Academic Minute: Probiotics Can Reduce Stress Levels and Anxiety

Tuesday, February 7, 2017 - 3:00am


Need to reduce your stress? Maybe the answer is in your yogurt. In today's Academic Minute, the University of Missouri's Elizabeth Bryda discusses probiotics and how they can help calm you down. Bryda is a professor in the department of veterinary pathobiology at Missouri's Columbia campus. A transcript of this podcast can be found here.

Greitens' budget plan won't fund MU Medical School

14 hrs ago

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Gov. Eric Greitens' budget proposal for the state's 2018 fiscal year won't fund the new expansions for the University of Missouri Medical School in Columbia and Springfield.
The information came on the heels of the governor's January announcement to withhold $4 million of the MU Cooperative Medicine Program's $10 million appropriation for the current fiscal year, the Columbia Missourian (http://bit.ly/2knyQoa) reported.

The Columbia facility and the new Springfield Clinical Campus that opened in June could face tight operating budgets and increased difficulty hiring faculty if state funding is halted, said Weldon Webb, the university's associate dean for Springfield Clinical Campus Implementation.

Webb said the medical school's expansions will proceed as planned for now, and that the funding loss won't affect construction of the university's Patient-Centered Care Learning Center. The $42.5 million facility is expected to be complete this summer, and it is expected to have classrooms, an anatomy lab, a simulation center, patient-based learning labs and educational services.

Springfield Chamber of Commerce President Matt Morrow said getting funding into the budget for the next fiscal year is priority.

"What I hope that we as a community are able to do is have productive conversations with the governor and the Legislature," Morrow said.

He said giving students the opportunity to fill Missouri's physician shortage, especially in rural areas, will help grow the economy.

The university is expected to admit 32 additional medical students each year because of the expansion, with the hopes that all 64 third- and fourth-year students will do clinical training in Springfield. Currently, the Springfield campus only has nine third-year students.
MU Medical School expansions won't get state funding next year under proposed budget

ANDREW KESSEL, 22 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — MU Medical School expansions in Columbia and Springfield would not receive state funding in the 2018 fiscal year under Gov. Eric Greitens' current budget proposal. This comes on the heels of the governor's announcement in January to withhold $4 million of the MU Cooperative Medicine Program's $10 million FY 2017 appropriation.

In the short term, the medical school's projects will proceed as planned, said Weldon Webb, UM associate dean for Springfield Clinical Campus Implementation. The loss of funding would not affect the construction of the Patient-Centered Care Learning Center at MU, which is expected to be completed this summer.

According to a School of Medicine fact sheet, the $42.5 million, 97,088-square-foot facility will include classrooms, an anatomy lab, a simulation center, patient-based learning labs and educational services. The center is located directly west of the J. Otto Lottes Health Sciences Library and south of Jesse Hall across from Stankowski Field.

However, both the Columbia facility and the new Springfield Clinical Campus that opened in June could face tightened operating budgets and more difficulty hiring faculty and staff if state funding is cut off. Through reserves, Webb said, MU was able to withstand the $4 million withheld by Greitens in January. But getting the legislature to put funding back into the budget for the upcoming fiscal year is a top priority.
Matt Morrow, president and CEO of the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, shared similar sentiments.

"What I hope that we as a community are able to do is have productive conversations with the governor and the legislature," Morrow said. There is a shortage of physicians in the state, especially in the rural areas, Morrow said, and giving students opportunities to fill those jobs helps grow the economy.

The first class of students with a shot at increasing the supply of physicians in the state are currently in their first year at the Springfield facility. MU medical students who spend their first two years at MU can spend their third and fourth years doing clinical rotations at CoxHealth and Mercy hospitals in Springfield as part of a private-public partnership.

Currently, there are nine third-year students in Springfield. MU is expected to admit 32 additional medical students each year as a result of the expansion, eventually pushing the total to 64 third-and-fourth-year students doing clinical training in Springfield.

