MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

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MU admissions office responds to lower applicant numbers


COLUMBIA, Mo - University of Missouri admissions Office Officials and Faculty Council members are responding after early data indicate a drop in the number of freshmen applying to the university.

In an enrollment update sent to a list of administrators and faculty, admissions and enrollment administrators detail the most recent enrollment data. The update shows freshmen applications are down by more than 941 for fall of 2016.

"I thinks it's early in the cycle. Of course, if we end up with a smaller number of student, that's going to mean fewer dollars coming in, which is going to make things hard for everyone," said Ben Trachtenberg, a member of the Faculty Council.

The memorandum details freshman applicant data back to 2012, when 17,678 prospective students applied to MU.

Subsequent years saw a steady increase -- peaking at 19,318.

The most recent data shows nearly a 5 percent decrease for fall of 2016, which could be a problem if the trend continues.

"It's very difficult to make cuts with short notice because we're planning in advance about what courses we're going to teach, and it's not like we're going to make the building disappear, and so of course it's very difficult. So as you can imagine, we're hoping that the enrollment stays sound," said Trachtenberg.

It's difficult to attribute an applicant slump to a particular issue. However, MU did have a turbulent fall semester with graduate health insurance cuts, though that was restored, and nationally-publicized race issues.

"I think it's reasonable to think that that bad PR might have made some people nervous about coming here, but fortunately that means that if we get the message out about the great place we're
still running and how that hasn't changed, we can fix that by the spring and get people to enroll," said Trachtenberg.

The University of Missouri Admissions Office said lower applicant numbers could be blamed on more competition in major markets, especially in Chicago.

"Increased competition in our major markets coupled with fewer high school students in Missouri, Illinois and Kansas due to lower birthrates 18 years ago and out-migration to Southern states," said Chuck May, director of admissions.

As for efforts to increase enrollment, MU officials plan to visit high schools, attend college fairs, and use current MU students to help with recruiting efforts.

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**Early enrollment forecast shows decreased numbers at MU for fall semester of 2016**

Columbia — An [enrollment update sent to the University of Missouri of Columbia administrators indicates student enrollment for the fall semester of 2016 is down.](#)

MU spokesman Christian Basi told KRCG13 the university anticipated the decrease in enrollment based on birthrates, fewer high school graduates, and increased competition.

The memorandum put together by Barbara Rupp, the Interim Vice Provost for Enrollment Management and Chuck May, Director of Admissions, is the third enrollment update of ten monthly reports administrators expect to receive before the start of next fall semester.

The enrollment report highlighted a decrease of 941 freshman applications entirely from non-Missouri residents, half of which are from Illinois.

African American applications decreased by 78 from last year, but is still 24 more applications than the university received in 2014.
"There is no way to accurately forecast our fall enrollment at this time, though we do anticipate a decrease. We are working closely with many on campus to make every effort possible in the coming months to minimize that decrease," the report states.

Although the campus was at the center of racial controversy and graduate student issues involving health benefits, university officials say it's difficult for them to know if those incidents had a direct effect on enrollment. Basi said prospective students were not surveyed on the matters and there are no numbers supporting those issues affected enrollment.

Officials said there are still several months left before the freshman class of 2016 is filled. More enrollment updates are expected to be sent to administrators throughout the year.

In Missouri, Lawmakers Can Shut Out Reporters But Professors Can't

State legislators are upset that a professor tried to keep reporters from covering a protest. They also just passed a rule to ban reporters from the state Senate floor.

Missouri lawmakers believe reporters should be able to do their jobs -- unless they're trying to do them at the state Senate.

On Monday, Republican lawmakers in Missouri made public a letter demanding that the University of Missouri fire Melissa Click, an assistant professor in the school's communication department who became notorious last year after she called for student journalists to be forcibly removed from a campus protest.

