Textile manufacturing methods could help create human tissue

By Brooks Hays | COLUMBIA, Mo., (UPI) -- Researchers at the University of Missouri are looking for ways to scale up the production of human tissue. Most recently, they've taken inspiration from textile manufacturing.

To create human tissues for use in a clinical setting, scientists suspend stem cells around "scaffolding" that dissolves or degrades over time and eventually leaves behind only tissue.

Currently, most scaffolding is made using a process called electrospinning, whereby non-woven materials are bonded by an electrostatic field. The process is tedious and imprecise. For large-scale production of human tissue, researchers need a more economical approach.

"Electrospinning produces weak fibers, scaffolds that are not consistent and have pores that are too small," Elizabeth Loboa, dean of Missouri's College of Engineering, said in a press release. "We can run our system for hours and create about a ten-inch diameter of scaffold material. Therefore, we sought to test methods that could standardize the process."

Enter carding, a method used in textile manufacturing. Carding uses rollers to separate and hold fibers as they're drawn into a web.

Researchers incorporated the technique into another fiber-production process called meltblowing, whereby fibers are pulled from a molten polymer.
Loboa and her colleagues used the new techniques to create scaffolding made out of polylactic acid. The scaffolding was used to hold collagen fillers embedded with stem cells. Tests suggest the spun scaffolding was capable of keeping stem cells healthy for at least three weeks.

The evidence -- detailed in the journal Biomedical Materials -- suggests the new techniques are cheaper and more effective than electrospinning.

"Next steps include testing how the different scaffolds created in the three methods perform once implanted in animals," said Loboa.

**Pay Equity Best Practices Are Critical for Closing the Gender Pay Gap**

*By Wendy Doyle, president and CEO of the Women’s Foundation*

As the President and CEO of Women’s Foundation, I'm often asked by supporters, “How can we help close the gender pay gap?”

In the past, I’ve encouraged them to help raise awareness of the issue, to advocate for policy changes in state and local governments, as we’ve done. But now we have another tool in our toolkit - the *Pay Equity Best Practice Guidelines* - that can help employers in both the private and public sector take action to end pay inequity.

Women’s Foundation commissioned the University of Missouri Institute of Public Policy (IPP) to research and develop the *Pay Equity Best Practice Guidelines* as a response to our research in Missouri that showed women in Missouri earn only 71 cents to the dollar men
Developing the guidelines was also a directive issued by Gov. Jay Nixon in his Executive Order #15-09 to advance equal pay.

The Guidelines seek to improve standards for pay equity and achieve measurable results with three best practices for Missouri employers:

- **Employers Should Determine if Gender-Based Pay Disparities Exist**

- **Reevaluate the Current Pay System from an Equity Perspective**

- **Promote and Ensure Pay Transparency**

For each best practice, the report includes a summary and how it can help close the gender pay gap in either the public or private sector, examples from other states, and indicators for measuring progress.

So, you might be thinking... **why should employers adopt these guidelines?**

- **Because it’s the right thing to do.** Unequal pay doesn’t just hurt women, it hurts entire families. Women who earn less bring home less money to pay for household necessities. It can also hurt qualified men who get passed over for jobs given to women, because an employer would rather hire the person they can pay the least.

- **Because it’s good business.** Organizations who compensate their employees equally see better performance, higher employee satisfaction and a lower turnover rate.

- **Because economically self-sufficient women will lead our country’s next chapter of economic growth.** By empowering women and their families with Equal Pay for Equal Work, we are ensuring economic development and security for all.
These guidelines present a real opportunity to lead the way toward equal pay for equal work. We believe the **Pay Equity Best Practice Guidelines** are a tool that can be used in the public and private sectors, in Missouri and beyond. (Our research on Kansas shows [women there have a significant pay gap as well.](#))

At Women’s Foundation, we’re focused on research, solutions, and results. We’re pleased to provide another solution to help close the pay gap once and for all.

**Pay equity best practices released for businesses in public, private sector**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - The average man working full-time and year-round in America makes $50,033.

The average woman working full-time and year-round in America makes $39,157.

That means a woman, on average, makes 78 cents for every dollar a man earns.

It’s 77 cents on the dollar in Missouri, and when part-time work is factored in, women in Missouri earned 65 cents on the dollar compared to their male counterparts.

According to the University of Missouri Institute for Public Policy, there are many factors for this.
"Two-thirds of minimum-wage workers are women, annual wage income for all women is lower than for all men. Also, female dominated professions, such as care-giving and hospitality, are often associated with lower wages than male dominated professions, such as engineering and computer science,” according to a report released on Monday.

The Women’s Foundation in Kansas City contracted with the institute to conduct research on best practices for reaching gender pay equity in Missouri.

The fight for equal pay has been going on for decades. The report states: “The effort to use legislative tools to ensure equal pay for women has been ongoing for more than 100 years, starting when women began entering industrial jobs in the late 19th century. In 1898, the federally appointed Industrial Commission started advocating for equal pay for women working the same factory jobs as men. During World War I, when women’s labor was vital to the war effort, the national War Labor Board (NWLB) mandated that, if women must undertake work normally done by men, they should earn equal pay for that work.”

From the information gathered, the Women’s Foundation is now sharing “best practices” for businesses in the public and private sector.


Pay equity best practices guidelines released ahead of Equal Pay Day
COLUMBIA - In Missouri, women are paid 71 cents to the dollar that men earn, and for the United States as a whole it is 78 cents to the dollar, according to the Women's Foundation.

**Monday, the Women's Foundation and the University of Missouri's Institute of Public Policy released a report called the Pay Equity Best Practices Guidelines.** The release came just ahead of Equal Pay Day to fulfill part of Governor Nixon's Executive Order No. 15-09.

That order stated, "The State of Missouri is committed to ensuring that all Missourians are treated on equal terms."

The two organizations partnered to come up with a list of best practices for employers to use in the public and private sectors.

These are the three "best practices" listed in the report:

1. Employers should determine whether gender-based wage disparities exist in their organizations.
   - Conduct self-audits to determine if there are disparities
   - Work towards fixing disparities if they are found

2. Employers should evaluate whether their current compensation system is equitable.
   - Understand what constitutes fair pay for all workers
   - Assess the value of every position in the company
   - Consider non-wage compensation, such as opportunities available to part-time workers, and flexible scheduling, in an evaluation of equal pay practices

3. Employers should ensure transparency concerning organizational compensation policies.
   - Salary ranges for all job titles should be made public and available to all job applicants
• Develop and implement policies which prohibit pay secrecy and eliminate penalties for discussing pay
• Consider joint evaluation processes when making pay raise and promotion decisions, and ensure that these decisions are justifiable and well documented.

In the United States, the median income of a man who worked full-time year round was $50,033, compared to $39,157, the median income of a woman who worked full-time year round, according to the report.

"The wage gap that is cited includes all workers: the median income of all male workers versus the median income of all female workers. It does include part-time, minimum wage, it includes everyone," Sonja Erickson, senior research analyst for MU's Institute of Public Policy, said.

