First members of Mizzou review commission named

JEFFERSON CITY • Four Mizzou grads, including an unsuccessful candidate for governor, will lead a $750,000 review of the university in the wake of last year's campus turmoil.

As part of a compromise designed to avert major budget cuts at the state’s flagship institution of higher learning, lawmakers formed a special commission to compile a report aimed at making changes within the University of Missouri System.

Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, R-Joplin, announced four of the eight appointees Thursday, including David Spence, the 2012 Republican candidate for governor, farmer Neal Bredehoeft of the Missouri Soybean Association, Kansas City attorney Michael Williams and Columbia conservative radio host Renee Hulshof.

The Republican house speaker is expected to announce his picks next week. The panel will have until Dec. 31 to compile a report.

The commission is among a handful of responses from lawmakers to the unrest last fall that erupted into protests, a threatened boycott by the Mizzou football team and the departure of two top administrators.

Lawmakers also were rankled by the behavior of former Mizzou communications professor Melissa Click, who tangled with reporters and police during the protests.

Along with threatened budget cuts, Sen. Eric Schmitt, a Glendale Republican who is running for treasurer, pushed for legislation that would launch an audit of the university. Auditor Nicole Galloway is conducting her own audit of the system.
“Last year we witnessed a lack of leadership at the UM System’s highest level. The Legislature saw the need for objective oversight. This commission will help gain back trust and respect from people across the state,” Richard said in a prepared statement Thursday.

Sen. Kurt Schaefer of Columbia, who is running for attorney general, said “many poor decisions were made” during the events.

“The commission will serve as an outside voice and give some much needed feedback on how to ensure the long-term survival and growth of the institution,” said Schaefer, who sponsored the legislation creating the panel and inserted the $750,000 to pay for the work.

Team picked to review University of Missouri after turmoil

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — A former GOP gubernatorial candidate and a conservative talk radio host are among those who will review the University of Missouri following turmoil.

The University of Missouri fell under scrutiny after student protests in Columbia over what some saw as administrators’ indifference to racial issues.

Lawmakers frustrated over how turmoil was handled created the UM System Review Commission to review system policies and administrative structure. The eight-member commission will recommend changes.

Republican Senate President Pro Tem Richard on Thursday said he appointed Mizzou alums Neal Bredehoef of the Missouri Soybean Association, unsuccessful former GOP gubernatorial
candidate Dave Spence and Kansas City attorney Michael Williams. He also picked Columbia conservative radio host Renee Hulshof, whose GOP husband unsuccessfully ran for governor.

The GOP House speaker also must appoint four members.

 MISSOURIAN
 UM System Review Commission appointees excited by "opportunity to make a difference"

COLUMBIA — Dave Spence has a philosophy: You listen first, then you learn, then you lead.

It’s a philosophy Spence plans to implement as a member of the UM System Review Commission. Spence was appointed Thursday by Missouri Senate President Pro Tempore Ron Richard, R-Joplin, along with Renee Hulshof, Neal Bredehoeft and Michael Williams.

“I think it’s exciting. It’s an opportunity to make a difference, and it plays to my strengths, so I think there’s a lot of opportunity,” Spence said.

The commission was the result of Senate Concurrent Resolution 66 and is charged with reviewing various aspects of the UM System’s inner workings. The resolution was sponsored by state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia.

“The rules have gotten so out of balance. Many poor decisions were made,” Schaefer said in a news release, in part referencing events last fall that toppled then-UM System President Tim Wolfe and then-MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

“The commission will serve as an outside voice and give some much-needed feedback on how to ensure the long-term survival and growth of the institution,” Schaefer said.

Spence, a St. Louis resident and chairman of Legacy Pharmaceutical Packaging, also saw problems with previous administration.
“I don’t think it was good, effective leadership, and I’m saying that as an alumnus,” Spence said. “We can sit here and point fingers, but that doesn’t solve the problem. We need to make sure management faux pas from previous administrations don’t happen again.”

Both Spence and Bredehoeft cited their business experience as assets. Bredehoeft is a farmer from Alma.

“I think that I’ve got a good background in business, and I’ve got a good background in education,” Bredehoeft said. "And of course, I have the interest of the university at heart, and I think those things will probably bring something to the table to help this whole process.”

The appointees were eager to begin the review process. Spence said it will be important to "leave politics and emotions at the door."

“I think a lot of things are in motion already,” Spence said. “I think Interim Chancellor Hank Foley has a lot of good ideas. There’s no reason for us to go in and reinvent the wheel. We just need to go in and see what we can do.”

“I think it’s an honor and a privilege to be appointed to this committee,” Bredehoeft said. “I’ve been very supportive of the university over the years and would like to see it continue to be a good university system.”

House Speaker Todd Richardson, R-Poplar Bluff, will appoint four additional members to serve on the committee.

The commission is supposed to complete its review by Dec. 31 and prepare a report for the General Assembly, according to the news release.

“We’ll work through this process and come up with some recommendations that go to the legislature, and what they do with it from there is up to them,” Bredehoeft said.

