Prostate Cancer Cells Could Be ‘Killed’ By Drugs Designed To Lower Cholesterol

Researchers say is could ‘reduce the need for toxic chemotherapy’.

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Rachel Moss Lifestyle Writer at The Huffington Post UK

Watch the story: [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/cholesterol-drugs-for-prostate-cancer_uk_5714c04ae4b0636a3f6cde1d](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/cholesterol-drugs-for-prostate-cancer_uk_5714c04ae4b0636a3f6cde1d)

Drugs usually prescribed to lower cholesterol may be an effective treatment against prostate cancer, new research suggests.

Researchers from the University of Missouri found that statins designed to combat high cholesterol can reduce the spread of prostate cancer and even kill cancer cells.

Prostate cancer death rates were found to be 43% lower among men who happened to be taking the drugs, when compared to the general population. Standard treatment for prostate cancer can include chemotherapy that targets receptors on cancer cells. However, drug-resistant cancer cells can emerge during chemotherapy, limiting its effectiveness as a cancer-fighting agent. According to the researchers, the cholesterol drugs may prevent this.

“Cholesterol is a molecule found in animal cells that serves as a structural component of cell membranes. When tumour cells grow, they synthesise more cholesterol,” explained study author Salman Hyder.

“Often, cancer patients are treated with toxic chemotherapies; however, in our study, we focused on reducing the production of cholesterol in cancer cells, which could kill cancer cells and reduce the need for toxic chemotherapy.” Using a compound developed by Roche Pharmaceuticals for the treatment of high cholesterol called RO 48-8071, Hyder and his team administered the molecule to human prostate cancer cells.
They found that the compound was effective in reducing human prostate cancer cell growth.

In a subsequent study, they found that the compound could even kill cancer cells completely.

Armed with this information, Hyder and the team then tested the results in mice with human prostate cancer cells. Following injection of the compound, Hyder found that the molecule was effective in reducing tumour growth.

According to the scientists, these findings suggest that the potential cholesterol drug, when used in combination with commonly used chemotherapeutic drugs, could “represent a new therapeutic approach in the fight against prostate cancer”.

**Graduate assistants voting on union representation at University of Missouri**

By Rudi Keller

Monday, April 18, 2016 at 2:00 pm

**Only a trickle of graduate assistants voted in the first few hours of the election that will decide if a union is coming to the University of Missouri.**

Fewer than 100 of the approximately 2,600 graduate assistants eligible to vote had done so by 9 a.m. Interim Chancellor Hank Foley on Friday referred to the balloting as a “mock election” and a “straw poll.” The university doesn’t recognize it as a true labor representation election and contends graduate assistants do not qualify as employees eligible to join a union.

Supporters of the union said they do not want a repeat of last fall’s announcement that graduate assistants would lose their health insurance subsidy, made the day before they began work for the year. The university reversed the decision on health insurance within a few days, and Foley increased minimum stipends for some doctoral students beginning in August.
“I would rather have a seat at the table and a contract rather than the promises, as nice as they are,” said Doug Valentine, a graduate assistant in the Department of Sociology.

Voting continues until 6 p.m. Monday and on Tuesday from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. The voting stations are in the MU Student Center and Memorial Union. The Coalition for Graduate Workers organized the election to determine whether graduate assistants want to form a local union affiliated with the Missouri National Education Association.

Graduate students employed by the university receive a stipend for living expenses, a tuition waiver and benefits that include subsidized individual health insurance coverage. Both the university and the coalition expect to go to court over the employment status of graduate assistants.

The university on March 10 hired Michael Kammerer, a leading management attorney from St. Louis, to assist it in the coming court battle. Kammerer, of McCarthy, Leonard and Kammerer LC, will be paid $330 an hour, and other attorneys in his firm will receive $175 to $285 per hour for handling the university’s business.

The university has used Kammerer’s firm on a number of occasions for other labor issues, UM spokesman John Fougere wrote in an email. The new assignment did not require a vote of the Board of Curators.

Asked for the university’s view on the vote, Fougere referred to statements made Friday by interim President Mike Middleton and curators’ Chair Pam Henrickson. At a news conference, Henrickson said the vote would not be recognized as a representation election.

“There is a serious legal question here that has to be resolved,” Henrickson said. “The election may be informative, but it is not going to be determinative.”

Leaders of the unionization movement said the vote will be an important demonstration of support for their cause.

“We have expressed our desire to avail ourselves of that right, and we will move forward regardless of whether they recognize the vote or not,” co-chair Connor Lewis said.

Zach Rubin, turnout coordinator for the coalition, said volunteers made hundreds of calls to remind graduate assistants of the upcoming election.

“I would be happy if at least 50 percent of graduate employees show up,” Rubin said. “The more people turn out, the better position we are in.”

