Tuition expected to remain steady at four University of Missouri campuses

December 11, 2015 • By Steve Giegerich

NORMANDY • Gathering for a regularly scheduled meeting for the first time since unrest on its flagship campus forced the resignations of two top administrators, the University of Missouri Board of Curators returned on Thursday returned to the more mundane matters of tuition, enrollment and academic affairs.

The first of two days of sessions at the University of Missouri-St. Louis saw Interim President Michael Middleton seated at the head of the board table.

Middleton in November was selected as the temporary successor to Timothy M. Wolfe. A veteran educator, Middleton was a deputy chancellor emeritus and a professor emeritus of law at the time of his appointment.

Wolfe, along with University of Missouri-Columbia Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, announced they were stepping down in the wake of racially charged protests that roiled the Columbia campus.

The tumultuous month ended with the departure of longtime Mizzou head football coach Gary Pinkel, a resignation prompted by health issues.

The curators are expected to vote in executive session at some point over the next two days on the salary for Pinkel’s successor, former defensive coordinator Barry Odom.

System spokesman John Fougere said the terms of the Odom contract would probably not be made public this week.

In his presentation to the board, Brian Burnett, vice president of finance and the UM system’s chief financial officer, did reveal that in-state tuition in the 2016-17 academic year was expected to remain steady.

Burnett cautioned, however, that the cost of attending a UM system institution could change once the Missouri Legislature and Gov. Jay Nixon reach an accord on the upcoming state budget.

The chief financial officer said tuition has in part leveled off because of course consolidation and other measures that this year saved the system $29 million.

Tuition paid by the largest enrollment in system history, 77,000 students spread across four campuses, also helped offset costs.

The price of attending classes notwithstanding, Burnett said students should anticipate slight increases in course fees and probably room and board when classes resume next summer.

The board is expected to sign off on the tuition and fee schedules when the curators convene again in the spring.
Flat tuition proposed for UM students

By DALE SINGER - DEC. 10

Taking into account low inflation, state law and a request from Gov. Jay Nixon, the University of Missouri is proposing no tuition increase for resident undergraduate students at its four campuses in the next school year.

The proposal was introduced at the Board of Curators meeting held Thursday on the university’s St. Louis campus. Curators will take a final vote in the spring on tuition for the 2016-17 school year.

Though tuition would remain flat for undergraduates who live in Missouri, some fees are set to rise by variable amounts at the system’s campuses in St. Louis, Columbia, Kansas City and Rolla.

In September, Nixon announced that leaders of the state’s public colleges and universities had agreed to freeze tuition next year in exchange for his asking for a 6 percent increase, or nearly $56 million, in funding for higher education. The money would be awarded based on institutions’ performance in a variety of areas, including graduation rates, student retention and academic achievement.

A 1 percent increase in state appropriations means $4.2 million for the University of Missouri system.

But Steve Knorr, the university system’s vice president for university relations, acknowledged to the curators Thursday that the governor’s request is far from a sure thing.

“It’s going to be a big challenge, in the current legislative environment, to get that increase,” he said.

The curators also heard a report that the system had saved $77 million over the past two years through efficiencies and effectiveness moves in a variety of areas. Brian Burnett, vice president for finance, said such changes are badly needed, given the stagnant nature of state support.

“We’re still a bargain and a good value,” he told the curators. “What we’re trying to do is meet challenges.

Burnett said the recent changes in administration at the top of the university system, with the resignation last month of President Tim Wolfe and Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin,
has set the tuition review back slightly. But he still expects that a final recommendation can be brought to the curators for approval in the spring.

**More from tuition, less from the state**

According to information presented to the curators, since 2001 state support for the university system has declined by 26 percent, or $148 million, in purchasing power. At the same time, enrollment has grown from 56,000 to more than 77,000, leading to a drop of 47 percent in real terms of state appropriations per student. Class sizes have also increased.

To make up for the decrease, the system has had to increase revenue from tuition. While the UM system historically has been considered to be state-supported, in 2010 money from tuition and fees surpassed the amount appropriated by the state, and that trend has continued. For the current year, tuition and fees represented 52 percent of the system’s budget, while 35 percent came from the state. Other revenue, which made up the other 13 percent, has remained relatively flat.

Nixon has frequently mentioned that Missouri ranks near the top nationwide in holding down the cost of tuition to public colleges and universities.

State law limits the amount that public colleges and universities can raise tuition to the national Consumer Price Index without receiving a waiver from the Department of Higher Education. According to information presented to the curators on Thursday, the national CPI for 2015 is expected to be 1.0 percent when final figures are released next month.

Last year, a projected 1.8 percent rate of inflation in December had dropped to just 0.8 percent by January because of a sharp drop in gasoline prices. Curators approved a tuition increase of 0.8, though curator David Steelman of Rolla, a former member of the General Assembly, voted no. He said the university needs to make a stronger case for more state support to avoid future tuition hikes.

Comparing resident undergraduate tuition and fees at the four campuses to public doctoral institutions nationwide, all four UM campuses were less than the national average of $10,354 for the current academic year. UMSL had the highest tuition and fees for the UM system, at $10,065. The UM average is $9,687.

Judged against tuition and fees at comparable institutions in the eight states bordering Missouri, only the state universities in Nebraska and Oklahoma charged less per semester than the UM average.

Proposed increases in fees at UMSL include $94.70 for the joint engineering program with Washington University; the second year of a 10 percent increase for undergraduate nursing students; and a restructuring of fees for online courses.

UMSL Chancellor Tom George announced at the meeting that Express Scripts will provide $2.5 million for scholarships and support for the campus Bridge Program which helps prepare high school students for success in college.
The gift will fund up to 20 new UMSL scholarships each year for the next five years, with preference given to participants in the Bridge Program from public high schools in north St. Louis County.

In a presentation to the curators, George said Express Scripts has given the campus more than $6.5 million to scholarships, academic programs and new buildings.

In an interview, George said the scholarship support is crucial to the campus.

“The average family for our students is about $50,000,” he said. “If you look at a Mizzou students, it’s about $110,000 thousand. The most Pell-grant eligible students are right on our campus. That’s very important money.”

A budget crunch at UMSL, prompted in part by a drop in enrollment and an increase in merit scholarships, led to the campus reversing course last month and canceling the creation of a new School of Public Policy and Administration.

The campus is trying to save $8.5 million this fiscal year, about 6 percent of its operating budget. It imposed a hiring freeze a year ago, when it said the budget shortfall was $2 million. Salary increases at the campus have been held down or eliminated.