“I think they want a system of checks and balances to make sure the taxpayers’ money is being used in a thoughtful and efficient manner,” Spence said.
Hulshof, of Columbia, is co-host of "The Morning Meeting" on KFRU/1400 AM. Michael Williams is a Kansas City lawyer. Neither of them could be reached for comment.

Renee Hulshof, Dave Spence named to University of Missouri Review Commission

By Rudi Keller

Thursday, June 16, 2016 at 11:40 am

The first four members of the University of Missouri Review Commission established by the General Assembly include the 2012 Republican nominee for governor and Renee Hulshof, conservative host of a Columbia radio show and wife of 2008 GOP gubernatorial candidate Kenny Hulshof.

Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, R-Joplin, made the appointments Thursday, filling four of the eight slots on the commission. House Speaker Todd Richardson, R-Poplar Bluff, will name the other four members next week, Trevor Fox, director of communication for the Missouri House, wrote in an email.

The members named by Richard are:

- Dave Spence of St. Louis, who holds a degree from MU in home economics and is CEO of Legacy Pharmaceutical Packaging. He was defeated by Democrat Jay Nixon in the 2012 gubernatorial election.
- Neal Bredehoeft, of Alma, District 4 director of the Missouri Soybean Association and president of Bredehoeft Farms, Inc. He holds a bachelor’s degree in animal husbandry from MU.
- Michael Williams of Kansas City, a partner at the Williams, Dirks, Dameron LLC law firm with a law degree from MU.
- Hulshof, of Columbia, host of the Morning Meeting radio program on KFRU and a graduate of the MU School of Journalism.

In a news release, Richard said the commission members were chosen after an extensive search.
“Last year we witnessed a lack of leadership at the UM System’s highest level,” Richard said. “The Legislature saw the need for objective oversight. This commission will help gain back trust and respect from people across the state.”

The commission was created by a resolution sponsored by state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, and is empowered to review numerous aspects of the UM System, including the system’s collected rules, administrative structure, campus structure and diversity programs. Legislative approval of the commission helped defuse some of the anger among lawmakers after protests over racial issues at the Columbia campus and the lengthy debate over the future of Melissa Click, an assistant professor of communication fired by the Board of Curators in February.

The protests came after turmoil over graduate assistant health insurance, leadership changes at the College of Medicine and infighting between former President Tim Wolfe and former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. Wolfe and Loftin resigned Nov. 9.

At one point, lawmakers were prepared to cut $10 million from the university’s state support and freeze UM out of budget increases provided to other public colleges and universities.

The curators are meeting Thursday and Friday in Columbia and were in a closed meeting of the presidential search committee when Richard’s news release was issued. A new release from Chair Pam Henrickson stated that the university was continually reviewing its rules and operations to be efficient, transparent and accountable.

“The Board of Curators and the leadership of the University are committed to transparency and intend to cooperate with the Commission as it goes forward,” Henrickson said.

Without some kind of oversight, the future of the UM System was unclear, Schaefer said in the news release announcing Richard’s appointees.

“The rules have gotten so out of balance. Many poor decisions were made,” Schaefer said. “The commission will serve as an outside voice and give some much needed feedback on how to ensure the long-term survival and growth of the institution.”

**MISSOURIAN**

Renee Hulshof, three others named to UM System Review Commission
COLUMBIA — **Four people, including radio personality Renee Hulshof of Columbia, have been appointed to the University of Missouri System Review Commission created by the General Assembly in response to a perceived lack of UM leadership.**

Missouri Senate President Pro Tempore Ron Richard, R-Joplin, announced the appointments in a news release on Thursday.

Hulshof is a co-host for KFRU/1400 AM's "The Morning Meeting" and earned a Bachelor of Journalism at MU. The other appointees are:

- Neal Bredehoeft, a farmer in Alma who earned a bachelor's degree in animal/livestock husbandry and production at MU.
- Dave Spence of St. Louis. He is chairman of Legacy Pharmaceutical Packaging and was a Republican candidate for governor in 2012. He earned a bachelor's degree in home economics at MU.
- Michael Williams, a partner in the law firm of Williams, Dirks and Dameron, LLC, in Kansas City. He earned his law degree at MU.

Richard said the appointees "each possess strong experience and expertise in governance, management, and understanding of school leadership and instruction," according to the release.

The four appointees will serve with four members yet to be selected by House Speaker Todd Richardson, R-Poplar Bluff.

The commission members will review various aspects of the UM System, including rules, regulations, administrative structure, campus structure, auxiliary enterprise structure, degree programs, research activities and diversity programs, according to the release.

The commission was established by Senate Concurrent Resolution 66, which was sponsored by Appropriations Chairman Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia.

The commission will review the UM System and prepare a report for the General Assembly by Dec. 31 to recommend any changes, according to the release.
Missouri man gets probation for threatening to shoot blacks at university

A Missouri man was sentenced to probation for threatening African Americans on social media including a pledge to "shoot every black person I see" after the University of Missouri president resigned during protests over his handling of reported racial abuse, a prosecutor said on Thursday.

