Why I Continue to Support Melissa Click

By Andrew Hoberek, professor of English at the University of Missouri at Columbia.

A recently released video that shows the embattled University of Missouri faculty member Melissa Click at a homecoming parade shielding protesters and telling a police officer to "get your [expletive] hands off me," has brought criticism to the assistant professor from the public, from the administration, and from politicians. This response — and the anger being expressed on social media, in newspaper comment sections, and in the state capital — seems excessive for the offense.

Underlying this response, of course, is the fact that Click already had a target on her back when this latest video appeared, thanks to an earlier video that showed her (along with many other people) temporarily blocking reporters’ access to the Concerned Student 1950 encampment on the day the system’s president, Tim Wolfe, resigned, and a student, Jonathan Butler, ended his hunger strike. I use the phrase "target on her back" advisedly; while some of the criticism has come from supporters of the First Amendment acting in good faith, much of it is politically motivated.

The Missouri General Assembly made this explicit when it recently characterized its denial of a funding increase for the system as a reaction to the university’s handling of Click’s case and the protests. As Rep. Donna Lichtenegger, a Republican, told the Columbia Daily Tribune on February 11, if the university’s department of mass communications had severed ties with Click, "we wouldn’t be in
this mess right now." She added that the protesting students "are there to learn, not to protest all day long. … When the curators didn’t immediately do something about that problem, that was kind of the last stroke for me."

I won’t dwell on the logical inconsistencies here: punishing UM-Kansas City, UM-St. Louis, and the Missouri University of Science and Technology for events that happened in Columbia; creating a false dichotomy between learning and protesting against injustice; invoking the First Amendment to call for Click’s firing while demanding that the university quash a protest, thereby infringing on others’ First Amendment rights. I’ll simply note that the earlier logic behind demands for Click’s firing — that she had violated the First Amendment — is in no way relevant to the homecoming video, in which she had no contact with the press and was, in fact, exercising her own First Amendment rights.

The University of Missouri’s interim chancellor, Hank Foley, has released a statement in which he calls Click’s behavior in the newly released video "appalling," but what exactly is appalling about it? The Columbia police did not press charges, so apparently they decided that Click’s actions were not illegal. Is it that she used profanity? That is ridiculous. Protests can get heated, and Click had a right to tell the officer — however impolitely — not to touch her. Is it that she defied police authority while trying to protect students? If so, that raises questions about Chancellor Foley’s abilities to lead the university through its current period of protest by black students — protest that unfolds against the backdrop of protest in Missouri and elsewhere about police violence against African-American citizens.

Foley’s statement is tremendously disappointing, especially since he had earlier said — rightly — that the university would follow through on the processes outlined in its rules and regulations. Now he is consulting with the Board of Curators as they investigate Click after placing her under a suspension which, according to the
American Association of University Professors and others, contravenes due process. And he is issuing statements that cast doubt on his ability to judge Click’s tenure file fairly when it arrives on his desk in the summer. Foley says that Click’s actions in the newly released video exemplify "a pattern of misconduct," but actually, given their irrelevance to the initial criticisms of Click, the only pattern here seems to be a desire to punish her, at whatever cost and under whatever pretext.

Foley is in a difficult position, and I don’t envy him. Perhaps he thinks he’s demonstrating the leadership that the legislature has been calling for, but as The Kansas City Star reported, State Senator Eric Schmitt, a Republican, went on Twitter to call the statement "late" and "toothless." True leadership is declaring a position and sticking to it.

Nothing in the new video calls for deviating from Foley’s initial plan of letting due process work itself out. And, frankly, there’s nothing to be gained from bowing to political pressure here. The university gave in to such pressure in the fall, severing its ties with a doctor who worked at Planned Parenthood, and now we are right back in the same place with a new demand and the same old budgetary hostage. I have been a professor at MU for 17 years, and in that time the percentage of the university’s budget supplied by the state has consistently gone down, forcing students and their parents to pick up the slack with increased tuition.

All of which is to say that there’s a reason for standing up for due process in this case regardless of what one thinks of Melissa Click’s actions. I was one of the signers of the derided faculty letter of support, and I continue to believe that Click’s actions were motivated by good intentions and in no way merit the end of her career.

I might be a little biased, however. My doctoral dissertation and first book were about the 1950s, and so I’ve read a lot about the anti-Communist witch hunts of those years,
in which many good people, academics among them, lost their livelihoods because of their political convictions. I often used to wonder what I would do in such a climate myself. I now no longer have to wonder. I remain proud to publicly support Melissa Click during what I fear will go down as one of the University of Missouri’s most shameful moments.

MISSOURIAN

Senator's charge won't initiate disciplinary action against Melissa Click

WILLIAM SCHMITT, Feb 19, 2016

COLUMBIA — Missouri Sen. Paul Wieland's written complaint against MU assistant professor of communication Melissa Click will not initiate disciplinary proceedings, but it will become part of an investigation conducted by a law firm in St. Louis.

Wieland, R-Imperial, delivered a formal complaint to MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley during a Joint Committee on Education hearing Wednesday night. The complaint, addressed to MU Provost Garnett Stokes, referred to Click's use of profanity during the MU Homecoming parade on Oct. 10 and a protest on Nov. 9.

The complaint alleged that Click violated UM System rules and regulations "on October 10th, 2015, by yelling profanities at police offices (sic) and on November 9th, 2015, in a confrontation with a student photographer, Mr. Tim Tai, when she called for 'muscle' to have him removed from a public space."

According to the UM System Collected Rules and Regulations, Wieland has no affiliation with the university, and thus no standing to file a complaint against a faculty member.
The rules state: "A charge of unethical or irresponsible action may be brought against a faculty member or teacher by a person or group of persons associated with the University, such as a student, faculty member, teacher, administrator, or board member."

During the Wednesday hearing, Foley said he was "not sure" whether Wieland or other lawmakers had standing to file a complaint.

UM System spokesman John Fougere said in an email Friday that "only persons with standing at the university, including students, faculty members, teachers, administrators or board members are eligible to file a charge of unethical or irresponsible action against a faculty member."

Fougere said on Wednesday he wasn't aware of Wieland's position on any university committee or board.

He said the senator's complaint would be included in a Board of Curators investigation of Click's activities. The Bryan Cave law firm in St. Louis has been hired to handle the investigation; on Thursday, a spokeswoman for the firm declined to comment about the status, scope or progress of the investigation.

Wieland's letter cited the UM System's Collected Rules and Regulations' section on employee conduct: "The personal conduct at all times of any employees of the University shall be of such a nature as not to bring discredit upon the institution. Conduct contrary to this policy will result in the termination of such employees' connection with the University."

In a video of the Nov. 9 incident, Click's call for "some muscle" was actually made in reference to MU student Mark Schierbecker, who filmed Click and others near the Concerned Student 1950 camp in the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle after the resignation of former UM System President Tim Wolfe.

Wieland spokesman James Murphy said the senator's office was aware that Click confronted Schierbecker, not Tai.
At Wednesday's hearing, Wieland also said he would "probably be preparing a complaint" against Gary Pinkel, who resigned Nov. 13 after spending 15 seasons as the Missouri football head coach. Pinkel supported his players' decision to stand in solidarity with the Concerned Student 1950 movement and to stop playing football until Wolfe was removed from his position.

Pinkel later negotiated a three-year deal worth about $1 million to serve as an ambassador for the Missouri Athletics Department.

Wieland questioned Foley about the latter's approval of the deal, including the amount of money the former coach would to be paid. Wieland told Foley his constituents were concerned that Pinkel "held the university hostage."

Murphy said Thursday that no letter had been submitted about Pinkel, and he said the office was continuing to review the Collected Rules and Regulations to determine whether Pinkel violated any section.

University of Missouri fundraising takes $6 million hit in December as donors hold back funds

By Rudi Keller

Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 12:00 am

New pledges and donations to the University of Missouri fell $6 million in December as the campus weathered the fallout of public discontent that also threatens to erode the school’s finances via state support and tuition revenue.

December combines Christmas generosity and the promise of tax deductions on returns due April 15, making it a prime time for fundraisers at major institutions.
In December 2014, new pledges and donations for all campus activities including athletics totaled $19.6 million, according to figures compiled by the university’s advancement office. Only $13.6 million came in this December, a drop of about 31 percent.

The figures represent new commitments and donations that are not given in fulfillment of previous pledges, Vice Chancellor of University Advancement Tom Hiles said.

