MU grad student employees will receive health insurance for another year

EMMA VANDELLINDER, 10 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — **MU graduate student employees will continue to receive health insurance subsidies under the university's regular plan for another full year.**

MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley announced Tuesday that the university will continue to provide insurance subsidies to graduate student employees despite its violation of an Affordable Care Act interpretation. Under the current plan, the university provides subsidies that make up all or part of the cost of health insurance for graduate students employed by MU. This plan will continue through the 2016-17 fiscal year, or from July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017.

In choosing to maintain the university's insurance plan, Foley has set aside the three recommendations offered to him in November by the Task Force on Graduate Student Health Insurance. The task force was charged in last year with finding a solution to the ACA violation.

"Though we had a task force examine and propose different options from that which we have always done, the options presented in their report each come with a new set of problems and negative consequences for some of our students, especially for those who have children or who will have children," Foley said in the Tuesday statement.

MU withdrew graduate student employee health insurance on Aug. 15 in response to an IRS ruling that prohibited MU and other universities providing similar coverage from continuing to offer their insurance plans. Leona Rubin, associate vice chancellor of Graduate Studies, announced the withdrawal just one day before it was to take place, causing an uproar from graduate students who were left with gaps in their coverage. The health insurance was reinstated on Aug. 21, but tensions remained high.
"We really were directed that the subsidies could not continue," Rubin said in an August Faculty Council meeting. She said she made the decision to withdraw the subsidies under the impression that MU was required to remove them.

In October, then-Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin guaranteed university-provided health insurance for graduate student employees. He did not, however, provide information about how he would do so and has since stepped down from office.

Rubin's abrupt announcement of the withdrawal made the IRS interpretation seem immediately threatening to the school if it chose to continue to provide health insurance. However, the university has continued under its same health insurance plan for five months and, with Foley's announcement, will continue to offer it for another year and a half.

"The major research universities across the country have mobilized their congressional delegations to address the IRS ruling so that beginning in 2017, we may be able to continue to offer the same insurance coverage that we have always offered," Foley said in Tuesday's statement.

He also said a new solution might be needed, but, "As part of our overall commitment to providing nationally competitive compensation packages for MU graduate students, we will continue to ensure that our graduate students have health insurance options competitive with our peer institutions."

The chancellor was unavailable to comment Tuesday, MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said.

"We support Dr. Foley's decision," task force chairman Kristofer Hagglund said. "He made this decision based on his interpretation of all the information he has and did it to support our graduate students. He is really looking out for their best interest."

Hagglund said maintaining the university's current plan was only considered as an informal option by the task force because it did not solve the university's violation of the interpretation of the Affordable Care Act. It was, however, included in the text of the report.
"There wasn't a single solution that we could find that didn't have both positive and negative consequences to it," he said. "There was nothing that was going to be perfect and so we fully respect and support (Foley's) decision."

Even though the task force's recommendations were not taken, its months of work paid off, said Graduate Professional Council President Hallie Thompson.

"Because the task force did the work that they did, they made us realize now that the other options are just not viable for a majority of graduate students," she said. "There are too many unseen risks and too many things that we would be compromising through doing other options. So what we were doing — continuing the subsidies — is the best thing going forward, and that's what the task force really did, is eliminate that question."

Thompson said Foley's decision was a limited victory because it aligned with what graduate students believed was the best course of action but was only a short-term solution.

GPC, MU's official democratic government for graduate, professional, postdoctoral and postbaccalaureate students, held a survey this winter offering graduate students the opportunity to choose between the four options for health insurance — the first three were the official proposals made by the graduate student insurance task force and the fourth was to maintain the university's current plan.

"We overwhelmingly heard from graduate students: 'Yes. Option number four, stay with the same insurance,'" Thompson said. The report was then passed along to Foley for consideration.

The Forum on Graduate Rights, a grassroots movement that was formed in response to the withdrawal of health insurance subsidies, also echoed this sentiment in a December statement.

"After careful consideration of the three solutions proposed by the Health Insurance Task Force, the Steering Committee of the Forum on Graduate Rights has concluded that all three would leave graduate students materially worse off than under our current subsidy plan," the December statement said. The forum recommended MU continue its current plan of providing health
insurance until a better solution could be found — a plan that the university is now implementing.

Eric Scott, co-chairman of the Coalition on Graduate Workers, Thompson and GPC treasurer Alex Howe voiced their frustration with the university's decision-making process over the past five months. They made it clear that the inefficiencies of the system, the lack of participation of graduate students in matters directly related to them and the broken communication between administrators and students have caused unnecessary turmoil and difficulty.

