MU News Bureau

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Loftin receiving full pay from University of Missouri as future job is developed

By Rudi Keller

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The University of Missouri is paying former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin his full salary of $459,000 through the end of the month while it finalizes the title and duties for the new post that will pay him 75 percent of that amount, Loftin said Wednesday.

Under the terms of the transition agreement signed Nov. 9, Loftin is supposed to move out of the chancellor’s residence on campus by April 29. He and his wife, Karin Loftin, have been remodeling a home they purchased in March and will complete their move within a few days, he said.

Other parts of the agreement have been more difficult to implement. Loftin's salary after May 1, when he will begin receiving the promised $344,000 per year, is secure. The agreement also provides a $10,000 to $35,000 stipend while Loftin performs administrative duties, a car allowance through Jan. 31, and all his accrued deferred compensation, worth about $50,000.

The exact job he will do is not yet defined. Loftin holds a tenured faculty position in the Department of Physics and Astronomy but his other duties are still being settled.

“I am eager to see a finalization of this in writing so we can all move on and go ahead and I am hoping for that very soon,” Loftin said.

The university was vague when asked about Loftin’s role.

“Since stepping down as MU chancellor, Dr. Loftin has been exploring the feasibility for advancing the development of research at the University of Missouri relative to his unique expertise and relationships,” spokesman Christian Basi wrote in an email.

Loftin was hired in December 2013 and took over as chancellor in February 2014. Loftin announced Nov. 9 that he was stepping down as chancellor following months of acrimony with President Tim Wolfe, who tried several times to fire him, and amid a wave of discontent among faculty, administrators and graduate students. Wolfe, who resigned the same day, negotiated Loftin's transition agreement.
The agreement was written for Loftin to continue as chancellor until Dec. 31. He was replaced the day he stepped down.

One position named in the agreement, research director at the Tiger Institute for Health Innovation, was contingent upon the consent of Cerner Corporation, MU’s partner in the institute. After the agreement was made public, Cerner made it clear in a letter to the Board of Curators that it was not ready to approve the job.

A job for Loftin has not been submitted to the institute’s Board of Governors, Cerner spokesman Dan Smith said. He directed all other questions to the university.

Loftin said he spoke with representatives of the institute and Cerner several times after the transition agreement was signed.

“The last meetings were in February of this year and I never heard back from them,” he said.

The other possible job is director of research development for the university. Loftin said he has been working on that role and this week spent part of Monday with Randy Curry of the College of Engineering, Tuesday with the Medical Device Network of Kansas City and Wednesday in meetings at MU to discuss research infrastructure.

“What I am doing right now I think is meaningful to the university and satisfying to me, so I am happy doing that,” Loftin said.

The agreement outlines other aspects of Loftin’s role. He was to receive a courtesy appointment to the faculty of the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering, contingent upon approval of the dean and department chair.

The appointment was approved by a faculty vote a few months ago, said Dong Xu, chairman of the department.

There was some discussion of why Loftin was removed as chancellor, but it was not a major issue in the vote, Xu said. “When people voted, it was about an academic position. It is not about non-academic issues. His background fit our department very well.”

Loftin was also supposed to be considered for a similar courtesy appointment in the Department of Health Management and Informatics in the School of Medicine. Department Chair Eduardo Simoes and Dean Patrick Delafontaine declined to comment on the status of the appointment in emails to the Tribune and directed questions to the MU News Bureau.

Basi was unable to provide the status of the medical school appointment. Delafontaine was pushed out by Loftin in September after less than a year on the job and reinstated by interim Chancellor Hank Foley in February and now has the authority to refuse Loftin as a faculty member.
“I did meet with chairman several months ago,” Loftin said. “I don’t know the status at this time.”

After stepping down, Loftin said he received hundreds of supportive emails and calls from old friends and colleagues. He has used that as an opportunity to make connections that will help the university, he said.

“I feel like I am doing things which are valuable right now to the university and which are valuable to me personally,” he said. “And that’s OK. What more could you ask for?”

R. Bowen Loftin yet to start administrative job

COLUMBIA — Former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin has yet to start an administrative job that was announced after he stepped down on Nov. 9.

Loftin's resignation came hours after former University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe relinquished his position. University leaders said Loftin would transition to a role in which he would help coordinate research on MU's campus with Cerner Corporation.

Five months later, Loftin said MU hasn't had enough time to coordinate the position with Tiger Institute.

"The pace of events from last fall, has precluded the kind of normal development process you might go through to make those kind of relationships happen and that's probably why this is taking longer to resolve than it otherwise takes," Loftin said.

