Mizzou may pay price for campus protests as enrollment plunges

Safe spaces may become empty spaces at the University of Missouri, where officials acknowledged an expected sharp decline in enrollment next fall is due at least in part to protests that rocked the campus last fall.

The school is braced for a 25 percent drop in new students this coming fall, forcing the institution to enact painful budget cuts, as well as hiring and salary freezes.

“We do know that the events of last fall have had an effect on our application numbers; however, it’s difficult to provide a specific number as we do not have any hard data,” University of Missouri spokesman Christian Basi said in a statement to Foxnews.com.

Basi said there are other factors contributing to the decline, including fewer high school graduates in the region since 2010 and increased competition since Mizzou entered the SEC a few years ago.

“We are continuing to work with prospective students and their parents, answering any questions they might have and giving them information about MU’s current campus climate,” he said. “We’re looking forward to welcoming our new class in the fall.”

The decline in enrollment is estimated to be as much as 1,500 students this fall. The school is cutting its budget by 5 percent in an effort to make up two-thirds of the $32 million shortfall, according to the Columbia Daily Tribune.

Further cuts may be possible if the state reduces monetary support. A budget approved last Thursday reduces funding for the University’s Columbia campus by $1 million and support for the systemwide administration by $7.6 million.

Experts say it may not be just Missouri paying the price for protests, as well as an increasingly ideological curriculum.

“College enrollment is declining overall – perhaps because high school graduates are realizing trivial courses that lecture on “white privilege” and “queer liberation” – just to name two – don’t
help one much with employment and real-world problems,” Kyle Olson, founder and head of the Education Action group and news site EAGnews.org, told FoxNews.com.

He adds that the same can be true of the microcosm of Mizzou.

“Do most reasonable people want classmates who parade through the library finger-waving about the supposed evils of whiteness – or professors who threaten the safety of their students and undermining the very tenant that protects their profession for which she is training them: the First Amendment?” he asked.

Olson was referring to video of an incident at the protests that went viral at the time in which former communications professor Melissa Click threatened a reporter for filming in a public area, requesting “muscle” to forcibly remove Tim Tai, a student photographer on assignment for ESPN. Click was subsequently fired from her post as an adjunct professor.

Olson noted that other schools in Missouri, including Missouri State, are seeing an increase in enrollment, which would indicate local students are considering options other than Mizzou.

**University of Missouri presidential search committee meets in advance of public forums**

By Rudi Keller

Monday, March 14, 2016 at 10:04 pm

Consultants hired by the University of Missouri Board of Curators to help in selecting a new system president said Monday that the search should be completed before the end of the year, when the terms of two members expire.

Isaacson, Miller Inc. will be paid $150,000 plus expenses to recruit candidates for the job that came open Nov. 9 with the abrupt resignation of President Tim Wolfe amid protests over racial issues on the Columbia campus. John Isaacson, founder of the firm, told the curators that typically searches that begin in the spring can be concluded by Christmas.

The curators set a tentative timeline of finishing by late November when the makeup of the Presidential Search Committee was approved on Feb. 4.
“Our search consultants think that is a reasonable timeline and at this time we haven’t hit any snags,” said Pam Henrickson, chair of the board. “We should be good.”

The tumultuous months before and after Wolfe’s resignation have seen unrest among black students in Columbia, distrust of the administration by graduate assistants who almost lost their health insurance, administrative infighting between Wolfe and former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and a continuing controversy over the employment of Assistant Professor Melissa Click.

The presidential search for UM will be followed closely by observers far beyond the state’s borders, Isaacson said.

“Our view is that there is unlikely to be another public university search in the country this year that will be as consequential,” he said.

The final selections for the search committee were approved Monday. Two university alumni, Cheryl Walker, a St. Louis attorney who chaired the curators when the board selected Gary Forsee in 2009, and James Whitaker, an orthopedic surgeon, will co-chair the committee along with James Whitaker.

The committee will also include the six current curators and four representatives of faculty, staff and students. There are slots on the committee for three additional curators and the student representative to the board, but whether those seats will be filled soon is unlikely.

Missouri Senate leaders have said they will not confirm nominees to the board from Gov. Jay Nixon. Nixon has not named any replacements for three board members who resigned, but last week he named Gene Patrick Graham of MU as the student representative. If no appointees are confirmed, Nixon will be able to make interim appointments beginning in May.

The next step in the process will be a series of public forums hosted by the search committee and consultants. The first will be held at 11:30 a.m. April 4 in Rolla, at the Havener Student Center at the Missouri University of Science and Technology. A second will be held at 3:30 p.m. the same day at the Millennium Student Center, Century Room at UMSL.

