University of Missouri takes needed steps in diversity

The Editorial Board

The University of Missouri-Columbia is taking important steps and making needed investments to improve race relations on campus.

The action announced Tuesday grows out of incidents of racism at MU last fall. That led to a student hunger strike and MU football players threatening a boycott. Resignations of the system president and Columbia campus chancellor followed.

A good first step was Mike Middleton being appointed interim system president and Hank Foley as chancellor of the Columbia campus. Other changes to improve diversity, equity, inclusion and race relations include the university pumping $1.6 million toward doubling minority faculty numbers to 13 percent in four years.

MU LEADERS PUT MONEY INTO EFFORT AIMED AT DOUBLING MINORITY FACULTY

Some money will be used for faculty recruitment and retention. Other funds will be devoted to attracting minority doctoral candidates and getting them ready for tenure tract teaching jobs.

Those are wise moves. The university faces tough competition from other institutions of higher education and businesses for talented persons of color. Attracting and developing them is the best way to retain them.

The Star earlier this year found from data obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request that of the 451 faculty members hired at the Columbia campus in the last two academic years, only 19 were African Americans. Increasing the number of black faculty members at MU has been a long-standing demand of black students there. Perhaps now university officials will finally get the job done.
Also starting this year, biannual campus climate and diversity surveys will take place on all four campuses in the system, including the one in Kansas City. This should gauge how well the university is doing with about $4.2 million to fund new diversity and inclusion initiatives. Evaluating the results will be important to determine what’s working — and what should to be discarded.

During the start of the school year, freshman orientation has included a mandatory and necessary awareness session focused on racism and diversity. Because of segregation in Missouri and in the country, many young adults’ first face-to-face, personal encounters with African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans is on college campuses. Faculty and staff also are being offered Diversity 101 training courses.

These are baby steps, but they are important in making all students in the four-campus system feel welcome.

Having a calm, equitable, inclusive campus environment increases the likelihood that all students will be able to better focus on getting the most from their college education without exposure to racism, sexism, homophobia or other distractions. The problems last November at MU hurt the university’s reputation and were partly responsible for a 5 percent enrollment decline this fall.

That prompted university officials to announce budget cuts and a hiring and wage freeze because of the expected revenue loss of about $30 million. MU still must fill the top administration jobs. The MU system appears to be on track to make positive changes. Results of these initiatives should be reported to the public so Missourians can see what progress is being made.
University of Missouri aims to increase minority faculty

COLUMBIA, Mo. — The University of Missouri says it’s putting $1.6 million toward doubling its numbers of minority faculty to 13 percent in four years.

University leaders met on the Columbia campus Tuesday to discuss efforts in the past year to improve diversity, inclusion and race relations, The Kansas City Star reports.

Kevin McDonald, interim vice chancellor for diversity, equity and inclusion, says $600,000 of the $1.6 million will be used for faculty recruitment and retention. McDonald says $1 million will go toward bringing in minority doctoral candidates and preparing them for tenure track teaching posts.

The newspaper reports that data shows that of the 451 faculty members hired at the Columbia campus during the past two academic years, only 19 were African-American.

The university also says that biannual campus climate and diversity surveys will be conducted on all four campuses in the system starting this year.

Efforts by the school are in response to protests held on campus last November where students voiced their concern that the university lacked diversity, especially among the faculty.

Minority students also said they felt isolated and that university leaders failed to respond to reports that students had been called racial slurs on campus.

“There was no one cause for what happened 10 months ago on this campus, and there will be no one solution,” MU Chancellor Hank Foley said. “We are working tirelessly to move toward being more inclusive.”

System interim President Mike Middleton said “We know full well that this is just scratching the surface.”
MU students respond to diversity and inclusion efforts

COLUMBIA- After the University of Missouri's announcement Tuesday to increase faculty diversity, some students question whether the $1.6 million pledge to the initiative is really enough.

MU Interim President Michael Middleton, Chief Diversity Officer for the UM System and Interim Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Kevin McDonald, and Interim Chancellor Hank Foley addressed last year's protests and what's being done to improve MU's damaged reputation and lack of diversity.

However, they put the biggest stress on finding the money and resources to increase faculty diversity.

The money the university set aside is going "to be used to bring in post-doctoral fellows from underrepresented groups, bring them here to Mizzou, with the goal of retaining them here as faculty members," Foley said.

"We're going to utilize this post-doc cluster hiring program," McDonald said. "We hope that we bring in potentially 3-4 post-docs a year that will hopefully be aligned with open faculty positions, so that when they finish these two year stints they'll be able to be very competitive for open faculty positions."

Huong Truong, a junior at MU, said money and the program is just a start to increasing faculty diversity at the university.

"I think it takes a lot more than money to increase the diversity in the faculty," Truong. "You can put as much money as you want to the cause, but it's not going to change it if you don't put it in the right direction and mindset."
With an end goal of teaching and depending on how the new initiative goes, Truong said she wouldn't mind contributing to faculty diversity in the future.

"If I had a guaranteed position, possibly- high chance, yes," Truong said.

McDonald said doubling the faculty diversity numbers enhances learning, lets students see themselves represented in faculty, and better introduces students to a globalized society.

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**University of Missouri Set Goal to Diversify Faculty**


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**Great Plains ADA granted $5 million for research and training**

Generated from News Bureau press release: $5 Million Grant to MU Will Continue ADA Services for Four-State Area

COLUMBIA - The Great Plains ADA Center at MU received a grant for $5 million from the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The money will benefit
Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas. The grant will fund the center through 2021. This is the fifth consecutive time the department has awarded the grant to the center.

The grant will pay for several projects, including an annual national symposium and research to find the most effective methods of education and training for ADA compliance.

Chuck Graham, the associate director of the Great Plains ADA Center, said without the grant, the center would not be able to run.

"It continues having a resource for people who have questions or concerns or need information about the ADA, about their rights, about what they need to do to comply, and that information is free of charge," he said. "It's a great resource not only for this community, but for the four state region."

