



MU News Bureau

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International applications lag at UM campuses

By Rudi Keller March 28, 2017

One of University of Missouri President Mun Choi's first initiatives to increase revenue for the four-campus system — increasing international enrollment — will be difficult to achieve because of uncertainty over U.S. immigration and visa policies.

The campuses report international applications are down 10 to 50 percent from this time last year, although officials on the Columbia campus refused to release actual numbers. Politics and safety as well as a strong U.S. currency and less interest from Chinese students — the largest single overseas group at MU — all contribute to the decline, MU spokesman Christian Basi wrote in an email.

The executive orders by President Donald Trump limiting entry by residents of some Muslim-majority countries and worries about changes to visa programs make international students reluctant to apply, Basi wrote in the email. Violent incidents targeting foreigners, such as the Feb. 22 shooting in Olathe, Kan., that left one man from India dead and two injured when a gunman said “get out of my country,” scare away students, Basi wrote.

“Based on incidents that have happened around the country, many prospective students and their families have said that they do not feel safe coming to the United States,” Basi wrote.

The university system faces severe budget pressure in coming years as state support is cut, with administrators considering whether to close academic programs. Gov. Eric Greitens withheld \$31.4 million from UM's appropriation for this year, and the budget plan under consideration in the House Budget Committee cuts \$40.7 million from UM's base appropriation.

Enrollment at MU, down about 6 percent this year, is expected to decline again and force up to \$50 million in cuts on the Columbia campus for the budget year starting July 1.

During appearances last week before the Columbia Chamber of Commerce and an MU faculty meeting, Choi defended efforts to attract students from other states and overseas. To the chamber, he pointed out that non-resident students pay far more in tuition than Missourians.

Increasing the number of non-resident students should be part of a goal of increasing overall enrollment, Choi said.

“We should also look at more out of state and more international students, who pay a higher tuition, which enables Missouri students to attend school at a lower rate,” he said.

To the faculty, Choi said bringing students from other states and overseas does more than add dollars when religious studies professor Rabia Gregory questioned his priorities.

“Our mission is primarily educating the people of Missouri, not international students, not out of state students, not developing research reactors, certainly not developing more financial opportunities for local businesses, but educating the people of this state,” Gregory said.

The university has room for non-resident students as well as Missourians, Choi said.

“Yes, we are training in-state students,” he said. “But why not consider having a more vibrant community with out of state and international students?”

Tuition rates for non-resident undergraduates are 2½ to 3 times that paid by Missourians and are not subject to restrictions limiting increases to the rate of inflation.

A large portion of students from other states convert to Missouri residency while attending school, which means the university has to find new out-of-state freshmen each year to maintain revenue levels. For the Columbia campus, about 1,100 students each year switch residency, Basi said.

It is far more difficult for international students to change residency, which means they pay the full non-resident tuition for the entire time they are enrolled.

There are 523 international students at UMSL, about 3 percent student body, spokesman Bob Samples wrote in an email. Applications from international students are down 10 percent from last year at this time, he wrote.

At Rolla, there are 1,083 international students, a little more than 12 percent of the student body. That is down from about 1,300 a few years ago. The ongoing decline is attributable to lower international oil prices and the end of an exchange program in Sri Lanka, campus spokesman Andrew Careaga said.

The school has received 1,009 applications from international students this year, down 14.6 percent from the 1,182 received last year by this time, he said.

“The challenge continues to be to recruit students from those petroleum countries,” Careaga said. “Globally, more students looking elsewhere; they are looking at Europe and Canada as options.”

The sharpest decline where campus officials are releasing actual numbers is at UMKC. The Kansas City Star reported March 18 that international applications are down more than 50 percent, from 1,225 in 2016 to 664 this year.

International students have been about 6 percent of the MU student body in recent years. Without giving precise total, Basi said admission applications from graduate students is down 16 percent and that “we are very close to UMKC numbers on interests in applying” overall.

Many international students come for graduate degrees and their applications arrive on a different schedule than for undergraduates, Basi wrote in an email.

“Currently, our international recruiters are focusing on yield activities, but at this time, we expect to see a decrease in international students this coming fall,” he wrote.

