Mizzou, without permanent leader since 2015, gets new interim chancellor

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS
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Garnett Stokes, the University of Missouri’s executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost on the Columbia campus, on Tuesday was named interim chancellor, effective May 3.

UM System President Mun Choi announced Stokes’ appointment Tuesday morning. Stokes steps in for interim chancellor Hank Foley, who has taken a job as president of the New York Institute of Technology.

The university has been without a permanent chancellor since R. Bowen Loftin resigned in November 2015 after a series of racially charged student protests that also led to the resignation of Tim Wolfe, then the UM System president.

“I am pleased that Dr. Garnett Stokes has agreed to serve as interim chancellor of the largest campus in the UM System at this critical time,” Choi said in a statement. “Dr. Stokes has been a pivotal member of the leadership team at MU. I am looking forward to working closely with her to accomplish the important goals of achieving excellence in research, teaching, economic development and outreach.”

Stokes has served in her current position at MU since February 2015. She has been responsible for hiring eight of the university’s 13 deans.

In addition, under her direction, the university established the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX and “centralized reports and investigations of discrimination and provided more process and rigor around how cases of discrimination and sexual misconduct are addressed at MU,” the university statement said.

Before coming to Columbia, Stokes served as provost and executive vice president for academic affairs and interim president of Florida State University. She previously was a faculty member at the University of Georgia, where she also served as chair of the Department of Psychology and dean of the university’s College of Arts and Sciences.
Stokes received her master’s and doctorate degrees in institutional and organizational psychology from the University of Georgia, and her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Carson-Newman University.

Mizzou provost Garnett Stokes will serve as interim chancellor effective Wednesday, university system president Mun Choi announced.

During a recent meeting in Rolla, Choi said that the search for the next Mizzou chancellor is coming along. He said that finalists will soon come to the flagship to visit with "stakeholders," but those meetings and the candidates' identities will continue to be kept private.

He said the finalist pool includes provosts and vice presidents.

Stokes was brought to Mizzou by former chancellor R. Bowen Loftin in February 2015 from Florida State University where she also served as an interim president and provost.

“Dr. Stokes has been a pivotal member of the leadership team at MU,” Choi said in a statement. "I am looking forward to working closely with her to accomplish the important goals of achieving excellence in research, teaching, economic development and outreach.”
University of Missouri-Columbia has new interim chancellor

COLUMBIA, Mo. — The provost at the University of Missouri in Columbia will serve as the campus’ interim chancellor.

The president of the four-campus university system, Mun Choi, announced Garnett Stokes’ appointment to the campus’ top administrative post, and it was approved Wednesday by the system’s governing board.

Stokes has served as provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs since February 2015.

She succeeds Hank Foley, who has accepted the presidency of the New York Institute of Technology.

The university system is pressing a national search for a permanent Columbia chancellor.

Similar stories ran statewide

MU taps provost Stokes to become interim chancellor

By Rudi Keller

Garnett Stokes, provost of the University of Missouri since February 2015, will be interim chancellor until a permanent selection is made in a few weeks.
Stokes will take over from Hank Foley, who has been interim chancellor since November 2015 and is leaving to become president of New York Institute of Technology. Stokes was appointed Tuesday during a special closed session of the University of Missouri Board of Curators. She will take over as the top official on the Columbia campus today.

“I am pleased that Dr. Garnett Stokes has agreed to serve as interim chancellor of the largest campus in the UM System at this critical time,” UM System President Choi said in a news release. “Dr. Stokes has been a pivotal member of the leadership team at MU. I am looking forward to working closely with her to accomplish the important goals of achieving excellence in research, teaching, economic development and outreach.”

Foley took over as chancellor when campus unrest over racial issues and administrative infighting forced former UM System President Tim Wolfe and former Columbia campus Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin to resign on the same day. After a year-long search ended with Choi being hired in November, a search committee to find a chancellor for the Columbia campus was formed.

Foley was a candidate until he took the post in New York. Stokes has not been mentioned as a candidate for the post on a permanent basis and she has not said she was seeking the post.

At their meeting last week, the curators were told that finalists for chancellor would visit Columbia this month for private meetings before a final selection is made. A selection is expected late this month or in June.

A news release announcing Stokes’ appointment credited her with guiding a major turnover in administrative positions, hiring eight of 13 deans on campus as well as key staff positions in her office.

