Academic Minute: Risks Leaving the Nest

Listen to the story: https://www.insidehighered.com/audio/2016/09/16/risks-leaving-nest

Generated from a News Bureau pitch.

Not all birds face the same risks when leaving the nest.

Julianna Jenkins, post-doctoral research fellow at the University of Missouri, explores the survival rates of two types of birds as they venture on their own. My dissertation work focused on understanding the transition between the nesting and postfledging life stages of Neotropical migrant songbirds on the breeding grounds. I worked with two interior forest nesting migrant focal species: the Ovenbird (Seiurus aurocapilla) and the Acadian Flycatcher (Empidonax virescens) in the fragmented forests of Central Missouri.

From 2010-11 I worked for the Wisconsin DNR as a Research technician for wetland biologist, Ron Gatti in Spring 2010, and as Assistant Upland Research Biologist under Dr. Scott Hull. Research projects included Greater Prairie Chicken monitoring, Sharp-tail Grouse monitoring and radio telemetry, grassland songbird nesting surveys, Blue-wing teal nesting surveys, and statewide pheasant roadside surveys. Additionally I was coauthor and support staff for the inter-agency publication, “Wisconsin Sustainable Planting and Harvest Guidelines for Nonforest Biomass”.

In 2009 I interned with the International Crane Foundation (ICF), field ecology department. I was a field technician on sandhill crane research projects investigating juvenile crane habitat use and sandhill crane crop predation sponsored by ICF field ecology director, Jeb Barzen and crane research manager, Anne Lacy. I participated in extensive sandhill crane capture efforts in Wisconsin and Ontario, Canada that incorporated blood collection, morphologic measurements, and banding.

In the fall of 2008 I was a biologist intern at the Keauhou Hawaiian Bird Breeding Center in Volcano, Hawaii. I participated in daily care of endangered Hawaiian breeding birds: diet prep, aviary maintenance, behavioral enrichment, health checks, and daily behavioral observations.

During the summer of 2008 I worked for the Maria Mitchell Natural Science Museum, Nantucket Island, MA where I participated in research with Dr. Bob Kennedy including: Barn Owl and Osprey banding and population monitoring, and Bay Scallop monitoring. I also participated in MA Audubon color band re-sighting and regional survey of common and roseate tern populations.

As an undergraduate at UW-Madison, I wrote and received funding ($5000) to conduct a summer research project in Costa Rica investigating the Spatial Ecology of the Margay, Leopardus wiedii in a Costa Rican Cacao Agro forest and participated in population monitoring of the Scarlet Macaw with Chris Vaughan, PhD.

Baby songbirds in the nest face naturally tough odds; unable to fly, they are easy prey for cats, snakes, and even other birds.
However, the perils don’t end when young birds venture from the nest. Our research focused on the risks baby migratory songbirds face in and out of the nest and our findings may have important implications for migratory songbird conservation.

Once out of the nest, fledglings need to gain the skills to survive on their own. It is during this time that the majority of mortalities occur.

You can think of young fledglings as teenagers getting ready to leave the house. They still depend on their parents for a lot of things and may have pretty poor judgement. While scientists know it’s a dangerous time for baby birds, they don’t know what may be affecting mortality or if risks post-fledging are similarly affected by habitat as compared to the nesting period.

So, we documented nesting habitat and survival and fitted baby Ovenbirds and Acadian Flycatchers with lightweight, temporary radio transmitters. We then followed them daily for four weeks using handheld receivers. We recorded the young birds’ behaviors and survival as well as characteristics of their habitat.

Ovenbirds and Acadian flycatchers had similar nesting success but experienced very different mortality rates post-fledging. Even though they shared the same area of habitat, around 90 percent of juvenile Acadian flycatchers and about 50 percent of Ovenbirds survived these first few weeks out of the nest. These results tell us that we cannot assume that species occupying similar nesting habitats will have similar risks after leaving the nest.

The study also is important because it sheds new light on factors that impact the survival of songbirds during a critical period in their lives. The more we know, the better equipped we will be to provide them suitable habitats.
MU granted $3 million for Hepatitis B research

Generated from News Bureau press release: NIH Grants MU $3 Million to Develop New Hepatitis B Treatments

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=e5e1dd8e-f43f-4f6c-beb5-0d0f007f30a8

COLUMBIA – The National Institutes of Health has awarded researchers at the University of Missouri $3 million to help them develop new treatments for the Hepatitis B virus.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the estimated number of chronic Hepatitis B cases ranges from 850,000 to 2.2 million.

