Plan for UM future: Interview with interim UM System President Mike Middleton


ABC 17 anchor Marissa Hollowed spoke with interim UM system president Mike Middleton about a range of topics from the new MU office that will include civil rights in Title IX and his take on the protesting of racial issues nationwide.

Here are some notable quotes from Middleton during the interview:

Mike Middleton served as a civil rights lawyer for the federal government.

"I do have some background dealing with issues with race, inequality, equity and inclusion, so that background should be helpful in getting us a solution to that difficult problem."

"We should not have a separate set of rules for Title IX enforcement and another separate set of rules for discrimination and marginalization."

When asked about adding civil right to Title IX he said, "The idea is to track the complaints and report regularly to the community on how they've been resolved or that they have been resolved... I'm a big believer in using data to drive policy."

"My number 1 priority is to restore confidence and trust in the university."

"Secondly, which is equally important, we've got to get a handle on the current crisis."

"I am optimistic about our future... we're poised to have some serious, honest discussions."

"I think we're in the position to make some real change, meaningful change."

"This is not some people being ultra thin-skinned or whiners or whatever."

"I think it's hard for people who have not been marginalized to understand the depths of the feelings that these students are expressing."
"I think the way this movement has spread across the country tells us there is clearly something there that needs our attention."

"We've got to resolve this, this has gone on for much much too long."

"My entire life has been involved in this as a victim, as a lawyer, administrator, as a teacher... we gotta stop."

Mizzou creates new office to investigate racism on campus

Dec. 2, 2015 • By Koran Addo

The University of Missouri-Columbia announced Wednesday that it had created a new Office for Civil Rights & Title IX.

The new office will be a central place for reports and investigations of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and more.

Ellen Eardley, who currently serves as the university’s Title IX administrator, will head the new office.

“We are committed to creating an inclusive campus climate that celebrates diversity and is built upon respect for others,” said Garnett Stokes, the university’s provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs.

“Consolidating reporting and investigation functions will allow us to better achieve those goals,” he said.

Just as the Title IX office conducts investigations of sexual matters, including sexual assault, the new office will conduct investigations involving discrimination.

Those investigations were previously handled by the university’s human resources office, the Equity Office and the Office of Student Conduct.

Wednesday’s announcement comes less than a month after the university named law school administrator Chuck Henson Interim Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity.

Henson’s job is broadly defined as tackling the issue of race on campus.

Race was at the center of a student revolt earlier this school year that led to the resignation of University of Missouri System President Timothy M. Wolfe.

Wolfe came under fire from students over his perceived lack of action in responding to a number of racist incidents on campus.
Wolfe resigned Nov. 9 amid student protests, one student’s hunger strike and a pledge from some University of Missouri-Columbia football players not to play until the president stepped down.

MU creates combined Office for Civil Rights and Title IX

By Roger McKinney

Wednesday, December 2, 2015 at 10:08 am

A newly formed Office for Civil Rights and Title IX at the University of Missouri will serve as a central location for reports and investigations about discrimination on campus.

Garnett Stokes, provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs, released information about the office Wednesday morning. Ellen Eardley, assistant vice provost and Title IX administrator, will head the new office.

The office will centralize reports and investigations of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information and veteran status at MU.

“We are committed to creating an inclusive campus climate that celebrates diversity and is built upon respect for others,” Stokes said in a news release. Consolidating reporting and investigations to one office will help the university achieve those goals, she said.

Former UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned last month after weeks of protests about the racial climate on campus. Former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin also resigned because of pressure from faculty and deans unrelated to race issues. Sexual assault also has been a concern on campus.

The Title IX office investigated reports of sex discrimination, but the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX will investigate all forms of discrimination. The office will handle investigations previously done by human resources, the Equity Office and the Office of Student Conduct. Human resources and the Office of Student Conduct will continue to handle issues not related to discrimination.
Eardley, who started as MU’s first Title IX administrator in April, said the number of campus offices involved in filing a complaint was confusing for students and staff.

“I hope it will make it easier for people to file complaints,” Eardley said in a phone conversation. “I think it will give the community a greater sense of comfort. We want to help people understand that we’re committed to addressing these issues.”

She said there had been several changes in policies and procedures in the past year, including the establishment of an equity resolution process to investigate complaints of faculty and student discrimination.

“This is a natural outgrowth of that,” Eardley said.

The Office for Civil Rights and Title IX will produce an annual summary of discrimination reports it receives. The office also plans to create a centralized online tool for reporting all forms of discrimination. The office will report to Stokes and interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley.

MU creates Office for Civil Rights and Title IX

COLUMBIA — MU's Title IX office has been renamed the MU Office for Civil Rights and Title IX, and it's more than a name change. The university is transforming the office to be responsible for all investigations of discrimination on campus. Additional staff will be hired to meet that goal. Civil rights complaints were previously handled by Human Resources, the Equity Office and the Office of Student Conduct. Human resources and student conduct will continue to handle incidents that do not involve discrimination, according to an MU news release.