On a daily basis, the center answers questions people with disabilities may have about their rights and helps businesses become more accessible. Richard King is the owner of Thumper Entertainment, the group that makes Roots 'n Blues possible. All Roots 'N Blues volunteers underwent ADA training on Wednesday in preparation for the festival. He said making sure all people are able to attend the festival is a number one priority for him.

"People with special needs, so to speak, are very important," he said. "We want to make sure they just feel welcome. We don't want them to feel like we're going out of our way or anything like that. We want this to be just a routine thing, the way we do business every year at the festival."

Bob Pund, a person with a disability who is confined to a wheelchair, said seeing Columbia become more concerned about accessibility is great.

"I remember before the ADA was passed, things were not as accessible," he said. "Since that time, every time they build a new building, it is much better than it was in the past before the ADA."
MU study finds parts of teacher pension funds are being used to pay off debt

Generated from News Bureau press release: Teacher Pension Plans Plagued by Debt

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=4dbe40ab-5d14-4652-ab82-e2dd1db066af

COLUMBIA - Nearly 11 percent of Missouri public school teacher pension plans are being used to pay for pension debt, according to a University of Missouri Study.

Associate professor of economics and public policy Cory Koedel headed the study.

Koedel said when teachers get their checks, 14.5 percent is taken out to pay for their pension.

"I would imagine that most people think that means that is paying for their pension, which they might not like the 14.5 percent but at least they think they're paying for their own pension," Koedel said. "There's nothing that says, oh by the way a big chunk of this is actually just debt. There's nothing in their check that says that."

Koedel said if it were not for the debt, as of 2013, teachers should only have to pay 9 percent.

"I don't think it's reasonable to not make that assumption that when it says money's coming out of their check to pay for their pension benefits that it's actually paying for their own benefits," Koedel said.

KOMU 8 News reached out to Public School and Education Employee Retirement system of Missouri (PSRS). PSRS officials said they were unavailable for an interview and haven't had a chance to read the study.

According to its website, "The Public School and Education Employee Retirement Systems of Missouri (PSRS/PEERS) provide a significant and stable source of retirement, disability and survivor benefits to Missouri's public school teachers, school employees and their families."
Koedel said he isn't sure why there hasn't been public concern about paying high pensions.

"I think everyone should care because the money being taken to pay for these pension debts is affecting the services that we as tax payers are paying for. Past costs are coming back to haunt us, and it's going to lower the quality of services that the typical tax payers are going to get for their money."

Koedel said if no action is taken debts will keep piling up, creating repercussion is the education system.

"It's not like the building is going to fall down tomorrow and I get that, so many people aren't that worried about it. At the same time, the continued tax on the system from these growing pension tax is going to keep degrading education services."

**Renovation adds classroom, office space to MU's Swallow Hall**

*Renovating the University of Missouri's Swallow Hall has added more than 8,300 square feet of usable space to the building.*

Construction on the $16.9 million project started in May 2014. The basement that was once cellar-like with low ceilings and dirt floors is now an “active learning” classroom that features new technology, said Heiddi Davis, director of Campus Facilities Planning, Design and Construction. The third floor — with offices, study space and research laboratories — was once an attic that had some inaccessible spaces.

MU officials took reporters on a tour of the building before a grand reopening scheduled for Thursday.

Swallow Hall houses the Department of Anthropology, which occupied the building before the renovations, and the Department of Art History and Archaeology, previously located in Pickard Hall. Faculty moved into the building in May, and classes are being held inside this semester.

Lisa Sattenspiel, chairwoman of the anthropology department, said her department was dispersed between McReynolds Hall, Mizzou North and University Place during construction.

“It worked well,” she said. “It was frustrating, but we had to get this building done. It was falling apart all around us.”
The Museum of Anthropology, which moved from Swallow, will remain at Mizzou North, said MU Operations spokesman Mark Yount.

Crews gutted the inside of the building and maintained its shell, later connecting the interior and exterior parts.

Davis said the building follows MU’s stewardship model, which maintains a building’s historic features while bringing it up to today’s standards.

“We were able to get the unique character, but also have a modern building,” Davis said.

Swallow Hall is a part of the “red campus,” which showcases redbrick buildings. Much of the building’s exterior maintains brick original to its 1893 construction. The back of the building, which faces Ninth Street, is new and features matching brick.

Slate shingles and wood trim in seminar rooms and some department offices are also original to the building. Stained glass once inside doors is now an artistic feature on a high wall inside the third-floor study space. Cast-iron columns that were also original to the building were relocated to the front lobby.

A lecture hall that can seat more than 100 students has been added. It includes seating space for individuals using wheelchairs. Two stairways have been added to meet safety codes, Davis said.

Casts of famous sculptures and artwork, mostly ancient Greek and Roman, are scattered throughout Swallow Hall and will be used for teaching, said Sue Langdon, chairwoman of the Art History and Archaeology Department.

MISSOURIAN

Past still present in renovated Swallow Hall at MU

ANN MARION, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — The dark, wooden window sills in Lisa Sattenspiel's key-shaped office are now deep enough to hold books and a cactus. Although new, the window sills were inspired by the character of the grand old building built around 1893.

"They did a great job," said Sattenspiel, chair of the Department of Anthropology, whose faculty and staff returned to Swallow Hall recently after about two years of construction.
These renovations were part of a larger "Renew Mizzou" project that included renovations to Swallow, Jesse and Pickard halls. Employees moved to different buildings on and off the main campus. Jesse reopened in the spring of 2015. Pickard, which was closed in 2013 due to concerns about radiation lingering from the days when the chemistry experiments were conducted there, remains shuttered.

A public reopening ceremony for Swallow Hall, on the southeast end of Francis Quadrangle, will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday. Heiddi Davis, director of planning, design and construction for MU Campus Facilities, led a tour for news media on Wednesday morning.

"We tried to respect the historic character of the building," Davis said.

The Swallow project cost $16.9 million, Davis said.

As with construction projects at Tate, Switzler and Jesse halls, renovations to Swallow were funded using the Mizzou Stewardship Model. It uses money from MU’s maintenance budget for these buildings that otherwise would have been spent maintaining outdated structures.

