
The demands include Wolfe's resignation and the creation of a racial awareness and inclusion curriculum.

Student protester Jonathan Butler began a hunger strike on Monday, pledging he would not eat as long as Wolfe was still the president. Members of Concerned Student 1950, which draws its name from the year the first black student was accepted to MU, also began camping on the Carnahan Quadrangle, demanding Wolfe resign.

Storm Ervin, one of the Concerned Student 1950 organizers camping out at Carnahan Quad, said the inclusion of the football team lifted the protesters' spirits, and that she felt the addition of the players to the movement would cause Wolfe to step down.

The group is disappointed, she said, that Wolfe's statement makes no mention of him leaving.

"We had the football players stand in solidarity with us," said Ervin, who wore a gold Missouri football sweatshirt as she spoke. "This is a big, Division-I and SEC school. We had hope" it would make a difference.

Concerned Student 1950 activist Reuben Faloughi, a doctoral student at Missouri and former walk-on linebacker at Georgia, said the Tigers' football team's involvement "definitely has brought another level of attention to the movement."

"My soul was glistening seeing student-athletes, but in particular black male athletes resist the system that exploits them for a noble cause," Faloughi said. "Wow. It was a magical moment for me, and I'm glad could actually witness it.

"The reality is they experience the same thing. Once Saturday's over, they're Concerned Student 1950 too."

Pinkel and Athletic Director Mack Rhoades sent out a joint statement Sunday afternoon that read, "Sunday, there will be no football practice or formal team activities. Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue. After meeting with the team this morning, it is clear they do not plan to return to practice until Jonathan resumes eating. We are continuing to have department, campus, and student meetings as we work through this issue and will provide further comment tomorrow afternoon."

The statement did not address whether the team's coaches will work during the player boycott, nor whether the team is planning on playing Saturday's game against BYU.

Butler tweeted that he was "extremely unsatisfied" with Wolfe's statement.

"He still has no true plan for change," Butler wrote. "We deserve a leader who actually cares."
Missouri's contract with BYU stipulates that, if one side were forced to back out of a game in the teams' two-game series, it would owe the other side $1 million plus attorney fees, "regardless of whether alternate arrangements can be or are made for a replacement game."

The contract does provide for the cancellation of the game without penalties if both sides agree to a mutual written agreement.

In a statement, Southeastern Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey said he has been in contact with Missouri athletics throughout the day Sunday and will "remain in communication as necessary."

"I respect Missouri’s student-athletes for engaging on issues of importance and am hopeful the concerns at the center of this matter will be resolved in a positive manner," Sankey wrote.

In response to a question about what penalties Missouri may face if it is forced to forfeit any games, SEC Associate Commissioner for Communications Herb Vincent wrote that "any speculation on events past today is premature at this point."

Gov. Jay Nixon released a statement Sunday regarding the student protests.

“Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state,” Nixon said. “Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion."

The University of Missouri system Board of Curators called a meeting for 10 a.m. Monday morning. At 10:05 a.m., the schedule calls for the meeting to go to executive session "for consideration of certain confidential or privileged communications with university counsel, negotiated contracts, personnel matters, and records protected from disclosure by law, all as authorized by law and upon approval by resolution of the Board of Curators."

**Missouri football players plan to boycott until Wolfe resigns**

The Concerned Student 1950 movement has spread to the football team.

**Saturday night, graduate student Jonathan Butler and Missouri defensive back Anthony Sherrils tweeted a picture with over 30 football players announcing that black members of the team will not participate in football activities until UM System President Tim Wolfe resigns.** Butler has been on a hunger strike calling for Wolfe’s resignation since this past
Monday. Students have also been camping out on Carnahan Quad, saying they’ll leave when Wolfe is no longer president.

Butler also tweeted the picture with a statement reading: “The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe ‘Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere.’ We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!!”

Cornerback John Gibson later tweeted, “Our coaches are 100% behind us. Including the white ones” in response to an earlier tweet from Dave Zirin, host of the Edge of Sports podcast.

Wolfe has been criticized for his lack of action regarding MU’s campus social climate. He recently angered students with his definition of systematic oppression.

“Systematic oppression is because you don’t believe that you have the equal opportunity for success,” he said.

Senior captains Ian Simon and Russell Hansbrough are both in the picture, which shows members of the team standing with Butler in locked arms. The Maneater identified Charles Harris, one of the team’s sack leaders, in the picture.

Hansbrough ended Missouri’s first touchdown drought this week. The team went 33 days without reaching the endzone. Missouri is set to play next weekend in Kansas City against Brigham Young.

Mizzou Athletics tweeted a statement reading, "The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes. We all must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our student-athletes right to do so."

According to the Columbia Tribune’s David Morrison, 58 of the 84 scholarship athletes are black. Sherrils and Butler’s tweets were retweeted by a number of football players, including Hansbrough and Clarence Green.

Athletics spokesman Chad Moller could not be reached for comment at this time. Students at the campsite did not wish to comment on the boycott.
Missouri football players boycott until president Tim Wolfe resigns
BY BEN PETERS  SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. — More than 30 African-American football players for the University of Missouri say they will no longer take part in football activities until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe is fired or resigns.

This has prompted the Missouri Board of Curators to schedule a special executive session meeting for Monday morning at 10 a.m.

According to an agenda provided in the statement, part of the meeting will be closed to the public.

The statement says Missouri law allows the group to meet in a private "executive session" to discuss topics such as personnel matters or privileged communications with university counsel.

It's unknown whether they will address the status of President Wolfe.

The latest turmoil began with multiple players from the state's flagship university tweeting the following statement and picture on Saturday night.

The post has even been shared by the verified Twitter account of head coach Gary Pinkel.

The move comes after several student protests at the University of Missouri over the past few months, and pushed the tension to its highest point yet.

The latest controversy kicked off with Missouri graduate student Jonathan Butler going on a hunger strike Monday.

Butler says he's not happy with Wolfe's handling of several racial incidents on campus, and will not eat until Wolfe steps down or is fired.

The controversies include a number of race and discrimination issues, the removal of graduate students' health care subsidies and an end to university contracts with a Planned Parenthood clinic.

The Missouri Athletics Department released a statement late Saturday night which read: "The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes. We all must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our student-athletes right to do so."

Athletic Director Mack Rhoades and Coach Gary Pinkel said early Sunday evening that there would be no team activities on Sunday.
They also said their focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of their student-athletes and working with the community to address this serious issue.

They said that after meeting with the team Sunday morning, they do not plan to practice until Jonathan resumes eating.

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe has not resigned, and issued a statement on Sunday.

In the statement, Wolfe says it is clear that change is needed, and that it will come as part of a system-wide diversity and inclusion strategy that will be announced in April of 2016. He said the majority of the demands made by Concerned Student 1950 were already in the strategy that was being worked on.

He did not, however, address the issue of his resignation.

The statement reads as follows:

Governor Jay Nixon has also released a statement, as of Sunday morning, regarding the ongoing situation at the University of Missouri campus.

"Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state," Gov. Nixon said. "Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion.

U.S. Senator Clair McCaskill says the Board of Curators needs to "send a clear message" to students that they will address the issue of racism on the Columbia campus.

McCaskill said a statement on Sunday that, as an MU graduate, she is "confident my university can and will do better in supporting an environment of tolerance and inclusion."

Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster, in a statement released late Sunday afternoon, encouraged the Board of Curators to condemn all acts of racism on campus.

He also called for the immediate creation of a task force to address the issues raised by Concerned Student 1950.

The task force would be made up of students, faculty, and concerned citizens.

One Missouri lawmaker is calling for the resignation of President Wolfe.

Rep. Steve Cookson (R-Butler County) is the chairman of the Missouri House Committee on Higher Education, and says it has become clear that Wolfe can no longer effectively lead the University of Missouri System.

"He should show leadership in his final official act and step aside, failing that the University of Missouri system Board of Curators should remove him.,” Rep. Cookson said in a release Sunday
evening. "Without this common sense approach it will be incumbent for the Governor and the General Assembly to come up with a plan to right the ship at this extremely important public asset."

It still isn’t clear whether the athletes’ announcement will affect next Saturday’s game at home against BYU.

The Tigers’ next game is at Arrowhead Stadium, the home of the Kansas City Chiefs, and canceling it could cost the school more than $1 million.


MU Football players join campus protest
BY TONY MULLEN SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH 2015

Missouri’s African-American football players say they will no longer take part in football activities until UM President Tim Wolfe resigns or is fired.

Multiple players tweeted a statement and a picture featuring about 30 members of the team.

Missouri graduate student Jonathan Butler started a hunger strike Monday. Butler says he’s not happy with Wolfe’s handling of several racial incidents on campus, and will not eat until Wolfe steps down or is fired.

The Missouri Athletics Department released a statement late Saturday night which read: "The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes. We all must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our student-athletes right to do so."

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

NOVEMBER 8, 2015
Tim Wolfe’s removal needed to quell crisis at University of Missouri

Tim Wolfe’s ability to lead is irreparably damaged

Rebellion by football players and coaches shows lack of confidence in leadership

University curators must act quickly to remove system president

*The Editorial Board*

**A rapidly accelerating crisis at the University of Missouri calls for drastic measures, starting with the departure of Tim Wolfe, the university system president.**

Members of the Board of Curators need to step up and take control of the situation, something Wolfe refuses to do.

Wolfe’s response Sunday to explosive developments on the Columbia campus was woefully inadequate.

A student is in the seventh day of a hunger strike, angry protesters are camped out on the lawns, and black players on the football team have vowed not to return to the field until Wolfe leaves his post.

All of this is in reaction to the failure of Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin to respond adequately to a series of racist incidents on campus beginning in September.

But Wolfe on Sunday again could not muster the necessary urgency.

In a written statement, he acknowledged that “change is needed.” But he then wandered into an explanation of “a systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy” that apparently will be announced in April.

April!

Graduate student Jonathan Butler, 25, is refusing food, putting his health and life at risk, precisely because Wolfe, Loftin and others responded to racist incidents on campus in bureaucratic, uncaring fashion. A strategic plan to be rolled out five months from now is not the decisive action required to quell the crisis.
A lone student refusing to eat doesn’t justify the removal of the president of a four-campus university system. But hundreds of students are supporting his cause, united loosely under the banner of a group called Concerned Students 1950. (The date marks the first year black students were allowed to matriculate at the University of Missouri.)

Those numbers now include the Missouri football team. Black players on Saturday announced they would not participate in practices or games until Wolfe vacates his office. Their action vaulted the campus unrest into a story commanding nationwide attention.

In a stunning lack of confidence in Wolfe’s ability to run the university system, head football coach Gary Pinkel and his staff announced they would stand with the players. Clearly, the problems on campus run deep and include a lack of respect for leadership.

Ugly incidents this school year include racial slurs directed to a black student who is president of the Missouri Students Association, racial epithets hurled at the Legion of Black Collegians as they rehearsed for a performance and the discovery of a swastika drawn with human feces in the restroom of a residence hall.

Confrontations between Wolfe and black students, including a standoff at MU’s homecoming parade and another in Kansas City on Friday night, have shown Wolfe appearing clueless about the students’ perspectives and how to respond.

The Columbia campus has other problems. Graduate students are worried about the removal of benefits. Some faculty and alumni are upset about Loftin’s decision to yield to political pressure and revoke university hospital admitting privileges for a doctor who also works for Planned Parenthood. Leadership changes at the medical school have not been adequately explained.

And at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, there is dissatisfaction with Wolfe’s muted response to a scandal resulting from leaders of the Henry W. Bloch School of Business submitting false data to pump up the school’s rankings.

Wolfe’s ability to lead the University of Missouri system is irreparably damaged. The university curators, who are appointed by the governor, need to recognize that and remove Wolfe immediately. Until they do, it is difficult to see how calm will be restored.

Regardless of the curators’ next move, Butler should discontinue his hunger strike. He has already achieved dramatic change at his university. Butler is a student leader whose
help will be needed in the months ahead. He must not continue to place his health and life at risk.

MU football players promise holdout to support campus protests


UPDATED (1:45 P.M.) UM System President Tim Wolfe is not stepping down, according to a statement he issued Sunday. In that release, Wolfe stated, "In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community."

Earlier Sunday, Missouri Football Coach Gary Pinkel tweeted out a photo of the football team together saying, "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players." When asked if that meant the football team stands with the movement, MU spokesman Chad Moller said, "You saw the tweet." The photo came after the Mizzou football team held a meeting this morning at the Missouri Athletic Training Complex.

Most Mizzou football players would not comment as they entered and left the Missouri Athletic Training Complex Sunday afternoon. However, tight end Jason Reese spoke on behalf of the players saying, "We all made this decision as a team to not talk to the media." Reese also said after the meeting, "I feel great. I love my team." Reese also said there was supposed to be practice today. When asked when practice will resume, Reese said, "Whenever this gets resolved."

Missouri Governor, Jay Nixon, weighed in on the issue releasing this statement late Sunday morning. "Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state. Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion."

UPDATED (10:06 P.M.): A Mizzou football spokesperson released this statement from the University of Missouri Athletic Department regarding the player protests:
"The department of athletics is aware of the declarations made tonight by many of our student-athletes. We all must come together with leaders from across our campus to tackle these challenging issues and we support our student-athletes right to do so.”

Below is tonight's original story:

COLUMBIA - Several University of Missouri football players tweeted their support of ongoing campus protests against racial injustice, promising to stop playing games until UM System President Tim Wolfe resigns.

Defensive players Anthony Sherrils and John Gibson III, both African-American, tweeted the message, along with a picture of several athletes standing with MU grad student Jonathan Butler. Butler started a hunger strike Monday in opposition to Wolfe's handling of "a collection of incidents" this year, including racist comments yelled at student body president Payton Head and Wolfe's handling of student protestors at the Homecoming parade. He said he would end his hunger strike when Wolfe resigned.

"The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe "Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere", a message accompanying the picture reads in Sherrils and others' tweets. "We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experiences. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!!"

MU football spokesman Chad Moller said the program was "working to get our hands around the facts of the situation."

Rhoades and Pinkel release statement regarding Mizzou protest involving football players


COLUMBIA - Mizzou Athletic Director Mack Rhoades and Football Coach Gary Pinkel released a statement Sunday afternoon saying, "Today, Sunday, there will be no football
practice or formal team activities. Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue. After meeting with the team this morning, it is clear they do not plan to return to practice until Jonathan resumes eating. We are continuing to have department, campus, and student meetings as we work through this issue and will provide further comment tomorrow afternoon.

The Mizzou football team is scheduled to speak with the media Monday at 3:30 p.m.

Football Players Join Protest Against UM System President Wolfe’s “Negligence”

Athletes of color on the University of Missouri's football team will no longer be participating in any “football related activities” until the President of the University of Missouri system, Tim Wolfe, either resigns or is removed from office “due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences.”

The message was shared on Twitter Saturday night by sophomore defensive back Anthony Sherrils. It was accompanied by a photo that showed Jonathan Butler, a student who is on day six of a hunger strike against Wolfe, standing in solidarity with the students of color on the football team.

The university's athletic department released a statement via Twitter in response to the black football players' strike.

An athletics department spokesman sent a statement from Mack Rhoades and Gary Pinkel to KBIA Sunday afternoon.

Today, Sunday, there will be no football practice or formal team activities. Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue. After meeting with the team this morning, it is clear they do not plan to return to practice until Jonathan resumes eating. We are continuing to have department, campus, and student meetings as we work through this issue and will provide further comment tomorrow afternoon.
Gov. Jay Nixon also released a statement:

Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state. Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion.