The third forum, at 10:30 a.m. April 6, will be held at the Reynolds Alumni Center at MU and the final forum will be at noon April 8 at the Student Union on the UMKC campus.

The search committee will have its next meeting in conjunction with the next regular curators meeting April 14 and 15 in Rolla.

During the discussion, the consultants urged committee members to keep the process as confidential as possible, warning especially not to reveal any names being brought forward as possible candidates.

“We want your contribution and perspectives from those constituencies but we don’t want you going back to those constituencies and giving them chapter and verse about what has been
transpiring in the various meetings and discussions that have been happening,” consultant Bud Moseley said.

Some members worried about losing the trust of the constituencies they represent. “We don’t want to close ourselves off to the people who trusted us enough to put us on the committee,” said Stephanie Shonekan, a faculty representative from the MU campus.

The first step will be to develop the qualifications needed in a president. Some potential candidates will shy away from the controversies, Isaacson said, but he expects to find others eager for a challenge.

“People perceive this search or this system as at the forefront in the nation of the crucial problems that ought to be taken care in higher education everywhere,” he said.

University of Missouri curators name chairs of presidential search committee

By Rudi Keller

Monday, March 14, 2016 at 2:00 pm

A physician from Kansas City and an attorney from St. Louis will be the alumni co-chairs for the University of Missouri’s Presidential Search Committee, the Board of Curators decided early Monday afternoon.

The special board meeting was called to bring the search committee members together with representatives of Isaacson, Miller Inc., the search firm selected Feb. 24, and to approve Cheryl Walker, an attorney of counsel with Bryan Cave in St. Louis, and James Whitaker, an orthopedic surgeon, as the alumni committee members.

The curators were set to vote on a document guiding the committee’s work and hold a discussion between search committee members and representatives of Isaacson, Miller.

“That will kind of give them marching orders as far as what the board’s expectations are,” system spokesman John Fougere said Monday morning.
Isaacson, Miller Inc. is working to recruit presidents for nine colleges and universities including Washington State University, which is replacing the late Elson Floyd, president of the UM System from 2003 to 2007.

A Feb. 4 decision to keep alumni off the committee was reversed in an open session Feb. 24 when the board decided the alumni representatives would lead the search.

The system presidency became open Nov. 9 when Tim Wolfe resigned under pressure from student protesters, including the Tiger football team, and Republican politicians who said he had lost their confidence. Interim President Mike Middleton has said several times that he is not interested in the job on a permanent basis.

The protests and their aftermath, along with other issues, have put political and financial pressure on the university. The Missouri House voted last week to cut $7.6 million from state support for the system administration budget and $1 million from the Columbia campus. In addition, interim Columbia campus Chancellor Hank Foley last week directed campus divisions to cut 5 percent from their budgets.

A poll conducted for the Tribune and nine other newspapers, released Friday, indicated only 20 percent of Missourians support cutting the university’s budget as a response to the turmoil.

The curators, including the student representative, four representatives of faculty, staff and students and the two co-chairs sit on the search committee.

There are six sitting curators and three vacancies. Gov. Jay Nixon on Thursday nominated Gene Patrick Graham, who is majoring in vocal music education at MU, to the student seat, but Graham cannot participate until confirmed by the Missouri Senate.

Whitaker graduated from MU in 1967 and received his medical degree from MU in 1971. He has a practice in Overland Park, Kan., and is a member of the Missouri Athletic Trainers’ Association Sports Medicine Hall of Fame.

Walker, a 1986 graduate of Missouri University of Science & Technology, is also a published poet and was a member of the advisory board that chose the state poet laureate in 2010.

“They bring a diverse experience and valuable perspective to the committee ...” Board of Curators Chair Pam Henrickson said in a news release issued after the vote confirming Walker and Whitaker’s selection.

The search committee will hold four public forums to discuss the process for selecting a president. The first forums will be held April 4 at Missouri S&T and on the UMSL campus. A Columbia forum will be held at 10:30 a.m. April 6 in the Reynolds Alumni Center.
Co-leaders of Missouri presidential search committee named

COLUMBIA, Mo. • The University of Missouri curators have named a St. Louis attorney and a Kansas City doctor to lead the committee searching for a new University of Missouri president.

The curators on Monday approved attorney Cheryl Walker and Dr. James Whitaker to head the committee. Both are University of Missouri graduates.

The board also selected Isaacson, Miller as the executive search firm that will work closely with the committee to lead the presidential search.

Forums will be held the first week of April on the four university system's campuses to discuss desired qualifications for the next president.