Boone County Circuit Judge Kevin Crane sentenced Hunter Park, 20, to five years probation after he made the threats in November, Boone County assistant prosecuting attorney Brouck Jacobs said.

Prosecutors were satisfied with the length of the sentence, even though they originally recommended three years in prison for Park, who is from the St. Louis suburb of Lake St. Louis.

"You can't make terrorist threats online," Jacobs said in an interview. "If you do, there's a strict consequence for that."

The charge is a felony, he said.

Park's attorney, Jeffrey Hilbrenner, said he felt probation was appropriate.

"Hunter is a good person who made a terrible mistake, posted some terrible stuff on the Internet," Hilbrenner said, "but, the Hunter I've gotten to know is a really good person."

Unrest at the university, widely known as "Mizzou," started last September after reports of racial abuse on campus led to student demonstrations over what they called the administration's weak response. The unrest came to a head in November when the university's football players refused to practice or play until Tim Wolfe, then president, stepped down.

Two days after Wolfe's exit in early November, police arrested Park in Rolla, Missouri, about 95 miles south of Columbia, where the main University of Missouri campus is located. He was a sophomore studying computer science at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, which is part of the University of Missouri system.

Police said Park's threats had circulated on social media, including Yik Yak, where an anonymous post tagged 'Columbia' had read, "I'm going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see."
"Some of you are alright. Don't go to campus tomorrow," another post read. “We’re waiting for you at the parking lots,” read a third post. “We will kill you.”

Missouri man gets probation for online threats to blacks

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) – A man who posted threatening messages against black people on an anonymous social media app during racial protests at the University of Missouri last year has been sentenced to probation.

Hunter Park was a Missouri University of Science and Technology student on Nov. 10 when he posted the messages on Yik Yak. The 20-year-old Lake St. Louis man’s posts included statements that he was going to shoot every black person he sees. They came the day after weeks of protests led to the ouster of then-University of Missouri president Tim Wolfe and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

Park pleaded guilty in April making a terroristic threat.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports that on Thursday, he received a three-year suspended sentence and was placed on five years of probation.
COLUMBIA — **Hunter Park, the college student from Rolla who was convicted of using Yik Yak to threaten blacks in Columbia, was given five years’ probation on Thursday with the condition that he never possess a firearm and his internet activity be monitored.**

He faced the judge with arms pinned straight to his sides and shoulders rigidly hunched, but left the courtroom relaxed, the corners of his mouth slightly upturned.

In the front pew, however, the reaction to the sentence was angry and swift.

Members from the community group called Race Matters, Friends, groaned in unison as people filed out of the courtroom: “Wrong, wrong, wrong.”

Park was arrested in November after posting messages anonymously on the social media platform Yik Yak that said: "Some of you are alright. Don’t come to campus tomorrow" and "I’m going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see."

The sophomore at Missouri University of Science and Technology 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 pled not guilty in January, then changed his plea to guilty in April.

The state had proposed a sentence of three years, but Judge Kevin Crane gave him probation instead without explaining his decision in court.

At least 60 people attended the sentencing and about 70 percent raised their hands when Park’s attorney, Jeffrey Hilbrenner, asked who came to support his client.

Many of the rest belonged to Race Matters, Friends, a community-based social justice organization formed after the MU campus protests in November.

Shayana McQuitty reacted to Park’s sentence with both shock and resignation.

“If there was a black man up there, there would have been a different outcome,” she said.
During the sentencing hearing, Hilbrenner reminded the judge that Park suffered from cystic fibrosis and that his lung condition was deteriorating.

The defense had submitted nearly 60 character reference letters that endorsed Park’s volunteerism, scholastic research abilities and his cooperation with ethnically diverse teammates in a soccer club.

“All of these letters describe the person that he is, that he was, that he can be,” Hilbrenner said.

Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Jonathan Jacobs responded to Hilbrenner’s arguments by reading several social media posts Park wrote, each describing a violent act against blacks.

The crowd, even those who supported Park, fidgeted and gasped as the list was read for several minutes.

Jacobs said Park’s Yik Yak posts were part of a “philosophical hatred” in the young man, not a momentary indiscretion.

Courtney McAllister, a member of Race Matters, Friends, described the hearing as demoralizing.

“All that we can pray for is that subsequent to this fumble of justice, he (Park) doesn’t follow through with any sort of terroristic or discriminatory act against any human,” McAllister said.
BOONE COUNTY, Mo. - **UPDATE 2:39:** Judge Kevin Crane sentenced Hunter Park to probation on a five-year suspended sentence Thursday for making terroristic threats. Park is not allowed to have guns and needs special permission by probation and parole to use the internet.

If Park violates any of these terms or commits another crime, he will carry out the full three-year prison sentence.

Thursday's courtroom was packed with dozens of people representing both sides. After his punishment was announced, some in the crowd yelled out, "wrong!" Park's attorney Jeff Hilbrenner admitted what Park did was both racist and sophomoric, but said he was not capable of carrying out the threat. Park did not have a car or weapon while going to school in Rolla, and only claimed to have held a gun once in his life.

