Lawmakers want Mizzou professor Melissa Click fired for photographer clash

Click garnered national attention after she confronted a student photographer during campus protests.

The Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – More than 100 Republican Missouri lawmakers are calling for a University of Missouri assistant professor to be fired in response to her videotaped clash with reporters during campus protests.

The group of lawmakers on Monday announced they sent a letter to the Board of Curators to oust assistant communications professor Melissa Click.

Click didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment Monday. A university spokesman declined to comment, saying it’s a personnel matter.

Click garnered national attention after she confronted a student photographer. The photographer was filming after the university system’s president and the Columbia campus’ chancellor resigned amid protests over what some saw as indifference to racial issues.

The video of Click and another professor fanned debate about freedom of the press.

Click later apologized.

Some Republican lawmakers say she acted inappropriately.
GOP Lawmakers Ask U. of Missouri to Fire Pair Who Obstructed Student Journalists

Weeks after two University of Missouri employees were caught on video trying to force student journalists from a protest about the campus racial climate, Republican lawmakers in the state are trying to force the women from their jobs.

The Columbia Missourian reports that more than a hundred state representatives and 18 senators, all Republicans, have signed a letter urging that the university fire Melissa A. Click, an assistant professor of communication, and Janna Basler, assistant director of Greek life, for their treatment of the student journalists during the November 9 event.

Concerned Student 1950, the student group calling for increased awareness of campus racial tensions, had posted signs asking reporters to stay away from an encampment of protesters on the Columbia campus’s main quad. The video shows the women confronting the journalists.

“Hey, who wants to help me get this reporter out of here?” Ms. Click shouts, after the reporter refuses to leave. “I need some muscle over here!”

A day after the protest, Ms. Click and Ms. Basler both apologized for their behavior, and Ms. Click resigned a courtesy appointment in the School of Journalism. She remains an associate professor in the department of communication.

The lawmakers’ letter, dated December 18, calls on the university’s interim chancellor and governing board to “take immediate action to address the inappropriate and criminal actions” of Ms. Click during the protest.

“As an academic professional, her first goal should have been to promote a safe and stable learning environment for all students, and to represent the university to the public in a way that strengthens the image of our flagship state institution of higher
“education,” the letter states. “Instead, Professor Click’s comments served to inflame an already caustic situation that was clearly out of line.”

The letter goes further, raising questions about Ms. Click’s research, which her faculty page says is “guided by audience studies, theories of gender and sexuality, and media literacy,” and involves fans of such pop-culture ephemera as Lady Gaga and 50 Shades of Grey.

A spokesman said the university doesn’t comment on personnel matters.

**COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE**

**Lawmakers call for termination of MU professor over video confrontation**

By Rudi Keller

Monday, January 4, 2016 at 4:10 pm

More than 100 Republican lawmakers have called on University of Missouri leaders to fire an assistant professor whose recorded confrontation with a photojournalism student during a demonstration on campus went viral.

In a pair of letters addressed to the University of Missouri Board of Curators and interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley, 99 House Republicans and 18 GOP members of the state Senate requested immediate action to address the "inappropriate and criminal actions" of Melissa Click, an assistant professor of mass media at MU.

The Senate letter also called for the dismissal of Janna Basler, associate director in MU’s Department of Student Life.

Click and Basler confronted a student photographer, Tim Tai, and ordered him and another student who recorded the video, Mark Shierbecker, to leave Carnahan Quadrangle during a demonstration Nov. 9 and to stop taking photos and video.

The incident took place after weeks of protests on campus calling for former UM President Tim Wolfe to resign. Click and others formed a wall of people in front of Tai, physically pushed him back and told him he could not photograph the scene.
“Every, every elected official I have talked to about this agrees we have a big issue with an MU journalism professor violating the First Amendment and assaulting students,” state Rep. Caleb Jones, R-Columbia, said. “People in Moniteau County don’t talk to me about anything but this.”

Click is a faculty member in MU's communications department. She held a courtesy appointment in the School of Journalism that she resigned after the protest video went public. Basler was placed on administrative leave on Nov. 11 but has since returned to her job.

University policies prohibit discussion of personnel issues, MU spokesman Christian Basi.