On Friday, Foley said he wanted graduate assistants to be academics, not workers, explaining why he doesn’t want a union. He also said he was “not trying to go to war with these kids,” a statement that generated resentment that was still evident Monday.
Valentine said he is 31 and has a child of his own who is 18 months old. “To be talked of as a kid on the heels of him giving graduating seniors beer because they are adults is a little disingenuous,” he said.

Earlier this year, Foley agreed to allow beer to be served at this year’s senior send-off event.

“He has to say certain things, like it is not a legitimate election,” Valentine said. “It is all keeping up appearances, and I will let someone else determine if it is a mock election.”

Graduate students to vote on unionization

COLUMBIA, Mo - Graduate students will vote on whether to form a union.

The vote is happening Monday and Tuesday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the MU Student Center and the Memorial Union.

Right now, the University of Missouri does not recognize graduate assistants as employees.
Some graduate students say they are upset by this and want to make sure their rights are protected.

In August, the university announced that it would stop providing health insurance to graduate assistants. While the decision was quickly revoked, it served as a catalyst for unionization and caused graduate assistants to form the Forum on Graduate Rights as an advocacy group.

Today's union representation election will decide if the Coalition of Graduate Workers will essentially become the voice of the graduate assistants.

Regardless of the outcome of the vote, the university says it will still not recognize graduate assistants as employees of the university.
Democrats say Mizzou panel may lack diversity

By Kurt Erickson St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 18 hrs ago

JEFFERSON CITY • Democratic lawmakers are concerned that a special panel proposed to address problems at the University of Missouri may lack diversity.

At a hearing Monday, two members of a committee reviewing the proposed commission said the lack of guidelines on who is appointed to the commission is puzzling given that race played a role in the unrest that roiled the campus in 2015.

“This could basically be eight white men,” said Rep. Gina Mitten, a St. Louis Democrat.

Democratic Rep. Courtney Curtis of St. Louis also raised concerns about the proposed commission.
"I just want to make sure my community is involved," said Curtis, who represents an urban district.

Under a plan approved earlier this month in the Senate, the university would be required to implement the recommendations of a special 8-member commission appointed by House Speaker Todd Richardson, R-Poplar Bluff, and Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, R-Joplin.

Members would not be lawmakers, but instead have experience in governance, finance and school leadership.

The two GOP leaders are not required to follow any guidelines on race, gender or geographic area in making their selections to the committee. But Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia, who is handling the proposal in the House, said he expects diversity to be a consideration because that’s partly why the problems at MU started.

The commission was crafted in response to the unrest last year that boiled over into protests, a threatened boycott by the Mizzou football team and the departure of two top administrators.

The House had sought to punish the university by cutting its budget. The Senate version of the budget restores those cuts on the assumption that the panel could help university administrators correct problems.

The commission and the budget cuts are among a handful of proposals that were floated in the aftermath of the university’s tumultuous year. Sen. Eric Schmitt, a Glendale Republican who is running for treasurer, filed legislation that would launch an audit of the university.

Auditor Nicole Galloway is moving forward with her own audit of the system without waiting for the Legislature to act on Schmitt’s bill.

The commission, if approved, would have to finish its work by Dec. 31.
JEFFERSON CITY — State legislators, rankled over a perceived failure by campus leaders to address problems at MU, expressed trepidation Monday about a proposed commission to review the structure of the four-campus University of Missouri System.

Rep. Tom Hurst, vice chair of the House Committee on Government Oversight and Accountability, wondered aloud at a Monday hearing on Senate Concurrent Resolution 66 whether the commission would lack real authority.

"Do they (the commission) have any teeth?" Hurst asked.

If passed, the resolution would create an eight-member commission to evaluate the efficiency of the UM System's organization, diversity programs, administrative structure and research procedures. The Senate approved the resolution two weeks ago.

The committee did not vote on the resolution. Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, filed the measure in March. Only three members of the 10-person House committee offered opinions during Monday's hearing.

Marty Oetting, UM director of government relations, and Tom Rackers, a lobbyist representing the MU Flagship Council, testified in favor of the resolution. Rackers said the board of the Flagship Council voted unanimously to support the commission.

Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia, also testified in favor of the commission and said UM System Interim President Mike Middleton and MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley support it.
Hurst criticized UM System leaders at the hearing. He said the governor-appointed UM Board of Curators "sat back on their hands" during unrest at MU in the fall. Protests against a perceived lack of response from administrators to racism at MU culminated in the November resignation of former UM System President Tim Wolfe.

Hurst said nothing has been resolved since. University leaders, he said, failed to respond to letters signed by more than 100 state representatives, which called for the firing of associate communication professor Melissa Click, who tried to block a student journalist from filming campus protests in November. The Board of Curators fired Click on Feb. 25.

"We were largely ignored," Hurst said. "Basically, slapped in the face."