**Assistant Prosecutor Brouck Jacobs read other posts attributed to Park from the the November threats that happened on the "anonymous" social media app Yik-Yak. One post read, "I pray to the Columbine shooters for someone to shoot up Mizzou's campus tomorrow." Another, "Going to start a new frat on campus, Kappa Kappa Kappa. No 'n-words' allowed," Jacobs read, self-editing the racial slur primarily used for black people.**

Dozens of people both wrote letters to Judge Crane and showed up in court to support Park, originally from Lake St. Louis. Hilbrenner spoke about his tutoring of others while in college, and his continued support of his high school's robotics team after graduation. Describing an intelligent, shy person, Hilbrenner said he did not believe Park actually harbored racist feelings, citing his involvement on an international youth soccer team in which Park, as white person, was a minority.

"I believe that he got caught up in the whirlwind of what was going on in Missouri last fall," Hilbrenner said. "He got online, got in debates, and that kept escalating and escalating, worse and worse things. What he said online was terrible. I promise you he regrets it."

Several members of Race Matters, Friends attended Thursday's sentencing. Rachel Taylor and Traci Wilson-Kleekamp said they were shocked to hear some of the other posts Park made.

"It was a depth of hate and extremely explicit hate that I wasn't prepared for that day," Taylor said.

Both had hoped for a prison sentence for Park, in part to serve as a deterrence for others to make such "racist death threats." While many people wrote letters to the judge and prosecutor's office regarding the case, Wilson-Kleekamp said she was disappointed Jacobs did not read any of those. She felt the prosecution did not capture the emotion of that week well, given the fear she saw in her students as an MU employee.

"I think it was important that he read those statements, but [Jacobs] just wasn't aggressive about it," Wilson-Kleekamp said.
Jacobs said while he asked for a prison sentence, he was satisfied that Judge Crane gave Park a suspended execution of sentence. If park completes his five-year probation term, he will still be considered a felon, making it illegal for him to have a gun.

(Editor's note, 6/16. 11:55 p.m.: An earlier version of the update said Park will serve a three-year suspended sentence. His probation term will last five years. If he violates his probation, he will begin to serve a three-year prison sentence.)

**ORIGINAL:** The man accused of making online threats amid protests at Mizzou last fall was scheduled for sentencing Thursday.

Hunter Park was set to stand trial in May for making a terrorist threat, but instead pleaded guilty back in April.

Park is a University of Missouri-Rolla student. Investigators say he posted threats anonymously on Yik-Yak, a chat app that allows for anonymous posting.

Concerns over the threats prompted some businesses near campus to close for a day. The threats included language reminiscent of a deadly shooting at a college in southwest Oregon, which happened a month prior.

Boone County Assistant Prosecutor Brouck Jacobs told ABC 17 News he will recommend a three-year prison sentence for Park. The 19-year-old, who has no prior criminal record, will be sentenced by Judge Kevin Crane Thursday. Jacobs said he also opposed probation for Park.

"The facts of the case, I don't think merit probation," Jacobs said.

University of Missouri Police traveled to Rolla early on November 11 to investigate posts on Yik Yak that implied shooting black students on Mizzou's campus, a day after protests over a lack of diversity and response to racially-charged incidents on MU's campus became national news.

Park agreed with the officers' characterization of the posts as "saber-rattling," according to the probable cause statement, which included shooting "every black person I see."

Investigators also questioned him about another posts similarity to things written by Christopher Harper-Mercer, the suspected shooter at Umpqua Community College on October 1, 2015, in which Park said he had a "deep interest" in the topic.
Yik Yak threat-maker sentenced to probation

COLUMBIA — A judge sentenced the man who threatened University of Missouri students on social media last fall to five years of probation Thursday afternoon. The judge also said Hunter Park can never own a firearm.

The judge originally sentenced Park to three years in prison, but suspended that sentence in lieu of probation.

Prosecuting Attorney Brouck Jacobs said Park received a middle-ground sentence. He said Park's family was asking that a criminal conviction would be left off Park's record.

Hunter Park was charged with making terrorist threats to Mizzou's campus on the anonymous social media app Yik Yak last November. He pleaded guilty to the charges in April.

The Missouri Students Association at MU posted a few of the threats to its Twitter account the day after Park posted them, calling them unacceptable.

"Probation is appropriate. What Hunter posted was terribly wrong, it was a terrible mistake and he said some terrible things," Jeff Hilbrenner, Park's defending attorney, said. "But the Hunter that I've gotten to know over the past several months and the letters of support for Hunter show that the threats are not emblematic of who he actually is."

Hilbrenner read a few of the 58 character reference letters at the hearing that friends and family members submitted on Park's behalf.

One threat read, "Some of you are alright. Don't go to class tomorrow." Another said, "I'm going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see." The prosecutor listed about 10 other threats made from the app before they were taken down.

MUPD arrested Park around 2 a.m. the morning after he posted the threats. The defense said Park never intended to carry out the threats, because Park was not on MU's campus at the time of the threats, as officials determined that night. Park was a sophomore at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, Mo.
However, the prosecutor said Thursday that Park changed his coordinates on his cell phone at the time of the threats to trick the Yik Yak app into thinking Park was in the Columbia area. Jacobs said this made the threats seem more dangerous.