The MU Police Department investigated the incident and sent a report to Columbia City Prosecutor Steve Richey. A receptionist who answered the phone at Richey's office Monday said the case against Click was still under review. Richey has not responded to numerous messages seeking comment on the case.

The legislative letters accuse Click of failing to meet obligations she has to her supervisors, fellow professors, students and Missouri taxpayers. "As an academic professional, her first goal should have been to promote a safe and stable learning environment for all students, and to represent the university to the public in a way that strengthens the image of our flagship state institution of higher education," the letters read. "Instead, Professor Click's comments served to inflame an already caustic situation that was clearly out of line."

The letters also call into question research Click has conducted.

"Our constituents have expressed outrage at the fact she is using taxpayer dollars to conduct research on '50 Shades of Grey,' 'Lady Gaga,' and 'Twilight,' the letters read.

Republican lawmakers decided to send a letter at a pre-Christmas caucus, Jones said.

“The University of Missouri is the state’s land-grant institution, and the students of the University of Missouri and the taxpayers who fund the university deserve better than Professor Click,” Jones said. “It is our job representing the citizens of Missouri to hold those people accountable if we need to.”

State Rep. Kathy Swan, R-Cape Girardeau, said faculty members need to be held accountable for how they interact with students outside the classroom as well as inside.

“It matters what faculty members engage in an and how they dialogue with students,” she said.

**MISSOURIAN**

Missouri Republicans want Click, Basler out of MU
AUSTIN HUGUELET, JACK WITTHAUS, 15 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Missouri Republican lawmakers want MU assistant professor Melissa Click and Assistant Director of Greek Life Janna Basler fired.

More than 100 Republican representatives signed a letter to Interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley, Interim UM System President Mike Middleton and the UM System Board of Curators on Monday, calling for Click to be fired for her behavior toward two MU students during campus protests Nov. 9.

Eighteen Republican senators signed the letter demanding UM dismiss Basler and Click.

Click is a faculty member in the communications department of the College of Arts and Sciences at MU. She resigned her courtesy appointment in the School of Journalism the day after she was seen in a viral video pushing the MU junior Mark Schierbecker's camera and calling for "some muscle" to remove him from Mel Carnahan Quadrangle, where students had been protesting the racial climate on campus and were reacting to the earlier resignation of former UM System President Tim Wolfe.

Schierbecker's video has about 2.7 million views and ignited a nationwide debate on the First Amendment.

In the same video, Basler can be seen pushing and berating MU senior photojournalism Tim Tai. Tai was trying to take pictures of student activists who had been camping on the quad for about a week. Concerned Student 1950, the group pushing for Wolfe's removal and increased awareness of racial tension on campus, had posted signs asking reporters to stay away from the encampment.

"The fact that, as a professor teaching the communication department and the school of journalism, she displayed such a complete disregard for the First Amendment rights of reporters should be enough to question her competency and aptitude for her job," the House letter reads.
Click never taught courses in the School of Journalism. Her courtesy appointment allowed her to advise graduate students on projects and theses.

Republican Reps. Caleb Jones, Caleb Rowden and Chuck Basye, all of Boone County, were among those who signed the House letter. Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, signed the Senate letter.

“At every turn, Click’s actions were unacceptable and inflammatory in a situation where the students and the public needed and expected university employees to serve professionally and as a calming influence,” Jones said in a statement accompanying the letter.

"In my opinion, it's clear she violated this reporter's constitutional rights," Jones added in an interview Monday afternoon. "It's also clear that she assaulted that reporter. The state's land grant institution should not be employing people like that."

The House letter also called into question some of Click’s research. The letter states that the lawmakers' constituents “expressed outrage” that Click was paid with taxpayer dollars to do pop culture research on “50 Shades of Grey,” Lady Gaga and “Twilight.”

MU spokesman Christian Basi said he doesn't comment on personnel matters as a matter of university policy.

Republican lawmakers call for removal of Melissa Click
JEFFERSON CITY - Republican lawmakers in Missouri sent a letter to the MU Board of Curators and MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley Monday, calling for the removal of MU professor Melissa Click.

Melissa Click is the MU faculty member who received backlash after video surfaced of her confronting a student during protests on MU’s campus.