The committee is searching for a replacement for Timothy M. Wolfe, who resigned under pressure after students protested the handling of racial issues and other problems on the Columbia campus.
UM Board of Curators chooses co-chairs for presidential search committee

COLUMBIA – The University of Missouri Board of Curators appointed two co-chairs of the UM System presidential search committee on Monday.

According to a news release, Cheryl D.S. Walker and James H. Whitaker are the co-chairs to lead the search for a new system president.

Walker earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Missouri University of Science and Technology in 1986. Whitaker earned a bachelor's degree and medical doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1967 and 1971, respectively.

Pamela Henrickson, chair of the UM Board of Curators, said the two bring a valuable perspective to the critical search process.

The UM System Board of Curators chose Isaacson, Miller, an executive search firm, to work with the committee and ensure successful search process.

There are several scheduled public forums listed:

- April 4: 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Havener Student Center, Rooms 204 A&B, Missouri S&T
- April 4: 3:30 p.m.-5 p.m., Millennium Student Center, Century Room, UMSL
- April 6: 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., Reynolds Alumni Center, Great Room, MU
- April 8: 12 p.m.-1:30 p.m., Student Union, Room 201BC, UMKC

The curators held a public session Monday at 2 p.m. in room 106A of the Ellis Library Telepresence Center on MU's campus.

During the session the curators said usually the search for a president would end by late fall, but they are starting now in hopes to be done sooner.
After the session, Henrickson said leadership is the primary skill they are looking for in a system president.

"The next step will be to write the job description and to determine the qualifications we want and give them to the search firm and let them go out and look," Henrickson said.

UM Curators round out presidential search team

COLUMBIA, Mo - The search is underway for a permanent president to head the UM system. The UM Board of Curators appointed co-chairs for the presidential search committee, announced open forums and the hiring of a presidential search firm at Ellis Library on Monday.

The presidential search committee consists of the six curators, two co-chairs, two faculty members, two students and a staff member. The committee is charged with picking a pool of candidates. The Board of Curators will make the final decision on the candidate who will head the UM system.

The board has also enlisted the help of Isaacson, Miller -- a firm to help with the search. Isaacson, Miller recently helped with the search for the University of Nebraska system president. An employee of the firm said the committee should ask, "What do they hope the next president achieves?"

Tim Wolfe resigned because of racial issues brought up by Concerned Student 1950. The chair of the Board of Curators said diversity will play a big role in picking the next system president.

"Diversity is very important and we've reached out to a broader constituency that's diverse in many ways, racially but in other ways. That's why we enlarged the search committee to add faculty and staff and we're going to spend a lot of time going out to the community," said Hendrickson.

Curators will hold open forums the first week of April at all the system campuses to give the university community an opportunity to give input on who should be the next system president.

There is no date for when the committee will finish the presidential selection process. They plan to have a list of candidates by November or December.
Melissa Click remains on paid suspension at University of Missouri pending appeal of dismissal

By Rudi Keller

Monday, March 14, 2016 at 4:15 pm

Assistant Professor Melissa Click remains on paid suspension from her faculty position at the University of Missouri pending an appeal of her dismissal, Board of Curators Chair Pam Henrickson said Monday.

Click, who was fired by the board on a 4-2 vote Feb. 24, has appealed her dismissal. Her salary is $57,798 annually.

Under the normal procedures governing faculty discipline actions on the Columbia campus, a complaint would have first been investigated in an informal process through the Department of Communication, where Click is a faculty member. If the charges were unresolved, the procedure calls for several steps leading to the chancellor’s office. Appeals beyond the chancellor go to the curators.

Because that procedure was not followed, the board will discuss how to proceed in a closed session Monday afternoon, Henrickson said.

“I don’t know what those steps will be,” she said. “We’re on unplowed ground.”

Click was fired after an investigation into her actions during Nov. 9 demonstrations at Carnahan Quandrangle. Mark Schierbecker, a student taking video at the Concerned Student 1950 protests, recorded Click calling for help to remove photojournalist Tim Tai and then calling for “some muscle” to have Schierbecker removed. Click was charged with third-degree assault Jan. 25 in Columbia Municipal Court for putting her hands on Schierbecker’s camera to stop his recording.

Click was put on paid suspension after the charges were filed. A second video surfaced during the investigation that showed Click shouting an obscenity at Columbia police officers trying to clear a Concerned Student 1950 blockade of then-President Tim Wolfe’s car during the Homecoming parade. The protests eventually led to Wolfe’s Nov. 9 resignation.
Along with Click’s appeal, her dismissal triggered an investigation by the American Association of University Professors, which is sending three faculty members from other schools to Columbia at the end of the month. That investigation, if it finds the university violated its own procedures and due process practices endorsed by the association, could result in the university being censured.