The lawmakers' letter, originally sent Dec. 18, was co-signed by more than 100 state representatives and 18 state senators. It became public this week just days before members of the Republican leadership in the state Senate introduced a proposal to bar reporters from the Senate floor. That measure passed the state Senate on Thursday, and will go into effect in March.

The irony was not lost on observers.

Click became the object of intense backlash last year after a Nov. 9 protest at Mizzou related to the then-recent resignation of President Tim Wolfe. In a video, Click can be seen telling student
journalists that they're not allowed in a certain area of campus -- an area that protesters had asked to be respected as a media-free "safe space," but one that was legally accessible to reporters under the First Amendment.

"I need some muscle over here," Click calls to someone in the video, after telling a reporter to "get out."

Click apologized for her remarks the next day, and at least one of the journalists in the video forgave her. But critics were incensed, saying that Click should have known better as a member of the school's communication department.

However, Click has defenders: At least 115 faculty members at Mizzou have signed a letter to university administrators saying that her actions were a "regrettable mistake," but that she's proven herself a worthy instructor and researcher.

"We believe that Click has been wronged in the media by those who have attacked her personally and have called for her dismissal," says the faculty members' letter, which was made public Tuesday. "We affirm our support of her as a colleague, a teacher, and a scholar, and we call upon the University to defend her first amendment rights of protest and her freedom to act as a private citizen."

Meanwhile, the Missouri state Senate's rule change will restrict reporters to the fourth- and fifth-floor galleries of the chamber, and will prevent journalists from coming onto the Senate floor. Missouri Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard (R) sponsored the rule change, and Missouri Senate Majority Leader Mike Kehoe (R) defended it to reporters this week, saying the lawmakers "have been talking about it for years."

Both Richard and Kehoe signed the Dec. 18 letter that rebuked Click for harassing journalists who were trying to do their jobs -- "jobs which are soundly protected by the Constitution," as the letter put it.

Richard said the rule change was needed because journalists were tweeting what they overheard senators saying on the floor, according to Kansas City Star reporter Jason Hancock.

The rule change passed the Senate 26 to 4.

Jeremy LaFaver, a Democratic state representative in Missouri, joked that Click would be hired as the Senate's "doorperson."

Jeff Rouder, a Mizzou professor in the psychological sciences department who signed the letter in defense of Click, said he'd thought at first that the senators had proposed their rule change ironically.

"The fact that they are not sarcastic makes it all the more sad," Rouder told The Huffington Post.
Missouri Senate boots press corps off floor

JEFFERSON CITY • In one of their first acts of 2016, members of the Missouri Senate voted 26-4 Thursday to kick members of the statehouse press corps from their longtime table on the floor of the chamber.

Republican leaders initially said the move was needed to create more space for staff members, but Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard later admitted he was still angry after an incident last year in which a private conversation between senators was posted to a social media site by an individual sitting at the press table.

"Some of the press violated the code of ethics by tweeting out discussions between senators, The Senate floor, that’s our space. That’s not your space," he told reporters.

The move came just days after more than 100 members of the House and Senate called for the ouster of University of Missouri communications professor Melissa Click in response to her controversial decision last fall to try and block a reporter from interviewing students who were protesting on campus.

Richard, a Joplin Republican, said it would be wrong to compare him to Click, who later apologized and resigned a post she held in the Mizzou school of journalism.

“I understand there’s social media making me look like some of the ladies in the journalism school that turned away the press. I don’t think that’s the case. I thought that was a breach of your responsibility," Richard said.
Republican state Sen. Ryan Silvey of Kansas City acknowledged the move was stirring controversy among reporters who cover the Legislature.

“I see Press is upset about being moved off the Senate Floor.” Silvey tweeted. “Important to remember, they don’t sit on Floor in US Sen/House or MO House.”

Republican gubernatorial candidate Eric Greitens weighed in against the move.

“Legislators do not need a private `safe space.’ This is absurd,” Greitens tweeted.

