Hiring bias study: Resumes with black, white, Hispanic names treated the same

New research on hiring bias found resumes bearing names traditionally held by blacks and Hispanics are just as likely to lead to callbacks and job interviews as those bearing white-sounding names.

The findings, announced last week by the University of Missouri, diverge from the results of a famous study from more than a decade ago that found Lakishas and Jamals were far less likely to get job interviews than Emilys and Gregs.

But study co-author Cory Koedel, an associate professor of economics and public policy at the University of Missouri, cautions that it would "be crazy" to interpret the results to suggest hiring discrimination is a problem of the past.

"People should not overreact to this study, but I think it is a data point to be considered when thinking about discrimination in the labor market today," Koedel said.

The study is the first to apply the resume test to Hispanic applicants, Koedel said, but most of the attention it is getting is fixated on the black-white test.

The new study, which is forthcoming in the journal Applied Economics Letters, has important differences from the research published in 2004 by University of Chicago professor Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan, then at MIT and now at Harvard.

Namely, they used different names.
In the original study, Bertrand and Mullainathan sent nearly 5,000 resumes to 1,300 job ads they found in newspapers in Boston and Chicago from fictional applicants with "very white-sounding names" like Emily Walsh and Greg Baker and "very African-American sounding names" like Lakisha Washington and Jamal Jones. The names were randomly assigned to higher-quality and lower-quality resumes and submitted for administrative support, clerical, customer service and sales openings.

The white names got 50 percent more callbacks than the black names, regardless of the industry or occupation.

One of the criticisms of that study was that Lakisha and Jamal can denote socioeconomic status, and that employers may have made assumptions about education and income rather than race.

Hoping to capture the effect of race alone, Koedel and his co-author, Rajeev Darolia, conducted their experiment using surnames that the U.S. Census shows overwhelmingly belong to whites, blacks and Hispanics, while using first names to signify gender.

In the new experiment, the researchers sent nearly 9,000 resumes to online job postings in seven cities for positions in sales, administrative assistance, customer service, information technology, medical assistance and medical office/billing. The resumes from the fictional black applicants bore the last names Washington and Jefferson, while those from white candidates bore Anderson and Thompson, and those from Hispanic candidates bore Hernandez and Garcia.

On average, 11.4 percent of resumes received a response from an employer, and there were no statistically significant differences across race, ethnic or gender groups.
The study, which only measured the very first step in the hiring process, could suggest that racial discrimination is less prevalent than it was a dozen years ago, the researchers say in a policy paper.

But it also could indicate that last names are a weak signal of race.

Though 90 percent of people with the last name Washington are black and 75 percent of those named Jefferson are black, "there is the fair criticism that maybe no one knows that," Koedel said.

The first names likely didn't help strengthen the connection. Megan and Brian were used for the white candidates, and Chloe and Ryan for the black candidates.

"If I got a resume in the mail for Chloe Washington or Ryan Jefferson it would be hard for me to imagine that I would have interpreted that differently from Megan Anderson or Bryan Thompson," said Northwestern University professor David Figlio, director of the school's Institute for Policy Research, who was not involved in the study.

Doing a search on a database he has of 2 million names of kids born in Florida between 1994 and 2002, Figlio found that 90 percent of Ryans and 89 percent of Chloes are white.

"This new study is interesting and worthwhile but I don't think it changes my view in how important race is in subconscious decision-making," Figlio said. He points to a 2010 study by Stanford University researchers, titled "The Visible Hand," that showed racial bias without the complications of names and other indicators that could influence people's decisions.

That experiment found that an iPod being sold online got 13 percent fewer responses and 17 percent fewer offers if it was shown held by a black hand than by a white hand, "strong evidence that race really makes a difference when people are talking about trustworthiness," Figlio said.
"Am I willing to buy an iPod from somebody — that's exactly the same thing employers are thinking when deciding to hire someone," Figlio said.

To Figlio, the most valuable findings from the Missouri resume study relate to the Hispanic names, which to his knowledge have not been put to such a test before.

The researchers paired the first names Isabella and Carlos with the last names Garcia and Hernandez, all strong indicators of Hispanic origin. So a finding that employers didn't treat those resumes any differently is significant, he said, "and a bit reassuring."