The letter was signed by more than 100 representatives and 18 senators.

"As a professional representing our University, Click failed to meet the obligations she has to her supervisors, fellow professors, University students, and the taxpayers of Missouri," the letter read. "Professor Click’s comments served to inflame an already caustic situation that was clearly out of line."

The letter also criticized her use of "taxpayer dollars to research '50 Shades of Grey,' 'Lady Gaga' and 'Twilight.'"

The Missouri Democratic Party did not comment. The MU Board of Curators also declined to comment.

Missouri Republicans ask curators to fire professor Melissa Click

Senate Republicans also called for Greek Life and Leadership assistant director Janna Basler’s removal.

State Republican lawmakers are calling for the immediate removal of assistant professor Melissa Click for her “inappropriate and criminal actions” during campus protests in November, according to a Jan. 4 news release.

In two letters sent to the UM System Board of Curators on Dec. 18, the lawmakers wrote that Click’s actions weren’t in line with her job as a professional representing MU and as an academic professional.

“Instead, Professor Click’s comments served to inflame an already caustic situation that was clearly out of line,” the letter read.

More than 100 House Republicans signed one letter, and 18 Senate Republicans signed the other letter. Additionally, the senators also called for Greek Life and Leadership assistant director
Janna Basler’s removal. Basler was placed on administrative leave but returned to work in December.

On Nov. 9, Click and Basler were involved in an altercation with student journalists on Carnahan Quad where students had set up camp in support of graduate student Jonathan Butler’s hunger strike. Butler and the campers were seeking UM System President Tim Wolfe’s removal from office.

In the viral video, Click is seen calling for “more muscle” to get a videographer out of the campsite. The campers asked for members of the media to stay away from their tents. The video was taken after Wolfe resigned.

Since then, Click has apologized to both of the student journalists involved.

In December, the Missouri Students Association Senate asked administrators for a statement regarding the Click incident, according to previous Maneater reporting.

Rep. Caleb Jones, R-Columbia, and Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, were listed as the main contacts in the news release.

"At every turn, Click’s actions were unacceptable and inflammatory in a situation where the students and the public needed and expected university employees to serve professionally and as a calming influence," Jones said in the news release. "It’s imperative that the university act swiftly to remove her from her position."

Jones could not be reached for comment before publishing.

Schaefer said in a statement that he expects more out of MU’s faculty and staff.

“The actions of both Basler and Click were unacceptable and inflammatory in nature, the university needs educators who display civility and patience even during emotional moments,” Schaefer said.

In the letter, the lawmakers questioned Click’s teaching aptitude, citing the fact that she was a professor in the journalism school but seemed to obstruct a journalist’s First Amendment right.

Click, a professor in the communications department, held a courtesy appointment with the School of Journalism, which she resigned from on Nov. 10. Journalism school Dean David Kurpius said in a Nov. 10 statement that Click didn’t teach courses at the school.

Despite resigning from her appointment, the lawmakers wrote that “it is exceedingly difficult to justify her continued service at the University of Missouri.”

The letter also addressed Click’s research.
“Our constituents have expressed outrage at the fact she is using taxpayer dollars to conduct research on ‘50 Shades of Grey,’ ‘Lady Gaga,’ and ‘Twilight,’” the letter said.

Click has taught at MU since fall 2003, and her staff page describes her research interests as pop culture texts and audiences.

In the letter, the lawmakers wrote that while they recognized there “may be some value in pop culture studies,” Click’s actions have led to increased public scrutiny.

Both letters concluded with the same call.

“The University now has the opportunity to send a strong message that leadership can and will act quickly and decisively to root out bad behavior,” the letter said. “We urge you to do so immediately.”

Welcome to Missouri, and Civil Rights 2.0

LGBT rights, racism and police use of deadly force converge in a politically purple state.

Joseph P. Williams, Jan. 5, 2016

They unfolded over 18 months, three unrelated events that sparked the latest round of debate on the state of justice and equality in America – a rebirth of the civil rights movement.

