MU changes how it handles complaints in post-Melissa Click era

BY WILL SCHMITT
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The University of Missouri’s top academic office has changed how it handles complaints about faculty behavior, months after administrators received a deluge of angry emails and phone calls about a former professor’s actions during the November protests.

Now there’s an online form that allows formal complaints to be submitted.

“Once submitted, the form is conspicuously labeled and sent to multiple members of the Office of the Provost,” Provost Garnett Stokes said in an email.

Stokes said she had communicated to senior associate provosts that they could take initiative and respond to complaints rather than wait for her say-so.

The university’s faculty disciplinary process involves a series of hearings to investigate whether a professor acted irresponsibly. That process is started when a person with university standing — a faculty member, student or administrator, for example — files a formal charge with the provost.

Many complaints about former communication professor Melissa Click were received after an incident during the protests, but Stokes said none of them were formal faculty irresponsibility charges.

The university suffered while Click’s case was up in the air. State lawmakers threatened massive funding cuts before settling on a $3.8 million decrease for the university system, and at the Columbia campus, enrollment is projected to plummet and hiring was frozen.

One faculty member — Michael Sykuta, a professor of agricultural and applied economics — believed he had filed such a charge with Stokes back in November, but no action was taken and
he didn’t receive a response until after the university’s Board of Curators voted to fire Click in February.

“I think a lot of the political fallout of the entire Melissa Click situation and the Board of Curators’ engagement in that process was a result of the provost’s inaction in response to what’s been described as a large number of complaints, none of which she took as official complaints under our university rules,” Sykuta told The Star this week.

Faculty, students, alumni and others had lambasted Click en masse after she was filmed calling for “some muscle” to eject a student videographer from protests at the Concerned Student 1950 camp on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle in Columbia. The video posted afterward went viral.

While all that was going on, people were calling for her to be disciplined in some fashion or another, according to emails to administrators obtained through a Sunshine Law request.

The curators eventually fired Click without affording her the series of hearings detailed in the university’s Collected Rules and Regulations, which describes how faculty irresponsibility charges are handled.

A report released by the American Association of University Professors found that the Board of Curators erred by not giving Click due process. Click has said that she would weigh her legal options but has not yet filed a wrongful termination lawsuit.

Sykuta sent his complaint to Stokes via email on Nov. 10.

“I certainly understand the tense circumstances surrounding the encounter; however, Professor Click’s behavior violates her professional obligations as a member of our faculty community,” Sykuta wrote in part to Stokes.

Stokes didn’t reply. She told The Star that she doesn’t know when she first read Sykuta’s email but said she did forward the message to Ken Dean, a senior associate provost regarded as an expert on the university’s bylaws. Dean drafted a response for Stokes to send to Sykuta, telling the professor that his message was not considered a charge of faculty irresponsibility.

“For some reason – probably due to the quantity of emails coming in and being circulated, as well as other serious disruptions in everyday activities following the events of Nov. 9 – the drafted email was never actually sent to the faculty member, Dr. Sykuta,” Stokes said. “I am sincerely sorry for this oversight and take full responsibility.”

Sykuta said he “thought a reasonable person would interpret it as a charge” but said he “would like to give (Stokes) the benefit of the doubt.”
Sykuta followed up with Stokes, Interim Chancellor Hank Foley and Ben Trachtenberg, a law professor and chair of the MU Faculty Council, on Feb. 25 — a few hours after the curators announced that they voted to fire Click.

“If this complaint had been acted upon in the first place, perhaps the channels of due process and resulting internal hearing would have resulted in Dr. Click’s dismissal before invoking the political wrath of the State legislature,” Sykuta wrote in part. The failure of due process started when complaints such as his “went overlooked or were ignored by your office,” he said.

However, Stokes told The Star by email, even if Sykuta’s complaint had been interpreted as a formal charge, “initiation of the faculty irresponsibility process does not constitute quick action; initiating the process in November would NOT have led to resolution by the time the Curators took their action. The process is deliberative.”

Trachtenberg, the MU Faculty Council chair, said the bylaws had been reviewed, and while there’s no final proposal yet, he hoped a change to the process would be before the council early in the academic year.

The proposed language would make it clear that a person who files the charge isn’t bound to personally handle the case each step of the way.

Instead, charges could be handed off to a third-party official “vaguely analogous to the role of prosecutor,” likely someone in the provost’s office, Trachtenberg said.

Stokes said she would support that: “The process needs clarification and greater transparency.”