Careem Gladney, who works in supply chain at Cargill Industries and is black, said he doesn't know if he was ever passed up for a job because of his first name. But he believes hiring managers are conscious of it, which isn't always a bad thing. It can help a candidate's prospects if the company values diversity.

"I believe people are conscious of it, and they definitely make a decision," Gladney said.

The New York Times

To Keep Obesity at Bay, Exercise May Trump Diet

By GRETCHEN REYNOLDS

MAY 4, 2016 5:45 AM May 4, 2016 5:45 am Comment

Young rats prone to obesity are much less likely to fulfill that unhappy destiny if they run during adolescence than if they do not, according to a provocative new animal study of exercise and weight. They also were metabolically healthier, and had different gut microbes, than rats that keep the weight off by cutting back on food, the study found. The experiment was done in rodents, not people, but it does raise interesting questions about just what role exercise may play in keeping obesity at bay.
For some time, many scientists, dieting gurus and I have been pointing out that exercise by itself tends to be ineffective for weight loss. Study after study has found that if overweight people start working out but do not also reduce their caloric intake, they shed little if any poundage and may gain weight.

The problem, most scientists agree, is that exercise increases appetite, especially in people who are overweight, and also can cause compensatory inactivity, meaning that people move less over all on days when they exercise. Consequently, they wind up burning fewer daily calories, while also eating more. You do the math.

But those discouraging studies involved weight loss. There has been much less examination of whether exercise might help to prevent weight gain in the first place and, if it does, how it compares to calorie restriction for that purpose.

So for the new study, which was published last week in Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise, researchers at the University of Missouri in Columbia and other schools first gathered rats from a strain that has an inborn tendency to become obese, starting in adolescence. (Adolescence is also when many young people begin to add weight.)

These rats were young enough, though, that they were not yet overweight.

After weighing them, the researchers divided the animals into three groups.

One group was allowed to eat as much kibble as they wished and to remain sedentary in their cages. These were the controls.

Another group, the exercise group, also was able to eat at will, but these animals were provided with running wheels in their cages. Rats like to run, and the animals willingly hopped on the wheels, exercising every day.

The final group, the dieting group, was put on a calorie-restricted meal plan. Their daily kibble helpings were about 20 percent smaller than the amount that the runners ate, a portion size designed to keep them at about the same weight as the runners, so that extreme differences in body size would not affect the final results.

After 11 weeks, all of the animals were moved to specialized cages that could measure their metabolisms and how much they moved around. They then returned to their assigned cages for several more weeks, by which time they were effectively middle-aged.

At that point, the control animals were obese, their physiques larded with fat.

The runners and the lower-calorie groups, however, although they also had gained ounces, had put on far less weight than the controls. None were obese.

Both exercise and portion control, in other words, had effectively protected the animals against their fated fatness.
But beneath the skin, the runners and the dieters looked very unalike. By almost all measures, the runners were metabolically healthier, with better insulin sensitivity and lower levels of bad cholesterol than the dieters. They also burned more fat each day for fuel, according to their metabolic readings, and had more cellular markers related to metabolic activity within their brown fat than the dieting group. Brown fat, unlike the white variety, can be quite metabolically active, helping the body to burn additional calories.

Interestingly, the runners also had developed different gut microbes than the dieters, even though they ate the same food. The runners had greater percentages of some bacteria and smaller populations of others than the dieters or the control group; these particular proportions of gut bugs have been associated in a few previous studies with long-term leanness in both animals and people.

Perhaps most striking, “the runners showed no signs of compensatory eating or compensatory inactivity,” said Victoria Vieira-Potter, an assistant professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at the University of Missouri who oversaw the study. They didn’t scarf down more food than the control group, despite running several miles every day and, according to the specialized cages, actually moved around more when not exercising than either of the other groups of rats.

In essence, the runners, while weighing the same as the dieters at the end of the study, seemed better set up to avoid weight gain in the future.

Of course, these were rats, which do not share our human biology or our tangled psychological relationships with food and body fat.

This study also involved young, normal-weight rodents and cannot tell us whether exercise or dieting alone or in combination would aid or hinder weight loss in people (or animals) who already are overweight, Dr. Vieira-Potter said. Metabolisms change once a body contains large amounts of fat, and it becomes increasingly difficult to permanently drop those extra pounds.