On Nov. 12, Cerner sent a message to Donald Cupps, who was then the chair of the UM System Board of Curators. Cerner stated its concerns about the transition agreement. It also requested the removal of any reference to the company in Loftin's agreement with the university until Cerner's governing body has reviewed it in full. Cerner indicated it had no prior knowledge about Loftin's supporting role.
Loftin said Tiger Institute's decisions come half from MU and half from Cerner and, after the initial deal, he reached out to the leadership. There have been several meetings but, in his mind, no closure, he said.

Chief Communications Officer for the University of Missouri System John Fougere said Loftin's terms of transition agreement would be active once Cerner concurred. He said the position is currently not feasible.

Cerner Communications spokesman Dan Smith agreed and said "nothing has been presented to the institute's board of governors for consideration regarding Mr. Loftin."

Currently, Loftin has been working in conjunction with Hank Foley to look for potential research sponsorships. He said he is still employed by the University and lists his job titles as professor of physics and former chancellor.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Student protesters won't be allowed to disrupt campus buildings due to revived security policy**

ALLISON COLBURN, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — A group of 15 black students demonstrating on campus against racism and student debt Wednesday were met with a challenge — an established rule against disruptions in campus buildings.

According to MU police, violators deemed disruptive are subject to possible arrest or suspension.

Officers enforced the rules Wednesday because the MU Police Department has received complaints about past demonstrations, Maj. Brian Weimer said.

When asked who had complained, Weimer said "a variety of people." He declined to be more specific.
The university recommitted to a broad policy of free expression in an interim report released March 18 by MU’s Ad Hoc Joint Committee on Protests, Public Spaces, Free Speech and the Press, but noted that there are exceptions, including threats, harassment and other actions that interfere with education and the academic environment.

The committee released the report in response to protest-related conflicts last semester. Upon its formation in January, the group was asked to identify ways to regulate public spaces on campus while still protecting safety and free speech.

The report said freedom of expression does not allow anyone to interfere with another’s education, employment or participation in university programs.

“In addition, the University may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that it does not significantly disrupt the University’s ordinary activities,” the report said.

Wednesday's march was part of the national Million Student March on college campuses across the country.

The Million Student March organization's website listed four ongoing demands that define its movement:

- Tuition-free public college;
- Cancellation of all student debt;
- $15/hour minimum wage for campus workers;
- Divestment from public prisons.

The first march took place Nov. 12 with students on at least 110 college campuses participating. This year the march collaborated with the Black Liberation Collective, described on the movement's website as “the group behind the Mizzou Movement.”
On Wednesday, the 15 demonstrators didn't identify themselves with any group but called themselves “just students,” said Nicholas Colbert, who was among them.

The march began just before noon and took a circular route from the MU Student Center to Jesse Hall. Along the way, the group drew a modest number of listeners, a few hecklers and reprimands from campus police.

In the MU Student Center, the demonstrators began chanting slogans, such as “Student debt means we’ve got to fight back.” They continued chanting until MU Police Officer Chris Groves met the group in Speakers Circle and told them not to shout inside campus buildings.

“The University doesn’t like their buildings being obstructed,” Groves said. An agitated demonstrator asked if anyone was recording, and Groves responded, "I'm recording."

The group picked up their chanting again until they reached Jesse Hall, where they filed inside the building in complete silence.

Groves, who was following the demonstrators, reminded them they were "subject to arrest and suspension by the university" if found yelling or chanting in a building. The group responded with respectful silence.

The demonstration lasted about an hour, ending with the group forming a circle outside Jesse Hall and sharing stories.

"We're a small piece of the puzzle," Colbert said. "But we're part of the bigger picture."
MU students protest racism and student debt on MU campus

COLUMBIA — A group of students protested on MU campus Wednesday morning and afternoon to mark the National Day of Action Against Racism and Student Debt.

Marshall Allen, one of the protesters, said the group is affiliated with Concerned Student 1950.

"We're protesting today because 60 percent of college students around the nation are in debt," Allen said. "It coincides with black lives and racism, because a lot of black students, by themselves, happen to take out loans to stay at these universities, which we're really qualified to attend."

Allen said things like affirmative action, diversity awards, scholarships catering towards black students are "real", but said if they were beneficial as they were created to be, the numbers would not be so high.

According to the national day's sponsor, the Million Student March, 81 percent of black students finish college with student debt, compared to 63 percent of white students.

The Missouri students met in front of the MU Student Center and made their way up to Jesse Hall.

"Coming up to Jesse was important, because that's where financial aid is," Allen said. "If anybody is going to receive the message, it's going to be financial aid, because they're the ones who control the allotment allocation of financial resources."

Nick Prewett, director of Student Financial Aid at MU, said his workers saw about seven to eight students expressing their concern for growing student debt in the country. He also the problem is something the university acknowledges.