In May 2014, Michael Sam, an elite NFL-bound college athlete acknowledged he was gay, smashing some long-held stereotypes. Three months later, white police officer Darren Wilson shot and killed an unarmed black teenager, Michael Brown, unleashing decades of pent-up anger in the African-American community and propelling the movement Black Lives Matter to national prominence. This fall, black students at University of Missouri launched protests to spotlight their frustrations over administrators’ lack of action to address racist incidents on a majority-white college campus.

The issues seem suited for a multicultural urban backdrop – New York, perhaps, or even Washington, D.C. Yet these pivotal moments in LGBT rights, use of deadly force by police and bigotry in what’s thought to be a liberal bastion all happened in Missouri.

The setting isn't as strange as it might seem. The Show-Me State is, geographically and culturally, almost equidistant between North and South, its status as a "purple" political battleground defined in part by its urban population and agrarian roots.
With a complex racial history – it was a divided Civil War "border state," and was the setting for a landmark ruling that rejected citizenship of slaves – Missouri has, once again, become a microcosm for monumental national tensions.

Jeffrey Mittman, who heads the state's American Civil Liberties Union chapter, notes "the whole array of complex issues" embedded in the state's history: bloody border clashes with anti-slavery Kansans before the Civil War; the 1820 Missouri Compromise, which allowed the territory to join the Union as a slave-holding state; the U.S. Supreme Court's 1857 ruling establishing that Dred Scott, a St. Louis slave, was not an American citizen, even if he were freed.

Fold in other factors – including Missouri's history of legal segregation, its battles against federal housing policies, government mortgage policies against redlining as well as a voter-approved (but court-rejected) referendum banning gay marriage – and the turmoil in the state becomes more obvious, Mittman says.

"I don't want to paint our state with a brush and say we're worse than other states," but Missouri's past, its demographics and heartland geography, sometimes leads people to overlook its problems, he says.

The state is politically split between Republican Red and Democratic blue, and Kansas City and St. Louis are urban bookends for a largely rural center. Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon is a Democrat but the 10-member congressional delegation is dominated by the GOP; 11 percent of the state's residents are African-American, compared to 13 percent of the overall U.S. population, and most are concentrated in the state's metro areas.

Although after the Civil War, Jim Crow-era laws governed St. Louis as much as it did places like Selma, Alabama, Mittman says, overall "Missouri escaped notice. But our practices, our policies, were not necessarily different than the Deep South."

Remnants of this history came into focus when protesters clashed with police in a St. Louis suburb over the death of Michael Brown and the subsequent decision not to indict Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson, who shot the teen in August 2014.

The governor endured withering criticism for failing to bring police to heel during the initial protests and for deploying a mostly white joint state and local force armed with military-grade weapons and armored vehicles against demonstrators.

A federal investigation found the town was deeply polarized. Although it's 67 percent African-American, the 54-member police department had just four black officers and the city generated revenue by collecting municipal fines mainly from its black residents.

"As we have seen from Ferguson, and the growth of peaceful protests around the country, people want to talk about human rights abuses that have been happening in law enforcement's interaction with the African-American community" nationwide, says Steven Hawkins, executive director of Amnesty International USA.
Some protests have turned violent, leading to destruction of property, injuries and arrests. Activists, however, have attempted to keep the focus on other questionable police shootings in places like Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Staten Island, New York and Charleston, South Carolina.

And scrutiny of racial tensions and injustices has gone beyond policing.

"I think the kind of attention and the growth of the Black Lives Matter movement has had a larger platform than only law enforcement abuses," says Hawkins.

Indeed, in September, Payton Head, an African-American and Mizzou's student government president, took to Facebook saying he was fed up with racism on campus. An escalating series of events, including a swastika smeared in feces on a dormitory wall, led black and some white students to seize the campus quad in protest, demanding action from administrators – and drawing national attention.

"I shed a tear for Mizzou – a school with a history so rooted in racism that even professors regularly deal with the N-word," Jenee Osterheldt, a Kansas City Star pop culture writer, wrote in an essay last month, when the campus protest was at its peak. "Understand that what is happening at Mizzou is happening systematically across the country."

Graduate student Jonathan Butler launched a hunger strike, vowing not to eat until university president Tim Wolfe was gone, and Mizzou's football team vowed not to practice or play in solidarity with their classmates, prompting one lawmaker to propose a bill that would revoke the scholarships of student athletes who protest by refusing to play. The dramatic stands inspired African-American students from Yale University to Claremont McKenna College in suburban Los Angeles to air their own grievances and issue demands, including the resignation of school administrators.