Thought for Food: Mindful eating offers a sane alternative to dieting

This story is a result of an MU News Bureau press release: http://munews.missouri.edu/news-releases/2016/0718-mindfulness-key-to-eating-what-you-want-while-preventing-overeating/

By Karen Worley

Sunday, August 7, 2016 at 12:00 am
Lynn Rossy, a health psychologist who works for the University of Missouri System, says the key to a healthy diet is being mindful of your body’s needs.

Rossy, who recently published “The Mindfulness-Based Eating Solution,” suggests that the availability of cheap, easy food has caused our culture to adopt a lot of bad eating habits. She encourages people to choose foods that will satisfy and nourish their bodies rather than focusing on any set diets.

By slowing down and savoring their food, she said people will be able to better judge their own hunger and stop before they overeat.

Rossy sat down with the Tribune to explain some key concepts of mindfulness-based eating and tips to develop some healthy eating habits.

Tribune: Have you struggled with weight, allowing the scale to rule your eating habits?

Lynn Rossy: After I quit smoking in 1990, I gained about 30 pounds. That seemed like a lot for me. I did become upset by it and tried for the next seven years to take it off. It wasn’t until I took the focus off of weight and on to finding fulfillment in the rest of my life that the weight just fell off. I saw firsthand how the diets, the counting calories and weighing every day were just a setup for me to feel bad about myself. Those strategies didn’t help me lose weight.

I never get on a scale except at the doctor’s office, and then I don’t care what it says. I eat when I’m physically hungry, and I don’t eat when I’m not physically hungry. Through the practice of mindfulness, I learned how to deal with my emotions directly instead of eating in reaction to them. We need to learn that emotions are mentionable and manageable. They are not a reason to eat.

Tribune: There are legitimate reasons to lose weight, such as attempting to control one’s blood pressure or fit more comfortably in one’s clothes. Beyond that, how does one get off the yo-yo of diets?

Rossy: Research demonstrates that dieting doesn’t work in the long run and that yo-yo dieting is worse on your health than never having gone on a diet. Diets, with their promises of fast weight loss, can be tempting, but they will not work over time. Mindful eating is the sane alternative to dieting. Not only can you enjoy your food and learn to follow your body’s internal wisdom, but you can learn to love and appreciate your body. When you do that, your body will adjust to the weight that it needs to be. The most important thing to focus on is health. People can be healthy at many different sizes.

Tribune: Your book uses the acronym BASICS to explain mindful eating. Please explain that particular approach.

Rossy: The BASICS are: Breathe and belly check for hunger and satiety before you eat; Assess your food; Slow down; Investigate your hunger and satiety throughout the meal; Chew your food thoroughly; and Savor your food.
**Tribune:** How and when did you figure this out?

**Rossy:** I figured it out like I did most other things — with practicing mindfulness. Mindfulness is a skill that can be improved with practice and then brought to every aspect of your life. Mindfulness teaches us to be in the present moment with curiosity, kindness and a relaxed attitude. Under those conditions, we are able to make decisions that nourish us.

**Tribune:** If people find themselves constantly planning, worrying, complaining and self-criticizing, how can they stop that self-defeating behavior?

**Rossy:** Mindfulness teaches you to be aware of thoughts without becoming them. You can begin to see the patterns of your thoughts — such as worrying, planning and criticizing — and not be affected by them. These types of ruminative, obsessive thoughts aren’t facts; even the ones that tell you they are. This is a profound teaching that you can learn through mindfulness.

**Tribune:** How can people turn stress or guilt about food into more enjoyment of the food?

**Rossy:** One of the worst times that you can eat is when you’re stressed. Stress and obesity are linked because when you eat when you’re stressed, the body stores the food as fat. Instead of eating when you’re stressed, how about going for a walk, listening to music, talking to a friend or taking a few deep breaths? The time to have your cake is when you are relaxed and can focus completely on the delicious taste and how much you actually want. Guilt gets in the way of our pleasure and usually makes us eat more than we really want or need. When you bring mindfulness to eating your chocolate cake, do so with full presence and enjoyment. There is nothing wrong with eating chocolate cake!

**Tribune:** A sedentary lifestyle is not good for health. Research provides mounting evidence that exercise and movement is more important than dieting. What does it take to get off the sofa?

**Rossy:** I love to teach people how to rediscover the joy of moving their bodies. The first thing to consider is the amazing things that the body can do. When you bring your attention to your body with this type of appreciation, you are more likely to discover how to move it in ways that feel delicious. Take the focus away from exercising to lose weight; move because it feels good. This does not require a gym membership or special clothes, although I do always recommend that you buy a good pair of running shoes.

