UM System supports review commission input

JEFFERSON CITY • A University of Missouri System representative said Tuesday the system welcomes input from the review commission proposed by a Republican lawmaker.

Steve Knorr, Um System vice president of university relations, spoke in support of a measure being heard by a Senate committee Tuesday that would create a special committee to review university system operations. The proposal was sponsored by Senate Budget Leader Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, who is running for attorney general this year.

The "board of curators and leadership routinely review operations and process ... and constantly are looking at ways to improve policies,' Knorr said.

Schaefer developed the measure in light of the recent tumult at the university, specifically on the Columbia campus. Lawmakers have been threatening to punish the UM System after racial turmoil on the Columbia campus led to a leadership shake-up last fall. Members of the House and Senate have threatened special audits and called for the removal of Melissa Click, who was recently fired after she was caught on video in November trying to block journalists from recording student demonstrations.

The Missouri House responded last week by cutting $8.7 million from the university budget for the 2017 budget year that begins July 1. It is now in the Senate's hands for further changes. Lawmakers have until May 6 to complete the budget.

Schaefer’s plan, on the other hand, takes a step back to let the heated debate cool down.
"This is a good mechanism for everyone to move forward on this issue," Schaefer said Tuesday.

If approved by the full Senate and House, the plan calls for the creation of an eight-member panel to be appointed by Republican legislative leaders. Members are expected to have expertise in finance, education and management, as well as an affinity for Mizzou. Their report is due Dec. 31.

The committee did not vote on the measure Tuesday.

University of Missouri backs proposal for outside review of rules, operations

By Rudi Keller

Tuesday, March 15, 2016 at 2:00 pm

JEFFERSON CITY — An outside review of the University of Missouri is an opportunity to fix long-term structural problems and answer critics who want to add degree programs at other state-supported institutions, state Sen. Kurt Schaefer said Tuesday.

In an interview after presenting a resolution establishing an eight-member “University of Missouri System Review Commission,” Schaefer said the commission likely will find many things that should be changed but have not.

“A lot of the reason it is not fixed — some of it’s inertia and some of it, you will just ruffle so many feathers of people who don’t want change,” Schaefer, a Columbia Republican, said. “So this is the ability to take an outside group and give an outside, objective perspective.”

At a hearing of the Senate Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics Committee, Vice President for University Relations Steve Knorr said UM supports the proposal. The Board of Curators and the university leadership regularly review operations to make sure the university is transparent and accountable, he said.
“If outside expertise can be brought in, we welcome that,” Knorr said.

After months of turmoil at the university, the Missouri House last week approved a budget that cuts state support for the UM System from $434.6 million in the current year to $426 million and divides the money among seven line items. Of the $8.6 million reduction, $7.6 million was taken from system administration and $1 million was taken from the Columbia campus allocation.

Overwhelming majorities of the Republican-dominated legislature have criticized the university for failing to fire Assistant Professor Melissa Click after videos surfaced of her attempting to prevent a student videographer from recording demonstrations Nov. 9. Schaefer has been critical of the number of faculty receiving teaching waivers, MU’s ties to Planned Parenthood and how the university handled a leave request from Josh Hawley, his opponent in the August GOP primary for attorney general.

Schaefer’s proposal, if passed, would create an eight-member commission with four members appointed by Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, R-Joplin, and four appointed by House Speaker Todd Richardson, R-Poplar Bluff. None of the members would be lawmakers. The commission would be required to deliver its report by Dec. 31.

The directive to the commission is broad, giving it authority to look at almost every aspect of the university, from rules and regulations and administrative structure to degree programs, research and diversity efforts.

“We are giving them a roadmap of what we think is important, but it will be entirely up to them what they look at,” Schaefer said.

The resolution, which must pass the Senate and the House, directs Richard and Richardson to appoint members who have knowledge of higher education governance, leadership, finance and the law. They also would be required to have a “demonstrated understanding of and commitment to the University of Missouri System” and knowledge of its role in the state.

“These need to be people supportive of the university but not blindly supportive of the university,” Schaefer said during the hearing.

The Senate Appropriations Committee, chaired by Schaefer, will begin amending the House-passed budget bills when lawmakers return March 28 from their annual spring recess. He said he is not certain whether cuts to the university will be reversed.

The outcome of the review commission will guide future appropriations, but, more importantly, it will tell lawmakers how to handle pressure from other universities who want the ability to expand degree programs, Schaefer said. Legislation introduced in the House and Senate would free Missouri State University from a requirement that it seek collaboration with UM before creating new graduate and professional degree programs.

“I don’t think we should make knee-jerk decisions that have long-term impact,” Schaefer said.
State Representative sponsors bill to review the UM System

JEFFERSON CITY - A State Representative is sponsoring a bill (HB 2740) that would create a committee to review the University of Missouri System.

The Joint Committee on University of Missouri System Accountability sponsored by Rep. Courtney Allen Curtis, D-St. Louis, would be made up of seven state representatives and seven senators.

A news release Tuesday said the committee would review the system's rules and regulations, administrative structure, campus structure, auxiliary enterprises structure, degree programs, research activities and diversity programs.

The release said the results would determine ways the University of Missouri "would be held accountable for its actions relating to inclusion, diversity and leadership."

The committee would then issue a yearly report of its findings and recommendations. It would start by the end of 2016.

"I have invited members of the University of Missouri System to attend our hearing in a few weeks. Currently, Denice Adkins is the only person that has confirmed to attend," Rep. Curtis said, "Hopefully, we will get more of Mizzou's leadership to see the seriousness of these issues and will attend this meeting. I am aware it is their spring break, but attendance to this hearing would go a long way in demonstrating their dedication to the students, and to resolving these issues."

The UM Board of Curators released a statement to KOMU 8 News.