Mizzou's first African-American student, Gus Ridgel, 89, was surprised that progress at his alma mater has been so halting.

"It's distressing, after this long period of time, that there would be racial incidents that would precipitate that kind of reaction," Ridgel, who was admitted to Mizzou in 1950, told The New York Times. "I had no idea that such an atmosphere existed."

The nationwide protests, investigations, activism and backlash spurred by Brown's death and racially fueled conflicts at Mizzou cut a sharp contrast when compared to Sam's historic 2014 decision to become the first openly gay football player.

Though Sam faced criticism on and off campus, his teammates publicly backed him, high-profile personalities like football legend Deion Sanders and President Barack Obama praised his courage, and Oprah Winfrey hosted him in a one-on-one interview.

"We're really happy for Michael that he's made the decision to announce this, and we're proud of him and how he represents Mizzou," said Gary Pinkel, University of Missouri's head coach at the time.
That he is a handsome, well-groomed star athlete – literally an All-American – and a groundbreaking NFL prospect likely helped people accept him, says the ACLU’s Mittman.

But while social and legal barriers for gay Americans have broken down more quickly than the racial barriers that have persisted throughout American history, the struggle for equality is universal, say Hawkins, and "it certainly is evolutionary."

"We see the ebb and flow of individuals defending their human rights and that process is always one, I think, of vigilance," Hawkins says. "It takes people to engage in peaceful protest in respect of their rights, and with respect to their rights, and that’s what we've seen here in Missouri."

Mittman notes there are plenty more issues lingering just beneath the surface. Racial profiling by police and racial disparities in drug arrests is problematic in Missouri, the state's ACLU chapter found, but also across the country.

Seeing young whites join in the Black Lives Matter movement as well as increased activism and consciousness among the new African-American generation is a hopeful sign, Mittman says.

"But it's not a silver bullet," he adds. "It’s not happening overnight, and we need to be in it for the long haul."

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

JANUARY 4, 2016 12:39 PM

Black MU students talk about racism on campus

University of Missouri students continue trying to improve race relations on the Columbia campus

The Chronicle of Higher Education published an article about what black students experience at the University of Missouri

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS
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Since race-related protests erupted in the fall at the University of Missouri, questions have continued to surface about how real are student and faculty claims of racism on our nation’s college campuses.
The Chronicle of Higher Education in its January 8, issue attempts to answer that question regarding Missouri in an article entitled “What It’s Like to Be Black at the U. of Missouri.”

In the story, students talk about living with racial division, isolation, and prejudice on the flagship campus in Columbia, Mo. where 7 percent of the 35,000 students, and 3.2 percent of the faculty are black.

The Chronicle talked with several black undergraduate and graduate students at MU and asked them to describe what life is like for them on the campus, and what changes they want to see there.

Students said they often feel caught between not wanting to speak for an entire race and knowing that if they don’t say something, stereotypes will lie unchallenged, and black and white people will stay in their own corners.

The article includes student accounts of overt and subtle racism. It quotes one student as saying that she looks to the faculty for mentors or role models and doesn’t find many. The only two black professors she’s had in three years have been in the black studies department. The same student told The Chronicle that classmates make assumptions based on her race — that she must be at MU because of affirmative action, and an administrator assumed she couldn’t afford a study-abroad trip to Ghana.

MU Researchers Work to Reach Missouri Lawmakers via Social Media

In a recent study, University of Missouri researchers developed new techniques to make scientific research studies more accessible to lawmakers through social media like Twitter.

MU professor Julie Kapp worked on the study and she said very little scientific research is shared via Twitter even though 95 percent of congressional health policymakers are users.
"It doesn't seem like there's a lot of science being shared broadly and that some of that science, obviously, would be very helpful to inform policy decisions," Kapp said.

MU Professor Brian Hensel worked with Kapp on the study, and he said Twitter is an opportunity for researchers to educate and inform policymakers by giving them access to more credible information.

But, he said, one difficulty of using Twitter is the one hundred forty character limit.