Two other representatives questioned whether the legislature would make an effort to include non-white members in the commission. The House speaker and the Senate president pro tem would appoint the commission.

"So, this could basically be just eight white men appointed by the speaker and the pro tem?" Rep. Gina Mitten, D-St. Louis, asked Rowden after his testimony.

Rowden said that was possible but that diversity would be a factor when appointments are made. Rep. Courtney Allen Curtis, D-Ferguson, suggested specific criteria be added to the resolution to ensure diversity.

The system engages in inefficient spending, Hurst said. He cited the proliferation of construction at MU despite a March announcement from Foley that fall enrollment could drop by as many as 1,500 students.

MU has taken more care to preserve its budget than to address legislative concerns about its operations, Hurst said.
The House voted in favor of cutting the budget by $8.6 million a month ago, a move representatives said they hoped would punish UM System leaders. In early April, the Senate eliminated all but $1 million of the budget cuts.

At a Senate committee hearing two weeks ago, Schaefer pushed to reduce the proposed budget cuts. The commission, he said, would help pinpoint potential flaws within the UM System.

The budget passed by the Senate would allot $750,000 from the general revenue fund for the commission's operations.

If the resolution passes, the commission would present findings from its review to the General Assembly in December. The UM System's failure to address recommended changes could affect future appropriations, according to the resolution.

At the end of the hearing, Rowden urged his colleagues to consider the idea. "What we have before us is an opportunity to get ahead of the curve."

"It's my hope that we can ... lead a national dialogue and say: 'This is what higher education looks like going forward, and the University of Missouri is going to be a leader.' And if that requires some painful changes in the process, then that's what we're willing to do."

Lawmakers discuss UM review commission

State Sen. Kurt Schaefer's proposed oversight group considered by House committee

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. - The Missouri House Committee on Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics discussed SCR 66 Monday which, if passed, would create the "University of Missouri System Review Commission."

Proposed by state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, the proposed group would consist of eight members appointed by General Assembly leadership.
The commission would be responsible for evaluating the university’s rules and regulations, administration, campus structure, degree programs and diversity.

“My goal in filing this resolution is to provide an objective evaluation of the university’s structure, accountability, and transparency,” Schaefer said. “This step is necessary to ensure the long-term survival and growth of this capable institution, and to earn back the trust and respect that has been lost through a series of recent poor decisions.”

A report of recommendations would be filed by the end of the calendar year. Lawmakers would then see how well they were implemented, and lawmakers would use that information during the next year’s state appropriations.

MISSOURIAN

Rape report leads to arrest of MU student

RACHEL PHILLIPS, 22 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — An MU student was arrested Sunday afternoon on suspicion of rape and sodomy.

Conner James Whyte, 19, was taken into custody at 4:56 p.m. in connection with an incident at an MU residence hall in the southwest corner of campus. The victim is an MU student, MU Police Department Maj. Brian Weimer said.

Police were notified of the incident at 3 a.m. Sunday, Weimer said. According to the Boone County Sheriff’s Department website, Whyte was booked into the Boone County Jail at 8:07 p.m. Sunday. His bond was set at $40,000.

Whyte, who is listed as a sophomore in MU’s online directory, was released on bond at 8:12 a.m. Monday.

No Clery release was issued because the incident did not involve an active, ongoing threat to campus, Weimer said.
**Rape reports**

At the beginning of 2013, the FBI changed its definition of rape for Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data collection. Prior to 2013, the offense was known as “forcible rape,” and its definition was “the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.”

The revised definition includes males and specifies rape as “penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.” For our 2013 data, we used data collected under the revised definition, as agencies in Missouri and Columbia reported their numbers under this definition.

Under the new definition, men are now included in the population base for calculating incidences per 100,000 residents. However, in state and city data collected before 2013, UCR rapes per capita were based on the entire population. For comparative purposes, rapes per 100,000 women in Missouri and Columbia were calculated using 2013 estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics' 2013 Criminal Victimization Survey, rape is the most underreported violent crime. In 2013, 34.8 percent of rape victimizations were reported to the police.

- Columbia’s reported rape rates per 100,000 residents were, on average, 28.3 percent higher than U.S. rates between 2009 and 2013.

- Columbia’s reported rape rates per 100,000 residents were, on average, 40.1 percent higher than Missouri rates between 2009 and 2013.

- The reported rape rate in Columbia rose by an average of 6.3 percent per year from 2009 to 2012.

- Columbia police reported 147 rapes under the legacy definition between 2009 and 2012. There were 67 in 2013 under the revised definition.
MUPD arrests man on suspicion of rape, sodomy on MU campus

COLUMBIA, Mo - The University of Missouri Police Department said it arrested a man on suspicion of rape and sodomy on MU campus.

Weimer said the reported rape happened at an MU residential hall on MU campus. He said he believes the victim and suspect were acquaintances.