Stokes was not available for an interview Tuesday, but said in a statement that she looks forward to “working closely with President Choi as we prepare the campus for a new chancellor.” Among the tasks ahead, Stokes listed budget decisions, program reviews and preparations for the incoming freshman class.

Before she was hired by the university, Stokes was provost, executive vice president and interim president at Florida State University. She has also worked as a faculty member, department chair and dean at the University of Georgia.

Stokes received her masters and doctoral degrees in institutional and organizational psychology from the University of Georgia, and her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Carson-Newman College.

MU Vice Chancellor for Operations Gary Ward has been named as interim vice chancellor for student affairs, replacing Cathy Scroggs, who is retiring from the post July 31, Choi wrote in an email to the campus about Stokes’ promotion. Ward will lead an internal organizational review and a national leadership search will follow, Choi wrote.
COLUMBIA — Garnett Stokes, MU provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs, will serve as MU’s interim chancellor effective Wednesday, University of Missouri System President Mun Choi announced in an email to the university community.

Her appointment, approved at a 10 a.m. Tuesday teleconference meeting of the UM System Board of Curators, will last until a permanent chancellor takes over.

Her salary will increase to $459,000 — up from $375,000 — while she is interim, said UM System spokesman John Fougere. She will maintain her role as provost while serving as the interim chancellor.

In the same email, Choi announced that Gary Ward will serve as interim vice chancellor for student affairs, as well as continue in his current role as vice chancellor for operations. Cathy Scroggs, the current MU vice chancellor for student affairs, will become a special adviser to Choi until her retirement in July.

“I’m honored to be able to work with a group that has a history of loving and serving students,” Ward said in a statement. “We have an opportunity to review the Division of Student Affairs and be at the forefront of student success in the United States. I’m excited to be a part of that future.”

In late March, Interim Chancellor Hank Foley announced that he will become the new president of the New York Institute of Technology, effective June 1. His last day at MU will be Wednesday.
Foley, 61, has served as interim chancellor since November 2015, following the sudden resignation of R. Bowen Loftin and then-UM System President Tim Wolfe.

Stokes, 61, came to MU in early 2015 from Florida State University, where she was provost, executive vice president and — at one point — interim president. Stokes was responsible for hiring eight of the 13 deans currently at MU, and the Office of Civil Rights Title IX was established under her direction, according to a system news release.

The UM System is engaged in a national search for a permanent chancellor at MU, with an announcement of a new chancellor expected to be made in the coming weeks, according to Choi’s email to the university community.

Stokes’ appointment does not push back the timetable for naming a permanent chancellor, Fougere said.

Stokes said in a statement from the MU News Bureau that she looks forward to working with Choi as the campus prepares for a new chancellor.

“We have several important issues to tackle in the coming months, including final budget decisions, programmatic reviews and preparation for our incoming freshman class,” Stokes said in the statement. "I look forward to engaging our many campus stakeholders in the coming weeks. Mizzou’s future is strong, and I’m excited and optimistic about what we can accomplish working together.”

Stokes begins her new role as the four UM System campuses are creating budget plans to submit to Choi on May 10. Ben Trachtenberg, chair of the MU Faculty Council, said the budget process won’t skip a beat under new leadership.

"We've known for a good while that Hank Foley was leaving the university,” Trachtenberg said. “Garnett Stokes has already been leading the MU effort to prepare the campus’ budget plan that will be submitted to system."
UM System President Names Stokes Interim Chancellor

By Rosemary Belson

University of Missouri System President Mun Choi named Dr. Garnett Stokes the new interim chancellor for the University of Missouri – Columbia today.

Stokes currently serves as MU’s Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost and will assume her new role May 3, 2017.

She will replace Hank Foley who stepped down after accepting a position as president of New York Institute of Technology. The University of Missouri Board of Curators approved the appointment today, which will be in effect until a permanent chancellor is chosen.

“She is uniquely qualified to step in and lead the university during a very important time in transition as we await the arrival of a permanent chancellor at MU,” said UM System Spokesperson John Fougere.

In a statement released Tuesday, Stokes said she looks forward to working President Choi to address campus issues.

“We have several important issues to tackle in the coming months, including final budget decisions, programmatic reviews and preparation for our incoming freshman class,” