University of Missouri set to name new system president

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri is set to announce its new president, almost exactly one year after the resignation of the previous leader amid protests over racial issues.

A person familiar with the search says University of Connecticut Provost Mun Y. Choi will be named the next president during an event Wednesday in Jefferson City. The person spoke on condition of anonymity so as not to pre-empt the official announcement.

Former system President Tim Wolfe resigned on Nov. 9 last year amid student protests over what some saw as administrators' indifference to racial issues on the Columbia campus. One student went on a hunger strike.

Choi is 52 years old. He joined the University of Connecticut in 2008 and has been provost since 2012.

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UM System chooses UConn provost as president

The provost of the University of Connecticut has reportedly been chosen as the next president of the University of Missouri System.

Mun Choi, currently provost and executive vice president of academic affairs at UConn, will be introduced as the UM System's 24th president Wednesday morning, a source told the Columbia Missourian.

After going into closed session during a Monday meeting, the UM Board of Curators issued an advisory that the new president would be named at a 9:30 a.m. event Wednesday at Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City. The announcement will be live video-streamed on the UM System’s website.

Choi would replace Tim Wolfe, who resigned in November after protests swept the system's Columbia campus. Michael Middleton has served as the system's interim president.

Choi also would be the first to hold the president's post in 10 years with an academic background and the first Asian-American in the job, the Missourian reports.

Choi joined UConn in 2008 as dean of engineering and professor of mechanical engineering. He served as interim provost for six months before taking on the job full time in December 2012.

He earned his bachelor's from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and master's and doctorate degrees in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Princeton University. He earned $471,679 in 2015, according to the Hartford Courant, which also confirmed Choi’s selection.

The four-campus UM System has about 77,700 students, compared with the University of Connecticut, which has a main campus and four regional campuses and about 30,000 students.

Former Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin also resigned his post last fall; Hank Foley serves as interim chancellor at Mizzou.
University of Missouri to name Connecticut provost as president Wednesday

Mun Y. Choi, provost at the University of Connecticut, will be presented Wednesday in Jefferson City as the 24th permanent president of the University of Missouri.

Sources close to the selection confirmed a report in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch that Choi, provost at Connecticut since 2012, is the choice.

After a brief closed session of the UM Board of Curators to approve the negotiated terms, UM System spokesman John Fougere issued a news release setting the announcement for 9:30 a.m. Wednesday at the Capitol Plaza Hotel.

The announcement is being made in Jefferson City rather than Columbia, where the system administration and flagship campus are located, to emphasize the university’s statewide mission, Fougere told reporters.

The announcement will be made 359 days after Tim Wolfe resigned amid turmoil marked by campus protests over racial issues and administrative differences that had poisoned his relationship with MU campus Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, who also resigned. Mike Middleton has been interim president since Wolfe’s resignation.

Repairing UM’s reputation with the public and politicians will be one of Choi’s biggest challenges. The protests on campus eroded a political position already damaged by criticism of ties to the Columbia Planned Parenthood clinic and questions about faculty teaching requirements. Lawmakers also were upset by indecision over the future of Assistant Professor Melissa Click, who was fired in February over trying to prevent media from covering demonstrations on campus after Wolfe’s resignation.

During this year’s legislative session, the UM System administration took a budget cut of $3.8 million. Seizing on UM’s weakness, legislation was introduced to repeal limits on Missouri State University adding engineering or doctoral degree programs unless it is does so in cooperation with UM.

Enrollment in Columbia is down about 6 percent from 2015, and the university expects further declines.
“We all know the University of Missouri System is the state’s public land grant institution of higher education,” Fougere said. “We have a unique mission that is enshrined in the Missouri Constitution of serving all 114 counties and all 6 million Missourians, so what better way to reinforce that message than on the day in which we celebrate a new era in the University of Missouri System history by going to our state’s capital city to once again make that point.”

The University of Connecticut has 32,027 students, most on its main campus at Storrs. The UM System has 75,999 students enrolled on four campuses, with 33,239 students enrolled in Columbia.

Choi joined the Connecticut faculty in 2008 as dean of engineering and professor of mechanical engineering, according to the University of Connecticut provost’s office website. When he was named provost at Connecticut in 2012, Choi was selected over Hank Foley, interim chancellor of the Columbia campus, and one other candidate.

At the time, Foley was vice president for research and dean of the graduate school at Penn State. He came to UM in 2013 as executive vice president for academic affairs for the UM System and was named interim chancellor after Loftin’s resignation.

Choi received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1987. He received his master’s and doctorate in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Princeton University in 1989 and 1992, respectively, according to his biography on the university’s Department of Mechanical Engineering website.

