MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

December 21, 2015
MU grad students collect more than 1,000 signatures calling for union election

By Megan Favignano

Friday, December 18, 2015 at 2:00 pm

More than 1,000 University of Missouri graduate students have added their signatures to a list calling for a union election.

Graduate students started considering forming a union in August after MU said it could no longer subsidize health insurance premiums for graduate student workers because of a recent IRS interpretation of the Affordable Care Act. Facing a backlash from the students, MU rescinded that decision for this school year, and a task force began work to examine MU’s options for assisting with premium costs in future years.

Eric Scott, co-chair of the student committee leading unionizing efforts, said the group has had a productive semester.

“In August, the idea of unionization was kind of a pipe dream for most of us, and now it is really within our grasp,” Scott said. “I’m absolutely confident we will have a ratified graduate labor union by the end of the” spring “semester.”

Scott is a member of the Forum on Graduate Rights, a group unaffiliated with the university that formed after the initial health insurance announcement in August. Since then, the group has worked to advocate for better graduate student benefits, including better pay, guaranteed subsidized health insurance and on-campus graduate student housing.

Scott and co-chair Connor Lewis have hosted multiple union informational sessions this semester and started a union signature drive that aimed to collect a supermajority of graduate worker signatures.

A union will give graduate students more say, Lewis said.

“At the moment, pretty much all we can do is tell the administration what we want, and they may or may not listen,” Lewis said. “What this does is put the entire process into a legally designed process where they have to sit down with us as equals and both sides have to negotiate with good faith.”
The group wants to collect signatures from two-thirds of the about 2,800 graduate student workers on campus, Scott said. Just fewer than 2,000 signatures will get the group to its goal and allow it to hold a union election.

Scott and Lewis will consult with the National Education Association, a national teachers union with which graduate students have associated their potential union, during the holiday break to plan a strategy for union efforts during the spring semester. Scott said the signature drive has picked up significantly the past two weeks. He doesn’t expect they will have to collect signatures long in the spring to get the number they need.

Initially, the Coalition of Graduate Workers — the potential graduate student union — aimed to have enough signatures to hold a vote by the end of the fall semester. Scott said it is possible the recent unrest on campus slowed the group’s progress.

“If it did slow down collection efforts, I think it was the right thing to do in that moment,” Scott said.

Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, MU hire first of 4 in joint faculty initiative

By Megan Favignano

Friday, December 18, 2015 at 2:00 pm

The University of Missouri and the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis has hired the first of four joint faculty members in a program aimed to attract scientists focused on plant science and agriculture innovation.

Officials unveiled the program agreement last November. Blake Meyers, currently the Edward F. and Elizabeth Goodman Rosenberg Professor in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences at the University of Delaware, will be the first faculty member to join the partnership.

Bob Sharp, director of MU’s Interdisciplinary Plant Group and professor of plant sciences, described Meyers as an outstanding scientist.

“We were very excited to have him as the first of these joint hires. We’re looking for colleagues that will breach this gap between MU and the Danforth Center in St. Louis,” Sharp said. “People that will have the approach to their research to be integrative.”
Meyers will be a professor in the division of plant sciences and a member of the Interdisciplinary Plant Group community at MU, Sharp said.

Meyers and one other faculty member will work at the Danforth Center, and two will have offices at MU.

Meyers has a bachelor’s degree in biology from the University of Chicago and master’s and doctoral degrees in genetics from University of California-Davis. He completed postdoctoral training at DuPont Crop Genetics and UC-Davis.

Meyers will help the research institute in its efforts to create sustainable sources of food and energy while also mentoring and training MU students to become the next generation of plant scientists.

The cost of Meyers’ salary and benefits — and the other three future faculty hires associated with this partnership — will be shared equally between MU and the Danforth Center, MU spokesman Nathan Hurst said. He could not confirm MU’s share of Meyers’ salary by deadline.

All four new faculty members will have joint appointments at both institutions and will be eligible for tenure at MU. This joint initiative will focus on using plant science to address global challenges.

MU interim Chancellor Hank Foley said in an email the partnership aims to combine the plant science strengths at MU and the Danforth Center.

“This partnership also will help us become an attractor for the best and brightest, whether we’re talking about future faculty members, graduate students or undergraduate students — in other words, thinkers of all kinds,” Foley said in an email.

The Donald Danforth Plant Science Center is a not-for-profit research institute that aims to use plant science to improve the human condition.

The Danforth Center and MU already work together on research projects. Both are part of a $20 million, five-year grant the National Science Foundation awarded to multiple higher education institutions and science centers in Missouri last year. The grant program focuses on climate variability and the potential agricultural, ecological and social effects those changes have on the state.

John Walker, chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at MU, said plant science affects every aspect of life from food to energy.

“From understanding our native ecosystem, which are highly dependent on plants, or the economic driver for our economy both in our state and across the nation,” Walker said. “Certainly feeding the population of the world with a growing population is of concern.”
Gov. Nixon to interview candidates for Board of Curators student representative

By Megan Favignano

Saturday, December 19, 2015 at 12:00 am

Gov. Jay Nixon’s office will soon arrange interviews with three candidates for a student representative position on the University of Missouri Board of Curators.

The Associated Students of the University of Missouri, a student lobbying organization, submitted the three names to Nixon’s office last month. The group would not release the candidates’ names. The student representative is a nonvoting member of the nine-member board that governs finances, policies and capital building projects for the UM System.