"The uncertainty involved during the process up to now and the uncertainty that remains due to this being a one-year fix robs graduate students of their agency because they are unable to plan their lives beyond more than a few months out," Howe said in an email.

"This is a good thing in the sense that it's good that we're not going to have to suffer any of the unintended side effects of the other proposals, and it's great that people will have health insurance next year," Scott said. "But we can't keep going from crisis to crisis. We need to figure out some way to have a system that is sustainable that doesn't just put us right back into the mess in a year and a half."

**MU to continue subsidizing grad student health insurance**

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) – Graduate students at the University of Missouri will receive subsidized health insurance premiums for another year.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports that interim Chancellor Hank Foley made the announcement Tuesday.

Health insurance became an issue after the university gave graduate assistants 24-hour notice in August that they would no longer receive health insurance subsidies because of an IRS
interpretation of the Affordable Care Act. The university rescinded that decision for this academic year after student and faculty backlash and created a task force to work on the issue.

The task force gave administrators recommendations last month. Graduate students have been waiting to hear how the university would handle health insurance premiums for fall 2016 since then.

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MU to subsidize graduate student health insurance for another year

By Megan Favignano

Tuesday, January 19, 2016 at 2:00 pm
The University of Missouri will subsidize health insurance premiums for graduate assistants for another year, interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley said Tuesday.

Graduate students have been waiting to hear how the university would handle health insurance premiums for fall 2016 since a task force gave MU administrators recommendations last month.

In a letter to faculty and staff, Foley said MU is committed to remaining competitive with its peers when it comes to graduate student compensation packages.

“We will continue to ensure that our graduate students have health insurance options competitive with our peer institutions,” Foley said.

Traditionally, MU has subsidized health insurance premiums for graduate assistants. Graduate assistants receive stipends and benefits in exchange for their work teaching and conducting research for the university.

MU told graduate students in August — 24 hours before their insurance was set to expire — that it could no longer subsidize premiums because of an IRS interpretation of the Affordable Care Act. Administrators later rescinded that decision for the current school year and put together a task force to determine how MU could cover the cost while following IRS rules.

In the letter, Foley said major research universities across the country are lobbying lawmakers to address the IRS ruling with the hope that universities can continue to offer the subsidy beginning in 2017.

“We understand that graduate students may have concerns regarding coverage in subsequent years,” Foley said in the letter.

Connor Lewis, a graduate student who has helped lead efforts to unionize this school year, said MU’s decision to provide insurance for another year was a “small comfort.” Lewis is a member of the Forum on Graduate Rights, a graduate student advocacy group that formed in August.

“We’re happy that Chancellor Foley decided to continue the subsidy plan for another year,” Lewis said. “Personally, I was looking for a little more long-term stability.”

Lewis said he was glad Foley listened to the group’s concerns about recommendations in a report released last month from the task force.

The task force recommended MU create a fellowship or increase stipends to cover health insurance premium costs while following IRS regulations. Unlike the subsidy, fellowship funds and increased stipends would be taxable income. Some graduate students worried the change might affect their eligibility for government programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

“Though we had a task force examine and propose different options from that which we have always done, the options presented in their report each come with a new set of problems and
negative consequences for some of our students, especially for those who have children or who will have children,” Foley said in his letter.

In the letter, Foley said he shared his decision with the UM System Board of Curators and that the curators agreed with his approach. Foley was not available before deadline for comment.

While Foley’s decision guarantees the subsidy for one year, MU Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies Leona Rubin said MU plans to cover health insurance costs after that year.

“We understand that students need health insurance,” Rubin said. “We are committed to providing health insurance for the length of their term.”

Graduate student applications were down 19 percent compared to this time last year, MU officials said in a Jan. 4 memo.

Rubin said graduate student recruitment is decentralized, with each department recruiting students independently.

“It’s hard to know why those application numbers are down right now,” Rubin said.

MU subsidizes graduate student health insurance for another year

COLUMBIA - Interim Chancellor Hank Foley announced Tuesday the University of Missouri will subsidize graduate student health insurance for another year.

In a statement, Foley said MU will "stand pat with all the other top research universities in the country," and will offer the health insurance benefit to graduate students for at least one more year.

"Though we had a task force examine and propose different options from that which we have always done, the options presented in their report each come with a new set of problems and
negative consequences for some of our students, especially for those who have children or who will have children,” Foley said.