So better to avoid weight gain in the first place, if possible. And in that context, she said, “restricting calories can be effective,” but exercise is likely to be more potent in the long term and, of course, as common sense would tell us, doing both—watching what you eat and exercising—is best of all.

Children react physically to stress from their social networks
A 28-year study reveals that the social relationships nurtured in childhood may have physiological consequences.

Date: May 2, 2016

Research has shown the significance of social relationships in influencing adult human behavior and health; however, little is known about how children’s perception of their social networks correlates with stress and how it may influence development. Now, a University of Missouri research team has determined that children and adolescents physically react to their social networks and the stress those networks may cause. Scientists believe that the quality and size of the social relationships nurtured in childhood may have important physiological consequences for physical and mental health for youth.

Cortisol and salivary alpha-amylase are secreted in response to outside pressure or tension. A part of the autonomic nervous system, release of cortisol in the system is quick, unconscious and can be measured in saliva; therefore, measuring cortisol is a good indicator of stress in the body, said Mark V. Flinn, professor of biomedical anthropology and chair of the Department of Anthropology in the MU College of Arts and Science.

"The typical physiological response to stress is the release of hormones like cortisol into the system," Flinn said. "In this study, we wanted to explore the association between children's personal social networks, as well as perceived social network size and density with biomarkers like cortisol and alpha-amylase that can indicate levels of stress in youth. Our goal was to determine if children experience stress because they perceive their networks to be inferior compared to their peers. Determining if social relationships cause stress in children is important because stress can influence human behavior and health later in life."

Flinn and his team, including Davide Ponzi, a post-doctoral fellow who is now with the University of Utah, have been conducting a one-of-a-kind project on an island in the Caribbean. For the study, the team has been using data collected over more than two decades from a small village on the east coast of Dominica. For years, Flinn has integrated himself within the culture, documenting socioeconomic, demographic, and health data as well as relationship data within a small community of about 500 residents.

"Over the years, we've collected data on grandparents, parents and their children; I've observed real kids in their communities, not in a controlled laboratory setting, so the data is unique and highly useful," Flinn said. "Using this wealth of knowledge, we were interested in learning how the kids physically responded to the social networks they cultivate."

For this focused study, Ponzi and Flinn chose a sample of 40 children ranging in ages from 5 to 12 and who represented about 80 percent of the total children in the village. Each child was asked a series of questions about their friends to measure their perceived density and closeness of their social networks. Three samples of saliva were collected before, during and after the interview and cortisol and alpha-amylase levels were measured.
"We found that, using the data we collected from the one-on-one interviews, children who were stressed about the size and density of their perceived social networks had elevated anticipatory cortisol levels, and responded by secreting more alpha-amylase," Flinn said. "Our study was in line with past research on stress, loneliness and social support in adults, but we strengthened past research by applying it to children. Future research should consider a multi-system approach like this one to study cognitive and biological mechanisms underlying children's perception."

**University of Missouri awarded $2 million grant to study cattle genetics**

Small variants in cattle that could mean better calving success, faster weight gain or more milk production will be the targets of a $2 million University of Missouri research grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The research will focus on the six most common breeds produced in the United States and examine 15 million genetic markers, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack said Tuesday.

The grant is part of $16.5 million in Agriculture and Food Research Initiative funding meant to increase food availability, safety and sustainability.

Vilsack said the goal is to "do a much better job of protecting our beef cattle industry and meeting the protein needs of the future."

Jared Decker, an assistant professor of animal science, will lead the research team at the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. While he was a graduate student at MU in 2009, he helped map the cattle genome.

The research will collect data from cattle breed associations to determine the characteristics that work best in different locations, Decker said.

For example, most pasture grass in Missouri is fescue. That grass contains a fungus with toxins that can impede cattle growth, he said. The research project will attempt to determine which breeds cope best with the toxins, he said.
“Typically when we talk about the genetics of complex traits such as growth, it is not a handful of factors,” Decker said. “What it ends up being is hundreds of thousands of little factors that, when you add them up, lead to big differences in growth.”