The student organization suggests students to fill the role every two years. The group selects candidates from one of the system’s four campuses on a rotating basis; this year’s representative will come from the system’s flagship campus in Columbia.

Kaitlin Steen, executive director of the Associated Students of the University of Missouri, said the recent turmoil at MU was a common topic during the interview process. The selection committee asked applicants how they would represent marginalized students if they served on the board.

“It’s always an important part of the review process,” Steen said of the question. “The current events put more of our focus on that.”

In November, UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned after weeks of student protests over MU’s racial climate. Since then, diversity and inclusion have been focuses at the system level and on each of the system’s four campuses. The curators approved a series of initiatives last month that included adding an inclusion, diversity and equity officer to each campus.

The new student representative will serve until January 2018. The position is unpaid, but the student representative’s campus either provides a tuition and fee waiver or contributes annually to the Governor Mel Carnahan Memorial Scholarship, which the student representative is eligible to receive.
MU students submitted applications in October, and members of the Associated Students of the University of Missouri and the Intercampus Student Council conducted interviews.

Steen said the final three candidates attended the December curators meeting at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

“Attending the December board meeting allows the candidate to see their first possible board meeting and see how the current student rep participates in the board meetings,” Steen said.

The December meeting also was a chance for the candidates to meet UM System staff and members of the Board of Curators, she said, as well as the current student representative.

“The student representative position is one that you can’t fully grasp the magnitude of it until you’re in that position,” Steen said. “This gives the current student representative a time to give the students advice.”

Tracy Mulderig, the current student representative and a doctoral student at UMSL, will finish her two-year term at the end of December. The board’s December meeting was her last as student representative. In her farewell remarks, Mulderig stressed the importance of choosing one’s words carefully.

Board Chairman Donald Cupps said Mulderig did well in her role as student representative.

“I’ve appreciated Tracy — her intellect, her forthrightness and her ability to many times teach the board about issues the students are facing that we never knew of,” Cupps said at the meeting.

MU professor: Stolen artifacts stemmed from communication breakdown

By Alan Burdziak

Saturday, December 19, 2015 at 12:00 am

R. Lee Lyman, professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of Missouri, chalks up his now-dropped criminal charges related to smuggling artifacts out of rural Washington state to a breakdown in communication.
Born and raised near Columbia County, Wash., Lyman had planned for some time to conduct an archaeological trip there. In summer 2013, Lyman said he and two other researchers — doctoral candidate Matthew T. Boulanger and research affiliate Dave N. Schmitt — went to the Umatilla National Forest and Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness for “archaeological reconnaissance.”

They communicated with the U.S. Forest Service, which Lyman said told them they did not need permits to collect artifacts on federal land despite a law that mandated as much. Lyman said his contact at the forest service told them to follow the agency’s inventory plan, and Lyman provided them with a rundown of their trip. He said he told them the trio would collect some artifacts but would do no excavation.

“They made some assumptions of what archaeological reconnaissance means, I made some assumptions about what that rule means and those assumptions were not the same,” Lyman said Friday. “There was a communication breakdown.”

The researchers collected 93 items, including chipping debris, rock samples and other materials, and returned to Missouri. They also reported their haul to the service, which then demanded the immediate return of the artifacts. The three men were charged this summer, about two years after their trip.

Lyman, chair of MU’s Anthropology Department from 2000 to 2013, was charged with second-degree theft, second-degree malicious mischief and making false or misleading statements to a public servant. His colleagues were charged with second-degree theft and second-degree malicious mischief.

“To be charged with breaking a law when we were trying to work in what we perceived to be the best interest of the archaeological record is a bit off-putting, to say the least,” Lyman said. He said he only removed items that he believed were in danger of being destroyed, per his agreement with the forest service.

Charges against Boulanger and Schmitt were dropped in September after they agreed to testify against Lyman at trial, Columbia County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Dale Slack said. Lyman’s charges were dropped Dec. 2 after he agreed to write a letter of apology to the Nez Perce tribe, whose federally protected land hosted the excursion. Lyman also agreed to not conduct research on federal land for one year.

Slack said he did not agree with Lyman’s version of the events.

“This is an area where people had been tramping through for a thousand years, and the items were still there,” Slack said. “The only thing that led me to settling the case was the difficulty in proving damages.”

Slack said he was suspicious because the trio had not reported their findings to the government until after they returned to Missouri. He claims they did not tell local authorities about the endangered artifacts.
While federal prosecutors were not interested in the case, Slack said, the forestry agent on the case and the Nez Perce people were. He said he wanted to ensure the tribe’s concerns were satisfied.

“We’re not 100 percent happy with the way this turned out,” Slack said. “This hopefully will send a message to other people to be extra careful when they’re out on federal lands.”

Holbrook reflects on storied career, Mark Twain's wisdom

By Alan Burdziak

Saturday, December 19, 2015 at 12:00 am

The world is full of crazy people, at least according to Hal Holbrook.

The actor, who has been in dozens of movies and TV shows but is perhaps best known for his portrayal of Mark Twain, has used the author’s writings as a way to better grasp the world.

“Even at a young age, I realized we’re living in a world with a bunch of crazy people,” Holbrook said. “And when I started reading Mark Twain, he began to explain to me why that is.”

Holbrook, 90, met with reporters at the University of Missouri on Friday, one day before he was set to receive an honorary degree during MU’s fall commencement.