The report stated this income disparity crosses all racial and ethnic groups, educational levels, and most occupations.

"Often people only look at a woman's hourly wage versus a man's hourly wage, but a lot of the pay disparities come during bonus times when a man might get a much higher bonus than a woman or might have an opportunity to be promoted when a woman doesn't have that same opportunity," Erickson said.

The report also said, "While educational attainment, career fields, and personal choices can contribute to differences in income, studies which control for divergent life paths have found that, all things being equal, women are still paid less than men for the same work."

Erickson said this is not a mandate nor statute but, "These are tools that the governor is hoping the public and private sector can use."
Fathers play a critical role in family values for Mexican-origin youth

Past research has indicated that Latino families, particularly Mexican-origin families, tend to be more family oriented and place a significant emphasis on family time. New research from the University of Missouri found that a father's family values can predict family values held by Mexican-origin youth as well as family time for late adolescents. Research also indicated that the link between family time and young adults' depressive symptoms depended on parental acceptance and warmth.

"Familism refers to an individual's identification with and attachment to family; it is characterized by a sense of responsibility, loyalty and solidarity among family members," said Katharine Zeiders, assistant professor of human development and family science in the College of Human Environmental Sciences. "Familism is a core cultural value among Latinos; yet, until now we have known little about the precise role it plays in youth development."

The study is among the first to address the long term implications of parental family values on social development among Mexican-origin young adults. Zeiders and her colleagues followed families across an eight-year period to test whether mothers' and fathers' familism values, and the interaction of those values, had a developmental impact on adolescents. They tested youths' familism values in middle adolescence and the proportion of time youth spent in shared activities with family members as possible mechanisms linking familism values to depressive symptoms in young adulthood.

Researchers found that fathers' familism values, not mothers' values, predicted the values held by sons and daughters in middle adolescence. Those values carried over to predict the amount of time daughters spent with their families in late adolescence. Family time, in turn, predicted fewer youth depressive symptoms when parental warmth was high; however, when parental warmth was low, family time predicted greater depressive symptoms in girls.

"When it comes to family values and family time, dynamics within the family need to be considered," said Zeiders. "Simply spending time together is not adequate if relationships within the family unit are strained and if warmth and acceptance is missing from the parent-child relationship."

The study was published in the Journal of Marriage and Family.
Missouri would lose $238 billion over a generation if it cuts all funding to the University of Missouri System, according to a report released Monday by faculty at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Currently, the state funds more than 30 percent of the UM System, which includes campuses in Columbia, St. Louis, Rolla and Kansas City.

The report, conducted by economics professors Ronald Harstad and Joseph Haslag, found that the University of Missouri System “is a powerful economic engine” for the state.

Specifically, they noted that:

- The UM System’s research and development efforts contribute 25 percent to the state’s growth rate.
- Aggregate income would decline if the system stopped educating students, costing the state $252.7 billion in lost human capital.
- $1 spent on the UM System from the state equals $38.43 of goods and services. The system also generates $1.46 in extra general revenue funds.

“For decades, we have shared the value of the UM System, our campuses and research to the state of Missouri. This report solidifies those claims,” UM System Interim President Michael Middleton said in a statement. “To be able to use current numbers to support our value statements reinforces the significant return on investment of a University of Missouri education and research for our state.”

The report comes after a state House committee voted March 2 to cut funding to the UM System by $7.6 million. State legislators also had denounced the University of Missouri-Columbia’s handling of racial protests at the campus and the employment of communications professor Melissa Click, who was seen in a video calling for “some muscle” to remove a student journalist from a public protest area. The University of Missouri Board of Curators fired Click in February.

The report was requested and funded by The Missouri 100, an advocacy group that advises the UM System president on a variety of issues.
“As a group, we felt this report would help us most clearly tell the good story about our university. We provide a great return on investment for the state and that doesn’t often make the headlines,” said Dudley McCarter, tri-chair of The Missouri 100.

The University of Missouri boosts the state’s economic output by 25 percent, and each dollar of state support means $38.43 in economic activity over the ensuing 25 years, according to a report commissioned by The Missouri 100, an advocacy and advisory group to the UM president.

The study, intended to update a similar report written in 2007, was released as state lawmakers are considering a final decision on the university’s appropriation for the fiscal year that begins July 1. The Missouri House has proposed cutting $8.6 million from the university and freezing it out of increases tied to performance. The state Senate has proposed cutting $1 million and providing $26.8 million in new support through performance-based increases.

The estimate of the university’s long-term impact on the state’s economy is based on assumptions of what would happen if the university did not exist. It is not intended to estimate the economic impact of small increases or cuts in the state’s support, said Joseph Haslag, a professor of economics and director of the MU Economic & Policy Analysis Research Center and co-author of the report.

Although it does not address the impact of smaller changes in the university’s budget, the study is an argument against cuts, interim UM President Mike Middleton said.

“The logic is, why would you do anything to hurt an entity that has such a significant impact?” Middleton said Monday.

The study is intended to address whether a university education increases income enough to make it worth the expense, how much the state economy grows as a result of UM research and development and the increase in economic activity because of a better educated workforce.
“As a group, we felt this report would help us most clearly tell the good story about our university,” Missouri 100 Tri-chair Dudley McCarter said in a news release issued by the university. “We provide a great return on investment for the state and that doesn’t often make the headlines.”

For individual students, the study compared the median earnings of people aged 25 to 34 based on educational attainment. The study concludes that a graduate of a large, public university will, on average, earn $1.62 million more over a lifetime than a high-school graduate and that a graduate of a large, public research university like the MU campus in Columbia will, on average, earn $2.15 million more during their lifetime.

Missouri median incomes are less than national medians and the gap between high school and college graduates is not as great. The national figures are closer to the age when young people start working, Haslag said, and students compete for jobs in a national marketplace.

Over 25 years, eliminating the university as a source of research and development would cost the state economy $168.1 billion, the study estimated. It does not attempt to determine whether the research would be replicated elsewhere in the state or what would happen with a reduced level of research, Haslag said.

The final section of the report is an effort to justify continued state appropriations. Maintaining state spending on over the next 25 years will cost about $6.2 billion, the study estimates. Without the education and skills provided to students, the state would lose $238.4 billion in economic activity over that same period.

For each dollar in state spending, the economic activity would return $1.46 in revenue, the report said.

The report will shore up the arguments used to present the university as a benefit to the state and worthy of tax investment, UM System spokesman John Fougere said Monday.

UM president assures Legislators University is making progress on diversity

JEFFERSON CITY • When state lawmakers threatened to cut Mizzou’s funding, school leaders sprung into action. When pressure to fire Melissa Click reached its zenith, the university’s board took decisive action to dismiss her.
But on the issue of making the University of Missouri-Columbia a more inclusive place for minorities, the university is dragging its feet.

At least that’s what state Rep. Courtney Allen Curtis, D-Ferguson, claimed Monday during a meeting of the Urban Affairs Committee.