CoxHealth CEO Steve Edwards recognized the need for budgetary belt-tightening, but reiterated the significance of funding the program.

"We hope that we can find continued funding because this is such a great program for MU and for southwest Missouri," Edwards said. "We want it to not just continue but really be funded more deeply and allowed to really prosper."

Edwards said the Columbia facility is more in need of funding than Springfield's, but that the clinical center wants MU’s students to be successful. But despite the long term uncertainty, he said the university has assured him the program will continue through the School of Medicine.
MU School of Medicine could lose funding in Greitens' proposed budget

By Emily McCarter


COLUMBIA - Gov. Eric Greitens' proposed 2018 fiscal year budget includes cutting funding for MU School of Medicine programs designed to provide more doctors and more space.

According to MU Medical School Dean Patrice Delafontaine, the School of Medicine Class Expansion and Springfield Clinical Campus Project will add more than $390 million each year to Missouri’s economy and provide more than 300 additional physicians for Missouri.

If state funding is eliminated for the two projects, it could be difficult to hire more staff and run the projects as planned, Delafontaine said.

“While this is disappointing news, we remain committed to the project and its ability to help fulfill our mission of improving the health of all people, especially Missourians, through exemplary education, research and patient-centered care,” Delafontaine said.

According to Greitens' budget proposal, 9 percent of the state’s general revenue operating budget would go toward higher education. It cuts almost $56 million from the core funding of four-year institutions.

Greitens announced in January he will withhold $4 million of the MU Cooperative Medicine Program's $10 million appropriation for the fiscal year.

“We had to make some difficult choices,” Greitens said in the proposed budget. “We must come together, tighten our belts, be smart and wise with our tax dollars, and work our way out of this hole by bringing more jobs with higher pay to the people of Missouri.”
Delafontaine said the state and nation are in desperate need of more physicians. He said he believes the MU School of Medicine benefits the community.

“We remain committed to working closely with our new governor and General Assembly in making the case for the medical school’s enormous positive impact on all of Missouri’s residents and economy,” Delafontaine said.

The school of medicine's expansions will currently proceed as planned.

**2018 budget won't fund New MU Medical School Expansions**

Gov. Eric Greitens' current budget proposal for the state's 2018 fiscal year won't fund the new expansions for the University of Missouri Medical School.

The Columbia Missourian reports that the information comes on the heels of the governor's January announcement to withhold $4 million of the MU Cooperative Medicine Program's $10 million appropriation for the current fiscal year.

Weldon Webb, the university's associate dean for Springfield Clinical Campus Implementation, says the Columbia facility and the new Springfield campus could face tight operating budgets and increased difficulty hiring faculty if state funding is halted.

Webb says the medical school's expansions will proceed as planned for now, and that the funding loss won't affect construction of the university's Patient-Centered Care Learning Center. The $42.5 million facility is expected to be complete this summer.
Governor’s Budget Impacting MU Med School

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=d20cc5b6-67a9-432f-a3c6-a9c70686731

Mizzou submits stadium architect approval Thursday

By Dave Matter St. Louis Post-Dispatch

COLUMBIA, MO. • At Thursday’s meeting of the University of Missouri Board of Curators, Mizzou athletics will propose funding for an architect to design the south end zone facility for Memorial Stadium. The total project budget has been set at $96.7 million, while $4.31 million has been committed to cover the design costs through private gifts, according to the meeting agenda released Monday by the board.

The proposed project is a four-story football team facility affixed to a newly constructed south side of the stadium that will feature new areas for private suites and general admission seating. Rather than build around the current south end zone structure, Missouri has decided to take down the entire south bowl and build a new structure, athletics director Jim Sterk announced in December. Mizzou also released artist renderings of the project in December.
Though the curators are only voting Thursday to approve the architect, the measure is expected to generate more dialogue than typical for an athletics funding project, especially in the wake of Gov. Eric Greitens’ plans to cut state funding for the UM system. One university source expected the measure to eventually pass but not without thorough discussion.