Public arrests record list Whyte's address as Lathrop Hall. It's unclear if this is the residential hall where the alleged rape happened.

The MU Residential Life website says those who live in the dorms on MU campus "must be enrolled in at least one class on the MU campus."

Whyte remained in the Boone County jail Monday morning.

Man arrested for rape, sodomy on Mizzou campus

COLUMBIA, Mo. — The University of Missouri Police Department arrested a man for rape and sodomy on campus early Sunday morning.
Major Brian Weimer with MUPD said officers were called to a resident hall on campus around 3:00 a.m. There, police contacted a female victim.

After the investigation, police arrested 19-year-old Conner J. Whyte. According to the Boone County Sheriff's Department arrest reports Whyte is living in Lathrop Hall on campus.

Police have requested charges of rape and sodomy.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Man who made threats on Yik Yak switches plea to guilty**

KARLEE RENKOSKI, 14 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — The 19-year-old man arrested in November for making an anonymous threat on Yik Yak changed his plea Monday to guilty.

Hunter Park, who was a student at the Missouri University of Science and Technology, was arrested Nov. 11 in his dormitory on suspicion of threatening to kill black people on the social media application Yik Yak. He was charged with making a terrorist threat in the first degree, a Class C felony that carries a prison term of up to seven years.

He was booked into the Boone County Jail on Nov. 11 and released on Nov. 18 on a $10,000 bond.

Park's attorney, Jeffery Hilbrenner, entered a not guilty plea for his client in January and asked that Park's formal arraignment be waived.

According to court documents, the post read:

"Some of you are alright. Don't go to campus tomorrow. Well tomorrow Mizzou will really make national news. I'm going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see."

The threat prompted the MU Alert system to send out mass notifications and caused some class cancellations at MU.
Park's sentencing was scheduled for 2 p.m. June 16 at the Boone County Courthouse, according to court records.

Student pleads guilty to making terroristic threats to MU campus

COLUMBIA – The man accused of making terroristic threats to the MU campus on social media last fall pleaded guilty Monday.

Investigators said Hunter Park, 20, posted an anonymous terroristic threat about the campus on the social media app Yik Yak.

The University of Missouri Police Department arrested Park in November for the incident.

Park is a sophomore at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla.

Original reports said Park was not on or near the MU campus at the time of the threats.

Man who made threats MU pleads guilty

BOONE COUNTY, Mo. — The man who allegedly made terrorist threats against the University of Missouri pleaded guilty on Monday.
Hunter Park, a student at Missouri S&T in Rolla, made those terrorist threats on the social media site Yik-Yak in November. Hunter allegedly posted anonymously that he would shoot people on campus. That threat came after the racial tension and protests on the MU campus.

Hunter is scheduled to be sentenced on June 16 at 2:00 p.m.

MISSOURIAN

Confirmed mumps case in MU residence hall

JARED KAUFMAN, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — A student in an MU residence hall has mumps, Susan Even, MU Student Health Center executive director, confirmed Monday.

The student is a resident in the North-Center halls complex on Kentucky Boulevard. According to a Residential Life notice to be posted in North and Center halls, the student is no longer contagious and didn't contract the disease on campus.

When a case of mumps is confirmed in Missouri, the diagnosing party must report it to the state Health Department. If several mumps cases are reported in one area in a short time, it's deemed an outbreak, which then is tested and tracked by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Last year, there were 1,057 mumps cases reported in the U.S. Before the creation of a vaccine for mumps in 1967, there were about 186,000 cases of mumps reported nationally each year.

This case was diagnosed at the Student Health Center, said Even, who is also MU's chief health officer. Symptoms of mumps include swelling of glands under the ears and jawbone, fever and body aches. But people who get mumps are generally only contagious for the first five days.

Mumps patients are typically not hospitalized unless they need supportive care, such as IV fluids. There are currently no plans to remove the student from the residence hall because that’s not part
of the university’s mumps response protocol, Even said. Patients are allowed to wait out the infectious period at home; in this case, the person's dorm room.

“At our school, once we diagnose someone, they’ve already been sick (and) they’ve already exposed people before they came to us,” Even said. “By the time we see them, it’s day two, three or four. So one more day, two more days (of being contagious). We’ll give them permission not to go to class and stay in their room for a day, but they’re really not walking around contagious to somebody.”

Since mumps is a viral infection, there’s no medical treatment. Prevention is the best way to avoid more mumps cases, she said. This means getting the word out to those why might have come in contact with the patient. Mumps is transmitted through saliva, so sharing drinks, musical instruments, kisses and food can put a person at risk.

“The next step is … to communicate to the people who might have been exposed, who were in (the patient’s) closest contacts,” Even said. “Roommate, the people around them. If they should have symptoms that might look like mumps, … they should seek medical attention.”

In the longterm, though, the MMR vaccine — measles, mumps, rubella — can shield people from the disease.