Curtis is chairman of the committee. He was just one of two legislators who attended the meeting.

As a Mizzou alumnus, Curtis said he is “livid” about what he described as persistent racial tension on campus dating back to his time as an undergraduate several years ago.

“There doesn’t seem to be a sense of urgency,” he said.

He described a university that has been slow to respond to questions and public records requests from legislators.

And he said he is “skeptical” of interim university President Michael Middleton’s ability to get things done as someone only temporarily running the university.

Middleton said his interim tag won’t hinder his performance.

“This is my top priority,” Middleton said. “We are not slowing down.”

Middleton pointed out that the university recently hired Kevin McDonald as its first-ever chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer. McDonald has handled issues of inclusion and diversity at his two previous positions in New York and Virginia.

McDonald will be in charge of creating policies to identify and address systemic issues related to diversity.
Middleton also pointed out that the university has set aside $900,000 for a campus climate survey and created a task force to study the issue.

The expectation, Middleton said, is that the university will have compiled a significant amount of data for McDonald to work with once he begins his new job in Columbia on June 1.

Rep. Justin Alferman, R-Hermann, was the only other legislator to attend Monday’s meeting.

He asked about other progress the university has made since the Columbia campus erupted in protest last fall.

Middleton assured him there has been progress even if it isn’t readily apparent.

“This type of change takes time and effort,” he said.

Democratic lawmaker questions University of Missouri leader

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — The only Democratic Missouri House committee leader is questioning University of Missouri administrators about racial issues at the Columbia campus.

Rep. Courtney Allen Curtis, of Ferguson, on Monday asked the system’s Interim President Mike Middleton and others why more wasn’t done earlier to address concerns at his alma mater.
Student protests over what some saw as administrators' indifference to racial issues in Columbia gained national attention in November.

But Curtis says there have been problems on campus for years. He cited two students in 2010 who admitted to dumping cotton balls outside the Black Culture Center.

Middleton says lack of coordination in diversity efforts has been part of the issue at the university.

The system last month named a diversity official to help direct the four-campus system's work.

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**Lawmaker supports cuts to University of Missouri as price of ignoring past racial concerns**

By Rudi Keller

Monday, April 11, 2016 at 6:53 pm

JEFFERSON CITY — The Missouri House should hold firm on cuts to the University of Missouri because the school has not done enough to close racial divides and promote inclusion, the Democratic chairman of the House Select Committee on Urban Issues said Monday.

Rep. Courtney Curtis, D-Ferguson, and Rep. Justin Alferman, R-Hermann, spent about 90 minutes questioning interim President Mike Middleton, Board of Curators Chair Pam Henrickson and Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Chuck Henson. Curtis, a graduate of the university, has sponsored legislation creating a joint legislative committee to oversee the university.
Last week, the Missouri Senate voted to pare the House-approved cuts to the university budget. The Senate approved a $1 million cut to administration and made the university eligible for up to $26.8 million from a pool for all public higher education. In the House, lawmakers voted to cut $7.6 million from UM System administration, $1 million from the Columbia campus allocation and to freeze the university out of a share of increased funding.

“Ultimately the university has a billion dollars or more in reserves, so this doesn't hurt them,” Curtis said. “But rescinding the cuts sends the message that we are not as concerned about the lack of inclusion and the lack of responsiveness to the issues of diversity that the university has shown and that we are willing to accept that from our perceived flagship institution in the state.”

Curtis has been critical of the university and Middleton for not doing more to make the campus welcoming before the fall protests organized by Concerned Student 1950 brought international attention to the school. During the hearing, he said that in the past the university used time against students who were upset by racial incidents or lack of inclusion.

“The reason we don’t get progress and results from the university is that the game that is played is new students come in every year,” he said during the hearing. “With new students every year it is hard to keep organized.”

Middleton, who was deputy chancellor with responsibilities for diversity before retiring in 2015, was questioned closely by Curtis about why past efforts at meeting the concerns of minority students were not successful.

“We simply weren't able to build the structure I thought was necessary, from a resources perspective,” Middleton said. “I simply was unable to get the organization to make the shift that I thought was necessary to make it effective.”

Curtis asked Middleton if he has the authority, while in an interim role, to make changes.

“I believe I do,” Middleton said.

Since the protests and the resignation of President Tim Wolfe in November, the university has elevated the status of diversity officers on each campus and created the job of chief diversity officer for the system. The appointee to that job, Kevin McDonald, will start June 1. The university has also created diversity task forces for each campus, expanded training for students and faculty and, in a concession to a key demand of the Concerned Student 1950 protesters, given faculty, staff and students votes on the Presidential Search Committee.

The lawmakers leading the effort to cut the university’s budget have focused on the Tiger football team boycott in support of the protests and the actions of former Associate Professor Melissa Click on Nov. 9 after Wolfe resigned. Click organized efforts to keep reporters out of the demonstration campsite and put her hands on a camera operated by a student videographer. A municipal assault charge was filed against Click in January and she was fired by the curators last month.
Lawmakers need to pay more attention to the issues raised by the demonstrators than whether anyone has been punished for supporting them, Curtis said.

“We don’t like to deal with race in the body and we went to the red herring of Melissa Click,” Curtis said. “That is a symptom. It came out of the problem that hasn’t been dealt with at the university for years. I do think the General Assembly tends to overlook those issues just because it is an uncomfortable conversation and we would rather believe we are in a post-racial society, but we’re not.”

MISSOURIAN

State representative scolds UM System brass about diversity efforts

ELLEN CAGLE, 12 hrs ago

JEFFERSON CITY — After the turmoil of the fall semester, MU has spent more time fending off criticism of former communication professor Melissa Click and preserving the University of Missouri System budget than it has on eliminating discrimination on campus, a state representative told top UM officials Monday at a legislative hearing.

At a meeting of the House Special Committee on Urban Issues, state Rep. Courtney Allen Curtis, D-Ferguson, grilled UM System Interim President Mike Middleton about diversity at MU for more than 30 minutes. Rep. Justin Alferman, R-Gasconade, and Curtis, who is the committee chair, were the only members of the 10-person body present at the hearing.

Curtis also questioned Pamela Quigg Henrickson, UM System Board of Curators chair; Brian Millner, chief of staff for Interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley; and Chuck Henson, MU’s interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.

"Do I need to become a Republican to get you all to be responsive to me?" Curtis asked Middleton. "That was a serious question."

"I don't think you're going to need to do that," Middleton said. "I think that we are doing our best to be responsive to you."
Later, Middleton told Curtis: "I'm sure you're not suggesting that we should not be working to restore our budget."

Republican legislators have been the main critics of MU's handling of campus protests last November that culminated in the resignations of former UM System President Tim Wolfe and former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. In January, more than 100 representatives signed letters urging the Board of Curators to fire assistant communication professor Melissa Click, who tried to block a student journalist from filming campus protests in November. The curators voted to fire Click in February.