"At the University of Missouri, the average debt at graduation is about $23,000, which is shorter of the national average which is about $29,000" Prewett said. "So, at Mizzou, we do a much
better job working with our students to make students aware of their student debts and make them aware of financial literacy initiatives to make sure we can work together to make college affordable for every student."

Prewett said he doesn't really have the demographic break down on student debt to MU.

Allen said he hopes to "continue and attack structural issues" as black students on a predominantly white institution "to combat everything that's against us."

UM tuition remains unsettled because of Jefferson City debate

Students who plan to attend Washington University this fall know that their tuition will be $48,950. Toward the other end of the scale, in-state tuition at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville has been set at $8,352.

But as students try to finalize their academic plans, those headed for any of the four campuses of the University of Missouri don't know yet how much their bills will be, and they don't know when the decision may be made.

Typically, UM curators hear preliminary plans for tuition and fees at their meeting in St. Louis in December, then finalize those numbers in February. For the coming school year, the tentative plan presented to the curators was for tuition to remain flat, as part of a plan floated by Gov. Jay Nixon to seek a 6 percent increase in state spending for higher education.

But the unrest in Columbia last fall, and the resulting backlash once lawmakers returned to Jefferson City, disrupted the typical scenario.

First, the Missouri House passed a budget that cut higher education by nearly $9 million, with several lawmakers criticizing Mizzou for its handling of the demonstrations and Melissa Click, the communication professor who was fired for her behavior during the protest.

Last week, the Missouri Senate passed its own version of the budget, reversing most of the cuts to the university system. That sent the spending plan to a conference committee that will have to work out differences before the May 6 deadline to pass the budget. Some lawmakers are trying to reach an April 21 deadline, so the governor work have to act on the budget bills before legislators adjourn May 13.
So while the political and financial jockeying goes on, current and prospective students at the university have to work with tentative budgets of their own. And layoffs loom at the St. Louis and Columbia campuses because of the fiscal uncertainty.

Curator David Steelman of Rolla, who heads the board’s finance committee, says the wait is unfortunate but unavoidable.

“The governor has been very clear with his generous recommendations,” Steelman said in an interview in advance of this week’s curators meeting in Rolla, “and the Senate has made it very clear, that their actions, which have been very good to higher education, are in order to help students avoid tuition hikes.

“I think the University of Missouri would be very remiss if we would take an action to increase tuition prior to the final actions. If the governor and the legislature combine for this kind of exceptional help for higher education to prevent tuition increases, I just think it would be unacceptable for us to raise tuition.”

No vote on tuition is on the curators’ agenda for this week’s meeting.

**Legal limits**

Because of a law generally referred to as Senate Bill 389, public colleges and universities in Missouri may raise tuition no higher than the annual rate of inflation, unless they receive a waiver from the Department of Higher Education to exceed that amount.

For 2016, that would have meant a cap on tuition increases for resident undergraduate students of 0.7 percent.

Based on that ceiling, Leroy Wade, Missouri’s interim commissioner for higher education, said tuition for the academic year at UM would cost less than $100 more.

“Current and prospective students can look at last year’s tuition rates to estimate what tuition likely will be at each of the state’s colleges and universities for the upcoming academic year.”

In September, Nixon said schools had agreed to a tuition freeze in exchange for his effort to win passage of a $56 million increase in state support for higher education. That agreement led to the recommendation to the curators in December for tuition to remain flat, at an average of $9,687 for the system’s four campuses.

When the debate over funding for the university system became tied up with the Columbia protests, that plan was knocked off course. So the waiting game continues for students who plan to attend this fall.

Still, with the 0.7 percent limit on any increase likely to hold, most students have a pretty good idea what they will be paying. Tracy Mulderig, an UMSL doctoral student who recently ended
her term as the student representative on the board of curators, said that a bigger concern for students might be increased fees.

“You don’t really know what the final price is going to be,” she said, “because it depends on whether you end up registering for classes online or not, exactly what classes you register for, whether there is a lab component, what the lab fees are for that particular course.

“So it can become particularly difficult to anticipate in advance what you’re going to be paying until you’ve registered for classes, know what classes you’re actually in and finally see that first bill.”

And, she added, while students and their families may not be operating close to the financial edge, the dollar amounts can affect how an academic career moves forward.

“There is an escalation of commitment,” Mulderig said. “If you’re enrolled in a program, and you’re in year three, and these are the classes you need to take in order to make progress toward your degree this upcoming semester, it becomes more a matter of figuring out how you can make it work.

“Unfortunately, I’m sure that some students will ultimately find they can’t, and they may choose to drop a class. In the end, that is not the best option for them, but it does become very difficult to budget.”