State Rep. Jason LaFaver, D-Kansas City, joked on Twitter that Click should be hired as a Senate doorkeeper.

“The floor of the Senate is now a safe space,” LaFaver said.

The move won’t take place immediately. Senate administrators plan to renovate space in an upper gallery to serve as the new press area. It is expected to be finished by late March.

“It will be a nice spot for you,” Richard told reporters.

The four “no” votes were cast by Democratic state Sens. Jason Holsman of Kansas City, Jamilah Nasheed of St. Louis, Jill Schupp of Creve Coeur and Scott Sifton of Affton.

MU task force recommends better pay for graduate students

By Megan Favignano

Thursday, January 7, 2016 at 2:00 pm

A University of Missouri task force is recommending improvements to graduate assistants’ compensation and workload, support structures and graduate education culture.

Within those three improvement areas, the task force’s recommendations include an increase in graduate student stipends, better access to housing and childcare for graduate students, and a
higher level of shared governance — requests graduate students have been making throughout the school year.

Eric Scott, a doctoral student studying English at MU, said the list of recommendations is a “huge vindication” for everything graduate students have been demanding since August.

“We have a university task force that is essentially agreeing with all of the demands we have been making all along,” Scott said.

In August, MU administrators told graduate assistants the university could no longer provide health insurance subsidies because of an IRS interpretation of the Affordable Care Act. After backlash from students and faculty, MU rescinded that decision for the school year and created a task force to weigh long-term options.

Beleaguered graduate students formed a group not affiliated with the university — the Forum on Graduate Rights. The group gave MU administrators a list of demands and advocated for better benefits. A committee of that group, which Scott helped lead, has been working toward forming a graduate student union. He said the task force report might be helpful if a union forms because the group would need to draft a contract with the university.

At a November meeting of the Graduate Professional Council’s general assembly, the group passed a resolution calling for improved shared governance on campus. The resolution said “minor structural changes can be implemented to significantly improve the legitimacy of shared governance and the role that graduate and professional students play in it.”

The resolution proposed some structural changes, including the Office of Graduate Studies offering a course on the university’s history and bureaucratic structures.

The Graduate Student Experience Task Force first met in May. Since the group began its research and analysis, MU changed its graduate student tuition waiver policy, temporarily withdrew health insurance subsidies and experienced turmoil related to racism on campus as well as the resignation of MU and UM System leaders.

“These three incidents either caused the task force to reconsider its current direction/thoughts or to change the nature of our work,” the report says.

Leona Rubin, associate vice chancellor for graduate studies, formed the task force after a request from former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. The task force examined three areas of the graduate student experience: quality of life issues, nonacademic campus resources and academic experiences.

Scott noted the report calls for both salary increases and subsidized insurance. The task force recommends MU increase its minimum stipend for doctoral students to $18,000 for 20-hour appointments by 2020; master’s students should receive a proportional increase, the group said.
Graduate assistants receive a stipend in exchange for their work conducting research and teaching for the university.

Scott said he was “pleasantly surprised” by the task force’s proposed stipend increase.

“I personally make about $14,000 a year, so that feels like a substantial jump to me,” Scott said.

The task force’s co-chairmen — Earnest Perry, an associate professor in the School of Journalism, and Tracy Kitchel, assistant vice provost for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs — did not respond to messages seeking comment before deadline Thursday.

Safety video teaches proper response to active shooter situation

COLUMBIA - University of Missouri safety officials filmed a safety training video Thursday throughout the campus aimed at preparing students for a worst-case scenario.

“The video will help educate individuals on how to respond in the unlikely event an individual commits violent acts on campus,” an MU News Bureau news release said.

MU urged the public not to be alarmed by fake weapons or potential screaming and said it's actors adding authenticity to their performance. MU News Bureau Associate Director Christian Basi said safety is the number one priority on MU’s campus and hopes this video will help promote that.

"The video is specifically going to be helping folks understand the certain actions and decisions," Basi said.