The program supporting the research is intended to figure out how to feed the world as population increases, prime land becomes urbanized, water grows scarcer and the climate changes, Vilsack said. “This research is incredibly important to keep pace with demand.”

Beef, pork and poultry likely will continue to be the major sources of protein for U.S. residents, Vilsack said, and the market will grow worldwide.

“We expect as middle classes evolve and develop in Asia, for example, there is going to be greater demand for American products,” he said. “There is no question about that. There will be new products in our grocery stores and new and more products in their grocery stores.”

Increasing cattle productivity won’t necessarily mean a big increase in the grain consumed by each animal or a significant increase in the greenhouse gas methane that cattle produce as they digest food, Decker said.

Raising cattle for beef is a way to make land productive where grain crops will not or should not grow, Decker said. The average 1-year-old steer sent to slaughter has been fed grain for 100 days and grass for the remainder of its life, he said.

“One of the things to keep in mind: A lot of the land we can’t efficiently use to create crops, we can grow grass,” he said. “Those cows can take that grass and convert it into a food source that we humans can use.”

The cattle industry’s effect on climate change often is overstated, Decker said. About 3.05 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions are related to beef production, according to data Decker provided.

“It is not this huge contributor that some groups have made it out to be,” Decker said. “We don’t necessarily want to have more cattle, what we want to do is do more with what we have.”

The research, which should start showing results in two or three years, will not only help U.S. producers but also support better productivity around the world, Decker said.

“The breed associations we are working with ... are really interested in whether we can identify markers that predict whether an animal is going to work better in hot climates, for example,” Decker said.
Mizzou Freshmen Enrollment Plunges After Fake Protests

The University of Missouri's student enrollment has plunged in the wake of protests this past fall.

By Clay Travis May 2, 2016 at 9:04p ET

This past fall a tiny number of Mizzou students protested over a poop swastika and two alleged racial slurs one delivered by a drunk man on campus, another delivered by a mysterious non-student in a red pick-up truck off campus. The best part of the protest, a fake hunger strike by a grad student whose dad is worth over $20 million. Unable to lead effectively, Missouri coach Gary Pinkel allowed his football team to go on strike in support of the protesters as well. Encouraged by mostly supportive media coverage -- Outkick was one of the only media outlets in the country to point out that there was no basis for these protests -- the student protesters were emboldened.

Despite the fact that Mizzou had elected a gay black man as student body president and embraced another gay black man who became the first football player to publicly announce he was gay, the protesters asserted that Mizzou was racist and not an inclusive campus. The protesting students, who took over the quad as their base, propounded an absurd list of demands that included the university president publicly announcing his white privilege.

Rather than stand up to the protesters and point out how illegitimate their protests were and assert that they would be kicked out of school if they didn’t immediately leave the quad and attend class, the school negotiated with the protesters. The result? The president and chancellor of the universities both resigned despite the fact that they’d done nothing wrong.

Now the university is paying the price for allowing these student protesters to set up shop on the quad and stage a fake protest. It was already announced that the school faced a yearly budget deficit of $32 million and projected an undergraduate enrollment decline of 1500. Now the official numbers are in for freshmen who have paid deposits to start school at Mizzou in the fall of 2016 and they're awful.

Freshmen enrollment has plummeted by nearly 25%, a decline of nearly 1500 students in the freshman class alone. Since many fewer freshmen students will also become sophomores and juniors and seniors, the financial impact of the Mizzou protest will cost the school hundreds of millions of dollars. Worst of all, the entire school's academics have likely suffered as these 4738 students are unlikely to be of the same caliber as the enrolling students in prior classes. Why’s that?
The students with the best college options are the least likely to enroll at Mizzou, meaning this isn't just a significantly smaller class, it's also likely to be much less academically strong.

These Mizzou protesters didn't just stage a fake protest, they nearly strangled the university to death.

The only comparable undergraduate enrollment decline in recent decades that I can find at any major college or university is Tulane University the year after Hurricane Katrina. Yes, this is real life. These protesting students had the same impact on the University of Missouri as Hurricane Katrina did on Tulane.

Remarkably, the only thing that we know happened on campus was a poop swastika and we still don't know who did it or what their motivation for doing it was. So a single poop swastika nearly crippled Mizzou.

Let this be a lesson to all colleges and universities who negotiate with student protesters -- the market is watching.