In March, the Republican-controlled House voted to cut the system's budget by $8.6 million and to exclude the four campuses from performance-based funding increases. Last week, the Senate voted to reverse all but $1 million of the cuts and to include the UM System in a 6 percent performance funding increase.

Middleton's past efforts to rectify growing racial inequality were meager, Curtis said, making several references to a 2010 incident in which cotton balls were scattered on the lawn of MU Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. Middleton was deputy chancellor when the incident occurred. He served in that position for 17 years before his appointment to interim UM System president.

"You were in the position, I thought, as deputy chancellor, to really weigh in on things and make things happen," Curtis said. "I specifically take issue with you being the president now, and it's only because I haven't seen the action on the fight."

Middleton said MU is restructuring its diversity programs. As deputy chancellor, Middleton said, he suggested an overhaul, but the system lacked the resources and organization to carry it out.

"There comes a point in time in an organization when ... the chancellor or president moves in one direction and you stop nay-saying," Middleton said of his previous efforts.

"Do you? I wouldn't," Curtis shot back.
Middleton contended that MU has taken strides to streamline its diversity programs. The UM System will conduct a systemwide audit of diversity programs, he said. Both systemwide and campus-specific task forces will further scrutinize university diversity policies and will supplement the audit. Campus climate surveys also will be part of the effort.

Middleton also cited MU’s efforts to bolster diversity-related faculty positions since last fall. A day after Wolfe's resignation, Chuck Henson was named the interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity. Previously, Henson served as the associate dean for academic affairs and trial practice at the MU School of Law.

In March, Pat Ivey, a former conditioning coach for Missouri’s football team, was hired as MU assistant vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.

MU has also announced required diversity training for incoming students and faculty members.

Also in March, the UM System appointed Kevin McDonald to serve as its first chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer. Beginning in June, McDonald will work to identify systemic problems in the UM System related to diversity and inclusion and will work with the UM president to find solutions.

Middleton said diversity efforts hinge partially on this year’s state funding of the UM System.

"As soon as I understand what our final budget is going to be, I will then determine how much of that I can put into this effort," Middleton said at the end of his testimony. "This is my top priority. We're not slowing down. We're speeding up."

In the hearing, Henson further detailed MU’s recent attempts to centralize its diversity programs. The December creation of the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX, which will handle reports on ethnic discrimination as well as sexual discrimination and misconduct, is part of the effort, he said. Henson also cited the hiring of Donell Young as the director of MU’s Academic Retention Services as an important step in improving diversity programs and student retention.
Curtis emphasized that minority students need to feel included and respected by faculty, administration and other students. He questioned whether MU had ever made a pointed effort to emphasize inclusion to students.

"Given the magnitude of the issues, it's extremely difficult to establish the physical, palpable changes that we all desire," Henson said. "But I do believe that we do have some other programs in place ... to bring all student leaders together."

Curtis emphasized there's more to do.

"The university has a lot of work to do, and the system has a lot of work to do," he said. "And I just ask that we do more, because now is the time."

**University of Missouri leaders, state lawmakers talk diversity plan**

Jefferson City - The House Committee on Urban Issues met Monday to discuss diversity at the University of Missouri.

UM system President Mike Middleton testified before the committee as did curator Pamela Henrickson and Chuck Henson, the university's interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.

Committee chairman Rep. Courtney Curtis said his goal was to gain a better understanding of how the administration was moving forward in addressing racial problems on the Columbia campus.

While UM leadership has established new positions and programs to help introduce greater diversity and inclusion, Curtis says it's not enough.
The Democrat from St. Louis is pushing for legislation to sustain the more than $8 million in cuts to the UM system.

Curtis also filed a bill that, if passed, would establish a new joint committee for UM accountability and oversight.

MISSOURIAN

Job cuts part of MU Operations' $5.47 million in budget reductions

RACHEL PHILLIPS, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — MU Operations will eliminate 50 positions through attrition and layoffs as part of an expected $5.47 million budget cut for fiscal year 2017, MU Vice Chancellor for Operations Gary Ward said in an email Friday.

"I do not anticipate that changes beginning July 1, 2016, will inhibit the academic mission at Mizzou, nor is it my intention for that to ever happen," Ward wrote in the email to faculty and staff.

This announcement follows a March 9 memo from Interim Chancellor Hank Foley that announced a campuswide hiring freeze and a 5 percent cut to MU’s fiscal year 2017 general revenue budget.

According to Foley's memo: MU faces an expected $32 million budget gap because of a decrease in student enrollment and retention for the fall 2016 semester and a small amount of necessary investments. The $32 million does not account for any losses from a decrease in state appropriations.

Other changes Ward announced include:

- Fewer available student positions.
• Reductions of partnerships in which MU Operations would share costs for projects with other departments.

• No cleaning of, or trash removal from, offices by custodial staff, freeing them to help with recycling.

• Mail delivery once a day.

• Lowered expectations for campus appearance.

• Parking lot trash pickup on Mondays only.

• Reduction of winter weather response.

• Reprioritization of plant and distribution preventive maintenance projects in the Energy Management unit.

• Further reduction of coal usage.

• The closing of the DigiPrint Center in the MU Student Center.

• Reduction of summer paving and maintenance projects.

The announcement noted that response time for requests to MU Operations units for activities, such as maintenance and repair work, will probably increase because of the decrease in staff.

Ward also asked that the university community help in Energy Management's energy conservation efforts by turning off lights, computers and appliances when they are not in use and selecting Energy Star-rated equipment if possible.

Ward said the list he presented is not comprehensive, but it included those things most noticeable to faculty, students and visitors and those that will save the department the most money.

MU Police and MU Environmental Health and Safety will not face cuts, Ward wrote. Other units had to undergo additional cuts to make up for this.
"I have exempted MU Police and MU Environmental Health and Safety from the five percent reduction because I feel strongly that the security and safety of our campus is of utmost importance," Ward wrote.

The cuts at MU Operations are among those happening across campus. At a faculty forum March 10, College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa announced 11 cost-saving measures and goals intended to make up about $500,000 to $700,000 of the school's 5 percent budget cuts. The total amount cut from the college will be about $900,000.

New Grant to Expand Health Care Program for Older Patients

The MU Sinclair School of Nursing announced it will receive $19.8 million to advance the Missouri Quality Initiative for Nursing Homes. Sponsored by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or CMS, the grant will enable nursing school researchers to study new ways to improve health care for older patients.

The Missouri Quality Initiative for Nursing Homes, or MOQI, began in 2012 with an initial CMS grant award of $14.8 million. The program is a collaboration between MU, federal and state Medicaid agencies, and 16 Missouri nursing homes, which aims to minimize hospitalizations among nursing home patients. By using proactive prevention measures to identify and treat common health problems, the program has reported an increase in
the quality of patient care and decreases in hospitalizations at participating nursing homes.

“CMS recognized our major accomplishments in reducing potentially avoidable hospitalizations by 39 percent, saving CMS millions of dollars,” said Judith Fitzgerald Miller, dean of the Sinclair School of Nursing.