The renovated building has 36,520 square feet. That includes 8,349 square feet of additions for two seminar rooms, a 100-seat lecture hall, research labs and a third floor.

The attic previously included elaborate wooden tresses, but the space wasn't usable. Now, metal tresses and spacious graduate research areas are housed on the third floor, where an original stained glass window and new dormer windows let in light from the quad.

Davis said Swallow Hall's unconventional maze-like shape made the remodeling challenging, but its importance at MU made updates necessary. Updates include accommodations in line with the Americans with Disabilities Act, unisex restrooms and a staircase to meet fire code.

The Department of Art History and Archaeology, which used to be in Pickard, is now in Swallow. "We're so excited to be back in the heart of campus," chair Susan Langdon said.

One former occupant of Swallow isn't returning.
Karlan Seville, communications manager for Campus Facilities, said the MU Museum of Anthropology will reopen this winter in Mizzou North, which is at North Garth Avenue and Business Loop 70 in the former Ellis Fischel Cancer Center. The new location has room to house all of the department’s artifacts, Seville said. It's also in the same building as the Museum of Art and Archaeology.

Although the museum is gone, Swallow has ornate statues, casts and other artwork throughout the building. Langdon said many of the busts came from historical properties in Europe. One statue came from a voyage undertaken by John Pickard, the namesake of Pickard Hall, she said.

Many original features were salvaged and repurposed, including cast-iron columns, exterior bricks and ceiling tiles. Swallow's wood floors are still there — but in another form: They have been repurposed as a large bench on the first floor.

"We love the bench," Sattenspiel said, "because they remind us of the old, creaky, wood floors."

**COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE**

**Lawmakers look at role of University of Missouri in new degree programs**

JEFFERSON CITY — The law requiring Missouri State University to cooperate with the University of Missouri on engineering and doctoral programs is a mandate to look for other cooperative ventures among public universities before allowing new stand-alone programs, Assistant Commissioner of Higher Education Rusty Monhollon told lawmakers Tuesday.

At a meeting of the Joint Committee on Education, called to discuss the Higher Education Review Task Force, Monhollon was asked to explain why many new degree programs are created as joint ventures, such as the dental program between the University of Missouri-Kansas City and Missouri Southern State University in Joplin.

Monhollon, task force chairman, said the statutes on higher education, taken as a whole, encourage cooperative offerings that save money on duplicated faculty and administration.
“Collectively, there is an implication that other institutions are limited in the kinds of programs they can offer as well,” Monhollon said.

The issue that concerns lawmakers, said Chairman Gary Romine, R-Farmington, is whether too much power is being given to MU. In this year’s legislative session, attempts to repeal the restriction on degree programs at Missouri State in Springfield received a serious review as the UM System took political lumps for the administrative turmoil and student protests that marked the fall semester.

“There are glitches right now and frustration with the Department of Higher Education and Mizzou and questions about who ultimately makes the decision about degree programs,” Romine said.

The task force is a 14-member body created in June by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education to look at all aspects of Missouri’s higher education system. The task force is looking at governance, efficiency, missions, adequacy of funding and selectivity of schools. There are six community college representatives, six public university representatives and a representative of the State Technical College of Missouri.

Commissioner of Higher Education Zora Mulligan said the task force will answer two basic questions: “What do we really need from higher education institutions in our state, and how can we afford to provide it?”

One example used during the hearing is a proposal for an engineering program at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau. A coordinating board decision on the program is on hold until the task force report is ready, Mulligan said.

The task force should look at the geographic distance from degree programs, said state Rep. Steve Cookson, R-Poplar Bluff. Where he lives, near the Arkansas border, attractive degree programs are closer across the state line than in Missouri.

“Once they go out of the state for education, getting them back into the state represents a challenge,” said Cookson, a former school superintendent. “It really is a brain drain.”

With help from consultants at the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, the task force will review current and future workforce needs, and programs will be created to fill gaps, Mulligan said.

“This will give us some objective data when we make those decisions, so it is really a policy decision rather than a political one,” she said.
The Latest: Missouri lawmakers override 13 Nixon vetoes

The Latest on Missouri's legislative session to consider overriding gubernatorial vetoes (all times local):

JEFFERSON CITY, MO. - The Latest on Missouri's legislative session to consider overriding gubernatorial vetoes (all times local):

10:15 p.m.

Missouri lawmakers have concluded their annual veto session after overriding Gov. Jay Nixon to enact measures loosening state gun laws and tightening voting requirements.

The Republican-led Legislature overrode the Democratic governor on a total of 13 vetoes Wednesday.

The guns laws allow most adults to carry concealed weapons without needing permits.

The photo ID requirement is contingent on passage of a November ballot measure.

Nixon, who is in his final year in office, already was the most overridden governor in Missouri history.

Over his past six years in office, lawmakers have successfully overridden 96 vetoes of bills and budget measures. That doesn't include one additional override of an unemployment benefits bill last year, which the Supreme Court declared void because it was not done in a timely fashion.

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9:55 p.m.
Missouri lawmakers have enacted a measure that will close some types of farm data from the state's open records laws.

The GOP-led Legislature on Wednesday voted to override Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon’s veto of the measure.


The measure will require state agencies to keep confidential the information collected for voluntary agricultural programs. That includes registration data for animal disease tracking programs.

Republican Sen. Brian Munzlinger says a goal is to encourage farmers to participate in state programs.

Opponents argued that those records should be open to the public to promote accountability.

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9:35 p.m.

Missouri lawmakers have failed to enact a bill to allow for exceptions to a requirement that some businesses use the federal E-Verify program to check whether job applicants are authorized to work in the U.S.

The GOP-led Legislature didn't muster enough votes Wednesday to override Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon's veto.

State law requires businesses with government contracts, tax breaks or grants to use E-Verify.

The proposal would have allowed businesses to opt out if doing so would be costly.

The measure, which lawmakers called the Big Government Get Off My Back Act, also would have extended a package of tax incentives to small businesses. Businesses with fewer than 50 employees would be able to claim a $10,000 tax deduction for each job they create that pays above their county's average wage.