Click could not be reached immediately for comment Monday afternoon.

In a statement issued after the association said it would investigate, Click accused the curators of bowing to heavy political pressure.

“The AAUP’s action underscores my belief that the Curators have overstepped their authority,” Click said. “While I have taken the Curators’ offer to appeal their decision to terminate me, I do not believe that the process they used to come to their decision was fair.”

Click’s continued employment after the Nov. 9 demonstrations became a political liability for the university. Dismissal became a flashpoint for legislative anger at the university and, at one point, the cause of a $402,000 cut in the House Budget Committee to the Columbia campus budget.

That money was restored, but the state appropriation that passed the full House included a $1 million cut to the MU campus and a $7.6 million cut to the system administration budget.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Click on paid suspension while UM Curators wade through appeals process**

RACHEL PHILLIPS, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Melissa Click is still being paid while the outcome of her attempt to appeal her termination is decided, UM System Board of Curators Chairwoman Pamela Henrickson said Monday.

The curators voted 4-2 to fire Click on Feb. 24 from her position as an assistant professor of communication. Her suspension was announced Jan. 27, and the firing was announced Feb. 25 after an investigation by St. Louis law firm Bryan Cave.
Henrickson clarified Click's status during a news conference after a curators meeting Monday. As to what the appeal process would entail, Henrickson said that there was no timeline and that the steps were uncertain.

"We're on unplowed ground here," she said.

Click was filmed Nov. 9 confronting MU student and videographer Mark Schierbecker near the Concerned Student 1950 camp on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle during demonstrations following then-UM System President Tim Wolfe's resignation. Schierbecker uploaded to YouTube footage of Click calling for "some muscle" to remove Schierbecker from a human wall surrounding the camp, and the video went viral.

On Oct. 10, Click linked arms with Concerned Student 1950 members blocking the progress of Wolfe's car in MU's Homecoming parade. After the group was dispersed by Columbia police officers, Click stepped between graduate student activist Jonathan Butler and a police officer and demanded that police back away. That tense encounter, which included Click's use of an expletive, was captured by police body camera footage, which the Missourian published Feb. 13 as part of a story about Click.

In a statement last week, Click said that she thought the curators had not acted fairly and that she believed they should stick to MU's Collected Rules and Regulations. Those rules outline a process by which faculty misconduct complaints are handled.

MU faculty members, the MU Faculty Council, the UM System Intercampus Faculty Council, the American Association of University Professors and the MU chapter of the AAUP have said that Click was entitled to due process and a hearing. The national AAUP has launched an investigation into Click's firing, and its ad hoc investigative committee planned to meet with the curators on March 22 and 23.

After the curators adjourned a closed session at about 5:30 p.m., Henrickson said she would not elaborate on her earlier remarks.
Missouri panel considers more gun access on college campuses

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri lawmakers during a Monday House committee hearing weighed proposals that would expand gun access on college campuses by allowing people to carry concealed firearms.

The bills are among several introduced this year by state Republican lawmakers, who have argued that students should be allowed to carry firearms for self-defense and that armed, law-abiding citizens with proper training can save lives during attempted mass shootings.

"Why are we taking an individual's right away to protect themselves on campus?" said Nixa Republican Rep. Jered Taylor, who is sponsoring one of the bills.

Under both House proposals, colleges and universities could apply for an exemption to ban concealed carry.

To receive permission from the state Department of Higher Education to ban concealed carry of firearms, schools would need to staff every door of every building with armed security and metal detectors. Those entering would be screened, and higher education institutions would need to provide a safe space to store weapons.
Unlike Lamar Republican Rep. Mike Kelley's legislation, Taylor's bill would only apply to public colleges and universities and includes exceptions for areas on campus with grade school children, some sporting events and hospitals.

University administrators have criticized efforts to expand gun access on campuses, saying it's dangerous given binge drinking and mental health issues among college students.

Paul Wagner, executive director of the Council on Public Higher Education, said Monday that no public campuses in Missouri allow for concealed carry of firearms and said the security requirements are not a viable alternative because of costs.

Legislative researchers estimate Kelley's bill would cost at least $991 million for the first year for schools to meet the security requirements needed to receive an exemption. Another estimate shows no costs associated with Taylor's legislation.

College students spoke both for and against the measures during the Monday hearing.

"We do not believe that your pursuit of a higher education should endanger your life," said Jake Buxton, chairman of the Missouri Federation of College Republicans who attends Truman State University.