"The Board of Curators and the leadership of the university routinely review our operations and professes to ensure that the university is as efficient, transparent and accountable as possible in the service we provide to the state," UM System spokesmen John Fougere said, "We are always
receptive to the input of the General Assembly, and look forward to working with Representative Curtis toward the betterment of the university."

The release said Henry Foley, Chuck Henson, Mike Middleton and Pamela Hendrickson were invited to the hearing.

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Mental and Academic Costs of Campus Activism

Maxwell C. Little wasn’t in a good place last fall. Many days he stayed up until 3 a.m. to meet with fellow founding members of Concerned Student 1950, the student group protesting racism at the University of Missouri at Columbia, going home for just a few hours and regrouping in the morning. He was tired all the time — physically, mentally, and emotionally.

As the campus protests escalated, it became harder for Mr. Little to juggle being an activist and a full-time student. Meeting with administrators and other student groups and, eventually, going on a hunger strike took priority over schoolwork. He started missing classes and asking professors for extensions.

"Every time I would go home, I would shed tears," says Mr. Little, a graduate student in the department of educational leadership and policy analysis. "I couldn’t comprehend my work because, to be honest, when I had to catch back up it was tough. All I could think about was the movement and what to do next."

He wasn’t the only student who felt that way. "Individuals looked sick," he says. "You could see it on their faces, because they’re constantly giving energy to addressing these issues."

When Mr. Little went online, he read invective against him and his movement. Some comments were sugarcoated in "colorblind racism," he says (they generally started
with "I’m not racist, but …"). Others called him a "black monkey" or a communist. Still others threatened his life. When he saw a death threat against black students posted on Yik Yak, he went to a friend’s house and talked through his fears with other members of Concerned Student 1950.

At one point it became too much. He starting taking days off of Twitter and deactivated his Facebook account.

Mr. Little grew up on the South Side of Chicago. He thinks of himself as a tough person. But he felt "tarnished and destroyed" by the comments on social media.

During those tense months on the Missouri campus, Mr. Little and fellow activists talked about mental health a lot. As awareness of mental-health issues has spread, and a bruising season of public protests has worn on, students have raised questions about what their universities should do to support the mental health of campus activists.

Stigmas that once curtailed those conversations may be lifting, but not everyone is supportive. Student activists at Brown University faced intense criticism after The Brown Daily Herald published an article describing how advocacy had placed strains on some students’ health and academic success. The article described students who, like Mr. Little, struggled to choose between coursework and advocacy — a choice that, to many activists, doesn’t feel like much of a choice at all.

**Breaking the Stigma**

The mental and physical toll of campus activism has not been widely studied, but it certainly isn’t new to movements in the current protest moment. Activists in the 1960s faced many of the same stressors as those spurring action today, but "they didn’t have the same language to talk about it," says Clarence E. Lang, an associate professor and chair of the department of African and African-American studies at the University of
Kansas. Mr. Lang, who studies black social movements in the 20th century, says that mental-health issues have long been a taboo subject in society. But recent movements promoting diversity and inclusion have been marked by more conscious and robust discussions of self-care and community care.

Instead of the "macho vibe" of activists 40 years ago, who saw value in pushing themselves to their breaking points, activists today are more concerned with taking care of one another, says Angus Johnston, a historian of student activism at the City University of New York’s Hostos Community College. Fifty years ago the average student was likely to be a white, male, third-generation college student with little debt and relatively few family obligations, says Mr. Johnston. Today that student is more likely to be a woman of color who is grappling with loans, a family, and the pressure to find employment upon graduation. Those changing demographics have birthed new protest movements, he says, and created different external pressures on protesters.

So has the appearance of social media, and of heightened attention from the mainstream news media. Many activists describe being thrust into a spotlight, bombarded by almost constant criticism, with nowhere to hide. It’s not hard to find commentators quick to criticize student demands for "safe spaces" and improved access to mental-health services as whining. The conservative columnist Ben Shapiro, for example, called out students at Brown University who had raised concerns that their activism was affecting their health. "The parents of these dolts," he wrote, "should be ashamed they’re spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to turn their teenagers into useless members of society more focused on feeling microaggressed than learning life skills."

But Mr. Johnston argues that students today are far less coddled than they were 50 years ago. "This idea that the American academe is an ivory tower with a bunch of
babied, coddled students just doesn’t reflect the reality of the American university today."

The irony of activism, says Mr. Lang, is that many activists are motivated by the feeling of being marginalized. Yet those students then face criticism and direct attacks that can reinforce their feelings of not having a place at the university — the very feelings that led them to action in the first place. "It’s the simultaneous nature of feeling empowered but at the same time feeling powered upon," he says.

Justice Gaines, a senior at Brown who has been involved in campus activism for several years, says activism can be isolating and mentally draining because it involves constantly explaining oneself and trying to educate others. "Students don’t choose to be an activist," says Gaines, who prefers to use gender-neutral pronouns. "They feel like they are fighting for themselves to have a supportive community." Protesters don’t want to protest all the time, Gaines says, but if no one else is addressing critical issues, there’s no choice but to stand up.

**Sustaining Self-Care**

Dara M. Huggins, a junior at Yale University and the president of the Yale Black Women’s Coalition, recalls feeling a "baseline exhaustion" during a stream of protests around Halloween in 2015, when a controversy over costumes heightened racial tensions on the campus. She says she wasn’t eating as often as she should have been, and she was hardly sleeping at all. But while her physical health may have deteriorated, her friends and colleagues helped keep her strong mentally. Ms. Huggins says students supported one another, whether they preferred to avoid "negative energy" or to reflect on the actions taking place on the campus.
Ms. Huggins never reached her breaking point. But she noticed other students who did, and she saw friends take time away from the campus as a result of the racial climate. As a minority student, she feels as if universities don’t fully understand the extra time many students in underrepresented groups spend outside of the classroom doing meaningful "educating work."

Those discussions, she says, "can be tiresome and can take a toll on people — a toll they didn’t necessarily sign up for when they matriculated into university or when they were born."