From the first time he read Twain and throughout the subsequent years, Holbrook said he has maintained an unending fascination with the man and his work.

Holbrook decided to play Twain, the pen name for Samuel Clemens and one of Missouri’s most famous residents, almost by happenstance. It was the 1950s, and Holbrook was broke and living in New York City with his wife and young child.

He and his wife had been performing a two-person act, but his wife was no longer able to perform. Someone told him to consider a solo act as Twain, Holbrook said, so he went to a used bookstore and bought a copy of “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.”

Broke and without a reliable way to provide for his family, Holbrook said he was feeling lousy at the time.
“After I read about three or four pages in, I started feeling better,” he said. “I didn’t feel so bad anymore. I thought to myself, ‘What the hell is it? I feel better.’ It was the way he wrote about people.”

He saw Twain, an ardent abolitionist and supporter of equal rights for women and minorities, as a man who was incredibly genuine. As proof of Twain’s realism, Holbrook mentioned how Twain used a racial epithet for black people more than 200 times in “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.”

“That’s the word people used in Hannibal, all the way down the river, everywhere,” Holbrook said. “This guy was writing a book about real people, what it was like. That’s why the word is there.”

Holbrook drew comparisons to the modern world and the political landscape: Islamophobia, veiled racism and politicians obsessed with thwarting the other party at any cost; particularly, he said, Republicans and their vitriol toward President Barack Obama.

Susan Bailey, Twain’s great-granddaughter, attended Friday’s event and answered a few questions after Holbrook spoke.

It was only eight years ago that Bailey, 78, learned of her lineage. She had always known she was related to Twain, but she said it took decades to trace her genealogy. Over the past year, she and Holbrook became friends.

“When I watch him do Mark Twain, Hal disappears for me,” she said. “It’s like my great-grandfather is there.”

Soon after he started to portray Twain in “Mark Twain Tonight!” in 1954, Holbrook said he decided not to update the author’s words.

Holbrook always wanted “to be Mark Twain in his time, talking,” he said. “Why? Because everything he said, everything is happening right now. It’s all happening again.”

Holbrook will be back in Columbia this spring for a special “Mark Twain Tonight!” performance April 2 at Jesse Auditorium as part of the University Concert Series.

Everything Holbrook says as Twain, Bailey said, came from the author’s work. She said she appreciates the authenticity of Holbrook’s portrayal.

“Even thought it might sound like he read the headlines today in one of your newspapers, it’s straight from Mark Twain’s mouth,” Bailey said.
Actor known for portraying Mark Twain to receive honorary degree from MU

COLUMBIA — When Hal Holbrook first agreed to do a one-man show impersonating Mark Twain in 1954, he didn't know anything about Missouri's most well-known author besides his name.

Holbrook and his wife performed together in the early 50s, but after having a baby, she was unable to work. Looking for ideas, Holbrook talked to James Pond, the son of Mark Twain's lecture manager, who suggested he do a one-man show about Twain. Holbrook reluctantly agreed to what would eventually become a Tony and Emmy award winning show, "Mark Twain Tonight!"

To prepare for the role, he went to a secondhand book store and bought "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," he said. After a few pages, Holbrook, poor and looking for money to support his family in New York, knew he had found something he liked.

Holbrook, 90, who received an Academy Award nomination for his role in the 2007 film "Into the Wild" has appeared in "All the President's Men," "Wall Street," "Lincoln," and many other films. He performed "Mark Twain Tonight!" for 60 consecutive years, through 2014, including a stint on Broadway. Holbrook will be awarded an honorary degree by MU on Saturday for his Twain performances and career's work. 

He will speak at the MU Honors Convocation at 8:30 a.m. Saturday in Jesse Auditorium.

Paul Sturtz and David Wilson, co-founders of Ragtag Cinema and the True/False Film Festival in Columbia, will also be awarded honorary degrees.

BECOMING TWAIN

After finishing "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," the next Twain book Holbrook read would play a major part in shaping his world view: "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn."

He said at first he didn't like the frequency of the "n-word" in the book, but he eventually realized its importance. As a book about a white kid growing up in Missouri in the pre-war South, Twain had to use it for authenticity.
"He used the word over and over again because that's the word that was used," he said. "This guy was writing a book about real people, what it was like. That's why the word is there.

"The word ... is used in the book 200 times because it points a finger at you, and you and me," he said emphatically. "And people who are afraid to read the book because of the word are afraid to face what is going on."

But the way the book plays out, Holbrook said, forces white people to hold a mirror to themselves. He said the racial undertones of the book are still relevant today.

He recalled that when his show debuted in 1954, the Civil Rights Movement was just beginning. He chose an excerpt from "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" that included a lynching as a form of social commentary.

"I developed the show at the same time that the Civil Rights Movement was breaking out in the South," he said. "And frankly, it became a very powerful, I would say strong, inspiration for the show."

CARRYING ON THE LEGACY

Susan Bailey, Mark Twain's great-granddaughter, said she met Holbrook for the first time at his 90th birthday party. They've kept a correspondence ever since, and Bailey, 78, said Holbrook's performances have augmented Twain's already towering legacy.

"I think Hal Holbrook has done more in his lifetime to keep Mark Twain's vision and wisdom alive than anyone else has," she said. "And I'm just very grateful he's been able to do that."

Holbrook can't help but get political when he speaks on the impact of Twain's work, but he likes to call it common sense.