Foley also said major research universities across the country have mobilized their congressional delegations to address an IRS ruling that says graduate students are employees of the university rather than students because they provide research and teaching assistance. The Affordable Care Act prohibits employers from giving employees money specifically to buy insurance under the individual market.

Foley said, because of the mobilization efforts, MU may be able to continue to offer the same insurance coverage that it has always offered.

"While we cannot predict what the agencies will do, we can predict our own institutional behavior. As part of our overall commitment to providing nationally competitive compensation packages for MU graduate students, we will continue to ensure that our graduate students have health insurance options competitive with our peer institutions," Foley said.

Foley guarantees graduate students at least one more year of health coverage

Graduate students are assured at least one more year of health coverage, interim Chancellor Hank Foley wrote in an email to graduate students and faculty Tuesday morning.

In the email, Foley acknowledged shortcomings of the Task Force for Graduate Health Insurance, noting the options presented in their Nov. 16 report each had a “new set of problems and negative consequences” for certain students, especially those with children.

The UM System Board of Curators approved Foley’s plan to provide the same benefits afforded in 2015 to graduate students for another year; however, the level of coverage for 2017 and subsequent years remains uncertain.

MU and other major research universities across the country have “mobilized their congressional delegations” to find a solution to providing graduate students with health insurance after this year, according to the email. The search for a new method of coverage comes after the IRS redefined student health insurance as “individual coverage” under the Affordable Care Act in 2014.

If MU cannot find a way to provide the same coverage in 2017, the university will look for alternative solutions.
“We will continue to ensure that our graduate students have health insurance options competitive with our peer institutions,” Foley said in the email.

**Police groups reaccredit MUPD**

Tuesday, January 19, 2016 at 2:00 pm

*The University of Missouri Police Department was recently reaccredited by two law enforcement organizations.*

MUPD was accredited for the fifth time at the November Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies conference, receiving advanced accreditation with excellence, according to a news release. The commission also recognized MUPD as a “Meritorious Agency” for being accredited for 15 years or more.

After receiving the CALEA accreditation and meeting standards for law enforcement on campuses, MUPD was reaccredited with the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, the release said, the third time the department has received that accreditation. MUPD is the only university police department in the state to be accredited with both, the release said.

**MUPD receives reaccreditation**

COLUMBIA - *The University of Missouri Police Department (MUPD) said it was re-accredited for the fifth time.* The department received Advanced Accreditation with Excellence
at a Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) conference in November.

Since the department has been accredited for 15 years or more, it was also recognized as a "Meritorious Agency".

MUPD said it was also re-accredited through the The International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA). It is the department's third re-accreditation through that agency.

"It is important to Mizzou that our police officers maintain the highest quality standards among sworn officers nationally. The level of professionalism by MUPD officers is something everyone at MU should commend," said Gary L. Ward, vice chancellor for MU Operations.

In a news release, MUPD said it continues to maintain accreditation in its efforts to provide professional law enforcement services to its community.

MUPD said it is the only university in Missouri to be accredited through both organizations.

Interim administrators won’t hold MU back

Chancellor Emeritus Brady Deaton: “Leaders need support and teamwork if we expect good judgments to be made. Interim appointments can provide sound leadership and be effectively managed at all levels.”

After several shifts in administrative positions following a semester of tension and student protests, MU’s administration began the spring semester with 15 administrators in an interim role. Despite the surplus of temporary positions, having many interim administrators could be beneficial for the university.

“I have felt completely accepted and empowered as an interim over the last seven months,” said Barbara Rupp, interim vice provost for enrollment management, in an email. “My experience has been that people just want to know that you’re going to work on their behalf for whatever time you are in your role. On some occasions an interim can even be more effective, especially if they are not a candidate for the open position, because they can be more forthcoming with their comments and opinions.”

Rupp was retired for one year when she returned to MU in her interim role. She worked in admissions from 1997 until her retirement in 2014, and she became the director of admissions in 2004.
Because both she and many of the interim administrators have previous experience with the university, Rupp said they are in a good position to make necessary decisions, especially in an interim role.

“I have a long history with the university, I care about the university, and I’m willing to speak up and try to accomplish some things,” Rupp said. “I’m not tethered by being worried about whether I’ll be hired permanently or whether I might be let go. I came with the full understanding that it was strictly on an interim basis, and that can actually be rather liberating. As an interim I think it would be unwise and unfair to make any sweeping broad changes in the division, but I’m fully willing to make specific recommendations and changes as they are needed and have done so.”