At Missouri, on days when he and other activists felt drained, Mr. Little says he and friends would "level each other." When activists gathered, they would give one another "black love," share inspiring quotes, and pray. God, he says, "was my mental-health counselor that looked out for me when I didn’t have a physical one to go to."

According to a survey commissioned by the Jed Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the emotional well-being of college students, and the Steve Fund, a group focused on the mental health of minority students, black students don’t seek help as often as do white students for their mental and emotional problems. Mr. Little’s experience demonstrates why. While he knew there were mental-health counselors on the campus, he didn’t feel they would relate to what he was experiencing as a black man.

So he turned instead to professors like Amalia Dache-Gerbinio, an assistant professor in Mr. Little’s department, who opened up her office and her home to him and 11 other founding members of Concerned Student 1950. Ms. Dache-Gerbinio is black and Cuban and grew up, like Mr. Little, in an urban, underprivileged family. "We both know the struggles," he says. "She was just there."
At the University of Kansas, where mounting protests of the racial climate led to calls for the resignation of the student body's president and vice president, Mr. Lang also found himself meeting with more students. He did so gladly, but he says that minority professors often are required to go beyond the call of duty to support those students.

Mr. Lang recently became co-chair of a newly formed advisory group on diversity and equity that reports to the provost. He sees it as a positive but feels it’s another weight that could conflict with his research and departmental commitments.

**Action for Universities**

Mr. Lang says that universities need to acknowledge the effects that lasting stigmas over mental-health issues can have on politically engaged students. "Otherwise, people may feel defective or that they are not resilient or tough enough," he says. "And in fact this is something that all generations of activists have had to struggle with."

Recognizing that students don’t work in a vacuum, administrators at Kansas decided not to dismiss the 150 students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences who had failing grades at the end of the fall semester, as the university normally would. Instead, officials created a mentorship program that allowed those students to pair with a professor and work through some of the external factors keeping them from succeeding on the campus. According to the university, 125 students chose to join the program.

While the policy stood for all undergraduates in the college, Mr. Lang says the mentorship program grew out of concerns about the racial climate and the rise in student activism on the campus.
As a professor, Mr. Lang says, his role is chiefly to be sympathetic to students. He listens, but he also voices support — so students like Mr. Little don’t feel alone in their advocacy.

When Mr. Little looks back at his involvement in Concerned Student 1950 last semester, he wishes he hadn’t put quite so much energy into it. "With my ex-girlfriend, we were having conversations that I talked about race too much, that I wasn’t home enough," he says. He has lost relationships with friends and family members because of his role in student activism. It’s been tough and troubling work, "but sometimes you have to make those sacrifices if you are really passionate."

**Board Upholds Firing of Missouri Professor Who Protested**

The University of Missouri’s Board of Curators upheld its decision to fire an assistant professor whose run-ins with student journalists and the police during race-related protests last fall drew widespread attention, the university system said Tuesday.

The board found that Melissa Click's appeal "brought no new relevant information," the university system said in a statement. The curators unanimously reached the decision Monday during a closed session. A spokesman for the curators, John Fougere, said Click stopped being paid Tuesday.

"We consider this matter now closed and are moving forward as a university and as a community," the statement said, adding that it believes that Click was "treated fairly throughout this matter."
Click, whose February firing came a month after she was suspended, issued a statement vowing to "continue to fight" the curators, saying their actions "violate university policy and set a dangerous precedent." The American Association of University Professors has backed Click and said it was investigating the process leading to her firing.

More than 100 state lawmakers, mostly Republican, had called for her removal. Click, 45, said her actions should be viewed "within the context of the volatile situations" she encountered.

In voicing support for Click's firing, top university administrators cited her run-ins with police during October protests in Columbia and with two student journalists weeks later on the Columbia campus, including a videotaped confrontation in which she called for "some muscle" to remove a student videographer from the protest area.

In October, Click was recorded telling police to get their hands off students during a protest, then hugging the students and cursing at an officer who grabbed her.

The protests, spurred by what activists said was administrators' indifference to racial issues on campus, led to the resignations of the president of the four-campus university system and the chancellor of its flagship campus in Columbia. Their resignations came after members of Missouri's football team threw their support behind the protesters and threatened not to play unless the situation was resolved.

Click said the curators' decision "appears to be designed to discourage future activism," but that she hopes the university "will continue to advocate for fair treatment of all students, staff, and faculty."

MU board upholds Melissa Click's termination
The University of Missouri's Board of Curators has rejected an appeal filed by Melissa Click, the former assistant professor fired last month after she'd gained notoriety last fall for her role in protests on Mizzou's campus.

The board's unanimous decision to reject Click's appeal means her termination has been upheld and she has no further recourse through the university to get her job back.

Click had been on paid suspension pending her appeal since the board fired her in February.
In announcing the board’s action Tuesday morning, board chairwoman Pamela Henrickson said Click has been treated fairly throughout the process.

“We consider this matter now closed and are moving forward as a university and as a community,” Henrickson said.

In a statement released by Click’s public relations firm, however, Click suggested the matter isn’t completely over for her.

"I am not surprised, but am certainly dissatisfied with the University of Missouri Board of Curators’ denial of my appeal and termination of my employment,” Click said. "I will continue to fight the Board of Curators’ decision."

Click became infamous after she was twice caught on video protesting with students angry at the university’s top leadership for their perceived indifference to a number of racist incidents on campus.

In one video, she was seen calling for “muscle” to prevent student-journalists from covering a campus demonstration. In another video, Click was captured cursing at a police officer during a protest of the University of Missouri-Columbia’s homecoming parade.

After investigating both incidents, the board decided Click's behavior did not “meet expectations for a university faculty member." She was fired on a 4-2 vote taken during a closed meeting on Feb. 24.

Click has said the university’s punishment was disproportionate to her actions.