Choi was a faculty member at the University of Illinois from 1994 to 2000 before joining Drexel University in 2000 and as department head of mechanical engineering and associate dean for research. As provost, Choi was paid $471,680 including benefits in fiscal year 2015, the latest year available in the state of Connecticut’s online salary database.

A Korean immigrant, his family founded Choi Brothers, a manufacturer of martial arts uniforms, in 1973 in Chicago.

The search began in earnest in February with the selection of a Presidential Search Committee that included the curators and seven other student, faculty and staff representatives.

The university operates campuses in Kansas City, Rolla and St. Louis in addition to Columbia. There are no set dates for introducing the new president to the four campuses, Fougere said.

“We do not have that planned at this time, but we should do that very shortly after the announcement on Wednesday,” he said.
New UM president Choi to be announced Wednesday morning


JEFFERSON CITY — The UM Board of Curators will formally announce University of Connecticut provost, Mun Y. Choi, as the 24th system president Wednesday morning.

Even though it has not been officially confirmed, the St. Louis Post Dispatch reported Monday Choi is the curators' pick to fill the role Mike Middleton has occupied on an interim basis for the last year.

The announcement takes place 51 weeks after the resignation of former system president Tim Wolfe. Wolfe and former MU chancellor R. Bowen Loftin stepped down from their positions after racial turmoil sparked campus protests against the administration's handling of racial matters.

Choi received his bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1987. He then received his masters and doctorate degrees in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Princeton University.

He went on to serve as faculty at the university of Illinois from 1994-2000, before joining Drexel University's engineering faculty in 2000. There he served as department head of mechanical engineering and associate dean for research, according to his biography on the University of Connecticut's website.

Choi began his time at the University of Connecticut in 2008 as a professor in the mechanical engineering department.

UM system spokesperson John Fougere said the board of curators is excited about its choice.
"The goal all along is trying to find the best individual to be the next University of Missouri president and the board feels very strongly they found that person," said Fougere.

Fougere said the board vetted more than 200 candidates for the position until they narrowed it down to five finalists. He said it looked for a candidate who understands the university's land grant mission, has a passion for public higher education, understands inclusion of the entire UM community and someone who can advocate for the university with the state legislature.

"There's just a myriad of strengths that this person has to have. We feel very confidently that we've found just such a person," said Fougere.

He also said there's a reason the announcement will take place in Jefferson City rather than Columbia.

"When you think about how the University of Missouri system has that unique statewide mission that's enshrined in Missouri's constitution, what better place to send the message of a new era with a new president than our state's capital city?" said Fougere. "The University of Missouri system, alone in the state of Missouri, is the institution that truly serves the entire state."

According to Fougere, there is a plan to have the new president visit each of the system's four campuses, but the details of the visits will be announced within the next few days.

The announcement of Choi is scheduled to take place at the Capitol Plaza Hotel at 9:30 a.m in Jefferson City. You can view the announcement streaming live on our website.

MU leaders expected to name Mun Choi as new UM System president today

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=f5104171-5145-43a9-8323-5e7b1fd87ef0

COLUMBIA, Mo. - The University of Missouri is expected today to announce its new president, about a year after the resignation of the previous leader amid protests over racial issues.

Sources tell ABC 17 News that reports indicating Mun Choi from the University of Connecticut will be the next UM System President are accurate.
Choi started at the University of Connecticut in 2008 as the dean of engineering and also as a professor of mechanical engineering. He then took the position as provost and vice chancellor of academic affairs in 2012.

Choi received his undergraduate degree at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Choi went on to receive his doctorate in mechanical and aerospace engineering from Princeton.

Unlike his predecessors, Choi's background is in education. Both Tim Wolfe and Gary Forsee, the previous two permanent system presidents, worked extensively in the private sector before taking the job.

**Mizzou faculty and students say what they want from their new president**

COLUMBIA, Mo. - Faculty and students at Mizzou said they don't know much about their new system president. They did say they want him to have good communication with not only the chancellors of the campuses, but also with faculty and students.

Dr. Mun Choi was hired as the system president of the University of Columbia on October 31. Before he joined the Tigers, he was provost at the University of Connecticut for two years. Choi obtained his mechanical and aerospace engineering degrees from Princeton University.

Berkley Hudson, faculty council chair of the racial relations committee, said a system president typically doesn't deal with students often, but this one should.

"In our situation and because of what happened with the chancellor resigning and the president resigning last year, it is incumbent upon the new president to get out and connect with students. Students on the Mizzou campus said they felt the same way.
New UM System president to be announced Wednesday

Reports say the new president is Mun Y. Choi, the University of Connecticut’s provost.

The 24th UM System president will be named Wednesday morning, according to a UM System news release.

