Emails outline possible additional cuts at Mizzou; staff travel budgets in some divisions being reviewed

The University of Missouri-Columbia is considering eliminating staff travel budgets in some divisions and delaying filling positions, according to emails obtained by Missourinet as part of a Missouri Sunshine law request.

The news comes as Mizzou will be laying off 20 administrative employees in MU’s Division of Operations, effective July 1. The layoffs are expected to save the university $1.7 million in salary and benefits.

Mizzou spokesman Christian Basi noted this month that the layoffs are due to a decline in state funding and an enrollment drop.

Missourinet reported those layoffs on April 6. The day before that, we filed a records request with the UM System’s custodian of records requesting “any e-mails to or from Mizzou Chancellor Dr. Hank Foley between March 27, 2017 and April 5, 2017, pertaining to Mizzou’s budget and the layoffs of 20 administrative employees in the Division of Operations.”

The University released three emails that were responsive to that request on April 10.

Mizzou Interim Vice Chancellor for Marketing and Communications Jennifer Hollingshead outlined possible cuts in an April 3 email to Mizzou officials.

The possible cuts, which are proposals at this time, would be for the Fiscal Year 2018 budget. The e-mail does note that “this is information we will want to post to the web in order to be fully transparent.”

Hollingshead’s email to officials mentions the 20 layoffs in MU’s Division of Operations. Five administrative employees in that division will also retire.
Hollingshead’s email says closing the Discovery, Responsibility and Center residence halls would save about $1 million in staffing, utilities and operating costs.

Basi told Missourinet on Thursday that those three halls are temporarily off-line, adding that two new halls just opened. He notes Mizzou doesn’t know what state revenues will be, and they also don’t have enrollment numbers for the fall.

Hollingshead’s email says MU is considering a proposal to eliminate staff travel budgets and not filling vacant positions in the Student Affairs Division.

That April 3 email from Hollingshead also mentions the Finance Division, which is a smaller department. The email indicates MU is considering a proposal to save $99,000 in that division by eliminating travel to peer conferences and delaying filling of positions.

The record also says Mizzou officials aim to save $60,000, by changing the distribution of Mizzou Magazine in conjunction with Alumni Relations.

The 20 Operations Division administrative employees will be laid off on July 1. Their responsibilities include Mizzou’s physical plant in Columbia and the safety of the Columbia campus. In an interview earlier this month, Basi emphasized to Missourinet that the layoffs will not compromise the university’s safety.

As part of the records request, the University also released an April 4 email from MU Vice Chancellor Gary Ward to MU Chancellor Foley’s staff.

Mr. Ward’s email says that it is his hope “that additional layoffs can be avoided, realizing savings through attrition and retirements.”

Ward also explains that the MU Operations leadership team is “working diligently” to assist those who are being laid off. Ward’s email says that Mizzou is “reaching out to our colleagues in the mid-Missouri business community in hopes that some will find positions elsewhere.”

The 20 laid-off employees will receive transitional benefits – at least four weeks of pay and a maximum of 26 weeks, depending on years of service.

Ward’s April 4 email notes “this permits possible bridging of service and access to insurance.”

Ward also writes that “We will continue to hire students, allowing invaluable experiential-learning opportunities, while furthering the academic mission of Mizzou. It is important for everyone to remember that without our students, there would not be a University of Missouri.”
Basi told Missourinet earlier this month that total enrollment in the fall of 2016 was 33,266, with 4,772 freshmen. In the fall of 2015, total enrollment was 35,448, with 6,191 freshmen.

The “Columbia Daily Tribune” has reported that Gov. Eric Greitens has restricted $31.4 million from the state’s current fiscal year budget for the university.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

Mizzou seeks canine cancer patients for clinical trials

BY ANDY MARSO
amarso@kcstar.com

Generated from News Bureau press release: Promising New Drug Development Could Help Treat Cachexia

The University of Missouri’s Veterinary Health Center is seeking cancer-stricken canines to test a drug researchers hope will let dogs — and maybe someday humans — live longer.

The university is running clinical trials in partnership with Tensive Controls Inc. on a medication for cachexia, a wasting syndrome that causes about one-third of cancer deaths.