"I maintain the belief that my actions should be fairly reviewed within the volatile situations I encountered on October 12, 2015, and November 9, 2015, and within the context of 12 years of outstanding service to MU," Click said in her statement.

Click later added that the board's decision "appears to be designed to discourage future activism."
"I hope the MU community will continue to advocate for fair treatment of all students, staff and faculty," Click said.

Appeal of fired University of Missouri educator rejected

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri's Board of Curators upheld its decision to fire an assistant professor whose run-ins with student journalists and the police during race-related protests last fall drew widespread attention, the university system said Tuesday.

The board found that Melissa Click's appeal "brought no new relevant information," the university system said in a statement. The curators unanimously reached the decision Monday during a closed session. A spokesman for the curators, John Fougere, said Click stopped being paid Tuesday.

"We consider this matter now closed and are moving forward as a university and as a community," the statement said, adding that it believes that Click was "treated fairly throughout this matter."

Click's lawyer, Christopher Slusher, didn't immediately return a phone message seeking comment.

Click, whose February firing followed her suspension in January, said in a statement this month that her dismissal was unfair and that the normal on-campus procedures weren't followed. The American Association of University Professors has backed Click and said it was investigating the process leading to her firing.
More than 100 state lawmakers, mostly Republican, had called for her removal. Click, 45, had accused the governing board in the statement of "using me as a scapegoat to distract from larger campus issues."

In voicing support for Click's firing, top university administrators cited her run-ins with police during October protests in Columbia and with two student journalists weeks later on the Columbia campus, including a videotaped confrontation in which she called for "some muscle" to remove a student videographer from the protest area.

In October, Click was recorded telling police to get their hands off students during a protest, then hugging the students and cursing at an officer who grabbed her.

The protests, spurred by what activists said was administrators' indifference to racial issues on campus, led to the resignations of the president of the four-campus university system and the chancellor of its flagship campus in Columbia. Their resignations came after members of Missouri's football team threw their support behind the protesters and threatened not to play unless the situation was resolved.
COLUMBIA, Mo. – The University of Missouri curators have rejected the appeal of an assistant professor who drew national attention for her run-ins with student journalists during protests.

The four-campus system announced Tuesday in a news release that the board unanimously reached the decision Monday during a closed session.

The release said the board found that Melissa Click’s appeal “brought no new relevant information” and that the matter was “closed.”

Curators Chairwoman Pamela Henrickson said after the board met Monday in open session and before its closed session that Click was continuing to be paid pending the appeal.

A spokesman for the curators, John Fougere, said Click’s pay ceases as of Tuesday.

Click has said in a previous statement that her dismissal was unfair and that the normal, on-campus procedures weren’t followed.
Click’s appeal “brought no new relevant information to the curators,” the board said in its Tuesday morning statement. The decision ends Click’s appeals with the university, and the board said she was treated fairly throughout the process.

“We consider this matter now closed and are moving forward as a university and as a community,” the board said in its release.

Click later released her own statement, saying she will continue to fight the decision but offering no specifics about how she will do so. She said in the statement that the latest decision sets a “dangerous precedent.” The Tribune could not reach Click for comment.

“Although the Curators’ decision appears to be designed to discourage future activism, I hope the MU community will continue to advocate for fair treatment of all students, staff, and faculty,” Click said in the statement.

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 was 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.

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. She later reached a deal with the city prosecutor to defer prosecution.

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 Oct. 10 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.

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

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**

**UPDATE: Board of Curators rejects Melissa Click's appeal, upholds firing**

RACHEL PHILLIPS, Updated 22 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Melissa Click's appeal to get her job back was unanimously rejected by the UM System Board of Curators during a closed meeting Monday.

"In the board’s view, her appeal brought no new relevant information to the curators," board chair Pamela Henrickson announced in a news release.

Click had been on paid suspension since Jan. 27. UM System spokesman John Fougere said that effective Tuesday, Click would no longer be paid by the university.

The curators' announcement included copies of Click's appeal and the board's response.

In her March 4 appeal to the Board of Curators, Click had listed the reasons she disagreed with the board's decision to fire her.

"I steadfastly believe it would be a violation of my First Amendment rights and my rights to academic freedom to suggest that my interactions on either day provide grounds for the termination of my employment," Click wrote.

She also said she believed her firing "without due process in the form of a fair hearing by a faculty body" violated her contract of employment with MU, the policies of the university and "basic standards of academic due process generally."
She cited support from the UM System Intercampus Faculty Council, the MU Faculty Council and the American Association of University Professors. She also called into question the fairness of the investigative report conducted by law firm Bryan Cave.

Click closed her letter by saying that her "participation in the process the Board has created here should not be construed as acquiescence to the appropriateness of this process."

"In submitting this appeal, I am not waiving any claims I may have arising out of or relating to my employment with the university, and am not in any way prejudicing any of my claims, which are expressly reserved," she wrote.

"I believe that my rights have been violated and that the Board’s conduct is illegal, but submit this 'appeal' to assure that I have taken advantage of every opportunity to be heard."

In a letter to Click on Tuesday, Henrickson said the board had taken her letter into account but had not changed its decision.

"The Board reiterates that it is your conduct that is the reason for termination of your employment," Henrickson wrote. "Specifically, your employment is being terminated based on the instances of conduct addressed in the Board’s February 25 letter, including conduct that interfered with the rights of others, not based on any exercise of rights on your part."

Henrickson said that the board's action had been consistent with the terms of Click's employment and university rules, which are spelled out in the UM System's Collected Rules and Regulations.

"Your appointment is expressly subject to the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri," Henrickson wrote. "Under those rules, the Board expressly possesses and retains authority to terminate your appointment."

The curators voted 4-2 to fire Click on Feb. 24 from her position as an assistant professor of communication. The firing was announced Feb. 25 after Bryan Cave's investigation was completed.
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 Monday.

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 former 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 the Missourian published Feb. 13.

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 in a series of hearings beginning at the department level.