He frequently poked fun at the current state of the Republican Party and riffed on the impact of slavery in the U.S.

What Holbrook wants most, however, is for his audience to see the relevance of Twain's words today.

In April, Holbrook will have a chance to bring back "Mark Twain Tonight!" for a night in Jesse Auditorium with the University Concert series.

Though the audience will have changed, Holbrook knew from the beginning that he needed to speak from the original text and not add anything himself.

"I knew then it was important not to update the material — to be Mark Twain in his time, talking," he said. "Why? Because everything he said — everything — is happening right now. It's all happening again."
"The greatest lesson you can give to an audience as far as I'm concerned, is to have them realize that," he said. "If the audience can make that connection, the light bulb can go off in their head ... maybe we've got a chance."

Honorees discuss race at MU at graduation ceremony

COLUMBIA — At the Honors Convocation on Saturday morning, MU granted honorary degrees to actor Hal Holbrook and film festival founders Paul Sturtz and David Wilson.

The convocation marked the second day of graduation ceremonies at the university. MU held four graduation ceremonies Friday, and seven more were scheduled for Saturday. Throughout the weekend, MU will confer degrees on 2,406 undergraduate and graduate students.

With some students earning multiple degrees, the university will award a total of 2,591 degrees.

Here is Missourian coverage of several ceremonies this weekend. This story will be updated.

Honors Convocation, 8:30 am. Saturday, Jesse Auditorium

A total of 317 graduates received honors medallions Saturday morning, including the Latin honors cum laude, magna cum laude and summa cum laude, as well as honors conferred by academic departments. Some students also received university honors, or the combination of Latin and departmental honors.

During the ceremony, MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley conferred three honorary degrees. Hal Holbrook, an actor best known for his portrayals of Mark Twain, received an honorary doctoral degree of fine arts. Foley awarded honorary doctoral degrees of humane letters to True/False Film Festival founders Paul Sturtz and David Wilson.

Speeches by the three men referenced the protests against racism at MU this semester. Holbrook was impressed with how the university community handled the events and said that coming to campus changed his viewpoint.

“It sounds better when you get here because you find out more about what was really done, what the odds were,” Holbrook said.
He ended his statement by quoting part of Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, which reads: “...government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

“And I’m sorry to tell you: The job is up to you,” Holbrook added.

Sturtz and Wilson spoke together, alternating thoughts. They honored Holbrook by working four different Mark Twain quotes into their speech. They also spoke earnestly about the events on campus and the need for change.

“We’re coming out of a time when the media spotlight shone in our community and we didn’t like what it revealed,” Wilson said.

He continued by speaking about the need to recognize flaws in the Columbia community. Sturtz followed up with a question for the future.

“What would it take for us to be the model for a diverse and inclusive and welcoming campus for the rest of the country?” Sturtz said.

The School of Health Professions awarded 151 degrees Saturday — 150 bachelor of health science degrees in areas such as health science, occupational therapy and diagnostic medical ultrasound and one master’s degree of health science.

At the beginning of the ceremony, School of Health Professions Dean Kristofer Hagglund told the students: “Graduates, commencement marks a successful completion of this phase of your journey as health care professionals, but it also marks your opportunity to accept a new challenge: the responsibility of continuing the legacy of teaching service and discovery that you have learned.”

The keynote speaker, Gregory Neukirch, ended his advice-filled speech by saying: “Enjoy your career, enjoy your path and don’t forget where you came from.” A 1988 graduate of MU, Neukirch is the vice president of sales and marketing at Mizuho OSI.

Graduate Karin Seley said her commencement was only a step to graduate school. Fellow graduate Amanda Lewis was happy to have her father at her graduation, even though he watched from a wheelchair after having hip surgery.

Adversity and change were two of the ceremony's themes.

Sarah Fuller’s plans changed significantly partway through her college career. The MU arts and science graduate decided to switch from pursuing a medical degree to studying women’s and gender studies and political science.

“Just so I could help people in a different way because I want to eventually be a professor of women’s studies and women in politics,” Fuller said.

Commencement speaker Bobby Campbell spoke about adversity, describing his struggle to find his biological father during his senior year of college and his despair when he was
rejected. That adversity threw him into a downward spiral of drinking and horrible grades.

He got through that low point with the help of others. Campbell cited his mother as a strong influence in his life. She became pregnant at 19 and graduated from college as a single mother. He also spoke of his grandfather, a World War II veteran.

With their help and that of others, Campbell became a successful entrepreneur and CEO.

“I truly believe that the secret to success is our ability to deal with adversity,” Campbell said.

Honorary degree recipients urge collaboration, fortitude

By Alan Burdziak

Sunday, December 20, 2015 at 12:00 am

Inclusiveness and listening to different viewpoints are necessary to create a welcoming and progressive community, the co-founders of Ragtag Cinema and the True/False Film Festival told degree recipients at the University of Missouri on Saturday.

The festival’s founders, Paul Sturtz and David Wilson, recalled the early days of the documentary film festival and how expanding their collaborators helped the event become the behemoth it is today. Wilson and Sturtz, along with actor Hal Holbrook, received honorary doctoral degrees Saturday at MU’s fall semester honors convocation, a ceremony that recognizes those students who are graduating with academic prestige.

Toward the end of Sturtz and Wilson’s address, they spoke about the recent protests and turmoil at MU that resulted in the ouster of UM System President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. Rather than shy away from the spotlight, Wilson said the community should embrace it.