For the three complete months since campus protests made international news in November, new pledges and donations to MU declined by about $7.4 million. Along with the decrease in new support, pledges totaling about $2 million were withdrawn, Hiles said. About 10 were gifts of $25,000 or more, including one for $500,000, he said.

Total new pledges and donations in fiscal year 2015 totaled $147.6 million, down from a record $164.1 million in fiscal year 2014.

The advancement office has fielded more than 2,000 calls from people upset with the university and tracks them by topic on a heat map.

“It ran the gamut from” Assistant Professor Melissa “Click to Planned Parenthood to just a general lack of leadership,” Hiles said. “‘Who’s in charge? Are the students running it?’ If I heard inmates are running the asylum one more time I was going to … . Those were the general categories.”

Student demonstrations over racism and marginalization on campus made international headlines after the Tiger football team announced it would boycott athletic activities in support of a hunger strike by Concerned Student 1950 member Jonathan Butler.

Athletic donations also have dipped, including a 68 percent drop in December cash gifts compared to December 2014 and a 38 percent decline in new pledges and donations as tallied in Hiles’ office during November, December and January.

The Athletic Department’s decreased fundraising over that period — $1.3 million — is included in the total campus decline of $7.4 million.

Giving by smaller donors, defined as those who give less than $10,000, declined by about 5 percent in the three-month period, with drops in November and December somewhat offset by a January increase in giving. Small donors gave or pledged $4.76 million in the period, down from $5.02 million the previous year.

“We definitely got hit in our annual fund and other points,” Hiles said. “It was rough because normally December is our best month.”

While his office fielded calls, Hiles said staff members researched callers who said they would never donate again. The result, he said, was “about a 90 percent correlation with people who ... have never given.”
The final word on other financial issues is unresolved. A House committee already has denied the university a portion of the budget increase allocated to other state colleges and universities. Chairwoman Donna Lichtenegger, R-Jackson, cited Click’s continued employment and a demonstration that interrupted a UM System Board of Curators meeting for the cut.

At a Wednesday hearing of the Joint Committee on Education, interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley said figures show an anticipated enrollment drop of 900 students, which roughly equates to a $20 million loss of tuition revenue.

For the year to date overall, new pledges and donations are well ahead of the previous fiscal year because Rich and Nancy Kinder pledged $25 million in October to launch the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy. Without that gift, the year-to-date total would have decreased by $8.7 million.

“We are not actually off in terms of donations,” Foley told the joint committee. “In terms of overall donations, we are doing quite well.”

Foley said he has “spent a fair amount of time speaking to donors.”

The university launched its “Mizzou: Our Time to Lead” campaign Oct. 8 with a goal of raising $1.3 billion; several events were linked to Homecoming weekend at MU. Protests by Concerned Student 1950 also started that weekend when several students blockaded the Homecoming parade and stopped then-UM System President Tim Wolfe’s car.

It was another problem for an administration already beset by troubles, including faculty members and deans upset by former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin’s administrative style. Graduate assistants were rebelling over a loss of health insurance coverage, and the bad blood between Wolfe and Loftin was being played out in closed curators meetings.

Wolfe resigned on Nov. 9, and Click was caught on camera later that day trying to push a videographer away from the protest site and calling for “some muscle” to help.

Click has dominated headlines since Nov. 9, with 117 lawmakers signing letters calling for her dismissal and the curators putting her on paid suspension while her actions are investigated.

For university operations outside athletics, current donations are not a major source of support. Donors who give to support academics are asked to support an increase in the university’s $825 million endowment, a particular building project or a project such as the Kinder Institute, Hiles said.

The biggest donors aren’t threatening to pull their support, Hiles said. He spoke to a donor last week who has pledged $5 million and is concerned about what lawmakers will do to MU, he said.

“They say the university is going to be hurt until some action is taken,” Hiles said. “They are not threatening to pull their gift or say they are not going to give.”
A consultant who was at Penn State University when retired assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky was arrested for molesting boys helped MU understand what happens in a crisis, Hiles said. Odd parallels include Penn State launching a major fundraising campaign in October 2011 and Sandusky being arrested on Nov. 9, 2011, Hiles said.

The Penn State scandal lasted for months as arrests, firings and trials took place. The lesson is that donors eventually return, Hiles said.

“It has not been easy, but nobody died, there’s not violence here, no classes were canceled,” he said. “So I’ll take our problems over that.”

**Donor discontent not being felt at University of Missouri campuses outside Columbia**

By Rudi Keller

Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 12:00 am

The fundraising operations at the University of Missouri’s campuses in St. Louis, Kansas City and Rolla have heard from donors about the issues in Columbia, but none reports a significant decrease in giving.

The biggest response, as reported by each campus’ media relations office, was at UMSL, although it has not affected fundraising to meet the campus goal of $25 million for the current fiscal year, Bob Samples, associate vice chancellor for communications, wrote in an email.

“The issues that transpired in Columbia last fall generated hundreds of email responses to and discussions on this campus,” he wrote. “It’s a situation that we continue to address with students, faculty, staff, alumni, supporters and legislators.”

Each campus in the UM System is responsible for its own fundraising, and there is no central program that supports the entire system, spokesman John Fougere wrote in an email.

At Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, year-to-date donations and pledges through Jan. 31 totaled $7.6 million, Andrew Careaga, executive director of marketing and communications, wrote in an email. It represents a 33 percent increase over the first seven months of fiscal 2015, he wrote.
The campus makes more than 15,000 contacts with alumni each year, and fewer than 10 have expressed strong concern about events at MU, the UM System or S&T’s response, Careaga wrote.

“Of this handful of people, some have said they do not plan to give again, but none have withdrawn a current pledge,” he wrote.

UMKC announced Oct. 1 that it had reached its “Campaign for UMKC” goal of $250 million a year ahead of schedule, John Martellaro, director of media relations, wrote in an email.

New pledges and donations through Thursday totaled $27.6 million for the current fiscal year, an increase of 24.3 percent from the pace the past fiscal year through Feb. 18, 2015, Martellaro wrote.

Since Nov. 1, “we have had no instances of any of our donors withholding donations or canceling pledges,” he wrote.

Explicit email draws fast reaction from University of Missouri officials

By Rudi Keller

Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 12:00 am

A sexually explicit email about members of a University of Missouri sorority provoked a harsh reaction from school leaders and campus Greek organizations and has a sophomore member of the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity facing a Title IX investigation.

The email written by Edward Lowther was sent Wednesday, after the fraternity-sorority pairings for Greek Week were announced. It referred to the women of the Pi Beta Phi sorority with crude language. Greek Week is actually three weeks in April when fraternities and sororities hold special social and service events.

“I have been made aware of a disgusting email being circulated among our Greek community regarding Greek Week pairings,” Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Cathy Scroggs wrote in a statement. “The content of the email was extremely degrading to women.”
Scroggs said the email was turned over to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX, which will investigate the matter.

“It is one thing to state our values,” she wrote. “It is another to practice them. It is clear we have much work to do to educate some members of our community on what it means to be respectful and responsible.”

Title IX is the federal law banning discrimination based on gender in educational settings. Each university is required to have an office that addresses issues covered by the law. MU is barred by law from discussing the details of any complaint, spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said Saturday.

She said she knew very little about the incident that wasn’t already public.

“There was an email, and it was a disgusting email,” Banken said. “There was a complaint filed in the Title IX office, and the complaint will be investigated.”

Lowther did not respond to an email seeking comment. His fraternity responded to the outcry over the email by issuing an apology and directing Lowther to do so in person to Pi Beta Phi members. The fraternity called an emergency meeting and asked the university’s Office of Student Life for assistance, according to a statement posted to Alpha Gamma Rho’s Twitter account.

“We are extremely sorry for the actions of this member and we do not condone these thoughts whatsoever,” the statement read.

The executive board of the Mizzou Panhellenic Association, an umbrella organization for sororities, said the email challenged “our value as women in the Greek community.” The association will confront any situation that demeans women and hold those responsible to account, the board said.

“We are women and we demand respect,” the executive board wrote. “We will not stand for behavior, actions or comments that function to minimize our contributions to this Mizzou community.”

The Interfraternity Council, the governing body for MU’s fraternities, issued the mildest statement on Lowther’s email. The council, the statement read, “is disheartened with the recent events that have occurred in our community relating to the Greek Week pairings.”