**Doug Witt, a student at the University of Missouri-Columbia and chairman of the College Democrats of Missouri, raised doubts about whether training for concealed-carry permits is adequate to prepare gun holders for mass shootings and questioned why the measures are some lawmakers' "first reaction to prevent gun violence on campus."

A Senate panel heard testimony on two similar bills in January. The measures also drew broad opposition from university administrators, and they have not yet received a committee vote.
Committee chairman Rep. Elijah Haahr, R-Springfield, said he might hold a vote to send Taylor's bill to the full House but that could be delayed for weeks.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Sculpture honoring firefighters revealed in blaze of glory**

ERIN BORMETT, 9 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Patrick Hutti spent 10 hours tending the fire. By then, it was Monday night, and the thermometer read 2,300 degrees Fahrenheit. More than 50 people assembled outside the Columbia Fire Department Administrative Building on Orr Street while waiting for the sun to set.

Once it was dark, the audience got its show: A ceramic sculpture was unveiled in a flaming presentation by two professional artists and four Columbia firefighters dressed in fireproof gear. The bell-shaped piece, titled "Last Call," is an homage to firefighters past and present.

A large bell is used to signal both the beginning and end of a fire emergency, and it will also sound if a firefighter dies while on duty. To this day, when a firefighter dies on the job, a signal of three bell rings represents the end of his or her duties.

**In February 2014, Columbia Fire Department’s Lt. Bruce Britt died from injuries he sustained while trying to evacuate residents of MU’s University Village.**

The ceramic piece was built and fired on-site in a kiln made from heat-resistant insulation and chicken wire. In the final stages of firing, the insulation was removed to reveal the red-hot clay, and sawdust and glazing material were thrown into the blaze and onto the sculpture.

Hutti, a resident artist at Access Arts, was the leader on the project. Hutti said he had been physically creating the piece for about a month and a half but had spent about four or five months working to obtain permits and meet administrative requirements.
Forty to 50 volunteers of all ages assisted with the formation of the sculpture before it was unveiled. The handprints covering its surface are meant to symbolize the collaborative efforts of the artists and the community who pitched in with its creation.

"We share the art-making process," Hutti said. "I believe in a creative learning experience for everyone, kids and adults, and that's what this project embodies."

Hutti flew in longtime friend and wood-firing partner Jacob Herrmann from Wilmington, North Carolina, to assist with the project's final steps. Hutti and Herrmann went to East Carolina University together, and Hutti said they became best friends and have worked on many firing projects together since.

"Pat might be the hardest working person I know," Herrmann said.

The unveiling was accompanied by a small block party on Orr Street. The Range Free bakery made s'mores cupcakes, Dog Master Distillery produced a cocktail involving Fireball whiskey, and T-shirt making and fire safety activities for kids were also available.

To build the sculpture, a foundation in the ground was constructed before a brick platform base was laid. The kiln was built around the entire structure to hold in the heat during firing.

The firing process was a slow one. Open ports around the base kept the heat evenly distributed throughout the sculpture.

With occasional help from kerosene, the wood fire gradually increased in temperature to 2,300 degrees, ensuring the sculpture would not cave in during its unveiling.

Access Arts, the studio manning the project, is an organization created to give access to any and all individuals that want the opportunity to create art. Many of its employees had a hand in the art-making and event planning of the evening, while Hutti was the main man in charge, studio manager Joel Watson said.
COLUMBIA — As the fog cleared Monday morning, about 60 viewers gathered to watch as a construction crew raised a beam into the air and placed it atop Thomas and Nell Lafferre Hall.

The beam-raising was part of a "topping out" ceremony hosted by the MU College of Engineering. The beam was available for people to sign before the crew hoisted it up.

The event celebrated completion of the structural component of the Lafferre renovation. Brad Grimes, MU alumni and construction manager, said before the beam was lifted that the "topping out" tradition dates back to old-time Scandinavia.

A tree and an American flag were placed on top of the beam. Grimes said the tree paid homage to the tree god and signified safety, luck and completion. The flag, he said, paid homage to the country.

College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa thanked those who supported the project and detailed some of the benefits that will come from the construction, including an increase in the quality and quantity of labs, collaborative study areas, new throughways and an additional elevator that accesses all levels of the building.

"This Lafferre renovation is a great step forward on our path to engineering excellence," she said.

After touring the building in October 2014, Gov. Jay Nixon authorized $38.5 million to renovate areas of Lafferre that were built in 1935 and 1944, according to previous Missourian reporting.
Private funding is paying for "shell space" on the third floor, which would provide additional space if needed in the future.

Construction began on April 13, 2015. Loboa said it is about halfway finished and should be done in December.