MU is proposing approval for the hiring of Populous, Inc., a Kansas City architectural firm, to design the facility. Poulous has handled similar football facilities at Colorado, Kansas State and Oklahoma.

Here’s more from the Curators’ agenda:

“Nearly all Intercollegiate Athletic (ICA) programs utilize the same training, study, and dining facilities located in the Mizzou Athletic Training Complex (MATC). The heavy use of the MATC by all sports presents scheduling challenges and limited availability of resources to student athletes and team training programs. Many Division I teams have invested in excellent football focused team facilities, including many Southeastern Conference (SEC) institutions. Top recruits factor access to this type of focused facilities in their decision as to which university to attend. Construction of a football focused facility will enhance recruiting specifically for football but also of student athletes across all sports and academic interests since it will alleviate congestion at the MATC. Memorial Stadium is the heart of the football program for fans and the team. Facility improvements have been made over the last 20 years to many areas of the stadium and field. The south end bowl of 10,800 general admission seats was constructed in 1977. It has not been measurably updated to improve the fan experience and is showing signs of deterioration and settlement consistent with a structure of this age. A change in seating mix to include premium seating and premium amenities and new general admission seating is projected to provide an increase in revenue

“MU’s ICA Master Planner and planning team recently completed a study to address the issues of creating a football focused team facility and eliminating an aging component of Memorial Stadium with the goal to improve the fan experience and revenues. The proposed project will build a new four-story building and seating at the south end of Memorial Stadium. The football team facility component of the project is approximately 107,000 gross square feet (GSF). Spaces include a new team locker room (both
training and game day use), football training facility, weight room, coaching offices and team meeting rooms, public and recruiting reception areas, equipment storage, and broadcast space. New kitchen and dining space is planned to serve both premium seating venues and team dining functions. The facility related to seating for fans includes approximately 38,500 GSF of enclosed premium club space, twenty-four (24) suites with twelve (12) seats each, and associated support spaces. Public amenities for general admission seats include new concessions and restrooms. The seating area is planned for 5,000 total seats with 1,000 premium seats and 4,000 general admission seats.”

There are currently three vacant seats on the board, leaving only six voting curators to consider Thursday’s measure. Greitens rescinded nominations of two curators appointed last summer by former Gov. Jay Nixon when the Legislature wasn’t in session, including former Missouri basketball star and Columbia businessman Jon Sundvold.

As of December, Mizzou athletics was close to its fundraising goal of $50 million to pay for roughly half of the project. Last week, MU secured a $1 million anonymous donation, the eighth seven-figure gift in the last seven months earmarked for the football facility. MU has proposed using revenue bonds to fund the other half of the project’s costs.

Records reveal conduct, disagreements between Kappa Alpha and MU

By Lucas Geisler

Watch the story: http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=e15df2b-db07-43f0-9a69-a5f5f07b7ff5
COLUMBIA, Mo. - More than 500 pages of records detail the conduct violations that lost Kappa Alpha Order recognition at MU, and the disagreements its national office had with the school's process.

ABC 17 News has followed the story since September, when the school began its investigation into the fraternity. An 18-year-old new member went to the hospital for overdosing on alcohol, which his parents believe was an act of hazing.

The university withdrew recognition of Kappa Alpha Order as a student organization for five years beginning in November. The seven sanctions included hazing and providing liquor to minors. Having hard liquor in Greek homes is also against school rules.

The records detail "the culture of the chapter" the Office of Student Conduct said it discovered after the September 27 incident. The office interviewed fifteen members about the semester, including the parties held there and pledge activities. New members said on four occasions they were made to do "line-ups," where the pledge class would perform wall-sit or "planking" exercises. During that time, active members would throw flour, soda or eggs at them and question them on why they wanted to join the fraternity.