The council expects fraternities to uphold university values, and “we are working with the members of our Greek community to address these issues,” the council said in the statement.
COLUMBIA — At least one Title IX complaint has been filed in response to a vulgar and demeaning email sent Wednesday by a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity about having sex with women in a Greek Week partner sorority.

MU sophomore Edward Lowther sent the email through his MU student account to other members of the fraternity. The message refers to women in the Panhellenic chapter Pi Beta Phi.

The email was captured and posted widely on social media Thursday.

MU Vice Chancellor Cathy Scroggs acknowledged in statement issued Friday night that "the investigation is being handled by the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX."

The MU chapter of Alpha Gamma Rho posted a statement on Twitter at 12:42 p.m. Friday apologizing for the incident.

"We are extremely sorry for the actions of this member and we do not condone these thoughts whatsoever," the post read. It also noted that an emergency meeting would be held and that the chapter had reached out to MU Student Life for assistance.

Jacob Farkas, vice president of public relations for the Interfraternity Council said, "IFC is a governing body of different organizations. We don't control individual membership of each chapter."

An apology from Lowther on Twitter, confirmed by Pi Beta Phi, said he took full responsibility for his actions:

"I want to extend my sincerest apologies to the entire sisterhood of Pi Beta Phi," the tweet read. "What I said was unprofessional on every level. I take full responsibility for my actions, and I
will take steps to show that what was said in no way defines my morals or the morals of the men of Alpha Gamma Rho.

"We hold the value of respect towards women in the highest regard. I am deeply remorseful and truly sorry from the bottom of my heart."

Lowther said he had no comment beyond the email.

The MU chapter of Pi Beta Phi would not comment, but the MU Panhellenic Association acknowledged the email by reaffirming solidarity with women in the Greek community.

"It has been brought to our attention that our value as women in the Greek community has been challenged. We are women bound together by the pursuit of service, scholarship, leadership and sisterhood."

MU Title IX Administrator Ellen Eardley said she couldn’t discuss specific cases or investigations.

Title IX reports submitted online are sent directly to the Title IX administrator, who oversees all sexual misconduct matters at MU.

Once the report is submitted, and depending upon the detail of the information provided, the institution will take reasonable steps to investigate the matter, stop the harassment, prevent its recurrence and remedy its effects.

MU Vice Chancellor Cathy Scroggs issued a statement Friday evening condemning the email and applauding student leaders in the Greek system.

"I am proud of the response of many student leaders in our Greek community. Information has been reported, and the investigation is being handled by the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX. Results of the investigation will inform the consequences of any parties involved," the statement said.
MU Fraternity Apologizes for Vulgar Email


University of Missouri athletic department tries to bounce back from donation downturn

By Joe Walljasper and Rudi Keller

Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 12:00 am

The Missouri football team delivered a second straight SEC East title in 2014, and happy MU fans opened their checkbooks. They donated more than $685,000 to the athletic department in December 2014.

A year later, the era of good feelings was over.

The football team suffered a tumultuous losing season that included a player boycott in support of the Concerned Student 1950 protest group. The day after Coach Gary Pinkel sided with his players — who threatened to sit out practices and games, including an upcoming matchup against BYU — University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe resigned, per the group’s demands.

After the controversial boycott, donations plummeted. The athletic department recorded only $191,000 in cash donations in December.

That difference of $494,000, a 68.7 percent decline, was partially made up when January receipts increased $264,000 compared to January 2015. But for the three complete months since the
players announced their boycott on Nov. 7, cash contributions to the athletic department were down 24.3 percent compared to last year.

“There’s a direct correlation between the success of your teams and the amount of money that you have capacity to raise,” MU Athletic Director Mack Rhoades said. “Also, in addition to that, the football team did not have a terrific season, did not go to a bowl game. And you factor that in with what happened on campus, people are upset with the university and the athletics department. The combination of the two is why I feel that donations are down, particularly in the month of December.”

There are anomalies in the figures — including more than $80,000 donated in memory of former coach and radio commentator John Kadlec in December 2014 — that exaggerated the difference in totals when comparing the last two years, Rhoades said. Donations in honor of Kadlec totaled $147,325 during the three months after his death Oct. 29, 2014.

The decline in donations is being felt by the academic side of university fundraising, as well. New pledges and donations overall fell $6 million in December, usually one of the biggest months because donors are planning their tax deductions.

A large portion of cash donations to the athletic department pays for scholarships through the Tiger Scholarship Fund. Much of that revenue comes in between January and May as fans renew their tickets for the coming football season. Donation revenue accounted for 21 percent of the athletic department budget in the fiscal year that ended June 30.

The campus advancement office tracks fundraising with a different accounting system than the athletic department uses. It keeps figures on cash received, pledges and gifts-in-kind, while the athletic department considers only cash received.

Using the campus advancement office’s numbers, it was a good year through November — athletic fundraising was up 23 percent. Steep declines of 59.8 percent in December and 48.5 percent in January, however, have put the department slightly behind last year’s pace.

“December is usually a good month for us, so that gives you a sense of it,” Vice Chancellor Tom Hiles said. “We got hit.”

By the campus advancement office’s math, the athletic department raised $1.3 million less from November through January than it did the previous year. Overall, the athletic department raised $8.4 million for this fiscal year through January, compared to $8.5 million at the same point last year. Rhoades said he expects the athletic department to equal the $17.2 million that was raised last year.

Donors are returning, he said, including a fan who gave $65,000 in December 2014 and who was expected to repeat the gift. Rhoades said the donor was upset with the team’s protest but did not withdraw the pledge and now is expected to give the money by the end of the month.
Rhoades said that while some fans are speaking with closed checkbooks, it’s not necessarily the people who write the biggest checks.

“In terms of major gifts, the individual meetings I’ve had and some of the staff have had with those donors, I think that’s remained really, really positive,” Rhoades said. “But the grass-roots, non-major gifts, annual fund, there absolutely has not been as much activity.”

A good test of the mood of Missouri fans will come this spring, when Rhoades starts shopping his plan for a major new football facility.

In 2012, MU unveiled an athletic facility master plan that was kick-started with a $30 million donation. The first major piece of that plan was the Memorial Stadium east-side expansion that was completed before the 2014 football season. At Pinkel’s request, the order of the projects in the master plan was rearranged that fall. Pinkel wanted to fast-track a new football-only complex attached to the south end zone of the stadium. The structure would centralize the football team’s facilities, as opposed to the current situation in which the football offices and training facilities are across Providence Road in the Mizzou Athletic Training Complex.

Athletic Director Mike Alden told reporters in December 2014 the end zone project would take nine to 12 months to design and 24 to 30 months to build, so it could be completed in 2018. A month later, Alden resigned. Eleven months later, Pinkel resigned.

The project is still at the forefront of MU’s plans, but the design timeline is already outdated. Rhoades said he is considering four options and starting to determine the cost of each. Among the design factors to consider are whether it will be a football-only facility or a more comprehensive structure that could be a venue for sports such as wrestling, volleyball and gymnastics when the Hearnes Center is leveled.

Rhoades said he hopes to narrow the options from four to one or two within the next few weeks.

“This football facility is a priority,” Rhoades said. “We’re hoping early spring we have drawings and a vision to show people, and then we’ll have a better idea. As we get out and show that to donors and hopefully get people excited and interested in investing in it, I think that’s when we’ll really know if we can keep our timeline or if it’s going to take a little longer to raise the necessary funds.”

University of Missouri tries to ensure no more boycotts
By Rudi Keller

Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 12:00 am

The polarized reaction to the Concerned Student 1950 protest that toppled University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe — with an assist from the football team and former Coach Gary Pinkel — has threatened the financial health of the university from reduced state funding and private donations.

The discontent with the football team has expressed itself in other forms, as well. A state lawmaker introduced, but quickly withdrew, a bill that would strip scholarships from players who refuse to participate. On Wednesday, interim Chancellor Hank Foley told the Joint Committee on Education that if there is another team boycott “there will be a very different response.”

University rules include sanctions, up to losing a scholarship, for athletes who do not meet their scholarship obligations.

“There is an expectation that our student-athletes practice, play, go to class and be responsible socially,” Missouri Athletic Director Mack Rhoades said. “There is absolutely that expectation of our student-athletes.”

The player boycott was an extraordinary situation and the athletic department is working to prevent a repeat, he said.

“For us, this is about creating an environment where our student-athletes never feel that they have to go to that measure,” Rhoades said.

Medical school dean comes back because of new administration

COLUMBIA - Dr. Patrick Delafontaine previously served as dean of the medical school at Mizzou and is now moving back into that role. Delafontaine may still be moving back into his office, but long term plans are already in the works for University Hospital.