UM System President Responds to Protests

There was a rush of local and national media attention Sunday after the students of color on the Mizzou Tigers Football team’s Saturday announcement that they would not take part in any “football related activities” until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe either resigned or was removed from office due to his “negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences.”

On Sunday afternoon, a statement from President Wolfe was released by his office, but he did not make an in-person appearance.

The statement acknowledged that “change is needed” and that President Wolfe’s staff has been meeting “around the clock” to address the issues being brought to light by Concerned Student 1950, Jonathan Butler, a black graduate student on a hunger strike until Wolfe’s resignation, and, most recently, the football team’s announcement they will not be involved in football activities until action is taken.

Wolfe, in his statement, said that he is confident that all of campus can come together to improve the student experience on campus, if everyone came together and had “meaningful conversation that promotes change.”

John Fougere, a spokesperson for President Wolfe’s office, said the President acknowledges that racism is an issue on the University of Missouri campuses.

“We are talking about a problem that is systemic - it is pervasive - it is a societal problem and our campuses reflect society,” Fougere said.
He added the way for the UM campuses to move forward was to bring the entire campus community together – including leadership, students and faculty – and have them address the issue together.

“But we're only going to get there if we have this meeting,” Fougere said. “If we get around a table and to start having this conversation.”

Fougere said the President has actually included a system wide diversity inclusion strategy in his strategic goals.

“This has been something that has been a priority for the President long before the current crisis that we are in,” Fougere said.

According to Fougere, the President has met with the MSA board and with Concerned Student 1950 and Jonathon Butler twice, as well as other community leaders. Fougere also said the President “believes the way to address this is ongoing dialogue, which is something we crucially and critically need right now because that’s the only way we can begin to form solutions.”

Fougere added that the President wants to take on the problems of racism and tolerance, and promoting diversity and inclusion on the UM campuses.

“It can seem completely intractable, but the President believes that’s not an excuse,” Fougere said. “We have to try - we have to move the ball - we have to do whatever it takes. It’s an extremely difficult undertaking, but the President is confident that if we can begin to do that and have the frank conversations and the dialogue, it’s going to move us into a position where we are addressing this issue.”

In response to the increasing protests calling for his departure, University of Missouri system president Tim Wolfe issued a written statement Sunday afternoon defending his administration’s approach to diversity.

It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns. My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed.

In conjunction with campus representatives, the university began work on a systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy, plan and metrics for the University of Missouri System as part of my strategic goals (see 1.4.i of the System Strategic Plan) as approved by the Board of Curators in summer 2015.
Our due date for announcing the strategy was April 2016, having allowed for multiple stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, students, consultants) across the system to provide input into the plan.

The majority of items listed on the Concerned Student 1950 List of Demands were already included in the draft of the strategy. While the student list provides more detail and more specific metrics than had been established in the UM System plan, we had anticipated providing specificity and detail to the plan over the coming months.

In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community.

This is Wolfe's second statement in less than a week. On Friday, Nov. 6, Wolfe released an apology for his behavior toward the student activist group Concerned Student 1950.

Students react to MU football players' recent announcement

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=31366&zone=2,5&categories=2,5

COLUMBIA - There's mixed emotions floating through MU. Saturday night, a group of MU football players announced they are standing by #ConcernedStudent1950. Many other players soon followed.

But, not everyone on campus plans to follow this lead.

"This thing has escalated and escalated and has become kind of a storm of bad things happening," MU student Matt Hudson said. "But, in my opinion, I think it'd be best if people try to combat those racist people instead of people who aren't necessarily responsible for that."

Hudson said he wasn't really surprised at the players' decision. Still, he said he feels dealing with those directly responsible for recent racist events on MU campus would be more effective.
"In my opinion, [University of Missouri System President] Tim Wolfe is not responsible for drawing those things on the wall," Hudson said. "And, I think it will probably be better for everyone if we just try to get rid of those racist people instead of going after people in authority positions that don't necessarily have the power to change everything."

MU head football coach Gary Pinkel recently released a statement and photo on twitter. The tweet said, "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players."

Some MU students said they will continue to support their team as they always did.

"The athletics play a major part in the university, and their support is just as important as anyone else's," student Khawhyn Johnson said.

He said the athletes' decision "is exactly what the community needed" to become united.

"I just love to see things coming together, and we're finally fighting for change," Johnson said.

KOMU reached out to the lead activist group, #ConcernedStudent1950. The organization and other students are camping outside until Tim Wolfe resigns or is forced out. The group decided to refrain from any comments or reaction to the media.

A spokesperson said they are not allowing media inside the camp right now. She said the tents are still functioning as their "safe space".

They plan to release a full statement to the media when they are ready.

KOMU 8 News will update this story if we receive any response from #ConcernedStudent1950

University of Missouri president gives no indication of resignation

Watch story:
http://www.cbs.com/shows/cbs_this_morning/video/BR7ZPq5O2NI_4kcTfhtQi8XpA1UIyYkQW/mizzou-president-faces-pressure-to-resign-amid-racial-tension/

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- Student protests over racial incidents on the University of Missouri campus escalated over the weekend when at least 30 black football players announced they will not participate in team activities until the school's president is removed.
President Tim Wolfe gave no indication he has any intention of stepping down, but agreed in a statement Sunday that "change is needed" and said the university is working to draw up a plan by April to promote diversity and tolerance.

For months, black student groups have complained of racial slurs and other slights on the overwhelmingly white, 35,000-student campus. Their frustrations flared during the homecoming parade Oct. 10 when black protesters blocked Wolfe’s car and he would not get out and talk to them. They were removed by police.

On Saturday night, black members of the football team joined the outcry.

"The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe 'Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,'" the players said in a statement. "We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experience. WE ARE UNITED!!!!"

Missouri football head coach Gary Pinkel tweeted a statement of support for his players. The Tigers' next game is Saturday against BYU at Arrowhead Stadium, the home of the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, and canceling it could cost the school more than $1 million. The athletes did not say explicitly whether they would boycott the team's three remaining games this season.

Practice and other team activities were cancelled on Sunday, Pinkel and Missouri athletic director Mack Rhoades said in a joint statement. The statement linked the return of the protesting football players to the end of a hunger strike by a black graduate student who has vowed to not eat until Wolfe is gone.

"Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue," the statement said.

The statement from the players included a photograph of 32 black men, including Butler. In the photo, two players have their arms linked through his.

Around 150 protesters gathered on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia on Sunday night as part of ongoing demonstrations. Those gathered late Sunday near Jesse Hall prayed for the hunger-striking student, among other things. They also chanted, sang songs and read a Bible verse. Organizers at one point called student-athletes forward to lead a prayer.

At least 20 tents were set up, and many planned to camp out overnight amid temperatures that had dropped into the low 40s. Students huddled together, wrapped in blankets. Other stopped by the campsite to drop off food and other supplies. Two university police vehicles were parked nearby.

The protests at the campus began after the student government president, who is black, said in September that people in a passing pickup truck shouted racial slurs at him. Days before the homecoming parade, members of a black student organization said slurs were hurled at them by an apparently drunken white student.
Also, a swastika drawn in feces was found recently in a dormitory bathroom.

Butler, who participated in the homecoming parade protest, began his hunger strike on Nov. 2 to call attention to racial problems at the state's flagship university.

Many of the protests have been led by an organization called Concerned Student 1950, which gets its name from the year the university accepted its first black student. Its members besieged Wolfe's car at homecoming last month, and they have been conducting a sit-in on a campus plaza since last Monday.

The organization has demanded among other things that Wolfe "acknowledge his white male privilege," that he be removed immediately, and that the school adopt a mandatory racial-awareness program and hire more black faculty and staff.

One of the sit-in participants, Abigail Hollis, a black undergraduate, said the campus is "unhealthy and unsafe for us."

"The way white students are treated is in stark contrast to the way black students and other marginalized students are treated, and it's time to stop that," Hollis said. "It's 2015."

She said Wolfe has shown "much more of a lack of concern and much more of a lack of understanding for us" than other administrators.

On Sunday, Wolfe said most of the 1950 group's demands have already been incorporated into the university's draft plan for promoting tolerance.

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed," he said.

Already, at Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin's request, the university announced plans to require diversity training for all new students starting in January, along with faculty and staff.

In a Twitter statement on Saturday, the Missouri athletic department said it was aware of the statement by "many of our student-athletes."

Late Sunday, the university system's governing body, the Board of Curators, announced a special meeting had been set for Monday. A statement indicated part of the meeting will be closed to the public. A system spokesman didn't immediately respond to questions about the meeting's agenda.

Wolfe, 56, is a former software executive and Missouri business school graduate whose father taught at the university. He was hired in 2011 as president of a four-campus system that includes Columbia, succeeding another former business executive who also lacked experience in academia.

The campus in Columbia is about 120 miles west of Ferguson, the St. Louis suburb where tensions erupted over the shooting death of unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown last year by a white police officer.
The school's undergraduate population is 79 percent white and 8 percent black. The state is about 83 percent white and nearly 12 percent black.

It's the latest controversy at the university in recent months, following the suspension of graduate students' health care subsidies and an end to university contracts with a Planned Parenthood clinic that performs abortions.

Two graduate student groups have called for walkouts by graduate student workers on Monday and Tuesday in solidarity with the protesters.

Two years ago, Pinkel and his team made headlines after defensive end Michael Sam came out as gay. Sam came out to his teammates and coaches before the 2013 season, and they agreed to keep his secret until he was ready to go public.

Missouri won the SEC East title in 2013 and 2014 but is unranked this year with a 4-5 record.

University of Missouri system president becomes the focus amid protests at Mizzou

By Stephen Deere, Koran Addo

Nov. 9, 2015

COLUMBIA, MO. • He was a lifelong businessman — neither scholar nor politician — and at the time, the decision to hire Timothy M. Wolfe as University of Missouri system president seemed to make perfect sense. The country was stumbling out of a recession. Universities were scrambling to fill budget shortfalls. The Board of Curators needed someone to guide its four institutions through financial turmoil.

“The impression that faculty have I think is that Wolfe was brought in as the slashing funding guy,” said Karen Piper, a professor in the MU English department. “He was brought in as the corporate overseer who was going to make the hard cuts and then leave.”

But that was four years ago. No one had heard the names of Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Eric Garner or Michael Brown.

The nature of the nation’s unrest has changed.

And Wolfe, 57, finds himself navigating his flagship university through waters that are seemingly unfamiliar to him.
What began as modest protest at a homecoming parade about a month ago has intensified, prompting a hunger strike and promises from black football players to boycott all football-related activities until Wolfe resigns. Two graduate student organizations called for a walkout on Monday and Tuesday. The conflict, which is at the culturally charged intersection of race, politics and sports, is playing out on a national stage, eliciting statements from Missouri’s top politicians — some of whom have called for him to resign — and becoming the lead story for major news organizations.

Amid that backdrop, the Board of Curators will meet in closed session at 10 a.m. Monday in Columbia “for consideration of certain confidential or privileged communications with university counsel, negotiated contracts, personnel matters, and records protected from disclosure by law,” the board announced Sunday night.

The boycott by Mizzou’s football players was announced on Twitter on Saturday evening, when the university’s Legion of Black Collegians released a statement criticizing what the group described as Wolfe’s disregard for issues facing black students.

“We will no longer participate in any football-related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences,” the statement said.

Cornerback John Gibson III tweeted that the boycott “has nothing to do with our coaches. Our coaches are 100% behind us. Including the white ones.”

He deleted the tweet, but then on Sunday, following a 90-minute team meeting of Mizzou players and coaches, the team posed for a photo in the dining hall, with many teammates and staff members locked arm in arm. The photo was posted on coach Gary Pinkel’s Twitter account with the message: “The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players. #ConcernedStudent1950 GP”
The photo and message left more questions than answers. Pinkel was unavailable for comment.

‘COMPLEX MATTERS’

The University of Missouri Board of Curators hired Wolfe in 2011, citing his business acumen and strong ties to the area. He moved to Columbia as a fourth-grader and is a 1980 graduate of Mizzou’s business college. His career began in Jefferson City when he was hired as a sales representative for IBM, later serving as a manager in Kansas City. By the time he left the company, he was a vice president. Later, Wolfe spent four years with Covansys, a consulting firm, before moving to Novell, a multinational software firm, where he served as president.

The Board of Curators agreed to pay Wolfe $450,000 a year and up to $100,000 in bonuses, along with a $45,000 relocation incentive, a car and housing at Providence Point, the official home for the university president.

Some faculty expressed concern that he had only a bachelor’s degree.
Piper said that Wolfe’s tenure has been marked by wage freezes for faculty, except for a select few who receive “targeted” raises. She said it’s never been made clear why some receive pay increases and others don’t.

A series of events this semester — some involving race — have brought matters to a head.

In September, student body president Payton Head, who is black, posted an account on Facebook about how he was walking down a street when a group of men driving by yelled racial slurs at him.

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. They were met by chants of “M-I-Z-O-U” from white bystanders trying to shout down the protest.

Last week, Jonathan Butler, who is pursuing a master’s degree in educational leadership and policy analysis, promised to forgo all food and nutrition until Wolfe steps down.

Saturday night, Wolfe was confronted by students outside a fundraiser in Kansas City. A video of the confrontation shows a resigned-looking Wolfe talking to students as they prod him to give his definition of systematic oppression.

“I will give you an answer, and I’m sure it’ll be a wrong answer,” he said.

“Systematic oppression is because you don’t believe that you have the equal opportunity for success,” he added.

Students shouted at Wolfe, saying he was blaming them for injustice.

On Sunday, Wolfe issued a statement that was more conciliatory.

“It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns,” it said. “My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.”

‘NOT JUST ABOUT RACE’

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 — students 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.
“This is JUST not about race,” tweeted linebacker Clarence Green. “It’s about Grad students getting benefits and unity within the athletes and community.”

On Sunday, as the sun went down, roughly 50 students were occupying the Carnahan Quadrangle in protest, setting up tents and getting ready for the night.

Ruben Faloughi, a member of the Concerned Students 1950, named for the first year a black student was admitted to Mizzou, said the football players added a new dimension to the protests.

“Now we get to affect the university’s revenue stream,” he said.

About 7 percent of Mizzou’s 35,000 students are black. Several of them said that they endure racist behavior every day and are routinely threatened with violence.

“Black students do not feel comfortable walking through GreekTown,” Faloughi said.

Sandra Davidson, a professor who teaches communications law at the Missouri School of Journalism, said the scene of the tents was reminiscent of a protest in 1987, when shantytown protesters built ramshackle shanties on Francis Quadrangle to call attention to the university’s holdings and corporations doing business with South Africa’s apartheid government.

That resulted in 41 shantytown protesters being arrested for trespassing. Only one student went to trial, but won on the grounds that the quadrangle is a public forum.

“We have had students out at the forefront of controversial issues,” she said. “They won that one, both in their right to protest and the University of Missouri did divest. So it’s kind of déjà vu all over again.”

Dave Matter of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report.

UM System President Responds to Protests

By REBECCA SMITH & NATHAN LAWRENCE • 8 HOURS AGO

KBIA, Columbia, Mo. - There was a rush of local and national media attention Sunday after the students of color on the Mizzou Tigers Football team’s Saturday announcement that they would not take part in any “football related activities” until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe either resigned or was removed from office due to his “negligence toward marginalized students’ experiences.”
On Sunday afternoon, a statement from President Wolfe was released by his office, but he did not make an in-person appearance.