**Man who made terroristic threat toward MU receives sentence**

COLUMBIA, Mo. — **A man who pleaded guilty to making a terroristic threat against black students on the University of Missouri campus was sentenced in a Boone County courtroom Thursday afternoon.**

Circuit Judge Kevin Crane sentenced Hunter Park to three years in prison with five years probation. The prison sentence was suspended.

Park, was a student at Missouri S&T in Rolla when he made terroristic threats on the social media site Yik-Yak in November. Hunter allegedly posted anonymously that he would shoot black students on campus. That threat came after the racial tension and protests on the MU campus in November of 2015. He was arrested a short time later.

Park is a former computer science major.

In late December 2015, a judge denied Park's request to access the Internet. Prosecutors compared it to letting a person suspected of DWI operate a motor vehicle while they were out on bond.

A Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla police officer said in the probable cause statement that he recognized the words in one post from the threats made by Chris Harper-Mercer, the shooter at the Umpqua University College in October.

When asked what Park meant with the post, he told the officer "I was quoting something."

The officer asked if he was quoting the posts from the Umpqua shooting, and Park replied "mmhmm."
When asked why he quoted the phrase, Park said "I don't know, I just... deep interest."

Hunter claimed to have no idea why he specifically targeted black students in his post.

Prospective candidates welcome chance to lead U. of Missouri, search consultant says

As the search for a new president of the University of Missouri system accelerates, more people are interested in the job than expected.

That was the word Thursday from John Isaacson, a consultant hired by the search committee that is leading the hunt for a successor to Tim Wolfe, the system president who resigned in November in the wake of racial protests in Columbia.

The search committee, which had convened electronically a few times earlier this year, met in person for the first time at Mizzou. Kelley Stuck, the system’s interim vice president for human relations, said that so far, the search process is going well.

“We really feel positive that we are on track to develop a strong pool of candidates for this position,” Stuck told the search committee, which includes curators, students and other representatives from the system’s four campuses.

As his firm, Isaacson-Miller, reaches out nationally for possible candidates for the presidency, Isaacson said that fewer candidates than expected are expressing an interest in the job for a leading position at a public university. He said that response is a tribute to the work done so far in selling the attributes of the university system.

“We’ve been able to make a good case for this system, and people have responded to it,” he said. "So, we’re very pleased where we are. That doesn’t mean we’re out of the woods, folks. We’re only halfway through building this pool, and probably only a third of the way through this search. But so far, so good.”

Stuck will lead the committee through the search schedule from now until the end of the year, when the curators hope to have a successor to Wolfe chosen.

She likened the winnowing of the broadest candidate pool to a funnel, using characteristics such as the qualifications developed earlier by the committee as well as experience, to come up with a smaller list.
Following initial interviews of as long as 90 minutes, she said, members of the committee should use a common rubric to rank possible candidates, so all interviewees are judged by the same criteria. A narrower list of finalists would be invited back for a second round of interviews.

Stuck said a series of open-ended questions are the best way to judge the candidates, focusing on their past experience that may have prepared them for the presidency.

She cautioned that certain types of personal questions are barred by law, such as age, race, sexual orientation and health. But that would not prohibit committee members from asking how candidates have dealt with circumstances growing out of those areas; a lack of knowledge about Wolfe’s experience with racial problems has been criticized as one of the reasons his presidency ran aground.

Stuck also emphasized that while a candidate’s knowledge and skills are important, the basis for judging anyone’s fitness for the presidency should be his or her basic talent.

“I would encourage the committee to really focus on asking questions about the candidate’s skills and abilities,” she said. “Too often, time in an interview goes very fast.

“We’ll focus the interview questions on that previous experience. We’ll explore in depth how they have interacted in their work experience, and try to evaluate how that work experience and those abilities may relate to the qualifications that we have identified. This is the lens that should be on the candidate – what their past abilities and experiences are, what they have accomplished to date.”

Money matters

The curators also approved a $3.1 billion budget for the fiscal year that begins on July 1.

As has been typical for the past several years, money from student and tuition fees totals more than the money appropriated by the state; for fiscal year 2017, 50 percent from tuition to 37 percent from state appropriations. Missouri ranks 43rd out of 50 states in its funding for higher education.

Brian Burnett, the system’s vice president for finance, noted that the gap between what the state provides and what students pay widens every year, as enrollment overall has grown and state funds have not kept pace.

“It would take a massive public policy change to reverse that,” Burnett said.

The budget seeks to make up the $3.8 million that was cut from the university system’s budget by the legislature this year. The university did receive nearly $18 million in performance funding after meeting all of its performance targets.
But while long-term enrollment is up overall, the system is expected to receive $34 million less in net tuition and fees from the four campuses. Enrollment drops at the St. Louis and Columbia campuses are responsible for the decrease.

At UMSL, enrollment is expected to fall by 3 percent, though Chancellor Tom George told the curators he hopes the final number is not that high. Because of a budget shortfall of $15.4 million, the campus has cut 85 jobs and taken other cost-cutting measures.