**Little deterrence**

Calls to guidance counselors and others who help steer students to the right campus found little effect from the uncertainty about tuition on the choices future freshmen will attend.

Michelle Luraschi, the college and career preparation coordinator at Pattonville High School, said students can use last year’s figures as a pretty good guide.

“We do have students that are heading to Mizzou or Rolla or the different campuses,” she said, “and for the most part they have already made the decision that that’s where they want to go. They either have the money, or they applied for financial aid.

“Of course there probably will be some increase, but I guess I don’t see a huge increase that would potentially make or break someone.”

What may make more of a difference this year, Luraschi said, is the fallout at Mizzou.

“In the fall when this was all kind of coming to a head,” she said, “I do recall that there were some parents that were a little apprehensive about sending their student there.

“But I don’t think we can be naïve and say that we don’t have issues of this sort at other institutions across the country. I feel bad for Mizzou.”
Curator Steelman, who was the only vote last year against a tuition hike of 0.8 percent, hopes he can bolster state support for higher education, financial and otherwise. In the wake of the criticism at Mizzou, he wants to see the university work more closely with lawmakers – and make a stronger case. But he’s also realistic about the university’s need to win backing from the public support.

“We are entitled to take certain actions,” he said. “Constitutionally, the faculty is entitled to free speech. But science will tell you for every action, there’s a reaction, and the Missouri General Assembly and the governor’s office are all entitled to their own actions too.

“When we are arrogant, when we don’t listen to their concerns, when we don’t understand that there are competing needs for money in the state of Missouri, when we think that we’re entitled to money and don’t have to earn it -- then that is a fatal flaw, and I think it’s been at the university for the past few years.”

Steelman said that having someone who can represent the university well in Jefferson City is a key element of the search for a new president that is just beginning. Former President Tim Wolfe, who resigned in November in the wake of the demonstrations at Mizzou, did not have the relationship with lawmakers that is needed, he said.

“The next president simply must have the skill set that allows him to communicate with the legislature,” Steelman said. “Communication goes two ways. Sometimes people in higher education think communication goes only one way, toward the General Assembly. Communication goes two ways and the next president is simply going to have to understand that and to be able to execute on that.”

That communication, he added, can help reverse the trend of dwindling support for the university system from Missouri’s budget. He doesn’t think his stand against tuition increase is going to attract any opposition, particularly from anyone working on a budget that includes the costs of higher education.

“If you can find a student who’s upset because we’re trying to prevent a tuition increase,” Steelman said, “you know students that I don’t know.”

Easter Seals offers early intervention program for children with autism

By Michele Munz St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 20 hrs ago
Easter Seals Midwest has launched a new early intervention program for young children with autism, expanding much-needed services for children from ages 18 months to 5 years old in the St. Louis area.

The first six-week session of the Early Childhood Academy began last week and helps toddlers and preschoolers with autism interact with their peers and learn in a group setting.

Instructors use proven techniques of applied behavior analysis, which teaches behaviors through rewards and consequences, and integrates them into children’s natural activities of playing and communicating. Children work on abilities such as school readiness, emotional behavior, play skills, motor skills, cognitive skills, self-help skills and language.

The academy also involves in-home visits, so parents can learn the techniques and continue to reinforce the skills their children learn in the classroom.

The program offered by the nonprofit builds on the area’s first early classroom-based intervention services offered by the Mercy Autism Center, an intensive program for children up to age 3 that began about five years ago. St. Louis Arc has also since provided a program for children up to age 4.

The latest figures show one in 68 children are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, a range of developmental disabilities that cause social, communication and behavioral challenges.

With increased awareness and better screening techniques, children are getting diagnosed at earlier ages. Yet parents of toddlers have few options.

School districts’ early childhood programs begin offering services at the age of 3, and those services typically involve meeting with speech, physical and behavioral therapists in separate weekly appointments.
With April being Autism Awareness Month, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon last week reiterated his proposal to budget $5 million to expand the University of Missouri Thompson Center for Autism, $1 million to help launch an autism clinic at Truman State University and $500,000 to expand services at the Mercy Autism Center.

If the governor’s plan is approved, the Thompson Center expansion would allow for an additional 2,000 visits a year and training of an additional 100 providers over the next five years to hasten diagnosis and ease the shortage of autism services.

With state financial support, the Thompson Center has for the past three years provided free training tailored for educators and health professionals who work with children with autism. The latest figures show that from July 2015 to February of this year, the center trained 1,731 professionals across Missouri in the latest research and skills needed to support individuals along the spectrum.

Despite the importance of early intervention, most children with Autism Spectrum Disorders are not diagnosed until after age 4, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Easter Seals Early Childhood Academy offers morning and afternoon sessions that meet two, three or five days a week at its Creve Coeur office, 10176 Corporate Square Drive, Suite 150. An autism diagnosis is not required, though funding may be available through insurance for those with a diagnosis. Interested families can call 314-567-8182.

City of Columbia working to address economic fallout of MU budget cuts
COLUMBIA, Mo. - **University of Missouri officials announced Tuesday they were eliminating about 50 jobs in addition to several other departmental changes in their expected budget cuts.**

The cuts are in response to the larger than expected drop in enrollment for the 2016-2017 school year.

City of Columbia leaders are now working to address those cuts and come up with positive solutions to the impact the cuts will have on the local economy.

Columbia Chamber of Commerce President Matt McCormick said the university is probably the biggest economic driver in the state and so it's the number one priority for local leaders to come up with solutions sooner rather than later.

"We took down a joint resolution from us (the chamber), the city, the county and the school district about our support for our university," he said. "We are one community, we're in this together. We're going to work together to come up with the best solution."

He said they're waiting to get final numbers from the university that would include the total number of jobs that will be cut, but they're still working with the university and its economic development department.

"We have a worst case scenario," he said. "We're working on those numbers and what that means, how far is this going to reach through ancillary jobs within our community."

So leaders know there will be an impact but they're not sure at this point what that impact will be or how serious it could become.

"It could affect housing, it could affect the number of students in our schools, it could affect businesses and jobs and student employment," he said. "It affects a number of different areas."

Columbia mayor-elect Brian Treece said he has reached out not only to the university, but also to the president of the Regional Economic Development Inc, or REDI, to find out how to address the expected trickle down effect.

"This is going to have a dramatic impact on Columbia's economy in terms of potential layoffs, the decline in student enrollment, how the city plans for growth," he said. "I think we have to take all of that into account."

McCormick said the impact will be felt long-term and they don't want to lose sight of that.

"That's something we're watching and being very proactive with," he said.

McCormick said he's reached out to his counterpart in State College where Penn State is located to find out how the city dealt with the fallout from the Sandusky scandal a few years ago.
"Asked how did they go about working with their university and working with their community," he said. "Talked about how they approached some things and what did they see as their impact when they went through the crisis that they had a couple of years ago."

Both McCormick and Treece confirm the city has been at the state capitol with university leaders, lobbying state legislators to stop budget cuts to the school.

"The first thing we can do is work with our legislators in Jefferson City to make sure that we stop the hemorrhaging in respect to state budget cuts," Treece said.

Treece also said there needs to be significant work put into improving the image of the school as well as making sure the downtown housing bubble doesn't burst.

"No one is going to make money when these facilities are 85 percent occupied. If they don't fill them in the first year, I think the student migration pattern is such that that they will never be filled," he said. "I do think you have to have a close look on future growth and to make sure that we're not contributing to collapse of our housing market."

McCormick said they're working to lessen the serious impact and so far have discussed concrete ways to do so.

There is a tentative plan to have a job fair for those who might lose their jobs at the university, in order to take care of those employees and make sure they can stay in the city.

McCormick also mentioned that there have been discussions to expand the nuclear reactor in town and create more jobs there.

Quelling Racial Tensions

To begin to deal with racial tensions, colleges and universities should recognize and respect people's humanity and apply other conflict-resolution principles, says Michael F. Mascolo, professor in the department of psychology at Merrimack College.

Racial tensions, which erupted last fall in the form of numerous student protests, continue to fester on college campuses. Within the last several weeks and months, for example, students at both Harvard Law School and the University of Washington have engaged in a series of sit-ins and protests at which they made demands intended to bring about changes in the racial climate on campus.
In fact, over the past seven years, more than one thousand complaints of racial harassment on college campuses have been reported to the U.S. Department of Education. Such events include racially motivated violence, slurs, acts of hate, social exclusions, hate speech, remarks viewed as insensitive by college personnel, and more. *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* documents the growing list of racial infractions.

In November, the president and chancellor of the University of Missouri appropriately resigned after students, administrators and faculty members protested their tepid reactions to racial incidents on campus. In a transcript posted in *The Columbia Missourian*, now former President Timothy Wolf stated, “It is my belief we stopped listening to each other … this is not, I repeat, not the way change should come about.”

While it may have come too late, Wolf has effectively diagnosed the problem: we do not listen well to each other on matters of race. Discussions about race typically take the form of confrontations and polarizing debates. If we listen to each other at all, we do so not to seek understanding but instead to advance and defend our own positions. That is not an effective way to resolve social conflict.