The statement acknowledged that “change is needed” and that President Wolfe’s staff has been meeting “around the clock” to address the issues being brought to light by Concerned Student 1950, Jonathan Butler, a black graduate student on a hunger strike until Wolfe’s resignation, and, most recently, the football team’s announcement they will not be involved in football activities until action is taken.

Wolfe, in his statement, said that he is confident that all of campus can come together to improve the student experience on campus, if everyone came together and had “meaningful conversation that promotes change.”

John Fougere, a spokesperson for President Wolfe’s office, said the President acknowledges that racism is an issue on the University of Missouri campuses.

“We are talking about a problem that is systemic - it is pervasive - it is a societal problem and our campuses reflect society,” Fougere said.

He added the way for the UM campuses to move forward was to bring the entire campus community together – including leadership, students and faculty – and have them address the issue together.

“But we're only going to get there if we have this meeting,” Fougere said. “If we get around a table and to start having this conversation.”

Fougere said the President has actually included a system wide diversity inclusion strategy in his strategic goals.

“This has been something that has been a priority for the President long before the current crisis that we are in,” Fougere said.

According to Fougere, the President has met with the MSA board and with Concerned Student 1950 and Jonathon Butler twice, as well as other community leaders. Fougere also said the President “believes the way to address this is ongoing dialogue, which is something we crucially and critically need right now because that’s the only way we can begin to form solutions.”

Fougere added that the President wants to take on the problems of racism and tolerance, and promoting diversity and inclusion on the UM campuses.

“It can seem completely intractable, but the President believes that’s not an excuse,” Fougere said. “We have to try - we have to move the ball - we have to do whatever it takes. It’s an extremely difficult undertaking, but
the President is confident that if we can begin to do that and have the frank conversations and the dialogue, it’s going to move us into a position where we are addressing this issue.”

In response to the increasing protests calling for his departure, University of Missouri system president Tim Wolfe issued a written statement Sunday afternoon defending his administration's approach to diversity.

It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns. My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed.

In conjunction with campus representatives, the university began work on a systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy, plan and metrics for the University of Missouri System as part of my strategic goals (see 1.4.i of the System Strategic Plan) as approved by the Board of Curators in summer 2015.

Our due date for announcing the strategy was April 2016, having allowed for multiple stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, students, consultants) across the system to provide input into the plan.

The majority of items listed on the Concerned Student 1950 List of Demands were already included in the draft of the strategy. While the student list provides more detail and more specific metrics than had been established in the UM System plan, we had anticipated providing specificity and detail to the plan over the coming months.

In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community.

This is Wolfe's second statement in less than a week. On Friday, Nov. 6, Wolfe released an apology for his behavior toward the student activist group Concerned Student 1950.
University of Missouri president Wolfe releases statement pledging work on race issues

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 1:25 pm

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe released a statement Sunday afternoon in response to growing calls for him to step down or be fired, but he stopped short of saying he'd leave his post over the growing controversy.

On Sunday night, the UM Board of Curators called a special meeting for 10 a.m. Monday. According to the posted meeting notice, the curators will talk about legal and personnel issues in a closed session before going into open session for the board chairman's report.

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns," Wolfe said in a statement distributed to reporters and posted on the UM System website. "My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

"Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed."

Wolfe said the university has been working on a strategy for promoting diversity and inclusion as one of its strategic goals. Much of the strategy addresses demands issued by the Concerned Student 1950 protest group, Wolfe said in the statement. He said the university had planned on providing details "over the coming months," with a full announcement in April. However, the statement gave no new timeline for the release of a specific diversity strategy.

"In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community," Wolfe said in the statement.

A woman read the statement aloud at Carnahan Quadrangle, where Concerned Student 1950 protesters have been camping since Monday to demand Wolfe's removal as president. Many shook their heads in disapproval as she read.

"He doesn't care if we die," one student said after the statement was read.

Jonathan Butler, a graduate student at the head of the protest movement, began a hunger strike on Monday, saying he would not eat as long as Wolfe stays on as president. Concerned Student
1950 takes its name from the year the first black student was admitted to the University of Missouri.

Butler said on Twitter that he was "extremely unsatisfied" by Wolfe's statement and said the president has no real plans for change.

Storm Ervin, who spoke on behalf of Concerned Student 1950 after the statement's release, said the group was disappointed in Wolfe's comments. Ervin said she does not think there is "any conscience" in Wolfe, and she is concerned for Butler's health.

"Tim Wolfe is not listening and that is an issue," Ervin said.

Butler has not eaten for nearly a full week, Ervin said. She said the protesters and supporters have been working to "feed him positive energy" and keep his spirits up as his body grows weaker.

Ervin said the protesters are not going anywhere until Wolfe is removed from his position. She said Wolfe is the leader of the system, and there will be no meaningful change until he leaves.

As the afternoon carried on, a steady stream of faculty, students and Columbia residents continued to drop off supplies for the protesters and assist them with tents and upkeep of the camping area. Ervin, who wore a gold Mizzou hooded sweatshirt, said the steady stream of support and the backing of the university's football team has helped lift the demonstrator's spirits.

Chancellor R. Bowin Loftin, who has visited the camp numerous times, stopped by to speak with protesters around 2:15 p.m. on Sunday. He declined to speak to reporters, but said MU administrators would issue a statement Monday.

Demands for Wolfe’s resignation or firing intensified over the weekend when football players posted on Twitter that black players on the team will not play until Wolfe is removed from his post. Coach Gary Pinkel indicated in a post on his Twitter account Sunday that he supports the players' actions.

The ongoing saga has drawn the attention of national and statewide media, with outlets such as ESPN and CBS News reporting about the football team’s boycott. Gov. Jay Nixon released a statement Sunday, though he did not call for Wolfe’s resignation.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill said in a statement Sunday that the board of curators should "send a clear message to the students at Mizzou that there is an unqualified commitment to address racism on campus."

“Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state,” Nixon said in the statement. “Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion.”
Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder, a Republican candidate for governor, said in a prepared statement that "Racism has no place in our public institutions," but the university can't be run by individuals making demands "or using extreme actions." He said the Board of Curators should be responsible for decisions governing the university.

Mary Ratliff, president of the Missouri NAACP, said she has received calls from the organization's national offices offering support and seeking information about the protests. She has not personally spoken with student leaders, she said, but intends to this week.

“I am hopeful a bunch of cool heads can prevail and meaningful negotiations start to take place,” Ratliff said.

Columbia First Ward Councilman Clyde Ruffin, pastor at Second Missionary Baptist Church, said he will visit the protesters this week. He was out of town last week as Butler began his hunger strike. He spoke with the leaders, who were reaching out for support from the Columbia community, he said.

“They have asked me to come pray with them,” Ruffin said. “I think the approach is getting attention because they refuse to be silenced.”

The task ahead is to find and remove the vestiges of racism from campus, Ruffin said.

“No matter what you do, racism will always be with us,” Ruffin said. “With each generation, you push it a little bit further away. Each generation has a responsibility to do that.”

Wolfe has been under intense scrutiny and criticism since he refused to address protesters at the Homecoming Parade in October. Protesters blocked his car during the parade to get him to address issues of racism on campus. Wolfe issued a statement Friday apologizing for not getting out of the car and engaging with protesters and also acknowledged that systematic oppression exists on campus, but protesters on campus Saturday night told the Tribune it didn’t change their minds.

Protesters also confronted Wolfe in Kansas City Friday night, his response to which has gone viral and drawn the ire of protesters, who took his comment to mean that he was blaming them.
University of Missouri president Wolfe releases statement pledging work on race issues

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 1:25 pm

University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe released a statement Sunday afternoon in response to growing calls for him to step down or be fired, but he stopped short of saying he'd leave his post over the growing controversy.

On Sunday night, the UM Board of Curators called a special meeting for 10 a.m. Monday. According to the posted meeting notice, the curators will talk about legal and personnel issues in a closed session before going into open session for the board chairman's report.

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns," Wolfe said in a statement distributed to reporters and posted on the UM System website. "My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

"Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed."

Wolfe said the university has been working on a strategy for promoting diversity and inclusion as one of its strategic goals. Much of the strategy addresses demands issued by the Concerned Student 1950 protest group, Wolfe said in the statement. He said the university had planned on providing details "over the coming months," with a full announcement in April. However, the statement gave no new timeline for the release of a specific diversity strategy.

"In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community," Wolfe said in the statement.

A woman read the statement aloud at Carnahan Quadrangle, where Concerned Student 1950 protesters have been camping since Monday to demand Wolfe's removal as president. Many shook their heads in disapproval as she read.

"He doesn't care if we die," one student said after the statement was read.

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1950 takes its name from the year the first black student was admitted to the University of Missouri.

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The ongoing saga has drawn the attention of national and statewide media, with outlets such as ESPN and CBS News reporting about the football team’s boycott. Gov. Jay Nixon released a statement Sunday, though he did not call for Wolfe’s resignation.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill said in a statement Sunday that the board of curators should "send a clear message to the students at Mizzou that there is an unqualified commitment to address racism on campus."

“Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state,” Nixon said in the statement. “Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion.”
Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder, a Republican candidate for governor, said in a prepared statement that "Racism has no place in our public institutions," but the university can't be run by individuals making demands "or using extreme actions." He said the Board of Curators should be responsible for decisions governing the university.

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Protesters also confronted Wolfe in Kansas City Friday night, his response to which has gone viral and drawn the ire of protesters, who took his comment to mean that he was blaming them.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UM President Tim Wolfe issues statement about MU protests

MISSOURIAN STAFF, 16 hrs ago
COLUMBIA — UM System President Tim Wolfe released the following statement Sunday afternoon:

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns. My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

"Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed.

"In conjunction with campus representatives, the university began work on a systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy, plan and metrics for the University of Missouri System as part of my strategic goals (see 1.4.i of the System Strategic Plan) as approved by the Board of Curators in summer 2015.

"Our due date for announcing the strategy was April 2016, having allowed for multiple stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, students, consultants) across the system to provide input into the plan.

"The majority of items listed on the Concerned Student 1950 List of Demands were already included in the draft of the strategy. While the student list provides more detail and more specific metrics than had been established in the UM System plan, we had anticipated providing specificity and detail to the plan over the coming months.

"In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex societal issues as they affect our campus community."
Wolfe's statement came a few hours after Gov. Jay Nixon commented on campus protests against racism.

"Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state," Nixon said in a statement.

Saturday afternoon, Missouri football's black players announced they would boycott football activities until UM System President Tim Wolfe is removed from office.

"We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experiences," the players announced Saturday in a tweet sent from the Legion of Black Collegians account.

Sunday morning, Missouri coach Gary Pinkel tweeted a picture of the football team with the caption: "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players. #ConcernedStudent1950 GP."

On Nov. 2, Butler sent a letter to the UM System Board of Curators saying he would not eat until Wolfe was removed from office, according to previous Missourian reporting.

Butler announced the hunger strike three weeks after Concerned Student 1950, a student activism group leading the protests, stopped Wolfe's car during the Homecoming Parade and a week after the group met privately with Wolfe.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: Missouri lawmakers call for UM System President Tim Wolfe to step down

ELISE SCHMELZER, Updated 9 hrs ago
COLUMBIA — Missouri lawmakers called Sunday afternoon for UM System President Tim Wolfe to step down in response to the escalating tension between student protesters and Wolfe's administration.

Rep. Steve Cookson, R-Poplar Bluff, and chairman of the Missouri House Committee on Higher Education, said the university system's reaction to the protests on campus are only the latest in a series of mistakes. He called Wolfe's reaction to the protesters' concerns about race relations on campus "callous."

"After all of this, it has become clear, that Mr. Wolfe can no longer effectively lead the University of Missouri System," Cookson said in an emailed statement.

"He should show leadership in his final official act and step aside, failing that the University of Missouri system Board of Curators should remove him.

"Without this common sense approach, it will be incumbent for the Governor and the General Assembly to come up with a plan to right the ship at this extremely important public asset."

Rep. Caleb Jones, R-Columbia, also called for Wolfe's resignation Sunday afternoon.

"The lack of leadership Mizzou has been dealing with for months has finally reached the point of being a national embarrassment," Jones told The Missouri Times. "It's time for a change in leadership and to start the healing process."

At about 9 p.m. Sunday, Assistant House Minority Leader Gail McCann Beatty, D-Kansas City, sent a statement on behalf of the House Democratic Caucus calling for Wolfe's resignation.
"Racism has deep roots at the University of Missouri, which was built by slave labor, barred black students from admission until 1950 and hasn’t always proven welcoming to minority students since that time," McCann Beatty said in a statement.

"Although history is immutable, a better future can be shaped if we are willing to take the difficult steps necessary to make it so."

She added:

"It has become increasingly clear in recent days that UM System President Tim Wolfe is not the person to tackle the university's racial problems and a build future for the institution that all Missourians can be proud of.

"For the good of the UM System, President Wolfe needs to step down without delay, and the Board of Curators must immediately address the demands of minority students."

Other public officials, including U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill and Attorney General Chris Koster, also commented on the campus unrest.

The statements came a day after Missouri football players announced they would not participate in any football-related activities until Wolfe resigns or is removed from office. The players made the decision in solidarity with MU graduate student Jonathan Butler, who is on a hunger strike until Wolfe is removed from office. Butler has not eaten since Nov. 2.

Butler made the decision to go on a hunger strike a few days after Wolfe refused to interact with students who stopped his car during the Oct. 10 Homecoming Parade to protest how the university has handled racial discrimination on campus.

A few weeks later the group of student protesters, called Concerned Student 1950, issued a list of demands including Wolfe's removal, an increase in the number of black faculty and staff and enforcement of mandatory racial awareness and inclusion training for students, faculty and staff.
Members of the group have camped out on Mel Carnahan Quadrangle in solidarity with Butler and promise to stay until Wolfe is out of office among other issues.

On Sunday, Wolfe released a statement that made no mention of an intention to leave office. In his statement, Wolfe said his administration is working on a "systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy" and will "share next steps as soon as they are confirmed."

"In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex societal issues as they affect our campus community," he said.

A few hours before Wolfe released his statement, Gov. Jay Nixon released a statement as well.

"Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state," he said. "Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion."

McCaskill, and MU alumna, issued a statement Sunday afternoon asking the Board of Curators, which can remove Wolfe from his position, to take a strong stand against racism.

"At this point, I think it is essential that the University of Missouri Board of Curators send a clear message to the students at Mizzou that there is an unqualified commitment to address racism on campus," she said. "As a graduate who cares deeply about Mizzou, I'm confident that my university can and will do better in supporting an environment of tolerance and inclusion."

Koster followed suit and also asked that the board condemn acts of racism on campus and quickly address future incidents.

"I also encourage the immediate formation of a task force to address issues raised by Concerned Student 1950, made up of student members, faculty representatives, and concerned citizens," he said in a statement.
Not all lawmakers who released statements were critical of Wolfe. Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder said in a statement that the "abhorrent acts of a dissident few" should not drive university policy," according to the statement.

"While I respect the right to peaceful protest and sincerely pray for the health and safety of all involved, I cannot ignore the necessity of law and order at our universities. Student concerns must be listened to and heard out. There is a process for that. However, our universities cannot be run by individuals making demands or using extreme actions.

"The Board of Curators is in place to make informed decisions and govern, and they must be free to do so. Otherwise, chaos ensues and no student is served by that."

Wolfe releases statement in response to MU student protest


COLUMBIA - **University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe has released the following statement in response to the protests of #ConcernedStudent1950, a group of students calling for him to step down. The protesters, who include hunger striker Jonathan Butler, say Wolfe has not responded quickly or strongly enough to racial tensions on MU's campus.**

Wolfe said:

"It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns. My administration has been meeting around the
clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.

Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses. We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed.

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Our due date for announcing the strategy was April 2016, having allowed for multiple stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, students, consultants) across the system to provide input into the plan.

The majority of items listed on the Concerned Student 1950 List of Demands were already included in the draft of the strategy. While the student list provides more detail and more specific metrics than had been established in the UM System plan, we had anticipated providing specificity and detail to the plan over the coming months.

In the meantime, I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community.

Wolfe releases statement, will not resign

“...I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community,” the statement read.

UM System President Tim Wolfe released a statement Sunday amid growing racial tensions on MU’s campus. He will not resign.

“It is clear to all of us that change is needed, and we appreciate the thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns,” the statement read. “My administration has been meeting around the clock and has been doing a tremendous amount of reflection on how to address these complex matters.”

Wolfe said the UM system began work on a “systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy” as part of his strategic goals, which the UM System Board of Curators approved this summer. The strategy will be announced April 2016.
He said most of the demands on Concerned Student 1950’s list were already included in the strategy draft, and that he would provide further details of the plan in coming months.

“Clearly, we are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses,” the statement read. “We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed.”

Pressure has escalated after a series of controversial events on campus this semester. On Monday, Nov. 2, graduate student Jonathan Butler began a hunger strike with the goal of Wolfe’s removal.

Butler tweeted his reaction to the statement:

An anonymous member of Concerned Student 1950 called Wolfe’s statement “heartbreaking.”

“Honestly, he can do all of the apologizing he wants,” the student said. “The culture that he has enabled here at the university and other universities at the UM system is frightening.”

A petition on change.org to remove Wolfe from office currently has more than 3,300 signatures.

Wolfe has been the system president since 2012. He grew up in Columbia and graduated from MU with a bachelor’s degree from the Trulaske College of Business.

Chairman of Committee on Higher Education calls for UM president's resignation

BY BEN PETERS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH 2015

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — With the Missouri football team and students expressing discontent with the University of Missouri System President, one Missouri lawmaker is also calling for the resignation of President Tim Wolfe.
Rep. Steve Cookson (R-Butler County) is the chairman of the Missouri House Committee on Higher Education, and says it has become clear that Wolfe can no longer effectively lead the University of Missouri System.

"All of these problems stem from the University of Missouri system slipping behind over the last few years in everything from faculty productivity, to fiscal health of several of the colleges, to national rankings," Cookson said in a release. "Since April 8th, the system has made national headlines for failing to protect the safety of female students on campus, the St. Louis campus purchasing a golf course weeks before announcing budget cuts, a failed attempt to build a third hospital in Columbia in the face of massive local opposition, a bungled handling of encouraging professors to run for state office, a now cancelled agreement with Planned Parenthood to facilitate abortions, the president of the system’s callous reaction to racial sensitivity issues which he has now apologized for, a highly embarrassing failed attempted firing of the Columbia campus chancellor, and now the events of this weekend".

"He should show leadership in his final official act and step aside, failing that the University of Missouri system Board of Curators should remove him.," Rep. Cookson said. "Without this common sense approach it will be incumbent for the Governor and the General Assembly to come up with a plan to right the ship at this extremely important public asset."

KRCG-TV (CBS) – Jefferson City, Mo.

UM System President meets with MU grad student on hunger strike

BY BEN PETERS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. — A MU grad student who is staging a hunger strike has met with the University of Missouri System President.

University of Missouri grad student Jonathan Butler met with President Tim Wolfe on Friday afternoon to discuss Butler’s concerns.

Butler said he wants Wolfe to quit because of his lack of leadership in certain aspects such as racial relations on all four campuses.
Butler says he will not eat until Wolfe has been removed from office or resigns.

Following the meeting, Chief Communications Officer John Fougere released the following statement from Wolfe:

Today I again had the opportunity to meet with MU graduate student Jonathan Butler who continues a hunger strike protesting the inequalities, inequities, and obstacles faced by students, faculty and staff at the University of Missouri. I am very concerned about Jonathan's health. His voice for social justice is important and powerful. He is being heard and I am listening. I am thankful for the leadership provided by him and the other student leaders in raising awareness of racism, injustice, and intolerance. This afternoon I also met with representatives of several student groups and I value their input and hear their voices.

Racism does exist at our university and it is unacceptable. It is a long-standing, systemic problem which daily affects our family of students, faculty and staff. I am sorry this is the case. I truly want all members of our university community to feel included, valued and safe.

I regret my reaction at the MU homecoming parade when the ConcernedStudent1950 group approached my car. I am sorry, and my apology is long overdue. My behavior seemed like I did not care. That was not my intention. I was caught off guard in that moment. Nonetheless, had I gotten out of the car to acknowledge the students and talk with them perhaps we wouldn't be where we are today. I am asking us to move forward in addressing the racism that exists at our university - and it does exist. Together we must rise to the challenge of combating racism, injustice, and intolerance.

Friday marks the fifth day of Butler's hunger strike.

Students supporting Butler and the group Concerned Student 1950 have camped out in tents on the MU campus.

Mizzou president meets with student staging hunger strike

November 06, 2015 4:33 pm  •  The Associated Press
COLUMBIA, Mo. — University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe met with a graduate student who is staging a hunger strike at the Columbia campus.

Wolfe met with Jonathan Butler and representatives of several student organizations Friday to discuss racism and other problems currently disrupting the university's Columbia campus. Wolfe called Butler an important voice for social justice and said he was concerned about Butler's health.

Butler began his hunger strike on Monday, saying he won't eat until Wolfe is removed from office.

Wolfe also apologized for not responding to protesting students who blocked his car during the Missouri homecoming parade to speak to him about their concerns. He said he was caught off guard at the time.

Butler did not immediately respond to an email request for comment on Friday's meeting.

Missouri Faculty to Walk Out in Solidarity With Students

The Concerned Faculty group at the University of Missouri is to begin a two-day walkout today in support of student activists who say the school has done too little to address their concerns about racism and racial intolerance on campus.

"We, the concerned faculty of the University of Missouri, stand in solidarity with the Mizzou student activists who are advocating for racial justice on our campus and urge all MU faculty to demonstrate their support by walking out on Monday November 9 and Tuesday November 10, 2015 along with other allies such as the Forum on Graduate Rights," according to a statement released late Sunday night by The Concerned Faculty group.

"Faculty will meet at the Carnahan Quadrangle starting at 10am and will be present throughout the day to respond to student questions in the form of a teach in. Students are encouraged to check email for information from their professors."

It's unclear how many staff, if any, plan to walk out at the Columbia, Missouri, campus.
The news comes as football players at the university said they won't participate in team activities until university President Tim Wolfe is removed from office, as the team's head coach, Gary Pinkel, tweeted in support of his players, "The Mizzou Family stands as one."

The ConcernedStudent1950 protest organization, which says it has represented every black student at the university since 1950, when the first black student was admitted, released a list of demands Oct. 20 that included Wolfe's removal, as a part of a protest over the way the university handles racial harassment.

Black graduate student Jonathan Butler started a hunger strike this week in support of the protest.

Gov. Jay Nixon weighed in Sunday, saying the "concerns must be addressed."

"Racism and intolerance have no place at the University of Missouri or anywhere in our state," he said. "Our colleges and universities must be havens of trust and understanding. These concerns must be addressed to ensure the University of Missouri is a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion."

The governing body of the University of Missouri system announced late Sunday that it is calling a special meeting for 10 a.m. Monday, and that part of the meeting may be closed to the public. According to the announcement, Missouri law allows the group to meet in a private "executive session" to discuss topics such as privileged communications with university counsel or personnel matters.

A statement from Wolfe on Friday said: "Today I again had the opportunity to meet with MU graduate student Jonathan Butler who continues a hunger strike protesting the inequalities, inequities, and obstacles faced by students, faculty and staff at the University of Missouri. I am very concerned about Jonathan’s health. His voice for social justice is important and powerful. He is being heard and I am listening. I am thankful for the leadership provided by him and the other student leaders in raising awareness of racism, injustice, and intolerance. This afternoon I also met with representatives of several student groups and I value their input and hear their voices.

"Racism does exist at our university and it is unacceptable," the statement said. "It is a long-standing, systemic problem which daily affects our family of students, faculty and staff. I am sorry this is the case. I truly want all members of our university community to feel included, valued and safe."

Wolfe also apologized for an incident during the school homecoming parade on Oct. 10, during which a protest group temporarily stopped the parade and, according to ABC affiliate KMIZ-TV, Wolfe's car allegedly bumped into one of demonstrators.

Besides Wolfe's removal, the group's list of demands includes a comprehensive racial awareness and inclusion curriculum and an increase of black faculty and staff to 10 percent by the academic year 2017-2018.
Wolfe said Sunday the university has begun work on a system-wide diversity and inclusion strategy.

"The majority of items listed on the Concerned Student 1950 List of Demands were already included in the draft of the strategy," he said.

"We are open to listening to all sides, and are confident that we can come together to improve the student experience on our campuses," Wolfe said. "We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change. We will share next steps as soon as they are confirmed."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

University of Missouri faculty call for class walkout amid protests, football team boycott

A faculty group at the University of Missouri called for professors and other staff to walk out of classes Monday and Tuesday in the latest protest against the university president's handling of a series of racially charged incidents.

USA Today reported that The Concerned Faculty urged its members to stage a teach-in at the plaza where dozens of the school's African-American students and their supporters have gathered for the past week.

"We, the concerned faculty of the University of Missouri, stand in solidarity with the Mizzou student activists who are advocating for racial justice on our campus and urge all MU faculty to demonstrate their support by walking out," said a statement from Elisa Glick, an associate professor and a spokeswoman for The Concerned Faculty. The Missouri Students Association expressed their support in a tweet late Sunday.

The latest actions came just over 24 hours after more than two dozen football players at the school drew national attention to the protests by announcing that they would not participate in team activities until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe is removed.
"The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe 'Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere,'" the players said in a statement. "We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experience. WE ARE UNITED!!!!!!"

It was not immediately clear what the football players' statement would mean for the university's next game Saturday against Brigham Young University. The game is scheduled to be played at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, and canceling it could cost the school more than $1 million.

Head football coach Gary Pinkel expressed solidarity on Twitter, posting a picture of the team and coaches locking arms.

Practice and other team activities were canceled Sunday, Pinkel and Missouri athletic director Mack Rhoades said in a joint statement. The statement linked the return of the protesting football players to the end of the hunger strike by Jonathan Butler, who began the effort Nov. 2 and has vowed to not eat until Wolfe is gone.

"Our focus right now is on the health of Jonathan Butler, the concerns of our student-athletes and working with our community to address this serious issue," the statement said.

The university's Board of Curators announced late Sunday that it would meet Monday at 10 a.m. CST. According to an agenda provided in the statement, part of the meeting will be closed to the public.

The statement says Missouri law allows the group to meet in a private "executive session" to discuss topics such as privileged communications with university counsel or personnel matters. A university system spokesman didn't immediately respond to questions by the Associated Press about whether the group would address Wolfe's status.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reported that the Concerned Student 1950 group and its supporters demonstrated for a sixth consecutive day Sunday against what they claim is an exclusionary culture toward minority students.

"Racism lives at the University of Missouri," one protester called out. "And so do we," the group called back in response.

At least 150 students gathered at the plaza Sunday night to pray, sing and read Bible verses, a larger crowd than on previous days. Many planned to camp there overnight amid temperatures that had dropped into the upper 30s.

The Associated Press reported that at one point Sunday afternoon, two trucks flying Confederate flags drove past the site, a move many saw as an attempt at intimidation. One of the sit-in participants, Abigail Hollis, a black undergraduate, said the campus is "unhealthy and unsafe for us."
"The way white students are treated is in stark contrast to the way black students and other marginalized students are treated, and it's time to stop that," Hollis said. "It's 2015."

Concerned Student 1950 has demanded, among other things, that Wolfe "acknowledge his white male privilege," that he be removed immediately, and that the school adopt a mandatory racial-awareness program and hire more black faculty and staff.

Wolfe hasn't indicated he has any intention of stepping down, but agreed in a statement Sunday that "change is needed" and said the university is working to draw up a plan by April to promote diversity and tolerance. He said that most of the group's demands have already been incorporated into the university's draft plan for promoting tolerance.

Already, at Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin's request, the university announced plans to require diversity training for all new students starting in January, along with faculty and staff.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reported that Wolfe was confronted outside a fundraising event in Kansas City Friday night by protesters who asked him to define systemic oppression. According to video of the encounter posted on Twitter, Wolfe responded that the students may not like his answer before saying, "Systematic oppression is because you don’t believe that you have the equal opportunity for success —"

That statement provoked anger from the protesters, one of whom asked "Did you just blame us for systematic oppression, Tim Wolfe?" as the president walked away.

The protests began after the student government president, who is black, said in September that people in a passing pickup truck shouted racial slurs at him. In early October, members of a black student organization said slurs were hurled at them by an apparently drunken white student. Recently, a swastika drawn in human feces was found in a dormitory bathroom.

Columbia is about 120 miles west of Ferguson, the St. Louis suburb where tensions erupted over the shooting death of unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown last year by a white police officer.

The school's undergraduate population is 79 percent white and 8 percent black. The state is about 83 percent white and nearly 12 percent black.

Lawmakers and elected officials began to weigh in Sunday. The chairman of a Missouri House higher education committee, Poplar Bluff Republican Rep. Steven Cookson, said in a statement that Wolfe "can no longer effectively lead" and should leave his post. Joining him in calling for Wolfe's resignation was Assistant House Minority Leader Gail McCann Beatty, the highest-ranking black member of that chamber.

Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon said the university must address the concerns so that the school is "a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion."
U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, a Missouri graduate, said the governing board needs to "send a clear message" to the students at the Columbia campus that they'll address racism.

The racial issues are just the latest controversy at the university in recent months, following the suspension of graduate students' health care subsidies and an end to university contracts with a Planned Parenthood clinic that performs abortions.

Latest on Missouri turmoil: University leaders set to meet

By The Associated Press

Nov. 9, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The latest on the protests and turmoil over racially charged incidents at the University of Missouri. All times local.

1 a.m.

Members of the governing body of the University of Missouri system are set for a special meeting amid ongoing protests over matters of race and discrimination at the system's flagship school.

The University of Missouri Board of Curators is to meet Monday at 10 a.m. on the system's Columbia campus.

According to an agenda provided in a statement announcing the meeting, part of the meeting will be closed to the public.

The statement says Missouri law allows the group to meet in a private "executive session" to discuss topics including privileged communications with university counsel or personnel matters.
A university spokesman didn't immediately respond to questions about whether the group would address the status of University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe. Wolfe has been the target of protests by students, including 32 black football players who announced they will not participate in team activities until he is removed. One black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

Wolfe has given no indication he intends to step down.

10:30 p.m.

Around 150 protesters have gathered on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia as part of ongoing demonstrations over matters of race and discrimination at the college.

For months, black student groups have complained of racial slurs and other slights on the overwhelmingly white campus, and they're now calling for President Tim Wolfe to step down. One black graduate student is on a hunger strike, and on Saturday night, black members of the football team joined the outcry.

Those gathered late Sunday near Jesse Hall prayed for the hunger-striking student, among other things. They also chanted, sang songs and read a Bible verse.

Organizers at one point called student-athletes forward to lead a prayer.

At least 20 tents were set up, and many planned to camp out overnight amid temperatures that had dropped into the low 40s. Students huddled together, wrapped in blankets.