With the new funding, MOQI will begin assessing the Medicare payment model for nursing homes and how it influences patient care.

Marilyn Rantz, MU professor emeritus of nursing, leads the MOQI initiative. She said that hospitals generally receive greater Medicare payments than nursing homes for the same services. A hospital treating a patient with pneumonia can bill CMS for $203. A nursing home treating a patient for pneumonia can only bill $136. Rantz said this disparity in payments can lead nursing homes to hospitalize patients who could have been offered quality care at the home.

Under the new grant, CMS agreed to increase the amount paid to MOQI nursing homes for onsite treatment. Rantz and the team of MOQI researchers will determine whether the increased payments incentivize onsite treatment, reducing nursing homes’ hospitalization rates.

MU interim Chancellor Hank Foley said the grant funding will improve patient care at nursing care facilities nationwide, but the MOQI project will benefit Missouri health care in particular.

Foley said the grant represented “Missouri taxpayer money that went to Washington and came back to Missouri”—a boon for the university’s researchers and their collaborators on the MOQI project.

Students in the Sinclair School of Nursing also benefit from the learning experiences offered through this patient health initiative. Nursing students
provide the nursing care at TigerPlace, a Columbia retirement living facility, where they practice proactive patient care.

MU nursing student Katie Hollon is conducting her geriatric clinical rotation at TigerPlace. She said students are taught to provide personal, individualized care, allowing them to recognize and prevent patient health challenges.

“It’s all about assessing patients, making sure that we’re providing thorough care, and recognizing when there’s a problem or an issue going on so that it can be addressed quickly,” Hollon said.

Rantz said the patience and persistence of the MOQI team has paid off, resulting in the new CMS grant funding and measurable improvements to patient care at Missouri nursing homes.

“The whole point is to ensure that when you need a nursing home, things work really well, and you get good quality care,” Rantz said. “That’s our objective, and that’s been the result of this work.”

Your ATN@Work: Autism training for healthcare providers and educators

The Thompson Center has developed a model program for promoting best practices among professionals who work with those who have autism

One of the core missions of the Autism Speaks Autism Treatment Network is to provide autism education and training to professionals and community members beyond the doors of the network’s 14 sites.
One such model program is Training Experts in Autism for Missouri (TEAM), a state-funded project of the University of Missouri’s Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, in Columbia.

TEAM provides free training and follow-up support to professionals working with children or adults who have autism across Missouri. It provides tailored training plans based on the needs of an agency, office, organization or individual practitioner.

“TEAM is making significant strides to implement quality training for educators and health professionals working with children with autism across Missouri,” says Thompson Center special education expert Jena Randolph, who founded and directs the project with behavior analyst Karen O’Connor.

The program began in July 2013 and uses a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of those with autism by training the professionals who work with them. This training emphasizes the use of best-practices that have the backing of rigorous scientific research.

To date, TEAM has trained approximately 4,000 participants through group seminars and follow-up consultations. The consultations often include TEAM members observing, interviewing and directly collaborating with an agency or professional to create a personalized training plan to improve their services to the autism community.

For example, TEAM trainings are available for:

- **Educational providers** including special and general education teachers (K-12), First Steps providers, early childhood teachers, educational administration and their support staff

- **Health professionals** including pediatricians, psychologists, neurologists, nurse, nurse practitioners, occupational therapists and speech/language pathologists

- **Applied behavior analysts** including board certified behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts and licensed behavior analysts.
Care coordination specialists including job coaches, social workers, residential managers/staff, patient navigators and parent mentors.

“The mission of TEAM is to increase expertise of educators and health professionals working with children with autism and to advance the knowledge and implementation of current science-based practices through training and support,” Randolph says. “Our goal is to help Missouri providers use best practices in the field, improve overall knowledge, increase the number of highly qualified personnel and improve overall program quality in an effort to help Missouri children living with autism.”

“By implementing changes in classrooms and health care, TEAM targets professionals already working in the field of autism as well as those who need training,” O’Connor adds. “These changes lead to improvements in overall program quality and positively impact individuals with autism.”

Like other centers in the Autism Speaks ATN, the University of Missouri’s Thompson Center is a national leader in addressing the needs of those with autism through collaborative research, training and service programs.

The Thompson Center likewise shares the ATN’s “medical home” model, which emphasizes family-centered care that is comprehensive, coordinated, compassionate, culturally sensitive and accessible. The goal is to support families from their first phone call or visit through access to services both at the center and in the community, with follow-up care to ensure the best possible outcome for each child and family.

Interested in learning more about the TEAM program? Contact TCtrainings@missouri.edu.
What issues confront women in Missouri?

In January of 2015, the Women’s Foundation, headquartered in Kansas City, MO, published a report called “The Status of Women in Missouri.”

Wendy Doyle, President and CEO of the Women’s Foundation, and Sonja Erickson, senior analyst at the University of Missouri’s Institute for Public Policy, joined host Don Marsh to discuss the report, its findings and what measures are being taken to help solve the issues highlighted in the report.

In 2014, the Women’s Foundation spent time in St. Louis, Springfield, and Kansas City gathering research. They profiled low-income women and mid-to-upper income women to clearly hear and understand the issues from a variety of perspectives. The foundation also spoke to men to hear what their perspectives were regarding issues confronting women.

They found that the number one concern most Missouri women had was over child care—accessibility and quality. Next was health care accessibility. Women want access to preventative health measures, said Doyle.

“‘The most important aspect of that initial research project was really to identify the five main areas that women in Missouri were concerned about,’” said Erickson. The five main areas were child care, healthcare accessibility, aging and economic security, income and employment, and civic leadership.

The objective of the project was to establish a baseline of action for the state of Missouri. As the Women’s Foundation begins to update the information and data
gathered last year, the 2015 report will help to indicate whether or not the state is making progress in these areas.

These problems are not unique to the state of Missouri. Issues such as the pay gap are consistent on a national level. However, Missouri women only earn $0.71 for each dollar a man earns for the same work. This is slightly lower than the national average in which women make $0.78 for each dollar a man earns.

The Women's Foundation invited Governor Jay Nixon to discuss this issue in December of last year. Nixon then signed Executive Order 15-09 on Dec. 4. The Women's Foundation will again partner with the Institute of Public Policy, located in Columbia, MO, to release best practice guidelines aimed at closing the pay gap between men and women in the coming weeks.

The pay disparity between men and women is a complex issue with many nuances, said Erickson. “But how do we change it? How do we fix it? And that’s what the best practices are really focusing on.”

“Only 25 percent of Missouri’s general assembly represents women, so we look at that as opportunity,” said Doyle. One of the solutions the Women’s Foundation has come up with is the Appointments Project, an opportunity for women to become civically engaged. The project is a solution that is based on a research study that looked at the barriers that stop women from becoming civically engaged. The number one reason is that women want to be asked to serve.

The project has been launched here in St. Louis with Mayor Slay and seeks to get women appointed to boards and commissions. The project has even been elevated to the state level as well. Governor Nixon has recently appointed two women who have already been senate confirmed.