MU alumni Walter Vandelicht, who received a degree in civil engineering in 1949, attended the ceremony. He said that as chair of the public policy committee he worked to make the project a top priority.

"It's great to see this happening after so many years of pushing for funds for this project," Vandelicht said. "I think this will let us enhance our whole engineering education here on this campus."

A hot dog lunch followed the ceremony on the south side of the building as part of Engineering Week events.

**THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Should Campus Leaders Ever Disinvite a Controversial Speaker?**

**No MU Mention**

About one year, almost to the day, after Christina H. Paxson was inaugurated as the 19th president of Brown University, the institution became the latest site in a string of battles on campuses nationwide that boiled down to two questions: Should a college disinvite a controversial speaker, and if so, when?

At Brown in the fall of 2013, the speaker was the commissioner of the New York Police Department, Raymond W. Kelly, who oversaw its controversial "stop and frisk" policy, which was widely viewed as racial profiling. Students pushed for Mr. Kelly to be disinvited, but when the university and its relatively new leader refused to do so, shouting protesters disrupted the event, to the point it had to be canceled.
Now, more than two years later, Ms. Paxson stands by the decision to not cancel Mr. Kelly’s lecture beforehand. Out of the headline-making incident, she says, came a campuswide teaching moment.

"These controversial talks can really move students forward in how they think about issues," Ms. Paxson says. "You can’t really learn and grow if you can’t hear things you don’t agree with."

But campus climates have changed. Colleges nowadays are seeing increased student activism, while also being pressured to respect the importance of free speech in higher education. At the intersection of those forces is the controversial speaker.

**A Failed Cancellation**

There are few more controversial speakers in the United States today than Donald J. Trump, the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, who planned to speak at a rally last Friday night at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Mr. Trump had not been invited to speak on the campus; rather, his campaign had rented out the UIC Pavilion, a large arena at the university.

But the prospect that Mr. Trump, whose campaign has featured rhetoric attacking immigrants, Muslims, and other minority groups, would speak at Illinois-Chicago drew sharp criticism across the diverse campus, which has large black and Latino enrollments. University officials allowed the rally to proceed, but protesters showed up in large numbers and clashes between them and Trump supporters led the Trump organization to cancel the event before the candidate could speak.

Since university officials were not involved in canceling the rally, they have not been criticized for violating Mr. Trump’s First Amendment right to free speech. But last month alone, a couple of speaker controversies on campuses from southern California to northern Massachusetts ignited a backlash. When such controversies bubble up, they can trigger tough choices for administrators that are likely to result in close scrutiny, regardless of their decision.

No leader has had to grapple with the issue more prominently than the president of California State University at Los Angeles, William A. Covino. The campus grabbed nationwide attention late last month, when Mr. Covino announced, after pushback from people on the campus, that the conservative commentator Ben Shapiro would not be allowed to speak at an event organized by the university’s Young America’s Foundation chapter, a conservative student group.

Mr. Covino proposed that Mr. Shapiro, who is on a speaking tour, postpone his appearance and return to the campus at a later date as part of a diverse panel of speakers. In the heated back and forth, Mr. Shapiro vowed repeatedly to show up, with or without university approval, and eventually Mr. Covino conceded, stating just hours before the planned speech that "if Mr. Shapiro does appear, the university will allow him to speak." The speech went ahead as planned.
But the divide between Shapiro supporters inside a campus auditorium and protesters out front wasn’t the end for Mr. Covino. Earlier this month the student government called for his resignation, citing "mismanagement and safety concerns" tied to the Shapiro episode, according to the campus newspaper.

Mr. Covino’s initial decision to cancel Mr. Shapiro’s appearance "was made in the interest of safety and security," he said in a written statement, which cited "a number of emails and social-media posts that caused concern for the campus community" as his reason for disinviting the speaker.

‘The Best Interest’ of Students

Safety concerns are among the most prominent reasons campus leaders rescind speaker invitations. But the rationale can be more complicated.

Just days before Mr. Covino’s original announcement, the president of Williams College, Adam F. Falk, banned the conservative writer John Derbyshire from speaking on the institution’s campus, in Williamstown, Mass.

In a written statement explaining his decision to cancel the event, Mr. Falk said many of Mr. Derbyshire’s views "constitute hate speech, and we will not promote such speech on this campus."

"We have said we wouldn’t cancel speakers or prevent the expression of views except in the most extreme circumstances," the statement reads. "At times it’s our role as educators and administrators to step in and make decisions that are in the best interest of our students. This is one of those times."

In his tenure at the University of California at Irvine, Thomas A. Parham has found himself in the same position as Mr. Covino and Mr. Falk. As vice chancellor for student affairs, Mr. Parham says it is part of his job to contribute to co-curricular aspects of the student experience, which includes public lectures.