Although administrators in interim positions often have limited time before they are succeeded by permanent replacements, Chancellor Emeritus Brady Deaton said in an email that being interim is rarely an excuse for inaction and there should not be delays in making administrative decisions because an administrator is in an interim role.

“There may be times that someone holds back or delays responding because they may think you will not be there that long,” Deaton said. “But that is risky for them, and trying to game that interim situation is very complex and subject to misunderstandings. I found it best to just charge ahead on the assumption that these were important decisions that needed to be made by whomever held the post. Someone else would have to change it later if they did not like the outcome.”

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley has already made changes in his new position in the two months since replacing former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, who resigned in November. Foley announced in an email to students Dec. 4 that he would re-establish the position of executive vice chancellor of health affairs, which Loftin decided not to fill after Hal Williamson retired from the position. Foley appointed Williamson as the interim executive vice chancellor of health affairs, making Williamson the most recent addition to the interim administrators.

Deaton has served in both interim and permanent positions at MU. After former Provost Edward Sheridan left for the University of Houston, Deaton was appointed interim provost in January 1998 before being appointed provost eight months later. When Chancellor Emeritus Richard Wallace retired, Deaton became interim chancellor in September 2004 and was directly appointed as chancellor without a search the next month.

Deaton said his responsibilities did not feel different in his interim roles compared to the permanent ones.

“Leadership in these positions depends on personal commitment, understanding of the issues, and respect from others,” Deaton said. “You have to have good people around you either way to help with the process. I did not find the circumstances to be that different in my case.”

The sudden prevalence of interim administrators is likely due in part to the voluntary buyout program that MU introduced in September 2014. The program offered a one-time payout for
retiring from MU to tenured faculty who were eligible for retirement and over 62 by Aug. 31, 2015.

Because the names of those who accepted buyouts were not released, it is unclear how many of the administrators succeeded by the current interim replacements retired as a result of the program. However, 13 of the 28 eligible academic administrators accepted buyouts, according to the Columbia Daily Tribune.

Some former administrators left their positions publicly, such as Loftin and former Trulaske College of Business Dean Joan Gabel, who vacated her position when she became the provost at the University of South Carolina in August.

The UM System Board of Curators met Jan. 13 to discuss the search for the next system president to succeed interim President Mike Middleton, who succeeded former President Tim Wolfe after Wolfe resigned amid student protests and racial tension.

The board is expected to announce a final decision regarding Wolfe’s permanent replacement at their Feb. 4-5 meeting. However, the current timeline for the search for permanent administrators at MU is still unclear. MU does not have any specific answers regarding the search for permanent administrators at this time, spokesman Christian Basi said in an email.

“I am confident that sound decisions will continue to be made and that adjustments will occur as needed,” Deaton said. “Universities are dynamic environments and continuing adjustments will continue long into the future by whomever is in charge. Leaders need support and teamwork if we expect good judgments to be made. Interim appointments can provide sound leadership and be effectively managed at all levels.”

**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**

**Messenger: Curators adopt Melissa Click approach to presidential search**

By: Tony Messenger

The University of Missouri Board of Curators has decided to adopt the Melissa Click philosophy.

When in doubt, shut the public out.

Click, of course, is the University of Missouri-Columbia communications assistant professor who earned notoriety during the fall hunger strike by MU student Jonathan Butler and associated protests of black students affiliated with the group Concerned Student 1950.
It was Nov. 9, the day university system President Timothy M. Wolfe resigned so that Butler would begin eating again, and dozens of protesters had gathered on the quad surrounding the Concerned Student 1950 tent city.

Click stood in the way as freelance photographer Tim Tai, also a university student, sought to report on the protests. She asked for “some muscle” to keep journalists away from what some of the protesters wanted protected as a “safe space.”

It was not a good moment for Click, and since then, there have been numerous calls for her resignation, mostly from the Missouri Legislature, but also from at least one curator, David Steelman.

Now Steelman and the curators are tasked with finding a replacement for Wolfe, whose resignation was sudden and unexpected.

But the rules of openness that they want so badly to enforce on the university’s campus don’t seem to apply to them.

As has been par for the course in most of the recent searches for president, including the one that chose Wolfe, the curators have decided to create a “safe space” so they can work in secret.

This is not becoming of a state university, but it’s a growing trend across the nation.