MU Title IX administrator Ellen Eardley, whose responsibilities will increase as head of the expanded office, said the change will help the community better understand the university's discrimination policies and demonstrates the university's commitment to addressing problems.
Eardley said the new hires will need to have an understanding of civil rights laws and be fair and open-minded people. The Title IX office already employs a case manager, an executive assistant and four investigators, all of whom have law degrees, she said.

With the change, the office will be in charge of reports and investigations regarding color, race, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, genetic information, disability or veteran status, according to the release. The office will produce a document compiling the reports of discrimination it receives.

Eardley said the office will follow the Equity Resolution Process to make victims feel more comfortable, including allowing confidentiality or privacy if requested. Investigators will also address concerns about safety in the work place and school and provide support for victims.

The office will report directly to Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Garnett S. Stokes.

MU MSA Senate approves proposed reevaluation of Melissa Click

Watch story: [http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=31758&zone=2,5&categories=2,5](http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=31758&zone=2,5&categories=2,5)

COLUMBIA – On Wednesday evening the Missouri Students Association Senate approved a proposed resolution to petition for the University of Missouri to reevaluate Melissa Click’s actions toward student journalist Tim Tai at the university during protests.
The resolution was formed by MSA Senator Jeremy Wiggins and Sergeant at Arms Timothy Davis, and cites Click’s call for “muscle” as seen on a viral YouTube video of the altercation between Click and a student journalist and student protesters in November.

Wiggins said the goal of the resolution is to receive a response from the University of Missouri Administration and the Department of Communications of the College of Arts and Science.

He believed the video of the altercation between Click and Tai was from one person’s point of view.

“You don’t see what happened before, you didn’t see what happened after.”

Wiggins also said the resolution was neither asking for another statement from Click, nor to force the university to make a decision regarding her employment.

"We're looking for an honest answer from the administration and their stance on this issue, and that is clearly and ultimately what we are looking for."

Davis said he believed a statement is owed to the students, and that it will set a precedent that the university needs to take a stand on issues or release some sort of statement as to their standpoint as to what happened.

“After all, we are here for the students, and that is our job as senators, as the executive and legislative branch within MSA, to be here for the students,” Davis said. “I think this is a very critical moment where the students need us the most.”

The resolution will now be sent to Jennifer Hollingshead, the interim vice chancellor for marketing and communications.

The university’s spokesperson, Christian Basi, said it cannot comment on disciplinary or personnel issues publicly due to its Human Resources policy 114. MSA’s Executive Cabinet and Melissa Click have not returned KOMU 8 News' requests for comment, and MU’s Department of Communication declined request for comment.
Missouri clinic to keep abortion license during court battle

Dec. 2, 2015

By SUMMER BALLENTINE

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — A judge ruled Wednesday that a Missouri Planned Parenthood clinic can keep its abortion license at least until late December, a move that doesn't allow the facility to immediately resume terminating pregnancies but could smooth its path to restoring the service.

During a teleconference hearing, U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey said she'll block the state health department from revoking the Columbia clinic's license while she considers the arguments of a lawsuit Planned Parenthood filed Monday. It accuses the Department of Health and Senior Services of unfairly trying to revoke the license without giving the clinic enough time to come into compliance with state laws requiring a doctor to have local hospital privileges.

Even should the clinic ultimately win that court battle, it would still have to find a physician who meets those requirements in order to perform abortions. Last month the clinic halted its non-surgical abortions, which are induced with a pill, because its physician Colleen McNicholas lost privileges with University of Missouri's hospital. That left only one clinic in the state that still administers abortions.

State Solicitor General James Layton argued Wednesday that there's no harm in allowing the state to immediately revoke the license because no abortions are being performed there anyway, a fact that Laughrey instead cited in her ruling in Planned Parenthood's favor.

"Neither patient nor public welfare is at risk by plaintiff maintaining its license," Laughrey said.

Planned Parenthood attorney Melissa Cohen said there would be high costs if the clinic had to reapply for a license, even though the judge's ruling doesn't allow abortions to resume right now.

Laughrey in her decision cited evidence that Planned Parenthood could win in court, saying that the state typically gives other similarly licensed centers the opportunity to come up with a plan of action to address concerns. The decision to revoke the Planned Parenthood license "may be the result of animus toward the center and the work it performs there," the judge said.

Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri President and CEO Laura McQuade said the organization celebrated the ruling, adding that she's confident the next hearing will be in Planned Parenthood's favor.

Sam Lee, of Campaign Life Missouri, said he's glad no abortions will be performed at the center in the near future but is disappointed that the clinic still has a license. He said that makes it easier for the center to try to start providing abortions again if it finds a doctor to comply with state law.

The decision Wednesday also drew criticism from the state Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, R-Joplin, who in a letter to Democratic Attorney General Chris Koster questioned the office's handling of the case. He called for a special assistant attorney to take over based on what he called the "apparent reluctance" of Koster's office to defend the law.

A spokeswoman for Koster said the office is reviewing the letter.

The move to revoke the license came amid backlash over undercover videos released by anti-abortion activists of Planned Parenthood officials discussing the transfer of fetal tissue. Republican lawmakers in response
launched investigations of abortion in the state, including practices at the Columbia clinic and its relationship with nearby University of Missouri.