“We need to let its glare strike us and reveal our flaws,” Wilson said. “We, especially white people, must own our history of racism. It’s hard. It’s really hard. It’s uncomfortable.”
Protests on campus culminated on Nov. 9, when Wolfe resigned over pressure from the group Concerned Student 1950, which was rallying against incidents of racism on campus and what it called lack of action from administrators. Loftin resigned the same day because of reported distrust and animosity among faculty members.

Sturtz asked what needs to happen for MU, as the first public land-grant university west of the Mississippi River, to be a model of inclusion and diversity.

“What would it take to convert all that publicity in the fall and to give a shining light in the world and to let people see that we’re not just reactive but proactive?” he said.

Holbrook, best known for his portrayal of Mark Twain in a one-man show, briefly touched on the campus protests during his speech. Holbrook said he was impressed with how the campus community handled the controversy. Throughout his quip-laden address, Holbrook spoke of Twain, American history and Abraham Lincoln.

It’s important, Holbrook said, to make the moral decision in life, as Lincoln did when he freed the slaves and sought to create a more just society. The actor ended his speech by quoting Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address.

“This country is the country ‘of the people, by the people, and for the people,’ and we have to keep it strong so it will ‘not perish from the Earth,’ ” he told the new graduates. “I’m sorry to tell you, the job is up to you.”

MU over the weekend handed out 2,591 degrees to 2,406 students, including 1,961 bachelor’s degrees, 460 master’s degrees and 151 doctoral degrees. More than 300 students graduated with honors Saturday morning.

Wilson and Sturtz provided an example of how they went outside their normal supporters for True/False. It was 2008 and The Crossing, a megachurch in south Columbia, asked whether it could help sponsor the festival. They were skeptical at first, Wilson said, but the partnership has flourished over the years.

“If you’re not always looking to expand your own community, if you’re not willing to be more inclusive of viewpoints that differ from your own — even radically — you’re going to stagnate,” he said.
After fee fails, MU's Ellis Library plans end to 24-hour access

COLUMBIA — The 24-hour access to MU’s Ellis Library that began in September for five days of the week is expected to end after the spring semester.

Ending the longer hours follows a failed MU student vote in November to raise fees for library operations. Ann Riley, acting director of MU Libraries, said the new hours haven't been determined. Previous hours at Ellis for Sunday through Thursday were 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 a.m.

MU libraries, which includes nine branch libraries in addition to Ellis, are the only academic unit at MU without a dedicated student fee. The proposed student fee was projected to generate $4.3 million in its first year and steadily increase until 2022. By 2022, it was projected to generate an additional $12.99 million annually.

Spending under the proposed student fee would have included opening Ellis Library around the clock seven days a week, adding a digital media lab, hiring 40 staff members and funding renovations.

MU’s annual library budget was $17.6 million in 2015, well below other members of the American Association of Universities, a group of leading research universities.

The average library budget for public university members of the AAU was $32.7 million in 2015. Even with the student library fee, MU would have remained below the average.

“It’s more of the same,” said Jim Cogswell, MU Director of Libraries. “We’ve been reducing our budget as best we can really for the last five to six years.”

The budget has remained somewhat stagnant for about a decade as student population and operating costs have increased.

MU’s enrollment increased more than 52 percent from 1998 to 2013, from 22,723 to 34,658 students. During that period, the number of library staff decreased by 25 percent from 193 to 146, according to the proposal for the fee increase.

Comparatively, the University of Kansas has 196 full-time employees and the University of Iowa has 191. The average staffing for libraries at public AAU institutions is 251 full-time employees.

The salaries for MU librarians and archivists are, on average, 20 percent below the Association of Research Libraries average for those in similar titles with the same years of professional service, according to library officials.
Additionally, MU libraries has been unable to give merit increases four of the past five years and nine of the past 12, Cosgwell said.

The staff plays a vital role in maintaining quality in the library’s services and collections, Cogswell said.

“We spend about $8 million on collections and books, journals and databases don’t just materialize,” Cogswell said. “We work closely with faculty members to avoid having the things they need for teaching and research aren’t getting cut.”

MU Libraries’ $8.8 million collections budget is $5 million below the average for public AAU universities, Cogswell said.

Significant gaps in the collection include historical collections of African-American newspapers, prominent newspapers such as the Washington Post and the Guardian, and over 300 journals that students and faculty frequently request on inter-library loans, he said.

The annual inflation rate for the costs of books and scholarly journals rarely dips below 6 percent, Cogswell said. This year the libraries are facing a deficit in its collections of more than $700,000.

“If we couldn’t have journals that some of our most senior and highly productive faculty members need on campus, we wouldn’t be able to keep those faculty,” Cogswell said. “The libraries are reaching a point where it’s getting harder to provide that access.”

One critical tool for scientists is “The Web of Science,” the largest single index of scholarly literature in the sciences. MU had to drop it in 2008 because it was costing about $300,000 a year.

The Web of Science was reinstated last year after interim chancellor Hank Foley, who was MU director of research at the time, made a point to get the campuses in the UM system, with the exception of St. Louis, to pledge money to bring it back.

Cogswell said he’s not certain how long the science resource can be retained.

Recent library renovations at Columbia University were one of the models for MU’s plan. Columbia University's plan aimed to “provide flexible work spaces, furnishings, diverse software, and high-end equipment to support collaborative group study and research.” It also sought to “provide visible and easy access to professional staff who can assist users with research and technical support questions.”