Chicago Tribune

Alternative spring breaks allow students to give back, gain real-world experience

By Leonor Vivanco

Generated from a News Bureau press release: [Mizzou Students to Spend Spring Break Serving 44 Communities Across the U.S.](#)

For many college students, spring break means following a well-established ritual — travel south, bask in the sun, drink beer and escape reality. But some students are finding there is an alternative, one that instead focuses on social issues like homelessness, the environment and working with people with disabilities.

This week, eight undergraduate students from the University of Missouri traveled to the Chicago area to work with adults with developmental disabilities at Aspire, a nonprofit in Hillside. The students will work with the adults in classes such as horticulture and technology, helping them gain job training and gardening skills. They will also be sprucing up housing in Franklin Park with a coat of paint and joining residents for dinner and games.

Nick Keesey, a sophomore at Missouri, is on his first alternative spring break, which he sees as an opportunity to learn about the struggles that people with disabilities face.

He freely acknowledges that he is going against the grain.

"While it may sound corny to some people, I think it's an important thing to learn because as we move on from college and become members of a different community it's important for us to

know what some people in communities are facing and if we can serve them in any way we can," said Keeseey, a psychology major from the St. Louis area.

Meanwhile, students from Northwestern and DePaul are returning home from their spring breaks where they spent a week on service trips outside the classroom in places including a wolf sanctuary in Westcliffe, Colo., and a homeless shelter in Washington, D.C.

The trips aren't free. Students help pay for transportation, food and housing but say the real-world experience gained and friendships formed with other students through such excursions is well worth it.

For example, students typically pay about \$200 for domestic trips that don't require airfare and the school subsidizes part of the trip, making financial aid available, and students also rely on fundraisers to help cover costs, administrators said.

But even with the cost, there are signs that the concept is catching on.

Last year, a survey of 168 institutions reported nearly 23,000 students participated in more than 1,600 trips during the 2015-16 school year, according to Break Away, a national nonprofit that provides training and support for the trips. That represented an increase from 16,700 students on 1,300 trips four years before that reported by 130 schools.

Break Away works with about 230 schools, including Northwestern, out of an estimated 1,000 that provide such programs.

Keeseey said that the trips have given him a new perspective. Through the student-led college program, he had participated in three weekend projects to clean up a historical graveyard, paint walls of a thrift store and food bank and clear out a children's shelter.

"The manual labor stuff is not quite as glamorous and less personal but still necessary for organizations to function," Keeseey said.

On their visit to Aspire, the Missouri students will get a tour of a new career academy under construction. Aspire works with about 1,000 children and adults with disabilities like autism and Down syndrome, said its chief executive, Jim Kales.

"These students are going to be the employers of the future," Kales said. "We want these young people to take the experience this week and impact the rest of their lives as far as them in the workplace and how they look at people they might potentially hire."

Parker Levinson's trip to Colorado's wolf sanctuary has reaffirmed her passion for wildlife conservation. The college junior said she also cherished the friendships she made with the dozen Northwestern students while doing meaningful work like building a fence or feeding the wolves.

Amy Parker returned from Washington with a sense of purpose. The 22-year-old DePaul senior spent last week alongside seven other students volunteering at a men's homeless shelter. Now, she plans to push politicians for more resources dedicated to homelessness.

"It was great to understand my voice could do something about that," Parker said. "This is one of the trips I could foresee having the biggest impact on me."

Such trips are focused on meeting people who are experiencing poverty or marginalization, having one-on-one conversations and building relationships, said Emily LaHood-Olsen, ministry coordinator for service trips at DePaul.

"Service immersions offer students the opportunity to see and experience a reality that's different from their own," she said.



Mizzou Alternative Breaks will Serve in Jackson, TN

Generated from a News Bureau press release: [Mizzou Students to Spend Spring Break Serving 44 Communities Across the U.S.](#)

Watch story: <http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=90e95409-b133-485f-b9fb-199da3f3286c>

Two MU paleontology professors each receive \$500,000 National Science Foundation grants

Generated from MU News Bureau release: NSF Grants \$1 Million to MU Researchers to Enhance Early STEM Education, Study Environment

BY ROGER MCKINNEY MARCH 28, 2017

Among the products of two \$500,000 National Science Foundation grants received by University of Missouri faculty members will be a Cambrian Period coloring book for schoolchildren and a study of the fossil record of the MU Columns.