Walking is one of the best and easiest things you can do. To overcome the main barrier to moving, do not listen to your thoughts that tell you there is not enough time or that you are too tired. Make movement a non-negotiable priority and schedule it into your day.

Discover what your body likes to do. You might be surprised at how much fun it is.
Access Missouri grants to increase 21 percent, Nixon says

With a little more than two weeks before classes start, students eligible for Access Missouri scholarships received good news Friday when Gov. Jay Nixon announced the maximum award will increase by 21 percent.

State lawmakers approved Nixon’s recommendation to add $4 million to the fund and increase allowed spending by $7 million, to $76.5 million, allowing for the increased awards. Students attending four-year schools will be eligible for up to $2,250, up $400 from last year, and students at two-year colleges will be able to receive up to $1,030, up from $850.

“In a knowledge-based economy, the high-growth and high-tech industries of the future need well-educated workers,” Nixon said in a news release. “That’s why my administration has made college affordability a top priority, strengthening and expanding our scholarship programs and ensuring Missouri remains a national leader in holding down tuition costs.”

In the 2015-16 school year, 48,301 students received awards, according to figures presented in June to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. Of that number, 10,157 attended one of the University of Missouri’s four campuses.

The average award across the four UM campuses was $1,583. The approximately 5,000 students attending MU who received Access Missouri awards received an average award of $1,630.

Access Missouri is the state’s major need-based scholarship program. Students whose families are unable to contribute more than $12,000 for their education costs are eligible if they are enrolled full time and maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher.

Under state law, the maximum award for students at four-year schools is $2,850 and the minimum award is $1,500. The maximum award at two-year colleges is $1,300 and the minimum is $300. If
appropriations are not enough to pay out the legal maximum, the top award is adjusted downward by the coordinating board.

Not every MU student will see an increased award, Nick Prewett, director of student financial aid wrote in an email. And those who do receive a larger award might not see an increase in their overall financial aid packet, he wrote.

For some, it could mean borrowing less, he wrote.

The university also provides need-based grants and more funding for Access Missouri could allow more students to participate, he wrote.

“We will work to extend the eligibility of our institutional need-based grant,” Prewett said.

The state’s two other major grant programs, the A+ Scholarship and Bright Flight, also saw funding increases, Nixon said in the news release.

The A+ Scholarship, available to graduates of almost all Missouri high schools, pays for tuition at community colleges for students who meet academic and public service requirements. Bright Flight provides stipends based on achievement to students who score in the top 3 percent on college entrance exams.

Reesman works to keep Mizzou's 'engines running'


COLUMBIA, MO. • Sarah Reesman has worked in Mizzou's athletics department for 23 years, and while the school looks to find its next athletics director, chancellor Hank Foley has appointed her to lead the department as interim AD. She’s the third person to hold that title since July 13 when Mack Rhoades was announced as the next AD at Baylor.

On Friday, her first official day with the new title, Reesman spoke to the Post-Dispatch.
Q: How has your new role been defined to you?

A: It’s similar to what Wren (Baker) was doing and really it’s a matter of trying to keep all the engines running as far as the athletic department goes. There is regular work to be done on a daily basis trying to support the coaches and staff as they prepare for the school year and provide some guidance and leadership in that role. It’s certainly a group effort. We have what we call our exec staff and we’ve always worked together very closely as a leadership team. I don’t see that changing at all. There just needs to be a point person, and I believe that’s what the chancellor’s intention was in doing this.

Q: Initially, last week, the chancellor said he was going to serve as interim AD. Did anything happen to change those plans? Was it because you were out of town?

A: To be honest, I believe he was trying to be very conscientious about me and my family trip that had been planned for a while and understanding that the time change would make communication somewhat inefficient and make things hard for people if decisions needed to be made. That was his decision to try to help be efficient as possible with that process and also being very considerate of me.

Q: I understand Mack and Wren are still around the office. Are they just helping with the transition phase? (Baker will take over as AD at North Texas later this month.)

A: It is a transition phase. They’re doing all they can to make sure people are informed about things they were involved with. They’re tying up things and helping prepare and organize.

Q: Do you have any idea of a timeline for how long you’ll be in this role?