And negotiating with student protesters might just kill your school.

Well, at least ESPN didn't let Spike Lee on campus to film a 30 for 30 glorifying the bravery of the student protesters.

Wait, they did that?

Pray for Mizzou.

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**University of Missouri freshman class likely to be smallest since 2006**

The University of Missouri in the fall will have the smallest class of new college students since 2006, according to the latest projections that show the loss of new enrollments could be as much as 50 percent higher than previous forecasts.

As of last week, 4,738 students had paid a deposit of $300, which was refundable through Sunday, according to a memo from Barbara Rupp, interim vice provost for enrollment management. In each of the past four years, the number of new freshmen who enroll in the fall has been within 100 of the May 1 paid deposits.
That is a 22.3 percent decline from this year’s total of 6,191. If the recent pattern holds, the fall enrollment of new freshmen will be about 4,800. In the fall of 2006, MU enrolled 4,838 new freshmen out of a total student body of 28,253. This year’s enrollment is 35,448.

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley in February ordered campus divisions to cut their budgets by 5 percent, including a freeze on hiring and wages, when Rupp projected the loss of new freshmen would be 900 and the overall campus loss would be about 1,500.

Rupp’s memo reported that 83 fewer deposits were received from transferring students and MU received 749 fewer applications for admission to graduate school. With the potential loss of new freshmen now at more than 1,400, the total decline from this year is difficult to gauge, spokesman Christian Basi said Tuesday.

“That’s where I can’t help you because that is something we are just not going to know until the first day of classes,” he said.

This year’s total freshman class of 7,600 includes students who transferred to the university with credit and students who are in their second year who did not have 30 credit hours when the fall semester began. In each of the past 10 years, the sophomore class has been about 80.5 percent as large as the freshman class, but long-term enrollment projections cannot be made at this time, Basi said.

“A lot of this is asking us to speculate right now,” he said. “We are focused on working toward retention rates to make sure students are successful here.”

The largest decline in deposits is in the largest school, the College of Arts and Science, where 520 fewer new students have paid deposits. Arts and Science has about 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The School of Journalism, with 225 fewer first-time students, and the Trulaske College of Business, with 199 fewer, have the second- and third-largest declines in prospective students making deposits.

Out-of-state students, who pay more for tuition, make up the largest share of the decline in new students, with 887 fewer paid deposits than May 2015, according to Rupp's memo.

There is little the university can do now to recover the lost enrollment by the fall, Basi said.
“We are already having discussions of what activities do we need to be focusing on for our fall 2017 class,” he said. “We are finished with recruiting for fall of 2016. We will continue to talk to any students who have deposited money. We need to be looking toward the following fall as well.”

MU freshman enrollment deposits down almost 1,500 for fall semester

ERIN BORMETT, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — The number of freshman enrollment deposits submitted to MU for the 2016 fall semester is substantially lower than previous years.

As of May 1, a nationwide college decision date, 4,738 students had paid their enrollment fee, according to a report from the vice provost for enrollment management.

That number is lower than last year’s total fall enrollment by 1,470 students, or nearly 24 percent. This is consistent with the projection from a March report by MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley, who said MU expects 1,500 fewer students in the coming year.

MU announced the closure of two residence halls in March due to the expected decline in enrollment, and two others were put on standby to remain closed until all other housing is filled.

Application totals were down only for non-residents, but the decline in paid enrollment fees was apparent for both residents and non-residents. There was also a decrease in graduate school applicants, down by 749.
Freshman enrollment for MU down nearly 1,500 from last year

Monday, May 02, 2016 10:31:00 PM CDT in News
By: Kaitlin Rounds, KOMU 8 Digital Producer

COLUMBIA - Following the May 1 national decision date for college choices, the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management at the University has confirmed that the entering freshman class of fall 2016 will be fewer than 5,000.

Freshman deposits-- the enrollment fee of $300 that incoming freshman pay-- have decreased by 1,470 compared to last year and 1,749 from two years ago.

Freshman applications decreased by 866 from this time last year, according to the Enrollment Management office.

Applications for non-residents for the freshman class decreased by 902 from this time last year. However, applications from Missouri residents for the freshman class increased by 248.