“That’s one of the best preventative measures we can recommend people do, stay up to date on your vaccines,” said Andrea Waner, public information officer for Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services Department. “Get vaccinated when you’re supposed to, check your shot record if you’re worried you haven’t been vaccinated. That’s the big one.”
Former MU Chancellor Loftin: 'I Didn't Sit Around' after Leaving Position

On November 9, 2015, following an intense few weeks of student protests on Mizzou’s campus and the resignation of UM System President Tim Wolfe earlier the same day, University of Missouri Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin stepped up to a podium in front of the Board of Curators and the journalists gathered.

“I have decided today that I will transition from the role of chancellor of Missouri effective at the end of this year and move into a new role where I will work with many people across the system to advance our research mission,” Loftin said.

According to R. Bowen Loftin’s Terms of Transition Agreement, signed by both Loftin and former UM System President Wolfe, his new positions would be the Director for Research Facility Development and the Director of University Research in support of the Tiger Institute for Health Innovation. This institute is a partnership between the University of Missouri and Cerner Health.

Days later, on November 12, 2015, Cerner Corporation sent a letter to the chairman of the UM Board of Governors to complain that Cerner had not been consulted or notified about the decision to give R. Bowen Loftin a role within the Tiger Institute.

So this position did not come to fruition. What has R. Bowen Loftin been up to since he stepped down as MU Chancellor? What has he done in three and a half months – all while still being paid his full salary?

"I didn’t sit around," Loftin said. "I’ve been very busy."

Loftin has a new office in the General Services building. It is a normal looking office, with books on chemistry, math and physics lining the walls. He said the office is rather new to him, and he had been working from a small office in the Chancellor’s residence up until the new placement.
He said that he has spent the last few months communicating and reconnecting with people who could help further the university’s mission.

“One of the sort of odd benefits of last fall’s events was the fact that my name became sort of made known publicly around the country a lot for a few days, and I had, I’m estimating, at least a thousand emails, phone calls, text messages, Facebook messenger messages, DMs… from people I had worked with in the past,” Loftin said. “Including former students and former colleagues at universities where I’ve been.”

Loftin had a long history in research prior to becoming a full time administrator – including being a professor of physics, a physics department chair and the director of the NASA/University of Houston Virtual Environments Research Institute from the late ’90s to early 2000s.

While a new title has not yet been confirmed, Loftin said that he and Interim Chancellor Foley had a conversation about what he could do to best help the university, and they settled on Loftin using his relationships and years of experience in the field to help the university find more opportunities for funding through the national security sector.

“I want to find opportunities and relationships for faculty at MU and across the UM system that give them the ability to do what they want to do. In terms of research related to national security,” Loftin said.

An MU spokesperson sent this statement:

“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.”

Loftin said he is reconnected with individuals that he worked with or advised in the past – trying to get himself back “up to speed” in the field.

“I’m right now in a learning mode and in a rebuilding relationship mode,” Loftin said. “I’m trying to learn a lot about what our faculty do here and at the other three campuses in the system. So I’m on the web a lot. Going to their websites and looking at what they’re doing specifically.”

He said that over time he hopes to be meeting with faculty members individually to talk about the research they would like to do in the future.

“Then if I can find a connection that enables them to build a partnership to obtain a grant or contract for their work then that’s a positive thing going forward,” Loftin said.

Loftin says he is working under the assumption that the specific letter of appointment will be finalized soon, and said he is working for a long list of bosses. According to Loftin, these include Dr. Mark McIntosh, the MU Interim Vice Chancellor for Research, Graduate Studies and Economic Development; Dr. Bob Schwartz, the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs,
Research and Economic Development of the UM System; and Dr. Elizabeth Loboa, the Dean of the College of Engineering.

Throughout the next year, in this new, still undefined position, Loftin’s salary will be at least $337,500, or 75 percent of his salary when he left office as chancellor. When asked if he thought this was fair given that campus operations intends to cut 50 positions for Fiscal Year 2017 and others across campus are facing budget cuts, Loftin replied that his salary was “not something new.”

“I came here under an appointment offer which was made in 2013 and those numbers derive from that. This isn’t anything recent,” Loftin said. “If you look at a list of people’s salaries at this university, where I sit - it’s pretty far down the list. Very far down the list. There are many many faculty here who make much more than I'll be making.”

Loftin said he is not only spending his time learning about and meeting with faculty members, but he is also traveling to different conferences and events to learn more about the field and tour the labs of those he has worked with in the past.

He has already spent days in Kansas City, and is planning to travel to Kansas City, Los Angeles and Washington – all in just the next few weeks.

When asked who was paying for the travel, the University or Loftin himself, an MU spokesperson declined to comment.

As for the current status of the Tiger Institute job, Loftin said “I’ve not heard from them since probably February this year.”