George said that UMSL has added recruiters to concentrate on areas such as Chicago and the Far East to bring in more students. He also noted that one reason for the decline has been a similar drop in enrollment at St. Louis Community College, which has been a primary feeder school for UMSL.

One particular area of concern that George noted is students who now attend Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, which charges in-state tuition for students from Missouri. George noted that with Edwardsville right across the river from north St. Louis County, a primary target area for UMSL as well, the competition has become stronger in recent years.

“They’re actually recruiting in our backyard,” George said. “And so North County, where we could simply snap our fingers and a lot of North County students would come to UMSL, that doesn’t happen anymore.”

Before the meeting began, three new curators named last week by Gov. Jay Nixon – Mary Nelson and Tom Voss of St. Louis and Jon Sundvold of Columbia – were sworn in, along with the student representative to the board, Gene Patrick Graham from Mizzou. All will be part of the search committee for the new president.

Consultant surprised by number willing to consider top University of Missouri job

By Rudi Keller

Thursday, June 16, 2016 at 10:08 am

The search for a new University of Missouri System president is going surprisingly well, a consultant said Thursday during a discussion of how the next steps in the process would be handled.
The presidential search committee created by the Board of Curators is about a third of the way to its goal, consultant John Isaacson said. The pool of candidates is growing daily, he said.

“It is a surprise, and a pleasant surprise,” he said. “The ratio of people who say no to us compared to the people who say yes is much higher than we expected.”

For every two people approached who says yes, he said, about three are saying no. In other searches, the ratio is two noes for each yes, he said.

After one of the most tumultuous years in its 177-year history, the university is trying to overcome months of adverse publicity and political backlash as it searches for a new president. Tim Wolfe resigned Nov. 9 under growing pressure from racial protests on the Columbia campus and after months of administrative infighting with R. Bowen Loftin, chancellor of MU. Loftin resigned the same day as Wolfe.

Donations dropped dramatically in the two months after the protests and resignations.

That was followed by months of political turmoil over the actions of Melissa Click, an assistant professor of communications fired by the curators in February. The controversy over Click isn’t over, with the American Association of University Professors potentially voting to put MU on its censure list during a meeting Saturday.

Interim President Mike Middleton, called from retirement to take over, has said he is not interested in the job on a permanent basis.

The presidential search committee has 16 members — all nine curators, the student representative on the board, two faculty representatives, a second student and a staff member, led by alumni representatives Cheryl Walker and Jim Whitaker. It met in open session for about 30 minutes Thursday before beginning a closed session scheduled to continue until noon.

When the committee was created, it set a goal of completing its work by the end of the year. The committee will narrow the field to a list of finalists for the curators to consider.

The negative press for the university has been portrayed as both a problem and a potential positive for the search. The number of people willing to consider the job shows it is not scaring off candidates, Isaacson said.

“That is a tribute to the search committee and all the work that was done by your committee ahead of time, preparing the case for Missouri,” he said.

Interim Vice President for Human Resources Kelley Stuck said a key step after the candidate pool is set will be initial evaluations and “airport interviews” of semifinalists. Those 75- to 90-minute interviews, so-named because they typically occur at a location near an airport convenient for the candidates, should be highly structured, she said.

“It is important that each candidate is asked the same set of interview questions,” Stuck said.
She also warned the committee members not to jump ahead in the process.

In those first interviews, she said, committee members should not ask hypothetical questions about what a candidate would do in a particular situation if he or she is selected. That could lead to a discussion of the candidate’s vision but take time that should be spent digging into his or her skills and abilities, she said.

“Sometimes there is a desire to jump to the end game,” she said.

The candidate pool is being developed, and it is important to keep the names confidential, Stuck told the committee. If members recognize a name or know someone who would know the candidate, now is not the time to call in search of information, she said.

“At this point in the process, that could jeopardize the candidate pool,” she said.

Stuck declined when asked to say how many people are in the present pool of candidates.

UM System presidential search candidate pool is a "pleasant surprise"

COLUMBIA — The UM System presidential search committee is about a third of the way through its search, and so far it’s going better than expected.

The Boston-based firm Isaacson, Miller is leading the search and contacting potential candidates. The firm's chairman, John Isaacson, told committee members Thursday that the ratio of people contacted who agree to be a candidate is higher than in most public university searches.

About 1.5 people have said no for every candidate that says yes, which is a "pleasant surprise," Isaacson said. “We’re very pleased with where we are in the search at the moment.”

Isaacson did not say how many candidates have agreed to apply for the job.
Thursday marked the first time the committee had met in person and kicked off a two-day meeting of the UM System Board of Curators. The committee was formed in February, and it now has 14 members after three new curators and the board’s student representative were appointed June 8.

The board expects to name a president by the end of the year, according to previous Missourian reporting. Michael Middleton has been serving as the system’s interim president since Nov. 12. Former UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned Nov. 9 following campus protests.

Kelley Stuck, interim UM System vice president for human resources, presented the search committee with details on the candidate evaluation process, which will include a rubric, interviews and a third-party assessment.