Other stopped by the campsite to drop off food and other supplies.

Two university police vehicles were parked nearby.

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9:15 p.m.

Two graduate student organizations at the University of Missouri are calling for walkouts in solidarity with protesters who want the system president to resign.

The Steering Committee of the Forum on Graduate Rights and the Coalition of Graduate Workers called Sunday for the actions. The organizations say walkouts by student workers on Monday and Tuesday will send a message of support for protesters seeking the removal of President Tim Wolfe.
The group Concerned Student 1950 and black members of the football team are calling for Wolfe to step down over the way he has handled matters of race and discrimination at the flagship school of the four-campus system. One black graduate student is on a hunger strike. That student, Jonathan Butler, has also cited the removal of graduate student health care subsidies as a concern.

Wolfe has given no indication he intends to leave the position, but he issued a statement Sunday saying that "change is needed."

The graduate committee criticized Wolfe's statement, saying he and the administration are doubling down on "business as usual."

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7:30 p.m.

The governing body of the University of Missouri system has set a special meeting amid ongoing protests over the handling of matters of race and discrimination at the system's flagship campus.

The University of Missouri Board of Curators announced in a statement it will meet Monday at 10 a.m. on the system's Columbia campus.

According to an agenda provided in the statement, part of the meeting will be closed to the public.

The statement says Missouri law allows the group to meet in a private "executive session" to discuss topics such as privileged communications with university counsel or personnel matters.

A university system spokesman didn't immediately respond to questions about whether the group would address the status of University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe. Wolfe has been the target of protests by students, including 32 black football players who announced they will not participate in team activities until he is removed. One black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

Wolfe has given no indication he intends to step down.

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6:30 p.m.

The chairman of a Missouri House higher education committee says University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe should resign.

Poplar Bluff Republican Steve Cookson said in a statement Sunday that Wolfe "can no longer effectively lead" and should leave his post.
Cookson's statement came as student groups and black members of the football team are calling for Wolfe to step down over the way he has handled matters of race and discrimination at the flagship school of the four-campus system. One black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

The GOP lawmaker says the recent events are just the latest problem at the University of Missouri system, which he says has been "slipping behind over the last few years in everything from faculty productivity, to fiscal health ... to national rankings."

Wolfe has given no indication he intends to step down. But he issued a statement Sunday saying that "change is needed" and that the university is working to draw up a plan by April to promote diversity and tolerance.

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6:10 p.m.

New York Jets defensive tackle Sheldon Richardson says he's standing by the football players at his alma mater, the University of Missouri, who are calling for the resignation or removal of the school's president.

Speaking after the Jets' 28-23 victory over the Jacksonville Jaguars Sunday, Richardson said Tim Wolfe "does need to go" over his handling of recent racial incidents on campus. Richardson added that "some stuff happened back then when I was there," but he declined to provide specifics.

Richardson played two seasons at Missouri from 2011-12. He was suspended the first four games of this season for violating the NFL's substance abuse policy. He could face additional discipline from the league after he was charged with resisting arrest in Missouri in July after speeding. The case is pending.

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2:15 p.m.

U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill says the University of Missouri Board of Curators needs to "send a clear message" to the students at the Columbia campus that they'll address racism.

McCaskill, a graduate of the state's flagship campus, said in a statement Sunday that she's "confident my university can and will do better in supporting an environment of tolerance and inclusion."

Student groups and black members of the football team are calling for President Tim Wolfe to step down over the way he has handled matters of race and discrimination on the campus, and one black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

Wolfe said earlier Sunday that changes will come as part of a systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy that's due to be announced next April.
2 p.m.

A University of Missouri student who is one of the Concerned Student 1950 organizers says black and other minority students are treated differently than white students.

Abigail Hollis and others have been camping out in the heart of campus in protest since Monday.

Student groups and black members of the football team are calling for President Tim Wolfe to step down over the way he has handled matters of race and discrimination on the campus, and one black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

Hollis said while there have been issues with the campus' administration, there's been a "stark difference" between meetings with Wolfe and those with Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. She said Wolfe has shown a "lack of concern and ... understanding for us as marginalized students."

1:55 p.m.

University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe says changes will come to address racially charged incidents at the school as part of a systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy and plan that's due to be announced next April.

Wolfe said in a statement Sunday that it's clear "change is needed" and that he appreciates the "thoughtfulness and passion which have gone into the sharing of concerns."

He also says the majority of items that Concerned Student 1950 listed in their demands were in the strategy that's being worked on.

Student groups and black members of the football team are calling for Wolfe to step down over the way he has handled matters of race and discrimination on the campus, and one black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

1 p.m.

A former Democratic state lawmaker and former chairman of the University of Missouri's Board of Curators has defended President Tim Wolfe's campus leadership.
Student groups and black members of the football team are calling for Wolfe to step down over the way he has handled matters of race and discrimination on the campus, and one black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

Longtime lawmaker Wayne Goode said Wolfe is "one of the best managers I've ever worked with." Goode also said Wolfe has "very strong support on the board," though he declined to indicate whether he had spoken with anyone on the board or with Wolfe.

Wolfe, 56, is a former software executive and Missouri business school graduate who grew up in Columbia and whose father taught at the university.

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon says the University of Missouri must address concerns over "racism and intolerance."

The Democratic governor issued his statement on Sunday, a day after 32 black football players announced they will not participate in team activities until university President Tim Wolfe is removed.

Student groups have protested the way Wolfe has handled matters of race and discrimination on the campus in Columbia, and one black graduate student is on a hunger strike.

Nixon's statement says the concerns must be dealt with so that the school is "a place where all students can pursue their dreams in an environment of respect, tolerance and inclusion."

The verified Twitter account for Missouri football coach Gary Pinkel has posted a picture of the team and coaches locking arms.

It comes a day after 32 black football players announced that they will not participate in team activities until university President Tim Wolfe is removed.

The tweet posted Sunday reads: "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players. #ConcernedStudent1950 GP".

Student groups have protested the way Wolfe has handled matters of race and discrimination on the campus in Columbia.

It isn't clear whether the athletes' announcement will affect next Saturday's game at home against BYU.
MU Faculty to walk out of class Monday and Tuesday, plan a 'teach in'

MISSOURIAN STAFF, Updated 7 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — MU Faculty plan to walk out of class Monday and Tuesday in support of student activists.

Faculty also urged students to check their emails to hear more from professors, according to a news release.

It was unclear from the release, which was sent out at 11:40 p.m. Sunday, how many faculty plan to walk out.

"We, the concerned faculty of the University of Missouri, stand in solidarity with Mizzou student activists who are advocating for racial justice on our campus and urge all MU faculty to demonstrate their support by walking out on Monday, Nov. 9, and Tuesday, Nov. 10," the statement, sent out by Associate Professor Elisa Glick, said.

"Faculty will meet at the Carnahan Quadrangle starting at 10 a.m. and will be present throughout the day to respond to student questions in the form of a teach in," the statement said.

The statement encouraged students to "check email for information from their professors."
Graduate student groups urge walkout over race protest

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 6:49 pm

Two University of Missouri student groups are encouraging graduate student employees to walk out of their jobs Monday and Tuesday to show solidarity with a push for the university system president's ouster.

The Forum on Graduate Rights and the Coalition of Graduate Workers called for the walkout in a statement posted online Sunday. The groups said the walkout is meant to show solidarity with Concerned Student 1950 and its supporters. Concerned Student 1950 is a group of black students demanding that UM System President Tim Wolfe step down or be fired because of what they say is his lack of action to address racism on campus. The group's name refers to the year the first black student was admitted to MU.

"This step has not been taken lightly," the graduate student groups' statement said. "We have chosen to" walk out "because we believe an injury to any member of the campus community is an injury to us all, and that our fight against labor exploitation has common cause with campus fights against other forms of systemic inequality and oppression."

The Forum on Graduate Rights formed earlier this semester to advocate for better benefits for graduate student employees after administrators said they would end tuition waivers for some students and stop subsiding graduate student employee health insurance policies. MU has since backed down on those decisions, saying they would not be implemented immediately.

The Coalition of Graduate Workers is a separate but related group working to unionize graduate workers.

Graduate student Jonathan Butler has been on a hunger strike since Monday, saying he will not eat until Wolfe is no longer president. Black MU football players said Saturday they will not participate in football activities while Wolfe is still president.

Wolfe issued a statement Sunday that pledged further work to increase racial diversity and inclusion on campus.
Protesters use recruiting day to voice concerns about racism at MU

ELIZABETH SAWEY AND KELSIE SCHRADER, Nov 7, 2015

COLUMBIA — Hundreds of prospective students flooding MU on Saturday got a lesson in civic activism when members of Concerned Student 1950 protested by holding a "mock tour" and giving presentations on the recent history of racism on campus.

Families were eating lunch at the Plaza 900 dining hall around 11:45 a.m. when members of Concerned Student 1950 joined hands and marched through the dining hall.

After a pause, the group began a tour of MU’s campus. The activists recited racist incidents that have occurred at MU starting in 2010 with the dispersion of cotton balls on the lawn of the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center.

The protesters also mentioned an incident that occurred Friday evening in which two women reported they were called a racial slur outside of the MU Student Recreation Complex.

"Two black female students, including myself, were called the N-word by four white males while being recorded outside of the rec center. Fun fact: in 2005, our rec center ... was named the best recreational facility by Sports Illustrated," a member of Concerned Student 1950 said as she stood on a chair in Plaza 900. Concerned Student 1950 has not released the names of those members.

Maj. Brian Weimer of MU Police said the department was contacted last night about the incident, and an investigation is ongoing.

A video also was posted to Twitter Friday night in which University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe responded to confrontations by protesters outside the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City at a fundraising event.
LeAnn Stroupe, MU manager of visitor relations, called a meeting for MU Tour Team members early Saturday morning in anticipation of protests during the large recruiting day for MU, said a Tour Team coordinator, Nathan Blount.

The tour guides were encouraged to explain the events to the visitors and present them in a positive light, Blount said.

Tour guides told Blount later in the day that families and guides had "good, positive interactions" about the protests.

Tom, Mary and prospective student Amy Heffernan were in Memorial Student Union at the start of their campus tour when protesters gave their first presentation, which consisted of voicing concerns and telling stories about racism on campus.

"I thought it was good that they were speaking up," Amy Heffernan said.

"They have their right to speak out," Mary Heffernan added.

Amy Heffernan said she wasn't deterred from MU because of the protesters. Some observers questioned the impact, though.

"I don't think it's a good look for the school," MU freshman Emily Peters said. "There's visitors coming in and seeing that."

Campus tour by Concerned Student 1950 from Columbia Missourian on Vimeo.

The Concerned Student 1950 group marched from Plaza 900 to Rollins dining hall where an estimated 100 Girl Scouts ate on their lunch break from the "Magic of Chemistry" program.

"Most parents I know of thought it was inappropriate at the time, but I'm pretty sure (the protesters) didn't know the kids were going to be there," said Jordan Yolich, an MU sophomore.
Concerned Student 1950 linked arms in solidarity as they moved from the Rollins dining hall to the Black Culture Center for a prayer. They then marched to the MU Student Center and stopped at the protest campsite on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle for water and snacks.

"Hey hey, ho ho, Tim Wolfe has got to go," the group chanted as they moved from the campsite to Mark Twain dining hall.

The Concerned Student 1950 mock MU tour passed through Mark Twain Hall and then moved to the Griffiths Leadership Society for Women in the Reynolds Alumni Center, where the group received a round of applause and support.

Concerned Student 1950 recited a prayer outside the Alumni Center. The words were a prayer often recited in protest by Jonathan Butler, who is in the sixth day of his hunger strike to remove University of Missouri Systems President Tim Wolfe from his position.

"It is our duty to fight for our freedom, it is our duty to win, we must love and support each other, we have nothing to lose but our chains," the group chanted.

MU grad students plan solidarity walkout
BY BEN PETERS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. — University of Missouri graduate student workers have been asked to participate in a walkout on Monday and Tuesday.

In a statement released late Sunday afternoon, the Steering Committee of the Forum on Graduate Rights, working with the Coalition of Graduate Workers, said they are outraged by President Tim Wolfe's statement issued on Sunday.
They say that, in the statement, Wolfe and the University of Missouri System administration doubled-down on "business as usual" as the path forward for the campus.

So, they have asked graduate workers to walk out Monday, November 9th, and Tuesday, November 10th.

They say they will stand in solidarity with their fellow anti-racism activists on campus, and that any injury to one is an injury to all.

The move takes place along with a number of controversies including race and discrimination issues, the removal of graduate students’ health care subsidies and an end to university contracts with a Planned Parenthood clinic.

The Coalition of Graduate Workers has been demanding better pay, a long-term insurance solution and full tuition waivers for all graduate assistants, and are discussing unionizing.

This all began after MU decided grad students would no longer receive health insurance subsidies because of an IRS interpretation of the Affordable Care Act, which they later took back.

The groups urge grad students to also get involved with future demonstrations, which they say they will announce through social media.

MU graduate student workers plan walkouts Monday, Tuesday

Watch story: http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=31368&zone=5&categories=5

COLUMBIA - MU graduate student workers are planning walkouts on Monday and Tuesday to support anti-racism activists at the University of Missouri.

This decision comes after Tim Wolfe released his statement in response to a series of student protests.
The Steering Committee of the Forum on Graduate Rights with the Coalition of Graduate Workers said it is "outraged" with how Tim Wolfe and the UM System administration treated recent protests on MU’s campus.

The committee said the "administration doubled-down on 'business as usual' as the path forward for our troubled campus."

The committee said this step to walkout has not been taken lightly and believes "any injury to any member of the campus community is an injury to all."

The committee also said "our fight against labor exploitation has common cause with campus fights against other forms of systematic inequality and oppression."

MU’s history department released a statement Sunday night via Twitter saying: "We therefore support our students' efforts to address these problems. We are concerned with their safety and wellbeing and stand ready to work with them as well as faculty, staff, and administrators to turn the University of Missouri into a more tolerant, respectful and inclusive institution."

This is not the first walk out graduate students have partaken in this year.

In August, MU announced it would stop health insurance subsidies for all graduate students.

Following the reinstatement of graduate insurance, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin apologized, saying the university’s sudden announcement it was going to drop the subsidies was 'insufficient.'

Graduate students walked out of classes to show they think the university's policies still have yet to be fully resolved, following the reinstatement of their insurance.

The committee said "removing Tim Wolfe will not be the end of our fight, and we will continue to organize as workers to ensure a more equitable University community."

A group called "Concerned Faculty" is urging both students and faculty to meet at Carnahan Quadrangle Monday at 10 a.m. to respond to any questions.

The committee will release demonstration plans for Monday and Tuesday on social media.
Hunger strike support continues to grow at MU

BY EMILY THORNBURG SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH 2015

"We had one red tent, a single red tent, and since that single tent, we have about twenty tents, Imagine how I feel," original Concerned Student 1950 member Ayanna Poole.

A feeling that comes after a group called Concerned Student 1950 started a protest that has since gained national attention.

"To see everything we've worked so diligently at come to this is very beautiful, the support system has grown tremendously," Poole said.

Protesters have been camping out on the University of Missouri's Carnahan Quad for seven days now.

Their efforts are in conjunction with MU graduate student Jonathan Butler who began his hunger strike Monday.

Butler, along with supporters, are asking for the resignation of UM System President Tim Wolfe. Butler said he will not eat until Wolfe is removed or resigns.