One new member said an active made him drink a bottle of hot sauce. Another said he was told to run around the fraternity house in less than a minute "to remind me that I was a pledge," the notes read.

The September 27 vodka-chugging contest that put Mike and Lynn Zingale's son in the hospital is referenced several times in the notes. The fifteen members interviewed were asked specifically about the night, and many report that they weren't there at the time. Information from those that were present is often redacted to avoid identifying specific people there. None make any direct references to new members being forced to drink that night.

Members called an ambulance the next morning when they found the Zingale's son pale and foaming at the mouth. He had a blood alcohol content more than five times the limit allowed to drive. The university placed KA on emergency suspension shortly after that incident.

Emails from the fraternity's national office express displeasure with the school's handling of the process in November. Executive director Larry Wiese and Dr. Mark Lucas had several exchanges regarding the punishment that KA would receive, and how the fraternity was handling its own discipline. Dr. Lucas wrote that a lack of chapter alumni support or membership review process, which often leads to the removal of "50%-70%" of the chapter, made the university wary of going lighter than withdrawal of recognition.

Wiese claimed that suspensions and membership reviews were not as effective a way of changing a fraternity's culture. He hoped the school would suspend them for one year while the chapter could work with Plaid, a company that specializes in culture change and guidance and works on other college campuses.
"Suspending a chapter sends a message that students are unworthy of education - while remaining enrolled as students," Wiese's November 8 letter said. "If students are worthy of remaining in the classroom, are they not worthy of a chance at culture change within the fraternal setting?"

Jesse Lyons, the fraternity's Assistant Executive Director for Advancement, said they "remain in communication with the University on the future of the chapter."

Kappa Alpha was one of two fraternities that lost recognition last semester. The university indefinitely kept Sigma Pi from coming back as a student organization after failing to stop its recruitment the semester after the school withdrew recognition.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Responding to interest, MU Korean studies institute aims to educate, do research**

THOMAS OIDE, 20 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — **MU and five universities in South Korea have forged a strong connection through an exchange program that’s been going on for 20 years. The program sends between 60 and 70 Korean students annually.**

That program was one of the catalysts for the newly created Institute for Korean Studies at MU, which will focus on educating the community and creating research opportunities in the field. Starting about a year ago, assistant professor of political science Sheena Chestnut Greitens and assistant professor of history Harrison Kim worked for its creation. After developing the proposal, Greitens and Kim contacted relevant faculty members.

"We realized that we had a great group of research faculty in the social sciences who work on both sides of the Korean peninsula, North and South," Greitens said. "We thought that the best
way to support that research and to highlight it was to create a focal point: a research institute to showcase and support that work by our faculty."

MU offers minors in East Asian, South Asian, Korean, Chinese and Japanese studies. However, MU doesn’t offer majors in any of those fields. Kim said one of the institute's goals is the creation of an Asian studies major and hopes the institute will help lead to that through showcasing existing research and offering additional research opportunities.

“IKS is the perfect institution to lay the foundation to create a major,” Kim said. “The research, the quality of faculty members, our experience and our knowledge will hopefully draw students.”

Kim and Greitens said research will cover a broad range of topics such as inter-Korean relations, the history of socialism in the area, refugees and migration, North Korea and its impact on American foreign policy, tracking North Korea's illicit activities over time and how dictatorships like North Korea manage their secret police.

Kim said he understands the creation of the institute may seem a bit odd considering Missouri’s demographics. According to the U.S. Census, only 2 percent of Missouri’s population is Asian.

But the interest level in Asian culture and current events is more concentrated in the Midwest, Kim said.

“This is where things are actually happening,” he said. “On the coasts, there is a certain level of saturation. If you go to a Korean-related event at UCLA or NYU, you might find 15 people because there is so much exposure and everyone knows about it. Here, we see 50, 60 or 100 people in the audience, and they aren’t necessarily Asian-Americans. There is a genuine interest in topics related to Asia.”