"There is rarely a speaker that you can find that everyone is going to agree with," he says. "What we try to do, however, is make people really aware that our goal in the administration is in fact to promote the free exchange of ideas, and we try very hard to maintain a posture that says we are content-neutral. We aren’t into screening or censoring speech; we’re into promoting free speech."

The Irvine campus made headlines in 2010, when a group of students disrupted a speech by the Israeli ambassador at the time, Michael Oren. They were later ordered to perform community service and serve probation for their roles in the incident.
Mr. Parham says it’s important for administrators to not turn a blind eye to any group and to engage with students who may be upset about a speaker’s presence.

‘Part of Learning’

Stops remain on Mr. Shapiro’s speaking tour, in which he intends to "invade safe spaces" and organizers say the events will go on as planned. At the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where he is scheduled to speak in early April, university officials say they are aware Mr. Shapiro has been invited but they feel strongly about following a policy that states, "expression of diverse points of view is of the highest importance."

Grant Strobl, chair of the campus’s chapter of the Young America’s Foundation, praised the university’s recent support for a variety of speakers, but said Mr. Shapiro would speak "no matter what."

Margaret Dunning, managing partner at Widmeyer Communications, said that, should a situation arise when campus leaders have a legitimate reason to cancel an event, it is important that they communicate with the students who organized it before announcing their decision.

If cancellation is warranted, "then the organization should be brought into the process before it is announced — engage students about your decision," she said.

Ms. Dunning said she worries about the ripple effects of what she describes as a recent rise in the number of campus speakers seen by students as controversial.

"What if advocates for women’s right to vote weren’t allowed on campus?" she said. "What if antislavery spokespeople weren’t allowed to go around and speak? This is a part of learning."

Candidates on Campuses

No MU Mention

By Bill Mahon, senior lecturer in Penn State’s College of Communications, where he previously served as vice president for university relations.

The college campus phase of the presidential race of 2016 has kicked off as scores of state primaries fill the nation’s calendar. Already you can hear in the background the
alumni anger, charges of policy violations and a rush of disgruntled donors for the
doors.

Candidates have visited college campuses for decades, but I don’t think we have seen
anything like the vitriol, name-calling, physical shoving and fighting, and controversial
candidate stances that now consume the news each day. And it’s not even the general
election yet.

A few rallies occurred on campuses in the early part of this crowded campaign, with
both Ted Cruz and Donald Trump appearing at the religious institution Liberty
University in Lynchburg, Va. But it was Trump’s visit with football and wrestling team
members at the University of Iowa that officially stands as the starting line for such
campus visits. As the world news media watched, the players gave the leading GOP
candidate an Iowa-style football jersey with the number one printed on the back.

One University of Iowa alum quickly responded on social media: “I don’t even know
how to react to this. I am disappointed and offended this bigot is associated with my
alma mater. What’s the story, University of Iowa? How are you going to unring this
embarrassing bell?”

The student newspaper jumped into the fray, raising the question of whether the
institution violated National Collegiate Athletic Association rules and citing a passage
that states “student athletes are not allowed to appear in any advertisement that
endorses a political candidate or party ...” A day later, university officials disagreed with
the paper and praised student athletes for getting involved in national politics “as
individuals” (albeit in school clothes and in a university athletic facility).

With the election now in full gear, the candidates have begun a wild spring road trip
crisscrossing the nation, often appearing on multiple college campuses in different
states every day of the week. That road trip will continue right up until election day in
November.

The appeal to candidates of visiting higher education institutions is pretty clear.
Colleges and universities often have some of the largest venues available in many cities
and may charge nothing or little to use them, and young people are traditionally
politically active. Institutions are often eager to oblige, as they like the image of
dozens, if not hundreds, of reporters rushing onto the campus and providing a nice
publicity bump.
But while such events can be a brief boost in national publicity, you need to balance carefully many competing interests, or you will run the risk of generating bad news for your institution.

For example, if the Trump campaign plans to visit, are you ready to address the complaints of minority and international students, religious groups, women, and others who have been offended by his comments? If Senator Ted Cruz denies climate change while speaking from a university-branded lectern, how will your world-class climate scientists react?

What is going to be the institution’s response when Trump supporters shout at your students, “Go back to Africa!” like the situation at the University of Illinois at Chicago last Friday? Silence may not be the best PR plan.

Trump is saying he might pay legal fees for supporters who get in trouble with the law when physically attacking protestors at his rallies. Is your institution going to provide bail money for students who thought they were just exercising First Amendment rights when police arrest them at their own college or university?