The argument, in Missouri and at most public universities that decide to close their presidential searches, is that the top candidates won’t apply if they are subject to public disclosure.

“The best candidates probably have a job,” Steelman told me in explaining his vote to close the process. “If word gets out that they are looking for another one, they become a lame duck.”

That argument hasn’t been a problem for Missouri’s second-largest public university.

In both of its last two presidential searches, Missouri State University has held a public process, at least revealing the last two or three finalists, and hosting those finalists on campus for a series of public interviews. One of those former MSU presidents, Mike Nietzel, is now a top adviser to Gov. Jay Nixon, who appointed most of the current UM curators. Such a process is required by law in several states, including bordering Iowa and Tennessee.

If Steelman’s wife would have had her way, that would be the law in Missouri, also.

In 2003, state Sen. Sarah Steelman, a Republican from Rolla, proposed changes to the state’s public records law, known as the Sunshine Law, that would have required public bodies to release the names of three finalists at least eight days before making a final decision.
As it relates to the Board of Curators, that change would have applied to the hiring of a president, chief counsel and secretary to the board.

David Steelman let out a hearty laugh when I reminded him of that legislation.

“I always supported my wife’s efforts on the Sunshine Law,” said the attorney. “She’d probably be with you on this one.”

The proposed change to the Sunshine Law never made it through the full Senate, but there is an opportunity for Steelman and his fellow curators to honor its spirit.

While they settled on a “largely closed” process, there is still a chance they could vote to release finalists’ names, Steelman said. He said his research was clear that the closed process led to the best possibility of having a “broad” applicant pool, but he’d be open to releasing some names near the end of the process.

Curators could make that decision in February, he said.

They would do well to remember how the university got to its current dilemma.

When black students targeted Wolfe for resignation, their larger, more important complaint had to do with making sure that they were included in the process of governance at a university that has a less than exemplary history in that department. In demanding that Wolfe step down, the Concerned Student 1950 list of demands also asked that future chancellors and presidents be chosen by a “collective of students, staff, and faculty of diverse backgrounds.”

In closing the presidential search process, it’s almost as if the curators posted Click at the door as the new head of security. They might need to call in some more muscle.

Freshman applications down from last year

The Office of the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management is concerned about the impact on enrollment for fall 2016.

Nonresident applications for fall 2016 have decreased by 941 compared to the same time last year, according to a Jan. 4 memo from Barbara Rupp, interim vice provost for enrollment.
management, and Director of Admissions Chuck May. The university has received a total of 18,377 applications for the fall, compared to 19,318 for fall 2015.

Enrollment deposits are also down by 383 from this time last year, but more deposits are expected to come when students receive information about orientation and residential life, according to the memo.

“Still, we are concerned about the decrease and are making plans for some increased yield activities this spring that might help to increase our deposit numbers,” the memo reads.

Applications are also down for transfer and graduate students.

“There is no way to accurately forecast our fall enrollment at this time, though we do anticipate a decrease,” the memo reads. “We are working closely with many on campus to make every effort possible in the coming months to minimize that decrease.”

Column: After last semester, MU students can handle whatever comes our way

Columnist Elane Edwards explains why this semester is already testing our “tiger pride.”

MU faced one of the most soul-searching semesters it has ever seen this past fall, and with the 2016 Spring semester starting, we continue to be faced with trials challenging the MU students, administration and our integrity as a school of higher education.

On Jan. 13, 2016, the Mizzou athletics department announced in a news release that the “men’s basketball program had admitted to violations under former coach Frank Haith,” according to previous Maneater reporting.

The investigation has resulted in a self-imposed postseason ban for the 2015-16 season. On top of the ban, the men’s basketball team will have to vacate all 23 wins from the 2013-14 season, will lose a scholarship and will be charged with a fine for the 2016-17 season.

Not only are we facing challenges in our athletics department, but also the Board of Curators is discovering potential issues with deciding on the most efficient way to find the next UM System president.

The Board of Curators discussed the many ways they are able to go about the search at a meeting Jan. 13. They needed to decide between an open, closed or hybrid way of managing the long and in-depth search for the best person to accept the position.
However, as we previously reported, Curator John Phillips said there was a consensus toward a closed search, “as it would allow them to reach out to candidates who were already employed.”

I understand the Board of Curators’ hesitation toward having an open or hybrid model of search because of their need for confidentiality during the process, however, after public demand lead to the fall of our last UM System president, not allowing more of a public voice in the decision could backfire.