The Women's Foundation also has a philanthropic component. The organization’s endowment allows it to allocate funds to support other nonprofit organizations through
grants. The foundation seeks to invest its funds based on improving the five key indicators that its research has shown to be most important to women in the region. According to Doyle, it had been about 15-20 years since such research had been completed for the state of Missouri.

“Anything we do is driven by data,” said Doyle. The foundation wants to focus on policy fixes to make real change in the state of Missouri. This is where they have the ability to have the greatest impact.

If a woman finds that she is being paid unequally, she can file a complaint with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and they will take her case. However, the woman must then prove that the pay disparity is due to gender bias, which is a very difficult task.

Child care is an issue for Missouri women for many reasons. The state of Missouri is the only state in the country that does not have a quality rating system for child care. “Four of the counties with the largest number of children under the age of four have no accredited child care centers,” says Erickson. Another challenge in this area is the cost of child care. Because the cost of these services is market-driven, legislation cannot decrease childcare costs.

On a day-to-day basis, women can help resolve these issues in a number of ways. Doyle said that it is important that women educate themselves on the challenges they and other women face. Women can also serve as civic leaders to gain more influence in their community as well as exercising their right to vote.

Listen to the story at http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/what-issues-confront-women-missouri
Mizzou to close 2 more residence halls

COLUMBIA, Mo. • The University of Missouri says it’s planning to close two more dorms on the Columbia campus because of a drop in residency.

KMBC-TV cites in a decrease in the number of students requiring housing at the campus for deciding to no longer offer space at the Respect or Excellence residence halls.

The university says it can reopen those dorms later if demand requires.

The university announced in March that it would be closing two residence halls scheduled for demolition ahead of schedule because of declining enrollment.

The Respect and Excellence halls opened in 2004 and together house more than 300 students.

University of Missouri to shutter residence halls because of enrollment decline

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Monday, April 11, 2016 at 9:38 am
There will be two fewer residence hall options for incoming freshmen at the University of Missouri, who on Monday began choosing their dormitories.

Respect and Excellence halls, constructed in 2004, will not be used unless the other open halls are filled, MU spokesman Christian Basi wrote in email. The two dormitories, which house as many as 315 students, need significant repairs, such as fixing leaking shower floors, that would be disruptive if students were housed there, Basi wrote.

“We also are doing this because we need to utilize our halls in the most cost efficient and effective manner possible,” Basi wrote. “For example, it’s more expensive to partially fill all residence halls than it is to close two, perform necessary repairs, and reopen at a later point.”

In March, the university announced it would close Lathrop and Laws halls in the fall, speeding up planned demolition of the two residence halls constructed in 1959.

MU is expecting an enrollment decline of about 1,500 students in the fall, including about fewer 900 incoming freshmen. All freshmen are required to live on campus or with their families during their first year at the university.

MISSOURIAN

Two residence halls to be on standby because of declining enrollment

LIZ RAMOS, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — With fall enrollment projected to drop by 1,500 students, MU residence halls Respect and Excellence won't be available to students until all other campus housing is filled.

MU Residential Life was expecting the decline in enrollment, MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley projected in an email. The decision was already made to close Laws and Lathrop halls next fall, and Respect and Excellence will only be available if the remaining 22 residence halls are filled to capacity.

"They are not closing," MU spokesman Christian Basi said. "We are temporarily restricting access to them for now because we want to make sure we are using the residence halls in a cost-effective and efficient manner. We want to make sure we fill all other halls."
The 319 beds in Respect and Excellence will be used over the summer until Aug. 4, Basi said. In the fall, both halls will undergo "invasive repairs" such as fixing leaky showers if they are not needed for the upcoming semester, he said.

Basi said the decision to restrict access to the halls was made within the past week, and no decisions have been made about employment in the two halls.

"With the other halls (Laws and Lathrop), we were able to take a look and utilize our employees in other areas of Res Life," Basi said.

Tiger Reserve, a student apartment complex located off-campus, will also not be an option for students after this year.

"We don’t need it," Basi said. "Tiger Reserve was specifically put in place because we didn’t have enough residence halls to house students."

Some returning students have already signed up to live in Respect and Excellence.

"We may have a very small amount of returning students that have registered (in Respect and Excellence), and we will be working with them to get them into a comparable living space," Basi said.

As for Freshman Interest Groups and learning communities, Basi said the communities in Respect and Excellence are replicated in other halls, and students who want to sign up for them can do so in the other halls.

Residents' Online Access to Rooms, the online portal for incoming MU students to choose on-campus housing, will close Thursday, according to the ROAR website.

George C. Brooks Hall will open as planned in the fall and will house 293 people, according to the Residential Life website.
An email from interim Chancellor Hank Foley seeking to discourage a graduate assistant union at the University of Missouri mistakenly attributes the decision to hold a representation election to the Graduate Professional Council, the council said in a news release issued Sunday.

On Friday, an email from Foley said he was surprised and disappointed by the announcement that graduate students would vote April 18 and 19 and the council had not indicated it planned to hold the vote. In the release issued Sunday, the council’s executive committee wrote it was only passing on notice of the election from the Coalition of Graduate Workers and had no role in deciding whether or when to vote.

Foley’s email “indicated both surprise with the election dates as well as a feeling of being disrespected by GPC,” the release said. “Both sentiments are premised on a misunderstanding of when the finalized dates were communicated to GPC.”

Hallie Thompson, president of the executive board, could not be reached for comment Monday. There was no response by press time to questions directed to Foley through the MU News Bureau.

“At no point did GPC intentionally withhold information nor intend disrespect,” the release said. “Indeed, doing so would be antithetical to the myriad of actions and countless hours of work we have poured into developing a robust relationship between GPC and campus administration.”

An announcement in August that the university would stop providing a subsidy for health insurance ignited the debate over the status of graduate assistants. The announcement, made a day before the insurance took effect, was later reversed but it led to the formation of the Forum on Graduate Rights and, later, the Coalition of Graduate Workers.

Foley has taken several steps to quiet the unrest, including higher minimum stipends. The coalition decided to press forward with a union election when the university refused to recognize graduate assistants as employees.
The Graduate Professional Council has passed two resolutions, in November and February, in support of efforts to organize a union. The election will be overseen by the League of Women Voters with polling stations to be set up from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. each voting day at the Memorial Union and the MU Student Center.

The university is not participating in the election. If unionization is approved, the coalition would become the university local of the Missouri National Education Association. The university has said it must hear from a court before recognizing the union and leaders of the coalition have said they are ready to sue for recognition.

A decision to unionize has many pros and cons, Foley wrote in his Friday email.

If approved, the “university leadership will begin an educational campaign to ensure that all graduate students impacted by this decision will be knowledgeable about what this means at the University of Missouri,” he wrote.

After sending the email, Foley met with representatives of the coalition and the council. He sent another email indicating there would be further talks this week.

No meeting times have been made public.