Filming is taking place over break because it will create less of a disruption in current low-traffic areas. Bradford Barnett, a junior mechanical engineering student at MU, acted in the video.
“I thought it was really important because mass shootings have become a prevalent thing in our society today," Barnett said. "It’s really important that our students are prepared and know what to do in the case that tragedy might happen here at Mizzou."

Bradford said it's been a fun experience to participate in the filming, but overall the cast wants to emphasize the seriousness of the video's message.

“It’s been good to try to show the fear that one might experience during that entire process but also like the calm, cool and collectiveness that you need to maintain to get out safely,” Bradford said.

MUPD offers a course called Citizens Response to Active Threats that also educates individuals on proper response when faced with violent acts. However, the amount of people able to enroll is limited. Basi said he hopes this training video can help further spread safety awareness.

“By filming this video we’ll be able to reach a much broader and wider audience," Basi said. "We will still offer the course because it is valuable, but this video is an opportunity to reach a lot more people."

If a real emergency was to happen during the filming of the video, MU said the public will be alerted by campus notification systems.

Active shooter training video filmed on Mizzou campus

POSTED 4:17 PM, JANUARY 7, 2016, BY ROCHE MADDEN

COLUMBIA, MO (KTVI) - A frightening scene on the University of Missouri’s campus had students running for help Thursday. It turned out no one was at risk; in fact, it was all about making the campus safer.

When classes are in session, the University of Missouri has a population of about 50,000 people. Officials want to make sure students, faculty, and staff are prepared for the type of violence that’s touched other U.S. campuses in recent years.
Student Mehdi Ben-Ayed is playing the role of an extra in an active shooter video being shot on campus.

“It gets you jittery,” he said.

The sound of gunfire and a warning that there’s an active shooter in the area caused Ben-Ayed and his fellow students to run for help. But it was all make believe.

Cierra Higgins also took part in the video.

“I feel like it’s very important to discuss and understand what to do if there are certain situations that come up from violence,” she said.

Violence at universities nationwide seems to have become all too common.

“You always wanted to be prepared and folks have good information and they have an opportunity to learn about potential options they might have in the event a situation however unlikely occurs,” said Christian Basi, a University of Missouri spokesman.

The video was being shot during the winter break when the campus was almost empty.

“If you didn’t know what was going on you could be alarmed we wanted to do it when there was the least amount of people on campus,” Basi said.

Signs were posted alerting folks they may see guns drawn and people screaming for help. Plus the media across the state warned everyone the video was going to be filmed this week. Students hope the procedures in the video are never needed, but if they are, students hope lives are saved because of it.
“I think it’s a good thing. It can’t hurt,” Ben-Ayed said.

University police already have a classroom program where they teach some of the same skills for an active shooter, but they can only reach dozens of people at a time. All 50,000 folks in the Mizzou community will have a chance to see this with very little effort. It should be ready sometime this spring.

Watch the story: [http://fox2now.com/2016/01/07/active-shooter-training-video-filmed-on-mizzou-campus/](http://fox2now.com/2016/01/07/active-shooter-training-video-filmed-on-mizzou-campus/)

**THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Hoverboards: Fun, Mildly Dangerous, and Now Banned on Campus**

**No MU Mention**

If you’ve never heard of hoverboards, the rare techno-toy that is actually less cool than the image it projects, here’s a video of people trying to ride them but falling off. Hoverboards are essentially smaller Segways, without the awkward podium but with several documented hazards. Dozens of fires and injuries associated with the motorized scooters have prompted retailers like Amazon to scale back sales, and New York City has banned them in public places.

Amusing and mildly dangerous? Sounds like something for college students! Except in the past few days, campuses across the country have been banning the devices, citing the reported hazards. “Don’t bring them to campus!” reads one email to students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which has banned hoverboards in dormitories.
The Associated Press has pegged the number of campuses with some kind of ban at at least 20, including American University, Emerson College, George Washington University, Kean University, and the University of South Carolina.