In that climate, a panel of MU Health Care staff voted in September to discontinue the clinical privileges granted to McNicholas, effectively stripping the clinic's ability to provide abortions.

Now the only clinic in Missouri still performing abortions is a Planned Parenthood office in St. Louis.

The next hearing is scheduled for Dec. 29.

Judge allows Planned Parenthood to hold onto its abortion license

Dec. 3, 2015
By Alex Stuckey

JEFFERSON CITY • The Planned Parenthood in Columbia, Mo., will hold onto its abortion license until late December.

U.S. District Judge Nanette Laughrey extended on Wednesday the temporary restraining order — first issued Monday — blocking Missouri health department’s revocation of the facility’s abortion license.

“Evidence suggests (the department’s) decision to hastily revoke (the facility’s) license may be the result of animus toward the center and the work it performs there,” she said.

Even with the restraining order, however, the clinic will not be able to perform abortions until a physician affiliated with the clinic has hospital privileges. That means the Planned Parenthood in St. Louis remains the only legal abortion clinic in the state.

After Laughrey’s decision, Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, R-Joplin, wrote a letter to Attorney General Chris Koster, a Democrat running for governor in 2016, asking him to either name a special assistant attorney general in the case or challenge the decision.

Richard said in the letter that Koster’s office showed “an apparent reluctance” to “vigorously defend the law.”

Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri filed a federal lawsuit Monday to preserve the Columbia clinic’s abortion facility license from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. The department had planned to revoke the license Monday evening.

The Columbia clinic stopped last week nonsurgical abortions induced with a pill because physician Colleen McNicholas no longer has privileges with the University of Missouri Health Care system, effective Dec. 1. The system’s medical staff voted to discontinue the type of privileges McNicholas and one other physician held amid a legislative investigation of abortion.

Missouri law states that a physician can perform or induce an abortion only if the doctor has clinical privileges at a hospital that offers obstetrical or gynecological care within 30 miles of where the abortion is performed.
To perform abortions, Planned Parenthood must be licensed as an ambulatory surgical center. When a center is informed of a deficiency, state law states it must develop and implement a plan of correction. Melissa Cohen, an attorney representing Planned Parenthood, said Wednesday that the facility was not provided that opportunity or the time to correct the problem.

But James Layton, an attorney representing the state, said the facility was informed in September that the license would be revoked if McNicholas or another doctor did not obtain privileges.

Laughrey opted Wednesday to extend the temporary order and allow the parties their “day in court before they are injured by actions being proposed.”

But Richard said in his letter to Koster that Planned Parenthood failed to establish that the federal court had jurisdiction in the case. Additionally, Richard said that Planned Parenthood had previously agreed not to bring a lawsuit against the state in this matter again.

Federal judge's ruling allows Columbia Planned Parenthood to keep abortion license through December

COLUMBIA — A federal judge extended a temporary restraining order Wednesday that allows the Columbia Planned Parenthood clinic to keep its license to perform abortions until Dec. 30.

The clinic still won’t be able to provide abortion services until it hires a doctor with clinical privileges at a Columbia hospital, in compliance with state law.

U.S. District Judge Nanette Laughrey said extending the temporary restraining order wouldn’t harm either the clinic or the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, the two parties in a lawsuit filed Monday by Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri.

"The facts as presented today suggest the plaintiff has received its fair treatment, and that other ASCs (ambulatory surgical centers) in PPKM’s (Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri) position would not have had their licenses revoked until the next annual inspection, at the earliest," Laughrey said.
Laughrey suggested extending the restraining order to mid-January to avoid the holiday season. Under state law, temporary restraining orders last 28 days and an extension requires the consent of both parties. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services rejected the extension.

"They could not even agree to a court-recommended extension to get through the holiday period," Laura McQuade, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri, said in a news conference after Wednesday's hearing.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services planned to revoke the clinic’s abortion facility license at 5 p.m. Monday. The clinic couldn’t keep its license because the St. Louis-based doctor who had been administering medical abortions at the clinic since August lost her clinical privileges at University Hospital, the department said.

The doctor, Colleen McNicholas, can’t legally provide abortion services without the privileges because Missouri law requires that doctors providing abortion services have clinical privileges at a hospital within 30 miles of the clinic.

The clinic stopped administering medical abortions on Nov. 23 in anticipation of McNicholas losing her privileges.

The executive committee of the medical staff of MU Health Care voted in September to discontinue "refer and follow" privileges on Dec. 1. This category of privileges, held by McNicholas and one other doctor, allowed doctors to refer patients to the health care provider and check on their progress. The other doctor with those privileges is not affiliated with the Columbia Planned Parenthood.

The suit filed by Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri states the Department of Health and Senior Services claimed to revoke the license because of McNicholas’ loss of hospital privileges.
"That loss of privileges relates in no way to the quality of care provided by the physician or PPKM," the suit said. "Rather, it is a direct result of recent political attacks on Planned Parenthood by anti-abortion activists."

The clinic has tried finding other doctors with hospital privileges willing to perform abortions since MU Health Care announced it would discontinue refer and follow privileges, McQuade said in a news release Monday. While the clinic did find two doctors who considered providing abortion services, both backed out, according to the suit. Planned Parenthood continued to search for new doctors, McQuade said Wednesday.