MISSOURIAN

CARL KENNEY: Spike Lee's film captures context of a historic movement

CARL KENNEY, 1 hr ago

A scene near the end of “2 Fists Up,” Spike Lee’s short film on student protests at MU, tells a story many viewers will miss due to a lack of context.

It’s after Tim Wolfe steps down as University of Missouri System president. A large crowd is celebrating inside Jesse Hall. The emotions of the moment ooze off the screen with everyone chanting and jumping.

The students aren’t alone in the celebration. There are adults joining in like the victory belonged to more than the black students who began the fight for justice.
In the crowd, jumping and chatting with students, is MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley. Foley appears emotional in that scene. I felt his passion burst off the screen as if to say, "We got this. We gon' be alright!"

Lee may have missed the significance of Foley’s presence. There was no character-generated message at the bottom of the page or narration to highlight the moment. It may have been an oversight, or Lee was allowing the unspoken to speak in ways that don’t impact the primary focus.

If so, that is the beauty of Lee’s short film. Lee brought a one-hour version of the film to Missouri Theater on April 6. The rest of the world will watch the 22-minute version on ESPN’s “30 for 30” documentary series later this year.

Foley’s celebration may not be understood by those outside campus, but for the people who teach, learn and work here, this is how we do it at MU.

The chant “We gon' be alright” says more than the critics of Concerned Student 1950 will decipher in 22 minutes. Some viewers will critique the actions of students, administrators, faculty and members of the football team. Some politicians will use Lee’s film to justify attempts to slash the MU budget. Some donors will complain about the football team’s involvement.

All of that is part of the interpretation of the story, but it’s not the story.

It’s a story that has inspired student protests around the world. The founders of Concerned Student 1950 are the type of change agents who will be mentioned in the same vein as David Richmond, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair Jr. and Joseph McNeil — the four North Carolina A&T students who staged a sit-in at a Woolworth department store on Feb. 1, 1960.

MU’s student protest is significant for a variety of reasons. It relates the language to critical race theory in a way that moves it beyond an academic exercise. It also exposes the manipulation of black bodies in college athletics.
More than before Concerned Student 1950 began to protest at MU, people are questioning high profits in college athletics juxtaposed against the NCAA’s unwillingness to approve compensation of student athletes.

This is also a story about Black Lives Matter and specifically the death of Michael Brown. It’s about institutional silence after Brown’s death and the brewing disdain among black students during a season of unarmed black people killed by police. Lee’s movie places all of that within the context of student protest at MU.

This is a national story, but it is a story that belongs to MU. There are nuances that speak to the particularity of the experiences that may be lost by people who aren’t connected with the current MU family.

We can begin with the story of UM Interim President Mike Middleton. Middleton embodies the struggles associated with being black at MU. He was a member of the marching band when they played “Dixie” during halftime at the football games.

He quit the marching band and helped start the Legion of Black Collegians as a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. in 1968. Middleton has served as a member of the MU administration for over 30 years.

His ascent to the university system’s highest office is part of the story. Lee features Middleton throughout the film to stress the correlation between the past and present goals of students who attend MU.

But there’s more.

MU is not a school in disarray with students causing mayhem at the expense of the administration. More than outsiders will ever understand, there is unity on campus. There is a will to move forward.
The students are supported by faculty committed to the vision of diversity and inclusion. The human circle formed around members of Concerned Student 1950 on the day of Wolfe’s resignation evoked the will of a community to be alright.

This is MU’s story. It’s the story of a community that calls Melissa Click a hero and rejects the viewpoint of outsiders not invested in the movement to listen to one another. At MU, coach Gary Pinkel is celebrated versus being villainized for failing to keep his athletes from boycotting a football game.

Members of the football team aren’t considered radical; they’re viewed as human for taking on a cause shared by other students.

At MU, it isn’t just the black students who fight for change — there are others who get it. They embrace the power of unity and join forces in the fight for change.

And there’s Hank Foley joining students in channeling the spirit of a chant. There, in the middle of the crowd, is the chancellor of the university celebrating in a way that offers hope beyond the silence that stirred the masses to fight for change.

“We gon’ be alright!” Foley joined with the students.

That’s the truth no one can take away. At MU, we gon’ be alright!

2 fists up.

2 fists up.
Opinion: Support for MU?

Not a simple piling-on

By Hank Waters

Monday, April 11, 2016 at 2:00 pm

As members of the Missouri General Assembly work through the politics of dealing with the University of Missouri, they are trending toward the inevitable; their reaction to the university can’t be as simple as beating Melissa Click. Now that they have gotten their ounce of flesh — Click has been fired from the MU faculty — what’s next?

Suddenly they are confronted with making next year’s budget, much of which involves spending for the University of Missouri. After a season of tough talk, much of it issued by people who know better but apparently regard university kicking as politically wise during this electoral year, they now must engage in more serious business. Happy to say, making the budget seems to have ameliorated some of their thinking.

In a series of compromises, the Missouri Senate overwhelmingly passed a bill Thursday restoring most of the cuts to UM made earlier by the House of Representatives — providing the university does not raise tuition costs, and it will undergo examination by an independent review commission established by a Senate resolution sponsored by Sen. Kurt Schaefer as part of his elaborate effort to blend support for his home district institution with what he hopes is a credible statewide posture of punishment for that same institution in the wake of recent campus protests.

Schaefer doesn’t consult with me for image advice, which at this moment is indistinguishable from campaign strategy in his race for Missouri attorney general. He might be making the best of it with his stance on the university. In his role as Senate budget chairman, he engineers more accommodating financial treatment of the U along with promises of serious second-guessing by the review commission he also engineered.

He said the university will have a chance to show whether it wants to be accountable to lawmakers. If university curators choose to ignore changes proposed by the review commission, “just as it says in the resolution — that is something that will be considered by the General Assembly next year.”

This is lovely rhetoric. Schaefer and several of his colleagues won’t be in the legislature next year. But actually the commission is not a bad idea. The university can show it is willing to be
accountable by doing what comes naturally: submitting to second-guessing by the legislature and the public. Whether any of the commission’s findings earn substantial support is yet to be seen, but sure to occur is ready cooperation from campus leaders for the commission’s work.

Interim UM System President Mike Middleton indicated as much when Schaefer’s commission idea was launched. Not only is this essential politics; it has potential benefit for Middleton and the Board of Curators. The commission might generate some good ideas, and outside political pressure might prove helpful to campus leaders wanting to make governance changes likely to be resisted on campus.

None of us from our distant perspective can know how this will shake out, but from this minor vantage point I think the dance is proceeding rather well. The Senate has moved toward its partner in a passable pas de deux. Now it’s up to the House to keep the choreography going, albeit likely to be attended by a measure of the aforesaid rhetorical feinting.

Ignore the blather. Watch their feet. One, two. One and two. As they dance toward their coda, no stumbles, please.

MISSOURIAN

Missouri would profit from cutting carbon dioxide emissions, expert says

TOM HELLAUER, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Missouri should shed its aversion to a federal plan that would reduce carbon dioxide pollution from power plants, an energy expert said Monday at a conference on renewable power sources.