According to reports by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the new president is Mun Y. Choi, the provost at the University of Connecticut. Before becoming provost, Choi was the dean of engineering and a professor of mechanical engineering. UM System spokesman John Fougere declined to confirm this.

Faculty Council Chairman Ben Trachtenberg said he has not met with Choi, but said if Choi is the chosen president, he looks forward to hearing his ideas.

“If he does turn out to be the next president, I look forward to meeting him and discussing his vision for the future of the university,” Trachtenberg said.

Choi would be the UM System’s first Asian president, and the UM System’s third minority president — Manuel Pacheco served as the first Latino president from 1997–2002 and Elson Floyd served as the first black president from 2003–2007. He would also be the first president with an academic background in 10 years. The two most recent UM System presidents, Tim Wolfe and Gary Forsee, both had business backgrounds.

Choi received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and his doctoral degree from Princeton. He served as a post-doctoral fellow for the National Institute of Standards and Technology. As a professor, he taught at the University of Illinois and Drexel University before joining the University of Connecticut in 2008. At Drexel, he was the department head of mechanical engineering and associate dean for research. Choi has developed a number of outreach and educational programs, according to his biography on the University of Connecticut’s website, and his current research is focused on “advancing the understanding of sooting and radiation on droplet combustion and soot diagnostic techniques.”

The announcement comes almost a year after former UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned on Nov. 9, 2015, amid faculty and student pressure following a series of racist incidents that took place on campus.

MU and the UM System made national news after student group Concerned Student 1950 published a list of demands, graduate student Jonathan Butler went on a hunger strike, and the
football team began a boycott of all football-related activities. Wolfe’s resignation was one of the group’s demands.

In November 2015, the University of Connecticut had its own troubles: a $40 million budget deficit. UConn discussed raising tuition, and Choi cautioned against an increase in tuition being a fix-all solution.

“We can’t raise tuition to a level to meet all of the deficit that we have,” Choi said, according to UConn’s student newspaper, The Daily Caller. “Tuition increase is a component to address the situation that we are facing.”

Faculty wrote a letter to Choi concerned about potential cuts to the library, a problem MU is also currently facing. Choi agreed with the faculty.

“The last thing that we want to cut is the library,” Choi said, according to The Daily Caller.

MU’s libraries have been through a tumultuous year. Following a failed library fee referendum, the libraries have had to make cuts of their own, including to their hours and collections.

MU overall has had its own budget troubles recently — due to a decrease in enrollment, the university has a $32 million shortfall which has resulted in a hiring freeze and a 5 percent budget cut for every department.

The president will be officially named at 9:30 a.m. in Jefferson City at the Capitol Plaza Hotel. The announcement will be live-streamed on the UM System’s website.

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**MU to receive or lose NCAA money for student athlete academics**

COLUMBIA- **The NCAA is pitching a financial disbursement changeup to its D1 institutions, and that includes the University of Missouri.**

The association announced last week that money earned from a new multimedia rights contract with CBS/ Turner will be disbursed using academic metrics of the student athletes in addition to athletic success.

"There is now a consensus among NCAA institutions that this is the best way to do that distribution," MU Intercollegiate Athletics Committee Member and MU Law Professor Bob Jerry said.

"This is a significant change beginning in a couple of years."

Starting the 2019-2020 academic year, MU could earn or lose revenue based off how well its student athletes do in the classroom.

The NCAA will base this off of three metrics: the Academic Progress Rate, the all-sport Graduation Success Rate, and the Federal Graduation Rate.

The Academic Progress Rate is a system that scores teams on their ability to reach academic benchmarks and penalizes those who do not.

The Graduation Success Rate measures what proportion of student athletes earn a college degree.

The Federal Graduation Rate measures the number of first-time, full-time freshmen that graduate with a college degree within six years of entering school.

Any money earned comes without restrictions and can be used at the MU Athletic Department's discretion.

The department declined to comment but will be holding a meeting next week to discuss the changes.

"It's not that this is necessarily new revenue coming from the NCAA, it's really a different way of allocating the resources that have come from the past," Jerry said.

In 2014, the MU Football program was in the top 10 percent for APR in the country in addition to women swimming diving, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field.

NCAA Faculty Representative Christina Wells and Intercollegiate Athletics Committee Chair Leigh Neier did not respond to KOMU's attempts for comment.
AARON REISS: Understanding the Missouri football boycott's legacy and the issues that remain

AARON REISS, 11 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Legacies can be complicated. We judge before we’re able to truly understand impact.

A year after racial protests rocked MU, the University of Missouri System will introduce a new president, University of Connecticut Provost Mun Choi, on Wednesday.

What Choi does after taking office will in part determine the legacies of Concerned Student 1950 and the Missouri football team, whose boycott ultimately pushed Choi’s predecessor, Tim Wolfe, out of office.