"Obtaining privileges at a hospital is a tedious, not to mention, medically unnecessary requirement that can take six months, or even more, to fulfill," McQuade said in the news release. "MU Health Care imposed an impossible timeline for our physician when it terminated Dr. McNicholas’ privileges just more than two months ago."

It took McNicholas five months to gain privileges from MU Health Care, McQuade said in a news conference after Wednesday's hearing. The doctor submitted an application for new privileges at MU Health Care last week, McQuade said. McNicholas is "currently exploring the possibility" of applying for privileges at Boone Hospital Center and Truman Veterans Hospital, McQuade said.

MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley said in a news release on Monday that he would not reverse MU Health Care’s decision to end the refer and follow privileges.

"The issue of abortion invokes much depth of emotion and passion; I understand this," he said in the release. "However, as a state and federally funded university with a health system, we are required to follow applicable state and federal laws."

The clinic has been without a doctor qualified to provide abortions before, with no trouble from the Department of Health and Senior Services, Laughrey said during Wednesday's hearing. In June 2012, the clinic’s qualified doctor resigned. The Department of Health and Senior Services did not inspect the facility until June of the next year, when the agency renewed the license. It
was not until September 2013 that the license was suspended because the clinic lacked a provider.

Because the department only conducts routine inspections every year, the Columbia clinic should not have its licensed revoked until its next inspection, at the earliest, Laughrey said. The clinic's current license is scheduled to expire in June 2016.

By Missouri law, the department is not required to revoke the clinic’s facility license because McNicholas lost her privileges, the suit claims.

Melissa Cohen, a staff attorney with Planned Parenthood's national organization, also said the clinic had not been given enough time to find a qualified doctor. Other ambulatory surgical centers would have been given a plan of correction, she said.

James Layton, solicitor general with the Missouri Attorney General's Office representing the Department of Health and Senior Services, said a plan of correction wasn't appropriate because the clinic has an external issue — not having a doctor with hospital privileges — not an internal issue it could have solved itself.

"We don’t see what a plan of correction would have consisted of if they had had one," Layton said.

If the Columbia clinic loses its license, reapplying would take time and money as the clinic would have to wait until it finds a qualified doctor, Laughrey said.

A preliminary injunction hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m. Dec. 29. If Planned Parenthood is granted an injunction, the license to perform abortions would be protected through the litigation process.

Missouri Sen. Ron Richard, R-Joplin and president pro tempore of the Missouri Senate, sent a letter to Attorney General Chris Koster Wednesday asking him to appoint a special assistant attorney general to represent the case. He said the current defense showed "apparent reluctance
of your office to vigorously defend the law" and failed to bring up two important factors during the hearing Wednesday.

Richard wrote that Planned Parenthood "failed to establish" that the federal court had jurisdiction over the matter.

He also said that in a 2010 settlement of a previous lawsuit with the state, Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri agreed to never sue again over the licensing of its Columbia clinic. The settlement was the end of a lawsuit filed by Planned Parenthood in 2007 about the status of the Columbia clinic’s abortion facility license after Missouri laws regarding abortion clinic licensing changed.

McQuade disagreed with Richard’s interpretation of the settlement, saying that promise wasn’t relevant to the current legal action. She has repeatedly said MU Health Care’s decision to end McNicholas’ privileges and the Department of Health and Senior Services’ plan to revoke the clinic’s license were politically motivated.

"This has nothing to do with meeting the licensing requirements and everything to do with Missouri politics," she said.
COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri Faculty Council has voted to recommend rescind an honorary doctorate given to Bill Cosby.

The Columbia Missourian (http://bit.ly/1RnbBoe) reports the council, which is made up of elected representatives of campus faculty, voted Nov. 5 to take back Cosby's honorary doctorate in humane letters. Ben Trachtenberg, chair of the Faculty Council, said Tuesday that he has sent a letter with the recommendation to interim Chancellor Hank Foley and Provost Garnett Stokes.

The 78-year-old comedian is embroiled in dozens of allegations that he drugged and sexually assaulted women. Cosby has not been charged in any of the cases and had denied many of the allegations.

In a deposition released earlier this year, Cosby testified that he used Quaaludes during consensual sexual encounters.

Cosby received the honorary doctorate from the University of Missouri in 1999. The university would join at least 12 other schools that have revoked honorary degrees given to Cosby.

Trachtenberg said he spoke to then-Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin about rescinding the degree and that Loftin spoke with former University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe. According to Trachtenberg, Loftin and Wolfe thought the process of withdrawing the degree should start with faculty.

"If the university was going to take away an honorary degree, they felt the process should be begun by faculty, who recommend people in the first place," Trachtenberg said.

It is unclear if the university has ever stripped someone of an honorary degree.

"If you think about it, we normally give honorary degrees to impressive people," Trachtenberg said. "They have to do something horrible for us to think about taking that back."

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Information from: Columbia Missourian, http://www.columbiamissourian.com

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
A Collective’s #StudentBlackOut Seeks to Ramp Up the Pressure on Colleges

Protests that have put intense pressure on colleges to improve the experiences of minority students have spread to dozens of campuses since demonstrations at the University of Missouri at Columbia recently touched off a nationwide movement. As student activists have looked to other campuses for inspiration, a group known as the Black Liberation Collective has emerged as a central coordinating hub for far-flung individuals.