Julia Friedman, a senior policy manager with the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, said adopting the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan could cut energy prices and generate jobs. She spoke at the "Advancing Renewables in the Midwest" conference Monday at MU’s Bond Life Sciences Center.

"There's a great savings potential in renewable energy," Friedman said.

Missouri ranks 17th among the 50 states in percentage of renewable energy use, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Still, 58 percent of the state's carbon dioxide emissions come from coal
burning, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Only Kentucky, North Dakota and West Virginia have a higher percentage of coal-produced carbon dioxide emissions.

Chances of the Show-Me State cutting emissions seem slim. In her talk, Friedman noted that two state bills — House Bill 2543 and Senate Bill 858 — would require the state to suspend all agencies' work on the Clean Power Plan until a February Supreme Court stay on implementation of the project is lifted.

Moreover, Attorney General Chris Koster — Missouri's sole Democratic gubernatorial candidate — is opposed to the Clean Power Plan. In an October speech to representatives of electric cooperatives, Koster said his "experience of the last seven years has undermined what little confidence" he had in the EPA.

Resistance in Missouri to the Clean Power Plan might stem from the steep reduction rate that would be imposed on the state. The EPA has said the state should reduce by 32 percent the emissions produced in 2005 by 2030.

Meanwhile, states such as California and New York were told to reduce their emissions by 13.2 percent and 19.5 percent respectively. Both states joined a legal battle in support of the EPA, suing non-compliant states.

Friedman said she still thinks Missouri should comply with the project. Renewable energies could provide an economic boost and other benefits to the state, she said. The U.S. Energy Information Administration expects renewables such as solar and wind powered sources to grow 8.7 percent in 2016 and 6.5 percent the following year.

Overall, there's hope for nationwide change, Friedman said.

"States such as North Dakota (that) were originally hesitant are now open to increasing their energy efficiency," she said.
Improving AAU status is a long-term game following budget cuts, leadership changes

MU spokesman Christian Basi: “AAU status would not be directly affected by any cuts to our budget. However, in the long term, it could be difficult to maintain some of the areas that support our high quality research and teaching.”

At a general faculty meeting in April 2014, then-Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin urged Faculty Council to consider the face of the university in 50 years.

“Why can’t we be the aspirational land grant (university)?” Loftin said in a Mizzou Weekly article.

At the time, Loftin was addressing faculty’s qualms about the planned 2 percent budget reallocations for the next four years, starting with the 2015–16 school year, that would fund MU’s Strategic Operating Plan. The plan was later extended two years and named Mizzou 2020. One focus of the plan is a set of initiatives to improve MU’s Association of American Universities metrics and overall standing.

Two years later, improving MU’s standing in the AAU is still a long-term game.

With the change in leadership at both a university and system level, active work on Mizzou 2020 has slowed considerably and “taken a backseat to other important issues,” said associate professor Dennis Miller, Mizzou 2020 Evaluation Committee chairman. MU is facing a $32 million budget shortfall for the next fiscal year in the face of declining enrollment. In November, MU was in the national spotlight following graduate student Jonathan Butler's hunger strike and a boycott by the football team. Loftin and UM System President Tim Wolfe both resigned on Nov. 9, 2015. Additionally, graduate students are planning to hold a union election April 18.

The AAU is a group of 62 top research universities across the U.S. and Canada. AAU status indicates to experts across the country that the university engages in quality research and is important when recruiting faculty, MU spokesman Christian Basi said in email.

Loftin and former UM System President Tim Wolfe’s goal was to improve MU’s AAU ranking from 32nd out of 34 public universities to 28th by 2018, according to Columbia Tribune reporting. The AAU does not publicly publish its rankings; however, Loftin and Wolfe divulged MU’s ranking in relation to the long-term goals of the university.

“Chancellor Foley and President Middleton are in a situation where with the things that happened on campus last fall, our funding priorities had to change a bit,” Miller said. “The
impact of our relationship with Jefferson City and the impact of decreased enrollment for the fall will have an impact on what the campus can do with its resources.”

However, MU’s designation as an AAU member is unlikely to change because of short-term budget cuts.

“AAU status would not be directly affected by any cuts to our budget,” Basi said. “However, in the long term, it could be difficult to maintain some of the areas that support our high quality research and teaching.”

The AAU’s metrics are in two phases, and members must continually improve them to remain competitive. They emphasize competitive federal research support, faculty awards and membership in national academies, among other indicators that value certain types of faculty and research.

Professor John Boyer is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, and his hiring in 2014 improved MU’s membership standing score in the AAU by 12.5 percent, according to previous Maneater reporting.

Boyer said AAU membership influenced his decision to come to the university, but ultimately it was the “highly interactive faculty and students, whom I have known and admired for most of my career,” who drew him here.

Still, Boyer believes MU’s AAU status is the source of some of the success of the Interdisciplinary Plant Group, a community of MU faculty, students, postdoctoral fellows and professionals researching in the field of plant biology.

“There may be a feedback with the AAU attracting more committed students, the IPG gaining recognition because of them and in turn attracting better students,” Boyer said in an email. “It is amazing to see the positions of responsibility attained by many IPG students and an honor to be part of it!”

Being a member of the AAU allows MU administrators to sit at the table with other AAU member schools and discuss common campus issues, as well as work together to get more federal funding.

“We are deeply affected by federal funds in terms of grants we’re able to get, what our graduate students are able to do work on, what our professors are able to do work on and the products of that research that we produce,” said graduate student Kaitlin Steen, who interned with the AAU last summer.

Steen is the executive director of the Associated Students of the University of Missouri, a student lobbying group. She believes that, beyond federal funding, the AAU is important for the future of MU’s research quality and overall reputation.
“Our membership in the AAU is extremely important to the future of the University of Missouri and our reputation on a national stage and international stage in terms of the research we are able to produce,” Steen said.

Membership in the AAU also allows for research collaboration among the member universities, a recent example being a sexual assault report survey released last year.

The goal of Mizzou 2020 is to advise the UM System on how MU can better reflect AAU ideals, even though some faculty believe the AAU metrics leave out certain departments and research areas, as some are weighted heavier than others. In 2012, the University of Nebraska was voted out of the AAU in part because of its strong focus on agricultural research, which is not valued highly in the AAU, according to Columbia Missourian reporting.

“The strategic goals of Mizzou 2020 will improve the stature of the university overall,” Miller said. “It emphasizes what the university wants to do, where we want to put our resources. We want to put our resources into student engagement, we want to put our resources into improving our research capabilities, our research outlook, we want to put our priorities into improving the economic development of the state.”

As the executive director of ASUM, Steen has been privy to the ongoing conversations about MU’s budget throughout the legislative session. She believes the outlook is better than originally thought, but regardless of cuts, status within the AAU shouldn’t be sidelined.

“We should still put effort toward improving our status within the AAU, in conjunction with other issues on campus, but that definitely shouldn’t be something that goes away,” Steen said.