There are other questions regarding the legacy of the football boycott, too. After a year in which athlete activism seems increasingly present — Colin Kaepernick taking a knee during the national anthem, NBA stars calling for action during the ESPYs — where do the Tigers’ actions fit? If the boycott was, as defensive end Charles Harris said at the time, a symbol of the power college athletes hold, then why haven’t we seen more of them take action around the country? Why haven’t we seen any more vocal athlete activism here, where earlier this fall another moment of racial tension made national news?

“That bubble never popped,” said Reuben Faloughi, who was an original member of Concerned Student 1950 and a former football player at the University of Georgia. “It opened up a little bit.”

Just because football players did something radical once doesn’t mean they’re comfortable doing it again, at MU or otherwise. Last fall, in the wake of the boycott and Wolfe’s resignation, the Missourian reported a story on the black student-athlete experience. And that at-times-
problematic experience doesn’t change right away. That’s the trouble with institutional issues; they’re wrapped in red tape and long-standing attitudes.

“It takes a very committed and highly dedicated effort to say ‘I’m going to step out there, and I’m going to take part in this,’” said Harry Edwards, the unofficial father of sports sociology. “Do you wind up at your parents’ place with no scholarship because nobody will touch you? These are not life decisions for a 19- or 20-year-old to make.

“So I’m not surprised you don’t find more athletes at the collegiate level taking a stand, making a statement. I’m surprised you were able to find any at all.”

There was plenty of scorn for football players after the boycott. It came in online comments, message boards and a misguided attempt from a state representative to revoke athletes’ scholarships should they participate in such a boycott again. Even though the bill attempting to police scholarships had its legality questioned and was eventually withdrawn, it was a very public display of censure.

And inside the MU athletics department, black athletes can feel like outsiders. It’s mentioned in that Missourian story on the black student-athlete experience that, at a Men4Men meeting, Missouri safety Anthony Sherrils told other athletes he felt steered toward an easier degree because he’s black.

Such a thing might happen to Sherrils or other black athletes even subconsciously. The athletics department staff is overwhelmingly white.

In January, Ty-Ron Douglas, a professor in MU’s College of Education, published a report titled “Identity, Leadership, and Success: A Study of Black Male Student-Athletes at the University of Missouri.” In spring 2015, he interviewed 52 black male Missouri athletes, and 45 of them were football players. His 34-page report, on multiple occasions, cites a cultural “disconnect” between black male student-athletes and many of the people they encounter both in the Columbia community and within the athletics department.
Athletes told Douglas that they even felt disconnected from the religious resources available in the athletic department. Many of them told Douglas that they didn't regularly attend team chapel services. As a result, some of them felt disconnected from the mental health personnel available to them. Some felt uncomfortable communicating with some white people, which led to them not pursuing participation in the Tiger Leadership Institute, for which Douglas helped craft the curriculum. The most recently published "coaching staff" list for the Tiger Leadership Institute includes no black people.

So while being an athlete provides a sense of privilege other black students don’t experience, it also, according to Douglas’ findings, provides access to another MU institution in which black students can feel like outliers.

None of this is meant to bash MU specifically. Higher education is overwhelmingly white. It’s reasonable to think these same dynamics live within other athletics departments.

In order for more college athletes to feel comfortable participating in activism, Edwards said, a cross section of the black community must stand together. Black coaches and legislators and professors and doctors and athletes.

“The greatest security of athletes is not necessarily in a uniform,” Edwards said, “but in a unified community of interest.”

So successful, persistent activism requires organization, not mobilization.

Last fall, after their boycott ended, some Missouri football players said they’d continue to be involved in social justice. Faloughi believes that intention was genuine.

He remembers that, during Concerned Student 1950’s first meeting with football players, some players mentioned speaking at local high schools during their boycott. Faloughi called it the “most beautiful part” of the meeting. The boycott, though, lasted less than 48 hours and ended on a Monday.
Faloughi said there was no long-term strategy for Concerned Student 1950 or the football players. He eventually disassociated from the student group.

"There’s no owner manual on social justice, and I think people have to consider that," said Faloughi, who believes even graduating as a black athlete is a form of resistance against higher education institutions. "These athletes are 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and they’re trying to go to school. They’re trying to play Division I athletics. And then you want them to take on social issues of which many of them have never talked about or engaged in. That’s a lot.”

“It was a lot,” said former Missouri football captain Ian Simon, who read the statement on Nov. 9 announcing the boycott had ended. “A lot to take in. A lot to handle. A lot to have all of that dumped on you.”

So that the boycott happened at all — regardless of what you think of it — is remarkable.

That will be its legacy.