Cachexia occurs with advanced cancers, causes loss of appetite and can lead to multiorgan failure.

“The clinical trial is targeting a disease that significantly decreases quality of life,” said Sandra Bechtel, the Missouri professor who is leading the study. “We are working to improve end-stage quality of life for our veterinary patients with the hopes of translating the improvements to human patients.”

The trial is being conducted at the Veterinary Health Center’s Small Animal Hospital in Columbia.

To inquire about enrolling a dog, call 573-882-7821 and ask to speak to Deb Tate or Bechtel, or email Tate at tated@missouri.edu or Bechtel at bechtels@missouri.edu.
Researchers from University of Missouri Identify Possible New Treatment for Cancer Patients

Generated from News Bureau press release: Promising New Drug Development Could Help Treat Cachexia
Watch the story: http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=c3c2c286-f450-4b4e-9d92-8c9ae24f21

Targeted Exercise Can Build Bone Strength in Men

Generated from News Bureau press release and MU Health video release: Weight-Bearing Exercises Promote Bone Formation in Men
MU Professor Named 2017 SEC Professor of the Year

By Yutao Chen

The Southeastern Conference named MU biological sciences professor James Birchler as its Professor of the Year for 2017 on Wednesday, April 12.

As the University of Missouri System Curators’ distinguished professor of biological sciences, Birchler teaches classes in general genetics and advanced plant genetics and has been a member of the National Academy of Sciences since 2011.

He studies the structure and function of cells and has created a widely used technique to visualize genes and chromosome features. John Walker, the director of biological sciences at MU, said it’s one of his most notable accomplishments.

“The technique is basically labeling chromosomes with specific to visualize their features underneath a microscope,” Walker said. “We can then create what are known as artificial chromosomes.”

Birchler said the agricultural industry can benefit from these techniques in the future.

“The artificial chromosome will allow us to put many different genes onto an independent chromosome that we can manipulate. This will potentially add new properties and make crops resistant to pests,” Birchler said. “The technique that we developed has been applied to various species including rice, wheat and cabbage.”

According to Walker, Birchler is not only an extremely production researcher but also one of the best teachers in the classroom.

He also co-founded the “gene balance hypothesis,” a theory explaining how organisms maintain the appropriate ratio of different genes.
The SEC Professor of the Year Awards is administered by the academic initiative of the Southeastern Conference. Birchler was selected by provosts from other SEC member universities and will be awarded a $20,000 honorarium in recognition of his accomplishment.

Lawmaker's proposal could restore nearly $11 million to UM System


By Nora Faris

JEFFERSON CITY - Facing ongoing budget battles, the University of Missouri System announced it may consider potential layoffs of staff and non-tenure track faculty as a way to bridge budget gaps.

Now a budget proposal by state Sen. Dan Brown, R-Rolla, could restore nearly $11 million to the UM System, potentially reducing the extent of possible personnel cuts and tuition increases.

Without the $11 million restoration, the UM System's total proposed state budget cuts for fiscal year 2018 amount to about $40 million.

Brown's budget proposal would restore $10.9 million to the UM System's core funding.

According to Missouri law, the state budget must reach the governor's desk by May 5. Between now and then, the Senate appropriations committee must finish reviewing the budget and the full Senate must approve it. Then, a conference committee of senators and representatives must reconcile both chambers' proposals, and the committee's spending plan must be approved by both the House and the Senate before it is sent to the governor.
Although the restored funding for the UM System has some way to go, UM System administrators said they are hopeful the funding will remain in place.

In a statement to KOMU, UM System spokesperson John Fougere said, "We are extremely pleased that the Senate Appropriations Committee restored $10.9 million to the UM System's core funding, and are especially appreciative of the leadership provided by Senator Dan Brown, the chair of the committee, in moving our budget forward."

At a press conference in March, UM System President Mun Choi discussed the possibility of raising tuition to increase UM System revenues.

But in order to increase tuition above Missouri's statutory limit, which is tied to the Consumer Price Index, the UM System would first need to obtain a waiver and the Department of Higher Education's approval.

In a "System Budget Guidance" document distributed to UM System faculty and staff, UM System administrators said they would strive to "protect programs of excellence for faculty research and creative works, student outcomes, community engagement and financial aid."