Stefan Sarafianos, an investigator with MU’s Bond Life Sciences Center, applied for the grant in what he said is a competitive market.

“Investigators apply for NIH funding, which actually these days is quite competitive, perhaps one in ten grants is funded by NIH to do research in various disciplines and fields,” said Sarafianos.

The grant awarded to MU is for research related to the development of drugs that would hopefully completely destroy Hepatitis B.

Sarafianos said the current treatments are not enough.

“We feel that there is a great need for the development of such drugs because the current drugs, while they’re effective in suppressing the virus in the blood of patients, they’re unable to cure patients and eradicate the virus,” he said. “Therefore we think, and we believe, that we can help develop such drugs that will lead to eradication of the virus.”
The CDC also shows that more than 9,000 death certificates listed HBV as a cause of death from the years 2010-2014.

Sarafianos said his team has already begun their research, part of which they used to apply for the grant.

“We have strong preliminary data which actually helped for us to get the grant, and we’re set up with collaborators,” he said.

Both the University of Minnesota and the University of Pittsburgh are working with MU on this project.

Sarafianos’ team is comprised of about 25 people including researchers, technicians and graduate students.

He said that with the NIH grant, his team will definitely make progress in the fight against Hepatitis B.

“This kind of research, and any research is an investment in my opinion. Any money spent towards research is money that we give many returns in the long term,” Sarafianos said.

MU scientist to direct research seeking cure for hepatitis B

Generated from News Bureau press release: NIH Grants MU $3 Million to Develop New Hepatitis B Treatments

A University of Missouri scientist will lead a $3 million program to find a drug that can attack the protective shell of hepatitis B, undermining the virus’ ability to reproduce.

Stefan Sarafianos, professor of molecular microbiology and immunology in the MU School of Medicine, will collaborate with researchers at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and the University of Pittsburgh to study hepatitis B with a National Institutes of Health grant, the university said in a news release.

Hepatitis B infects 240 million people worldwide, causing liver damage and killing about 686,000 people.
A vaccine exists, but treatments for infections have focused on the virus’ similarity to HIV and antiviral drugs targeting replication of the virus are based on HIV treatments, the news release said.

University of Missouri has Received a $3 million Grant to Study Hepatitis B

Generated from News Bureau press release: NIH Grants MU $3 Million to Develop New Hepatitis B Treatments

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=d732d313-f72c-4741-a410-6e08a2b6f6e1

MU renames building to honor creator of stealth technology

Generated from News Bureau press release: MU Officials Rename Engineering Building West “Naka Hall” after MU Alumnus, Donor

F. Robert Naka, who left a Japanese-American internment camp to attend the University of Missouri in 1943 and went on to become chief scientist of the U.S. Air Force, was memorialized Friday when the Engineering Building West was renamed in his honor.

Naka, known as the father of stealth technology, died in December 2013. He was chief scientist of the Air Force from 1975 to 1978 and deputy director of the National Reconnaissance Office. He was also a founding member of the engineering dean’s advisory committee, a life member of the Mizzou Alumni Association and contributed to scholarships for engineering students, an endowed professorship and improvements to College of Engineering facilities.
A native of California, Naka was imprisoned among 120,000 other Japanese-Americans after the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor. He was released when the Japanese-American Student Relocation Council, supported by the Quaker organization, American Friends Service Committee, arranged for 4,000 college-age Japanese-Americans to attend universities in the Midwest, a news release said.

Curt Davis, Naka endowed professor in the College of Engineering, said at a news conference he became acquainted with Naka during his visits to MU and had many detailed conversations with Naka about his work. Davis said Naka developed the first analog radar systems for use in the Arctic region, and he developed stealth technology first used on the U-2 spy plane. His infrared remote sensing system still is used to detect missile launches.

“At the outset of his life, he was perceived as a threat to this country,” Davis said. He said MU gave Naka an opportunity, and he went on to make important contributions to national security.

After graduating from MU in 1945, Naka earned a master’s degree at the University of Minnesota and a doctorate from Harvard University. He was awarded an honorary doctor of science degree from MU in 2008.

The Engineering West Building houses the computer science department in the engineering school.

“It is an honor for our parents to have their names on this building,” said David Naka, son of Robert and Patricia Naka. “We are grateful, and proud. It also is a privilege to be associated with the University of Missouri, and its leadership in providing education and opportunity to each new generation.”

Naka’s granddaughter, Elizabeth Naka, said MU’s generosity to a Japanese-American internee made his success possible.