The Board should strongly consider pursuing the hybrid search model, as it would allow for transparency and oversight from all of the stakeholders involved in the search while also preserving candidate confidentiality throughout the process, which is essential to attracting the best possible candidates. In a hybrid search, open forums would be held once the Board decides upon a list of finalist. At the forums, students, faculty, and administrators will be able to comment and critique the candidates, which is extremely important.

It wouldn't be fair for the Board of Curators to make such an important decision regarding the UM System’s future without any public comment whatsoever.

This Spring semester is already testing our “tiger pride,” but this campus is strong. After enduring the last semester, we can handle whatever is coming our way these next 16 weeks.

Catch up on MU news you missed over break

From banning hoverboards on campus to an announcement on potential new student housing, here’s what happened during winter break.

Lawmakers call for Melissa Click’s dismissal State lawmakers released a letter calling for assistant professor Melissa Click’s immediate dismissal after her actions in campus protests in November. In response, more than 100 MU faculty released a letter supporting Click.

Presidential Search The UM System Board of Curators met Jan. 13 to discuss the logistics and timeline for the search for a new UM System president. They discussed potentially using an open, closed or hybrid model for the search, but they didn’t finalize a decision.

Hoverboard Ban Interim Chancellor Hank Foley announced that self-balancing scooters, also known as hoverboards, are now banned from MU’s campus in an email to students Jan. 8 because of the potential impact on campus safety. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is investigating fire hazard and other potential dangers of hoverboards, and Foley said the policy may be modified after the CPSC releases recommendations.
New MSA cabinet members announced Missouri Students Association President and Vice President-elect Haden Gomez and Chris Hanner chose Lydia Ghuman as their new chief inclusivity officer and Kathryn Cua as their new director of student communications. Their announcement comes after Gomez controversially dismissed Riley de Leon and Natalie Edelstein as the Department of Student Communications director and assistant director, respectively.

Abortion services In late December, a federal judge ruled that Planned Parenthood could resume performing medication-induced abortions if it hires a physician with privileges. Due to the lack of privileges at nearby hospitals, the Columbia clinic is still unable to perform abortions.

New student housing Britches Clothing and Quinton’s Bar & Deli could be transformed into a new 10-story student housing complex, according to the Columbia Tribune. A California housing developer submitted their plans to the city earlier this month.

University of Missouri, Lincoln University cancel classes for Tuesday night

Two mid-Missouri universities cancelled class Tuesday evening due to snowy conditions.

Officials with Lincoln University announced they were cancelling classes for the rest of Tuesday night around 4:00.

About a half hour later, officials with the University of Missouri also announced that classes were canceled for the rest of the night.

ABC 17 News talked with MU officials Tuesday who said they will not make a decision about classes for Wednesday until 5:00 a.m. Wednesday morning.

Columbia Public Works also said The University Tiger Line shuttles will stop service early at 8:00 p.m. Tuesday. The shuttles are apparently stopping because MU canceled evening classes.

ABC 17 News also spoke with officials with Columbia Public Schools Tuesday. A CPS spokesperson said CPS has canceled most activities scheduled for Tuesday night. The spokesperson said CPD will not make a decision about class for Wednesday until late Tuesday night or Wednesday morning.
ABC 17 news will continue checking with school officials, asking for updates on closures and cancellations. We'll keep updating this story as we learn more.

MU cancels classes Tuesday evening

COLUMBIA - The University of Missouri announced Tuesday it would cancel all classes and activities for the remainder of the evening because of a winter weather advisory.

“Due to a winter weather advisory we just received for our area and out of concern for the safety of our students, staff and faculty, we have decided to cancel all classes and activities for the remainder of the evening,” said Gary Ward, MU vice chancellor for operations.

All MU Health Care hospitals and the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital will remain open 24/7. The MU Student Center, Student Recreation Complex, residential hall dining facilities and select dining facilities in the MU Student Center will stay open.

Officials said they will decide whether to cancel classes for Wednesday by 5 a.m.

First day of semester snow leads to class cancellation

MU has only had 13 snow days in 176 years.

MU officials have canceled both classes and activities for the remainder of Tuesday, according a news release sent at 4:40 p.m. An announcement regarding the status of tomorrow’s classes will be made by 5 a.m. tomorrow.
The Student Center, Student Recreation Complex, residential hall dining facilities and select dining facilities in the Student Center will continue to remain open. In addition, MU Health Care hospitals and the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital will also stay open 24/7, according to a news release.