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9:10 p.m.

Thirsty for a beer at a ballgame or rock concert? There soon could be an app for that.

Missouri lawmakers on Wednesday overrode a veto by Gov. Jay Nixon to enact a law allowing entertainment facilities to sell alcoholic drinks through mobile applications.
Customers could tap an app on their phones to place orders from concession stands, then show proper identification when the drinks are delivered to their seats.

Nixon cited a different section of the bill when vetoing it. The governor says the bill would allow the Missouri Wine and Grape Board to hire attorneys to defend the interests of Missouri winemakers in out-of-state lawsuits. Nixon described that as an expenditure of public funds for a private purpose that is prohibited by the Missouri Constitution.

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9 p.m.

Missouri lawmakers have approved a tax break for farmers who receive federal disaster aid payments.

The Legislature voted Wednesday to override Gov. Jay Nixon's veto of a bill creating a state income tax deduction for disaster payments to cattle ranchers and other agricultural producers.

The new law is retroactive to 2014, when Missouri farmers received an unusually high amount of federal aid stemming from a 2012 drought. That means people can file amended tax returns seeking refunds.

Nixon's budget office estimates the tax break could cost the state nearly $52 million.

**But an analysis by an agricultural economist at the University of Missouri puts the cost near $12 million.**

The Missouri Cattlemen’s Association says Arkansas is the only other state with a similar tax deduction.

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**Story continues:**
Lawmakers override Nixon on gun, voter ID bills

JEFFERSON CITY — Senate Republicans on Wednesday twice used some muscle to pass bills over Gov. Jay Nixon’s objections, approving controversial gun and voter identification bills in the annual veto session.

A motion to shut off debate, rare anytime in the state Senate, had been used only once in September veto sessions since they were initiated in 1974. That was in 2014, when lawmakers approved a 72-hour waiting period to obtain an abortion. On Wednesday, it was used on both the gun measure and the voter identification bill.

The Missouri House also passed both bills. The gun measure eliminates the requirement for gun owners to obtain a permit to carry a concealed weapon and enacts provisions known as a “Stand Your Ground” law. The voter identification bill would require a government-issued ID with a photo, birth date and expiration date to cast a ballot if voters approve Amendment 6 on Nov. 8.

Through 8 p.m., lawmakers passed five bills over Nixon’s vetoes, raising the number of successful override votes in his eight years in office to 88, far surpassing the number for any other governor.

Lawmakers did not, however, consider overturning any of Nixon’s spending decisions, leaving the University of Missouri Review Commission without authority to use $750,000 set aside for its work. The commission can tap legislative appropriations for expenses that are absolutely necessary, said Rep. Scott Fitzpatrick, R-Shell Knob and vice chairman of the House Budget Committee.

The commission’s funding was included in $115.5 million in spending restrictions imposed by Nixon in July. Revenue growth for the year that ended in June was far below expectations, Fitzpatrick said.

“You can debate on what he selected to withhold, but the amount is absolutely necessary, in my opinion,” he said.

Debate on the gun bill began more than six hours after the Missouri chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America held a rally in the capitol that drew almost 200 people. As they dispersed to visit legislative offices for last-minute lobbying, Kristin Bowen of Columbia said the show of strength was important.
“Whatever happens today, we are sending a strong message to legislators who cave to the gun lobby that we are watching,” she said.

The gun measure passed the Senate 24-6 on party lines and was subject to more than two hours of debate in the Senate before the sponsor, Sen. Brian Munzlinger, R-Williamstown, submitted the motion to cut off debate. During debate on the bill, Munzlinger defended it as a public safety measure. Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, voted with the Republican majority.

“What this will allow is those legal, law-abiding citizens to protect themselves from those criminals,” he said.

Democratic lawmakers who opposed the bill questioned why the state is abandoning the training requirements to carry a concealed gun. The “stand your ground” provisions, which allow the use of deadly force in a public situation, will lead to more gun deaths, said Sen. Jason Holsman, D-Kansas City.

“What is the average citizen going to think about the Stand your Ground law?” Holsman said. “I am in fear, so I am going to shoot someone.”

In the House debate, Rep. Eric Burlison, R-Springfield, said the bill only recognizes rights inherent in the Second Amendment.

“It is just as essential a liberty today as it was 200 years ago,” Burlison said. “Those rights weren’t given to us by men, they were given to us by God.”


The voter identification measure has been a priority for Republicans for more than a decade. A 2006 law was declared unconstitutional by the Missouri Supreme Court. The bill passed Wednesday will not take effect unless voters approve Amendment 6, which would overturn the court ruling, and lawmakers appropriate money to fulfill its provisions.

Under the legislation, approved 115-41 in the House and 24-7 in the Senate, voters could not cast a ballot without showing the required identification or signing an affidavit that they are the person listed in voter registration rolls. For those signing affidavits, election officials would not count the vote until verifying the signature against records on file from the initial registration.

Voters without the necessary identification or documents to obtain it would be able to get government help securing the papers at no cost.

Boone County lawmakers split on party lines on the voter identification bill, with Basye, Jones, Rowden and Schaefer supporting it and Webber and Kendrick opposed.
MU Students Practice Putting Out Fire as Part of Safety Week

MU to host symposium to address media, ethics and the law

COLUMBIA - The Missouri School of Journalism and the University of Missouri School of Law will host a two-day symposium Thursday on the MU campus. The symposium is called the Price Sloan Symposium, which will address the topic of media, ethics and law.

According to a news release, "The symposium, which focuses on free speech on college campuses, will feature roundtables and lectures to discuss legal issues related to free speech, law, culture, social science perspectives and student press issues on college campuses."

The symposium aims to provide clarity on these issues to students, faculty and the general public.
Brett Johnson, an assistant professor of Missouri School of Journalism, said the first day of symposium will cover some topics including freedom of expression and freedom of press, which are very important topics in recent years.

"Particularly after the University of Missouri became the focal point of this debate back in November 2015," Johnson said. "We as the journalism school and the school of law, wanted to create an event that would showcase our leadership on the issues involving freedom of expression on college campuses and the freedom of the press."