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 plan to meet with the curators on March 22 and 23.

Henrickson said she would not elaborate on her earlier remarks.
The University of Missouri’s governing board has rejected Melissa A. Click’s appeal of her termination, The Columbia Daily Tribune reports.

The Board of Curators voted on Monday to reject the appeal of Ms. Click, an assistant professor of communication who drew ire nationally for trying to block a student journalist from an area on the Columbia campus where protesters had gathered last year.

The board voted last month to fire Ms. Click after an investigation. It said in a statement on Tuesday that she had “brought no new relevant information to the curators.”

Ms. Click has said she was made a scapegoat after supporting students who were protesting racism on the campus.

On Tuesday she said in a written statement that she was “not surprised” by, but “certainly dissatisfied” with, the decision to deny her appeal. “Although the curators’ decision appears to be designed to discourage future activism,” she said, “I hope the MU community will continue to advocate for fair treatment of all students, staff, and faculty.”
The University of Missouri Board of Curators announced Tuesday that it has rejected an appeal from Melissa Click, an assistant professor at the university's Columbia campus, of the board's February decision to fire her. Click was given the right to file an appeal, which she did. She was fired based on two incidents, both videotaped. In one, she blocked the access of a student journalist to campus protesters even though they were in an open area on a public campus. In the other, the board determined that she interfered with a police officer trying to maintain order amid a protest during a parade. Pamela Henrickson, chair of the University of Missouri Board of Curators, said that “in the board’s view, her appeal brought no new relevant information to the curators.” The board’s full rejection of the appeal may be found here.

In her appeal, Click wrote in part, “In my participation and in my actions on both days I firmly believe I was exercising my protected rights as a United States citizen and a citizen of the state of Missouri. I steadfastly believe it would be a violation of my First Amendment rights and my rights to academic freedom to suggest that my interactions on either day provide grounds for the termination of my employment. Additionally, I believe that your decision to terminate my employment without due process in the form of a fair hearing by a faculty body violates my contract of employment with the University of Missouri.”

The American Association of University Professors has questioned the decision to fire Click, and many observers expect the case to end up in court.

The University of Missouri Board of Curators rejects Melissa Click's appeal

COLUMBIA, Mo. - The University of Missouri (UM) Board of Curators has voted to reject the appeal filed by former assistant professor Melissa Click, who was fired last month.
Click, who was widely criticized for harassing a student journalist at a campus protest last fall, has responded to the UM Board of Curators after its rejection to her appeal. Her statement reads:

"I am not surprised, but am certainly dissatisfied with the University of Missouri Board of Curators' denial of my appeal and termination of my employment. I will continue to fight the Board of Curators' decision. Supported by the American Association of University Professors, the UM System Intercampus Faculty Council, and MU's Faculty Council, I believe the Curators' actions violate university policy and set a dangerous precedent. I maintain the belief that my actions should be fairly reviewed within the context of the volatile situations I encountered on October 10, 2015 and November 9, 2015, and within the context of 12 years of outstanding service to MU. Although the Curators' decision appears to be designed to discourage future activism, I hope the MU community will continue to advocate for fair treatment of all students, staff, and faculty."

In a statement released Tuesday morning, Chair Pamela Henrickson said the vote was unanimous.

Henrickson said in the board's view, her appeal brought "no new relevant information" to the curators.

The statement reads:

"Dr. Click was treated fairly throughout this matter, including meeting with investigators multiple times to share information as well as her opinion; providing investigators with a list of favorable witnesses, with every attempt made by investigators to meet with those suggested by Dr. Click; ample opportunity, along with her legal counsel, to review and provide comments to the investigator's report, which included all documents, videos and witness statements in the report, before the final report was even reviewed by the board; and finally, Dr. Click's opportunity to appeal the decision of the board."

Click came under fire after her actions during student protests in November. Video of Click interacting with police during Mizzou's 2015 homecoming parade was later released, sparking more controversy.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) objected to Click's firing. According to its website, the AAUP is an organization that "defends academic freedom and tenure."

Tuesday's Board of Curators statement went on to read:

"We consider this matter now closed and are moving forward as a university and as a community."
Curators deny ousted MU professor Melissa Click's appeal

COLUMBIA - The University of Missouri Board of Curators announced Tuesday the termination of former MU assistant professor Melissa Click will stand. The board made the unanimous decision during a closed session at its Monday meeting at MU.

In a statement, curators said Click's appeal brought "no new, relevant information" to the board.

Click was fired Feb. 24 after curators listed several reasons for terminating her, including her conduct during the MU Homecoming parade and during the Nov. 9 protests on MU campus.

The statement from curators continued, saying:

"This action by the board completes the discipline and appeals process for Dr. Click. Dr. Click was treated fairly throughout this matter, including meeting with investigators multiple times to share information as well as her opinion; providing investigators with a list of favorable witnesses, with every attempt made by investigators to meet with those suggested by Dr. Click; ample opportunity, along with her legal counsel, to review and provide comments to the investigator’s report, which included all documents, videos and witness statements in the report, before the final report was even reviewed by the board; and finally, Dr. Click’s opportunity to appeal the decision of the board. We consider this matter now closed and are moving forward as a university and as a community."

At the time of Click's firing, curators said, "The board believes that Dr. Click’s conduct was not compatible with university policies and did not meet expectations for a university faculty member. The circumstances surrounding Dr. Click’s behavior, both at a protest in October when she tried to interfere with police officers who were carrying out their duties, and at a rally in November, when she interfered with members of the media and students who were exercising their rights in a public space and called for intimidation against one of our students, we believe demands serious action."
In response to the board's decision, the image firm representing Click released the following statement:

"I am not surprised, but am certainly dissatisfied with the University of Missouri Board of Curators’ denial of my appeal and termination of my employment. I will continue to fight the Board of Curators’ decision. Supported by the American Association of University Professors, the UM System Intercampus Faculty Council, and MU’s Faculty Council, I believe the Curators’ actions violate university policy and set a dangerous precedent. I maintain the belief that my actions should be fairly reviewed within the context of the volatile situations I encountered on October 10, 2015 and November 9, 2015, and within the context of 12 years of outstanding service to MU. Although the Curators’ decision appears to be designed to discourage future activism, I hope the MU community will continue to advocate for fair treatment of all students, staff, and faculty."