“Mizzou provided him the opportunity to learn, grow and achieve success,” she said.

She said people must remain vigilant against prejudice like her grandfather faced and still affects the country today.
Engineering Building West renamed after renowned scientist
JING YANG, Sep 16, 2016

Columbia — MU's Engineering Building West has been renamed F. Robert and Patricia Naka Hall, MU interim Chancellor Hank Foley announced Friday.

The building, built in 1958 to house the electrical engineering department, honors MU alumnus and scientist F. Robert Naka and his wife, Patricia.

Robert Naka was known as a pioneer of classified stealth technology, and was considered an expert in surveillance, reconnaissance and communication systems. He died in 2013 at the age of 90.

Born in 1923 in San Francisco, he grew up in Los Angeles and spent most of his adult life in Boston and Washington D.C.

He enrolled in the University of California-Los Angeles at 16. At 19 during World War II, he and his family were sent to the Manzanar Relocation Center, an internment camp for Japanese-Americans. Nine months later he was released and decided to finish his studies at MU.

In 1945, he received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. He earned a master’s degree in the same field at the University of Minnesota in 1947 and a doctorate in electron optics at Harvard University in 1951.

MU was the place "where he was able to start over and kind of break from the judgment that he faced on the West Coast," said his granddaughter, Elizabeth Naka.
Naka's career started at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Lincoln Laboratory where his team developed the first automatic analog radar signal detection equipment that was used to warn of bomber attacks.

His research during the Cold War helped the United States military prevent other countries from detecting its aircraft via radar. He moved to Raytheon in Massachusetts before becoming the 20th chief scientist of the Air Force in 1975.

He was a long-time supporter of MU, serving as a founding member of the Engineering Dean's Advisory Committee and a member of the Engineering Campaign Team. He also provided considerable financial support to the university, including scholarships and gifts for engineering students. Naka also endowed professorship and improvement to College of Engineering facilities.

"We are elated to memorialize a man of Dr. Naka's character and stature on our campus," Foley said in a prepared statement.

"Dr. Naka has made incredible contributions to science, his country and our university."

**Email offers clues to University of Missouri search**

Newly obtained emails show that five to nine candidates made the cut to be semifinalist for the job of leading the four-campus University of Missouri system.

*The Associated Press*
COLUMBIA, MO. - Newly obtained emails show that five to nine candidates made the cut to be semifinalist for the job of leading the four-campus University of Missouri system.

The Columbia Daily Tribune (http://bit.ly/2dasd3c) reports that the disclosure was made in internal emails from last month recommending a car service for presidential search interviews.

Few details have been released about the presidential search. The paper obtained the email through an open records request.

Earlier this month, a 16-member search committee concluded two days of 10-hour meetings. But committee leaders have declined to say how many candidates were interviewed or provide any other particulars.

Protests last year over racial issues on the Columbia campus led to the resignation of former system president Tim Wolfe and Columbia's former chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

Emails help pierce secrecy of University of Missouri presidential search

August emails recommending a car service for University of Missouri presidential search interviews indicate five to nine candidates made the cut to be semifinalists for the system’s top job.

In an Aug. 24 email to Wendy Rivers of Isaacson, Miller Inc., senior human resources consultant Tracy Fuemmeler wrote two cars would be needed Sept. 6 and Sept. 7, plus one Sunday, when only one candidate was scheduled to meet with the Presidential Search Committee.

The search for a permanent UM System president is cloaked under strict confidentiality. After the 16-member committee concluded two days of 10-hour meetings Sept. 7, committee co-chairs Cheryl Walker and Jim Whitaker declined to say how many candidates were interviewed, how many additional interviews were planned or any other particulars.

During the meetings at the Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel, cars ferrying candidates used a sally port so the visitors could avoid being photographed.
The committee will meet at the same hotel at 2:45 p.m. Sunday and again starting at 7:45 a.m. Monday. At a news conference Tuesday, curators chairwoman Pam Henrickson spoke in very general terms about the status of the search.

“The search is going well, the search is on schedule and we are very, very pleased with the candidate pool that we are having,” she said. “We are hopeful we will have someone selected before the end of the year.”

When Henrickson was asked how many candidates were being considered, she said, “I am not going to tell you that.”

The Tribune obtained the email from Fuemmeler under a Sunshine Law request. In it, she gave Rivers contact information for JED Limousine and reported she already had called the company. In that conversation, Fuemmeler wrote, she “described to her our thoughts about likely needing” two cars Sept. 6 and 7 “(1 car for candidate 1 & 3; 1 car for candidate 2 & 4) and” Sept. 18 “would be only one candidate transport etc.”