A: No, I don’t. Just as long as I continue to help as the search process moves forward. Then I’m sure there’ll be some transition time once someone is named. Whatever works best for the chancellor and our new leader I will do what I can to help.
Q: I know you were on the advisory committee the chancellor formed to help with the AD search. Are you still in that capacity? Have you met or is that committee more for down the road?

A: I am still serving on the advisory committee. Anything beyond that, and I’m sure you understand, is with the chancellor and he’s the point person for all the activities of the group. But I am still involved.

Q: What are your priorities right now? Wren talked about the agenda a few weeks ago. When you talk about keeping the engines running, what’s most important?

A: We’re getting ready for the school year and have three, really four sports with cross country that either have started like football or getting started in the very near future. Even with summer school out we’ve got a lot of student athletes who are going to be back on campus and we’ll be helping the coaches and staff get ready and be prepared for competitive seasons. But also we’ve got a lot of overriding things that will continue whether that’s ticket sales or fundraising and trying to move forward with our facilities plans. We just don’t want to lose ground. We want to keep moving forward in an appropriate way, not getting ahead of ourselves knowing that new leadership is coming but also making sure we’re making progress in a good way. We’ve got a good foundation that.

The other thing that’s new and exciting for us if what we’re calling our Mizzou Made curriculum. It’s a great opportunity for our student athletes to experience a lot of different things to help them as they progress through their careers here and also beyond. With the staff that’s coming onboard, Brian Brown and Natasha Kaiser-Brown with the track team, that’s just an unbelievable addition to our athletics family. We’re really excited about that.

Universities Boost Stipends Ahead of Ruling on Grad Unions

No MU Mention

Several private universities are boosting stipends and benefits ahead of a federal ruling that could clear the way for graduate students to form unions. To some grad students, it's an attempt to persuade them that they don't need collective bargaining to get a raise.

Union backers say pay hikes are nice but what they want most is more control over their work as teaching and research assistants.

"The message isn't that graduate students need more money," said Ben Cohen, who studies biomedical engineering at Cornell University, which recently raised stipends by 2 percent and increased child-care subsidies for graduate students.

"The message is that graduate students deserve to have a voice in their representation," he said.

Thousands of graduate students at public universities are already unionized, but New York University is the only private university in the U.S. where graduate students now have union representation.

That could change in the months ahead. The NLRB, which ruled in 2000 that grad students had a right to collective bargaining only to reverse itself in 2004, has been revisiting the issue yet again in cases involving Columbia University and the New School, both in New York City.

Both pro- and anti-union forces say they expect the current board, appointed by President Barack Obama, to again declare that grad students have a right to organize. A ruling is expected before Obama leaves office.

Last month, Columbia announced it would raise the standard nine-month graduate stipend of $26,286 by 17 percent over the next four years. That came after the university acted last May to increase child-care subsidies and paid parental leave.

Among other universities that have increased pay and benefits for graduate students, the University of Chicago announced a $2,000 graduate student stipend increase over two years last December. Brown University raised stipends and added money for dental coverage and travel to conferences.
Brian Carlson, a Massachusetts-based law lawyer who represents educational institutions, said the increases in pay and benefits are likely intended to dissuade graduate students from unionizing. "When graduate students are happy they are less likely to be receptive to calls to organize," Carlson said.

University administrators argue that graduate students are not employees, even though they help teach and conduct research.

The other seven Ivy League institutions plus Stanford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology filed a brief with the NLRB on Feb. 29 supporting Columbia against the union effort. They warned that allowing graduate students to unionize would represent "an inappropriate intrusion into long protected areas of academic freedom and autonomy."

Unionization of grad students, they warned, also has the potential "to transform the collaborative model of graduate education to one of conflict and tension."

Labor organizers at Columbia, where grad students have been considering an affiliation with the United Auto Workers union, have both celebrated the recent boost in pay and benefits, and characterized them as an attempt at appeasement.

Olga Brudastova, a Columbia graduate student in civil engineering, called the four-year raise package "a classic tactic for an anti-union campaign, so that at the end of the day they are able to say, 'Oh, we are doing everything for you, even for the future, not just for now.'"

A Columbia spokesman declined to comment.

Ian Bradley-Perrin, who is studying for a Ph.D. in the history of public health at Columbia, said that in addition to increasing pay and benefits, university officials began last spring to invite small groups of graduate students to lunch meetings where a negative view of unions was presented.

"At one point the dean said there was no successful student union in the country," Bradley-Perrin said.