**UPDATED: Curators reject Click’s appeal of her termination**

Melissa Click: “I do appreciate the seriousness of this situation. I can, however, maintain that appreciation while expecting the University of Missouri to treat me fairly... and comply with the terms of the Rules and Regulations that govern my employment."

The UM System Board of Curators have rejected assistant professor Melissa Click’s appeal of their decision to fire her, board Chairwoman Pamela Henrickson announced in a news release Tuesday morning.

Henrickson said in the news release that the curators voted unanimously during an executive session portion of a meeting Monday. She said Click’s appeal “brought no new relevant information” to the curators.

“We consider this matter now closed and are moving forward as a university and as a community,” Henrickson said.

UM System spokesman John Fougere said in an email that Click’s appeal was only reviewed by the Board of Curators, as the board is the university’s governing authority.

Click was fired Feb. 25 following an investigation commissioned by the Board of Curators into her involvement in campus protests last fall. She had been on paid suspension since Jan. 27, when the curators announced the investigation.
In a statement released Tuesday, Click said that she was not surprised by the board's decision, but she was dissatisfied.

"I will continue to fight the Board of Curators’ decision," Click said. "Supported by the American Association of University Professors, the UM System Intercampus Faculty Council, and MU’s Faculty Council, I believe the Curators’ actions violate university policy and set a dangerous precedent. I maintain the belief that my actions should be fairly reviewed within the context of the volatile situations I encountered on October 10, 2015 and November 9, 2015, and within the context of 12 years of outstanding service to MU. Although the Curators’ decision appears to be designed to discourage future activism, I hope the MU community will continue to advocate for fair treatment of all students, staff, and faculty."

In her appeal to the board, Click wrote that she had been assured in a Dec. 5 meeting with Senior Associate Provost Pat Okker and Ken Dean that she would receive a faculty hearing for any disciplinary action against her. No hearing was held, and on Jan. 25, interim Chancellor Hank Foley said in a press conference that Click’s job was safe while her application for tenure was being reviewed.

“Please be assured that I do appreciate the seriousness of this situation,” Click wrote in the appeal. “I can, however, maintain that appreciation while expecting the University of Missouri to treat me fairly, give me due process, and comply with the terms of the Rules and Regulations that govern my employment.”

In her appeal, Click requested a hearing before a committee, following the guidelines outlined in the UM System’s Academic Tenure Regulations.

In the response to Click’s appeal, Henrickson wrote that the process in the Academic Tenure Regulations “is not the only means by which your employment can be terminated.”

Click also wrote that the board’s suggestion that she did not recognize the seriousness of her conduct is unfair.

“Four months of public scrutiny, thousands of angry, threatening emails, and the possibility of losing a job I have loved and excelled at for 12 years has certainly impressed upon me the seriousness of my conduct,” Click wrote. “I have repeatedly reached out to MU administration, from my Department Chair to the Chancellor’s staff to ask for advice and I have taken every action suggested to me. I deeply respect the University of Missouri and have been very concerned about how all of the events that unfolded in Fall 2015 have impacted the university’s reputation.”

The American Association of University Professors announced March 7 that it will send a committee to MU March 22–23 to conduct an investigation into Click’s termination. The investigation could result in MU being added to the AAUP’s censure list, which warns potential faculty and the public about institutions breaking academic freedom and tenure principles.
Missouri House passes limits on student reporter censorship

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Missouri House has passed a bill giving student journalists more leeway over their publications.

Lawmakers voted 131-12 Tuesday to limit the power of public schools to censor student media, including publications financed by the school. Administrators would still be able to block content that is slanderous, libelous or otherwise breaks laws.

Rep. Elijah Haahr said his bill would give students similar protections to professional journalists. He added that Missouri should make it clear free speech is valued after the state drew national attention for confrontations between University of Missouri faculty and student journalists.

The bill now goes to the Senate.
Donald Trump is now the presumptive presidential nominee in the Republican party.

The businessman claimed victories in three of five states, including a slim lead in Missouri.

Sen. Ted Cruz has a narrow path to catch Trump and will stay in the race.

BY DAVE HELLING
dhelling@kcstar.com

Donald Trump, the flamboyant businessman and TV star, comfortably won at least three of five Republican primary states Tuesday, further cementing his claim to the party’s nomination for president.

He’s also the likely winner of a fourth primary — Missouri’s. Trump led Sen. Ted Cruz Wednesday morning by less than 2,000 votes, with virtually all the ballots counted.


Rubio said he would suspend his campaign.

“This was an amazing evening,” Trump told cheering supporters at an evening news conference in Florida. “This was a great evening.”

The New Yorker’s sweep was not complete — he lost Ohio to the state’s governor, John Kasich. A loss in his home state would have doomed Kasich’s candidacy, too.

Instead, Kasich may now be the only remaining hope of a desperate Republican establishment, which distrusts Trump and dislikes Cruz. But Kasich’s chances of capturing the nomination depend solely on winning a contested convention — a “quadruple bank shot,” said Marvin Overby, a political science professor at the University of Missouri.
That’s because Trump tightened his grip on the delegate math Tuesday. He now holds roughly half the delegates needed to win the nomination. If he wins a little more than 50 percent of the delegates remaining, he’ll be the nominee.

Trump is likely to accumulate those delegates even if he doesn’t win all of the upcoming contests. And 10 states are winner-take-all, increasing Trump’s chances to close out his opponents before the convention.