Johnson said he also believes we use the freedom of speech too loosely, which betrays the true meaning of what freedom of expression is all about.

Johnson defines his understanding of the core meaning of free expression as "opening up dialogues to ideas that maybe dissenting opinions; ideas that would challenge the statue of quote; ideas that are ultimately beneficial for society that keeps us constantly honest about what are true values of ideas are."

"We're not here to make necessarily political statement. It's more to bring people together to talk about these important issues," Johnson said.

Johnson said the symposium is free to the public, it will begin with opening remarks by Sylvester "Sly" James, mayor of Kansas City. The second day of the symposium will include a keynote debate at Missouri Theatre featuring nationally known media commentators Kirsten Powers of Fox News and Sally Kohn of CNN.

**Former chancellor takes on new role as director of national security research at MU**

R. Bowen Loftin has experience in the field, having worked with agencies like NASA and the military to develop effective ways to train and educate.

**Drawing from his experience in the field of national security research, former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin is now working to make connections between researchers and government funders as MU’s director of national security research development.**

Loftin said his job entails finding sponsored research opportunities for MU faculty from the departments of Defense and Homeland Security and other intelligence agencies. He also meets with faculty to learn about their research capabilities and goals, brings contacts to speak with departments on campus and makes recommendations to the administration about how MU can receive more research funding.
Loftin first met with interim Chancellor Hank Foley in January to discuss his new role and began traveling for the position in March. It wasn’t until late June that Loftin’s job was officially defined on paper.

Originally, the Board of Curators asked Loftin to work on research facility development, but Foley later decided to focus Loftin’s role on national security research, Loftin said.

Some of the research projects Loftin is currently working with are being done for the National Geospatial Agency. Loftin said he is also working with research about the medical treatment of soldiers, mass data analysis, triage techniques involving augmented reality, nuclear energy and using virtual reality to help treat autism spectrum disorders.

Loftin is currently working mostly with faculty who have received funding from national security agencies in the past. He is starting with these projects because they already demonstrated established interest.

“Not everyone wants to do research in the national security area,” Loftin said. “It’s a sensitive area and many people don’t feel comfortable with that. My point is that the things I’m looking at are not weapons; they’re simply things used to educate and train.” Loftin is working to find and present opportunities he thinks faculty might be interested in.

“Faculty members are very independent, and the last thing I want to do is make them feel like they have to do something that they don’t want to do,” Loftin said. “But if this is something that they’re interested in as a possibility, I’m happy to try to go out and be a ‘bird dog,’ to try to find the right opportunities for them and point at it and say there it is and go after it.”

Loftin is also working to cultivate connections between different departments and researchers on campus.

Bimal Balakrishnan, an associate professor in architectural studies who is currently researching virtual reality, said that it can often be difficult to connect with others on campus.

“This is a huge campus; people don’t always know what the other person is doing,” Balakrishnan said.

Loftin first met with Balakrishnan a few months ago to discuss his research and goals.

Now, the virtual reality researchers from architectural studies are having preliminary discussions with the Thompson Center about exploring new possibilities within virtual reality to help autistic children, Balakrishnan said.

Before he started working as an administrator, Loftin served as an educator and researcher.

As a physics professor, he disliked the teaching system where there is one teacher and many students, Loftin said.
With this problem in mind, Loftin got involved with a technology called intelligent tutoring systems. He and his team developed the first ITS for physics, catching the attention of NASA and the military. In intelligent tutoring, a computer replicates an individual tutor or professor, diagnosing and prescribing solutions to the unique difficulties of each student.

“I went from my individual use of [intelligent tutoring systems] in physics to helping NASA develop these systems for the ground-based flight controllers as well as people who were flying missions,” Loftin said. “My last project for the military before I became an administrator was charting the future course of this research area. And that’s what the people in the Army research area have done; they’ve followed the prescription I gave them for how to develop this technology further, and it’s been quite successful.”

The controversy and turmoil of last year’s events led Loftin to reconnect with many of his old contacts.

“One of the things that really helped me get past the events of last November was the fact that over a thousand people reached out to me that I had known in my career... to wish me well,” Loftin said. “It proved to me that I still have these connections in this world of national security where I worked for so long.”

Loftin views his decision to pursue research development, as opposed to other roles that were considered for him earlier in the year, as positive. “It was a good choice,” Loftin said. “I really had fun going back to my roots, my research roots, and to have the chance to renew the relationships I had for so many years with good people.”
MU Campus Dining Services rolled out its new Tiger Plan, advertised as “the most flexible off-campus student dining plan,” this semester after over five years of development, CDS Marketing Director Mike Wuest said.

The Tiger Plan allows students to shop at all 21 CDS locations, including restaurants in the Student Center and Memorial Union, Mizzou Market locations and all dining halls. The department’s website advertises that students will “save up to 63% off the cash price” at all locations.

The 63 percent off does not apply to the total cost of the plan, but instead applies to flex dollars purchased with the plan. The Tiger Plan’s price is divided into two parts: the base cost and flex dollars. The base cost goes directly to CDS to pay fixed expenses, such as mortgages and staff salaries. The remaining money becomes flex dollars and goes into a flex account, similar in structure to E.Z. Charge. The flex dollars are what students use to actually purchase meals or a-la-carte products at the discounted rate.

Students can save money on The Tiger Plan, but they can never save 63 percent of their cost when factoring in the base cost. If a student buys the 350 plan for $800, for example, and only dines at all-you-can-eat locations, they receive $946 worth of food, or a 15.4 percent discount.
compared to the cash price. But if the student only dines at a-la-carte locations, they receive $700 worth of food, which is 14.4 percent more expensive than paying in cash.

Students receive a 63 percent discount on flex dollars at all-you-can-eat locations, 50 percent at a-la-carte locations and 20 percent at Mizzou Markets. Wuest said the differences in discounts are due to the varying costs of food at different locations.