The UAW is also seeking to represent graduate students at Harvard University, where President Drew Faust has spoken out against the union drive.
Missouri has concluded its Title IX investigation into softball coach Ehren Earleywine with no finding that he violated federal non-discrimination statutes.

Still, Earleywine apparently hasn’t been cleared of all wrongdoing — at least not yet — according to a statement provided to The Star on Friday from MU interim chancellor Hank Foley.

“At Mizzou, we are committed to ensuring the health, well-being and safety of all of our students, faculty and staff,” Foley said. “To this end, we are committed to complying with state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination and harassment.

“We can confirm that the internal investigation by the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX involving University of Missouri softball coach Ehren Earleywine has concluded, and it was determined that there was no violation of our non-discrimination policies.

“At the same time, the university remains equally committed to our core values of Respect, Responsibility, Discovery and Excellence — and we believe it is incumbent upon each member of our campus community to demonstrate these values in their words and actions. Senior leaders in athletics are currently discussing next steps, and I, too, will be involved in those discussions.”

Earleywine had been under investigation by the athletic department, and later the main campus through MU’s Office for Civil Rights & Title IX, for more than four months.

Former athletic director Mack Rhoades, who resigned July 13 to accept a similar position at Baylor, launched the investigation after receiving a complaint from several players alleging verbal abuse by Earleywine.
Missouri’s compliance department quietly interviewed team members during the season before the team’s Unity Council publicized the investigation May 7 by announcing the Tigers were playing under protest.

After a first-round exit in the SEC softball tournament, Earleywine asked the players to end the protest, which Mizzou’s players agreed to do before hosting an NCAA regional. The Tigers dominated regional play, but lost to Michigan in the NCAA super regional round.

The Star learned in late May that the Title IX office had become involved in the investigation.

Earleywine, a Jefferson City, Mo., native, is 453-154 in 10 seasons as Missouri's coach. The Tigers have appeared in a NCAA regional every season of Earleywine's tenure, advancing to a super regional eight times and appearing in three consecutive Women’s College World Series from 2009-11.

MU researchers discover fidgeting is good for you

COLUMBIA - Researchers at the University of Missouri have found fidgeting can help prevent the negative effects of sitting for prolonged periods of time.

The study was led by a professor of exercise and physiology at MU, Dr. Jaume Padilla, along with other professors and several graduate students apart of the school.

Previous research has shown that sitting at desks or computers for long periods of time can restrict blood flow and potentially lead to cardiovascular disease.

The findings MU researchers published show fidgeting while sitting can protect the arteries in the legs and help prevent arterial disease.
While it was known fidgeting would increase blood flow to the legs, this research now shows it is sufficient enough to counteract the negative health effects of sitting for long periods of time.

The authors of the study recommend people engage in leg movement when sitting either at work or home.

**The New York Times**

**College Students Protest, Alumni’s Fondness Fades and Checks Shrink**

**No MU Mention**

Scott MacConnell cherishes the memory of his years at Amherst College, where he discovered his future métier as a theatrical designer. But protests on campus over cultural and racial sensitivities last year soured his feelings.

Now Mr. MacConnell, who graduated in 1960, is expressing his discontent through his wallet. In June, he cut the college out of his will.

“As an alumnus of the college, I feel that I have been lied to, patronized and basically dismissed as an old, white bigot who is insensitive to the needs and feelings of the current college community,” Mr. MacConnell, 77, wrote in a letter to the college’s alumni fund in December, when he first warned that he was reducing his support to the college to a token $5.

A backlash from alumni is an unexpected aftershock of the campus disruptions of the last academic year. Although fund-raisers are still gauging the extent of the effect on philanthropy, some colleges — particularly small, elite liberal arts institutions — have reported a decline in donations, accompanied by a laundry list of complaints.

Alumni from a range of generations say they are baffled by today’s college culture. Among their laments: Students are too wrapped up in racial and identity politics. They are allowed to take too many frivolous courses. They have repudiated the heroes and traditions of the past by judging them by today’s standards rather than in the context of their times. Fraternities are being unfairly maligned, and men are
being demonized by sexual assault investigations. And university administrations have been too meek in addressing protesters whose messages have seemed to fly in the face of free speech.

Scott C. Johnston, who graduated from Yale in 1982, said he was on campus last fall when activists tried to shut down a free speech conference, “because apparently they missed irony class that day.” He recalled the Yale student who was videotaped screaming at a professor, Nicholas Christakis, that he had failed “to create a place of comfort and home” for students in his capacity as the head of a residential college.