Cruz stumbled Tuesday. He now needs about two-thirds of the outstanding delegates to win outright, a hurdle that gets more difficult if Kasich stays in the race until the convention.

Cruz did his best Thursday night to make the race a two-person contest with Trump. “America now has a clear choice,” Cruz told supporters in Houston.

Trump’s status as the GOP’s presumptive nominee marks one of the most astonishing campaigns in American political history. It’s been 64 years since U.S. voters picked someone with no political experience to run for president — and that candidate, Dwight Eisenhower, had served as a supreme allied commander in World War II.

Trump, by contrast, has been far better known as a television show host and real estate developer. Yet he’s racked up primary wins across the nation, successfully promoting a message aimed at voters deeply angry at Washington and the political establishment.

“I’ve been telling students, he’s not the kind of person that we nominate for president,” Overby said. “We’re having to update, I guess. Re-evaluate that. And we may have to re-evaluate that for the general election, too.”

Yet prevailing in a general election will be a much bigger challenge than winning the nomination. Republicans remain deeply split over Trump, and several of the party’s national leaders — dismayed by Trump’s boisterous rhetoric and scenes of violence at his campaign events — have examined ways to stop Trump’s momentum, or mount a third-party campaign in the fall.

But most outside analysts now think those efforts will be futile. For better or worse, the Republican party’s chance to regain the White House rests in the hands of the most unusual candidate in memory.

Tuesday, Trump seemed to understand the challenge ahead.

“We have to bring our party together,” he said Tuesday. “We have a great opportunity.”
Here’s how the states voted Tuesday.

Missouri

Trump’s closest contest came in Missouri, with the outcome in doubt late in the night. Cruz invested time and money in Missouri, hoping to attract votes from social and religious conservatives in the state. He advertised on television stations and barnstormed the state, including a Kansas City stop Saturday.

Trump also stopped in Kansas City that day, drawing hundreds of protesters — and thousands of supporters. Scenes of police officers using pepper spray dominated Sunday’s newspapers and television broadcasts, but they did not appear to significantly affect Trump’s vote in the state.

Fifty-two delegates were at stake Tuesday, but the exact allocation won’t be known until today.

Florida

Trump won 46 percent of the Florida vote, defeating favorite son Rubio, who won 27 percent. Trump won all of the state’s 99 convention delegates.

Shortly after 7:15 p.m., Rubio said he would suspend his campaign.

“The fact that I’ve even come this far is evidence of how special America truly is,” he told a disappointed audience in Florida.

He urged supporters to avoid campaigns based on anger and fear, a not-so-thinly veiled shot at Trump.

But the outcome in the Sunshine State wasn’t a surprise. Trump led public opinion polls in the state for months.

Exit polls showed Trump enjoyed an overwhelming advantage with older voters, precisely the voters who make up much of the state’s electorate. Trump was also popular along the state’s panhandle, where voters have more in common with Alabama and Mississippi residents than voters in southern Florida.

Illinois

Trump canceled a campaign rally in Chicago last Friday, prompting clashes between supporters and demonstrators. Yet here, too, the fracas seemed to have little impact on
the race. With the latest returns Tuesday, Trump had 40 percent of the GOP vote in Illinois, with Cruz at 29 percent and Kasich 20 percent.

Sixty-nine delegates were at stake, to be awarded proportionally.

North Carolina

Trump’s message opposing free trade agreements with other nations had particular resonance in this state, which has been decimated by foreign competition in furniture making and textiles. He captured 41 percent of the vote, with Cruz taking 37 percent, with 80 percent of precincts reporting.

Trump is expected to win at least 27 of the state’s 72 convention delegates, according to the Associated Press. Cruz will take at least 24 delegates, according to projections, with Kasich winning seven and Rubio four.

Ohio

Kasich will take all of the state’s 66 convention delegates. He defeated Trump by a 10-point margin, in part because of a large number of crossover votes from Democrats and independents in the state.

“I have to thank the people of Ohio. I love you,” Kasich said.

MARCH 15, 2016 10:18 PM

Clinton nomination nearer with wins over Sanders in four states

Voting in Florida, Illinois, North Carolina and Ohio makes Hillary Clinton’s Democratic presidential nomination look almost inevitable

The former secretary of state adds to her already daunting delegate lead

Bernie Sanders’ prospects for winning the primary season suffer another blow

BY SCOTT CANON
Bernie Sanders’ upstart campaign slipped into a stall Tuesday as voters in one state after the next flocked to front-runner Hillary Clinton.

The self-described democratic socialist from Vermont, powered by microdonations and economic angst, lost significant ground to Clinton, the monied favorite of the Democratic Party’s old guard running on a rich resume and talk of pragmatic politics.

She was trailing by just 2,000 votes in Missouri with 98 percent of the vote counted. She barely won Illinois while mostly running away with primaries in Florida, Ohio and North Carolina. The margins matter because they propel her delegate collection forward.

Her mounting wins make her nomination at the party’s convention in Philadelphia look all but certain and cast Sanders’ prospects as the stuff of liberal wishful thinking.

That puts the Democrats on course to nominate a candidate who fought off the left flank of the party partly by voicing its pain on economic inequality. She’s the candidate Republicans love to hate, and she could face Donald Trump, the most confounding politician of modern history, in the general election.

In fact, Clinton timed her victory speech from North Carolina to come just moments before Trump had scheduled a press conference — pre-empting him by grabbing the cable news live feeds. And she jabbed at him both by inference — “bluster and bigotry” — and by name.

“The next president needs to be able to defend America, not embarrass it, engage our allies, not alienate them,” Clinton said.

It was a signal that the primary race had all but ended, the general election campaign getting underway.

“There just doesn’t seem to be a viable route left for Sanders to pull ahead of her at any point,” said Peverill Squire, a political science professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia. “She would much rather talk about Trump rather than deal with another Democrat.”