There is a decrease of 749 graduate school applications from last year, and a decrease of 1,140 from two years ago.

The May 1 report from the Vice Provost of Enrollment Management said:

"We have known for months that our freshman class would be smaller than last fall and with both resident and non-resident deposits lagging well behind last year's numbers, this May 1 report confirms that we will have an entering class of fewer than 5,000."

Mizzou freshman class fewer than 5,000, report says
A new report from the vice provost for enrollment management says the freshman class at the University of Missouri will fall below 5,000 students for the coming year.

University of Missouri spokesperson Christian Basi said those numbers are continually updating until the start of the fall semester, so there is some leeway with the projection right now.

The report was issued after the May 1 national decision date for college choices.

"The cancellation and deposit activity is always very volatile around this date," the report says.

The report says enrollment is down across the board, but overall, freshman enrollment fees of $300 have decreased by 1,470 compared to last year. They' decreased 1,749 from two years ago.

Freshman applications have decreased by 866 from this time last year and have increased by 43 from two years ago.

Basi said the applications usually come in between September and November and in this case, before the campus protests in the fall.

The report compares resident and non-resident enrollment fees and applications.

Applications from non-residents have decreased by 902, but applications from Missouri residents have increased by 248.

Deposits have decreased by 887 for non-residents and 535 for residents.

African American applications are down 69 from last year and deposits have also decreased by 214. Hispanic applications have increased by 33 but the deposits are down by 71.

Graduate school applications have hit a three-year low. The number has decreased by 749 for this year and 1,140 from two years ago.

"With May 1 falling over the weekend, a number of cancellations that were submitted in the past two days are not included in this monthly report," according to the Provost.
Students can still cancel their deposits over the summer, they just won't be able to get a refund. They can also still put down a deposit over the summer as well, which is why Basi said those numbers can change come August.

**D.C. group blasts state ethics commission, refiles complaint against senator**


A Washington, D.C.-based group refiled an ethics complaint against a Missouri state senator, questioning the state's ethics commission's decision to drop the first one.

The Foundation for Accountability and Civic Trust, or FACT D.C., called the decision by the Missouri Ethics Commission to decline an investigation into Sen. Kurt Schaefer (R - Columbia) an "unusual" one. The MEC notified FACT D.C. on April 25 that it did not have "primary jurisdiction" over some of the allegations the group wanted the MEC to look into, such as public corruption and conflict of interest. They, instead, referred them to local prosecutors in Boone and Cole County, as well as the U.S. Attorney's office in Kansas City.

The complaint asked these groups to investigate whether or not Schaefer, a candidate for Missouri Attorney General, pressured the University of Missouri Board of Curators into changing its leave policy for employees vying public office. Schaefer will run against Josh Hawley, a University of Missouri law professor. According to FACT, Schaefer may have broken the law when he contacted administration about the policy requiring unpaid leave of employees running. Curators voted in July 2015 to move up the effective date employees would take unpaid leave, which FACT said was a result of the board fearing Schaefer's position as Senate Appropriations Committee chair, and in charge of the system's state funding.

In his refiling of the complaint Monday, FACT executive director Matt Whitaker said, "it appears the Commission is taking the unusual act of simply not accepting a complaint because it does not wish to investigate Kurt Schaefer." James Klahr, executive director of the MEC, told ABC 17 News last Friday that the commission sometimes refers complaints it receives to agencies better suited to investigate criminal activity, like prosecutors and police.
FACT general counsel Kendra Arnold told ABC 17 News Tuesday that the MEC was wrong in saying they had no authority to investigate some of the allegations.

"They gave no legitimate reason under the [law] for them to not accept it," Arnold said. "And so it does seem to odd to us that they wouldn't."

The MEC wrote on April 25 that FACT's allegations "appeared to be criminal in nature," and they did not have "primary jurisdiction" over criminal offenses. However, state law says the commission "shall receive any complaints" that break certain sections of "conflict of interest law." FACT's complaint cites two sections of the law that Schaefer may have violated, meaning MEC's acceptance of it would be, as Whitaker wrote, "mandatory, not discretionary."

"If something is going on here, we think the citizens have the right to know, and the right to have the MEC do the appropriate response and investigate," Arnold said.