“We had several meetings,” Loftin said. “It began the week of November 9. I had a meeting that week with the Tiger Institute director and we had other meetings past that, and I don’t know where that is right now.”

But he said, at least in his mind, he has not been sitting idle waiting for a job to come to fruition.

“I was working already the week of November the Ninth,” Loftin said. “I had several meetings that week about the types of tasks that were discussed in my agreement and I wasn’t waiting for those to actually go through some process. I began reaching out - I had a thousand emails to answer. I’ve spent a long time answering emails and phone calls and text messages and other kinds of communication I had from a lot of people.”
We are living in an age of vast technological improvement, and this growth has been predicted many times over to lead to the downfall of the human race. While that hasn’t exactly been the case, there have in fact been some negative consequences to our increasingly Jetson-esque world.

We all already know about modern technology’s ability to distract, whether it be in class or the night before a final exam. But what many of us college students are just beginning to realize is its potential to disrupt our sleep, and lord knows we can’t afford any less sleep than we’re already getting. But before we bemoan the times we live in, we need to realize that this technological growth, as distracting as it can be on a personal level, is also helping researchers and scientists understand sleep better than ever before.

The work is being done on a large scale, like at the National Sleep Foundation or the Stanford Center for Sleep Sciences and Medicine, but a growing understanding of sleep is being promoted at areas all over the country. At the University of Missouri, students are offered a course that they can take from the most appropriate place possible: their own beds.

**Sleep and Sleep Disorders, an online class taught by Dennis Miller, an Associate Professor at the University of Missouri School of Psychological Sciences, focuses on teaching students the ins and outs of sleep deprivation.**

“The goal of the class is to get a basic overview of what happens when we sleep, why it’s important and some of the common sleep disorders that people might experience,” Miller said. The course runs for nine months, so even though no formal classroom is used, it’s still an immersive experience.
“We tend to think of sleep as just being unconscious - 8 hours to 10 hours a night we are unconscious - but sleep is really us existing in a different form of consciousness,” Miller said. “If we do certain things like take drugs that disrupt the brain’s activity, what we’ll find is we’re not at our best the next day.”

College students often use their weekends to catch up on sleep, but many of them don’t know that their alcohol and drug use inhibits their sleep’s effectiveness, even if they sleep in until late in the afternoon. In fact, having drastically different sleep habits on the weekends is potentially harmful to a person’s sleep schedule during the week, as sleeping in late or relying on naps creates a harmful reliance on midday rest. These seemingly innocuous habits can lead students down a slippery slope.

“Regardless of how many hours of sleep you get, low quality sleep will make you feel groggy and drowsy, and long term that can contribute to psychological disorders like depression and anxiety,” Miller said.

When students understand their sleep patterns and recognize when it’s time to make a change in their habits, they are taking a big step toward better overall health. Miller recommends maintaining a regular schedule. “It can be hard with classes, work and other social activities, but you should try to go to sleep around the same time every night and get up at the same time each morning.” This might mean foregoing the temptation to sleep in on days that start late, because in the long run your body’s ability to adjust will prize the quality of your sleep over the amount.

Sleep and Sleep Disorders is just one class at one university, and the country is rapidly making improvements in access to sleep education. If your university offers a class like this one, online or not, you might want at least consider it for the benefit of your physical and mental health.
When MU announced budget cuts that will eliminate 50 positions, Columbia's leaders began seeking ways to absorb those jobs.

"We took down a joint resolution from us (the chamber), the city, the county and the school district about our support for our university," Matt McCormick, president of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce, told KOMU-TV. "We are one community; we're in this together. We're going to work together to come up with the best solution."

It’s the type of decision good neighbors make when they see trouble on the other side of Elm Street. The people who clean the buildings at MU were about to face unemployment. City leaders know many of the people in those positions are black. Their loss of employment would add to the dismal disparity between blacks and whites in Columbia.

In 2013, 47 percent of blacks in Columbia made $20,000. According to statistics in the city of Columbia 2016-19 Strategic Plan, 21 percent made less than $10,000. During that same period, black unemployment in Columbia was 15.7 percent compared to 4.4 percent for whites.

Overcoming the unemployment and wage gaps between blacks and whites was a daunting challenge before MU announced budget cuts. The wealth gap has traditionally been framed within the context of a mounting achievement gap, incarceration and a lack of sustainable job training. The numbers expose the tale of a polarized city with race as the factor that determines quality of life.

City Manager Mike Matthes, members of the city staff and concerned citizens are deeply engaged in creating solutions. They know too well the extent systemic racism plays in
overcoming the economic divide. They know race has and continues to undermine efforts to stimulate the type of economic growth that levels the playing field for blacks living in Columbia.

City leaders are wise in building a bridge between the city and MU, but the timing couldn’t be worse. Resources at MU are needed to form the type of collaboration that stimulates economic growth throughout the city. MU can help create the type of jobs that can lift residents out from under the cycle of poverty that impacts far too many people.