Butler stated: "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"

Although we could not reach Butler today, we spoke with him Wednesday. "You signed on to protect my life and to help me and every other student to get a quality and excellent learning experience and right now he's not doing that," Butler said.

Butler has been using social media to update everyone on how he is doing.

Although their efforts are now making national headlines, Poole said this has been an issue for awhile.

"We've been sending him emails, sending him letters, we've been trying to talk to him because the racial climate on campus has been rising," Poole said.

During the MU homecoming parade members of Concerned Student 1950 stopped Wolfe's vehicle.

Poole said this was an attempt to make him aware of what has been going on.

"This is what's happening on your campus we don't know why you don't know, but we're going to make you listen in this moment,"Poole said.

In a statement Friday Wolfe said he regretted his actions at the parade:
"I am sorry, and my apology is long overdue. My behavior seemed like I did not care. That was not my intention"

Wolfe met with Butler Friday and said he is concerned with Butler's health

In a statement he said: "Racism does exist at our university and it is unacceptable"

In light of the latest news with MU football players choosing to support the strike, Wolfe released a statement Sunday afternoon:

"I am dedicated to ongoing dialogue to address these very complex, societal issues as they affect our campus community."

University of Missouri Student Body President Payton Head is also calling for Wolfe's resignation. Payton said he is disappointed in Wolfe's lack of leadership.

"Someone who doesn't understand the student body in which they represent which is a larger issue when we're even having the conversations about racism, sexism, homophobia, all of this kind of stuff is looking like on this campus," Head said.


NOVEMBER 9, 2015

AP News in Brief at 5:58 a.m. EST

The Associated Press

University of Missouri sees renewed calls for president's ouster after football team weighs in

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Long-simmering protests at the University of Missouri over matters of race and discrimination got a boost over the weekend when at
least 30 black football players announced they will not participate in team activities until the university system's president is removed.

For months, black student groups have complained of racial slurs and other slights on the overwhelmingly white, 35,000-student flagship campus of the four-college system. Frustrations flared during a homecoming parade Oct. 10 when black protesters blocked system President Tim Wolfe's car and he would not get out and talk to them. They were removed by police.

On Saturday night, black members of the football team joined the outcry. By Sunday, a campus sit-in had grown in size, graduate student groups planned walk outs, politicians began to weigh in, and a special meeting of the university system's governing body was set for Monday morning in Columbia.

Wolfe hasn't indicated he has any intention of stepping down, but agreed in a statement Sunday that "change is needed" and said the university is working to draw up a plan by April to promote diversity and tolerance.

The athletes did not say explicitly whether they would boycott the team's three remaining games this season. The Tigers' next game is Saturday against Brigham Young University at Arrowhead Stadium, the home of the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, and canceling it could cost the school more than $1 million.

Racial tension continues at University of Missouri

Demonstrations at Traditions Plaza on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia continued on Sunday. The students, and now a majority of the Missouri football team, are demanding that Tim Wolfe, the president of the Missouri university system, step down or be fired for what they say is a lack of response to a series of racial incidents at the university.

Watch the story: http://www.kansascity.com/sports/college/sec/university-of-missouri/article43713492.html
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Racial climate at MU: A timeline of incidents so far this fall

EMMA VANDELINDER, Nov 6, 2015

COLUMBIA — The racial climate at MU has been tumultuous for months, but with recent events — including a hunger strike undertaken this week by a graduate student and campus activist — conversation and action has hastened. Here’s a chronological look at the key incidents since September that have led to a recent escalation of tension on campus:

Sept. 12: Missouri Students Association president Payton Head posts about a racial slur directed at him.

Payton Head, MU senior and president of MSA, renewed the dialogue about racism and the racial climate on campus after publishing a Facebook post about his first-hand experience with racism. The night before, Head said he was walking around campus when the passenger of a pickup repeatedly shouted the “N-word” at him.

Head’s statement went viral on social media, and many people shared their support of Head and frustration with MU’s response, or lack thereof, to his post.

“I’d had experience with racism before, like microaggressions, but that was the first time I’d experienced in-your-face racism,” Head told a Missourian reporter.

Oct. 5: Legion of Black Collegians members are the targets of racial slurs by a man on campus.

Another instance of racism brought the racial climate on campus again to the attention of students and administrators.

The Legion of Black Collegians shared a letter on social media describing the group’s encounter with overt racism the night before. The group was rehearsing for a performance at Traditions
Plaza when a “young man” talking on his cellphone walked up to the group. After being politely and repeatedly asked to leave, the man walked away but referenced LBC members using racial slurs.

That same day, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin responded with a post of his own, acknowledging and condemning racism at MU.

“There was a silence that fell over us all, almost in disbelief that this racial slur in particular was used in our vicinity,” Naomi Collier, president of MU’s NAACP chapter and member of the LBC’s activities committee, wrote in the letter.

**Oct. 8: Loftin announces mandatory online diversity training for faculty, staff and students, which is met with widespread skepticism.**

The training came after a number of accounts of overt racism experience by students on campus, but was met with skepticism and suspicion.

Jonathan Butler, MU graduate student and campus activist, wrote a letter to Loftin saying the training was “a step in the right direction, but it is not enough.”

**Oct. 10: Members of Concerned Student 1950 protest during the MU Homecoming Parade, blocking a car carrying UM System President Tim Wolfe.**

Concerned Student 1950 refers to the year African-American students were first admitted to MU. The group targeted Wolfe’s car during Homecoming to send the message that students will not be ignored by administrators on the issue of discrimination on campus.

“We’ve sent emails, we’ve sent tweets, we’ve messaged but we’ve gotten no response back from the upper officials at Mizzou to really make change on this campus,” Butler said afterward.

The protesters blocked the street and Wolfe’s car for about 15 minutes, chanting and making speeches, until they were dispersed by police. Some students watching the parade also joined in on the protest in support. No protesters were arrested for disturbing the parade.
“I joined in the line because white silence is compliance, like what they were yelling in the Student Center. I feel like I can’t just sit by and watch. It’s not my fight, but I support it,” MU undergraduate Breanne LoPresti told a reporter.

Oct. 21: Concerned Student 1950 issues a statement of demands, including a formal apology from Wolfe and his removal from office.

Ten days after the Homecoming protest, the group issued the statement with eight demands, including enforcement of mandatory racial awareness and inclusion training for all faculty, staff and students; an increase in the percentage of black faculty and staff; and an increase in funding to hire mental health professionals for the MU Counseling Center, particularly those of color; and more staff for social justice centers on campus.

A number of groups showed their support for the sentiment, including the Department of Black Studies, the Department of Classical Studies and the School of Health Professions.

Oct. 24: A swastika using human feces is drawn on a bathroom wall in MU’s Gateway Hall

The vandalism, reported by the Residence Halls Association, was described as "an act of hate." The vandalism was reported immediately to the MU Police Department and an investigation initiated, but no one has been apprehended to date.

Oct. 27: Concerned Student 1950 meets with Wolfe, but no issues are resolved.

Members of the group said Wolfe did not agree to any of the demands they sent to him the previous week. In the meeting, Wolfe said he cared for black students at MU but was "'not completely' aware of systemic racism, sexism, and patriarchy on campus," according to a statement by Concerned Student 1950.

Morning of Nov. 2: Jonathan Butler announces he will go on a hunger strike until Wolfe is removed from office.

Butler said his decision was made a few days after student protesters interrupted the Homecoming Parade in October.
To prepare for the strike, he reduced his food intake and researched how his body would react. He updated his will and spoke to a physician.

As of Friday, Butler had gone five days without food.

Butler said the demand for Wolfe’s removal from office was made because of the president's failure to respond sincerely and actively to student concerns about discrimination on campus. Butler has continued his daily life during the strike, working and attending his classes.

“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 wrote in a letter to the UM System Board of Directors.

**Evening of Nov. 2: Students camp on Carnahan Quadrangle in support of the hunger strike and Wolfe's removal from office.**

One Concerned Student 1950 representative said student activists will stay until the semester ends in December, if that’s what it takes.

**Nov. 3: Concerned Student 1950 and supporters meet with Wolfe and Loftin near University Hall to discuss race relations and discrimination.**

The Forum on Graduate Rights, an activist group dedicated to improving the state of graduate student employees at MU, called for the gathering and made a statement supporting Jonathan Butler and his hunger strike.

“JB (Butler) is our colleague, our fellow activist and our friend,” said Eric Scott, co-chair of the Coalition of Graduate Workers, a part of the Forum on Graduate Rights. “We want him to live a happy and healthy life, and you (Wolfe) have the power to resolve this, and we urge you to use it.”

Wolfe responded to students’ comments by saying racism is unacceptable, he is committed to combating it on campus and his actions will support his words. Student activists were not
convinced and continued to press Wolfe for answers. Loftin did not make a statement, but was present for the duration of the meeting.

**Evening of Nov. 3: Concerned Student 1950 decides to boycott MU services until Wolfe is removed from office.**

The boycott was announced Wednesday and officially began Thursday. The group is using the hashtag #BoycottUM to promote the boycott of merchandise, retail dining services and ticketed events. The group began using a website called Change.org to hold a petition to remove Wolfe from office.

“We are boycotting spending money at the Student Center, we are boycotting football games — anything that brings the university extra money, until everything is resolved. If you can’t listen to our voices, you can’t have our dollars," said Storm Ervin, Concerned Student 1950 representative, in an interview.

**Nov. 5: Concerned Student 1950 holds a demonstration on campus before the MU-Mississippi State football game.**

About 200 members and supporters of Concerned Student 1950 participated in the demonstration, marching through campus and chanting “Join us in the revolution." Participants were urged to identify themselves only as “Concerned Student.” At Speaker's Circle, the group reiterated its demand for UM System President Tim Wolfe’s removal.

The same day, Payton Head posted on Twitter a slideshow of images of racist comments he said were made by MU students, and Chancellor Loftin responded: "Sad to see more hate speech hiding behind anonymity. Racism, bias, discrimination have no place here."

**Evening of Nov. 5: Students reschedule a football game protest for Monday, citing security reasons.**

Members of Concerned Student 1950 planned to hold the protest after Missouri’s football game Thursday night. Nearly 100 protesters gathered in the basement of the MU Student Center that night, but decided the circumstances — mixing with “drunk white people” after the Tigers’ loss — could lead to an unsafe protest. Details about Monday's protest have not been announced.
Nov. 6: Wolfe issues an apology for his action and inaction during the Homecoming protest.

In the statement, he said he was very concerned for Jonathan Butler's health and acknowledged that racism at the university exists and is unacceptable.

"I regret my reaction at the MU homecoming parade when the ConcernedStudent1950 group approached my car," the statement read. "I am sorry, and my apology is long overdue. My behavior seemed like I did not care. That was not my intention. I was caught off guard in that moment. Nonetheless, had I gotten out of the car to acknowledge the students and talk with them perhaps we wouldn’t be where we are today."

"I am asking us to move forward in addressing the racism that exists at our university — and it does exist. Together we must rise to the challenge of combating racism, injustice, and intolerance."

Evening of Nov. 6: Protesters confront Wolfe in Kansas City

Student protesters with the group Concerned Student 1950 from both MU and the University of Missouri Kansas City met Wolfe outside a fundraiser at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City. One student released a video in which the UM System president responds to the question, "Tim Wolfe, what do you think systematic oppression is?"

Wolfe says, "It's — systematic oppression is because you don't believe that you have the equal opportunity for success — "

The crowd of students reacts negatively, and the chatter is mostly inaudible.

Someone in the crowd yells, "Did you just blame us for systematic oppression, Tim Wolfe? Did you just blame black students — " before the video cuts off.

Nov. 7: Concerned Student 1950 holds demonstration in front of MU prospective students
A group of students holds a "mock tour" of campus featuring a presentation on the recent history of racism on campus. Protesters marched through dining halls and campus hubs on Meet Mizzou Day, a large campus recruiting event.

The MU Tour Team was warned about the possibility of protests in the wake of the video that surfaced the previous evening.

**Nov. 7: Black MU football players plan to boycott**

"We will no longer participate in any football related activities until President Tim Wolfe resigns or is removed due to his negligence toward marginalized students' experiences," the players announced in a tweet sent from the Legion of Black Collegians account.

Sixty of the 124 players on the MU football team are black, but it was unclear as of Saturday night how many of the players agreed to participate in the boycott.

**Nov. 8: MU football team unites behind black athletes; officials, others issue statements**

Football coach Gary Pinkel tweeted a photograph Sunday morning showing him and nearly 100 players and assistant coaches — black and white — at the team's training complex. "The Mizzou Family stands as one," the tweet read. "We are united. We are behind our players. #ConcernedStudent1950GP"

UM System President Tim Wolfe issued a statement Sunday morning expressing hope that all sides could get together and resolve the matter. He also said he was dedicated to ongoing dialogue. Jonathan Butler tweeted almost immediately that he was "extremely unsatisfied and (the president) has no true plan for change."
Former MU student requested removal of photo from admissions website in solidarity with Concerned Student 1950

“I refuse to allow a picture of me to be used for marketing purposes by the University of Missouri until Tim Wolfe is removed from office,” Singh said in a press release. “I will not be the one brown kid on your website while Mizzou continuously disregards the lives of people of color.”

Former MU Student Ankur Singh requested the removal of his photo from the MU Admissions website in solidarity with the Concerned Student 1950 movement.

“I refuse to allow a picture of me to be used for marketing purposes by the University of Missouri until Tim Wolfe is removed from office,” Singh said in a news release on Sunday, Nov. 8. “I will not be the one brown kid on your website while Mizzou continuously disregards the lives of people of color.”

MU first used the photo of Singh along with an article after he released a documentary in 2013. Singh has since transferred to Prescott College in Arizona after attending MU for two semesters, but the photo was used on the admissions website until early Nov. 8. when Singh was notified via email that the photo was removed.

“I’ve been watching the Concerned Student 1950 stuff online from Arizona and I’m just trying to think really hard what I can do as a former Mizzou student to help support,” Singh said. “Then I realized that my photo was still on the website and so taking it down was something I wanted to do because I didn't want to be part of the marketing for Mizzou when it’s actively ignoring the concerns of students of color.”

Singh said he felt marginalized during his time on campus for both his racial identity and his mental health. He said the main reason he transferred was the inadequate mental health services offered on campus.

“I don’t think the mental health aspect of it is separate from race,” Singh said. “I think the race part of it contributed to my mental health at the time just (by) being different and feeling outcasted.”

Singh said he relates to the sentiments of Concerned Student 1950 members because he often experiences discrimination based on his racial identity.

“Growing up in the U.S., being brown is hard to do, especially after 9/11,” Singh said, “When I went to school, I would always be called a terrorist and kids would make fun of me, thinking I had a bomb in my backpack.”
Racism is a problem at Prescott College as well, Singh said. Those issues made him more sympathetic toward Concerned Student 1950.

“At my school, we’re also trying to do some stuff to make color more prominent,” Singh said. “I wanted to figure out a way to support the Mizzou movement from here.”

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Racially charged incidents at the University of Missouri have led to numerous protests, a hunger strike by a graduate student and at least 30 black football players announcing they are on strike — with all of them calling for the president of the four-campus system to be removed.

Here's a look at the situation:

WHAT'S NEW

The treatment of minorities has been the focus at the state system's flagship campus in Columbia, and campus groups, including one called Concerned Student 1950, that have been protesting the way President Tim Wolfe has handled matters of race and discrimination. The 35,000-student population is overwhelmingly white.

The football players issued a statement aligning themselves with campus groups, and on Sunday, coach Gary Pinkel expressing solidarity on Twitter by posting a picture of the team and coaches locking arms. His tweet read: "The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players."