When calculated with the base cost, each flex dollar actually costs $2.29 or $2.26, depending on which plan a student purchases. Plan 350 costs a total of $800, with a base cost of $450 and $350 in flex dollars. Plan 630 costs $1430, with a base cost of $800 and $630 in flex dollars.

“We wanted to be as transparent as possible about where the dollars in The Tiger Plan were going,” Wuest said in an email. “All dining plans at all universities have these [fixed costs] built into their program, but many times you won’t know that without asking specific questions.”

The CDS website offers students a glimpse of how prices at different dining locations look when using the Tiger Plan. The chart on the website advertises that a Double Shack Burger from Mort’s costs $4.19 without a meal plan and $2.10 in flex dollars. However, the chart does not factor in the base cost. A student using the Tiger Plan 350 pays $2.29 for each flex dollar, so that burger actually costs them $4.81.

Junior Ahmad Kayyali said he began the year on the Tiger Plan but switched to a block meal plan after he calculated that it was possible to lose money by using it.
“I was really disappointed with The Tiger Plan this year,” he said. “If you actually calculate it, you’re paying more for food.”

Wuest said CDS consulted leaders of the Residence Halls Association, the Missouri Students Association and CDS’ secret shoppers, students who are selected to shop at dining locations as regular students and then evaluate the location. He said the feedback was “overall very positive.” MSA President Sean Earl and RHA President Matt Bourke both confirmed that they had discussed the plan with CDS leaders before its release.

Earl said the plan is a good opportunity for students living outside of residence halls, but he said he wishes the plan gave students more flex dollars.

“The only major concern that I had with the program was the fact that it only gave students $350 of flex spending after paying $800 for the plan,” Earl said in an email. “[CDS Director Julaine Kiehn] explained that the $450 is to cover the base cost of operations, which is understandable.”

A student can save money by adding additional funds to their flex account, but students are limited to adding $100 per semester. Flex dollars also do not roll over to the next semester the way E.Z. Charge does. Kiehn said in an email that was so the Tiger Plan works the same as the block dining plans to avoid confusion.

“The Tiger Plan can save students money, depending on where they use the plan,” Kiehn said. “There is value in the convenience and flexibility of being able to use the plan at any Campus Dining Services location. The student realizes the greatest value by using the plan in the all-you-care-to-eat dining locations.”

Wuest acknowledged that students would not receive as high a value if they shopped at a-la-carte locations and Mizzou Markets.

“We estimated that students would use it in a combination of places so that they would get at a minimum, the amount they paid for the plan in value,” Wuest said. “Most scenarios showed an increase in value.”

According to CDS’ website, the plan is currently in pilot stage and is targeted at “increasing the number of off-campus students on dining plans (and generating new revenue during these challenging financial times).” The website states that CDS will need to adjust the financial structure of the plan and make changes to the housing and dining contract before offering it to on campus students.

“Our students have been asking for a dining plan that offers the flexibility of use in all of our locations across campus, and we wanted to design a plan that worked with off-campus students,” Wuest said. “So we created The Tiger Plan with that in mind.”
Will its takeover by Bayer do anything to improve Monsanto’s image?

By Bryce Gray St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 8 hrs ago

CREVE COEUR • The announced $66 billion sale of Monsanto Co. to Bayer AG leaves many wondering about its impact on the futures of both companies. Beyond the finances, one question is whether the mega-scale merger of pharmaceutical and agricultural giants will do anything to change Monsanto’s controversial — and widely vilified — reputation worldwide.

From business experts to activists, some are skeptical that the deal will move the needle of some public sentiment, which they say remains weighted against the Creve Coeur-based company branded as “Monsatan” in some activist circles.

“I don’t think it’s really going to change their image,” said Doug Gurian-Sherman, the director of sustainable agriculture and a senior scientist at the Center for Food Safety. He said that both
Monsanto and Bayer “have done things that, from our perspective, are not in the public’s interest.”

Skeptics say Monsanto won’t be helped by Bayer’s own past. The German company has been linked to a number of controversial issues and products throughout its history — from production of the deadly gas used in Nazi concentration camps to its stance in the modern-day debate on genetically modified food.

“When you look at the history of Bayer, it’s almost as bad as Monsanto, in terms of spending huge amounts of money to resist genetically modified food labeling,” said Michael Hansen, a food safety and environmental health expert for Consumers Union.

Hansen said Bayer had a poor track record with genetically modified crops, pointing to a $750 million out-of-court settlement the company reached in 2011 after an engineered rice variety that was never approved for public consumption turned up in the commercial rice supply, ruining about half of long-grain rice exports from the United States and leading to international trade bans. The rice variety, known as LibertyLink 601, was grown only on test plots from 1998 to 2001, Hansen said, yet somehow resurfaced in rice exports five years later.

But the merger is perhaps most worrisome to environmentalists and scientists concerned about Monsanto, the world’s most prominent herbicide producer, joining forces with Bayer, manufacturers of widely used, controversial pesticides called neonicotinoids. Some studies suggest that the family of pesticides may harm pollinators such as honeybees, prompting bans to be implemented or proposed from Europe to Minnesota.

“It’s a troubling combination of toxins and more toxins,” said Gurian-Sherman.

Others are more optimistic about how Monsanto will fare after the merger, which is expected to close at the end of 2017.
“Monsanto’s image could only be helped by disappearing into Bayer, I would think,” said Carey Gillam, a director of the consumer group, U.S. Right to Know, who has researched Monsanto for nearly two decades.

She believes the benefits of merging with Bayer will be twofold. Besides shielding Monsanto from continued negative attention, she says the deal could also provide financial security at a time when the company’s marquee products face intense public scrutiny or outright bans in markets such as Europe.

“Monsanto faces many challenges if they continue to push back against Bayer and opt for a standalone strategy as their rivals consolidate,” Gillam said. “Both of the company’s bread-and-butter product lines – its glyphosate herbicide and its GMO crops – are facing a host of challenges now and Monsanto’s efforts to develop new product lines and diversify its revenue stream so far have not proven successful.”

Wayne Keene, director of the Center for Sales and Customer Development at the University of Missouri-Columbia, says that the merger could provide Monsanto with a fresh start in terms of building its corporate reputation.