**New curator joins the board**

At the start of the meeting, the newest member of the board, Yvonne Sparks of the 1st congressional district St. Louis, was sworn in. She is the assistant vice president and community development officer for the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Sparks was named to the board by Nixon for a term ending Jan. 1, 2021. She will serve on the board for now, but her nomination is subject to Senate confirmation once the General Assembly reconvenes next month.

Sparks, who is African-American, was named to the board last month, a few days after racial tension in Columbia led to the resignation of the chancellor at Mizzou and the president of the university system. She is the second black member of the board, along with David Steward of St. Louis.

*The University of Missouri’s Board of Curators holds the license for St. Louis Public Radio.*

**MISSOURIAN**

**New buildings, rebuilding trust highlight first half of curators meeting**
ST. LOUIS — After a November of closed, high-stakes meetings as racial tensions and administrative upheaval came to a head at MU, the UM System Board of Curators got back to regularly scheduled programming Thursday: new buildings at MU, potential hikes in student fees and rebuilding trust throughout the state.

Gary Ward, MU vice chancellor for operations, presented the curators with plans for two large research facilities, a new home for the School of Nursing, new graduate student housing and a rebuilt McKee Hall.

A 120,000-square-foot complex for medical, veterinary medicine and bioengineering research would cost an estimated $120 million. Two proposed buildings next to the College of Veterinary Medicine would hold 28 greenhouses for plant sciences research at a cost of $30 million. Another $50 million would buy the Nursing School space for a growing student body and research needs, Ward said.

MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley said the research facilities, together with a revamped Lafferre Hall and a bigger building for the Nursing School, are essential to boosting the university's profile in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields and improving its standing in the prestigious American Association of Universities.

"Those areas are the ones most likely to get the statistical results that the AAU looks for," Foley told the curators.

MU is one of 34 public universities in the invite-only association, which evaluates its members on a range of categories, including competitively funded research support, faculty awards and fellowships.

Ward also said MU hoped to partner with a private company to build new apartments for graduate students and their families on the former site of University Village and the Student Parent Center, which were torn down last year after a walkway collapse killed a Columbia firefighter.

"We are looking at possible childcare facilities at the site," Ward said. The Forum on Graduate Rights demanded the return of on-campus daycare in August and again last month.

Ward said a $25 million proposal to demolish and rebuild 93-year-old McKee Hall with added lab space will likely be ready for curator approval at the February meeting in Columbia. He said there is still planning to be done on each of the other four projects.

Student representative Tracy Mulderig said that with relatively large price tags on the projects, the curators should make sure students understand why each is important.

"I would encourage you all to really explain how each building benefits students, so they know how each will tangibly benefit them," she said.
Higher fees

The curators also got a look at the proposed increases in tuition and supplemental fees for fiscal year 2017 that they’ll vote on in February.

The proposal would keep tuition for in-state undergraduates flat, in compliance with Gov. Jay Nixon's September promise of spending an additional $55.7 million for higher education in fiscal year 2017 in exchange for a tuition freeze.

But MU students would pay more per credit hour in every school on campus, with the biggest increases coming for those taking courses in the Sinclair School of Nursing and the Trulaske College of Business.

Graduate clinical nursing courses, already the most expensive at $191.50 per credit hour, would rise to $197.20, and undergraduate nursing courses would rise $6.40 to $96.40 per credit hour.

Graduate business school credit hours would cost $99, up $6, and undergraduates would pay $84.60, up $5.20.

Brian Burnett, the UM System's chief financial officer, said declines in state funding meant tuition and student fees have been the primary source of funds since fiscal 2010.

However, he said the system universities have been able to keep tuition and student fees low compared to other universities in the region.

"We still think we're a good bargain, a good value, even with the challenges we face with state funding," Burnett said.

Rebuilding trust

Steve Knorr, the UM System's vice president for government relations, acknowledged growing distrust in the system among graduate students and students of color in recent months and pledged the system was working to satisfy their needs and make them feel welcome again.

He said Interim System President Michael Middleton's blog posts and interviews with six media outlets, many of which focused on MU’s racial climate, showed a commitment to mending the system's relationship with students, faculty and the public.

The interviews came just weeks after former system president Tim Wolfe's Nov. 9 resignation. Former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin stepped down the same day after nine deans signed a letter to the curators and Wolfe saying Loftin had created a "toxic environment through threat, fear and intimidation."

Knorr also warned of expected attacks on the curators' authority from Jefferson City and said he was already tracking 50 prefiled bills that could affect the system in the 2016 legislative session.
Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-St.Louis County, filed one that would require the system to open its books to the state auditor at least once a year.

Sen. Brian Munzlinger, R-Williamstown, filed another that would create a board to evaluate teaching waivers requested by system faculty. Professors needing extra time for research or leadership positions can ask for waivers exempting them from teaching the two three-credit-hour courses normally required in a semester. Besides creating the board, the bill would also cap the amount of faculty allowed to have waivers at 30 percent.

Munzlinger and Bob Dixon, R-Springfield, have also filed bills that would allow concealed carrying of firearms at universities across the state.

"Many of these bills strike at the heart of this system and your ability to govern it as curators," Knorr said.

Knorr's presentation also mentioned expected bills that could review the faculty tenure system or dissolve the UM System itself.

“We’re in the crosshairs right now, it seems like, with the things that have happened in the past month," Curator Phillip Snowden said, speaking to Knorr. "We need to really concentrate on having a single voice in Jeff City and going through your office rather than having individuals go and talk to these legislators. We need to tighten this up."

**Sparks sworn in**

Yvonne Sparks was sworn in as curator representing the 1st Congressional District of Missouri, which covers the city of St. Louis and north St. Louis County. Gov. Jay Nixon appointed Sparks, the assistant vice president and community development officer for the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, on Nov. 13.

Her seat is still subject to Missouri Senate approval.
MU students decide to transfer after semester's racial tension


COLUMBIA - Racial tension on MU's campus has caused some students to take matters into their own hands by transferring universities. Thursday was the last day of classes for students.

Many students have decided to withdraw from the term and some decided to stay to finish the semester, but will transfer after they finish.

"I'm transferring because I really didn't like all the racial stuff that happened on campus," MU freshman Keenan Callion said.

Another freshman student said for the money he's paying, safety is vital.

"People have gone out of their way to make it feel like we shouldn't be here, and if I'm paying 20 or 30 thousand dollars, I have a choice of where I can be at," Ronald Hearns said. "I feel like where I was from it wasn't like this."

One student packed up her stuff and returned to Chicago right after racial tensions turned into threats earlier in the semester.