Stuck said using a rubric based on the qualifications document the committee approved in April will help them focus on skills and experiences while lessening biases.

The committee will interview candidates in person for 75 to 90 minutes each, which will allow them to get an impression of candidates and candidates to get an impression of the university.

“We will be evaluating candidates, but in turn candidates will be evaluating us,” Stuck said.

She encouraged the committee to focus on concrete skills and experiences when interviewing candidates rather than their vision for the position so they can get a good impression of the candidates’ qualifications.

Stuck also warned committee members against discussing specific candidates before or after interviews, even if they know someone who knows a candidate.

“Confidentiality is critical,” she said. “There will be a time when we reach out further into our networks and explore those candidates, but in the early stages it’s not the time. We have to remember that we have to protect our candidates and protect our pool in the process.”

The final part of the evaluation will be an assessment of the candidates' talents and natural tendencies, Stuck said.
Isaacson, Miller is evaluating the candidate pool and giving the search committee information, Stuck said. Isaacson said the firm is about halfway through building a pool.

Following the public meeting, the search committee entered closed session to discuss specific candidates. The curators will reconvene for a public session Thursday afternoon to discuss the system's budget for fiscal 2017 and its fiscal 2018 state appropriations requests, among other matters.
“It provides a quantitative approach to the supplemental third piece of the pie which is the assessment later in the process,” said Stuck.

The rubric will be used in a 75 to 90 minute interview with each candidate. The interviews will be held by the committee in person at a neutral site to ensure that the candidates are confidential to the public.

“This kind of discipline can help lessen or minimize the impacts of our own biases, whether those are imaginary or explicit,” said Stuck.

The pool of candidates will then be narrowed when the committee meets and discusses the evaluations of each candidate. They will then conduct a second round of interviews before making a decision on the new UM System president.

“The intended outcome is to further narrow the candidate pool,” said Stuck. “At this point, the Issac’s and Miller team is continuing to develop the candidate pool. They will continue to bring us information and work more diligently to gain more awareness of the candidates that have been nominated into the pool.”

The Presidential Search Committee has not announced when the interview process would begin.

Curators approve budget with millions in MU cuts

COLUMBIA, Mo. — The UM System's flagship campus will lose $31.4 million under the budget the Board of Curators approved Thursday evening.

Interim MU Chancellor Hank Foley said the Columbia campus will have about 2,630 fewer students than it did during the 2015-16 school year. About 300 of that number is due to a shrinking age cohort. The last of the Millennials, the children of the Baby Boomers, are finishing high school and entering college. Foley attributes another 900 to intensified recruiting efforts by Illinois universities in that state, something he said MU has anticipated for some time. Of the remaining 1,200 students, Foley said he didn't want to speculate.
"Pick your favorite scenario what that's due to. I prefer not to attribute it to anything in particular because no matter what I attribute it to, someone gets angry," he said.

MU and the UM System are coming off a tough year. November's protests led to the resignation of both the MU Chancellor and the UM System President. Both posts remain filled on an interim basis. Since November, three members of the Board of Curators have resigned. Republican lawmakers angry over the handling of the protests cut $3.8 million from the UM System's budget and refused to confirm any of Gov. Jay Nixon's appointments to the Board.

In all, Foley said MU will lose $22.4 million outright. Another $9 million will be lost as the budget is reshuffled to cover strategic projects jeopardized by the funding loss. So far, MU has laid off 37 people. Foley said that's fewer than campus leadership had anticipated but added that figure doesn't include temporary teachers and staff and non-tenured faculty whose contracts were not renewed. He said he doesn't have any figures for those categories.

MU's budget does include some line items addressing student protesters' demands. The university will spend $600,000 on hiring minority faculty and another $500,000 to hire more campus police officers, particularly officers of color. About $1.5 million will go toward the new Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity.

Three of the nine curators who approved the 2017 budget are recess appointments named by Gov. Nixon after lawmakers adjourned last month. Mary Nelson, Tom Voss and Jon Sundvold can serve without confirmation by the Senate until lawmakers return in January. Until then, the three have full voting rights and likely will help choose the next system president.

UM System will take a $3 million cut for fiscal year 2017

COLUMBIA — To help offset a $3.8 million reduction in state funding, the UM System will cut several administrative positions and reduce some salaries, Vice President for Finance Brian Burnett announced Thursday at the Board of Curators meeting.

The Board of Curators voted unanimously Thursday to approve the UM System budget for fiscal year 2017, which includes a $2 million recurring and $1 million one-time cut to payroll.
To make the cuts they will:

- Institute a hiring freeze for some vacant positions within the UM System.
- Not give raises to employees based on past performance for fiscal year 2017.
- Reduce some UM System salaries and expenses.

The cuts to administrative positions will include jobs in UM Finance, Information Systems, Human Resources, University Relations, General Counsel and Academic Affairs.

Burnett noted that revenue for the upcoming year is “steady,” totaling around $3.1 billion, which is about the same as it was last year. State allocations are a key part of the UM System’s operating budget every year, Burnett said.

Burnett said the system will also do its best to serve all four campuses “with a smaller workforce.”