But in-depth research is the main goal of the grants. John Huntley and Jim Schiffbauer, assistant professors of geological sciences in the MU College of Arts and Science, each received the National Science Foundations Faculty Career Development Award, for which each will receive more than \$500,000 for their projects over the next five years.

Huntley said his research will focus on interactions between parasites and hosts.

"When sea level starts to rise, parasite prevalence goes through the roof," Huntley said. He said that occurred among clams and other invertebrates during the Holocene Epoch around 11,700 years ago.

"We're at a time now of sea level rise," he said, and his research will try to determine if a similar parasite increase might be expected.

"The parasites themselves don't fossilize," Huntley said. Instead, their effects can be observed on the shells of clams.

"It's not the simple rise in sea level itself" that caused the parasites to increase. He said temperature, water salinity and nutrients in the water also might have come into play.

Huntley said he would use a finely-focused laser in the MU Research Reactor and other equipment to analyze the chemistry of the shell fossils to try to determine the conditions during which the parasites thrived.

For the education component of the grant, Huntley said, he will develop a one-hour credit course for non-science majors on the fossil record in the MU Columns.

The material from which the columns were manufactured was "made about 350 million years ago," Huntley said. He said the course would be offered beginning next spring semester.

"We'll take the course materials and turn it into continuing education for high school and middle school science teachers," he said.

Schiffbauer is researching the Cambrian Period, also called the Cambrian Explosion for the abundance of life that appeared. It dates to some 550 million years ago and lasted 25 million years. "It's a relatively rapid evolutionary event," Schiffbauer said. "There are a lot of questions about how this event occurred. The contributing factors is an important question."

He said many of the Cambrian fossils are in a mode of preservation called Burgess Shale Type Preservation.

"We're going to try to replicate this mode in the lab with worms and shrimp," he said. He said he doesn't have the luxury of waiting millions of years for a fossil to form, but he would use oxygen-free chambers to observe the subjects. "We're going to try to see how quickly these things decay."

He said he would also use a specialized electron microscope, which was acquired through another NSF grant, in his research.

Schiffbauer said a four-week course for graduate students on the use of the microscope will be one part of the education component. Another part will focus on elementary school students.

"Every kid has some fascination with dinosaurs," Schiffbauer said, adding that he also did as a child. "Kids at that age, when they're excited about ancient life, rarely get a glimpse of really ancient life."

He said he is working with a graduate student and an illustrator in the MU School of Medicine to develop a Cambrian coloring book. He said it would go first to students at Lee Expressive Arts Elementary School in 2018-19. He said it would be paired with Cambrian fossil samples from the university.

"If it works well with Lee, we're going to take it to other elementary schools in Columbia," he said.

He said the elementary school project might also expand beyond Columbia. "Paleontology is not all dinosaurs," he said.

Huntley and Schiffbauer both said they appreciated the support they received in the grant applications from the university. Huntley said he didn't think either of them would receive the grant and called it remarkable that they both did. "It's crazy," Schiffbauer said.

"Hopefully it helps put Mizzou paleontology on the map."



[DESE Report looks into education programs at Missouri colleges](#)

Watch story: <http://krcgtv.com/news/local/dese-report-looks-into-education-programs-at-missouri-colleges>

By Caileigh Peterson

COLUMBIA — The Missouri Department of Secondary and Elementary Education released the Annual Performance Report for Education Preparation Programs at Missouri.

The report analyzed the readiness of education programs at Missouri colleges and universities. The report classifies university programs based on GPA, content assessments, a new teacher perception survey, and principal perception survey.

The programs are placed in four tiers, with the first tier being the best and fourth being the worst. DESE said a majority of Missouri programs were placed in the first and second tiers.

"These are certainly some indicators that show that our teachers are performing well and that they feel they're prepared to teach," Associate Dean of the Mizzou Education School John Lannin said.

DESE took data from Missouri universities and colleges that graduate at least 15 students. Schools such as Westminster in Fulton were not considered for this reason.