Ellis Library already had to cancel its research assistance program, which provided personal consultations for students working on projects or research.

“People who want personalized services can’t get it,” Cogswell said. “If you search Google, you’ll get 4 million answers. If you talk to a librarian, you’ll get the best answers.”
Rhonda Gibler, MU vice chancellor for finance, said the funding problem isn’t exclusive to the library.

“It’s not that the administration doesn’t care about the library, there simply isn’t enough,” Gibler said. “Everyone I work with has huge pressures on them to try and do more with less, which we’ve been doing for well over a decade.”

Columbia Planned Parenthood still has abortion license

December 18, 2015 1:00 pm • By Alex Stuckey

JEFFERSON CITY • The Columbia Planned Parenthood will hold onto its abortion license while a federal judge mulls an injunction request to stop Missouri’s health department from revoking it.

U.S. District Judge Nanette Laughrey heard on Friday arguments for and against issuing a preliminary injunction to stop the Department of Health and Senior Services from revoking the facility’s abortion license while it searches for a doctor with adequate hospital privileges. She did not make a decision Friday, which means the department still is blocked from taking the facility’s license.

Earlier this month, Laughery extended a temporary restraining order — first issued Nov. 30 — blocking the department from revoking the facility’s abortion license. That order expires Dec. 28.

But even with the restraining order, the clinic cannot perform abortions until a physician affiliated with it has hospital privileges. Because of this, Planned Parenthood in St. Louis remains the only legal abortion clinic in the state.

Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri filed a federal lawsuit last month to preserve the Columbia clinic’s abortion facility license from the department, which planned to revoke the license Nov. 30.

The Columbia clinic stopped performing nonsurgical abortions induced with a pill in November 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. Under Missouri law, centers that are informed of a deficiency must develop and implement a plan of correction, approved by the department. Diana Salgado, attorney for Planned Parenthood, said Friday that the department had not given the facility a chance to do so.

Two phone conversations do not constitute an opportunity to create a plan of correction, Salgado said.
“It seems (the department) is trying to argue (Planned Parenthood) failed to submit a plan of correction and that somehow the conversations ... (are) sufficient ... but that is not the process that the department goes through with every other ambulatory surgical center when it discovers license deficiencies,” Salgado said.

She added that the department buckled under political pressure from Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, who headed the Senate’s Planned Parenthood investigation. Schaefer, who is running for attorney general next year, is the Senate’s budget leader.

“The evidence is clear, your honor, that defendant was under enormous pressure to revoke Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri’s license,” she said. “The record contains evidence that the department was concerned about backlash and potential ramifications for its budget.”

But Assistant Attorney General James Layton said those informal conversations were sufficient.

“Although it wasn’t in writing, there was a plan,” Layton said. “The plan was, and this was pretty obvious, they were going to either find a doctor with credentials or get their doctor credentials” to meet state law.

Missouri Planned Parenthood argues to keep abortion license

December 18, 2015 5:15 pm • By SUMMER BALLENTINE

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — A Planned Parenthood attorney asked a federal judge Friday for more time for a doctor at its Columbia clinic to obtain needed hospital privileges or to find another doctor who meets those requirements so abortions can be performed at the facility.

The clinic in November stopped offering non-surgical abortions induced by a pill because its doctor faced losing hospital privileges, effective Dec. 1. As a result of the loss of state-required privileges, the state health department is seeking to revoke the clinic's abortion license.

A 1986 state law required physicians providing abortions to have certain agreements with hospitals for patient care, with the idea being patients could quickly receive help if they needed further medical assistance. The law was tightened in 2005 and most recently in 2007.

A Planned Parenthood clinic in St. Louis now is the only center offering abortions in Missouri.

Planned Parenthood last month sued the Department of Health and Senior Services, saying the agency didn't give the Columbia clinic enough time to comply.
U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey previously temporarily blocked the health department from revoking the license through the end of December.

Since then, the Planned Parenthood doctor hasn't managed to obtain new hospital privileges, and the clinic hasn't found another doctor who meets state privileging requirements. Planned Parenthood attorney Diana Salgado during a Friday teleconference asked Laughrey to give the clinic more time.

Salgado argued that losing the license will mean the Columbia clinic needs to reapply, which can take months and costs money. Maintaining its license would allow the clinic to resume offering abortions if a hospital grants Planned Parenthood's Colleen McNicholas privileges or the clinic finds another doctor who meets that requirement.

"We will be able to start up services immediately," Salgado said. "That's the meaningful difference here."

Solicitor General James Layton argued that the state wouldn't cause irreparable harm to Planned Parenthood if it revokes the clinic's license because the Columbia site can't perform abortions without a doctor anyway.

"If someone shows up at the Planned Parenthood facility and cannot get an abortion, it isn't because of the revocation," Layton said. "It's because the facility does not currently have a physician who meets the requirements to provide that service."

McNicholas' privileges with University of Missouri Health Care ended following a vote by a panel of medical staff to stop offering privileges allowing outside doctors to refer patients to the hospital and check on them. The vote came as a Republican-led legislative committee investigated abortion practices in the state and focused on the university's relationship with the nearby Planned Parenthood center.

Laughrey did not indicate when she might rule, but her prior restraining order to block the health department from revoking the clinic's license expires Dec. 30.