Outside of the $3.8 million reduction, the UM System received $17.9 million in performance-based funding. Of the funds, $16.2 million will go to the four campuses and $1.7 million will be used for diversity initiatives.

**Enrollment update**

At the meeting, MU Chancellor Hank Foley addressed the expected decrease in enrollment. He estimated enrollment will drop by 2,630 in fall 2016. Of the expected drop, almost 500 are students who are not returning to MU. The anticipated decrease in enrollment has led to a $31.4 million budget gap.

To help offset the gap, the Missouri legislature approved a 4 percent performance-based funding increase in April for all Missouri universities. The performance-based increase will cover half the expected loss in tuition. To further reduce the budget gap, the UM Board of Curators in May approved a tuition hike for all students except in-state undergraduates.
Foley said the 2017 budget for MU will be balanced, so the campus won’t go into deficit spending, at least for the next year.

Starting next spring, MU will likely begin graduating larger classes than are entering. However, despite the shortcomings in total enrollment, Foley remains “quite optimistic.”

“A breather at this point is not actually a bad thing,” Foley said.

UM Curators meeting, including newest curators

COLUMBIA, Mo, - The University of Missouri Board of Curators met Thursday for their annual meeting. The three new curators, as well as the student representative, were present.

In one of their afternoon sessions, the curators took a look at the future finances for the UM system. Vice President for Finance and CFO Brian Burnett went through a slideshow with the board about FY18. FY18 will start July 1, 2017. Vice President Burnett says the board has to vote on and present the budget ahead of time so the state legislature has time to look at it.

The Board of Curators will vote on this presented budget Friday.

The draft budget presented at Thursday's meeting includes $464.9 million in core operations. The core operations include $10 million for the MU Medical School Expansion, $2 million for UMKC/MSU Pharmacy funding, and $1 million for the UMKC Satellite Dental Program at MSSU.

The draft budget also includes new requests. One of those new requests to legislature is to reinstate the $3.8 million the legislature cut the UM System Administration this year.

"Other Curator Programs Core and New Requests" and "Legislative Requirements Requests" were also included.
The total of the drafted FY18 is $515.6 million.

John Fougere, Chief Communications Officer for the University of Missouri System, said since the Missouri state legislature cut $3.8 million from the UM System Administration budget, the curators have been trying to make cuts that don't affect the campuses.

"One thing we've tried to emphasize as we look for areas to find savings," Fougere said, "is to make sure that the impact of those savings is not being passed on to the campuses.

Fougere said the savings for the UM System Administration budget will come from a combination of eliminated positions, not filling open positions, no merit increases or raises, as well as renegotiating contracts and curtailing some programs.

---

**Student dismisses lawsuit alleging racist comments by University of Missouri professor**

By Alan Burdziak

Thursday, June 16, 2016 at 2:00 pm

The lawsuit against a University of Missouri professor accused of harassing a Muslim student was dismissed last week.

The accusations against Michael Garcia, an associate professor of biological sciences, were dismissed with prejudice last Friday, meaning the case cannot be refiled. The UM Board of Curators was dismissed as a defendant 2½ weeks ago. Both dismissals were at the behest of the plaintiff, Fatma El-Walid, who is still listed as a student in MU’s online directory.

One of El-Walid’s attorneys, Paul Rechenberg of Chesterfield, referred questions to her other counsel in the case, St. Louis attorney Azra Ahmad. An assistant at Ahmad’s office said she declined comment. Josh Oxenhandler, Garcia’s attorney, declined comment other than saying, “The matter is resolved as to all parties.”

Filed in late November, the lawsuit accused Garcia of using offensive language toward El-Walid and making unwanted sexual comments toward her, creating a hostile learning environment. An anonymous student reported to MU’s Equity Office that Garcia had asked offensive questions of
El-Walid in a meeting during Garcia’s office hours. The lawsuit said nine students were present during the meeting.

Garcia, the suit said, asked El-Walid, “How many virgins do you get when you die?” and “Are you a Jew hater?” He also asked her if her parents had waterboarded her when she was a child and if she had been called a “towel head on campus before,” according to the lawsuit.

El-Walid had become anxious and had fits of crying because of the incident and its “discriminatory, sexist, demeaning, humiliating comments made by Garcia,” the suit said.

She also had filed a discrimination complaint with the Missouri Commission on Human Rights and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the former of which in September issued a notice of her right to sue.

The lawsuit outlined two counts of violations under the Missouri Human Rights Act, with one count specifying a public accommodation violation. El-Walid had sought damages in excess of $25,000.

JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri public colleges and universities are set to restructure general education courses to make it easier for students to get credit for classes if they transfer schools.
Gov. Jay Nixon on Thursday signed legislation that will require schools to adopt similar 42-credit-hour, lower-level coursework.

The goal is for public colleges and universities to set up similar general education classes so students can more easily transfer.

Colleges and universities will need to implement the program by the fall 2018 school year. It will ensure students can transfer and get credit for those classes.

The legislation also allows community colleges and other two-year postsecondary schools to offer classes to high school students.

It will create a scholarship for low-income high school students who take college classes.