Missouri GOP Sen. Blunt speaks to lawmakers at session state

JEFFERSON CITY, MO. - Republican U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt touted health research and mental health access during an address to Missouri legislators.

In a speech before the Missouri House Thursday, Blunt also stressed making the most of inland ports in the area and focusing on transportation.

Blunt ended his speech with advice to lawmakers not to immediately discount views different from their own.

He cited Ferguson, where protests unfolded after the fatal police shooting of black 18-year-old Michael Brown in 2014. Blunt also mentioned the University of Missouri, where some student activists protested and called for the former system president to step down. Activists had criticized the administration's perceived indifference to racial discrimination.

Blunt earlier spoke privately to Senate Republicans.

This is Blunt's fifth year speaking to the House.
Confronting the Past: Historians debate the value and place for Confederate monuments, memorials and other symbols.

No MU Mention

ATLANTA — Those driving or even flying here this week for the American Historical Association’s annual meeting might have glimpsed Stone Mountain out their car or airplane window. The massive, Mount Rushmore-style tribute to Confederate leaders Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee and Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson is hard to miss and -- for many -- hard to stomach. But what can and should be done about the thousands upon thousands of Confederate memorials and other symbols throughout the American South, many of which are on college and university campuses?

The topic was the subject of a plenary session for the first time open to the public here Thursday at the AHA’s gathering.

James Grossman, executive director of the AHA and a panel of noted experts on the American South all said that the evening’s discussion had been precipitated by the June massacre at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, in Charleston, S.C., which prompted debates about state-sanctioned Confederate iconography due to the shooter’s interest in such symbols, as well as the recent student protest movement.

But speakers also said that the history of the Confederate flag and other symbols is long and fraught, and that another national conversation over their value and rightful place was already overdue.

For David Blight, the Class of 1954 Professor of American History at Yale University, the Confederate symbol question is, in part, about where one’s “line” is. For some, he said, the line between what is historically valuable and not is drawn at that which does not promote maximum unity. For others, the line leads to maximum knowledge, and the “troubled wisdom” that comes with it.

Others still draw it at healing justice, if such a thing can be achieved, he said, and yet others at maximum pleasure or pain. Blight said he was pushed by a reporter earlier this year in the aftermath of the Charleston shooting -- which he called the past “exploding” into the present --
to draw his own line. Without realizing it, Blight named the Davis and Lee figures in the National Statuary Hall Collection in the U.S. Capitol as Confederate monuments he found unacceptable.

“I found I had a line,” Blight said, but admitted he couldn’t do anything to remove the statues, which are selected by individual states.

W. Fitzhugh Brundage, the William B. Umstead Distinguished Professor and chair of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, said he used to shrug off the Confederate symbol problem in favor of what he saw as more pressing issues. He’s come around, he said, but the problem is of a massive scale and seeking to “rebalance” the Southern memorial landscape would likely be prohibitively expensive. According to the digital archive he’s helped create of all the monuments in his state, just 30 of several hundred Civil War-related ones honor Union or black soldiers.

So what to do about all the other monuments in North Carolina and other states -- such as Georgia’s giant Stone Mountain? Brundage suggested that the mountain -- with its various historical ties to white supremacists, including those in the Ku Klux Klan -- might best serve as a museum tracing the history of American white supremacy. But because there would be little public interest in such a project, he said, it’s probably best to start by addressing the “lowest-hanging” fruit, or smaller monuments and memorials -- many of which are housed at colleges and universities. While students on campuses across the country have called for the removal of monuments from everyone from Davis to Thomas Jefferson, who was not involved the Civil War but who owned slaves, Brundage said colleges and universities should target symbols for removal based on their significance.