The school of medicine will be starting a health disparities clinic in July. "We'll be focusing on some of the conditions that are prevalent in underrepresented minorities," Delafontaine said. He will also be working with other administrators to develop a national advisory board for the school of medicine with members including former US Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin.

Delafontaine says the school of medicine is early on in establishing a pipeline program for underrepresented minorities. It would be "a training program for students that come from different backgrounds and would like to enter a medical career."

The review board is currently just for Mizzou, but Delafontaine said he could see it extending to other departments across the country.

Delafontaine did not want to comment on why he left the university under the Loftin administration, but said "I'm confident that with the current leadership of the university that we are going in the right direction."

"The current leadership of the university asked me to come back, and I must say that discussions with the current leadership really made me certain that the university is really going in the right direction there's an emphasis on all the things I think that matter for excellent academic programs," Delafontaine said. "From an emphasis on diversity and inclusivity throughout the missions, an emphasis on excellence in research and excellence on patient care and an emphasis on excellent education and partnership in our community, which is really important, particularly for a medical school."

Delafontaine is not currently involved in discussions regarding the University of Missouri Medical School's relationship with planned parenthood, but Delafontaine said "I suspect at some point I will be involved in that and I'm willing to help in any way I can."

Raised in South Africa, Delafontaine is no stranger to racial tension and he thinks the experiences of his youth might help the university as it sifts through its own racial discord.

"I had first hand knowledge of racial discord and segregation, this was at a time when Mandela is in prison," Delafontaine said. As a kid he would go surfing where you could see Robben Island where he was held prisoner.

"I think that experience to some extent sensitizes me to some of the issues that underrepresented minorities and that definite different socio-economic groups face," said Delafontaine.

"Diversity and inclusivity is a very important aspect of actually every medical school and every medical school around the country is grappling with this. As physicians we treat everyone, in fact our Hippocratic oath says we treat everybody irrespective of gender or whether they can pay
or ethnicity, background, religion do that already puts inclusivity and diversity at the forefront for a medical professional."

"As a medical school, to be excellent, we have to emphasize this," Delafontaine said. "Like many medical schools we've had successes in this area and we've had challenges."

MU scientists study feeding habits of ancient arthropods

By Rudi Keller

Saturday, February 20, 2016 at 12:00 am

Among the hills of St. Francois County, there are thousands, perhaps millions, of clues pointing to the behavior of the fiercest predator in the neighborhood when the region was covered by shallow seas 500 million years ago.

The only dry land was islands that today are granite mountaintops. They were devoid of trees or any other complex terrestrial life. The action was in the water, where the first complex animals evolved to feed on the bacterial mats coating the ocean floor and each other. Wormlike creatures burrowed through the silt and bacteria, while inch-long trilobites — ancient cousins of modern spiders, scorpions and crabs — hunted them.

**Exactly how the trilobites hunted was a mystery, however, until three scientists from the University of Missouri examined their fossil traces with a laser.** What they found — published Monday in the scientific journal Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology — is that the trilobites favored small worms and dove into the bacterial layer to snag their prey.

The trilobites studied by graduate student Tara Selly, Associate Professors John Huntley and Jim Schiffbauer, and Professor Kevin Shelton of the Department of Geological Sciences could perhaps sense their prey chemically, as humans use smell to know that a pizza in the oven is ready. A more interesting and likely possibility is that their eyes detected the motion of something disturbing the bacterial layer or spotted the raised hump of the burrow, Huntley said.

“These trilobites had fairly large eyes that were fixed to the front of their little trilobite faces,” he said.

Precisely what they were hunting, however, remains a mystery.
“We just have a trace of what this animal left behind, and we don’t know what it was,” Selly said. “It has very wormlike traits. We can say these are trilobites, we can see the frame, we know they are present and we know what kind of traces they left behind.”

Because of their hard exoskeleton, trilobites were preserved worldwide in sediment from the Cambrian period, roughly 540 to 490 million years ago. Trilobites disappeared in a mass extinction event that marked the end of the period. A larger predator called an anomalocaris also was in existence, but researchers have found no evidence to indicate its presence in the St. Francois fossil beds.

“We had the precursors to vertebrates at this point in time, but nothing we would definitively call a fish,” Schiffbauer said. “The animals are predominantly arthropods, like trilobites.”

Missouri was part of a landmass that included modern North America, Europe and Siberia. The water was shallow enough for sunlight to reach the sea floor in most places, Huntley said. The sediment washed from the granite islands kept adding new layers and, most importantly for the study, filling in the holes left by the predators, he said.

That’s how the scientists figured out what happened. By using a laser imaging system to study more than 2,000 examples from the fossil-bearing stone, Selly discovered that the disturbed spots left behind would intersect small burrows while leaving large, adjacent burrows untouched.

The laser imaging recorded features as small as 2 one-thousandths of an inch and allowed the rock to be studied in detail without being handled, Schiffbauer said. They focused on the numerous lumps of silt, hardened to stone, where the trilobite attacked.

“It is kind of like a footprint that has filled in,” Schiffbauer said. “We are looking at the molding.”

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FEBRUARY 19, 2016 3:50 PM

Area veterinarians are on alert for dog flu

Symptoms can include sudden-onset cough, runny nose and malaise

One Missouri dog has tested positive for the influenza

No apparent cases have been documented in the Kansas City area

BY BRIAN BURNES
Kansas City area dog lovers should be on alert.

Veterinarians here and across the country are advising dog owners to watch their pets for signs of a sudden-onset cough, a lack of appetite or malaise — all of which have been described as symptoms of canine influenza, or dog flu.

The respiratory disease that sickened close to 1,000 dogs in four Midwestern states a year ago now has been documented in 30 states, including Missouri, where one dog tested positive last year.

Although it appears no Kansas City area dogs have been diagnosed, one veterinarian believes it could be only a matter of time.

“If it is not in Kansas City now, it may be there at some point,” said Leah Cohn, professor at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine in Columbia.

Pet owners are correct to be vigilant, Cohn said, as the influenza, which can be spread nose to nose, is highly contagious among pets who visit dog parks or spend time in day care facilities. Then again, many dogs will shake off the illness and not need medical intervention, she said.

“The vast majority of people who get the flu feel crappy for a while and get over it,” Cohn said.

That goes for many dogs as well, she said.

“If your dog just has a cough, but it is eating or drinking well, this may be an infection that will just run its course.”

But for some older dogs or dogs with other illnesses, it can be potentially life-threatening, Cohn added. In severe cases, the disease could lead to high fever and pneumonia.

Two canine influenza viruses have been identified worldwide.

Canine influenza H3N8 had been monitored in horses for about 40 years before officials traced cases of respiratory illnesses in dogs to it in 2004.

Scientists believed the virus jumped from horses to dogs, especially those housed in kennels and shelters. In 2005, officials identified H3N8 as a “newly emerging
pathogen” in America’s dog population, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

South Korea health officials documented a separate influenza, an avian virus now known as H3N2, among dogs in 2007.

Authorities in the United States first detected that illness among dogs last April, when Chicago became an epicenter.

In Illinois, officials logged 820 positive tests for canine influenza over much of the past year, compared to 1,055 negative tests during that same time period, according to the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell University in New York.

The center, which compiles statistics from labs and clinics across the country, documented one positive test and 115 negative ones in Missouri in that time period.

All 60 tests conducted in Kansas turned out negative.

Vaccines exist for both strains of dog flu.

At the Union Hill Animal Hospital in Kansas City, initial vaccines are followed by booster shots about two or three weeks later. The shots cost $25 each (or $100 for the four), although there is a discount if both vaccines are followed by boosters.

For new clients, the hospital requires a $25 exam to verify the pet is healthy enough for vaccines.

Hospital staffers have not documented any cases, said veterinarian and medical director Christi Belew. Still, pet owners should be alert for symptoms.

“With any animals that show upper respiratory signs with cough, fever, runny eyes or nose, we recommend that they be seen immediately so we can assess what their needs will be,” Belew said.

As the strain is extremely contagious to other dogs, pet owners should alert their clinics before coming in so they can make arrangements to have their dog wait away from other dogs.
Lewis Diuguid: Mizzou magazine doesn’t back away from covering last fall’s campus controversies

The Mizzou Alumni Association publication gives complete picture of protests

Magazine also tells what the university is doing in response to the campus unrest

BY LEWIS DIUGUID
ldiuguid@kcstar.com

The spring edition of Mizzou magazine came in the mail Thursday and surprisingly it didn’t omit, gloss over or sugarcoat any of the controversies that have kept the University of Missouri-Columbia campus in the news.