**Lawmakers Consider More Protections for Student Journalists**

Missouri lawmakers are considering a bill to give student journalists more freedom by restricting the types of content school administrators could censor.

The bill passed out of the House in March and is awaiting debate in the Senate.
The Kansas City Star reports current law allows administrators to censor anything they consider sensitive material. It was established by a landmark Missouri case that made it up to the U.S. Supreme Court. The 1988 Hazelwood decision determined that public school students do not have full First Amendment rights in school-sponsored publications.

The new law would restrict censorship of student work to stories that are libelous, invade privacy, violate law or incite a clear and present danger.

Sandy Davidson, a lawyer and professor of communications law at the University of Missouri, says the bill creates some "breathing space" for high school and collegiate journalists to report important stories.

Republican Rep. Kevin Corlew, of Kansas City, says the additional protections show student journalists that their rights matter.

So far, at least 11 states, including Kansas, have adopted some form of additional protection for student journalists.

A similar bill made it out of the House last year but was never debated on the Senate floor.

Clips continue onto next page…
University of Missouri students start store to help others sell

The project earned one founder a student entrepreneur award

By Roger McKinney
Columbia Daily Tribune

The Bridge, a store that has been operating in the University of Missouri Student Center since classes began in August, generated $23,000 in sales in its first three months, bringing more than $15,000 to student and alumni creators who sell their products in the store using a consignment business model.

The store was the idea of Drew Rogers and Blaine Thomas, both sophomores from St. Louis. Rogers was presented with the University of Missouri System Student Entrepreneur of the Year Award recently, but he said Thomas deserves as much credit as he does for the store. Thomas said there were no hard feelings that Rogers got the award.

"There can't be more than one Student Entrepreneur of the Year," Thomas said of the situation. He said he takes pride in what they've both done with the store.

Rogers and Thomas said they went to high school together in St. Louis, where they each tried to start businesses. They said at MU there were a lot of students talking about entrepreneurship, but not working together.

"Everyone was trying to do it on their own," Rogers said. "We wanted to create a place for Mizzou entrepreneurs to come together under one roof."

Rogers said gross revenue projections for the year is $60,000.

"We didn't want to make a quick buck, but really to give something to help the student entrepreneurs," Thomas said.

Student intern Molly Van Lann, a junior from Minneapolis, was the only person in the store early Monday afternoon. She said the store's peak time is during lunch. "Some days it's insanely busy," she said.

The store sells shirts, hats and other apparel and several jewelry makers also are represented. There are books written by MU journalism student Riley de Leon, including "Driven: A Millenial Manifesto."

Thomas said student-run services can't really be sold in a store.

Astronobeads, jewelry made by MU student Bea Doheny, are a consistent seller, Thomas said. A customer can buy a solar system bracelet for $30 or a galaxy choker for $15. Rogers said the seller keeps 70 percent of the sale price and the store keeps 30 percent. Thomas said entrepreneurs are given two weeks to prove themselves through sales.

"We get a pretty good idea of what the product is going to do in two weeks," Thomas said. He said if the product isn't moving, space is made for the next entrepreneur.

"We only have 300 square feet of store space," Thomas said. He said there's careful screening to select who will be able to sell in the store.

Rogers is a journalism major and Thomas majors in finance.

Rogers will be recognized in June by UM System President Mun Choi during the UM System President's Awards Celebration. The award includes a $2,500 prize.

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Missouri baseball teams up against sexual assault


By Anthony Romano

COLUMBIA - Along with the traditional black and gold, teal was the color on display at Taylor Stadium on Friday.

The color of sexual assault awareness month splattered the stands as part of a "Teal Out" for Missouri's series opener against No. 10 Kentucky. It was the first of its kind in all of Division I athletics.

The "Teal Out" was the culmination of Missouri's partnership with It's On Us, a national organization committed to helping end sexual violence on campus.

"It helps set that national standard that this is something that athletics should be taking seriously," said Tori Schafer, the director of It's On Us at MU. "This is something we should be having proactive conversations about in the future."