This is the new reality of presidential candidate rallies.

Better to have tough conversations about such hypothetical -- yet certainly possible -- scenarios now rather than before the motorcade pulls through the elephant doors for your campus arena.

**Tips for Surviving Campus Campaign Season**

For two decades, I helped coordinate many candidate visits to Penn State. During the 2008 campaign alone, our university relations staff managed visits from Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, Sarah Palin and others. One day we shuffled between buildings across campus for meetings with advance team members from both the Obama campaign and the Clinton team, not telling either of them that the other candidate was also coming to campus the same week.

Based on these and many other election-year experiences, here are some lessons I have learned.

- Treat all candidates the same. Don’t pick and choose which ones you will allow on campus.
- Put a policy in place. Designate an administrator who will be in charge of hosting such events. At many colleges, it will be the university relations or communications vice president.
• Establish ground rules about who pays for what. First and foremost, student tuition should never be used to pay for a candidate’s political rally. In addition, you should make sure campaign teams do not run up huge bills and then skip town without paying for anything. That can be a real danger when a campaign goes belly-up before it has paid for the rent of an auditorium or athletic center, campus catering, sound and lighting systems, security, and a lot more. Bills can easily top $20,000 for a quick candidate visit.

• Always put the best interests of your institution ahead of those of the candidate. When candidates and their supporters leave town a few minutes after the event, campus officials will need to explain what they did and why they did it. Nobody from the campaign is going to stick up for any bad, embarrassing or illegal decisions that were made.

• Don’t forget it’s your campus. The arena, auditorium, field house or campus quad belongs to your university. Always defer to Secret Service needs, but never let campaign staff members push you around. They are two different entities. Nor should you kowtow to the governor or U.S. senator who’s arrived to show support for the candidate -- or to the big donor whom the building is named after.

• Remind people at the institution that you are in charge. After you meet with campaign officials and outline how you will help them have a successful event, they will typically begin to work around you every moment they can. The campaign staff will dodge you and go directly to your athletics department -- probably a specific coach or team -- as well as the marching band, cheerleaders, dance team and, of course, the school mascot. You should tell your campus colleagues now and remind them regularly through the rest of the campaign season that you and your office manage such events. The band should not march with Marco Rubio to the podium, and the football team should not make Bernie Sanders an honorary quarterback for the spring intersquad scrimmage.

• Consider the needs of campus constituencies first. If a campaign worker demands you keep 5,000 students and faculty standing out in the rain for two hours because Bill Clinton is late, ignore him or her if the Secret Service has no security concerns. Open the doors and invite everyone inside.

• Make sure your university police officers don’t get pushed into playing the heavies. Sometimes, a candidate perceives students, visitors or others to be disruptive simply because they don’t agree with him or her. Every campus police officer in the room needs to understand exactly under what circumstances they are permitted to put their hands on a protestor and lead, or drag, them out of the building in front of dozens of video cameras.

• Set aside a clear space for demonstrators. Protest is a rich part of the American democratic process. Your campus police and the Secret Service will need to provide a space reasonably close to the event for protesters to gather, hold signs, chant and do
interviews with the news media. The university should welcome that group but make sure they and anyone they are hell-bent on insulting remain safely apart.

- Plan for media coverage. During the campus rally, keep in mind that thousands of people stand ready at a moment’s notice to point their smartphone camera at you, your students, your mascot and your police and help your institution become the next viral sensation on worldwide social media. If that’s not a role you want to star in, plan now. There have been scores of rallies across the country by close to two dozen Democratic and Republican candidates over the past half year. Review news and social media comments to see what students, donors and faculty have most complained about at other institutions. If one of those candidates schedules a visit to your campus, make sure that staff, police and administrators review those complaints in advance and agree how to address similar situations at your institution.

- Monitor social media in advance. By following messages on Twitter, Facebook and other platforms you can get a pretty good sense of how your students and the public feel about an upcoming event. You can see what their plans are, the location and the number of likely participants.

- Always be prepared for surprises. After several days working smoothly with the advance team for Sarah Palin, we thought everything was proceeding as it should. But then the day of the visit, her campaign staff informed me the university president was not invited to welcome the candidate to Penn State as he normally did with such dignitaries. “The reason?” I asked. “Because he is a known liberal.”

This is a harsh presidential election. The candidates and a lot of the public are angry. Candidates regularly shout at one another, launch personal attacks that are thin on accurate information and take strong stances against Muslims, gays and Mexican immigrants. Challenges aside, however, a visit by a presidential candidate can be a great opportunity for your students, faculty members and staff members to watch democracy in action. Make sure you make the moment work for your institution.