On Thursday the collective is sponsoring a second national day of action, after holding one on November 18 that involved students at more than three dozen campuses. Activists used the hashtag #StudentBlackOut on Twitter to publicize their efforts and presented lists of demands that have become central to the protests at many colleges. It’s not clear how many activists or
how many colleges will be involved in Thursday’s activities, which will take place as final examinations and other academic stresses mount for many students.

Still, one of the group’s national organizers, David C. Turner III, believes the day of action will reiterate to college leaders, students, and others that black activism isn’t going away anytime soon. Mr. Turner, a second-year Ph.D. student in education at the University of California at Berkeley, spoke with The Chronicle about the group’s hopes for Thursday’s event and how it plans to continue supporting activists nationwide throughout the holidays and into the new year. What follows is a transcript of the conversation, edited for clarity and length.

Q. The Black Liberation Collective organized a similar day of action a couple of weeks ago. How will this effort be different?

A. It’s to not only keep the momentum but also to stand in solidarity with folks who are also organizing, but aren’t organizing on college campuses. Black folks were leading the charge to get the chief of police fired out in Chicago, as well as the occupation happening in Minneapolis right now — they are occupying the city’s police department and receiving really heinous retaliations and white-terrorist shooting threats. I think that in this moment, we want to show that the assault on black lives is multifaceted and it comes in a variety of ways, including in education. The campus movement is part of the larger narrative. Folks in education, particularly in higher education, they are just joining the fight for black lives.

Q. What will the event look like?

A. It’s going to look somewhat different depending on the campuses and their context. Some of our campuses are still negotiating on their demands, and we also have other campuses that are just now releasing demands, while some of our campuses have had demands met already. So this day of action is going to be very campus-specific. Some folks might be continuing to occupy a building. Some folks may have a march. Other folks may have photo campaigns. Some folks may be taking over presidents’ offices. Our role is to support these campuses in whatever they do.

Q. Two weeks ago, more than three dozen colleges participated in your organization’s day of action. How many campuses might be involved this time around? Can you name any specific campuses that are planning demonstrations?

A. At the moment, we’ve had about 75 campuses send us demands. We’re connected to a network of almost 300 students across the country. I would say anywhere between 50 to 100 campuses. I know John Carroll University, in Cleveland, has an action planned, and I know of a couple of other universities. I can’t necessarily mention who they are for security reasons. But there are definitely folks who are planning on engaging. How many and who? It’s very difficult to predict at this point.

Q. Students at many colleges are about to take final exams. Do you think that could affect the event’s scope?
A. I think it’s going to have an impact, but I don’t think it’s going to stop anything, because we recognize that this fight is a lot bigger than our grades.

Q. What would make this day of action successful, in your opinion?

A. I hope people will understand that this movement for black lives is not going to stop. Keeping the momentum alive will definitely make this a very successful action — keeping people’s spirits high as we go into winter break. Also, the more new people we can bring into our network, and the more people that we can help to build leadership capacity with, the better. We’re a firm believer in helping build leaders. We don’t want to be leaders ourselves.

Q. During a conference call with hundreds of student activists on Monday night, you all talked about the need to keep pressure on college administrators. How will you do that over the holidays?

A. We’ll definitely keep up with some direct actions. But more intentionally, we’ll be making sure we’re working with students locally. Students at some universities will probably still be in negotiations. Our job is going to be to support them through that process during the winter break — helping them with arguments, helping with data collection, helping to prep folks.

Q. The collective also talked about crafting checklists to help activists get protests going. Can you tell me more about that?

A. On our website, we have a direct-action checklist, and we have a demands tool kit. An occupation checklist and the self-care checklist are being created now. We’re looking to build our infrastructure and do things more regionally in the upcoming months, but for now we’re just looking to provide materials to support this new wave of student activism.

Q. Going into the new year, how do you think students’ strategies might change? Do you think activists will continue using sit-ins and demonstrations, as they have in recent weeks, or do you think black student activism could evolve?

A. Black student activism has always been incredibly multifaceted, and I think social media nowadays gives us a new tool to not only help us see what’s happening in real time, but also to organize. I think that as we grow as an organization, you’ll probably begin seeing more intentional ways of building leadership capacity. But I think we follow a very classical method of organizing, though it doesn’t mean we’re just doing that. I don’t believe any one method is going to save us. And I think it’ll also be key that we build our own brand as we join the fight for black lives, along with organizations like Dream Defenders, BYP100, Millennial Activists United, and so on.
Escalating Demands

The number and complexity of students' demands of administrations is going up -- and some of the items deal with issues typically left to faculty governance.

December 3, 2015
By Scott Jaschik

When black students at the University of Missouri at Columbia issued a list of demands in October, eight items were listed. The demands were far-reaching, including the ouster of the university system president (a protest goal that was achieved), the hiring of more black faculty members and significant expansion of efforts to promote an inclusive campus. When students at Amherst College staged a sit-in in November, they had 11 demands.