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Mizzou School of Journalism ranked No. 1 - 5 things you don't need to know but might want to

1. The University of Missouri School of Journalism has been ranked No. 1 in News Pro-RTDNA's annual survey, repeating its win from last year. Coming in second is Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, and in third, you'll find Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

2. St. Louis has been ranked No. 56 of 150 on WalletHub's Best & Worst Cities for Singles. St. Louis was ranked 25th in the romance and fun category and 120th in the dating economics category.

3. World Cup champion, Olympic gold medalist and St. Louis native Lori Chalupny will take over as Maryville University's head soccer coach in 2018. Chalupny retired from international soccer after helping the U.S. team win its third FIFA Women's World Cup title in Canada last summer.

4. Schlafly has rolled out a customer-focused hop beer trial program, which will ask customers to fill out a comment sheet, and then post it on a hop trial board at the bar after consuming the beer. With the new program, Schlafly plans to roll out new hop trial beers every four weeks.

5. Former Mizzou football player DeMontie Cross has been named Mizzou's new defensive coordinator and linebackers coach. Cross is originally from St. Louis and played for Mizzou from 1994-1996.

Short take: One dumb idea down, but Legislature's MVP has plenty more

December 18, 2015 3:30 pm • By the Editorial Board

Rep. Rick Brattin, R-Harrisonville, may be the most valuable member of the Missouri Legislature.
Mr. Brattin, 35, annually proposes cockeyed bills that perfectly exemplify the know-nothing extremism that dominates today’s Legislature.

One year it was a bill declaring that food stamps couldn’t be used to buy foods like sushi and fish sticks. There was the father-must-consent-to-abortion bill. Worried that the state would run out of legal lethal injection drugs, he proposed firing squads as a nice alternative.

This year he prefiled a bill that would strip scholarships from any state university athlete who refused to play for any reason other than injury. Clearly this was aimed at the Mizzou football team, which staged a brief boycott in November as the campus was roiled by allegations of racism.

Never mind that most athletic scholarships are funded by private donations. The university and its supporters, desperate to restore peace on campus, were apoplectic. So Mr. Brattin quickly withdrew his bill. But his food stamps bill is back as “no Gatorade for you.” And another prefiled Brattin bill would remove sales taxes on guns and ammunition.

And the session doesn’t even start for three weeks. We can’t wait to see what’s next.

Why College Presidents Need to Speak Up

To the cacophony of voices, often shouted, that defines the national body-politic these days is added, occasionally, that of a college president. Compared to the daily podium and social-media utterances candidates and pundits seeking the widest possible attention, we tend to do most of our talking to our campus constituents.

It doesn't always stay that way.

Liberty University's President Jerry Falwell Jr. received a campus ovation -- and national coverage -- for linking concealed-carry permits to preventing tragedies like the one in San Bernardino.

Oklahoma Wesleyan University's Everett Piper made news when he challenged students, in effect, to get a grip. Responding to a student complaint about a chapel sermon, he wrote: "At OKWU, we teach you to be selfless rather than self-centered. We are more interested in you practicing personal forgiveness than political revenge. ... This is a place where you will quickly learn that you need to grow up."

"This is not a day care. This is a university."

University of Missouri President Timothy Wolfe was compelled to resign amid various campus grievances, charges of racism and a threatened football-team boycott for what his
critics perceived as his inadequate response to their concerns. Protests brought the institution virtually to a standstill.

Coverage of academic ceremonies has often been driven by protests accompanying them. Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice backed out of an invitation to deliver the commencement address at Rutgers University following an outcry fueled by a letter to the university's president, charging that "by inviting her to speak and awarding her an honorary degree, we are encouraging and perpetuating a world that justifies torture and debases humanity."

For years, I've debated whether higher-education presidents need to speak out publicly and forcefully on controversial topics. After a quarter-century as a college president, my conclusion is that, yes, we need to.

Although many presidents are reluctant to voice their opinions in public for fear of offending key stakeholders (donors, legislators and, increasingly, faculty and students), I see little reason to decline an opportunity to use the "bully pulpit" of our offices.

One reason: We usually try to have something of significance and relevance to say. A president who takes a stand on any hot topic -- gun control, abortion, terrorism, global warming -- risks the same scrutiny as a candidate for the White House. But a university president should have the advantage of reflecting knowledge, viewpoints and research grounded in long-term scientific investigation, vetted by institutional experts and carefully readied for distribution without the daily pressures of political leverage or media deadlines.

Presidents also have a role as guardians of academic freedom. Because America's institutions of higher education have traditionally fostered open dialogue about the most compelling issues, we should join current debate about topics affecting not only our campuses, but all of our citizens. To shrink from doing so relegates our institutions to an unsettling and unnecessary silence, to existing as places of intellectual vapidity.

Putting it another way is the late University of Notre Dame President Father Theodore Hesburgh: "Anyone who refuses to speak out off campus does not deserve to be listened to on campus."

The problem for many presidents now, of course, is the spread of a new strain of political correctness on campus. Symptoms range from shouting down unacceptable (often politically conservative) commencement speakers to demanding "safe areas" free from offensive words and threatening ideas. Comedians are bypassing campus gigs because today's students either don't get, or can't take, the jokes.

That doesn't bother me so much; some campus comics aren't that clever anyway. But many of my presidential colleagues are also treading carefully. Some use the rationale that they simply don't have time to blog, tweet or text. For others, their caution overrides a sincere desire to speak out. I have been fortunate during my career to enjoy broad support of my governing boards for my public communication. Some presidents do not have that freedom.
Still, I believe we have an obligation to speak our minds, whether we offend audiences or not. Our responsibility as educators demands that we embrace different, challenging, even threatening ideas.