Todd McCubbin, executive director of the Mizzou Alumni Association, said in an opening essay: “As I write this there are concerns about enrollment and state legislative appropriations. It only stands to reason that questions need to be asked and answered just as with many of you who reached out to us. We have a lot of hard work ahead, and for our students, alumni and the state of Missouri, we have no choice but to succeed.”

The magazine of the alumni association includes color pictures of the November black student protests against instances of racism on campus and a special feature headlined “The State of Mizzou,” detailing the problems that made national news last fall. Mizzou’s coverage includes the controversies over attempts to yank graduate student health insurance benefits, multiple instances of racism, protests, rallies, the release of a study of sexual assaults on campus and a lawsuit over conceal-and-carry restrictions.
The article notes that student activism has always helped the university grow and be more responsive to the people it serves. The magazine notes that when the college started 176 years ago, it was for white men — there were no women or students of color. Women today comprise more than half of the students, and since 2000 black student enrollment has increased 90 percent.

Because of the race-related controversy, top administrators have resigned and interim replacements have been named. The article notes that “Mizzou supports freedom of expression, academic freedom and the robust exchange of ideas and knowledge.”

That is what any institution of higher education should do.

The article explains that since November listening sessions and teach-ins have occurred in which students and school officials have talked about race, diversity and inclusion. New lecture series will begin on the African American experience in Missouri and academic freedom, hate speech and social responsibility.

But throughout controversies last fall, classes continued and “learning never stopped.” Mizzou magazine also features profiles of Mike Middleton, who came out of retirement to be appointed interim president of the University of Missouri system, and Hank Foley, appointed interim chancellor.

MU graduates may remember some of the protests of the past featured in Mizzou, including a 1974 march by black students over the lack of minority faculty, protests by gay students over a lack of inclusion, protests in the 1980s to get the university to recognize the national holiday for the birthday of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., 1990s lobbying efforts by Native American students to have the remains of 1,800 American Indians returned to their tribes and 1980s anti-apartheid protests.

This is followed by many pictures in a graphic design of the events of last fall. It’s all to keep MU alums up to date. No matter where they are in the world, they always want to know what’s going on at MU.

In addition, the magazine puts the events in context better than the national news media did.
Mixed in with telling that story were articles on Gary Pinkel’s resignation in December as MU’s winningest football coach, ground-breaking research at the university and updates on alums of yesteryear.

The magazine is how tens of thousands of people worldwide stay connected to the university. It’s great to know that it’s not backing away from giving a complete picture of the goings-on at MU.

*In the interest of full disclosure, I am a 1977 MU graduate, my older daughter is a 2005 MU graduate. I served on the communications committee for Mizzou magazine and I served several years on the board of the Mizzou Alumni Association.*

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**OPINION: After Click, what? MU self-evaluation in the offing**

By Henry J. Waters III

Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 12:00 am

 REGARDLESS OF WHETHER ASSISTANT PROFESSOR MELISSA CLICK REMAINS ON STAFF, THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI — PARTICULARLY OUR COLUMBIA CAMPUS — MUST LOOK AT ITSELF.

Over many years, the institution and others like it have become increasingly inbred. For good reason state universities enjoy considerable immunity from the operational vagaries of the real world. They have unique functions and purposes and access to extraordinary flows of revenue. Their forgiving “marketplace” allows for extraordinary remuneration for high-profile employees, even reaching into the seven digits for some.

Recent “golden parachute” deals for former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and football Coach Gary Pinkel rankle state legislators and others looking for way to criticize the university. When money is not the primary issue, detractors often look with disdain on the teaching and research done by faculty.

Too much of this is misguided, but enough of it is understandable to arouse legitimate concern among university managers. To justify salary levels, the explanation “That’s what the market
demands” is wearing thin with many whose affection for the university is lacking to being with, including members of the Missouri General Assembly.

Where is the line between erroneous and warranted criticism? How much of the trouble stems from poor public communication and how much from palpable shortcoming?

I’ve heard legitimate friends of the university in high places say they are disappointed with university management stemming from lack of “control” over recent events on campus. Much of this is focused on the tenure of Professor Click, but surely that is a largely superficial concern arising from more abiding irritations.

We have all heard them, even from well-informed people here in the flagship community where support for MU should be strongest. Boosters are stretched between affection for the economic effect of the campus and its natural habitat for curious goings-on, like uppity student protests and weird faculty attitudes. As many cheer the money generated and spent by MU, they chafe at the level of salaries paid.

How can citizens regain support? Will it have to come from students and faculty learning how to “act right,” or must citizens learn more appreciation for the oddities of the campus?

Too bad the Click incident scratched the scab, but her antics on camera are not the big issue. Her presence can more easily be remedied than the public attitude toward MU. I’ve said here often that relationship will resume normalcy soon enough. Problem is, what is normal in a state where skepticism and narrow-mindedness have been ascendant in recent years? The Click episode might turn out to be a blessing for the introspection it is causing.

We need to rekindle strong and general appreciation for the university, Melissa Click et al notwithstanding. Campus managers must look in the mirror for broader issues to address. Narrowing the focus on university priorities is a general tactic worth pursuing. The more MU tries to be all things, the more areas of potential excellence will suffer.

People in positions of public leadership — in the General Assembly, for instance — must help. Simply using the university as a punching bag might seem politically expeditious to some but is a demonstration of poor leadership. The University of Missouri is too important to treat with disdain.

**MISSOURIAN**

MU and Missouri legislature forge contentious relationship during period of campus unrest

ELLEN CAGLE, 1 hr ago
JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri lawmakers are at odds with the UM System after a season of upheaval on the MU campus. What began as a war of words and sound bites has, in recent weeks, evolved into legislation that targets the university system.

Since August, turmoil has rocked the university system. A semester of protests over racial inequality, abortion availability in Columbia and health insurance for graduate students culminated in the Nov. 9 resignation of former UM System President Tim Wolfe and former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

Several members of the General Assembly have been outspoken in their displeasure with university leadership and faculty in light of the campus protests. Many have also expressed anger about the way MU has handled Melissa Click, the assistant professor of communication who tried to block a student journalist from filming the protests in November.

Lawmakers have taken steps to restrict the university system's budget, including an amendment that would allow for a funding increase for every Missouri university except those in the UM system.

Here are statements and actions from legislators about MU faculty, their research, state funding for the UM System and university leadership.

MU faculty

What legislators are saying:

In a flood of written statements, lawmakers have assailed MU for failing to terminate Click.

In early January, 99 Republican representatives signed a letter urging the UM System Board of Curators to dismiss her. They included Boone County Reps. Chuck Basye, Caleb Jones and Caleb Rowden.
Eighteen senators signed a similar letter, including Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, a candidate for attorney general. In the letter, the senators questioned the validity of Click's research, which focuses on pop culture and media.

"Our constituents have expressed outrage at the fact that she is using taxpayer dollars to conduct research on "50 Shades of Grey," "Lady Gaga," and "Twilight," the letter read. "What is even more insulting is that Professor Click was on a research waiver from the University of Missouri so that she didn't have to teach classes."

On Jan. 27, Click was suspended with pay. Two days before, MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley said she would keep her job until tenure decisions are made in August.

Criticism resurfaced on Feb. 13 with the release of police video footage of Click at the MU Homecoming parade. The video shows Click standing with student protesters and later shouting an expletive at a police officer. After the video's release, Foley called Click's actions appalling.

UM System leaders fielded questions from legislators about the status of Click's employment last week when Foley, UM Interim President Mike Middleton and UM Board of Curators Chair Pamela Henrickson testified before the Joint Committee on Education.

When asked about Click's status, Foley told the legislators that she is entitled to a due-process hearing, which can be a lengthy process.

According to the UM System Collected Rules and Regulations, a written grievance against Click must be filed to initiate the process. The grievance would then be adjudicated by a faculty committee and presented to the chancellor. No complaint had been filed, Foley said.

Committee members asked whether legislators could file a grievance, and Sen. Paul Wieland, R-Imperial, submitted a formal complaint at the end of the meeting.

The UM collected rules and regulations, however, restrict standing to those affiliated with the university: "A charge of unethical or irresponsible action may be brought against a faculty
member or teacher by a person or group of persons associated with the University, such as a student, faculty member, teacher, administrator, or board member."