“I think that Bayer gives them the opportunity to reset the discussion,” said Keene.

Plus, he says the deal may expand the company’s marketing possibilities. “Monsanto is looking at Bayer as a company that can give them opportunity and access to new growth,” Keene said.

The merger still needs approval from anti-trust regulators before being finalized. Anti-trust concerns not only present a regulatory hurdle, but an additional challenge in terms of the new company’s public image.

“Anytime you get into monopoly conditions, that’s not considered good at all for the farmer,” said Hansen.
Ultimately, the effect of the merger on Monsanto’s image may come down to the name the company takes on in the aftermath of an approved deal. In comments Wednesday, Monsanto Chief Executive Hugh Grant said the name of the company was not discussed as part of the merger. “That’s really the $66 billion question,” said Keene, weighing whether Monsanto will keep its name.

On one hand, the company’s name has garnered notoriety in some circles that it may wish to shed.

“They’re keenly aware that that’s a huge liability in terms of limiting their business opportunities,” said Ricardo Salvador, the director of the food and environment program with the Union of Concerned Scientists.

But on the other hand, Monsanto could be compelled to keep its name, Keene said, because its name-brand crop science still holds “unique” value to a number of customers.

“From a marketing stand point, Roundup is highly valued in their marketplace,” Keene said. “Within their lane, Monsanto has a great brand recognition if nothing else.”

SEPTEMBER 14, 2016 1:58 PM

**Mizzou to sell $25 tickets for SEC opener against Georgia**

Missouri has sold 55,000 tickets for its Southeastern Conference opener Saturday against Georgia, which is well short of Memorial Stadium’s capacity of 71,168.

Hoping to spur additional purchases, Mizzou Athletics on Wednesday announced a 25-hour flash sale, offering $25 reserved seats in the Tiger Deck, the upper deck on the east side of the stadium. Sale tickets can be purchased from noon Thursday through 1 p.m. Friday atMUTigers.com/buytickets or by calling 800-228-7297.
Mizzou officials said last week before the home opener against Eastern Michigan that the season-ticket renewal rate was 82 percent, which is down from an average of more than 90 percent. The Tigers had sold nearly 40,000 season tickets, a decline from more than 45,000 last season.

After the 2012 season, the last time Mizzou had a losing season, the season-ticket renewal rate was 85 percent.

It’s unclear if the sluggish ticket sales — including a crowd of 51,192 for last week’s game, the smallest for a Mizzou home opener since 2006 — are related to fan unrest after last season’s player boycott.

“There’s no way to tease that one apart,” interim MU chancellor Hank Foley said Tuesday during a forum to announce diversity initiatives.

Foley cited several other possible factors for the low attendance.

“We didn’t have a particularly exciting season last year,” he said of the Tigers’ 5-7 record, which included a seven-game conference losing streak. “That has an effect. It’s impossible to know how much of it (the decline) is due to that and how much is due to changes we had to make with ticketing within the stadium that were necessary and that other schools have had to do also around the country.”

Since joining the SEC, the Tigers have averaged 69,012 for their first conference home game, including matchups with Georgia in 2012 and 2014.

Foley remains optimistic there will be a good crowd for the Mizzou-Georgia game, which kicks off at 6:30 p.m. and will air on the SEC Network.

“I think there’s tremendous excitement about (first-year Tigers coach) Barry Odom and his coaching,” Foley said. “I think we’re going to see really good attendance this week for the Georgia game.”
When the Obama administration announced that starting this fall, students would be able to file the famously complex Free Application for Federal Student Aid months earlier using older tax data, some predicted that the move could bring big changes to the admissions process. It’s too soon to know if they were right: Students can’t start filing the "early Fafsa," as some are calling it, until next month.

But many colleges have worked to get ahead of the new process. More than two-thirds of them plan to make significant changes in their enrollment procedures because of it, according to a survey by the education-technology company Cegment Inc. Others are taking a wait-and-see approach.

Letting students and their parents fill out the Fafsa using older financial information had been a popular policy recommendation for years. Under the old system, the Fafsa became available in January and relied on tax data from the previous year, so, for instance, a student planning to start college in the fall of 2016 filled out the Fafsa using tax information from 2015.
That timing was far from ideal. Students are encouraged to file the Fafsa as soon as possible, in part because some kinds of financial aid, including some states’ grant programs, are based on the principle of first come first served. But many families don’t file their taxes until closer to the April deadline for doing so. Families that had not completed their taxes could apply for aid using estimated information, which they would have to go back and correct later, adding a hurdle to an already cumbersome process.

Now that the Fafsa will ask for tax information from the "prior prior year" — two years back, instead of one — nearly all aid applicants should have the correct information available. And many more of them will be able to take advantage of the IRS data-retrieval tool, which lets families transfer their tax information into the financial-aid form. That should greatly ease the process for families, and improve the accuracy of the information they submit, too.

While student advocates had long pushed for the shift to prior-prior-year tax data, the administration’s announcement that the Fafsa would be available in October instead of January came as a surprise to most observers. That new timing will allow colleges to send out aid awards — which spell out the financial aid a student can receive for the coming year — at a point in the year when, in the past, students couldn’t even have applied for aid yet. Students, in other words, could have a full picture of what college would cost them even earlier than their advocates anticipated.

But there’s significant variation in how colleges are responding to the change, at least in this first year. Nathan Mueller, a principal with the consulting firm Hardwick Day, calls it a "stratified response": Some colleges — especially private institutions with rolling admissions — see responding to the early Fafsa as a strategic opportunity or necessity, he says. Others are waiting to see how this year goes, or don’t think the change will mean much for them.

**Earlier Awards**

As soon as the Fafsa changes were announced, Tom Willoughby started holding monthly meetings about them with high-level admissions and financial-aid staff members at the University of Denver, where he is vice chancellor for enrollment. "We wanted to really understand what the implications were," he says, "for families and for us."

Mr. Willoughby figured that at least some families would apply for aid earlier — and expect an earlier aid award from Denver, too. The group of half a dozen senior staff members discussed whether the university should change its admissions deadlines, set
tuition earlier, shift aid policies, or communicate differently with families. They decided to push to get students earlier aid awards.