The company charges $81.25 per hour, including tip and fuel, “but since we’d have multiple days of need she would approach her supervisor for a day rate,” Fuemmeler wrote.

In an Aug. 18 email to Fuemmeler, Cindy Harmon, secretary to the Board of Curators, recommended JED Limousine because of an endorsement from former curator David Steward’s office. Steward is chairman and co-founder of World Wide Technology, a supplier of technology integration systems.

The search committee includes all nine curators, the student representative to the board and a second student representative, two faculty, a staff member, and Walker and Whitaker, who represent alumni. All 16 members have a vote to narrow the field to a recommendation for the curators, who will make the final selection.

The four-campus university has been without a permanent president since Nov. 9, when Tim Wolfe resigned under mounting pressure from student protests over racial issues on the Columbia campus. Mike Middleton, former deputy chancellor of the Columbia campus, is serving as interim president but has said he would not seek the job on a permanent basis.

The Concerned Student 1950 protests brought a national spotlight to the university at a time when administrative turmoil already had weakened both the campus and system administration. Wolfe had tried unsuccessfully to get the curators to fire R. Bowen Loftin as chancellor, but Loftin did not survive in his job when Wolfe was forced out. Hank Foley is interim chancellor of the Columbia campus.

Concerned Student 1950 targeted Wolfe after he did not respond when his car was blocked during the Homecoming parade in October. Graduate student Jonathan Butler began a hunger strike in early November and protesters set up a campground on Carnahan Quadrangle.
National media attention multiplied after the Tiger football team joined the protest by boycotting athletic activities.

The university’s problems grew when then-associate professor of communication Melissa Click was recorded Nov. 9 calling for “some muscle” to remove a videographer recording the aftermath of Wolfe’s resignation at the protest campsite. It helped launch a political backlash at the same time the university was trying to address the protesters’ demands.

On Tuesday, Middleton, Foley, Henrickson and system Chief Diversity Officer Kevin McDonald held a lengthy news conference to describe what had been done to increase diversity and inclusion and answer questions about what impact events from last year had had. Enrollment on the Columbia campus was down 6 percent as classes began with a final count due this week.

“I don’t want to dwell on the past,” Middleton said. “I can’t explain to you exactly what happened or why. All I can tell you is what we are doing to move this institution forward.”

Board of Curators Meeting in St. Louis

Watch the story: http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=8989b3ac-96ff-4134-ae36-901c34e8d3e6
Can’t sit still while reading this? Keep fidgeting. MU research says it’s good for your health

BY LISA GUTIERREZ
lgutierrez@kcstar.com

Finally, science comes to the rescue of those of us who have been told all our lives to “sit still.”

Turns out fidgeting can be good for your health.

A study from researchers at the University of Missouri found that mild toe-tapping while seated can dramatically cut your risk of cardiovascular disease.

That’s big news for a society that seems to be spending a lot of time in a seated position, sometimes even sitting for more than 10 hours a day. Thanks, Netflix.

“Many of us sit for hours at a time, whether it's binge watching our favorite TV show or working at a computer,” Jaume Padilla, an assistant professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at MU and lead author of the study, said in a statement about the study.

“We wanted to know whether a small amount of leg fidgeting could prevent a decline in leg vascular function caused by prolonged sitting.”

The results were published this spring by the The American Journal of Physiology — Heart and Circulatory Physiology.

Researchers used 11 healthy young male and female college students for the study. According to The New York Times, researchers measured the level of normal blood flow through one of the main arteries in their legs to see how well the artery responded to changes in blood pressure.

Then each subject sat at a desk for three hours, without getting up.
They were asked to fidget one leg intermittently, tapping one foot for one minute then resting it for four. The other leg stayed stationary, foot flat on the floor. On average, the participants moved their feet 250 times per minute.

The result? After 3 hours of sitting, the fidgety leg had much higher blood flow than the other. The researchers concluded that even this little bit of movement could help stimulate vascular health.

“While we expected fidgeting to increase blood flow to the lower limbs, we were quite surprised to find this would be sufficient to prevent a decline in arterial function,” said Padilla.

In the real world, though, they recommend tapping both legs while seated to boost blood flow. Though fidgeting clearly has its benefits, Padilla and his colleagues said it’s not a substitute for getting up and walking.

“You should attempt to break up sitting time as much as possible by standing or walking,” Padilla said.