For example, he said, some students have argued that all tributes to Woodrow Wilson, a known racist, should be expunged. While Wilson’s imprint on certain campuses might be relatively insignificant, and therefore perhaps best left alone, he said, the Woodrow Wilson School of Public Service and International Affairs at Princeton University probably should be renamed because Wilson’s views contradict in many ways what the school is trying to promote.

Daina Ramey Berry, an associate professor of history at the University of Texas at Austin, was a member of her university's task force on what to do about several Confederate monuments in a prominent area on campus. The task force didn’t tell President Gregory L. Fenves what to do, but rather described the historical context of the monuments, gauged how members of the campus community felt and outlined possible ways of dealing with them. Students were nearly perfectly split on the issue, and in the end Fenves decided to move the most controversial monument -- that of Davis, president of the Confederacy -- to a museum on campus that could provide appropriate historical context. Several other monuments stayed in place because they were found to have significant ties to Texas.
Berry said she’d refrained from talking publicly about her work on the task force after someone commented in a local newspaper article that black faculty members should be chained to the Davis statue. But because she felt that she was among peers on Thursday, Berry said she wanted to speak out. She asked what the historian’s role was in the national ongoing debate, and encouraged her colleagues to get involved.

“I’ve been saying to my students for the last year, year-and-a-half, that we are in a particular historical moment,” Berry said. “So what is the historian’s role in this moment, I ask again? The historian’s role is to provide the context in which people can understand the very complex issues of the past and the present.”

In addition to students, Berry said, historians also serve the public. “What will we say?” she asked. “Some of you in this room have already weighed in and I know these are difficult conversations. We will certainly not always agree with one another’s interpretation but that is history and it is what we do.”

John Coski, an historian with the American Civil War Museum and author of The Confederate Battle Flag: America’s Most Embattled Emblem, said historians can help elevate the “tone and substance” of current and future conversations about such issues. Most importantly, he said, historians can help distinguish between sovereignty and free speech contexts -- that is, the difference between a state flag that looks like the Confederate flag, for example, and someone wearing the Confederate flag on a T-shirt.

Second, he said, historians can help explain the difference between the facts of history and the “glorifying” of it. For example, he said, it stands to reason that those who strongly value the Confederate flag as a means of memorializing the soldiers who fought and died under it ought to want to limit their expressions to a memorialized context. That’s instead of, say, wearing a prom dress featuring the flag’s pattern, he said.

Last, Coski said, historians should demand a more sophistication conversation about what it means to "erase" history, and whether that's really possible. "That's what we have heard about and will be hearing a lot about in the next few years, unless these discussions morph into something unexpected," he said. "'It's erasing history!' Is it really? Well you can't really erase history. You can erase the presentation of it, you can erase the memory of it, you can erase a particular spin of it, but is it really erasing history? We should be at forefront of trying to clarify what does and does not constitute erasing history."

Jane Turner Censer, a professor of history at George Mason University, made a similar argument, saying that the earliest attempts at memorializing Confederate soldiers -- undertaken largely by white women’s organizations -- sought to locate and identify their remains. Over time, the monuments became more and more celebratory, and "glorifying," boldly moving from the cemetery to public squares and other prominent areas: Davis on a horse, a Confederate soldier standing guard.
Some of the supporters argued that these efforts weren’t political, when they of course were, Censer said. "White Southerners showed their power by dominating the space with martial monuments."

But rather than eliminating such symbols altogether, she suggested, what if they were moved back to cemeteries and other locations more clearly tied to the act of memorializing, or the "bringing about of remembrance?" Censer said that while she’s much more comfortable dealing in 19th century history than 21st century policy, "I suggest the way that these Confederate statues came to exist can offer something to our decisions.... Purpose matters. Even though cemeteries are not generally closed to the public they do not appear public" in the same way parks or colleges or universities do.

Grossman said it would have been irresponsible for historians meet in Atlanta without talking about the “presence of the past within our lives.” And while the city is rife with reminders of a cause that “deserved to be lost,” he said, it’s a history that can’t be erased -- even through the removal of monument and symbols -- and which instead must be confronted.