Mizzou had 16 programs with more than 15 students. Thirteen of those programs were placed in tier one, three in tier two. Columbia College ranked one program in the first tier and another in the second tier.

Programs ranked in the third tier for five consecutive years and tier four for four consecutive years will be unable to recommend candidates for certification the next year.

No Missouri programs were ranked in the bottom fourth tier.



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KOCO-TV (ABC) – Oklahoma City, OK

[Older Americans More Likely to “Live Apart Together”](#)

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Downtown Robberies Suspect Goes to Trial

Suspect targeted Mizzou students in downtown Columbia.

Watch Story: <http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=420037d4-2362-4491-b7c1-a0032eb61973>

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Weeks After Charles Murray's Visit, Middlebury Continues to Debate the Contours of Free Speech

NO MU MENTION

BY NELL GLUCKMAN MARCH 28, 2017

Charles A. Murray may have [moved on to other campuses](#), but the Middlebury College community is still debating whether it was right to invite him to speak — and taking stock of what his appearance means for the college going forward.

The political scientist's appearance on campus on March 2 was [disrupted by student protesters](#); after the event, the professor who had appeared on stage with Mr. Murray was injured during a confrontation. In the days and weeks [that followed](#), students, faculty members, and administrators say the campus community has been working through the ethics of the event, though they're not pretending they've reached a consensus.

In the first days after Mr. Murray's visit, 'people were more staunchly for or against.' Now, there's movement toward 'a more fluid dialogue.'

"There was a lot of uncertainty," said Elizabeth S. Lee, a senior, of the mood in the first days after Mr. Murray's visit. "I wouldn't say people were afraid to talk about it, but people were more staunchly for or against. I think now people are kind of moderating and creating a more fluid dialogue."

On Thursday of last week, Ms. Lee participated in a lunchtime discussion with other students and professors and attended an evening debate about the event. The college's president, Laurie L. Patton, was among the 60 or 70 people who attended that debate, which was sponsored by the Middlebury Debate Society and the Community Council, a group whose members include students, faculty, and staff members, Ms. Lee said.

Ms. Lee, who has emerged as a leading voice for student protesters in the media, has also met with trustees, and she said informal conversations have been taking place in and out of the classroom.

Like many members of the Middlebury community, Ms. Lee depicted a campus trying to turn an ugly scene into a more productive discussion about speech.

"People are saying, 'I agree with *this* part of the protest, but I don't understand why they did *that*,'" Ms. Lee said. "It's bringing people from different perspectives together, although my friends are kind of divided."

A Statement of Principles

One of the most assertive public statements made in response to Mr. Murray's appearance on campus came in the form of a list of principles of ["Free Inquiry on Campus,"](#) written by a pair of Middlebury professors and signed by more than 100. The statement was first published in *The Wall Street Journal* on March 7.

The statement is meant as a defense of free speech, according to one of the authors, Jay Parini, a professor of English and creative writing. Among more than a dozen principles, it advocates that "all our students possess the strength, in head and in heart, to consider and evaluate challenging opinions from every quarter."

"I think it is beyond discussion that we have to listen to people who have different points of view," Mr. Parini said.

"I think it is beyond discussion that we have to listen to people who have different points of view."

But some students were offended by parts of the statement, particularly the fact that the principles were described as "unassailable in the context of higher education." After it was published, a group of students used a shared Google document to craft a response to each principle, which they called ["Broken Inquiry on Campus."](#) Five days later, their rebuttal appeared online.

Alex C. Brockelman, a junior who was among the authors, said he wanted to dispel "a false, misleading narrative about the students, which was, 'Well, if they didn't want to debate with Charles Murray, then they don't want to debate with anyone.'" He came up with the idea to respond while watching the news about his campus unfold from Paris, where he is studying abroad.

Among the professors' principles that he sought to rebut: "Exposure to controversial points of view does not constitute violence."

The students responded with a quote from Toni Morrison: "Oppressive language does more than represent violence; it is violence; does more than represent the limits of knowledge; it limits knowledge."

"To label the speaker's claims as 'controversial' is to signal that the intellectual inferiority of women, minority, and low income communities is up for debate at Middlebury," the students wrote.

Story [continues](#).