Seeking to promote racial justice, colleges promulgate formalistic policies and procedures prohibiting harassment and acts of discrimination. Clear acts of racial discrimination are appropriately handled with such policies. There is no place on campus for racially motivated violence, slurs or harassment -- just as there is no place for administrators who are not fully committed to responding to ongoing racial tension.

But the full range of racial tension cannot and will not be solved through policy and enforcement alone. That is because racial tension is a human problem and not simply a legislative one. At base, dealing with racial conflict is a problem of affirming the dignity of the other, something that can’t simply be mandated. Instead, it must be cultivated over time by establishing an ethos of mutual understanding, empathy and respect for other people’s humanity. This is a collaborative process that requires engaging the emotions as well as the intellect. And it is no small task.

**Steps to the Collaborative Resolution of Racial Conflict**

Fortunately, however, a vast literature shows how principles of conflict management can bring about meaningful changes in the attitudes of people involved in social conflict. Those principles, as expressed, for example, in Fisher, Ury and Patton’s classic *Getting to Yes*, are founded upon the importance of seeking to resolve conflict while preserving and enhancing the dignity of all participants -- regardless of the positions and attitudes they may espouse. They are directly applicable to addressing issues of racial tension in the academy.
By following such principles, campuses can model ways to have difficult conversations about the unspoken issues that underlie racial strife. Conflict management principles help people to (a) articulate their genuine concerns about race in ways that (b) preserve the dignity of those involved in the conflict. They also help them (c) seek resolutions to resolve the unmet needs of each party (d) without giving in.

Colleges should consider four basic steps when confronting racial tension on their campuses. To illustrate, I will draw on the case of Dean Mary Spellman of Claremont McKenna College, who resigned her post after protests spurred by an email. In that email, she communicated her commitment to serve those who “don’t fit our CMC mold” -- a phrase that many people regarded as racially insensitive.

**Step 1: Acknowledge the humanity of the other person.**
We live in an increasingly polarized society. We tend to think of people with whom we disagree in extreme terms: they are out of touch, crazy, stupid or evil. We forget that the people with whom we disagree are human beings. And so, the first step to resolving a social problem is to try to understand the interests, beliefs, fears and failings that motivate the other person’s actions -- and especially those actions with which we disagree. That is necessary in order to open up dialogue and pave the way to genuine problem solving.

In the Spellman case, seeing the humanity in the other would simply take the form of seeking to understand and have compassion for the plights of both the students and the dean -- regardless of whether one agrees with their actions. It would involve acknowledging the deep hurt experienced over time by minority students and how the dean’s email was experienced as yet another recapitulation of those hurts. It would also involve extending the benefit of the doubt to a dean, whose clumsy words would seem to be motivated by noble intent.

**Step 2: Identify unmet interests.**
Racial conflict on campus often involves contests over demands. A demand, especially when made in the throes of a heated protest, is a kind of pre-emptive solution. But arguing over demands tends to make it more difficult to solve the genuine problem at hand because it is never identified -- and thus cannot be addressed.

In conflict management, a distinction is made between the positions or demands made by people involved in a conflict and the underlying interests that motivate those demands. Positions are the initial stances taken by opposing sides in a conflict; interests are the unmet needs of participants that give rise to initial positions and demands. In conflict resolution, the problem to be solved is how to meet the unmet needs and interests of each party involved in a conflict.
In the Spellman case, students demanded the resignation of the dean, and the situation then became a contest over whether or not she would keep her post. But the students’ interests likely included: being recognized as full members of the college community, having their history of indignities acknowledged, changing the perception of minorities as second-class citizens and so forth. From the available evidence, the dean’s interests involved supporting students of color and seeking understanding and forgiveness for her clumsy use of words. The administration’s interests were likely to avoid the embarrassment of exposed tensions.

**Step 3: Negotiate from interests, not demands.**
To resolve racial tensions, it is helpful to create forums in which parties can express their genuine interests, anxieties and concerns without fear and without impugning the humanity of others involved in a conflict. The simple fact, however, is that this does not come naturally. We simply do not know how to talk effectively about issues like race. A skilled mediator can help parties learn to identify their genuine interests -- public and private -- in ways that minimize blame and preserve the dignity of others involved in a conflict.

Take the Spellman case again. Imagine a series of public and private forums, organized over long periods of time, run by a series of trained mediators. Imagine that the mediators were to teach and enforce a series of strategies and ground rules for expressing interests and needs. Imagine that students had the opportunity to express, without interruption, the full range of their experiences of indignity and marginalization -- but with a minimum of blame or hostility. Imagine that administrators, faculty members and others agreed to continue to listen until they could demonstrate to the students’ satisfaction an adequate understanding of students’ experiences (even if they were to disagree). Imagine that the students felt heard and perhaps even empathized with.