FACT also sent a Sunshine request to find any ties Schaefer may have to the Commission, and see if the group was pressured in any way to not investigate. Whitaker also noted that Schaefer himself was "copied" on the letter informing FACT they would not investigate.

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**Curators, search committee to meet Wednesday in Columbia**

The University of Missouri Board of Curators and the Presidential Search Committee will meet Wednesday to discuss the document that will be used to describe the system presidency to potential candidates. The meeting will begin at 8 a.m. in Ellis Library on the Columbia campus, with some curators and committee members participating remotely from the other three university campuses. The search committee is scheduled to meet with consultants from Isaacson Miller Inc. for a little more than an hour, with the curators set to vote on the profile document afterward.
The search committee is seeking a permanent replacement for Tim Wolfe, who resigned Nov. 9. Interim UM System President Mike Middleton has said he does not intend to be a candidate for the permanent position.

The curators also will appoint members of the board’s standing committee on health affairs.

MU Health sued over employee timekeeping system

MU Health has been named a defendant in a class-action lawsuit regarding the system used to track hours worked by employees. The plaintiffs claim, MU Health is in breach of contract for failing to pay proper compensation to hourly employees.

MU Health uses an automatic timekeeping system designed by Kronos Incorporated, which keeps track of when hourly employees clock in and clock out. Employees have cards they use to electronically clock in and out for their shifts.

The plaintiffs claim in cases where shifts are longer than eight hours, the Kronos system automatically deducts 30 minutes from employee work shifts for meal breaks, even if the employee doesn’t take a meal break on a given shift.

One example given by a plaintiff cites a shift where he worked 12.5 hours, not taking a lunch break, but was only paid for 12 hours, since the system automatically deducted half an hour. The plaintiffs further claim that their supervisors are supposed to schedule meal breaks, and 30 minutes of time can’t be taken off their shift unless the employee is given a half-hour uninterrupted meal break. The employees filing the suit never clocked in or out for their breaks, because they never got uninterrupted breaks, but claim Kronos deducted the time anyway.

MU Health made arrangements to end this practice for two employees, but the plaintiffs claim there are still employees dealing with the same concerns.

The University of Missouri Board of Curators has also been named a defendant, by virtue of their supervisory role over MU Health.
Employees serve MU Health with breach of contract lawsuit

COLUMBIA - MU Health employees filed a lawsuit against the hospital and claimed MU Health "knowingly and willfully failed and refused to pay hourly compensation due to the plaintiffs."

Richard Hunsley and Donna Reeves claim the automatic timekeeping system used by the hospital has been deducting thirty minutes from every shift.

Hunsley and Reeves said MU Health automatically deducted the thirty minutes for meal breaks.

They said they never "punched-in" and "punched-out" on the timekeeping system and they continued to work without any breaks.

Hunsley and Reeves says MU stopped its deductions of their pay earlier this year, but has not compensated them.

Hunsley and Reeves said they are also suing on behalf of others who are in a similar situation, but they don't know the exact number. They said they estimate the number is "well over one hundred."

MU Health would not comment while still reviewing the court documents.
Legislature passes University of Missouri review commission

The Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, MO. - Missouri lawmakers have approved the creation of a commission to review the University of Missouri System's policies and administrative structure.

The measure approved in the House on Tuesday follows months of legislative criticism over how the university handled protests over what some students saw as indifference to racism at the Columbia campus.

Columbia Republican Rep. Caleb Rowden says lawmakers are trying to work with the system to enact change. The commission is expected to recommend changes for the system by the end of the year.

The Republican House speaker and the Senate president pro tem will appoint members.

The measure has received pushback from some Democrats who say their party should also be involved in appointing members. One Democratic lawmaker has questioned whether the commission will be effective.
May 1 is known as the international workers’ holiday. We Americans, ever vigilant against notions, instead decided to call ours Labor Day and moved it to September. That’ll trick those darn Commies!

But seriously, with this talk of graduate student workers trying to organize, let’s consider the folks behind another college labor movement — student athletes. This made news in recent years when football players at Northwestern moved to form a union.

**Similar to MU’s pushback on graduate student’s organizing, the NCAA put the kibosh on even recognizing college athletes as employees.**

Do student athletes perform employee-like work functions, or are they just volunteer participants in glorified extracurricular activities?