Wolfe responded to the criticisms Sunday, saying that it "is clear to all of us that change is needed" and adding that his administration has been "meeting around the clock" to address the issue. The statement, however, made no mention of Wolfe resigning.

THE BACKGROUND
The protests began early in the semester after Missouri's student government president, who is black, said he was called a racial slur by the occupant of a passing pickup truck while walking on campus. Days before the Oct. 10 homecoming parade, members of the Legions of Black Collegians said racial slurs were directed at them by an unidentified person walking by. And a swastika drawn in feces was found recently in a dormitory bathroom.

THE MAJOR PLAYERS

Wolfe, a former software company executive and 1980 Missouri graduate, began leading the four-campus system in February 2012.

Concerned Student 1950 draws its name from the year the university accepted its first black student, and has demanded, among other things, that Wolfe "acknowledge his white male privilege" and that he be removed immediately, as well as that the school adopt a mandatory racial-awareness program and hire more black faculty and staff members.

Jonathan Butler, a black graduate student, began a hunger strike Monday. An organizer with Concerned Student 1950 said Sunday that Butler's body is "reacting as anybody's body would" after a week.

WHAT'S NEXT

The university system's governing body, the Board of Curators, has set a special meeting for Monday morning.

The issue is also expected to be a major source of questions Monday during Pinkel's weekly news conference. Football players are routinely available to the media after Pinkel speaks.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

FROM READERS: MU faculty member shares stories of racism

CYNTHIA FRISBY/MISSOURIAN READER, 15 hrs ago

_Cynthia Frisby is an associate professor in the Missouri School of Journalism. This is excerpted from a post on her Facebook page._
I have lived in Columbia and been at the university for almost 18 years. During this time, I have been called the n-word too many times to count.

My most recent experience was while jogging on Route K in May of 2015 when I was approached by a white man in a white truck with a Confederate flag very visible and proudly displayed.

He leaned out his window (now, keep in mind I run against traffic, so his behavior was a blatant sign that something was about to happen). Not only did he spit at me, he called me the n-word and gave me the finger.

Of course, I responded with, "Oh yea, get out of your car, you coward, and say that to my face." He then raced off. Typical. After the Zimmerman trial, I wrote about my experiences being called the n-word twice while I was on my jog. And yes, I have had a few faculty call me the n-word and treat me with incredible disrespect. Yes, faculty.

I have had a student who said he couldn't call me Dr. Frisby because that would mean that he thinks I am smart, and he was told that blacks are not smart and do not earn degrees without affirmative action. Yes, true story. I have so many stories to share that it just doesn't make sense to put them all here.

What I am responding to is the frequent question I have been asked all week: How have I endured these many hateful experiences for over 17 years, and why am I still here?

I endured because God allows me to see the good and cup half full. I endured because I know my life is in God's hands, and I do not walk alone. I endured because I find these to be teachable moments that I use in my classroom with my students. I endured (or better yet endure) because I have an amazing support system.

I endure because there are far too many of my white friends that have a heart of gold, love people of any color with a passion and who have a strong trust in and love for the Lord. I endure because I have friends who are white and daily show me that there are people who can hurt when
I do and who sincerely want to make this culture a better place. I endure because I look to the Lord to help me grow and be the best person I can be.

I endure because I CHOSE AND CHOOSE to endure and overcome, and I choose to overlook ignorance. Choosing to overlook these idiots doesn't make me a "sell-out" or an Uncle Tom. I choose to endure because my mom and civil rights leaders taught me to never run but stand straight, tall and do not run.

Racism is alive, and it's everywhere. I endure because what I have gone through is nothing like what my mom went through in the '50s and '60s, nor is it even close to what my Lord and Savior had to endure while on the earth (he, too, was spat at, made fun of and even nailed to a cross simply because He loved us/me that much).

Yes, we are better off now than we were in the '50s, but to some extent, we are taking many steps backward by ignoring or not talking about the racial issues.

We need to have open discussions where people share their ignorance and learn from people who are different. (I do this in my classroom every day, and we learn and I learn so much.) So where am I going with this post?

I understand the anger. I understand that we've had enough. I also understand and agree with my friend Traci Wilson-Kleekamp when she wrote, "Jonathan L. Butler and #ConcernedStudent1950 please give space for mistakes, listening, learning and dialogue. This on the job training thing is powerful because it is SO VERY PUBLIC." I not only see this as on-the-job training for our administrators at MU, but I also see it as training for some of my very educated white friends.

The saddest of all things for me is to see how a few of my white friends are responding to these events and basic conflicts in race relations in our nation (i.e., police shootings, the President, etc). It hurts my heart when I see posts from these friends who make fun of us because we find things hurtful like dressing up in black face costumes or Confederate flags flying high in my neighborhood.
What bothers me is that the few of my white friends who feel this way have not taken time or energy to reach out to me and ask me why these things hurt or to understand what is going on or even send an email saying they are confused.

For the two friends who have in the recent days, thank you. That speaks volumes of your openness to understand. You are not even saying that you agree; you just want to hear from me and my thoughts and experiences. Kudos to being open.

Unlike my "other" so-called acquaintances. Instead, they take to social media and make jokes of the students, say things like, "Oh my God, what else are these people going to find offensive?" or even dumber things like, "I guess next year I will dress up as nothing." By the way: The Halloween costume event is not about not dressing up like someone, but it is about dressing up as characters, not as a race of people. It is the heart and intent of a person.

I write this post to ask if those folks who find that the situation on campus is ridiculous to please be a little more open-minded. Ask questions. Do your research. Heaven forbid you will put yourself in their shoes.

Maybe you should dress up in black face and spend a month walking around in that costume, and maybe then you will understand how we feel when you walk in a room or a store and get treated like a second class citizen. Maybe then you will understand that our feelings about being constantly referred to as niggers is more than "just getting over it." Maybe then you will understand why telling the students to get their "a@&S" in class because they are making much ado about nothing hurts and doesn't solve the problem.

I am much more than the n-word. I am an educated black woman who happens to have worked hard for my Ph.D. I am a mom. I am a grandmother. I am a daughter. I am a sister. I am an auntie. I am a cousin. I am loved by my family and friends. I am smart. I am funny (or so I think). I am a Christian who loves the Lord Jesus with my whole heart. I would die for Him as He died for us. I am YOUR FRIEND!
Yes, I am all of these things. There is so much more to me than the n-word implies. Please consider that when you criticize the events on campus: Yes, I am silly. Yes, I am a drama queen who thinks I should have been born a celebrity. But what I am not is a nigger! Let me just say that.

Consider that you have a friend who deserves and simply wants to be treated equally. You have and know a friend who jogs on Route K and wants to do that without fear that some kids in a car will think it is funny to yell at me and pretend that they will run me off the road. Know that you have a friend who wants to walk out every day with confidence that she will not be spat on or yelled euphemisms simply because of the color of her skin. To make things better in our world, that would be a start.

Universities create new application tool to create a more diverse student body

By DALE SINGER • Nov. 9

As a counselor helping students find the right college, first in Clayton and then at Metro High School in St. Louis, Chat Leonard has an unusual perspective on the bumps that can litter the road to higher education.

Both schools, she said, have bright, energetic, motivated students who have been preparing to go to college “since they were in utero.” But at Metro, a magnet school where almost 40 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, aiming to get into the best school possible may have a fuzzier focus than at a place like Clayton, where many more of the families are affluent.

Helping to expand the horizons and the aspirations of students like those at Metro is the main goal expressed by a new coalition of more than 80 public and private colleges and universities, including Washington University and the University of Missouri at Columbia.

The group – known as the Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success — wants to broaden the reach of member schools to find students who can make the grade on their campuses but may not even consider
applying. With a new common application, plus tools to help simplify the process, the universities hope to help the students and themselves.

“I hope that more students will consider that college is possible,” said Julie Shimabukuro, director of admissions at Washington U., “There are resources out there. There are people that want to help them reach their goals, not only to make it possible to think about going to school but financially possible as well. And there are supports there as well. We hope to see that shift.”

Added Chuck May, her counterpart at Mizzou:

“The research is clear that for low-income and underrepresented students, earlier engagement and being part of that college-going culture is critical to their success. We're hoping that in addition to the application it's going to provide, it's going to create concrete tools that they can use for planning and applying to schools.”

But the new initiative is raising concerns in some quarters. Some high school counselors worry that the coalition will add even more pressure to a college-search process that already starts too soon and becomes too intense.

Among the tools is an online “locker,” like a dropbox, where, as early as freshman year, students can start to set aside materials that can help them get ready for college as well as help them narrow their search.

A top enrollment official at DePaul University publicly criticized the move, saying it appears to concentrate less on disadvantaged students and more on the desire of high-profile schools to improve their standing in “colleges’ continuing, almost rabid, quest for prestige via impressive statistical profiles.”

Leonard said at a recent conference of high school counselors, the coalition drew such interest that a session about it had to be moved to a larger room. Counselors had many questions about what its effect will be – so many questions that the coalition has postponed introduction of some of its tools from January to April.

“Are they going to attract more of the elite applicants as they have been in the past?” Leonard asked. "Or is their intention to attract some of these underrepresented populations? There needs to be communication and training for those counselors who don't have the resources to perhaps attend that national conference.”

Accessibility and affordability

On its website, the coalition spells out its mission this way:

“Our nation has been in the midst of an important public policy dialogue about whether college is affordable and whether it has value—can students, especially low- and moderate-income students, be successful and graduate without going deeply into debt? This Coalition helps to answer that question with a resounding YES.”
By getting students to start thinking about college as early as possible during their high school years, the coalition hopes to encourage them to look as broadly as possible at their options. And the online tools it will be introducing will be designed to help them with that goal.

And, it added, coalition schools are not trying to block out others who may be trying to attract talented students from underrepresented groups.

“We don’t believe we have a corner on access,” its website says. “Many institutions do great work to provide access. Our work is grounded in research about the outcomes for students who can be financially supported throughout their college careers.”

Can students, especially low- and moderate-income students, be successful and graduate without going deeply into debt?

Members of the coalition range from Ivy League schools to those with lower profiles, such as the Illinois State University in Normal. To qualify for membership, colleges and universities have to graduate at least 70 percent of their students within six years; many have a higher rate than that.

The coalition cites research that shows students from disadvantaged backgrounds often don’t apply to schools they qualify for, or don’t get all of the financial aid available because of complex procedures for applying. In some cases, students are even discouraged from being too ambitious in their college choices.

The coalition hopes to change that situation and ease the process with its new planning and application tools. Its goal:

“Get low-income, underrepresented, and first-generation students thinking about college earlier and create the expectation that college is FOR THEM. We want to send a strong message that college is affordable, that they can be successful, and that the top schools in the country want students like them.”

New students, new markets

For Mizzou and Washington University, membership in the coalition is designed to help broaden their recruitment reach in a variety of ways.

Shimabukuro, at Washington U., noted that the Common App – an application used by a number of schools across the country – had technical problems a few years ago that caused a lot of turmoil around application time. That glitch was one reason Washington U. was interested in the coalition, to give prospective students another alternative.
“When the coalition began developing its application,” she said, “they saw an opportunity to create a platform that could potentially help underserved students, which is what all schools want to support – helping underserved students know that college is possible.”

Washington U. has been criticized for having a low percentage of its students receiving Pell grants, a federal program for students from low-income families. The university has pledged to steadily increase that number over several years, but Shimabukuro said that initiative was not a key factor in joining the coalition.

She said the major thrust in raising the Pell grant percentage will be more funding, not finding more students who are eligible.

“Our focus is really to raise more money for scholarship funds and to help students from challenging financial backgrounds, rather than just through an application process,” Shimabukuro said.

“We’ve got a lot of students who are applying to the university that we just haven’t had the resources to fund. We’re shifting funding and raising more money in that effort. We’re always reaching out to students across the country. We’re not just going to rely on an application itself, but should the coalition application help students find their way or think about colleges who haven’t thought about college before, we think that’s great, too.”

May, at Mizzou, noted that the number of high school graduates in Missouri and the Midwest as a whole is declining, so schools have to become more active in finding students who want to enroll. The coalition will help Mizzou “pop up on the radar” of students who may never have thought about it before, he said.

“As the pool shrinks, we constantly need to be looking to new markets,” he said.

And new competition makes that drive even more urgent, May said. But the key remains making sure the student and the school make a solid connection.

“We’re starting to see regional reps from the SEC schools moving to St. Louis now,” he said. “So we are competitive. But in the end, the most important thing is retention rate and graduation rate. Retention is those students who start at your institution after the first year, come back for their second year. And then, of course, graduate.

“If we’re a good fit for someone, wonderful. But if the University of Virginia is a better fit for a student, I would rather they go to Virginia and be happy and have that be a fit for them than come here and transfer out,” May said.

Concern and anxiety
For high school counselors, concerns aren’t just about the right fit between students and campus. It’s about the whole process of applying for college in the first place.

One part of the coalition’s approach that has raised concerns is the online “locker” where students can start as freshmen to set aside materials that can help them get ready for college as well as help them narrow their search. The coalition explains it like this:

“Whether collecting thoughts on college options or storing classwork or reflections, students can confidentially save documents that may be useful later in their college search or application.

“While only the student will have access to the locker, they will be able to share documents with their counselors, teachers, and mentors who can provide guidance along the way.”

Letters from groups representing counselors at Jesuit high schools, including DeSmet and Saint Louis U. High, and private schools, including Mary Institute and Country Day School, have questioned the coalition’s approach.

“Based on all adolescent development models,” said the letter from the Jesuit High School College Counselors Association, “starting to ‘collect items’ and for parents to ‘obsess’ in the 9th grade will most likely produce significant concern/anxiety over the college process at a time when all of our students’ focus should be on the growth of their personal and academic selves.”

The Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools expressed a similar worry.

“Students in the class of 2017 – and the adults who offer them support in the college process – are already juggling a number of significant changes. The new SAT and the implementation of price-prior year FAFSA submissions are already causing confusion and consternation, and we are concerned that the Coalition platform will increase both.”

Chat Leonard at Metro High School

Leonard, the counselor at Metro, said that at the recent national meeting of her colleagues, one counselor from the Northeast said he had already been contacted by the parent of a ninth grader, asking how soon the student could begin compiling an online portfolio of writing, recommendations and more.

She said questions for the coalition range from process to philosophy.

“Philosophically, is the intention to throw a broader net and to communicate to students they perhaps had not been reaching for that college that is accessible and affordable – and not just community college or maybe a
state regional college but some of the colleges on this elite list?” Leonard said. “Or is it to put up some competition with the Common App? We were kind of hearing a mixed message.

“I think for small liberal arts colleges, if they’re on a list with Harvard and Princeton and Yale and other schools, it’s going to be like, ‘Gee, I’m invited to the party with the popular kids. How can I say no?’

Grad students discuss rights, unionizing

By Megan Favignano

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 12:00 am

*University of Missouri graduate students continue to pursue unionizing and are holding town hall meetings to answer student questions about the process.*

The Coalition of Graduate Workers, the potential union, held a town hall for international students to learn how a union affects them, and the group gained support from the Graduate Professional Council on campus this week.

At a town hall Thursday, Conner Lewis, a graduate student leader with the Coalition of Graduate Workers, said international students were most concerned about a union’s potential effect on their visas. Lewis said unionizing will not affect visa requirements for international students. Students also asked more general questions about the process for forming a union.

About 30 international students from various backgrounds and departments on campus attended Thursday’s forum, Lewis said.