Now imagine that the roles are reversed, and students are asked to listen and demonstrate their understanding of the interests, needs and fears of their opponents. Imagine that the goodwill that could be accrued by being understood carried forward into the task of seeking to understand the other.

**Step 4: Seek solutions for mutual gain without giving in.**
Once people have their genuine interests heard and acknowledged, they often, although not always, find that their core interests do not conflict. At this point, genuine problem solving can begin. The task becomes one of seeking novel solutions for mutual gain -- that is, solutions that can meet the interests and needs of all parties to the conflict.
When that happens, the problem becomes: Is it possible to develop solutions that meet the core interests and needs of each party, without any party giving in? In the Spellman case, that might translate into: Is it possible to address the marginalization that students experienced by the dean’s choice of words while simultaneously entertaining multiple interpretations of those words? Or more broadly: Can we change our institutional culture in ways that respect minorities as full members of the college community while also promoting honest and sensitive racial communication?

**Moving Past Fear**
Although we know a great deal about managing conflict and reducing prejudice, we fail to act upon this knowledge. Our failure is born mainly of fear. We fear that our efforts will be difficult and take time. That is true. We fear that if we lead with compassion we will appear weak. That is untrue. Seeking understanding does not imply giving in to the other.

It is possible to understand -- even empathize -- without agreeing. When we learn that the other person does not have to lose in order for us to gain, listening becomes easier on both sides, and collaboration for mutual gain becomes possible. Could such an approach fail? Of course. But without significant change in the communicative culture of the academy, racial tensions are more likely to continue to fester than to heal. And we haven’t even begun to try.

**MISSOURIAN**

**High tuition a barrier for undocumented students' college dreams**

BRIANA SAUNDERS, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — The dream of obtaining a college degree can turn into a nightmare for the undocumented student unless legislators hear immigrants’ personal stories, two speakers suggested during a Wednesday panel on immigration policy.

At the event at MU’s Hulston Hall, Vanessa Crawford Aragón, executive director of Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates, talked about the effects of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy and U.S. immigration on undocumented students.
DACA allows certain undocumented immigrants to apply for deferment of removal from the U.S. According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's website, eligible applicants must:

- Have been younger than 31 as of June 15, 2012;
- Have arrived in the U.S. before their 16th birthday;
- Be enrolled in school, have a high school degree, have obtained a GED certificate, or have been honorably discharged from the Coast Guard or the Army;
- Have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, three or more other misdemeanors;
- Not pose a threat to national security or public safety.

Aragón and Stephanie Potochnick, an associate professor in the Truman School of Public Affairs, led the panel. The MU Cambio Center, the MU chapter of the American Constitution Society and Tigers Advancing Political Participation sponsored the event.

Lindsey Saunders, coordinator of the Cambio Center, said the state should invest more in undocumented students. Saunders said she hoped the event would foster empathy for undocumented students and raise awareness about their exploitation.

Aragón said she wanted to use the panel as a platform to publicly advocate against discrimination of undocumented students.

"For many years ... undocumented students weren't even allowed to enroll simply by virtue of their immigration status," Aragón said. "They were barred from attending MU, and any other public college in Missouri. This has only changed recently, so there are students that should be here that aren't."

Under DACA, undocumented students may enroll in public universities and community colleges. But they aren't eligible for student loans, Pell Grants or institutional scholarships, according to the American Immigration Council, a nonpartisan organization that analyzes immigration policy.
Currently, undocumented students in Missouri must be charged at least the same tuition rate as international students. The 12-month cost estimate for MU international students taking 12 credit hours each semester was $20,460 for the 2015-2016 academic year, according to the MU International Center. The figure doesn't include health insurance or living expenses.

Undocumented students are statistically more likely to come from families living in poverty, Aragón said. Financial barriers dissuade undocumented students from attending college, she added.

Lower tuition in other states lures students to move out of Missouri. States such as Kansas charge undocumented students in-state tuition rates, Aragón said.

"K-State is actively recruiting because they say, 'Missouri doesn't want them, but we do.'" Aragón said.

She later added: "If the students don't leave the state, they've been discouraged from even getting an education, which means their earning power is lower over time and can't fully contribute to paying taxes as they could have."

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

After Protests Over Race, Kansas Experiments With a Multicultural Student Government

No MU Mention

Last fall Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk, a student-protest group at the University of Kansas, released a list of 15 demands that it said would improve the campus racial climate. Item No. 14 put the university in uncharted territory: It called for the creation of a "multicultural student government," an entirely new body that would function independent of the Student Senate.
That demand took a giant step toward becoming a reality last month, when the Senate voted to create and fund what some student-affairs experts say will be the first independent, minority-based student government in the country.