The baseball team is the first athletic team at Missouri to officially partner with It's On Us. Junior relief pitcher Nolan Gromacki spearheaded the team's involvement.

"The support I have from those guys in the locker room is more than I could ask for," Gromacki said. "Having their support makes it easy to do stuff like this because I know every guy in that locker room and every coach has my back."

Gromacki also serves as co-president of Missouri's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. His goal is to change the assumptions about college athletes.

"It's absolutely shocked some people," Gromacki said. "There's a lot of groups on campus that don't think so highly of athletes a lot of the time, especially talking about stuff like It's On Us."
Seeing how people have kind of flipped their predisposition about what a baseball player should look like and those assumptions that they wouldn't want to be involved with things like this was pretty special tonight."

Schafer has been involved with It's On Us for two years, but official programming at MU did not start until April 10. The "Teal Out" game was the final event of the organization's first week of action on campus.

"I feel like there's a stigma around talking about sexual assault and athletics, so we're really grateful that Coach Bieser decided to take up this initiative and promote a positive cause and change on our campus," Schafer said.

For Gromacki, his inspiration comes from his sister, who will attend MU in the fall.

"This school means so much to me and I want to be able to take the love I have for my family and try to reciprocate that to everyone on campus," Gromacki said.

While the baseball team is the first Mizzou team to get involved, Schafer said she has already been approached by the track team. She said she also plans to reach out to other teams on campus, like women's basketball, football and softball.

"I think it's going to be pretty contagious," Gromacki said. "I feel like other sports are going to want to get involved because they see the energy it can bring around the program."

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**PayScale's Impact (and Limitations)**

The compensation company was early in drawing attention to graduates’ incomes. Others have entered the fray, and all are imperfect.

**NO MU MENTION**

*BY DOUG LEDERMAN APRIL 18, 2017*

Blame it on PayScale.
Ten years ago this summer, the compensation data firm began publishing data on the colleges whose graduates earned the highest salaries. “For what it costs, a B.A. degree might as well be made of gold,” the company’s first report said. (It also noted that in the 2007-08 academic year examined then, the price of a four-year public degree averaged $6,185, and “costs at private colleges and universities can skyrocket beyond $33,000 for tuition, room and board.”

Today the former figure stands at nearly $21,000, and the sticker prices for a year at the most expensive private universities now start with a six. So it isn’t surprising that PayScale has expanded the data it publishes about higher education and been widely mimicked. Rankings providers like Money and Forbes have incorporated the data into their formulas, the American Institutes for Research's College Measures is working with numerous states to produce their own measures of college economic payoff, and even the federal government, in its College Scorecard, has included a measure of postcollege earnings in the outcomes data it provides.

The newest entry into the mix, The Equality of Opportunity Project, uses graduate earnings data to show how well (or poorly) colleges help their graduates climb rungs on the country's economic ladder.

Many college leaders dislike the metric, but the public eats it up -- and PayScale feeds its appetite.

PayScale today releases its 2017 College ROI Report, which provides information on the return on investment -- the 20-year compensation advantage gained by attending that institution -- for the typical graduate of 1,400 public and private nonprofit colleges. As is our practice, Inside Higher Ed does not report on the results of this or any of the burgeoning number of other rankings of colleges, given the skepticism with which most informed observers view their methodologies. This year's report from PayScale, like many such studies, shows engineering and science-oriented colleges having the best ROI, and sees a significant edge for public institutions, where the costs of attendance are much lower than at private nonprofit ones.

But given the PayScale data’s widespread use and the interest in ROI that the company’s approach has both helped spawn and capitalized on, the 10-year mark represents an appropriate time to look at its evolution and influence.

Most experts agree that the PayScale report has improved since its inception, and that the company has made changes over the years to address some of the criticisms directed its way, for instance by significantly refining how it calculates how much students at a given institution spend on their education. “They are definitely trying to do the right thing,” said Robert Kelchen, assistant professor of higher education at Seton Hall University.

But some of the PayScale metric's fundamental flaws remain: because the company bases its data on voluntary survey reports, its samples for certain colleges and majors may not be representative. And its institutional rankings are heavily influenced by the makeup of the colleges' programs, favoring institutions whose programs lean toward high-paying fields.

Story continues.