UM System spokesman John Fougere added in an email Friday that "only persons with standing at the university, including students, faculty members, teachers, administrators or board members are eligible to file a charge of unethical or irresponsible action against a faculty member."

Fougere said on Wednesday he wasn't aware of Wieland's position on any university committee or board.

**Legislative action:**

Research conducted by university professors has drawn scrutiny from politicians, with bills proposed to curb research waivers, require a class on freedom of speech and reimburse students when a certain percentage of their courses are conducted by teaching assistants.

One proposed bill would establish an instructional waiver review board for the UM System. Currently, deans issue the waivers to allow professors to forgo teaching some classes to conduct research.

Senate Bill 583, sponsored by Sen. Brian Munzlinger, R-Williamstown, would dictate that no more than 30 percent of the faculty at each UM system campus can receive research waivers. Nine members of the proposed board would meet at least twice a year to review waivers.

Forty percent of tenure-track faculty received waivers during the last two academic years, according to a December report prepared by MU. The report was given to Schaefer after he questioned the volume of waivers granted to MU faculty.

Munzlinger, one of the senators who criticized Click's research, said research conducted after obtaining a waiver sometimes lacks substance.
Before any research funding is granted, funding agencies assemble panels of experts in each field of study to review the proposals, said Mark McIntosh, MU interim vice chancellor for research, graduate studies and economic development.

Proposals are evaluated, in part, based on the quality and necessity of the research proposed and the qualifications of the person seeking to conduct it.

Research is peer-reviewed when findings are ready for publication in journals and other academic publications, McIntosh said, which assures that the research was conducted properly and is valid.

The process is rigorous, he said, and experts who review the research make sure it is “up to high quality standards.”

Munzlinger said his bill corresponds to recent events at MU.

"I don't know if it's actually related, but I can say that the things that have gone on at the university could contribute to maybe some of these waivers," he said. "The people at the university don't like it, so that tells me, maybe there's something there."

House Bill 2100, sponsored by Rep. Jason Chipman, R-Steelville, would require Missouri universities to reimburse a portion of student tuition if professors fail to teach 75 percent of classes or if a teaching assistant instructs three-fourths of classes without the professor.

Chipman emphasized that instruction from teaching assistants cannot substitute for a professor's but said the bill "has nothing to do with" recent events at MU.

"Universities pay professors not only to teach classes, but to do a lot of research," he said. "I thought it was very unfair for the students to pay full freight for an inferior product, because in the end, they are customers."

Munzlinger and Chipman's bills have been referred to committees.
House Bill 1637 would mandate that Missouri universities require a class on freedom of speech. The House Committee on Higher Education passed the bill on Feb. 9, and it will be taken up by the House Select Committee on Education.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Dean Dohrman, R-La Monte, said he found Melissa Click's actions disconcerting, but said his bill is not directed solely at MU.

College students lack knowledge about free-speech rights, he said. Forty percent of millennials support government restrictions on speech that is offensive to minority groups, according to a Pew Research Center study that Dohrman cited.

"It's not targeted at MU," he said. "It's really a country-wide phenomenon."

Legislation targeting MU athletes was pre-filed and withdrawn in December after an outpouring of negative criticism and questions of legality. House Bill 1743, sponsored by Rick Brattin, R-Harrisonville, would have revoked athletic scholarships for athletes who refused to play for non-health reasons.

The bill's co-sponsor, Kurt Bahr, R-O'Fallon, said the it was "obviously a reaction" to a November boycott by MU football players, according to previous Missourian reporting.

On Nov. 7, black players agreed not to participate in football-related activities until Tim Wolfe, then UM System president, resigned. The rest of the football team joined the boycott on Nov. 8.

Wolfe stepped down a day after the entire team announced the boycott.

**State funding**

**What legislators are saying:**

Some lawmakers have declared that UM System funding could be in jeopardy. Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, R-Joplin, called it a budgetary "haircut" during a press conference on Feb. 4.
In a confidential letter that became public, former UM System President Tim Wolfe said the budget cut "could be as much as $500 million," which would be the entire state appropriation to the university system.

Schaefer, chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said he's unsure whether the university is being held accountable for its expenditures.

"When we give [the UM System] a half a billion dollars a year, they can show us, and we can show taxpayers, that the money is getting spent appropriately," he said.

At a Feb. 4 town hall meeting, Columbia legislators Kip Kendrick, D-Columbia, Stephen Webber, D-Columbia, Rowden and Basye said they oppose any funding cuts to the UM System.

"I know from experience that [funding cuts] will not hit the target intended," Basye said. "It's going to hurt our students, and it's going to hurt our low-level employees at MU."

Rowden said he believes MU is still a worthy investment.

"We don't base funding off of one isolated scenario," he said. "We base funding off the realities that we think are important for our state's future."

State appropriations for the UM System operating budget have increased marginally over the past several years, according to the UM System budget. In 2015, the state appropriated almost $441 million for the system. In 2014, the system received roughly $411 million.

UM System enrollment has increased by 38 percent since 2001, according to a February document given to the House appropriations committee by the UM System. The number of faculty has increased by 8.8 percent.

The UM System counted 77,733 students or 59,816 full-time equivalent students in the fall semester. Foley told legislators last week that enrollment at MU may drop by 900 students next year, which could amount to a $20 million budget shortfall.
Legislative action:

The House Higher Education Appropriations Committee voted on Feb. 10 to deny the UM System a 2 percent funding increase. If the measures passes and is signed by the governor, all state-funded universities except the UM System would receive increased funding.

The bill was referred on Feb. 11 to the House Select Committee on Budget, and no further action had been taken as of Friday.

Rep. Donna Lichtenegger, R-Jackson, chair of the Higher Education Appropriations Committee, said during the Feb. 10 hearing that the UM System was excluded from the increase, in part because of recent protests at MU.

"It would be one thing if it just made state news, but this is national," she said. "It has made our university a laughingstock, and I'm trying to make people understand that we are not going to be a laughingstock."

The university could be subject to further financial scrutiny if a bill sponsored by Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Glendale, passes. His bill, Senate Bill 766, would require the state auditor to evaluate the UM System at least once per year.

Schmitt's bill passed the Senate Committee on Governmental Accountability and Fiscal Oversight on Feb. 9. No further action had been scheduled as of Friday.

In early February, State Auditor Nicole Galloway announced that the UM System would be audited, but said the audit is not being conducted in light of recent events at MU. The audit will examine the spending by the UM System president and the Board of Curators.

University leadership

What legislators are saying:
Missouri law invests the curators with UM System oversight, but some lawmakers argue that the state legislature should intervene.


"The fact that the legislature is taking full advantage of its 'power of the purse' to obtain as much information as possible about what is truly happening at Mizzou and the entire University of Missouri system in order to protect the taxpayers' hard earned money is in no way an attack focused on Ms. Click," he said in the release. "It is the General Assembly doing the job that the citizens of the State of Missouri sent them to Jefferson City to do."

Webber, one representative from Columbia, has said that lawmakers should stay out of university affairs, citing MU as constitutionally separate from the legislature.

The UM System’s government "shall be vested in a board of curators consisting of nine members appointed by the governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate," according to the Missouri Constitution.

The charter charges the Senate with the confirmation of curators, but it doesn't lay out other duties for that body or for the General Assembly in the governance of the university system.

Given the separation, the legislature's intervention hasn't been beneficial, Kendrick, also a Columbia representative, has said.

"For us to weigh in on this conversation has been, in my opinion, destructive and damaging and furthering controversy at the university," Kendrick said. "We need to be moving beyond. We need to be building the university up."

Other legislators contend that the UM System lacks stable leadership.

"It's apparent to me that no one is charge. So we'll be in charge," Richard said during the Feb. 4 press conference.
Rep. David Wood, R-Versailles, said during last week’s Joint Committee on Education meeting that "we have an instance where it at least appears the tail wags the dog because the leadership can't cooperate and make united decisions in terms of the University of Missouri.

"It seems like the administration was throwing each other under the bus and not taking control of the situation."

Schaefer said in a Jan. 27 interview that leaders have not taken decisive action in the face of turmoil.

"I met with Mike Middleton, Foley and several curators, and my message to all of them is the same," he said.

"With everything that’s occurring on campus — and every week, it’s something new where the wheels seem to be falling off — they need to make a showing to the citizens of the state of Missouri that someone is in charge of the institution."