"As researchers, we often have to present complex and nuanced findings in an accurate way and we have to place those findings within the broader context of other research,” Hensel said. “It's not easy given the limitations of the characters that can be sent in a tweet."

Hensel said he believes it is vital for researchers to build trust through tweets with lawmakers over a period time. This way researchers can have more impact on policy.

Kapp and Hensel plan to continue their research on Twitter to see how researchers can best communicate with lawmakers.

MISSOURIAN

Student in Yik Yak threat at MU said he was worried about passing exam

JARED RIDGEWAY, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — An MU freshman charged with making terrorist threats on the social media platform Yik Yak told police he made the threat because of fear he would fail an exam, according to a probable cause statement in the case.

Nathan Benz was arrested on Dec. 14 for a post that stated he was going to "bomb his test" that evening in Cornell Hall, according to the court document.

Police brought in an explosive-sniffing dog and posted officers in three locations at Cornell Hall when the test was being taken, according to the document. There was also discussion about whether the building should be closed.
When police confronted Benz, he originally said he thought he was under scrutiny because of a racial post he had made on Yik Yak a few days earlier, according to the probable cause statement. Benz also told police that he thought the Cornell Hall threat would be taken as a joke.

Benz told investigators he created the Yik Yak post about the exam at Cornell Hall and referenced previous MU-related threats on Yik Yak as well as a community college shooting in Oregon.

Benz was released on $4,500 bond.

The threat came two weeks after a similar threat was made against the campus by Hunter Michael Park, an MU Science & Technology student in Rolla who threatened to shoot black people at MU.

MU puts Sinclair Research Farm up for sale

Watch story: [http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=32107&zone=2,5&categories=2,5](http://www.komu.com/player/?video_id=32107&zone=2,5&categories=2,5)

COLUMBIA - The University of Missouri has put a 535-acre piece of land up for sale.

The property is located in southwest Columbia and had been used as the Sinclair Research Farm until it was closed in the late 1980s.

It is located south of West Nifong Boulevard and runs east and west of South Sinclair Road.

According to the Maly Commercial Realty Inc. website, it is divided into nine tracts that can be bought together or individually.
The website said the property is offered as-is and tracts will be sold individually.

The tracts are between 25 and 100 acres. According to the website, the University will provide limited warranties.

MU Greek houses granted more time to install sprinkler systems


COLUMBIA, Mo. - The Columbia City Council approved an extension to a city ordinance that requires Greek organizations to have sprinkler systems installed in their houses.

_Council members unanimously voted in favor of the three-year extension at Monday's meeting. University of Missouri fraternity and sorority houses now have until June 1, 2019 to be in compliance with the sprinkler code._

The ordinance was enacted in 2009 and the original deadline was set for March 16, 2016.

In July, five Greek houses did not have a sprinkler system installed and said they needed more time to have them installed.

At Monday's city council meeting representatives from two campus fraternities discussed their current housing situations and their need for more time to get the sprinklers installed, which included building completely new houses.

Chief Randy White, with the Columbia Fire Department said they're willing to work with each organization to make sure their homes are safe.

"It's difficult sometimes to meet the fire code, especially in a situation where you're retrofitting buildings to fit this new requirement," he said. "I think this was a win-win to get that compliance."

Those houses that don't have a sprinkler system installed by June 1, 2016 will be working with the fire department to implement temporary safety measures.
CFD said this could include occupancy restrictions, special event restrictions and monthly fire alarm battery checks.

This is the first extension to the ordinance since it was enacted in 2009.

University of Missouri agriculture group goes all-female

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — An agriculture leadership group at the University of Missouri is made up of all female students for the first time, reflecting a slow but steady shift in the industry.

Thirteen students were selected in December as the first all-female group of Dickinson Scholars, the Columbia Missourian reported. The university's College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources pairs the students with Kansas City agribusinesses to give them an immersive experience.

Thomas Payne, the college's vice chancellor and dean, said he has noticed the demographics change since coming to the university in 1999.

"When I began my academic career, colleges of agriculture were predominantly men, as students and faculty," Payne said. "Now our student body is close to 50-50 women and men, and there are many more women faculty."

In the fall, the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources had 57.5 percent female students in its undergraduate programs. The University of Missouri's undergraduate student body is 52 percent female, according to the school's Division of Enrollment.