"I didn't feel comfortable at school, so I felt it was best for me to just withdraw," Teria Halsell said.

For Halsell, she said her withdrawal was a result of her feeling like her teachers didn't care about her success in the classroom and the racial problems were just the icing on the cake.

MU Associate Director of the News Bureau said that the number of term withdrawals for the semester are actually down from past fall semesters. This semester, 320 out of 35,448 students have withdrawn. That number is down from 376 and 372 the past two fall semesters.

Students who withdrew from the term simply had to complete a form that they could get from MU Registrar's office. Students then had to contact their academic area for signatures. Monday was the last day to withdraw from the term.

On the other hand, the number of students who have decided to transfer after finishing the semester has yet to be calculated.

One student said he has decided to stay despite two of his friends' decision to leave.
"I'm staying because, I feel like this being a PWI [predominantly white institution], leaving this school wouldn't solve any of the problems that I would have on any other campus," freshman David Westbrook said. "By no means is Mizzou a bad institution, but when you have such a low population of black people on campus, you don't feel welcome."

The students KOMU 8 News talked to said they don't blame the institution for the incidents happening on campus, but they said direct actions should have been taken afterward to ensure students' safety.

Concerned Student 1950 plans to continue to educate students, raise awareness

Reuben Faloughi: “To know that other students have that same experience and are willing to stand up with you because you did, it’s so empowering. It makes the sleepless nights worth it. It makes the threats worth it. It makes the struggle worth it.”

A movement that generated national attention, forced out UM System President Tim Wolfe and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and generated support from colleges across the country, started with a simple, vague message in a GroupMe.

“Who’s interested in planning something?” it read.

It was mid-September. Reuben Faloughi, a graduate student, liked the message. And with that, Faloughi and 10 others became the original 11 founders of Concerned Student 1950. They had no idea how big the movement would become.

“Nobody thought it was going to be a group,” Faloughi said. “Nobody thought that it was going to become a brand. And ultimately, we didn’t even know that we were going to do a demonstration during the homecoming parade.”

Some of the original 11 already knew each other because of their participation in the “die-in” event during the MU4MikeBrown movement in fall 2014. It’s where many of the original members got their start in organizing and planning change. During Concerned Student 1950’s press conference after Wolfe’s resignation on Nov. 9, Jonathan Butler made sure to give credit to the activists who came before.

“When you look at what’s been happening on campus, especially in terms of black students, I would be remiss and it would be inappropriate if I did not acknowledge the people who got us here,” Butler said. “Specifically, when you look at post-Ferguson activism that happened here at
the university, the movement ... was ignited by three queer, black women who started
MU4MikeBrown.”

Concerned Student 1950 met for the first time three weeks before the Homecoming parade. Although they didn’t know each other well, their desire to change the culture of race on campus helped them bond quickly, Faloughi said.

“When there’s new people that you don’t know there’s always some skepticism,” Faloughi said. “Ultimately, we still had the same goals. We had shared experiences being black and marginalized on the campus. I think in that regard, we knew that we were coming together for a purpose that was bigger than us.”

The group spent several days together to become more familiar with each other and plan their course of action. At one of the first meetings, someone brought up the idea to hold a demonstration during the Homecoming parade.

Three weeks later, the original 11 members of Concerned Student 1950 formed a human chain during the Homecoming parade to block Wolfe’s car, the UM System president at the time, and talked about the history of racism at MU. The human chain halted the entire Homecoming parade. Wolfe and some parade spectators did not acknowledge the protesters, and some members of the crowd started “M-I-Z, Z-O-U” chants to overpower the 11 members.

After the protesters were ushered away by police, the 11 members of Concerned Student 1950 went back to the Student Center for two and a half hours to process what had happened. Maxwell Little, a graduate student and one of the original 11 members, said the demonstration was emotionally, mentally and physically draining, but it became a turning point and a defining moment for the movement.

“We talked about the situation and talked about our personal lives,” Little said. “We talked about personal issues and experiences that nobody had shared with anyone else before. That moment brought us together like brothers and sisters.”

At first, the “Racism Lives Here” protests and other social justice movements focused their efforts on ousting Loftin. But after the Homecoming parade, Concerned Student 1950 shifted their attention to Wolfe. And while the change was sudden, there was a specific reason to the shift.

“That’s when Tim Wolfe became the big fish, so to speak,” Faloughi said. “After that incident, it was like, if Tim Wolfe could get away with it, well then of course Loftin could get away with it because he’s Loftin’s boss.”

Long, late-night meetings at 1 or 2 a.m. became common. After the Homecoming demonstration, they were determined to accomplish their mission of ousting Wolfe, and they became even more committed to the movement.
“Continued negligence by Tim Wolfe created his own conditions for his departure,” Faloughi said. “He did this to himself.”

“Beautiful Chaos”

Neither Faloughi nor Little was at Waffle House when graduate student Jonathan Butler announced his hunger strike to other members of the group Sunday, Nov. 1.

Faloughi wasn’t able to make it. And after being so focused on the movement in the months before, Little wanted to spend the free time he did have with his family. Both received word of Butler’s hunger strike via text, and both wanted to support Butler in whatever way they could.

“When JB has his mind set on something, there’s nothing you can do,” Little said. “So I was like, ‘I’m gonna support you, and I’m going to fast in solidarity with you because we’re a team.’”

Several of the other original 11 members went into organizing mode, which led to the campsite at Carnahan Quad. While the original purpose of the campsite was to simply raise awareness about Butler’s hunger strike and the issues facing minority communities at MU, it turned into much more.

It became a space to share personal experiences. It became a place for people to have critical conversations about racial climate. It became a place for marginalized students to feel welcomed.

“It was an amazing thing to see,” Faloughi said. “So much support and solidarity was shown through the items (people donated), the messages … I took pictures of some of the messages because they were so touching.”

Places like the campsite were empowering, but supporters of the movement had to also watch as Butler’s health slowly but steadily started to decline.

“It was tough. It hurt,” Faloughi said. “It was hurtful, but it was empowering at the same time. This was the ultimate sacrifice. But it’s very sad to see your friend dying and you having to consider, ‘Is this his last breath?’”

But one week after Butler announced his hunger strike, all of the struggle became worth it. On Nov. 9, Wolfe resigned and Loftin stepped down from his position as chancellor to take a lesser role within the university.

Later that day, after the announcement, the original 11 members of Concerned Student 1950 held a press conference at a packed Traditions Plaza. Little called it an unforgettable moment.