Rather than engage in negotiations that build upon town-gown collaborations, MU is struggling to swim to the shore after being hit with a colossal deficit. Beyond the job cuts of those who clean buildings on campus, a hiring freeze impacts the employment of hundreds of people.

The freeze makes it virtually impossible for MU to meet goals to increase black faculty. Budget cuts impact employee benefits, promotions and stagnates the way MU thinks long-term.

Budget cuts also impact the management of city government.

Thanks to consumer fascination with online shopping, the city is facing substantial budget cuts that will impact employment. The budget for the next fiscal year could reflect up to 3 percent cuts due to massive reductions in sales taxes caused by online shopping.

Although the dip in sales taxes isn’t enough to severely hinder the management of city government, it does raise conversations related to the role the city plays in stimulating economic development. The City of Columbia, like MU, is a major employer locally. Matthes understands the need to ponder how the city limits the employment of black people due to systemic racism.

As the city contemplates ways to change its hiring process, members of the Columbia City Council and residents should consider how the lack of business incentives impede the implementation of an economic development strategy that addresses economic disparity.

Columbia’s anti-business climate negates the formation of public/private partnerships that secure jobs for the people who need them the most. The city could enforce baselines that reflect the
goals of the city. Given that the black-white economic gap has been identified as Columbia’s largest obstacle, shouldn’t the policies of the city reflect ways to overcome this barrier?

If the goal of the city is to create sustainable employment for a population left out due to the prevalence of racism in hiring practices, shouldn’t the city help negotiate ways to move the broader community beyond implicit bias in the work force?

Many will continue to argue economic barriers are assembled as a consequence of deficient black performance. Rather than concede data that substantiates indicators of obstructions that are part of a system of institutionalized racism, many blame the poor for their misfortune. The data in Columbia compels us to consider an aggressive solution.

City leaders have taken the first step. They clearly recognize how the local economy is impacted by budget cuts at MU. The reduction in students, changes with employee benefit plans, concerns with the unionization of graduate students, the meager pay of adjunct faculty and the hiring freeze — all have damaging repercussions for the city.

One could argue this is the consequence of failing to address systemic racism. That’s if you concede the correlation between reductions in student enrollment and student protest. What is clear is the escalating burden budget cuts have in the lives of blacks living in Columbia.

Citizens can easily dismiss this as problem best managed by black people. Some will argue against government creating policies and stirring a process to advance the needs of a few. This is a credible argument that shouldn’t be minimized as racist. It is a fundamental difference in the way people think about the role of government.

But, as you consider your position, think about how we got here and what it takes for people to overcome when the odds continue to be stacked against them because of the color of their skin.
Missouri Sen. Kurt Schaefer’s bullying on abortion rights wears thin

His shameful attacks on Planned Parenthood and MU are designed to gain publicity

But some people are fighting back, while others point out the absurdity of his efforts

BY YAE L T. ABOUHALKAH

Missouri state Sen. Kurt Schaefer loves the limelight. That’s common among political candidates lusting for higher office; Schaefer wants to be the state’s next attorney general.

In recent months Schaefer has tried to get plenty of attention, polishing his ultra-conservative credentials with the Republican crowd in the Show-Me State.

His weapon: bullying attacks on abortion rights for women.

**His targets: Planned Parenthood and the University of Missouri.**

But a few funny things have happened in recent days to Schaefer. They offer up the hope that Missourians are wising up to the dangerous games he’s playing.

- Planned Parenthood officials have revealed how they are going to fight back against attempts by Schaefer and the committee he leads to hold a top official of the organization in contempt of the Senate.

Mary Kogut — the president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri — wants to face potential witnesses against her in next Monday’s scheduled contempt hearing.
This is a trumped-up matter by Schaefer and other Republicans who are continuing years of attempts to end legal abortions in Missouri.

It would be the height of absurdity for the Senate to go through with this farce to find Kogut and a pathology lab owner, James Miller, in contempt for not releasing six years — that’s right, six years — worth of files to lawmakers.

If jail time is the result of this gamesmanship, Schaefer might look like a hero to a few people for political reasons. But Missouri would look like a backward state that can’t get its priorities straight.

And in the long run, trampling on the legal system in a trivial attack on Planned Parenthood could backfire on Schaefer and deep-six his attorney general campaign.

• Schaefer’s attack on the freedom of academic research in Missouri recently earned him “runner up” status in the 25th annual Jefferson Muzzles, a contest run by the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression.

The nonpartisan, nonprofit organization in Virginia hands out awards to “institutions and individuals responsible for committing some of the more egregious and ridiculous affronts to free speech in the prior year.” The finalists will be named Wednesday.