Women are in the minority in agriculture nationally, according to the Census of Agriculture conducted in 2012 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Just 14 percent of the country's farms had a female principal operator.

The Dickinson Scholars program has been in existence since the mid-1990s, said Stephanie Chipman, the agriculture college's career services director. Students are chosen based on academic excellence, career aspirations and demonstrated leadership.

Payne said the all of the college's academic programs are available to men and women, including Dickinson Scholars. The demographics of this year's group are encouraging, Chipman said.
Lindsey Robinson, a Dickinson Scholar this year, hopes to work for a livestock magazine after graduation. She said women have major roles on farms and in agricultural businesses and that people are recognizing their roles now.

"We are more than just farm moms," Robinson said.

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Flagship Diversity Divide

The student bodies at large state universities are more diverse than the faculties. But the broader population outpaces them both.

Recent protests by student groups have drawn attention back to a broad and important question: How diverse are colleges, really?

Flagship institutions often find that question to be particularly pressing. Because of their public funding, there’s an expectation that their student bodies would resemble the demographics of the areas they serve. And increasingly, students want their faculties to be similarly diverse. But because professors are hired from a national pool, it’s also reasonable to expect that their faculties would represent not only the diversity of their states but of the nation as a whole.

There’s plenty of room for debate about what it means for a campus to be diverse. But we can gather some context by comparing each flagship’s student and faculty diversity with that of the state in which it is located — and with that of the nation overall.

To do that, we used a Diversity Index, which represents the probability that any two people chosen at random from a sample will be of different races or ethnicities. The index works on a scale of zero to 100. A score of zero means there’s no chance that
those two people will be of different races; a score of 100 means it’s a guarantee that they will be.

The Chronicle has calculated the Diversity Index for every state’s flagship, counting racial and ethnic diversity among both students and full-time professors. Then we compared those scores with state-level numbers. (We used university data reported to the Department of Education for the 2013-14 academic year and state data gathered in the 2010 Census. For more details, see the footnote at the bottom of the page.)

There’s a diversity gap between students and faculties.

At most flagships, there is a significant disparity between the diversity of the student body and the diversity of the faculty. In fact, institutions with the greatest student diversity have the largest such gaps. Only eight institutions, or sixteen percent, have a faculty more diverse than the student body.

Diverse states have more-diverse flagships.

Plot student and faculty diversity against state diversity, and you’ll see that flagships in more-diverse states have more-diverse students and faculty. That’s not surprising. However, across the board, the diversity of faculty tends to be far lower than the diversity of students.

The University of Hawaii-Manoa is the most diverse university in terms of students and faculty, with a student-body Diversity Index of 76 — a full 22 points greater than the index for the U.S. population as of 2010 — and a faculty index of 61. (When comparing people who report being of two or more races, the index considers them
diverse by default. So it is not surprising that Hawaii, where close to a quarter of the residents identify themselves as being of two or more races, had a high score.)

Many flagships have student bodies more diverse than their states.

Flagships are much better at creating student diversity on par with the state’s demographics than they are at creating faculty as diverse as the state. Thirty-eight of the flagships have a student Diversity Index equal to or greater than that of their state. But only twenty-one of the universities have a faculty Diversity Index that matches or surpasses that of the state.

Flagship diversity falters when compared with the nation.

The national Diversity Index in 2010 was 54. So how many flagships meet that threshold? As it turns out, 18 flagships have a student diversity that meets or exceeds that level, while only two, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and University of Hawaii-Manoa, have faculty that diverse.

Since student bodies turn over every few years, while faculty tend to keep their jobs for decades, it’s not surprising that progress on making faculty more diverse has been slow. Nevertheless, targeted efforts have shown what can happen when diversifying faculty becomes a priority. And with nonwhite Americans expected to become a majority within 30 years, pressure to remake faculty more like the nation will only increase.

The Chronicle has calculated the Diversity Index for every state’s flagship, counting racial and ethnic diversity among both students and full-time professors. Then we compared those scores with state-level numbers. (We used university data reported to the Department of Education for the 2013-14 academic year and state data
It Starts Day 1

Colleges and universities should implement orientation seminars to educate new students about available resources and support systems concerning mental health, argues Sarah Lyon.