During a question and answer period, U.S. Army Col. Ty Seidule, chair of the department of history at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, said confederate symbols and monuments were “not just a Southern problem.” While West Point rejected as traitors all Confederate veterans in the aftermath of the Civil War, he said, the university in the 20th Century the university began to honor some Confederate officers. Now it’s rethinking some of those ties, he said, based on the idea that Lee, military leader of the Confederacy, alone “killed more U.S. Army soldiers than Hitler.”

Michael Allen, a community partnership specialist with the National Park Service based in Charleston, said he was heartened to hear some of the evening’s suggestions, and that he’d report them back to leaders of the Emanuel church. They want to plan a memorial or museum for their slain members, he said, and will have to face many of the issues discussed.

Allen also said he’d had some success trying to “rebalance” the memorial landscape in and around Charleston. A historical marker at the site of secession caused controversy and was knocked down, but survives. And a marker dedicated to Robert Smalls, the first African-American to command a U.S. warship, is still standing.
I’ve heard a lot of concern about mental health in recent years: How many homeless folks are so because of mental illness. The plight of veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. Young people in our own community. College students under stress.

So it was welcome news all around when, just before Christmas, MacQuest Consulting submitted plans for a new 60-bed psychiatric hospital in southeast Columbia.

I read that local public officials of all sorts, and of all political stripes, lauded the announcement, recognizing the great unmet need for mental health services this facility would help to meet.

But other than complying with the usual zoning and building codes, the private, for-profit firm wanting to build this hospital won’t be pitching to the Columbia City Council for approval. Instead, it must appeal to the lesser-known Missouri Health Facilities Review Committee. This state group determines if it will issue a “certificate of need” to allow this facility, with its services and jobs, to be legally created in our community.

The company’s sales pitch (not yet to potential patients, mind you) is reported to include a seven-county area where supposedly more than 2,000 people have unmet psychiatric needs. I don’t doubt it at all, though I freely admit I have no idea what the mental health market is in real terms.

It is not my business. It is this company’s business. So God bless them for wanting to find a profitable enterprise serving this segment of humanity.
In fact, why should this potential hospital provider, or any other, have to go in front of bureaucrats and get permission to serve a need in our community, as if these officials have any magical perception to determine the need?

I recall a different atmosphere entirely just last summer when a partnership among a different private firm, Fulton Medical Center and MU Health Care proposed a 10-bed hospital in southeast Columbia. This was most certainly not a welcome idea to many — particularly Boone Hospital Center, which engaged in one of the most anti-competitive smear campaigns I can recall in this community.

The 10-bed hospital was characterized as seeking to poach a profitable segment of the regional health care market. Its certificate of need application was mocked for artificially drawing a market boundary that focused on Callaway County, but conveniently excluded Columbia, where Boone Hospital and MU Health Care are clear leaders in market share.

Boone Hospital officials mailed letters to residents and placed paid advertisements in local newspapers with their scare tactics. I was stupefied that respected local leaders would stoop to sabotage, like that of the powerful establishment antagonists from an Ayn Rand novel. Nonetheless, they chalked up a victory by having the proposal rejected.

Funny how Boone Hospital was fighting that deal at the same time they were building a nice new facility at Nifong and Forum boulevards. In fact, there’s a ribbon cutting ceremony there next month.

Boone’s flagship campus on East Broadway has a relatively new tower on its south end, and expansion land on the north. Doesn’t that also present a perceived “need?”

The University Hospital complex continues to expand, as well. And rightly so, as Columbia is relatively thriving, and medical services are a major industry, drawing customers from what must be a nearly 100-mile radius. This is good.
MU’s Missouri Orthopaedic Institute has sprouted in recent years and is aggressively expanding, yet I don't see where any of these projects had to get state approval.