Late last year, Schaefer used his bully pulpit to threaten the University of Missouri by trying to get documents “related to a research project in which a doctoral student in the university’s School of Social Work is gauging the impact of Missouri’s new law requiring women to wait 72 hours before obtaining an abortion,” as The Star’s Barb Shelly wrote.

Schaefer thought he could bully the student and MU officials into stopping the research; Missouri law prohibits using tax revenues to do anything that could encourage women to have abortions.

As the Jefferson Center pointed out:

“The lawmaker’s assertion raises so many questions it is hard to know where to begin. One that comes to mind is how does he know the effect or impact of a dissertation that hasn’t even been written yet?....
“That Sen. Schaefer attempted to silence the expression of views he does not agree with is troubling, but to use his office to inject politics into academia is particularly disturbing. Academic inquiry requires the freedom to explore any theme, concept, or idea. Sen. Schaefer appears to believe academic freedom extends only to those studies that politicians believe will support their political views.”

Yes, that’s the Kurt Schaefer we’ve come to know. His bullying act is wearing thin.

**A Broader Protest Agenda**
Race is still a prominent issue in this semester’s rallies and sit-ins, but students are also pushing issues related to campus employees, foreign policy, state laws on sexual orientation and more - and linking the various topics.

**No MU Mention**

While the protests that swept campuses in the fall semester varied, most focused on issues of race.

This semester, students have resumed protests, especially in the past few weeks, with a series of sit-ins and lengthy protests in public spaces.

These appear to share less in the way of a theme, though students involved will tell you they are still connected. Students at Clemson University have been staging a days-long protest -- during which several were arrested for trying to occupy a campus building -- focusing on the university’s racial climate. A recent protest at the University of Washington also focused on race.

But other campus protests have widened their scope. Duke University protesters -- who occupied the president’s office for a week -- are fighting for employees’ rights and a $15 minimum wage for all campus employees. Students at Appalachian State University, who also staged a sit-in, want to hear officials there denounce North Carolina’s bathroom bill, which bars transgender students from using restrooms and locker rooms that don’t match their assigned gender at birth. Ohio State University protesters are demanding transparency on finances and divestment from several companies with operations in Israel. Some of these protests -- while not primarily
focused on race -- have touched on the issue. Duke students, for example, regularly pointed out that many of the employees paid the least on campus are not white.

These protests also vary widely in length. Duke’s has continued for weeks now, whereas Ohio State’s sit-in ended the same night it began. At Clemson occupiers were shut down swiftly, via arrests for trespassing, but the protest continued outside in tents.

As these protests and sit-ins have unfolded, many on social media have expressed solidarity with the activism on other campuses, suggesting common ground among those taking action.

Activists at Duke posted a statement that read, in part, “We stand in solidarity with students at Ohio State, Appalachian State, UC Davis and beyond who are currently occupying their administrative spaces. We see their campaigns and ours as part of a larger resurgence of student activism addressing deep systematic issues that require transparency and action from university officials.”

Mina Ezikpe, who participated in Duke sit-in, also added in an interview that insufficient or hypocritical administrative leadership connect the various protests.

“The way that universities espouse a certain rhetoric of progressiveness and then those same universities repress social change and repress students on campus is very much connected,” she said. “It’s also about holding our institutions accountable for the ideals they espouse all the time to us .... Why is it the university that tells us we have the power to make the world a better place, but those same people running the university are so shocked the students would actually try to hold them accountable to those ideals they tell us about all the time?”

Shell Sindle, a student at Ohio State who helped organize the protests there, said many campus protests are also fighting disenfranchisement. “Most campaigns are generally interested in democratization of our universities,” she wrote in an email. “Most every protest and campaign can get behind that without compromising their primary goal. We want a seat at the table; we want to be an integrative part of the decision-making process.”

The demands Sindle and her compatriots have put to their university’s administration are notable in light of the many pronouncements of solidarity between campuses. They feature the priorities of three student organizations but ask that the university only commit to progress on at least one.
“The issue is not the issue,” said Angus Johnston, a historian who tracks student activism, echoing a common saying from protests in the 1960s, with which, he added, current student activism shares more than a passing similarity.

“Frequently when you’re organizing on a campus, the immediate proximate cause ... it’s only a small part of why you are organizing,” he said. “Something may light the fire and spur you to action, but it’s not the only thing you are dissatisfied with about the way the campus is run or in larger society.”

Another important factor unique to this wave of protests, Johnston said, is how skilled students are at building coalitions, be they between groups on campus (like at OSU), local communities (a feature of the Duke sit-in) or race, gender and ideology.

“This generation of students are much, much better at building those bridges across communities than previous waves of activism in the United States,” he said. The issues themselves aren’t new, though -- recent protests center on racial justice, economic access, sexual harassment and workers’ rights. But, he added, “There is definitely something new in the level and intensity and breadth of the organizing that’s happening.”