Little has all of the articles from that day posted on his wall, and looking back on that moment, he still could not put his feelings in that moment into words.
“It was beautiful, beautiful chaos,” Little said. “I really can’t explain it. It was beautiful to me to stand with the people who stood with me on the frontlines and had my back through this whole experience.”

“We’ve won some battles, but not the war”

On Dec. 2, Little, Faloughi and some of the other original 11 members of Concerned Student 1950 made a Skype call into a classroom full of 30 to 40 students studying higher education along with the chief diversity officer at Harvard University.

As those students prepared to head to academia to become professors, they asked Concerned Student 1950 how to foster discussions about important issues and how to support student activism at their universities.

It was then that Little began to realize and think about the gravity of what he and the 10 others had accomplished.

“With the tradition of Harvard, that elite tradition of higher education in the United States, I was just like, ‘Wow, we had a chance to speak to Harvard students in a class. We had that big of an impact,’” Little said.

Concerned Student 1950 has also garnered support from more than 100 college campuses across the country, many of whom are also listing their own demands to their respective administrations. For Little, it’s an empowering feeling.

“What it means to me is that finally, marginalized students at predominantly white institutions are standing up and saying, ‘You know what? I’m done being oppressed, and it’s time for me to resist that oppression,’” Little said.

Faloughi echoed Little’s sentiments and was thankful for the nationwide support.

“It’s so empowering that our struggle means something to other people, or it’s a shared struggle with others,” Faloughi said. “To know that other students have that same experience and are willing to stand up with you because you did, it’s so empowering. It makes the sleepless nights worth it. It makes the threats worth it. It makes the struggle worth it.”

But while Concerned Student 1950 has generated national media attention and support from across the country, they know that there is still work to be done. Although they were successful in removing Wolfe and Loftin from their positions, they did not consider that a “win” for the movement.

The group still has seven other demands besides Wolfe’s resignation, including increasing black faculty and staff at MU, increasing funding for campus social justice centers, meeting the Legion of Black Collegians’ demands from 1969, and creating a “comprehensive racial awareness and inclusion curriculum.” They do not have any tangible evidence to show that race relations have improved on campus.
“I think the question is: Can you defeat racism or is it always present?” Faloughi said. “My view is that our society is built on racism. It’s in the fabric, the DNA of the United States. That’s the catch-22 of the struggle: you dedicate your life to fixing something that is possibly permanent.

“When I think about a win, I think of a war. We’ve won some battles, but we haven’t won the war. So maybe a win on this campus may look like having this campus really become a diverse and equitable place for all marginalized students.”

Faloughi recognizes the events during the week of the hunger strike may have polarized the campus, but he wants to foster discussion between the two groups.

“But both sides are going to have to listen,” Faloughi said. “Ultimately this is still an opportunity to show every college campus what change looks like, we’re writing the future right now.”

The university has already started to build the foundation for improved race relations in the years to come. Mike Middleton became the interim UM System president and Chuck Henson became the new interim vice chancellor of diversity, equity and inclusion. Even though Little believes these are personnel moves that should have been made years earlier, he feels it is a step in the right direction.

“They’re making adjustments and making decisions that should have been made yesterday,” Little said. “This institution will never be the same, and that’s saying a lot. They may come up with new, sneaky ways to continue the oppression, but it’s not going to be like how it was before. Marginalized students on this campus have a voice now.”

Even though the university has taken steps to solve some of the problems, Concerned Student 1950 still wants more done. The group wants shared governance: students and staff to have input as the hiring process of future administrators continues.

But above all, Faloughi wants to continue generating awareness and educating students on campus about the issues.

“A majority of our campus doesn’t understand still,” Faloughi said. “They think some students got mad, started pouting and got the chancellor and president fired. That’s not awareness. So there still needs to be more awareness, and when you do generate that awareness, that’s when you can see what you can do.”
NCAA President Mark Emmert calls Missouri football boycott 'inherently good'

NEW YORK – NCAA President Mark Emmert on Wednesday called the decision last month by Missouri football players to get involved in campus social issues “inherently good,” at least in that the athletes were engaged. The players threatened to boycott a game against BYU over perceived racial issues on campus.

“In general, anytime college athletes are participating in campus life, it’s a good thing,” Emmert said, speaking at the IMG Intercollegiate Athletics Forum. “It was a social justice question. ... A group of football players said, ‘We want our voice to be heard on this question.’ I thought that was inherently good. Having student-athletes feel they can be a piece of a very important debate. How can an educator not like that?”

On Nov. 7 the Missouri football team declared it would not play its next game in a move of solidarity with a graduate student who was on a hunger strike. The grad student and others in the Concerned Student 1950 movement were protesting what they saw as an inattention from administration to race issues on the campus.

SEC commissioner Greg Sankey said Wednesday one criticism involved in college athletics is that athletes “are not engaged on their campus,” and held up Missouri as a counter to that notion. “As difficult as that situation was,” he said, “that was a team that was very engaged.”

Bob Bowlsby, commissioner of the Big 12 Conference, noted the “high-profile stage” occupied by college athletes, and said “it’s unrealistic to think it won’t happen (again).” Emmert agreed.

“I suspect we will see more of that around big, complicated issues,” Emmert said. “We’re in a period of student activism. We’ve seen this before and we’ll see it again.”

He said he doesn’t fear that possibility, but said it brings home the importance for athletic administrations to “stay close” to athletes in order to know of concerns.

KU protesters calling for more diversity demonstrate in the chancellor’s office

- Student leaders calling for more diversity on campus marched protested at KU administration building
Students don’t believe university leaders are acting quickly enough to promote more inclusion on the Lawrence campus.

Rock Chalk Invisible Hawks demand inclusion in KU Chancellors office. They talk with E. Nathan Thomas III, Vice Provost for Diversity and Equity.

Rock Chalk Invisible Hawks demand inclusion in KU Chancellors office. They talk with E. Nathan Thomas III, Vice Provost for Diversity and Equity. Mike Yoder, Lawrence Journal World

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

Dec. 10, 2015

Student protesters at the University of Kansas are still pressing their demands for more inclusion on the campus.

On Wednesday about 100 students from the group Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk marched into Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little’s office to reiterate their demands for diversity and inclusion on the campus. Students were calling for more and faster action from university leaders.

The Lawrence Journal-World reported that members of the group barged into several classrooms and the School of Social Welfare dean’s office and after amassing a group at Wescoe Hall marched into Strong Hall, where the chancellor’s office is located.