One of the causes of that interest is what Seungkwon You, KSI executive director calls the “Korean Wave.”
“There seems to be big interest in Korean culture,” You said. “People in America are interested in Korean pop music, Korean dramas and Korean films.”

But beyond culture, Kim also wants the institute to help educate the community about political issues such as South and North Korean relations.

“One mission that we have is to talk about North Korea and with the goal of trying to erase this lens of exoticism,” Kim said. “We want to look at North Korea as a place that we can understand and to make sense of the things that are happening there.”

Because the institute is in its early stages, Kim said he has many goals for the program. In the short term, he hopes to find a permanent office space as well as an associate who can help manage the institute full time.

Long term, Kim hopes the institute leads to the creation of an MU Department of Asian Studies that offers a range of majors.

The institute will hold a launch on Thursday in Jesse Wrench Auditorium that will include screening the film "I am Grace," which tells the story of North Korean refugee, U.S. citizen and human rights activist Grace Jo.

"We are absolutely delighted to bring Grace Jo in," Greitens said. "We’re really excited to launch Thursday, and we’re looking forward to putting up more events and getting more people involved.”
MU launching Institute for Korean Studies

By Roger McKinney

A talk on Thursday by a refugee from North Korea who is now a U.S. citizen will launch the new Institute for Korean studies at the University of Missouri.

The co-directors of the new institute are C. Harrison Kim, MU assistant professor of history, and Sheena Greitens, assistant professor of political science. Greitens also is the wife of Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens.

"There has been close to two decades of research and studies related to Korea" at MU, Kim said. "There's strong historical ties between Korea and MU. The Institute for Korean Studies will be fostering research and supporting new research related to Korea."

Kim said that includes both South Korea and North Korea. He acknowledged there is a keen interest in North Korea.

He said though there had been a history of academic research on Korea at MU, the creation of the institute required a stable and willing group of faculty members, which had not come together to establish a research institute until recently.

"We realized the university had really incredible resources in terms of Korean studies," Sheena Greitens said. "The breadth and depth of study on Korea puts MU on the level of other major research institutions."

She said there wasn't a real focal point for the research on campus until now. One goal of the Institute for Korean Studies is to boost the research profile of MU, Greitens said.

"The project's been in the works for about a year new," Greitens said.

She said her first interest in Korea was a personal one because her adopted sister is from Korea.

"I had a chance to go to Korea, and I started doing research into Korean politics and history," she said. "I have been both to South and North Korea for research."

Korean Security Services, or secret police, and also the secret police in South Korea under military rule, Greitens said.

She said she has researched the North Korean government's participation in illicit activity, including exporting methamphetamine and making counterfeit U.S. $100 bills that are hard to recognize as fake.

Activist Grace Jo will speak Thursday in Jesse Wrench Auditorium inside Memorial Student Union South, 518 Hitt St. Her talk, "From North Korea to American Citizen," will follow a screening of the documentary film about her, "I am Grace." She has a new life after fleeing from North Korea and speaks about the importance of human rights and freedom as part of a North Korean refugees' advocacy organization.

"We're delighted to have Grace come to speak," Greitens said. "She's a fairly widely known speaker on North Korean refugees and defectors."

Kim said Jo was able to come to the United States through a refugee law after growing up under harsh conditions in North Korea.

"She is special because she is willing to speak about this issue and the importance of human rights in the global community," Kim said.

**University of Missouri launches Institute for Korean Studies**


COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — **The University of Missouri is launching a new Institute for Korean Studies.**
Co-directors will be assistant history professor C. Harrison Kim and assistant political science professor Sheena Greitens, who is Gov. Eric Greitens' wife.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reports the institute will foster research on South and North Korea. Kim says the university has a long history of academic research on Korea but faculty members hadn't come together to establish an institute.