As attorney and professor Mark Weaver writes: "University leaders must not shrink from their duties to be the rock of principle in a rushing stream of campus anger, confusion, and unrest. Students won't always like it when they don't get all they ask for. But they will learn a great deal about the real world of family life and career, where angry demands are not always met and shouted grievances are often rebuffed."

I don't advocate that my fellow presidents take the kinds of outrageous positions we might hear on the political circuit. I do advocate, however, that we encourage debate, discussion and discourse as necessary steps in becoming educated. Although the outcome might be distasteful or troubling, presidents' voices, on balance, are influential and necessary. Especially today.

MU Language Partners program aims to embrace diversity, build friendship

MUCOLUMBIA — When Nicholas Colbert studied abroad in Japan last fall, the people around him were so helpful that he decided to help others out when he got back to MU.

“I needed help while I was overseas, so I understand the feeling,” said Colbert, a fifth-year senior in interdisciplinary studies.

Even though he had learned Japanese before studying in Japan, he found conversational language different from what he learned in books.

“No matter how accurate it is, it doesn’t sound right,” he said.

Now, Colbert is partnering with two Chinese students through the Language Partners program of the MU Women’s Center. He is trying to teach them fluent English through casual conversations. It's the primary goal of the program.

Khalilah Henderson, a graduate assistant in the Women's Center who is running the program, said the program has been around for years. More than 200 international students and about 150 U.S. students signed up for the program this year, she said.

Some American students had to take more than one partner, as Colbert did, to close the gap.
To sign up for the program, participants first fill out a sheet online, writing down information including what year they are, where they are from and their preferences of potential partners.

“We match them as best as we can based on their application, and we try to make them as comfortable as they can be,” Henderson said. “If they want to be with a woman, we try to pair them with a woman; if they want a graduate student, we try to pair them with a graduate student.”

Eric Prieto from Columbia wants to learn about other cultures, and he wanted a male partner. He was matched Rodrigo Pilau, an exchange student from Brazil. They actually met each other at an international event before the program matched them, so they were pleasantly surprised to find out that they would be language partners, Pilau said.

They met each other at least once a week. Prieto helped with Pilau's English and tried to engage him in local culture, taking him to climb, shoot and square dance. Prieto also brought Pilau to his home during Thanksgiving break.

“I like my partner,” Pilau said, "and I had a good time with his family."

Pilau prepared a Brazilian grill party for Prieto and showed him Brazilian dance.

Colbert initially preferred a Japanese partner but eventually got two Chinese partners. They meet sometimes to eat, drink, talk or exercise together.

“A couple students wanted partners who speak Spanish, but we didn’t have enough Spanish-speaking applicants to meet the request,” Henderson said.

After being paired up, it is up to the participants to decide where, when and how often they want to meet with each other and what they prefer to do.

The Women’s Center doesn’t check on participants regularly, though it does recommend that they meet at least an hour a week, Henderson said. The center also holds monthly events in which all participants are able to come together and have discussions, play games and voice any questions or concerns.

The partnership sometimes works, sometimes not.

Sarah Kumpula, a freshman from Lake Villa, wanted to get involved in her college life soon after she got to MU in August. Kumpula is majoring in international studies and plans to teach English after graduating. She signed up for the Language Partners program and sent her language partner an enthusiastic email after being paired up. But her partner never replied.

“To me, the success of the program depends heavily on my partner,” said Yiren Zhao, an MU sociology student from China. She was part of the program last semester, and she signed up again.

Zhao said she got along well with her first partner, and they still keep in touch even though she has a new partner.
“It’s just hard for things to work out,” said Yiwen Zhan, a Chinese student who joined in this semester. “People are busy and sometimes have conflicting schedules.”

The interaction between partners is vital for the program, Zhang said, because “your enthusiasm needs response.”

There are times when people sign up but never show up, Henderson said. If participants don’t feel comfortable with their partners, or the program, they can send an email to the center to get a new partner, stay on the waiting list or quit the program.

“We signed up online, so people can forget easily,” Kumpula said. “Maybe it’s better if the center holds an event at the beginning to help introduce one another in the program.” She also looked forward to more group activities in the program.

Kumpula got her second partner after the first failed. This time things went well. She now enjoys her meeting with Jiamei Yang, a visiting scholar from China. They usually meet twice a week, each time for an hour. For the first half-hour, Kumpula helps with Yang’s English pronunciation, and, for the next, they talk about television programs and hot news.

They cover other things as well. “I’ve learned Chinese festivals. Now can you tell me more about Chinese food?” Kumpula asked Yang during a recent meeting.

Yang initially wanted a graduate student, but now she is happy with Kumpula. They both decided to keep their partnership next semester. Yang also made some progress in spoken English as she expected.

“We want to do the program just to help other people, to make new friends,” Henderson said. “I think a lot of them (native speakers) do it for that reason.” Another reason may be that they can get community service hours, she said.

The MU International Center, the Mizzou Multicultural Center and some faculty members have helped spread the word about this program, and the number of participants has increased over the years, she said.

“I didn’t see any advertisement for the program, and I found the information myself through OrgSync,” Kumpula said. She suggested the center advertise more to find native English-speaking volunteers. Language Partners program aims to embrace diversity, build friendship.