**Student protests, led predominantly by students of color, heated up on the KU campus in Lawrence following protests at the University of Missouri that drew national attention last month and led to the resignation of MU’s chancellor and the university system president.**

In late November, in response to student protests, KU announced the formation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group being chaired by athletics director Sheahon Zenger and associate professor and African and African-American Studies Department chairman Clarence Lang. Members of the Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk group are to be included on the advisory group, which was established to help lead KU diversity efforts.

Wisconsin university panel endorses free speech

Dec. 10, 2015 • By TODD RICHMOND
MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A University of Wisconsin System regents committee unanimously approved a resolution Thursday affirming a commitment to free speech, following the lead of schools around the country that have faced protests over racial tensions and other social issues.

The regents' Education Committee approved the resolution after Chairman Gerald Whitburn recounted how he picketed George Wallace when the Alabama governor known for his segregationist policies appeared at UW-Oshkosh and how he watched protesters march in Madison when Martin Luther King Jr. was killed.

"There is a ripple in the air today suggesting it is a good and appropriate thing to reiterate and reaffirm our strong commitment to ... these principles and values," Whitburn said.

UW's resolution states that ideas on a university campus will naturally conflict but a school shouldn't shield people from remarks or concepts they might find offensive.

"Although the university greatly values civility, concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as justification for closing off discussion of ideas, however offensive or disagreeable those ideas may be to some members within the university community," the resolution states.

Regent Tim Higgins and faculty members have been developing the resolution since May, modeling it after similar resolutions from the University of Chicago and Purdue. Freedom of speech has grown into a contentious issue on college campuses across the country since they began their work. Demonstrations over racial tensions, sexual misconduct and other social issues have fed concerns that free speech could be sacrificed in order to address student grievances.

In Columbia, Missouri, protesters angry over racial incidents on campus forced University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe to resign last month. An assistant professor aligned with protesters blocked a student photographer from the protesters' tent city and university police told students to report any hateful or hurtful speech they experienced, leaving the impression any comment considered offensive could be prosecuted as a crime.

Civil liberties supporters also have cited the use of "trigger warnings" to alert students about uncomfortable course content. Campus groups also have protested or cancelled appearances by speakers with contentious views, including former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

UW-Madison saw its own free speech mini-dispute last month. Chancellor Rebecca Blank wrote in her blog on Nov. 13, a day after UW students held a street protest to show support for black students at the University of Missouri, that no one is entitled to "express (their thoughts) in ways that diminish others, or that devalues the presence of anyone that is part of our Badger community."

Blank amended her remarks three days later to say she was trying to encourage civility and wasn't advocating for limiting free speech. But three UW-Madison professors — Donald Downs, John Sharpless and Mary Andersen — wrote a column on Nov. 30 saying Blank's remarks could inhibit the free exchange of ideas on campus and run contrary to First Amendment protections. They acknowledged that Blank was trying to head off racial confrontations like Missouri but said the "clash of ideas constitutes the heart and soul of what a university is."

"This wasn't supposed to be such a big deal," Higgins said. "Events have conspired to overtake the issue."

The resolution doesn't guarantee complete freedom of speech. It states the system can restrict threatening speech or speech that is "directly incompatible with the functioning of the university." Those exceptions can never be used in a way that's inconsistent with a commitment to a completely free and open discussion of ideas, the resolution states.
Downs, who helped draw up the resolution with Higgins, said that language mirrors the University of Chicago's resolution. He said the provision could be interpreted to mean no one can interfere with someone's speech but acknowledged it also could be construed as prohibiting criticism of the university. He said he wished the language had been clearer, but insisted it still protects free speech rights and will encourage an "intellectually honest" campus environment.

The full Board of Regents was expected to vote on the resolution Friday morning.

MU Researchers Hope to Strengthen Families with New Grant

University of Missouri researchers hope to strengthen families in Missouri through a five year project. This project is funded by a $9.6 million grant. A team of human development and family researchers received the grant money from the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families.

All participants, whether married, coupled or single, will complete a relationship education class. The couples or individuals will work with a case manager and choose additional classes based on their needs.

Project Director David Schramm said the goal of the project is to help strengthen individuals in couples and family relationships. This could include strengthening marriages or relationships, as well as the relationships between parents and children.

The project has been called a “wrap around” service. This means the treatment will not only examine and advise on the marital problems in the family, but also look at other factors that may affect the relationship such as financial or anger management issues.

“We will be offering parenting education, family finance education, education related to their personal well-being," Schramm said. "Helping things go right with stresses and anger and emotions, and job skills training."

The program is going to be driven by data collection from the couples. Each couple using the services will be given an iPad and at the end of each class, they will fill out a survey that will
then be analyzed. This data will then be picked through by Schramm and his colleagues so that they can give tips to improve and reinforce their training.

“The healthy marriage funds have been around since the end of the Bush era, and we have received a smaller project that funded some programing a few years ago but we missed out on the last round,” said Schramm. “And so we were very fortunate, we went to work as a team, preparing and planning the application and we’re just thrilled to have it received and to be able to help so many families.”

The program will be offered in 21 Missouri counties. Schramm said he hopes the project can help 2,000 Missourians starting in July 2016.

GEORGE KENNEDY: Work of Kinder Institute could be important chapter for MU's story

Good news has been in short supply on our university’s campus this fall. From the football field to University Hall, the stories have more often recounted defeat and disarray than accomplishment or accolade. And there have been lots of stories.

That probably explains in large part why the biggest positive story of the semester disappeared so quickly from the front pages and why some important elements of that story haven’t yet been told, as far as I can see, by any of our usual informants.

You might consider this my attempt to fill some holes.

The Missourian headline on Oct. 8 captured the event’s significance: “MU receives $25 million gift for Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy.”

The story, and similar reports in the Columbia Daily Tribune and multiple broadcast outlets, noted that the Kinder Foundation, created by a billionaire alumnus and his wife, would underwrite a major program of research, teaching and public awareness focused on the history and function of our system of government.

There will be four new faculty positions, graduate and post-graduate fellowships for students, an array of courses on campus and online, and a series of public lectures.
Missing from that coverage, however, were a couple of facts that, when I learned them later, caused a bit of concern.

We weren’t told that the agreement with the Kinders requires the university to come up with half the cost of operating the Institute. That will amount to more than $1.2 million a year when the Institute is in full swing.

Nor did we know, until the New York Times reported it a few weeks later, that Rich and Nancy Kinder each had given Jeb Bush $1 million this year alone. That wasn’t their first reach into their deep pockets for the Bush family.