“But if you’re stuck in a situation in which walking just isn’t an option, fidgeting can be a good alternative. Any movement is better than no movement.”

What's Causing The Increased Enrollment At HBCUs?

Historically black colleges and universities are having big increases in student enrollment. Dillard University president Walter Kimbrough thinks it's because of increased racial tensions on campuses.

Now, you may have noticed that we've been taking a look at a number of interesting issues in education since the start of this school year. Now, we have another interesting trend to report. Several historically black colleges and universities are reporting record increases in student enrollment after years of declines. Freshmen enrollment is up nearly 50 percent at Shaw University in North Carolina; nearly 40 percent at South Carolina State; nearly 30 percent at Tuskegee University in Alabama and Virginia State
University and a 17 percent increase at Dillard University in Louisiana, according to those universities.

Now, everybody seems to have a different theory about the higher enrollment at these institutions from lower out-of-state tuition fees to improvements in outreach. But the president of Dillard University says he thinks enrollment is up due to increased racial tensions on college campuses over the past few years.

Dillard president Walter Kimbrough wrote about this in The Washington Post, and he joined us from WRKF in Baton Rouge to talk about it. I started by asking about his theory that the jump in enrollment numbers at HBCUs - which he calls the Missouri effect. He's been talking about the protests at the University of Missouri last fall when students protested racist incidents against students of color that they felt were unaddressed and those protests eventually led to the resignation of the institution’s president, Tim Wolfe.

WALTER KIMBROUGH: Missouri became the tipping point for African-American students on predominately white campuses that they were just not going to take it anymore. And, really, last year wasn't the beginning. If you go back even a year before that, you had black students at University of Michigan with the hashtag #beingblackatmichigan, and they sort of aired everything that was going on there. Black students at Harvard had the campaign I, Too, Am Harvard where they held up placards with some of the phrases that have been said to them by white students, like I'm surprised you're here, can you read, it must be easy to get into Harvard if you're black, those kinds of things.

Missouri then becomes this tipping point, and everyone sees it nationally, and they see real change happen. The president of the system as well as the chancellor of the campus are gone. And from then, all these other campuses started to have the same kinds of protests. There were other resignations and lots of different things happened. So it really was this empowering movement, and it really linked with everything that was happening in the country with the Black Lives Matter movement as well. And so I think that that spilled onto the campus to say that black students' lives matter on these campuses, and we want to address those issues.

MARTIN: But wait, how would that then lead to more students, black students in particular, seeking out the historically black colleges and universities?

KIMBROUGH: Right. So, you know, as you look at a lot of the demands, people are asking for more black faculty, more black staff, black living spaces, black-centered curriculum. Well, HBCUs have provided these things for almost 200 years. And so I think people are now asking a question to say, what’s important to me? And if those things are important, they're looking to say, well, an HBCU offers that, and why don't I just go to the place that has those things? The other part of the conversation with students and parents that I'm hearing is that they are concerned about their students being in those environments that they feel are hostile with macro- and micro-racial aggressions.
MARTIN: You say in your piece that for black students, HBCUs continue to serve as the original safe spaces, that the whole question of safe spaces has become something that people are, you know, academics and also the broader public have been discussing - with some emotion - is the argument that college is the place to open yourself up to new experiences. And so is that necessarily a good thing?

KIMBROUGH: Right. No, I agree, and I think that you can have those kinds of experiences at HBCUs as well. It - you know, I guess the question becomes we really only apply that question or that standard to African-American students. When I was president of Philander Smith in Little Rock, we had a white female student who comes to Philander Smith. She's one of a handful of white students. She joins a historically black sorority. She's very engaged. She doesn't act like someone that she isn't. She's fully engaged in the life of a campus.

So there should be more students who are looking for that kind of experience as well. But it always seems that we expect black students to be the ones that will have to go out and experience, you know, these diverse environments. And so I think that you can get that in an HBCU. You can get that at a majority institution as well. In the end, I think the student wins if they go to the place that's the best fit.

MARTIN: That was the president of Dillard University, Walter Kimbrough. He wrote in The Washington Post education blog Answer Sheet about why HBCUs, a number of them, are seeing large increases in student enrollment after some years of decline. He was kind enough to join us from member station WRKF in Baton Rouge. Now, President Kimbrough, thank you so much for speaking with us.

KIMBROUGH: No problem, thank you, any time.

**Race Relations Committee presents report outlining creation of new committees across UM system**

Committee Chairman Berkley Hudson: "When you start to pay attention to our humanity and our community, all boats start to rise."