That’s just what student advocates hoped that colleges would do. On the traditional timeline, many students find out what they’ll pay after aid at a particular college only a few weeks before May 1, the deadline to decide where to enroll. That doesn’t give them long to make a thoughtful decision.

Colleges build their aid awards based on the cost of attendance, the full amount students face for tuition, fees, room, board, and other expenses before financial aid in a given year. In many cases, that number can’t be pinned down until the spring, when colleges set their tuition for the coming year. So colleges that want to send earlier aid awards must either move up the tuition-setting process or send out estimated awards.

In April, Mr. Willoughby proposed to the university’s board that it set tuition in September instead of January, and the board voted to do so.

So when Denver sends out early-action and early-decision admissions offers this December, they will be paired with final aid awards. That move will give applicants lots of time to consider the financial aspects of their college decision. Denver will do the same with the offers in its "early decision II" cycle, in February. Those earlier awards will help many of the university’s students: About 60 percent of the class usually comes in through early-admissions programs, Mr. Willoughby says. The university also plans to send aid awards with regular admissions decisions, which go out in March, when possible.

A Question of Flexibility

Susquehanna University, which is on rolling admissions, also plans to send earlier aid awards, says Madeleine Rhyneer, vice president for enrollment and marketing at the Pennsylvania institution. "If we have offered you admission," she says, "we are going to send you a financial-aid package four or five days later." Like Denver, it brings in a large portion of the class early in the admissions cycle, meaning that many admitted students will have a long time to mull over their aid awards.

And incoming students aren’t the only ones who will benefit. Susquehanna also plans to give returning students earlier aid awards, Ms. Rhyneer says, hopefully in March or April, before students take their finals and leave for the summer.

While Ms. Rhyneer thinks that the early Fafsa is a boon for families, she sees a potential drawback for colleges. A student who accepts admission, final aid offer in hand, in January could go months without making any kind of next step toward
enrollment. That kind of lag time concerns admissions officials because it might make students more likely to melt, or not enroll as planned.

To fill in part of that long wait, Ms. Rhyneer worked with colleagues across the university to bump up two other parts of the process for students who’ve decided to enroll. They’ll now get dorm assignments earlier, and will be able to register sooner for their first-year seminars. Susquehanna will also move one or two of its preview days for admitted students earlier.

Admissions officers have other worries about that long wait. It gives students time to fall out of love with a college that turns out to be expensive. And it gives families more time to try to negotiate for additional financial aid.

But those are worries for colleges, not students, Ms. Rhyneer says. At Susquehanna, more than a quarter of students receive Pell Grants, and about a third are first-generation students: exactly the sorts of students the federal policy change was designed to help. Serving such students is important to Susquehanna, she says, and here was a way to help them.

Besides, Ms. Rhyneer says, a small, private college like Susquehanna has the flexibility to make changes quickly.

Not every college is in that position. At the University of California at Santa Barbara, "we are in the camp of not doing much of anything initially," says Michael Miller, interim assistant vice chancellor for enrollment management and financial-aid director. "There’s a lot of unknowns," he adds.

The new financial-aid timeline may be particularly confusing for students applying to the University of California, which does not accept admissions applications until November, Mr. Miller says. Prospective students, in other words, will be able to apply for financial aid before they can apply for admission, making their first point of contact a campus aid office. Even so, Mr. Miller likes the idea of getting aid information to students more quickly.

**Unintended Consequences**

While the shift to the early Fafsa is widely seen as an improvement for students, even those in favor of it worry about unintended consequences.

Experts agree that the changes are likely to make it harder for colleges to predict yield, the percentage of admitted students who enroll.
Phil Trout, a college counselor at Minnetonka High School, in Minnesota, worries that such uncertainty will push colleges to bring in even more students through their early-decision programs, which have binding admission. Such programs tend to attract more-affluent applicants, for whom financial aid won’t play a pivotal role in the college decision, raising concerns about equity. Besides, says Mr. Trout, president of the National Association for College Admission Counseling, many high-school students are simply not ready to make a decision that early in the year.

The National College Access Network has been monitoring another potential downside for students: Some colleges have responded to the new Fafsa timeline by moving up their suggested submission dates for the forms, often known as "priority deadlines." The group fears that doing so could disadvantage low-income students if, for instance, later submission results in a less-advantageous aid package. Some colleges warn that it might, but there’s no standard policy regarding priority deadlines.

The network isn’t alone in that worry. Last month the Education Department — which has encouraged colleges to send out earlier aid awards — sent a letter to college presidents asking them, among other things, not to change their deadlines. "Early priority aid deadlines," the letter says, "most negatively impact students from low-income backgrounds and first-generation students who often have the least amount of information and support."

Not everyone agrees with that reasoning. Hardwick Day has suggested that colleges "institute additional priority deadlines," Mr. Mueller says. What the network is probably worried about, he says, is colleges giving less aid to students who miss deadlines. That’s not something the firm advises. The better use of deadlines, Mr. Mueller says, is to provide "a nudge for students to submit the Fafsa."

Arizona State University has moved its Fafsa priority date from March 1 to January 1, says Melissa Pizzo, dean of admission and financial-aid services. While the deadline has moved up, students will have a longer window between when the Fafsa opens and the deadline than they did in the past, Ms. Pizzo says. "We are giving them 30 additional days for that priority date," she says.

And even though the deadline is earlier, students can continue to file the Fafsa after it passes. Those who miss the priority date will still be in the running for academic scholarships, and those who qualify for the university’s College Attainment Grant Program, which fills in the gap between other grants and the sticker price of tuition for Pell-eligible Arizona residents, will still get that money, Ms. Pizzo says.
The university plans to start sending aid awards quite a bit earlier than it did in the past — in December, rather than March. That, Ms. Pizzo says, will give students much more time to make a fully informed enrollment decision.

Whether or not that extra time will work in the university’s favor is something that ASU, like other institutions making similar moves, won’t find out for months.