KOMU predicted that 2 to 4 inches of snowfall could be expected in Columbia on Tuesday. Many schools around Columbia closed early in response to the snow, including Moberly Area Community College.

According to the MU Alert website, “The University maintains its teaching, research and service activities in accordance with established schedules and operational demands.”

In the event that campus closes, MU Alert states that “certain essential functions” will always remain open, such as Campus Dining Services, MizzouRec and Ellis Library.

MU cancelled classes for the 13th time in its history last February. According to previous Maneater reporting, snow accumulation reached 5 to 7 inches, which caused road conditions the university deemed dangerous enough to cancel classes.

Campus opened up again the following day and did not close again despite more snowfall later on in the year.


DAVID ROSMAN: Legislative attacks continue to plague women

DAVID ROSMAN, 2 hrs ago

A friend of mine is very, very angry at state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia. It is her contention that Schaefer is misusing his position as the chair of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee to threaten Planned Parenthood and MU.

She goes as far as suggesting a criminal investigation of Schaefer for abuse of power, and hers is not a lone voice in the wind inside or outside our fair state.
Schaefer is not the only one under the Gray Dome who is attacking Planned Parenthood and women. Republican Rep. Mike Moon, who represents part of Lawrence County, introduced the “All Lives Matter Act,” HB 1794, which would declare that "personhood" starts at conception, thus criminalizing abortion in this state.

Moon's proposed bill would also "(repeal) current statutory provisions acknowledging the pre-emption of state law by the Constitution of the United States and decisions of the United States Supreme Court;" thus denying the Constitution's validity.

If passed, the state could conceivably ignore the three Supreme Court cases protecting a woman's right to choose: Roe v. Wade, Planned Parenthood v. Casey and Whole Woman's Health v. Cole.

Rep. Diane Franklin's HB 2071 would require that "all tissue removed at the abortion to be sent to a pathologist" to determine if the laws of the state were followed and that the tissues be properly disposed. There is no provision about how to pay for the added requirements.

Then there is proposed legislation by Sen. Bob Onder's, R-St. Charles, that would require annual inspection of Planned Parenthood centers.

More anti-women legislation has been proposed, but as I noted last week, those under the Gray Dome purposefully neglect to add titles and/or summaries to bills, so citizens cannot find them on either the House or Senate websites.

This is where we rely on the news media and advocacy groups to comb through the stack of bills to determine the effects each will have on their constituencies.

Anti-abortion bills are the conservative GOP's response to the now debunked videos by the ultra-right Center for Medical Progress, as well as the false statements made by presidential candidate Carly Fiorina that Planned Parenthood is harvesting and selling fetal tissues and parts.

Of course, all of these proposals are contrary to the GOP's stake in small, non-intrusive government. As legislators increase the size of government to regulate women's health, they add
no provisions about paying for the new services demanded by statute. Bigger government with no new taxes means that the money must come from education, health care, transportation and other areas.

I also contend, as I have in the past, that anti-abortion legislation is, in large part, religion-based and, therefore in violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause.

These are not only anti-abortion bills but also anti-health care bills, for they would deny access to reliable and safe medical care for women and men seeking reproductive education, contraceptives, diagnosis of sexually transmitted diseases and, yes, abortions.

Planned Parenthood says it has served more than 4.6 million men and women in at least 700 clinics in all 50 states. Only 3 percent of Planned Parenthood's procedures are abortions.

With almost 80 percent of Planned Parenthood's patients falling below 150 percent of the poverty line, other medical clinics might not be financially available to these individuals.

As I have written so many times before, I am not pro-abortion. I am for a woman's right to choose. I am not anti-religion, but I believe sectarian-based laws have no place in our secular government. We are a "Christian nation" only in terms of the religiosity of our citizens, not in the makeup of our federal or state constitutions.

It is my firm belief that those of faith will see through the pandering of the GOP and the neo-conservative movement. Those opposed to clinics such as Planned Parenthood understand that women know their personal medical needs without the intervention of government telling them how to make decisions about their lives.

If the pro-life movement is truly pro-life, it would seek legislation claiming that life continues through the death of the individual; that as a state we need to support the medical needs of all individuals regardless of age through health insurance for all, i.e. the expansion of Medicaid; that we need to pass a death-with-dignity law.
In fact, the pro-life contingent should be supporting Bernie Sander's call for universal health care.