Berkley Hudson, chairman of the Faculty Council Race Relations Committee, presented a progress report to Faculty Council on Sept. 15 outlining recommendations moving forward.
The report calls for creating “small groups of people committed toward naming the problems of race relations and naming the solutions.” The committee recommends forming new committees across all UM system campuses and also in more focused areas, such as nursing or journalism.

“The [Race Relations Committee] itself was reflective of the larger campus culture,” committee member Stephanie Hernandez stated in the report. “People of color understand how racism impacts their lives. And as much as we explain it, many of the white people in the group did not seem to get it or even believe it.”

The Faculty Council members raised questions about how these new committees would reach out to people beyond their immediate supporters. Hudson agreed he did not want to “preach to the choir,” and the Race Relations Committee is focused on spreading their work to different audiences.

“It took a long time to get people together and say what they want,” committee member Craig Roberts said.

The committee members emphasized they want the future committees to remain small. The current committee has 12 members, but at the meeting, Hudson said that size is probably the largest a committee should be. For future committees, Hudson said, there is no planned size other than “small.” He said there should be at least two students and one staff member on the committee in addition to faculty.

Hudson said the procedure for creating these new committees would start with finding people to form small groups and picking leaders from the groups.

Some Faculty Council members raised concerns about how the Race Relations Committee would successfully choose leaders and committee members.

Hudson seemed unconcerned.

“We’ll use our bulls--- detectors,” Hudson said.

According to the report, the number of black faculty has decreased in the past year, though the total number of black faculty is 12 percent higher than in 2005. Despite the growth from 2005, Hudson said the number of black professors is still too low because it is not equivalent to the percentage of black students.

At MU, 3.7 percent of faculty is black, while 7.2 percent of students are black, according to MU’s Institutional Research. The report does not include comparisons to Missouri’s state demographics; the Census Bureau estimates Missouri's black population is around 11.8 percent.

Hudson said the disparity between black students and black faculty “puts pressure on the faculty of color.”
The report has seven pages of statistics, and the rest of the 98-page report focuses on personal experiences, committee members’ recommendations and historical examples of racism in America. The report also has a timeline of events about race relations that have affected MU.

Hudson said the committee has received backlash for singularly focusing on racial issues instead of multiple social issues. But he said focusing solely on racial issues actually improves overall social well-being.

“When you start to pay attention to our humanity and our community, all boats start to rise,” Hudson said.

School of Medicine accreditation at stake, report finds a history of misconduct

MU’s School of Medicine could be put on probation for being noncompliant in its levels of diversity, gender discrimination, student mistreatment, curricular management and affiliation with other medical centers.

The school must show progress with these issues within two years or else it will lose its accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, according to the Columbia Missourian. If this happens, the school may be unable to provide legitimate medical degrees. School of Medicine Dean Patrice Delafontaine has until Dec. 1 to send an action plan to the committee.

One of the major issues within the school has been the mistreatment of students. Students at MU experience higher amounts of harassment in comparison to the national average, according to a June LCME report obtained by the Missourian through an open-records request.

Forty-three percent of students said they were publicly humiliated at least once while at the school, while the national average of public humiliation in medical schools is 19 percent. Similarly, 22 percent of students said they were targeted by offensive or sexist comments at least once, in comparison to the national average of 14 percent.

Specific examples of students’ mistreatment were removed from the report by the university prior to its public release.

This is not the first time the school has learned about these issues. The demands of student activist group Concerned Student 1950 indicated the lack of minorities within the school. In general, the population of students of color within the school has been low for years, according to previous Missourian reporting. In the School of Medicine class of 1997, there was one black
graduate. Even now, there are only around a dozen graduates, according to U.S. News and World Report.

When the school was evaluated for its full accreditation in 2008, LCME noted that the school did not properly comply with the diversity standards. In order to receive the full accreditation, the school established Warren Lockette as senior associate dean for diversity and inclusion. Since then, the population of minority students has been increasing, though this year it decreased from 5 percent to 3.3 percent.

According to LCME’s report, the school’s long history with noncompliant levels of diversity and its lack of progress are what causes concern for the committee, rather than just this year’s numbers.

The school also had unclear affiliations with other health centers, such as Mercy Hospital St. Louis. These affiliations are required written agreements intended to provide students access to different types of clinical experiences.

The school’s agreements were deemed inadequate because they lacked important details regarding its affiliates. In addition, the school did not provide LCME with the written agreement for its students to receive MU’s health care plan during their evaluation.