The Senate approved a $2-per-student increase in annual fees to give the multicultural government a budget of roughly $90,000. The Senate also awarded control of its $90,000 Multicultural Education Fund to the new body and gave it 12 seats on the Senate’s campus-fee committee.

The new government’s goal is to give a seat at the table to students who have long felt they’ve been denied one. Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk’s frustration with the traditional student government was highlighted during the fall protests, when its members demanded the resignation of three student-government leaders. Two of those leaders — the president, Jessie Pringle, and the vice president, Zach George — were criticized as insufficiently supportive of protesters’ demands. None of the three officers stepped down.

In a season of activism over colleges’ racial climate, multicultural student governments could offer a path to easing tensions. But can an idea whose critics claim it only enhances a racial divide really be an effective solution?

For Jameelah Jones, a member of Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk who is leading the creation of the multicultural student government, the answer is an emphatic yes.

"Student government should be a place where we can reimagine what change looks like," she said. "If in that space, there can’t be room for reimagining what social justice and inclusivity look like, then we really have to think about what it is we are teaching our students about diversity and inclusion."
As of now, the multicultural student government has only a few concrete plans, she said. It falls to Ms. Jones and Katherine Rainey, another member of Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk, to determine how to turn a body that is as yet largely theoretical into one that can bring tangible change to the campus.

‘Their Own Thing’

The multicultural student government’s $180,000 budget is eclipsed by the Student Senate’s allocation of roughly $880,000. However, the Senate voted to expand its campus-fee committee to 24 seats and to designate half of those positions for the multicultural student government, giving the new body significant influence over the allocation of student money.

It remains unclear, though, how the group will lobby university leaders, whether it will have a physical location, and what its specific rules and regulations will be. Also undetermined: who will head the organization. The first elections probably will not take place until next fall at the earliest.

The government has one more hurdle to clear before it becomes official. Bernadette Gray-Little, chancellor of the university system, could still decide not to approve the government’s formation, the student fee increase, or the allocation of budget control over the multicultural fund. The chancellor’s office is aware of the plan but is awaiting a formal proposal from the Student Senate before making a decision, a university official said.

In the meantime, Ms. Jones and Ms. Rainey said they would use a portion of their budget to create paid executive positions to encourage qualified students to run. They also plan to develop programming, which would be part of standard freshman orientation, to help prepare underrepresented students for the challenges of college.
The orientation plan, Ms. Jones acknowledged, is susceptible to the same criticism that has dogged the multicultural student government in general — that it could discriminate against white students.

"That is a common misconception about the student government, that white students aren’t allowed," Ms. Jones said. "Our goal is to make sure underrepresented identities are brought to the table. We are talking about veterans, we are talking students with children, nontraditional students, we are talking about students whose needs are not fully represented under the current Student Senate structure."

Ms. Jones said it’s not uncommon for the majority to become upset when the minority tries to shake up the status quo by demanding greater representation.

"There is a reason why they want their own thing," said Shaun R. Harper, executive director of the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education at the University of Pennsylvania, of the students who pushed for a multicultural government. "For generations, they have not felt included in the main things. They just reached a breaking point where they are tired of waiting to feel included in a place that routinely fails to include them."

In Search of Authority

While Mr. Harper is optimistic that the new government will help marginalized students feel involved, he does have concerns. Allowing minority students to work exclusively with one another could hamper students’ ability to work cooperatively with different groups, he said. Mr. Harper worries that Kansas could graduate leaders who get used to making decisions that affect diverse, multicultural groups without ever spending time learning about those groups.
That concern is valid, said Ms. Jones, but it misses the point of the multicultural student government.

"The central focus of underrepresented students being on campus is not just so that other students can have a learning experience," she said. "We want to make sure that underrepresented students are being centered because they are valuable, not just because they are useful to the majority group."

The multicultural student government should be able to provide students who feel excluded an opportunity to be involved, said Butch Oxendine, executive director of the American Student Government Association. But the body will confront the same problem most student governments face in creating change.

Mr. Oxendine cited the low voter turnout for the university’s Student Senate elections, around 20 percent, as reason to doubt that the Senate really represents what the campus wants. When even the traditional student government has struggled to fight apathy, he said, it’s fair to wonder if the multicultural student government will have the sway it hopes for.

"I don’t see any assurance in what I read that they are going to have more authority or influence or a better pulpit to get things done," said Mr. Oxendine.

Still, for Ms. Jones, the multicultural student government is a step in the right direction. At a campus where students had been demanding action, she said, the government offers a potential "reimagining of what change, diversity, and advocacy can look like."