Juvenile office lauds Family Access Center creation

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

Monday, January 18, 2016 at 2:00 pm

A new avenue for connecting children to mental health services is expected to further reduce the number of kids ending up in juvenile court.

“There are times when there’s a kid who has a mental health” issue and immediate referral to the juvenile office might not be the best course of action, said Ruth McCluskey, juvenile court supervisor for the 13th Judicial Circuit.

The Boone County Commission recently awarded $4.1 million from the Children’s Services Fund to the University of Missouri’s Office of Sponsored Programs to establish the Family Access Center for Excellence, or FACE. The award, to be made over three years, will create an organization designed to expand access and improve coordination of existing services such as counseling, mental health screening, substance abuse prevention and treatment, and other programs allowed by the children’s services statute.

McCluskey, who has been with the 13th Judicial Juvenile Court for 20 years, including seven years at the Robert L. Perry Juvenile Justice Center, said the FACE Access Center “has a potential to be a huge benefit” to the community by helping kids and their families find services they need without going through the juvenile office.

“There are other consequences to having referrals to juvenile court,” McCluskey said. “If they can be avoided, that’s in the best interest of the kid.”

The juvenile court needs to be involved in cases that involve community protection and delinquent behavior, she said.
Aside from law enforcement, schools are the next leading source of referrals to the juvenile office. In 2014, Boone County had 1,840 referrals to the juvenile office. The number was almost identical — 1,835 — in 2013. The number for 2015 was 1,610, with 403 or 25 percent being referred by school personnel or school resource officers.

McCluskey said the decrease in referrals from 2014 to 2015 can be tied to the services now in place through the Children’s Services Fund, which has awarded more than $11.5 million to Boone County agencies since 2014.

The Children’s Services Board on Thursday approved the appointment of a seven-member board to oversee the formation of the Family Access Center: Associate Circuit Judge Leslie Schneider; Ruth McCluskey, juvenile court supervisor; Steve Hollis, manager of the human services office at the Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services; Major Tom Reddin of the Boone County Sheriff’s Department and Officer Steve McCormack of the Columbia Police Department; and public school superintendents Peter Stiepleman of Columbia and Darin Ford of Centralia.

Kelly Wallis, director of the Boone County Community Services Department, was appointed as a non-voting, ex-officio member. The FACE board may recommend other appointments from agencies that are “non-conflicted,” meaning they won’t be part of organizations that might provide services to FACE clients or gain financially from the Children’s Services Fund. Even though the Family Access Center award was made to the MU Office of Sponsored Programs, which typically captures 25 to 45 percent of funds for “indirect expenses” such as salaries, the Children’s Services Board contract with that office has capped that amount at 15 percent.

Wallis said all of the board’s 43 funded programs provide mental health services, though not all are specific to counseling and therapy. Programs target child abuse prevention, substance abuse, temporary shelter for abused, neglected, runaway or homeless youths, promotion of healthy lifestyles, respite care for parents of a child with a mental illness or for foster parents, and youth mental health first aid training.

“I definitely think there are people out there who think mental health means something’s wrong and you need a therapist or psychiatrist,” Wallis said.

**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**

**Tipsheet: SEC rakes in crazy money**

Here is a report that will not shock you: The SEC is raking in money at an astonishing rate.
The power conference in college sports is just killing it, in part because of the successful launch of its television network. Year 1 of the new and tremendously lucrative College Football Playoff also factored into the jump.

CBSSports.com went through the conference’s tax return and learned that:

- League revenue was up 62 percent from the previous year, to $527.4 million.
- The SEC collected $311.8 million in TV/radio rights fees for 2014-15, up from $210.4 million two seasons back.
- Postseason revenue for the SEC increased from $98.6 million in 2013-14 to $162.8 million in 2014-15.
- The SEC distributed an average of $32.7 million to its 14 member schools, for a total of $457.8 million. That is an increase of nearly $12 million per school since 2013-14.
- SEC schools collected nearly $20 million more in conference revenue in 2014-15 than they did in 2008-09.
- Factoring in inflation, SEC revenue increased by 222 percent between 2008-09 and 2014-15.

**So, yes, Mizzou is on the big stage.** The Tigers have won a couple of SEC East football titles since coming into the league, but it's fair to say the athletic program is *not* pulling its economic weight during this academic year.

**With all this money pouring onto campuses, it's beyond crazy that Missouri basketball players drew scrutiny for making $20 per hour while working an internship for a booster's company.**

But that's the hypocrisy of the NCAA for you.