But the demand lists being discussed this week at Hamilton College and Emory University are longer, more detailed -- and in some cases deal directly with decisions typically made by faculty members. And while some of the demands deal with long-festering issues in higher education, others are coming as a surprise to many on campuses, even those sympathetic to the idea that black students face far too much hostility and ignorance at their colleges.

Consider, for example, Hamilton College, where administrators this week received a list of demands from The Movement, an anonymous group of black students and supporters. By the group's count, there are 39 demands, but given that many of those demands have multiple parts, some critics say the demands have gotten so detailed that they are becoming difficult to discuss, and that the number tops 80.

One demand concerns a statement on the college's diversity webpage that was not known previously to be controversial. From the demands: "We, the students of Hamilton College, demand the immediate removal of the repugnant phrase listed within the college’s diversity page stating: 'A student at Hamilton can be grungy, geeky, athletic, gay, black, white, fashionable, artsy, nerdy, preppy, conservative ... it doesn't really matter. At Hamilton you can be yourself -- and be respected for who you are.' This distasteful assertion trivializes the identities and experiences of marginalized groups and will not be tolerated further." (Italics are per the Movement's document.)

Like the lists of demands at many colleges, the one at Hamilton calls for the hiring of many more minority faculty members. But the list also suggests actions against those nonminority professors currently employed. One of the demands: "We, the students of Hamilton College, demand that white
faculty are discouraged from leading departments about demographics and societies colonized, massacred and enslaved." It is unclear which fields would be covered.

Hamilton administrators may have had good reason not to expect criticism on historic figures honored on the campus. The college is named for Alexander Hamilton, who was an abolitionist. But the demands include that the college remove the name of Elihu Root from various campus structures. Root was a member of the Class of 1864; he served in positions such as secretary of state and U.S. senator and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1912 for his work promoting the idea of arbitration rather than war to resolve conflicts between nations.

Because he held key positions at a time when the United States oversaw territories won in the Spanish-American War, the student demands say that Root's name has no place on campus "because of his historic role in colonization."

The college has not responded demand by demand, but has set up several campus discussions on issues of inclusiveness and diversity and has pledged to continue to encourage open discussions on these issues.

Emory on Wednesday did release a demand-by-demand response to 13 demands (many with subdemands), in many cases pledging to find ways to advance certain goals, but not necessarily agreeing to all of the numbers and timetables presented by students there.

Some of the demands deal with topics that Emory's response noted are supervised through the faculty governance process. (In these cases, Emory said it would encourage discussions, but didn't pledge to meet the demands in full.)

One such demand, for example, focused on student evaluations of faculty members. "We demand that the faculty evaluations that each student is required to complete for each of their professors include at least two open-ended questions such as: 'Has this professor made any microaggressions towards you on account of your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language and/or other identity?' and 'Do you think that this professor fits into the vision of Emory University being a community of care for individuals of all racial, gender, ability and class identities?' These questions on the faculty evaluations would help to ensure that there are repercussions or sanctions for racist actions performed by professors. We demand that these questions be added to the faculty evaluations by the end of this semester, fall 2015."

The demands that are coming out this week are being widely mocked in the conservative blogosphere. Others, while opposing many of the specific demands, are offering some sympathy for the students. "Students have the right to raise whatever concerns or demands they wish," said Hank Reichman, chair of the American Association of University Professors Committee A on Academic Freedom, Tenure and Governance, via email. "Faculty and administrators should respond to these demands in a spirit of respectful engagement and with the goal of furthering the students' education. It would be foolish to demand of college-age students the sort of sophisticated understanding of academic freedom we would desire of faculty members and administrators."

At the same time, he said, the kinds of demands being made with regard to faculty members were in many cases ill-advised.

The demand at Hamilton to discourage white faculty members from chairing certain departments "would impose a prejudicial and possibly illegal racial restriction on the hiring of faculty," he said.
And the demand at Emory about faculty evaluations would require questions that are "far too subjective" and are "prejudicial," Reichman said. He added that "a better approach would be to permit students to file complaints about specific mistreatment, backed by evidence, and to handle those through mechanisms that guarantee any faculty member so charged with fair due process protections."

Can Yik Yak Be Banned?

Yik Yak SymbolAt both Hamilton and Emory (and many other campuses), there are demands about banning Yik Yak, the social media app that has become a place for many people to make racist and sexist comments, anonymously, about specific individuals. Many violent threats have also been made on Yik Yak -- and many administrators would love to see the service go away. However, most academic leaders have determined that it would be impossible to simply ban it.

The Hamilton students demand that Yik Yak be banned from the area, while the Emory students called for the university to use "geofencing" to block Yik Yak on campus. Emory said it would study the feasibility of the idea.

Hilary McQuaide, director of communications for Yik Yak, said colleges would fail in geofencing efforts. The concept is to block access -- and Yik Yak works with high schools to do this because the company doesn't want users under the age of 18. But McQuaide said that while colleges could block people from using institutions' wireless systems, they would be powerless when students used mobile phones with their own connections (which is of course the norm for students).

Tracy Mitrano, a consultant on technology and legal issues in higher education (and an Inside Higher Ed blogger), said she too doubts most colleges would truly be able to block Yik Yak beyond their own networks.