A February news release from the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus criticized the Board of Curators for not addressing racial inequality within the UM System.

"The UM Board of Curators' lack of action shows there's no genuine concern to address longstanding historical issues," said Brandon Ellington, D-Kansas City, according to the release.

"It is our hope that with new leadership the curators will begin working to ensure there that there are proper protocols and proper funding put in place to improve the university system and promote inclusion and diversity."

**Legislative action:**

The Senate president pro tem has said the Senate will not confirm any new members to the Board of Curators until a new governor takes office.
In early February, two curators — Yvonne Sparks and David L. Steward resigned, leaving the board with no black representatives.

A third curator, Ann Covington, resigned in November. The three resignations left the nine-person board with only six members, all of whom are lawyers.

"We're not in a hurry to do anything for the University of Missouri," Richard said.

Gov. Jay Nixon has said he will appoint interim members to the board when the legislature is not in session, according to the Associated Press.

House Bill 2179, sponsored by Rep. Don Rone, R-Portageville, would allow no more than two members of university governing boards to have the same occupation. If passed, the bill would apply to appointments made on or after Jan. 1, 2017.

The House Committee on Higher Education passed the bill last week. It was referred to the House Select Committee on Education that day, and no further action had been taken as of Friday.

Board of Curators Chair Pamela Henrickson has said the curators would not have a problem with the legislation moving forward.

Editorial: Board of Curators needs diversity

New appointments must be made with racial, gender, and employment diversity in mind.

One glance at the UM System Board of Curators reveals a troubling lack of racial, gender and professional diversity. Of the six current members, there are five white men and only one woman, who is also white. All six curators are lawyers.

In last week’s editorial, we urged the Missouri state legislature not to block new appointments that would fill the three empty seats on the board. While these appointments are undoubtedly
pressing, it is still essential that Gov. Jay Nixon and the Missouri General Assembly consider them with diversity in mind.

The board’s lack of racial and gender diversity is obvious and troubling, but its struggle with diversity is goes beyond that. While there is, of course, nothing wrong with having board members with backgrounds in law, it only makes sense that the entirety of the board not come from the same professional background.

House Bill 2179 was recently introduced limiting the number of curators by occupation. If the bill were to pass, no more than two members of the same occupation would be allowed to serve on the board.

While the passage of this bill could be a step toward creating more multi-faceted and diverse curator appointments, the appointments themselves first need to be made by Gov. Nixon and approved by the Missouri legislature. These appointments are urgent, as the board is beginning a presidential search — a process that takes nearly a year to complete.

Earlier this month, the curators approved the composition of the presidential search committee. In the committee, there are nine spots for curators, two for student representatives, two for members of the Intercampus Faculty Council and two for members of the Intercampus Staff Advisory Council. But there are currently three empty curator seats, and three empty seats on the committee as a result.

This is an opportunity for the board to be pragmatic and adaptable while further including all of the UM System’s stakeholders in this search. Rather than shrink the size of the committee, the board could give an additional seat to each of the three stakeholders: faculty, staff and student. This is particularly important for this search, as every member of the committee will have voting power.

The search for the next UM System president will be one of the most consequential decisions the Board of Curators make in the next several years. Taking steps to include more stakeholders in this decision while also working to increase the diversity of the board itself is in the best interest of the UM System.

Concerned Student 1950 activist joins civil rights leaders for meeting with Obama

By Rudi Keller
At the White House on Thursday, DeShaunya Ware of Concerned Student 1950 was seated beside U.S. Rep. John Lewis and C.T. Vivian, two of the most prominent surviving leaders of early civil rights struggles, during a meeting with President Barack Obama.

Lewis, 74, helped organize the 1963 March on Washington and was an original Freedom Rider seeking voting rights in 1960.

Vivian, 91, was born in Boonville. He is a minister and author and was a close friend and lieutenant of Martin Luther King Jr.

“These are men who have challenged the status quo, civil rights activists who fought and helped pass the Voting Rights Act,” Ware said Friday morning. “Just being in that space with them was very powerful.”

Ware represented Concerned Student 1950 as Obama met with established and emerging civil rights leaders at a Black History Month reception. Ware said she brought Obama a message members of Concerned Student 1950 crafted as a group.

“We, Concerned Student 1950, talked to him about what we had been doing on campus, on and off campus, to get the rest of our demands met,” she said. “We also made specific requests of him as he is ending his time as president, as far as it relates to education and police brutality.”

**Concerned Student 1950 brought international attention to the University of Missouri by engaging in protests that culminated in the Nov. 9 resignation of University System President Tim Wolfe.** Obama, in his public remarks, did not directly address those protests, but said he is inspired by the example of young civil rights leaders.

Other young activists on hand included Brittany Packnett of Ferguson, a member of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing and co-founder of We The Protestors.

Aislinn Pulley, an organizer with the Black Lives Matter movement, declined Obama’s invitation.

“But overall, what I am most encouraged by is the degree of focus and seriousness and constructiveness that exists not only with existing civil rights organizations, but this new generation,” Obama said. “They are some serious young people.”

While Ware was in Washington, members of the MU Young Americans for Liberty chapter gathered 683 signatures at Speakers’ Circle calling for Assistant Professor Melissa Click to be fired for her actions during the Concerned Student 1950 protests. Click is on paid suspension during a Board of Curators investigation into her actions that led to municipal assault charges for trying to move a student videographer away from the protest site.
Thomas Bradbury, president of the group, said 683 students signed the petition, which will be sent to the curators. He denied racism is a major problem at MU.

“I think they were right in their aim, but I think the narrative they created about Mizzou being a racist campus was simply not true,” Bradbury said.

He had no criticism of Obama for recognizing the local movement, Bradbury said. “I think what they did in trying to go out there and have a voice is great,” he said.

The reminders of a racist past are everywhere on campus, Ware said. At Rollins Hall, students eat in a building named for the university’s founder, a slaveholder, she said.

Black students see modern racism in the way they are treated, she said.

Concerned Student 1950 is focused on having its demands met, not convincing groups like Young Americans for Liberty, Ware said. But not every step must be confrontational, she said.

“We do it for black liberation, and it is a little glimmer of hope that change can happen,” she said. “It is OK to disagree, it is OK to not have the same values. It is also OK for things to not be this war zone.”

Black Lives Matter leaders talk to MU audience

By Alan Burdziak

Friday, February 19, 2016 at 11:02 am

Black Lives Matter got its name from the end of an open letter to black people written by one of the movement’s founders, Alicia Garza.

She called it a love note.

Shortly after George Zimmerman was acquitted of second-degree murder in the shooting death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in Florida in 2013, Garza penned the letter and told black people “our lives matter.” Another co-founder, Patrice Cullors, shared the message with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. In the time since, the movement has exploded.
It was not until unrest over the death of Michael Brown at the hands of a police officer in Ferguson erupted in August 2014 that Black Lives Matter’s popularity skyrocketed, Garza said Thursday night during a discussion at the University of Missouri.

“It was protesters in Ferguson taking that message and having it broadcast around the world,” Garza said at Jesse Auditorium. She and Opal Tometi, another movement co-founder, spoke in an informal Q-and-A moderated by Cristina Mislan, an assistant professor in the MU School of Journalism.

Talk turned briefly to the protests over racial issues that toppled the university’s president in November. Tometi said she and Garza were in awe of the student-led protests.

“I’m in deep, deep appreciation of all the folks that are a part of that,” Tometi said of the group that led the protests, Concerned Student 1950, and its supporters.

Tometi and Garza talked about the beginning of the movement and the challenges it faces, how Black Lives Matter has evolved and about systemic oppression and racism that minorities experience. What took off as a way to protest killings of unarmed black people by police officers today confronts many of the social ills minorities face.

“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle,” Tometi said, “because we don’t live single-issue lives.”

The pair took questions from the audience, including one person who asked about two other social media hashtags that formed in response to Black Lives Matter: Blue Lives Matter, in support of police officers, and All Lives Matter. Calling the responses a “head-in-the-sand approach,” Garza said they’re used by people who are trying to deflect racism, ignorant of the plight of minorities or just being racist.

“Anybody who believes that all lives matter should believe that black lives need to be protected,” she said.

In response to a question about black-on-black crime, Tometi said it’s an issue they grapple with, but one that can cloud the bigger problems of how poor minorities are cast aside to live in desolate areas with little opportunity, allowing criminality to thrive.

“When you’re experiencing that kind of trauma in your community, it has to come out,” Tometi said.