Students do zealously volunteer to compete for a spot on their respective squads, and oodles would do so simply for the privilege of playing. Those who make the team seem to at least get free food and other advantages.

Some obviously also receive athletic scholarships — free education, as well as room and board — in exchange for their athletic efforts. Players for popular sports programs receive public acclaim and popularity among their peers, likely enhancing their romantic opportunities.

But they certainly are not (legally) allowed to receive direct monetary compensation. They are considered amateurs, in the grand idealistic tradition of representing the pride of their institution of higher learning, their state, or even the god(s).

Yet, the production value of college football is quite professional. The games are nationally televised via multi-million dollar contracts. Spectators pay $60 or more per ticket — to watch the amateurs.
Other "workers" in the athletic programs are certainly paid professionals. In fact, the coaches of major teams are among the highest-paid employees in the state (many times the salary of a chancellor or even the governor).

An MU professor emeritus of sociology, Dr. Richard "Dick" Hessler, calls college football a modern-day "plantation." Everyone in the enterprise makes lots of money, except the work force on the field.

I watched bits of the recent NFL draft, where college football stars were entering the pros. What a farce, to go from no pay to multi-million-dollar contracts (and a players union) overnight. Those young men had most certainly been working.

Many players came from one of the few big NCAA conferences that have grouped together to clarify their role as the de facto NFL farm system. Players are at the very least semi-professional athletes in minor league football.

There are worries, though, about college athletes receiving a lot of cash. As paternalistic as that concern might be, compensation for players need not be in the form of a paycheck.

There are proposals to put money into a deferred compensation fund that could be paid out at a certain age, after graduation or another milestone. They could receive medical insurance during their student careers. They could be credited with disability insurance, a growing need, perhaps, as we realize the extent of the concussion epidemic.

Student athletes in big-time college sports are most certainly employees in practice. They should be able to be paid, one way or the other. And if they want to form a labor union, that should be their call.
Education systems and community partners address race and equity issues

COLUMBIA - Education systems along with community partners are trying to find solutions to race and equity issues in the community.

The City of Columbia, University of Missouri, Columbia Public Schools, along with community partners such as Worley Street Roundtable and Heart of Missouri United Way held a public forum on Tuesday discussing the race and social equity issues in the community.

The forum, which was open to the public, was held in Hickman High School's gymnasium.

Being the first forum between the groups and organizations along with the public, the meeting was expected to serve as a catalyst for the alliance.

“So I think this is a good starting point, for just kind of creating the conversation, but not letting that conversation end. That's the key, getting the people in the room and continuing the conversation as time goes on,” city of Columbia public communications specialist Sara Humm said.

"Facing the lowest unemployment rate, while also having the highest poverty rate Columbia has ever seen, the community felt they should react," City Manager Mike Matthes said.

Supervisor of Student and Family Advocacy for Columbia Public schools Carla London said, “This is the first of many forums and really the goal is to bring people from the community and the schools and community together so that we can continue to address some of the issues that we’re all addressing in Columbia.”

London was one the speakers of the forum.
The community leaders and the education systems are forming plans so the next generation won’t face the same issues.

"It does take a village. I believe that this event, it will allow a village to begin tonight and then to flourish and grow in the future," Dr. Adrian Clifton, President and Co-founder of Worley Street Roundtable, said.

With many racial issues happening on MU’s campus and across the country, the city of Columbia expects to make a difference.

“People who might be skeptical, I would say give us time, because you know things evolve over time and things don’t happen over night so we need time to make sure we are taking steps in the right direction,” Humm said.

City leaders meeting to discuss race and social equity in Columbia

Local leaders met on Tuesday night to discuss race and social equity in Columbia. Last fall, officials started the city's Strategic Plan for 2016-2019, and one of the five priority areas where the city needed improvement was social equity.

Some key objectives and actions that the city highlighted were, strengthening three low to moderate income neighborhoods by increasing neighborhood activities, increasing healthy eating/active living, increasing access to health care, participation in outdoor and cultural activities, and help first time buyers achieve home ownership.

Representatives from the Heart of Missouri United Way, City of Columbia, University of Missouri and Diversity Awareness met at Hickman High School to discuss ways the city could move forward.