For all the criticism of her as a flawed candidate — including her own declaration in recent weeks that she’s no “natural politician” — she’s repeatedly proved she can turn out voters for her cause.
It might take a political miracle or an undeniable scandal to deny her the nomination now.

Her critics on the right already contend she’s smeared badly by her response to the killing of diplomats in Libya when she was President Barack Obama’s secretary of state, and how she routed government communications through a private server while in that job. Democrats — both politicians in their support for her and voters in the casting of their ballots — suggest that none of the flaws disqualify the former senator and first lady.

Prospects for a Sanders comeback surpass daunting. Unlike Republicans, Democrats don’t hold winner-take-all primaries. That means he needs almost unimaginable margins of victories in nearly every state left on the primary calendar to overcome Clinton’s delegate lead.

He pulled a surprising upset in Michigan earlier this month, but any momentum from that win seemed absent Tuesday night. Still, Sanders leads in seven of eight states that vote before April 9.

Before Tuesday, Clinton had won nearly 770 delegates based on caucuses and primary voting. Sanders had about 555. Count so-called superdelegates — mostly current and former elected officials — and her lead grew to 1,235 to 580.

Superdelegates, however, are free to vote for whomever they want. Their pre-convention commitments don’t bind them. And they tend to rally to the person entering the convention in the lead.

After Tuesday’s voting — Clinton and Sanders appeared to be splitting delegates won in both Missouri and Illinois — her lead ballooned to more than 1,000 among committed delegates, nearly 1,500 if superdelegates are counted. Sanders combined total stood at about half that. It takes 2,383 to win the nomination.

Missouri sends 84 delegates to the Democratic National Convention. Of those, 13 are superdelegates free to choose any candidate they want, and to do so regardless of any public commitments they make. The remaining 71 are chosen based on the Tuesday vote. Of that 71, 47 are picked based on the proportion of the vote within each of the state’s eight congressional districts. The remaining are divvied up based on the statewide vote totals.
Results were slow to roll in across the Missouri, especially from St. Louis and Kansas City, where election officials warned that problems with electronic voting would delay returns. But the two Democrats appeared on track to roughly split the delegates determined by the popular vote.

“These are big wins,” said Steve Glorioso, a Kansas City Democratic consultant backing Clinton. After Sanders’ Michigan win, some analysts suspected he might surprise Clinton again in Ohio. Instead, she took the state handily.

“It matters that she heads into the convention without any question of doubt about things,” Glorioso said. “It means she has the true support of the party.”

- In Illinois, Clinton won with a margin of less than 2 percent.
- In Ohio, Clinton had about 56 percent with two-thirds of votes counted.
- In Florida, Clinton took about 65 percent of the vote.
- In North Carolina, about 55 percent of voters went for Clinton.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Imam speaks on American Muslims, Fetty Wap**

IDA SOPHIE WINTER, 8 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Imam Suhaib Webb isn’t your typical cleric: unlike Islamic scholars born into Muslim contexts, Webb is a blond, blue-eyed Oklahoman, originally Christian, who converted to Islam in college. Webb received an Islamic education at Egypt’s well-known Al-Azhar University and acted as imam of the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center. He now runs a virtual mosque, where he answers questions about Islam from those within and outside the faith, and he does interfaith outreach and anti-bigotry work across America.

Perhaps because of his diverse background — as well as references to Fetty Wap and Nicki Minaj — he easily engaged a crowd of over 100 students and families on American Muslim groups and shari’ah religious law Tuesday evening. MU's Muslim Student Organization, along with other groups, helped organize the event.
Dressed in a blue-and-white button-down shirt and black sneakers, Webb generally kept it light, dropping jokes about his Book of Revelation-quoting grandmother and a seemingly conservative Egyptian friend searching for the film, "Scent of a Woman." He also quietly suggested members of the audience might be "feeling the Bern" in Tuesday's primaries.

Webb aimed to spread knowledge about Islam in coming to MU. He said non-Muslims are concerned about their freedom when faced with Islam. Women worry about intense patriarchy, he said, while gay people fear for their lives. His mother, Webb said, calls him every week with questions about Islam. This is why Webb reaches out to all groups: to clear up misconceptions about the religion.

Webb’s talk comes at a time when Muslim Americans face disturbing increases in hate crimes, a backlash to 2015’s ISIS-linked attacks in San Bernardino and Paris. The New York Times reported in December 2015 that the average monthly hate crime rate against Muslim Americans about tripled toward the end of the year in the U.S. Before San Bernardino and Paris, three Muslim Americans were killed in February 2015 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Webb explained there are four types of American Muslims: first there are violent extremists along the lines of ISIS, who take the Quran literally and, Webb said, act in violation of the prophet’s teachings. Second there are "hyper-traditionalists," who adhere to older scholarly interpretations of religion. Third are the moderates, who rely on contemporary scholars to interpret issues and are often heavily involved in social activism. Finally, there are those who feel culturally Muslim but do not practice the religion.

Webb emphasized that extremists often act alone and suffer from mental health issues.

Webb discussed the much-maligned concept of shari’ah, or Islamic religious law. He said shari’ah, often cited for punishments like stoning and cutting off hands, serves as a watering hole in a spiritual desert. In other words, shari’ah is seen as a source of religious life.
He stressed Islam’s biggest principle is not to cause harm to others, especially wives and children. Webb also said Islam centers on the preservation of life, intellect and family and the protection of societal welfare.

In a lampooned Southern accent, Webb noted that many non-Muslims think Muslims are "out to 'shar-orrize' America."

"Everyone’s running from us like Rick (Grimes, a fictional character in the TV series "The Walking Dead") being chased by zombies, behind him are the Muslims, building their mosques," Webb said.

Webb spoke about how Islamophobia drains Muslim communities, how little children now want to change their Muslim first names because of bullying and how many Muslims constantly feel on the defensive.

"Have you ever flown into LA?" Webb asked. "You see that pollution, that haze, it kind of follows the city? That’s what it’s like to live with Islamophobia."