NO MU Mention

Mental illness exists on any type of campus -- urban or rural, public or independent, prestigious or relatively unknown. Students of all class years, ethnicities, majors and socioeconomic backgrounds are susceptible. Thus, it is now time for every one of our colleges and universities to implement orientation seminars dedicated to educating new students about the campus resources and support systems available with regard to mental health. This effort can be particularly important in preventing campus suicides, now the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 18 and 24, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Recently, the state of Texas has made strides in this area. As a result of a bill passed this past June, Texas now by law “requires universities to show students a live presentation or video with information about mental health and suicide as part of their orientation.” But the concept of dealing with mental health within the collegiate setting is nothing new -- so why haven’t such orientation seminars been required all along? Historically, mental health resources were not always well received. As one historian notes, “The stigma associated with admitting mental health problems, together with tight budgets and the wish to focus only on academics, has often constrained ... the development of services.” Still, the historian explains, by the mid-20th century, half of colleges and universities had mental health-related programs on campus. Why, more than 60 years later, are we not giving these resources the full credit they deserve by emphasizing their benefits during the orientation period?

gathered in the 2010 Census. For more information on this story, please go to: http://chronicle.com/interactives/flagship-diversity
It should be noted that campus health programs came about even earlier than the 1950s. **Princeton University** is credited with having established the first on-campus resource in 1910 -- the service was formed to tackle the issue of strong students withdrawing from the university “because of emotional and personality issues.” **Harvard University and Yale University** both hired campus psychiatrists in 1925, and other institutions had done so even earlier. The mental hygiene movement, which one scholar referred to as “a movement whose aim is the promotion and preservation of mental health,” was one factor connected to the establishment of such resources at the time.

Unfortunately, today’s students are still abandoning higher education for reasons similar to those who left Princeton over a century ago. In 2012, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) released results from a survey of 765 college students experiencing a mental health condition, noting that 64 percent of respondents left college as a result of their condition. The survey findings indicate that half of the students who left an institution “did not access mental health services and support,” later noting that 24 percent of respondents cited a lack of information as one reason that they did not take advantage of such resources. In general, those students who left college cited “connecting with mental health providers earlier” as one factor that may have prevented them from withdrawing.

What’s more, over the years, students’ needs for mental health care have become more pressing. For instance, a 1998 paper found that the concerns of contemporary college students “include both the normal college student problems ... as well as the more severe problems, such as anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, sexual assault and personality disorders.”

All of the above findings underscore the need for exposure to mental health-related services upon students’ arrival to campus. NAMI, too, advocates for orientation and campus tours to include information about mental health resources. First-year orientation programming often includes sessions on alcohol use and abuse, sexual violence, and other topics pertaining to student health and lifestyles. In examining future programming, college administrators should make every effort to include a seminar detailing the resources that are available to those battling depression, anxiety and other forms of mental illness. It is still important to consider the issue of stigma; as the NAMI report notes, “Stigma remains the No. 1 barrier to students seeking help.” Thus, a key benefit of making such seminars required for all first-years is that it eliminates any implication that any one student is personally facing a specific issue.

At such orientations, students can have the opportunity to practice asking each other difficult questions, such as, “Do you have thoughts of harming yourself?” They will learn how to delicately decipher why a friend seems upset and engage in sample
conversations with peers. They can watch simulations that demonstrate how to respond to a friend who appears to be in distress. These are all the same tactics that the University of Pennsylvania’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) counselors incorporate into their own training sessions. CAPS offers free workshops throughout each semester, during which students, faculty members and staff members have the opportunity to gain awareness of the university’s many resources designed to support individuals. Likewise, this type of workshop demonstrates how to be an ally for a peer suffering from mental illness. Ensuring students’ mandatory attendance to such a workshop during orientation will pave the way for a more supportive campus community as a whole. By addressing mental health during the orientation period, students will begin their college careers with knowledge of the various challenges they or their peers may face at the present moment or at some point throughout their college career. With anxiety, depression, relationship problems and thoughts of suicide among the most common mental health concerns plaguing college students, it is imperative that our nation’s colleges and universities address this serious issue.

BIO
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