We journalists are notorious for our math aversion, but those numbers are too big to be overlooked. So after poking around online and picking up some background on the Kinders and the pipeline empire that has yielded for Rich a net worth recently estimated at $8.2 billion, I got in touch with the founding director of the Institute.

We met Monday in his temporary office in the Professional Building on University Avenue. The permanent quarters, to be renovated at university expense, will be on the fourth floor of Jesse Hall.

Justin Dyer is an associate professor of political science. He was a collegiate wrestler at Oklahoma and holds a doctorate from the University of Texas-Austin. His most recent book was "Slavery, Abortion, and the Politics of Constitutional Meaning," published in 2013. I haven’t yet read it.

Professor Dyer did his best then and in a follow-up phone conversation to set my mind at ease. He began by pointing out that he and the associate director, history Professor Jeff Pasley (a Harvard Ph.D.) have been working for several years on creating an interdisciplinary program in constitutional democracy.

Several courses are already being taught, and a minor in the field is already available. He and Professor Pasley, he said, are intent on developing "an intellectually diverse faculty." All the new faculty hires, he said, will be handled through the usual procedures and undergo the usual vetting. The Institute’s first annual report lists nine current "core faculty" members, from history, political science, economics and law.

When I asked about the role of the Institute’s advisory board, which will have four members appointed by the university and four by the Kinder Foundation, Professor Dyer said his understanding is that the board will be concerned primarily with oversight of the budget, which is projected to exceed $2.4 million by FY2020.

The required university contribution is standard in this kind of arrangement, he pointed out. The Reynolds Journalism Institute, recipient of the only two larger academic endowments in the university’s history, has a similar cost sharing.
He doesn’t know where the university share will come from, he said. He added, “It’s good for the university to invest in the humanities and social sciences. There’s not much of that.” He expects that more fundraising will be needed.

Rich Kinder’s two MU degrees are in history and law. After he served in Vietnam as an Army officer, he and his first wife fell into bankruptcy as real estate investors before he joined and rose to the top of an energy company headed by another MU alumnus.

That alum, of course, was Ken Lay. The company was Enron.

A falling-out led to his departing well before Enron collapsed and then to his teaming up with yet another MU alumnus. Bill Morgan, who now heads the nationwide pipeline company they formed, Kinder Morgan.

Professor Dyer told me he expects Sara Scholes Morgan, an MU alumna and wife of Bill Morgan, to be a member of the advisory board. He said he thinks she is a contributor to Democrats.

Everything I’ve now learned suggests that we’re opening a new chapter of what promises to be a fascinating and important addition to the story of our university.

On MOOCs and Mizzou

December 10, 2015 - 5:56pm

Dan Butin

Student protests are seemingly everywhere. What began at the University of Missouri has spilled over onto college campuses across the country and onto front-page news and editorials from the New York Times to the Wall Street Journal.

At first glance, any linkage between such protests and an op-ed about online education feels far-fetched, a tad too forced. What would the issue of race relations on campus, of social justice, have to do
with online education and MOOCs? (I know, I know, they are not the same thing; far from it; I just couldn’t resist the alliteration of the title.)

As it turns out, a lot.

To be clear, I’m not talking about the traditional critiques (or defenses) of online education and diversity. We all know by now that those enrolled in MOOCs are for the most part those who already have the credentials, opportunities, and access; we are also acutely conscious of the inconvenient reality that even with a so-called digital democracy of global and free openness, a deep and divisive divide permeates who benefits from such a digital cornucopia of learning technologies.

But this is not the issue at hand. Rather, what I want to make vivid is that such student protests reveal a true limit to online education and, at the very same time, offer a powerful reminder for the potential power of the hybridization of higher education.

To see this, we must first understand that scholars usually differentiate between a weak and a strong multiculturalism. The former goes by lots of different labels, such as difference multiculturalism or cultural competence, with an emphasis on respecting and celebrating the voices and traditions of others and of coming to understand oneself and one’s own implicit biases and privileges. The latter is what is usually found within critical theory or anti-oppressive education, with an emphasis on social justice issues and the overturning of deeply-embedded cultural and societal norms of, for example, systemic racism and the institutionalization of masculine and heteronormative privilege.

The student protests are, by and large, all about strong multiculturalism. As Henry Reichman, chair of the AAUP’s Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure, commends in a recent op-ed, today’s students “have begun to grapple with issues that their elders have resisted tackling for far too long.”

Indeed.

Issues such as racism, systemic oppression, and white privilege are difficult stuff to talk about, much less to adequately address and reform. As Amherst’s President phrased it in a letter to students and the larger community, “We agree with the students that racism and other deeply entrenched forms of prejudice and inequality continue to affect our institutions and our culture as a whole. And we acknowledge that our efforts to achieve a more inclusive and egalitarian environment are insufficient...[Yet] What is going on at Amherst right now is not at odds with our educational mission or an aberration from its course. It is part of a struggle in the direction of greater awareness, understanding, and freedom from ignorance, prejudice, and narrow ideologies...The complexity of the issues is challenging, yes, but also energizing...”

Reichman makes a similar point, drawing out the “teachable moment” and the critical need for students’ academic freedom to engage in such protests: students “have made and will again make mistakes. They will offend others even as they respond to deeper offenses against their own dignity. They may demonstrate indifference to the rights of others, as protesters everywhere always have. But, in doing so, they will learn. And that, it seems to me, is the essential point. Student academic freedom, in the final analysis, is about the freedom to learn. And learning is impossible without error.”

And it is here where we get to the heart of matter.

For such protests are not happening at institutions such as Western Governors University or Southern New Hampshire University or the University of Phoenix or the American Public University System. To
Student protests don't happen in online universities or through competency-based education. (There are no doubt numerous mitigating sociological factors at play here, not least of which are the student demographics at these institutions; but as the graduate student protests at the University of Missouri made abundantly clear, age is not the determining factor.)

I would suggest that such protests do not happen at online institutions because online education is fundamentally organized (pedagogically and structurally) to promote a very particular type of learning; a learning without error. What I mean by this is that online education (and here I clump together MOOCs, online education, and CBE) is an incredibly effective and efficient mechanism for content knowledge delivery. It is structured around a paradigmatic notion of curriculum, instruction and assessment as ultimately stable, singular, and solvable. In this model, everything is able to be unbundled: the curriculum; faculty roles; an academic major. It is much like when the production line (the deep implications that everything—products, people's tasks, systems—could be reverse-engineered) revolutionized how things were built.