“International students are an unfortunately vulnerable group,” Lewis said. “In some cases they don’t know what rights they have, and they’re here on a visa. My feeling is, now more than ever, is a union is potentially more important to them than anyone because it does give them a degree of security that at the moment they don’t have.”

Students began taking steps to form a graduate student union earlier this semester as a way to advocate for better graduate student employee benefits. The Forum on Graduate Rights, a student group that is not affiliated with the university, formed in August after MU told graduate assistants it could no longer provide health insurance subsidies because of an IRS interpretation of health care law. That decision was later revoked, but it sparked a larger discussion about graduate education and graduate assistants’ benefits at MU.
The Graduate Professional Council, the official student government for graduate and professional students on campus, passed a resolution at its general assembly meeting Tuesday to support the Coalition’s right to unionize, but the council did not endorse the creation of a union.

The resolution allows the Graduate Professional Council to advertise the Coalition’s educational events, like Thursday’s town hall. The resolution also asked MU administration to avoid delay in a union vote if the Coalition gains enough signatures to hold a vote.

Kristofferson Culmer, a graduate student with the Forum on Graduate Rights, said the resolution aims to ensure graduate students have the information they need to make an informed decision.

“It states the general assembly’s support to have a union election. It doesn’t state the support of unionization,” Culmer said Tuesday. “We’re asking the graduate council to endorse the right of graduate students to choose whether or not they would like to have a union on campus and also asks the university to not impede in that process.”

The Coalition of Graduate Workers also is continuing with its card drive, collecting signatures of students interested in a union. The group needs 50 percent plus one, Lewis said, to hold a union vote. The card drive’s signature goals, however, are for a larger majority of graduate students.

Lewis said the group has about a third of the signatures it needs to reach its goal. The Coalition of Graduate Workers hopes to have another town hall right before Thanksgiving, he said. The group will continue to hold town halls that target specific groups on campus and informational meetings that discuss general questions regarding unions.

Missouri senator objects to study on abortion waiting period

November 06, 2015 1:15 pm

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — A Republican state lawmaker has raised objections to a study about a Missouri law that requires a 72-hour waiting period for abortions.

The study is being conducted by a University of Missouri graduate student in the School of Social Work. It's being supervised by the director of the school, Marjorie Sable, who became a member of the Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri Board of Directors in 2013.

Sen. Kurt Schaefer, who is seeking the GOP nomination for Missouri attorney general, wrote to university Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, accusing the university of violating a state law that prohibits the use of public
funds to "encourage or counsel a woman to have an abortion not necessary to save her life," The Columbia Daily Tribune reported (http://bit.ly/1Q8Kcjq).

"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.

The university also said the study does not violate state law.

Loftin supports and "and will continue to strongly support academic freedom and the intellectual property of MU's students and faculty," university spokeswoman Mary Joe Banken said in an email.

Schaefer is chairman of the Senate Interim Committee on the Sanctity of Life, which has also looked at whether Planned Parenthood is providing fetal tissue from abortions for research and the Columbia clinic’s abortion license.

Lawmakers passed the 72-hour law in 2014, over the veto of Gov. Jay Nixon. The law requires a woman to be counseled on abortion alternatives, given an ultrasound examination to determine the gestational age of the fetus, and sign a form consenting to the procedure.

Mary Kogut, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri, said the study being conducted at that affiliate's clinic in St. Louis 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.

"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."

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The Associated Press

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Journalist, filmmaker to discuss racism in Israel, speak on MU campus

By Megan Favignano

Sunday, November 8, 2015 at 12:00 am

David Sheen, an independent journalist and filmmaker, will speak Monday on the University of Missouri campus about racism in Israel. Sheen, who has lived in Israel since 1999, will focus on the treatment of Palestinians and African immigrants.

The event “Racism in Israel: A Presentation by David Sheen” will start at 7 p.m. Monday in 204 Neff Hall. The program is part of Sheen’s multiweek speaking tour in North America.

Sheen moved to Israel from Canada in 1999 and started blogging. He later worked as a reporter and editor at an Israeli daily newspaper and produced a full-length documentary on ecological architecture. Now, Sheen is writing a book about African immigrants in Israel.

Monday’s program is co-sponsored by several organizations, including MU Peace Studies program, MU Women’s and Gender Studies, Mid-Missourians for Justice in Palestine and the Islamic Center of Central Missouri.
Kinder Institute to be housed in Jesse Hall

By Megan Favignano

Saturday, November 7, 2015 at 12:00 am

The Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy will be housed on the fourth floor of Jesse Hall at the University of Missouri.

Justin Dyer, Kinder Institute director, said the institute is scheduled to move in during summer 2016 after making renovations to office spaces.

The Kinder Foundation gave MU $25 million to fund the Institute, MU officials said during a gift announcement last month. Initially, the Institute was going to be housed on the fourth floor of Ellis Library. The library committee did not learn that would be the case until after the gift was announced. The Institute’s move to the library would have displaced 20,000 books, music collections and a student study area.

Dyer said the Institute is looking forward to the move to Jesse Hall from its current location in the Interdisciplinary Center. He said the space in Jesse Hall is more centrally located and gives the Institute space to grow.

The Kinder Institute will offer postdoctoral fellowships, research and travel grants. It also will oversee the Kinder Scholars Program, which consists of coursework and a summer internship in Washington, D.C.

The Institute is an expansion of the Kinder Forum, which was created in 2014 with a $1.67 million gift from the Kinder Foundation through the Jack Miller Center.
Missouri prosecutor scolds community for supporting molester

BY BILL DRAPER Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, MO. - A Missouri prosecutor has called out members of a small community for shunning a sexual abuse victim while publicly supporting a community leader who confessed to molesting her for more than a decade.

In a scathing news release last week, Platte County prosecuting attorney Eric Zahnd listed 16 Dearborn residents who had either written letters or testified in court in support of Darren Paden after he admitted the girl's claims were true.

"Prosecutors met with most of them to make sure they understood that Paden had fully confessed to his crimes, yet many of those community leaders continued to stand behind Paden," Zahnd wrote in the news release.

Paden, 52, pleaded guilty in August to two counts of statutory sodomy, admitting that he molested the girl up to 300 times over a 10-year span, starting when she was 5. He was sentenced Oct. 30 to 50 years in prison.

A lifelong resident of the northwest Missouri town of about 500 residents 40 miles north of Kansas City, Paden is former chief of the local volunteer fire department and his parents are prominent members of the Dearborn farming community.

Many of the letter writers were relatives or longtime friends who told of positive things Paden had done for his neighbors, his town and his church.

Some acknowledged the seriousness of Paden's crimes, but asked the judge for lenience in sentencing because of his previous good deeds. One couple, trustees in his church, suggested Paden had been coerced into confessing and didn't molest anyone.

John O'Connor, a Kansas City attorney who represented Paden in court, said it's common for people to write letters before sentencing on behalf of a family member or friend who commits a crime, but that doesn't mean they endorse the crime itself. The Associated Press contacted four of the letter writers, who did not respond to requests for comment.
"This will absolutely have a chilling effect on any individual who wants to write a letter in support for a criminal defendant in the future," O'Connor said. "If you follow their statements logically, any person who writes a letter for any criminal defendant supports what that criminal defendant does."

Such letters generally have little impact on judges, who already have heard all of the facts in a case, he said.

Larry Dessem, former dean of the University of Missouri School of Law who continues to teach there, said he didn't see anything clearly unethical about Zahnd's actions. He noted, however, that Missouri's Rules of Professional Conduct say prosecutors should refrain from making extrajudicial comments that "have a substantial likelihood of heightening public condemnation of the accused."

"In this case, the prosecutor reached out and not only identified anyone who had supported the defendant, but also listed their workplaces," Dessem said. "I can think of no good reason to identify those people and their employers or their churches. I have not seen anything like this."

He added that if he were a defense attorney working in Zahnd's county, he would file motions to transfer similar cases elsewhere on the argument that those who don't agree with the prosecutor's view of a case will be ostracized.

At Paden's sentencing hearing, the victim read a statement detailing some of the man's acts against her and the reaction of many in the community after she told authorities what he had done.

The victim, now 18, said she was forced to transfer to a different high school because she felt uncomfortable at her old school and was worried a teacher would snap at her in front of her peers. She said she was afraid to go into the town's new cafe because someone might tamper with her food, and that she felt like all of Dearborn had turned its back on her.

"I wanted to die, sincerely and unapologetically, wanted to be off of this earth," she said. "I deeply desired to be gone. I wanted to be freed from the memories slowly creeping their way into my mind."
Zahnd, former president of the Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, said it's the first time he had issued such a harsh statement against specific members of a community.

"I only hope the community treats this victim with the same compassion that it did for the man who stole her innocence and took actions that caused her deep and lifelong suffering," he said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU researchers test promising gene therapy for muscular dystrophy

BRAD BERGNER, Nov 8, 2015

COLUMBIA — After more than 10 years of research, a team of MU researchers has developed a promising new treatment for muscular dystrophy, an often fatal disease.

With his team of 20 researchers, Dongsheng Duan, a professor of medical research at the MU School of Medicine, is testing a new gene therapy treatment for Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Because of the encouraging results, the testing has shifted from mice to dogs, subjects that physiologically have more in common with humans.

Duan said the results of the treatment in dogs have been "very promising" and put his team "very close" to performing human clinical trials.

Additional studies will be required, however, before Duan and his team are able to acquire the FDA approval necessary to test the new gene therapy on people. "We are looking into two to three years from now if everything works out," Duan said.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy, the most common and severe form of the disease among children, is a degenerative muscle disorder resulting from a lack of dystrophin, a protein that helps preserve muscle cells. The disease is most common in young boys, and symptoms typically manifest between 3 and 5 years of age.
It affected about 16 of every 100,000 males in 2009, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is also the most common genetically inherited disease among children, Duan said.

Duchenne is often fatal because it causes the degeneration of vital organs.

"You lose your muscle. Your heart is a muscle, without it blood can't pump ... and your diaphragm, all the breathing muscles; without them you cannot breathe," Duan said.

Steroid medications are among the more common treatments for Duchenne, but these medications only slow the inevitable breakdown of muscles. "The effects are really limited," Duan said.

Duan said the new gene therapy treatment is the result of a cloned dystrophin gene. It is a mutation of the gene that is responsible for hindering the body's production of dystrophin. By reducing the size of the cloned dystrophin gene and using a common virus to distribute the gene throughout the body of diseased dogs and mice, a preservation of their muscles was achieved.

Duan's research has received the attention of the Muscular Dystrophy Association, a nationwide nonprofit organization dedicated to providing health care services, finding treatments and funding research.

Duan's research into a gene therapy treatment is "very exciting and very promising," said Michelle Norman, health care services coordinator for the Muscular Dystrophy Association in Kansas City. "It was very exciting to see how they're introducing it in dogs."

When it comes to treating muscle disease, she said, "any help and hope is welcome."

Supervising editor is John Schneller.
COLUMBIA — Columbia's celebration for veterans lasts a whole week. Here are some of the events Nov. 7 to 14:

**Mizzou Joint ROTC Veterans Day Vigil**

Where: Boone County Courthouse

When: Saturday, Nov. 7 at 11:11 a.m.

Veterans Week will start with a 24-hour vigil near the war memorials at the Boone County Courthouse. A detail of cadets and midshipmen from ROTC will be marching every hour.

**Mizzou Joint ROTC Veterans Day Parade**

Where: MU Columns and Boone County Courthouse

When: Sunday, Nov. 8 at 10:30 a.m.

The parade will start at the MU columns and head down Eighth Street to the Boone County Courthouse. A short ceremony will follow at the courthouse. Ryan Gill, an MU student and U.S. Army veteran, will speak at the ceremony, and the 24-hour vigil will end.

**Student Veteran Panel and Lunch**

Where: Memorial Student Union, Room S110
When: Monday, Nov. 9 from noon to 1 p.m.

MU student veterans will give a presentation on their transition to MU at Memorial Student Union in room S110.

Blood Drive

Where: Stotler Lounge in Memorial Student Union

When: Tuesday, Nov. 10 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Wreath Laying Ceremony

Where: Memorial Tower, Memorial Student Union

When: Wednesday, Nov. 11 at noon

Ken Hines, president of the Mizzou Military Veterans Alumni Association, is the guest speaker, and the ceremony will include the Remembrance Day National Roll Call.

"I Support Mizzou Veterans" Photo

Where: Memorial Student Union Archway

When: Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 12:50 p.m.

Free Veterans Day Film: Max

Where: Memorial Student Union, Wrench Auditorium

When: Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 8 p.m.

Thank You Cards for Veterans
Where: MU Student Center, main level

When: Thursday, Nov. 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Medal of Honor Recipient Ryan Pitts**

Where: Jesse Auditorium

When: Thursday, Nov. 12 at 7:30 p.m.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

FROM READERS: MU PHA implements new programs to confront campus sexual assault

*ABBY FLORES/MISSOURIAN READER, Nov 8, 2015*

*Abby Flores is the 2015 MU Panhellenic Association vice president of programming. She is working to foster conversation and education around the issue of sexual assault in MU Greek Life.*

When I was elected to my position as vice president of programming for the Panhellenic Association, I immediately knew that I wanted to create discussion on the topic of sexual violence within the Greek community. It wasn’t something that I began thinking about when the media highlighted the prevalent problems of sexual violence in Greek life. It wasn’t something spurred by a single event. The topic of sexual violence within our Greek community is something about which I am incredibly passionate.

In fact, I am so passionate about this topic, I built my platform around it. When running for my Panhellenic position, my platform was based on holding monthly “town hall” meetings, inviting
all members of the community to come, in order to understand what exactly was going on in our community.

It began as an idea to foster better communication and give a voice to more members of our campus. And while the meetings do these things, they soon became an excellent outlet for change, for discussion, for awareness. They became an opportunity to educate the masses on sexual violence.

My executive board was very supportive as I spent months and all my spare time meeting and preparing with the RSVP Center. The amazing peer educators helped me to tailor a discussion that would be based around our community. This conversation has taught me that sexual violence is something that surrounds my sisters and me, pressing on us like an omnipresent fog.

And with that, I have come to understand that we have all of these amazing resources on our campus, but as student leaders we haven’t done our best to help our members make the connections to these resources — we haven’t used these resources.

The RSVP Center wasn’t the only resource, I soon learned, that we could take advantage of. After the feedback from the town hall, I understood that we could encourage the executive board members of the individual chapters to foster a relationship with their members for this discussion.

Over the summer the PHA Executive Board with the help of Greek Life, RSVP, and Title IX staff developed a plan for a conference to educate all executive board members on the subject of sexual violence. Our goal was to give the leaders of our chapters information and resources but also to help them navigate how to help a sister in need.

My sisters, best friends and family all inspire me to help others, and I think this is why I find this work so important. After having countless conversations with friends, I knew that this was something that I could do, that I could directly help them.
This issue is not something that can be solved overnight, but as a woman on this campus I could not sit and hope that someone else would do the work for me. I cannot pretend to be an expert on this subject, but part of my job is to bring the experts to our members and I will continue to do this.

My friend and PHA Vice President of Risk Management Kendall Foley and I know that there is a lot of work that we have to continue after the Sexual Violence Prevention Conference, our work will never be "finished." I know that each of us, with the support of the rest of our executive team, are more than willing to work with all of the resources on campus to give our executive leaders, chapter members and campus a more comprehensive education on matters dealing with sexual violence. We as a board understand the importance of giving the members what they want and need. I am more than blessed to have these wonderful and intelligent women constantly supporting and fighting alongside me.