Sheena Greitens says one of the institute's goals will be to raise the university's profile in Korean research. She has a personal interest because one of her adopted sisters is from Korea.

The institute will launch Thursday with a speech by Grace Jo, a North Korean refugee who became a U.S. citizen and advocate for human rights.

Duquesne Press to Close

The 90-year-old university press will close its doors this year after Duquesne decided to cut its funding.

By Carl Straumsheim February 7, 2017

The Duquesne University Press will shut down later this year, an “unexpected” decision that is already facing pushback from scholars.

Timothy R. Austin, provost and vice president for academic affairs, informed press staffers about the decision on Friday. He sent a statement to the campus later that day, describing the decision as a cost-cutting measure. The press receives an annual subsidy north of $200,000.

“In the context of rapid changes in the world of scholarly publishing, Duquesne has been far from alone in having to confront the challenging question of whether it could afford to continue to underwrite the costs of a press,” Austin said in the statement. “In recent years, the press has been unable to attract sales adequate to cover its costs and the university has committed large sums to subsidizing its operation. In an era of cost containment, this is no longer a viable path.”
The small press, which specializes in Continental philosophy, humanistic psychology and medieval and Renaissance literature studies, publishes about 10 books a year -- enough to cover its operating costs, but not its salaries and graduate assistantships, press director Susan Wadsworth-Booth said.

Sales have remained more or less flat over the last couple of years, though the press, which turns 90 this year, experienced a period of disruption last year when it was forced to find a new vendor for distribution and warehouse services. With that issue resolved, however, Wadsworth-Booth said she was hopeful the situation would improve.

“It was unexpected,” Wadsworth-Booth said. “I indicated to the administration that we would be happy to discuss some plans to cut costs and maintain the imprint -- perhaps just concentrating on our most successful subject areas, but they indicated that was not the path they wanted to take.”

Others at the university involved in running the press said they, too, were still dealing with the news. Erik Garrett, an associate professor in the department of communication and rhetorical studies who serves on the press's advisory board, said he was still in “shock” from Friday's announcement. As recently as the Monday before the announcement, he said, the press was notified that one of its titles had won the French Voices Award, which is presented by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and the PEN American Center.

Garrett also expressed a willingness to work with the administration to save the press.

Wadsworth-Booth said the press will continue to operate at least through the end of May -- perhaps longer -- to fulfill its existing obligations.

News of a protest began to spread over the weekend, with some faculty members, researchers and staffers with other university presses pointing to the campaign that saved the University of Missouri Press from closure. The University of Missouri System in 2012 announced plans to shut down the press for financial reasons, but the press survived -- and continues to operate today -- after moving to the flagship campus at Columbia.

“That’s a very different situation,” Wadsworth-Booth said about the comparison. “We’re very unlike Missouri.”

Duquesne joins the many university presses that in the face of mounting financial difficulties have closed down or come dangerously close to doing so over the last several years. Even some presses at larger universities are feeling those same pressures.

Many defenders of university presses question the idea of cutting them for failing to be self-sustaining, noting that presses promote a central mission of higher education -- the dissemination of knowledge. Others note that colleges rely on university presses -- not only on their own campus, but elsewhere -- to publish works that help launch the careers of scholars.
Peter Berkery, executive director of the Association of American University Presses, said in a statement that the organization is monitoring the situation at Duquesne.

“Like most members of the scholarly communications ecosystem, AAUP was alarmed to learn that Duquesne University has announced plans to close its press,” Berkery said. “The association is in the process of gathering additional information in order to determine whether, as is so frequently the case, an alternative to closure may be possible.”

MU Students for Life holds display at the MU student center

By John Saltzman

COLUMBIA – The nation’s largest youth pro-life organization is putting on a display as part of a nationwide tour called “We Don’t Need Plan Parenthood.” The organization is Students for Life of America is teaming up with Mizzou Students for Life to distribute information on their belief that taxpayer dollars are best spent funding Federally Qualified Health Centers.