The school has had recent difficulty passing other accreditation evaluations, including in 2009 when the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education put the school under probation for subpar education standards.

These standards, in addition to a slew of other issues, were brought back up in the new report.

Students identified two neurology clerkships as being too brief in 2008. To lift the probation eight years ago, the school promised to extend the programs’ lengths to four weeks. However, the clerkships are still two weeks long because there has been a lack of faculty to support and expand the programs. LCME cited this as an example of poor curricular management.

Delafontaine will hold a press conference in early October further discussing the report and future measures the school will take.
Censorship, free speech main topics of two-day symposium
TARYN PARKER AND EMILY SHERIFF, Sep 16, 2016

COLUMBIA — A two-day symposium on topics related to freedom of speech on colleges was held on the MU campus and the Missouri Theatre Thursday and Friday.

Almost a dozen law professors, journalism faculty, attorneys, social scientists and media commentators spoke about and debated issues concerning censorship, trigger warnings and student activism. The symposium consisted of six events including roundtables, debates and presentations.

Defining discussion terminology

On the first day of the Price Sloan Symposium for Media, Ethics and Law, Robert Jerry, a professor at the MU School of Law, gave a presentation to help lay some groundwork and provide background information for the rest of the symposium's events.

The presentation was originally put together by Geoffrey Stone, a professor at the University of Chicago Law School, but he was unable to make it to the symposium, so Jerry presented in his place.

Much of the presentation covered the history of freedom of speech at U.S. universities, and it defined key terms used in discussing free speech on campus.

Stone's presentation listed two definitions:

- Trigger warning: "A requirement that before professors assign readings or hold classes that might make some students feel uncomfortable, they must warn students in advance that the readings or the class will deal with such sensitive topics as rape, affirmative action, abortion murder, slavery, the holocaust, religion, homosexuality, or immigration.”
- **Micro-aggression**: “A word or phrase that may make students uncomfortable or unsafe.”

Placing college campuses into the context of American history, Stone’s presentation said that today we live in "an era of political correctness in which students themselves demand censorship, and colleges and universities, afraid to offend their students, too often surrender academic freedom to charges of offense.”

The presentation also took a stand on the role of higher education institutions in censoring offensive speech on campus. It said that universities have a responsibility to protect free speech and "concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as a justification for closing off discussion of ideas, however offensive or disagreeable those ideas may be.”

**Powers and Kohn debate**

The last day of the symposium included a debate between Kirsten Powers, a political analyst, and Sally Kohn, a columnist and political commentator, both from CNN.

Roughly 30 people attended the event, which was held at the Missouri Theatre. During the debate, Powers and Kohn discussed trigger warnings and student activism.

Powers insisted that speech is not in itself dangerous. We should learn to have a disagreement and sometimes that means being offended, Powers said and added: "If you aren’t offended at least once in your college experience, you need to ask for your money back."

When it comes to activism on campus, Kohn argued that activists' efforts are not being celebrated the way they should be. She said students should not be shamed for engaging in protests or making demands. They, too, have freedom of speech, Kohn said.

One issue discussed was the tendency for students to reject speakers invited to visit universities.

Powers said that if someone doesn’t express the right view, students demand that the university revoke the guest speaker's invitation to campus.
"Why don’t they just not go to the event?” Powers said.

In response, Kohn said the students making demands that the guest speaker leave, also have the right to speak about against the speaker.

When the debate turned to discussion of using trigger warnings in the classroom, Powers said the decision to have trigger warnings should be left to professors, not to students. When students set up trigger warnings and safe spaces, it eliminates the option of having a debate, Powers said.

**Nixon Budget Cuts Include MU Applied Center for Learning**


**Antitrust issues loom large in Monsanto-Bayer deal**

By David Nicklaus St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Sep 18, 2016

Monsanto Chief Executive Hugh Grant sees “minimal” antitrust issues with Bayer’s purchase of his company, but he insisted on a $2 billion insurance policy against those very issues.
The $2 billion is a breakup fee that Bayer must pay if regulators reject the $66 billion deal, and it was a priority for Monsanto during negotiations. Monsanto rejected Bayer’s first offer in May partly because it didn’t contain a breakup fee, and when Bayer later offered a $1 billion fee Monsanto said it was “insufficient to ensure deal certainty.”

Monsanto’s insistence on the breakup fee highlights the uncertain nature of antitrust enforcement around the world, especially in a politically sensitive sector such as agriculture. According to Thomson Reuters, regulators have blocked deals worth $682 billion this year, including large mergers in the health insurance, retail and oil field services industries.