“I don’t think anything has damaged Yale’s brand quite like that,” said Mr. Johnston, a founder of an internet start-up and a former hedge fund manager. “This is not your daddy’s liberalism.”

“The worst part,” he continued, “is that campus administrators are wilting before the activists like flowers.” Yale College’s alumni fund was flat between this year and last, according to Karen Peart, a university spokeswoman.

Among about 35 small, selective liberal arts colleges belonging to the fund-raising organization Staff, or Sharing the Annual Fund Fundamentals, that recently reported their initial annual fund results for the 2016 fiscal year, 29 percent were behind 2015 in dollars, and 64 percent were behind in donors, according to a steering committee member, Scott Kleinheksel of Claremont McKenna College in California. His school, which was also the site of protests, had a decline in donor participation but a rise in giving.

At Amherst, the amount of money given by alumni dropped 6.5 percent for the fiscal year that ended June 30, and participation in the alumni fund dropped 1.9 percentage points, to 50.6 percent, the lowest participation rate since 1975, when the college began admitting women, according to the college. The amount raised from big donors decreased significantly. Some of the decline was because of a falloff after two large reunion gifts last year, according to Pete Mackey, a spokesman for Amherst.

At Princeton, where protesters unsuccessfully demanded the removal of Woodrow Wilson’s name from university buildings and programs, undergraduate alumni donations dropped 6.6 percent from a record high the year before, and participation dropped 1.9 percentage points, according to the university’s website. A
Princeton spokesman, John Cramer, said there was no evidence the drop was connected to campus protests.

The story continues: http://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/08/05/us/college-protests-alumni-donations.html

**Historical society unveils vision for new research center and museum**

By Rudi Keller

Friday, August 5, 2016 at 2:00 pm

Missouri takes its name from the longest river in the United States, and its principal city, St. Louis, was founded just south of where it joins the Mississippi River.

At the confluence, the muddy waters of the Missouri enter the clearer stream of the Mississippi, remaining distinct at first but then mixing as things flow downstream. The confluence was the major path to the interior for early European explorers who mapped other places where streams joined.

The new Center for Missouri Studies, which will house the State Historical Society of Missouri, adopted the symbol of the confluence to define its mission and guide its design, Director Gary Kremer said. The society on Thursday released conceptual drawings from Kansas City architects Gould Evans for the $35 million research center and museum that will be built at Sixth and Elm streets.

“This came out of endless conversations — repeated conversations between the staff and the architects,” Kremer said. “There were lots of brainstorming discussions of ‘What does this building mean?’ and ‘What message do we want to send?’ ”

The schematic design drawings were approved last Friday by the executive committee of the historical society’s board of trustees. The design represents a fusion of the past, present and the future, board president Stephen Limbaugh said in a news release.
Museum galleries will fill most of the first floor of the three-story structure, with collections of manuscripts and newspapers set aside for researchers on the second floor. The top floors will house the society’s administrative offices.

“The Center for Missouri Studies is a place where we can build on the history of our past while making decisions about the future,” Limbaugh said. “I think Gould Evans’ vision for the building represents our mission beautifully.”

The building is being funded by $35 million in state revenue bonds. The vote to accept the designs means Gould Evans can begin work on the floor plans and construction blueprints, Kremer said. Groundbreaking is set for early 2017 with completion expected in 2019.

To get the maximum useable space out of the state funding, the design drops plans to include a basement parking area. The parking area would have added $5 million to the cost, Kremer said, so the society is seeking private donations to develop about a quarter of the block into a two-deck parking structure that will provide about 70 spaces for the public.

“We just simply couldn’t afford” the underground parking plan, Kremer said.

The society is located on the ground floor of Ellis Library, where it has been housed since the library opened. The State Historical Society was founded in 1898, is the trustee of state historic records and is designated lead agency for the state bicentennial in 2021.

Only a tiny fraction of the society’s art collection can be displayed, and many of its documents are stored off-site. In the news release, Limbaugh said current facilities “have been woefully inadequate for decades” and will be replaced with “a visionary space where Missourians of all backgrounds can discover our complex cultural roots.”

The building will have two front doors, one facing south toward the University of Missouri and another facing north toward downtown Columbia. The reason, Kremer said, is to make the new center a place where the city and the university meet.

The doors will lead visitors into a large, open lobby, bounded on the east and west by the new galleries, research rooms and vaults for storing priceless art and irreplaceable documents.

The lobby will be useable space, capable of hosting as many as 200 people for receptions, lectures or other events.