In one respect there is nothing wrong with that. Such knowledge is what learning theorists describe as declarative and procedural knowledge. We need to know stuff and what to do with it, whether it is writing a paper or solving an equation. Think of this as the kindling, the building blocks and foundations, for future learning. Online education can be incredibly powerful at teaching about many issues; and exactly because it is all about reverse-engineering the teaching and learning process, research has by now shown that students can learn in such models as well as in face-to-face instruction. (And, to be honest, we must also acknowledge that much of face-to-face instruction suffers from the exact same stand-and-delivery paradigmatic perspective of content delivery; but that's a whole other discussion.)

(My hunch, by the way, is that the limit case to good online education is exactly something as complex as weak multiculturalism. This is the limit case of helping students to the edges of their comfort zones, to the conceptual edges of how far can a student change his or her own perspective of the world.)

But learning theorists also talk about the critical importance of contextual knowledge, of applying such knowledge in real-world situations. This is what we usually talk about as linking theory to practice, whether it be through project- or problem-based learning, experiential education, or “high impact” practices. It is that transformative moment where we envision a faculty member actually sparking a match of engagement to the kindling of information that students may possess. It is the passion of that fire where information is transformed into knowledge as we come to see and embrace the larger purpose of our learning.

What these student protests show is that the oxygen for sustaining such fires rely to a large extent on exactly the “errors” of engagement that Reichman referenced. Online education may on a shallow level support and even encourage student engagement. But it is not built for nor able to sustain such contextual learning.

But again, there is nothing wrong with that. We already knew that there are deep limits to the power of online learning; we already knew that a truly transformative education requires a blending of what both educational models have to offer. So what these student protests have done is just remind us that the purpose of the university is about much more than the delivery of information and that we need both the kindling of information and the spark of transformation. Because we must always allow for and indeed encourage an educational system where those moments of learning are not just sparks that create a flame, but also an explosion.
Leaders discussing contract details for MU's new football coach

ST. LOUIS, Mo. - ABC 17 News has a reporter in St. Louis, where the University of Missouri system board of curators are expected to approve contract details for MU’s new head football coach, Barry Odom, after the team's defensive coordinator was promoted last week.

It is the first official curator's meeting for the new interim system president, Mike Middleton, after Tim Wolfe resigned last month following protests on campus.

Other topics discussed on Thursday include a 2015 budget efficiency report, the swearing-in of new board members and proposals for two new degrees at Mizzou.

Leaders will continue their meetings on Friday as needed.

Curators to vote on name for new residence hall

If approved, George C. Brooks Hall will be the third campus building named after a black man.

Set to open next fall, Building One is finally getting a name — George C. Brooks Hall, if the UM System Board of Curators votes ‘yes’ at their meeting Friday.
Building One is on the site of the former Jones Hall, demolished in January 2015. If the name goes through, it will be the third building on campus named after a black man, according to previous research by The Maneater.

George C. Brooks directed the Financial Aid office in its infancy, developed MU’s work-study program, and was one of the first African-American administrators. For his efforts in the Financial Aid office, a scholarship for underrepresented students was named after him. Each year, 25 students receive the $7,500 award, which comes with an out-of-state tuition waiver.

According to the meeting documents, naming the building after Brooks would recognize “his efforts to create opportunities for a diverse range of students in a wide range of educational and cocurricular activities, and in particular, access to higher education for many first-generation college students.”

Residential Life Director Frankie Minor said the name is part of the department’s mission to create more inclusive communities.

The name was recommended by the Residence Halls Association and given informal approval by administrators. Minor said it received good support along the way. The Board of Curators have the final say on the name.

The naming requirements in the UM System Collected Rules and Regulations say that a building can be named after someone who served the institution and the state of Missouri.

“I believe Mr. Brooks is deserving of that honor,” Minor said.

A Columbia native, Brooks attended Douglass High School, according to his biography in the meeting documents. He received his undergraduate education at Lincoln University with the help of the GI Bill. He eventually changed his career plans to stay in town and teach science classes at Douglass.

He also coached several sports, a position in which he pushed racial boundaries by arranging “football games between white and black high schools,” according to meeting documents. He also advocated for the integration of umpires.

Outside of the school system, Brooks was a local civil rights activist. He led the effort to desegregate Columbia restaurants and “fought for a city ordinance ending discrimination in housing,” per the biography.

Minor referred to Brooks as a “trendsetter.” Brooks was one of the first African-American senior staff members at MU, and also helped to provide access to education.

“He soon earned a reputation for encouraging students individually as they sorted their way through financial difficulties,” according to the meeting documents.
Higher education plan sets five-year goals for Missouri colleges

NO MU MENTION

By Rudi Keller

Thursday, December 10, 2015 at 6:10 pm

Missouri should overhaul its financial aid programs to encourage students to remain in the state after graduation and establish a fund to provide emergency help when unexpected expenses threaten to force them out of school, the Coordinating Board for Higher Education decided Thursday.

The board approved a draft report titled “Preparing Missourians to Succeed: A Blueprint for Higher Education” during the afternoon session of its meeting at the Holiday Inn Executive Center. The report, prepared by a 36-member committee of business, education and political leaders, made recommendations in five areas including providing enough state support and financial aid to put Missouri in the top 10 nationally for college affordability.

All of the areas are important, but meeting the affordability goal should be the top priority, committee co-chair Deb Hollingsworth of St. Louis, a retired AT&T executive, said.

“It is a fine line” between spending on institutional support and financial aid, she said. “Both need the money.”

To improve affordability, the report recommends revamping financial aid programs to balance need-based and merit-based awards. Other recommendations include a forgivable loan program that writes off debt for students who stay in Missouri after graduation, a scholarship that pays two years of tuition at a community college or heavily subsidizes the first years at a four-year school and a work-study program emphasizing skills needed after graduation.

The other goals in the report are:

- Increasing educational attainment so 60 percent of working age adults have a post-high school degree or certification by 2025.
- Increasing the number of graduates with credentials that are “valuable and relevant to individuals, employers, communities and the state.”
• Increasing state spending on research to provide matching funds for federal and private grants.
• Stronger partnerships between institutions and businesses, government and communities.

“We understand that this plan is not a panacea for everything that ails our higher education system,” Commissioner of Higher Education David Russell said.

The proposals are intended to strengthen the state’s economy by providing better trained employees who have less debt and a commitment to stay in the state, said co-chair Jim Anderson of Springfield, a vice president at CoxHealth. The blueprint is a five-year plan for improvement and members of the committee don’t intend for it to sit on a shelf with no action, he said.

“Nothing happens without execution and I am firmly convinced that a good plan, vitally executed today, is better than the perfect plan next week,” Anderson said. “Vision without implementation is nothing more than hallucination.”