On the issue of black voter participation, one man in the audience told the women they did not address mobilizing voters. Garza said the movement conducts registration drives and seeks out people to promote as candidates in some elections. Black voters are a coveted group, she said, but they don’t turn out unless they see something or someone in the system they can get behind, such as Barack Obama’s presidential bids in 2008 and 2012. Merely voting in an election is one way to exercise power, she said, but it is not always the best way.
“Too often we’re saying: Pick the lesser of two evils so you can feel good about participating,” Garza said.

#BlackLivesMatter founders speak on the prominence of racial injustice

Founder Alicia Garza: “We need black people, especially young black people, to not wear hoodies, to pull their pants up, to get a better education and deviate from the narrative that they didn’t start.”

Two of the three creators of the BlackLivesMatter movement, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi, took the Jesse Auditorium stage last night to educate an estimated 700 students, faculty and community members on the prominence of racial injustice.


“It was a punch in the gut. I think it hit a lot of us personally,” Garza said. “Everybody has a word for black, and it is usually pejorative. We need black people, especially young black people, to not wear hoodies, to pull their pants up, to get a better education and deviate from the narrative that they didn’t start.”

Tometi said the movement is concerned with supporting a black consciousness rooted in embracing people in their entirety: their skin color and various identities beyond skin color.

“When we say Black Lives Matter, we are broadening the conversation around state violence to include all of the ways in which Black people are intentionally left powerless at the hands of the state,” the Black Lives Matter website reads. “We are talking about the ways in which Black lives are deprived of our basic human rights and dignity.”

Tometi said that though there are prominent African-American people such as President Barack Obama and Oprah Winfrey in society, the reality for many is brutality, surveillance and disenfranchisement from education and jobs.

“There are systems that are already connecting across the globe defining our lives and our place,” Garza said. “Companies are making decisions about what to do with the workforce. We are made to fight for scraps. We are pit against one another. We have to lean into the connections we have as people who share a lot of history. We have to, as a movement, embrace that.”
Tometi and Garza spoke on collective care, recognizing, expressing appreciation for and checking in with one another. They spoke on the necessity of working to be so deeply rooted in each other’s struggles to prevent division among people.

“There are actual enemies that aim to make sure we don’t get the quality of life that we deserve,” Garza said. “We are not them. In between holding protest signs and all of that, we have to do the work to stay connected and in sync. We have different skills and beliefs and we need all of that.”

Tometi quoted African-American civil rights activist Audre Lorde, “There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

People can’t deny that their intersections play a role in their particular experiences, Garza said.

“It’s not about identity politics, it’s about segregation in our democracy and in our society,” Garza said. “There is such a dialectic between culture and law; we can’t legislate our way out of racism because it’s so embedded in our culture.”

Garza said she doesn’t think the U.S. has ever been truly united; there has been a divide between the races since black people first came to America as slaves.

While it is important to recognize African-Americans’ historical roots as is done through Black History Month, Garza said it is more important for people to focus and act on ceasing current racial division.

In regard to last semester’s protests on racism and diversity at MU, Tometi and Garza said they were “in awe of the leaders (at MU) raising their voices.”

“We have deep appreciation for the folks who were a part of all of that,” Garza said.

Landon Jones, co-chairman of the Missouri Students Association and Graduate Professional Council speaker’s committee, said the event was scheduled last July and inviting Garza and Tometi to speak was not a reaction to last semester’s events.

BlackLivesMatter has 32 chapters internationally and been acknowledged in an episode of “Law & Order: SVU” about the Paula Deen racism scandal and the murder of Trayvon Martin.

Garza attributed the momentum BlackLivesMatter has gained to the fatal shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson by Darren Wilson, a white police officer, in August 2014.

“A lot of people don’t know what the movement is about,” freshman Serena Stoddard said. “They hear about it and make their own conceptions about it. I had an idea of what it was about, but I came to learn more, so I can counter arguments from people who think this is just an anti-police or anti-white movement.”

Tometi and Garza spoke for 30 minutes and answered the audience’s questions for 90 minutes.
The event was sponsored by the MSA/GPC Department of Student Activities, Student Life, Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center and the Chancellor’s Diversity Initiative. In honor of the movement’s roots in social media, the event included a BlackLivesMatter Snapchat filter.

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Week: What You Need to Know About the Past 7 Days

Beyond Repair

Is the federal student-aid system so broken that it can’t be fixed? New America, a think tank that devotes a lot of its thought to education, says it is. In a paper called "Starting From Scratch," the group’s higher-education-policy team last week proposed ditching the whole tangled mess of federal grants, loans, and tuition tax credits, and replacing it with formula-driven grants to states.

States would be eligible to participate, the paper says, if they promised to keep their higher-education funding "at a level equal to the average of the last five years," and if they also provided "at least a 25-percent match for the federal formula grant" and played "a more active role in holding colleges accountable for their performance and costs." If a state opted out, it would get no federal higher-ed money.

The states, in turn, would funnel money to colleges — public, private, and for-profit — but the institutions would all be required "to enroll a substantial share of low-income students," meet students’ financial needs by keeping their costs at or below their estimated family contribution, and also meet "accountability performance measures."

So far, so good. But there’s a catch — a $38.6-billion catch. That’s how much more it would cost on top of what the federal government spends now, according to New America’s estimate. Price tag notwithstanding, the plan "is straightforward, actionable, and would
ultimately restore American higher education’s promise of upward mobility for all,” says Kevin Carey, New America’s education-policy director.

Meanwhile, the Education Department and interested Washington insiders are negotiating new loan-forgiveness regulations in a process — a geekfest, really — known as "neg reg." At issue, among other things, is a new federal standard for deciding which borrowers can ask to have their loans forgiven because they were defrauded by colleges.

Concealed Carry

Gregory L. Fenves, president of the University of Texas at Austin, last week accepted a committee’s recommendations for allowing people with concealed-carry permits to bring guns onto the university campus. The new policies, required last year by the state Legislature, presented him with "the greatest challenge of my presidency to date," Mr. Fenves said.

While openly carrying guns will still be prohibited, people who have the appropriate permits will be able to bring their weapons into academic buildings — even into classrooms — and university-owned apartments, although in residence halls guns will be allowed only in common areas. Under the policies, guns must be in holsters that cover the trigger and the trigger guard, and must be kept entirely hidden and well within reach, or locked in a gun safe or car. State law continues to prohibit guns at sporting events (except, of course, those involving guns). The new rules will also ban guns from disciplinary hearings for students, faculty members, and staff members, from labs and other areas "where the discharge of a firearm might cause great harm," from buildings and areas used by programs for minors, and from animal-care and -research facilities.

No Change for ‘Fisher’

Speaking of Texas, the unexpected death of the Supreme Court justice Antonin Scalia has upset the court’s conservative/liberal balance and upended expectations for
a number of cases the court heard last fall — but not for the one of most interest to colleges, *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin.*

That’s because Justice Elena Kagan, who worked on the long-running lawsuit while she was the Obama administration’s solicitor general, has recused herself from the case. As you surely recall, it’s a challenge the university’s race-conscious admissions practices. (Read more [here](http:).

**Yet Another Video**

*Just when you hoped things might be settling down at the University of Missouri at Columbia, another video has surfaced of the assistant professor of communications who was suspended after being caught on camera shouting for "some muscle" to keep reporters away from black protesters on a campus quadrangle last fall.* This time, however, it’s police body-cam footage, and the professor, Melissa A. Click, is seen yelling at and scuffling with officers trying to clear a campus road for a car carrying Timothy M. Wolfe, who was then the university system’s president.

The appearance of the second video is an unfortunate twist for Ms. Click, whose supporters have maintained that the first video represented uncharacteristic behavior by her. The university’s interim chancellor, Henry C. (Hank) Foley, released a statement calling her conduct "appalling," and adding: "I am not only disappointed, I am angry, that a member of our faculty acted this way."

Cardboard compactor at Mizzou Arena spontaneously catches fire

COLUMBIA - A cardboard compactor at Mizzou Arena caught fire Friday during the wrestling meet.

Columbia Fire Department Battalion Chief Clayton Farr Jr. said the department got a call from local police who were working the meet about a structure fire behind the building.

"The compactor was on fire, but staff was out here with fire extinguishers taking care of it," Farr said. "We took over from there and had it under control."

The department does not know what caused the fire, but it does know the only damage was to the few cardboard boxes still left in the compactor.

Staff said there are protocols in place to train employees in case of fire or other dangerous accidents.