Mitrano said there may well be more important questions and better ways to consider the issue of Yik Yak's impact. Via email, she said that colleges should be talking about such issues as "how race is experienced and discussed on campus, what does free speech mean (and whether or not it matters on either a private or public campus), what does institutional policy on conduct mean, what choices might student make about their use of social media -- especially that which is anonymous -- to express their ideas, and how much ideas matter in the larger process of education. For me observing this entire set of events, taking the opportunity to use these challenging issues as fodder for the educational process appears to be an opportunity lost by reducing the complexity of it down to simple questions of 'to block or not to block' or to a zero-sum game of race versus speech."

Former Olympian Greg Louganis discusses his journey with HIV

By Megan Favignano
Five-time Olympic diving medalist Greg Louganis learned he was HIV positive six months before the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea.

HIV was a death sentence at the time; he considered withdrawing from the Olympics.

“If I was HIV positive, then I was going to do the honorable thing. I was going to pack my bags, move back to California, lock myself in my house and wait to die,” Louganis said. “That’s what we thought of HIV at that time.”

Louganis, 55, spoke Tuesday night at Jesse Auditorium as part of the University of Missouri’s World AIDS Day events, which aimed to raise awareness and show support for people living with HIV.

Louganis talked about his time in the Olympics and his experiences managing his HIV-positive status. He publicly came out as gay and HIV positive in 1995, which he chronicled in his 1996 book, “Breaking the Surface.”

“I felt so isolated and alone,” Louganis said of hiding his HIV-positive status. “I knew in my heart that I wasn’t the only one. I thought the only way I could express myself was through a book.”

After revealing his HIV-positive status in 1995, Louganis’ injury during the 1988 Olympics became a topic of discussion. Louganis’ head started bleeding after he struck a springboard during the Olympics, but he got back on the board and won a gold medal the next day for his diving.

At the time, people questioned whether Louganis was obligated to disclose his status to other athletes using the pool and to the doctors who treated him. Louganis said other athletes were never in danger.

“The only people I was putting in harm’s way were the doctors who were sewing me up … because they were in direct contact with my blood,” Louganis said. “I was paralyzed by fear. I didn’t know what my responsibility was.”

Had anyone known he was HIV positive back in 1988, Louganis said he would not have been able to compete.

Tom Barry, a Florida resident who was visiting Columbia for work, said he was excited to hear Louganis speak. Barry said he remembered watching Louganis compete at the 1988 Olympics at a time when fear about the AIDS crisis was prevalent.

“I remember how scary that was, and I can’t imagine him competing under that pressure when everybody was preaching hate,” Barry said.
Barry said he found out he was HIV positive two years ago. Barry said his doctor helped him understand the virus.

“It’s … very manageable,” Barry said. “I have never considered it a death sentence,” Barry said. “But there is still a social stigma around it as well, and that’s the piece that I’m having trouble dealing with.”

Louganis said he feels a responsibility to share his experiences and hopes to encourage others to find out their HIV status.

Free HIV testing was available in Jesse Hall on Tuesday, and MU hosted a panel discussion about living with HIV as part of its awareness events.

Louganis said HIV treatment has come a long way.

“I take my meds in the morning, I take my meds in the evening and I go about the business of living,” Louganis said.

During his lecture Tuesday, Louganis read from a letter he wrote to his younger self that said life would get better. “That feeling of failure will pass. You will in time let people in instead of pushing everyone away. You will also understand those confusing feelings you are having about who you love or fall in love with. It is your nature to love, and it is just who you are that you love a man.”

Louganis earned five Olympic medals and five world championship titles. He also earned 47 national diving titles.

Former Olympian Greg Louganis says he's not defined by HIV diagnosis: Gold medal diver tells his story during World AIDS Day events

COLUMBIA — When former Olympian Greg Louganis was 53 years old, he penned a letter to his younger self. It was a "letter about healing," he told the audience at his lecture, "Don't Let HIV Write Your Story," Tuesday night at Jesse Auditorium.

Louganis, now 58, said that after testing positive for HIV when he was 28, he didn't think he'd live until age 30.
"I know you can't imagine living past 30, but you will live well beyond that and learn you can love and be loved," said Louganis, quoting his letter. "Those hurts, bumps and bruises you're going to let go of and see them as blessings of your life."

The lecture was the second of two events MU hosted for World AIDS Day. The first was a panel discussion titled "A Day in the Life of HIV," which featured Louganis and members from the community and university.

Many remember Louganis as the Olympic champion who hit his head on a springboard while diving in the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul. Louganis said he was "paralyzed with fear" after he hit his head because he knew that he was HIV positive at the time, but the public didn't. He said he received heavy criticism and backlash for not disclosing his disease, but that he has learned to respond with kindness.

"As long as you open your heart and be kind to people, it will be returned," Louganis said.

Just six months before competing in his third Olympic Games, Louganis was diagnosed with HIV. In 1988, HIV and AIDS were considered "death sentences," and Louganis wasn't optimistic about his future.

Despite his diagnosis, Louganis continued training for the Olympics and competed in the games. He won two gold medals while taking azidothymidine, or AZT.