Hollingsworth said the proposals should be studied by every candidate for legislative and statewide office in the 2016 elections.

“It is important for them to know what is happening and what the vision is,” she said.

According to the College Board’s annual “Trends in College Pricing” report, Missouri had the 11th lowest community college costs in the nation and the 22nd lowest average four-year institution costs in the current school year. Over the past 10 years, the average tuition at a four-year public college in Missouri has increased 12 percent, the fourth smallest increase nationally over that period.

Gov. Jay Nixon said in September that he would recommend a 6 percent budget increase for higher education in the coming fiscal year if college governing boards would freeze tuition for the 2016-17 school year.

Finding the balance between need-based and merit-based financial aid should include consideration of how family economics impact college readiness, said Roger Drake, president of Central Methodist University in Fayette. Children in families with higher incomes tend to have higher achievement in high school, he said, and merit-based aid reinforces their advantage.

“There has been an unintended, unfortunate consequence that we have left out the people we are trying to get into the education pipeline,” Drake said.
McCaskill donates $10K for sexual harassment resources

Dec. 10, 2015

By SUMMER BALLENTINE

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri's U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill said Thursday that she donated $10,000 to an advocacy group to help interns facing sexual harassment, an issue that drew national attention to the state Legislature after the resignations this year of two lawmakers accused of inappropriate behavior with interns.

The donation provides seed money for a panel of Missouri college and university representatives collaborating on how to best assist interns, said Matthew Huffman, program development specialist with the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. He said the panel will consider interns at the Capitol and in other roles.

Former state Sen. Paul LeVota, D-Independence, stepped down in August following allegations that he sexually harassed interns, which he denied.

One intern's claims launched a Senate investigation and led another to come forward with similar claims. McCaskill and other top state Democrats such as Gov. Jay Nixon publicly questioned LeVota's ability to serve in response.

Former Republican House Speaker John Diehl also left the chamber in disarray on the last day of session in May after admitting to exchanging sexually charged text messages with a Capitol intern.

McCaskill, who said she dealt with sexual harassment when she interned at the state Legislature, applauded lawmaker's recent efforts to address the culture in Jefferson City. Changes include newly mandated annual sexual harassment training for House members and staff.

But McCaskill for months also has called for ways for interns to find help outside the Capitol, such as a hotline.

"The biggest issue facing someone who is being harassed in a situation where someone has a lot more power than you have is, 'Where can I go to find out what I should do?'” McCaskill said.

Huffman said representatives from nine public and private colleges and universities — including the University of Central Missouri, which the intern who reported being harassed by LeVota attended — are part of the new panel. Members include intern coordinators, counseling directors and college investigators of possible violations of Title IX, a federal law that prohibits sexual discrimination in education.
Huffman said members will look for services that are already available and identify ways to best connect interns with help and information about sexual harassment. Ongoing prevention education, Huffman said, is necessary because students face different challenges when they get ready to join the workforce.

"The information you get as a freshman is going to be very different from when you're a junior and a senior," Huffman said.

Huffman said the hope is to come up with a plan by April 2016.

The Challenge of Restoring the ‘Public’ to ‘Public Higher Education’

By Eric Kelderman DECEMBER 11, 2015

AUSTIN, TEX.

NO MU MENTION

Advocates for public colleges know a degree has value beyond increased wages for their graduates. Now they are trying to convince everyone else.

How to make that argument is the theme here at the annual conference of higher-education lobbyists representing public two- and four-year colleges — members of the American Association of Community Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. Members of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education also attended.

'We can't forget about the overarching public good of higher education. The public good has fallen off the agenda.' Central to the discussions was the growing movement to more broadly define the value of public colleges, which for more than a decade has focused on the financial payoff of earning a degree.

"America is losing her way on higher education," Thomas W. Ross, president of the University of North Carolina system, said on Wednesday in a speech to the lobbyists.

The discussion of higher education’s value has become too focused on metrics, return on investment, and work-force preparation, said Mr. Ross, who is being forced to step down from his position at the end of the year.

The result is that colleges are increasingly described more like factories than educational enterprises, said Mr. Ross, with a mandate to produce more products at a lower price.

"We can’t forget about the overarching public good of higher education," said Mr. Ross. "The public good has fallen off the agenda."
The Economic-Benefits Pitfall

Colleges themselves have some responsibility for the state of the debate.

For at least a decade, leaders and advocates of public higher education have highlighted the individual economic benefits of earning a college degree. That reasoning has largely taken hold among both policy makers and the public, who see college as an imperative for getting a good job.

By highlighting the increased earnings of college graduates, the argument has made it easy for state lawmakers to conclude that individuals should pay for more of their education and to justify budget cuts in public higher education. The argument that a state’s residents make more money when they are well educated is meant to protect legislators’ appropriations as an investment in the state’s economic future. But it has not, in most cases, helped persuade them to increase spending on higher education.

Instead, by highlighting the increased earnings of college graduates, the argument has made it easy for state lawmakers to conclude that individuals should pay for more of their education, said Mr. Ross and others, and to justify budget cuts in public higher education.

Budget cuts are not the only fallout from a focus on individual financial benefits, Jeremi Suri, a professor of history at the University of Texas at Austin, said during a presentation at the conference.

"Students come in and want to learn interesting things," Mr. Suri said. "Sadly, they are told by their parents and everyone else, Just study to get a job."

"The message to them is, Go get what you can get, because if you don’t get it someone else will," Mr. Suri said.

Minutiae and Meetings

Mr. Suri said the first responsibility of those in higher education is to know their history and mission and to live up to its ideals. Too much time and energy is being spent in academe on minutiae and pointless meetings.

In addition, he said, state legislators need to visit campuses for more than football games.

But the problem college advocates face as they try to shift the conversation to the public good is that there is little agreement on the means and measures to show those benefits.

In contrast, state and federal governments have established several ways to link wages to college degrees and, in some cases, have criticized majors they perceive as having little economic value.

The associations at the meeting have begun various efforts to change how college success is measured. In particular, the land-grant-university group has started the Post-Collegiate Outcomes Initiative to examine both the public and the personal economic and social capital that is generated by higher education.

In an era of increased accountability, higher education needs to include both perspectives, Jonathan R. Alger, president of James Madison University, told attendees.

"Our philosophy majors do a lot with the skill sets we give them," he said. "We need to tell that story."
Eric Kelderman writes about money and accountability in higher education, including such areas as state policy, accreditation, and legal affairs. You can find him on Twitter @etkeld, or email him at eric.kelderman@chronicle.com