“The main purpose of the display is to highlight Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers and how they can do more with our taxpayer money than Planned Parenthood,” said President of Mizzou Students for Life, Kristen Wood.

Planned Parenthood doesn’t deal directly with Students for Life of America often but says they are confident in their value to the community as a healthcare provider.

“It’s really important for us to be available to the community for access of reproductive health but also for other equitable issues such as transgender care, male reproductive health, some of the things that aren’t accessible in FQHC’s or health professional shortage areas,” said Assistant VP of Planned Parenthood, Kristin Metcalf-Wilson.
Wilson continued that the expert services that are provided make Planned Parenthood the leader in not just quality of service but also uniqueness of service.

“I would argue that our services are different in special ways, that we are the experts, and that’s probably the message I would most like to get across,” said Wilson.

Wilson added that those specific services that set Planned Parenthood apart.

“I would not expect you to come here for a well baby check-up, I’m not a pediatrician, just as I wouldn’t expect a pediatrician to do what I do everyday and I think those differences need to be recognized because while those centers do a lot of family planning they don’t provide expert family planning,” said Wilson.

Mizzou Students for Life’s display at the student center is mainly trying to educate people on what the difference between Planned Parenthood and FQHC’s are said Wood.

Wood added they want to distance themselves from graphic image displays that have been used with Pro-Life organizations in the past.

“We are here to present facts, and show people compassion instead of just showing these horrific images,” Wood continued, “the biggest piece of evidence against using those images came from a former Planned Parenthood clinic director who said people were running inside to avoid the graphic images of the ‘crazy people’ outside.”

The Mizzou Students for Life display is set up from 9 am to 2 pm in the MU Student Center. This stop along the nationwide tour of this organization is just one of over 60 stops that are planned to be made across different Universities.

The DeVos Agenda

After winning confirmation with the vice president's tie-breaking vote, new education secretary is expected to shift away from Obama policies on for-profit higher education, regulation and dealing with sexual assault on campus.
Betsy DeVos saw her nomination for education secretary clear its Senate hurdle Tuesday when Vice President Pence broke a 50-50 tie. Every Democrat and Independent and two Republicans opposed her nomination.

To many of the teachers' groups and other critics who protested, called and emailed their senators, the confirmation of the pro-charter school, pro-voucher Michigan billionaire was a blow to public education. But while most of the public debate about her nomination swirled around issues affecting K-12 public schools, it largely neglected the realm of higher education.

Observers of higher education policy said DeVos could have a significant effect in the short term by changing tack on Obama administration strategies that saw the department take on a bigger oversight role involving for-profit colleges and student loan servicers.

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DeVos’s confirmation as secretary could also mean a more chastened department in regulatory areas beyond the for-profit sector. In areas such as guidance for campuses on enforcement of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and oversight of loan servicers, the department could be “less of a cop on the beat,” Huelsman said.

Under the Obama administration, the department through Dear Colleague letters pushed colleges and universities to take a more active role in investigating sexual assaults on their campuses. Those policies could be among the first to be shifted in a department whose leadership is more sympathetic to concerns about due process rights for students accused of sexual assault. Advocates for victims of sexual assault say federal guidance was critical to ensure institutions were reporting and resolving cases appropriately, but many critics -- including some Republican politicians -- said the Obama administration's policies denied the accused fair treatment.

But there are a number of nonideological issues that could keep the department preoccupied in the coming months, said Dennis Cariello, a former attorney at the Department of Education who now advises institutions including for-profit colleges. He pointed to a Government Accountability Report from last year that found the department has miscalculated the costs of income-driven repayment programs and news, more recently, that it had included an error in loan repayment rates in the College Scorecard.

“The department is basing policy on repayment rates that are wrong. There’s no Republican or Democratic way to make sure you have correct data,” he said. “You’ve just got to get that done.”