To their credit, I didn’t hear complaints about new competition from the many local private practice doctors, nor the privately owned Columbia Orthopaedic Group, seemingly direct competitors to the institute.

Some in the know might say, "But Spellman, you just don’t understand the 10-bed proposal. It would have cut into one of the increasingly few areas of the medical industry that are still quite profitable. And even a publicly owned hospital needs that lucrative segment to cover the free- and reduced-cost services they are mandated to offer."

Still, how do more restrictions help the health care sector, already one of the most convoluted sectors of the American economy?

Let this new psychiatric hospital come; let’s welcome it with open arms. Let MU’s 10-bed facility come, too. More clinics, as well.

If it turns out too many are built, some providers might possibly lose out. But if we prevent a new entry, we guarantee that we all lose.

Any and all medical providers should be able to determine the opportunities to serve patients, make a living and provide jobs and economic activity. It’s this certificate of need stuff, some outmoded Soviet-style approval board, that needs to be disapproved out of existence.

**MISSOURIAN**

**GEORGE KENNEDY: Joining a big, scrappy crowd to watch women's basketball**

GEORGE KENNEDY, 1 hr ago
It had been a long time since one of our university’s basketball teams played what could reasonably be called a Big Game.

So I jumped at the chance, which came with a free ticket, to attend Monday’s conference opener between our 20th-ranked Tigers and the 12th-ranked women of Tennessee.

I wasn’t alone. Day-after reports noted that Monday’s was the biggest crowd ever to witness a women’s game at Mizzou Arena and the biggest in a couple of years for either the men’s or women’s team.

As you know by now, the outcome was a disappointment. The Volunteers may not be the national-championship quality of the Pat Summit era, but they were tall, quick and aggressive. Our younger, smaller Tigers came out looking tight and couldn’t buy a basket from beyond the 3-point line.

The game wasn’t a minute old when a voice behind me — loud, hoarse and more than a little profane — began offering advice to the Tigers and posing questions and suggestions to the officials.

“Screen, (drat it)!”

“Don’t pick up your (darned) dribble out there!”

“Can’t you see a (doggoned) foul when they commit one!?”

“Why don’t you take that (blessed) whistle and stick it…...!”

Before long I felt a tap on my shoulder. I turned around and saw a tall, lean, intense woman who said she felt a need to apologize, for fear she had offended me and my companion.

“I’m not offended,” I told her. “I haven’t learned any new words, and I may be learning something about the game.”
My education continued throughout the 40 minutes. When the game ended, we exchanged commiserations. She told me she knew the Missouri players. Her seatmate said my instructor had herself played in college. She’d have played hard, I guessed.

Asked for her assessment, she offered a couple of coachlike observations, such as the need to make sure your best shooters get the ball when they’re open and the requirement to match the intensity of your opponents.

She also noted that the good news for the Tigers is that ours is a young team, with the potentially best player only a freshman. That would be Sophie Cunningham, a Rock Bridge High School graduate and younger sister of Lindsey, a junior and also a starter.

The other freshman starter is another Rock Bridge alumna and this week’s Southeastern Conference Freshman of the Week, Cierra Porter, whose older sister, Bri, is a junior and whose father, Michael Sr., is assistant coach.

(The third set of sisters on Coach Robin Pingeton’s team, Morgan and Maddie Stock, are both senior guards from Town and Country, Missouri).

The bad news, if you can call it that, is that Tennessee is reckoned to be only the fourth-best team in the SEC, the strongest conference in women’s basketball this year. Going into Monday’s game, the Tigers were rated sixth in the conference.

It took us more than 30 minutes to exit the parking lot, far longer than after either of the two men’s games I’ve attended this season. I counted that another good thing.

After two road games that promise to be at least as challenging as Monday’s — at Georgia (12-2) and at South Carolina (No. 2 in the nation) — the Tigers come home next Thursday to play Mississippi State (No. 7 in the nation).

Maybe I’ll see you there. I’m hoping to continue my basketball education.