For their part, Bayer executives express confidence that the deal will go through. Liam Condon, head of the crop science division, told investors Wednesday that Bayer was “encouraged by the feedback” from regulators. “I think there is a good sense of the strategic rationale behind the deal, and the fact that we are focusing on innovation and growth is highly appreciated,” he added.

“When you look at that from a regulatory point of view as we studied it, it is a very clean deal,” Grant said on the same conference call. “The overlaps are clear and obvious, and they are fairly minimal.”

One obvious overlap is cotton seed, where Monsanto and Bayer control nearly 70 percent of the market. Antitrust experts think regulators also will scrutinize vegetable seeds and the rivalry between Bayer’s Liberty Link corn, soybeans and canola and Monsanto’s Roundup Ready varieties.

If those truly are regulators’ only concerns, a handful of divestitures may be enough to get the deal approved. But the U.S. Justice Department — and similar agencies in the European Union and in important agricultural nations like Brazil and India — might also worry about the broader effects of consolidation among farm suppliers.
Dow Chemical and DuPont are combining their agriculture businesses in a deal that’s also awaiting approval. If that and the Bayer-Monsanto deal both go forward, four companies would sell more than 90 percent of the world’s seeds and crop chemicals.

Bayer alone would control more than a quarter of the seed market and nearly a quarter of crop-chemical sales.

Would such a concentrated market mean higher prices for farmers? Would it mean fewer potential buyers — and ultimately fewer investment dollars — for the dozens of venture-capital-funded startups pursuing agricultural research in places like St. Louis County’s Helix Center?

The big companies’ line is that mergers will make their own research more effective. By combining Monsanto’s genetics expertise with Bayer’s chemistry knowledge, they say they’ll increase farmers' yields while saving them money.

Nicholas Kalaitzandonakes, professor of agribusiness strategy at the University of Missouri, believes those gains are real. “When you are looking at a slower-growing economy, those efficiencies are important,” he said.

Peter Carstensen, an emeritus law professor at the University of Wisconsin, says he’d like to see a rigorous review that goes beyond studying specific markets for corn, cotton or canola. He thinks a Clinton or Trump administration will want to tread carefully in considering its first big merger.

Grant may talk confidently about overcoming regulatory hurdles, but he has no idea what U.S. antitrust policy will look like next year. That political uncertainty is one of many reasons he’s glad to have a $2 billion insurance policy.
City, county set to collaborate on data project

City, county and Heart of Missouri United Way officials are set to collaborate on a data collection project in the hopes of gaining a clearer picture of various poverty indicators.

The proposed project first was introduced to the Columbia City Council on Sept. 6 and is scheduled for a vote as early as Sept. 19.

The University of Missouri’s Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis will develop the data dashboard, an online compilation of socioeconomic, housing, health and education information. The office’s list of past projects includes Missouri Kids Count, Family Wage Calculator for Missouri and the Missouri School Improvement Program.

The city is expecting to pay $28,323, or 66 percent, of the project cost. If the city council approves the project, the county will start to draft its contract with the university, which will detail its cost portion, said Kelly Wallis, Boone County Community Services director.

Steve Hollis, the city’s community services manager, said the dashboard likely will use data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, state departments and more.

Hollis said he hopes the project will use Medicaid data as a “proxy indicator of poverty.” Specifically, he said he would like to see how many Boone County Medicaid patients are accessing mental health services.

“We think Medicaid data is reflective of the population we’re trying to access services for,” Hollis said.

Wallis said the dashboard also could take advantage of data from local sources, such as the Boone County Schools Mental Health Coalition that gathers student health information. The Columbia Housing Authority could be another local agency to tap into, Hollis said.

By streamlining various data sources, Wallis said officials want to see what the data identifies as the community’s most pressing needs.

The information, she said, will come in use when the county decides how to allocate the Children’s Services and Community Health funds, giving officials the ability to make better “data-driven” decisions.
The Children’s Services Fund, which garners a one-quarter sales tax for children’s mental health needs, took in more than $6.6 million in sales tax revenue in 2015.

The Community Health Fund is supplied by the Boone Hospital Center lease with BJC Health Care at $500,000 annually.

Hollis said the online dashboard will be updated as new information becomes available.

United Way will not make a financial investment in the project, but the organization will seek input on community needs from its agencies and partners.

“No matter how good your tools are, you can’t replace engagement from the community,” said Rachel Finch, community impact director for the United Way.

She said the dashboard will make the community more competitive for federal and state funding and grants.