"I didn't know that AZT was as toxic as it was, because I had nobody to talk to about it," Louganis said. “People were dying from AZT treatment."

Louganis recounted a conversation with the co-author of his autobiography, Eric Marcus. "Eric said, 'you won two Olympic gold medals on AZT, you will never know what that truly means.'"

Louganis said the day was important to him because of what the United States and the rest of the world is doing for HIV and AIDS treatment.

"World AIDS Day to me is so important because of not just what we're doing here in the United States, but what we're doing in the rest of the world," he said at the panel discussion. "The rest of the world — they need a lot of help as far as education and awareness, and I try to be part of the solution."

Hank Foley, recently named MU interim chancellor, was also on the panel and agreed that education and awareness, as well as outreach and economic development, are the keys to HIV and AIDS treatment. Foley said while the United States has medicine that treats HIV, the current variances of HIV in the United States could change.

"Nature is incredible in its ability to adapt and change, and we need to be ready for that," Foley said. "There are certain variances of HIV that appear in North America that are very different than the plethora of varieties that appear in Africa. What we need to ask ourselves is — are we
prepared for the time when the varieties that we are treating well here today are no longer treatable?"

Susan Even, executive director of MU Student Health Center, said at the panel that because today's students did not live through the time when HIV was incurable, they have a "sense of invincibility."

"Students don't know the life that happened before we could treat HIV," Even said. "They've only seen people who are living with HIV. I think it accentuates that sense of invincibility that young people have."

According to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, as of Sept. 30, 234 residents in Missouri have been diagnosed with HIV or AIDS. In the central Missouri region, which is made up of 37 counties including Boone, there were 36 cases of HIV or AIDS in 2014.

While AIDS and HIV are often referred to in the same context, the two are different. According to the Center for Disease Control, HIV is a virus, and an HIV infection can lead to AIDS.

Louganis said that, although he may live with HIV, it doesn't define him.

"I'm not focused on my disease," Louganis said at the panel. "HIV is a part of my life. I live with it. I'm a gay man living with HIV, but that doesn't define me."

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Jay Ambrose: Universities incorrect about political correctness

Dec. 2, 2015

**NO MU MENTION**

Universities in America are getting tough on using words.

If you use the word "female" or "American" or "healthy" or "violate" or "normal" or "foreigner" or "insane" or "obese," for instance, there are those at these institutions who say you might offend someone, and, yes, I know what they are talking about.

I mean, as soon as I read the word "offend" in actual accounts of administrators or professors cracking down on such verbal misbehavior, I got out my microscope, examined it with care, and discovered its deployment was a microaggression.
To me, at any rate. Seeing this word was an atomistic but nevertheless painful puncture that made me think of all the times I have been offended, which is to say, insulted, belittled, snubbed, denigrated. I was suddenly full of hurt. Depressed. Traumatized.

Why wasn't I stuck in a safe zone or at least trigger-warned the word was coming? Did no one care about me? Couldn't someone at least have posted something on the order of a movie rating, just two words in red print prior to the word "offend." saying "Adults only"?

Here's where I start talking seriously, folks, for it is far from adult, much less intellectual, for students, professors and administrators to be engaged in the moment's absurd overkill on political correctness. What we've been seeing is childish and more: an assault on reason, discussion and freedom.

At one school, students wanted to shut down a student newspaper for containing thoughts different from theirs while at others administrations have enacted speech codes and professors have threatened low grades or failure for clinging to excoriated expressions. Invited speakers who might open minds have been disininvited by students with closed ones.

Concerning forbidden expressions, the possibilities are such that the best way to stay out of trouble would seem to be round-the-clock silence unless maybe you are favored protesters. Consider this case: A Black Lives Matter group walked through a library yelling vicious vulgarities and disrupting study and then was defended by an administrator critical of "conservative" reactions.

All of this and much more is part and parcel of such reported university faults as softened study demands, the near abandonment of core humanities, student intolerance in the name of tolerance and the professorial substitution of leftist, conformist hooey for the adventure of competing ideas. The experience isn't without cost. Students must often pay predatorily imposed, ruinously hurtful tuition fees.

The heartening news is that much that is good and some that is great remains in these varied institutions and that ours is still a free enough society for there to be critiques galore. A special missive, reprinted in National Review online, came from Princeton students calling themselves the Princeton Open Campus Coalition.

Their particular concern began with a protest in which black students barged into the office of university President Christopher Eisgruber and refused to leave minus their demands being met. A sense on campus, they said in a letter to the president, was that anyone at odds with protester views was subject to slander and vilification.

They politely requested a since-granted meeting with Eisgruber to discuss how the university might preserve a culture of civil discourse without intimidation but with plenty of challenge. They said no student of any set of convictions should feel "safe" from having his or her views contested and that they would like more professors who do just that.
They simultaneously voiced opposition to faculty members being required to undergo "cultural competency training." They said this sounded to them like imposing "orthodoxies" and that one professor said it reminded him of "re-education programs" in his native Romania.

Not these students, certainly, and none of the critics I've read are shrugging their shoulders about bigotry. What they want is the kind of intellectually mature educational institutions that better enable flourishing lives.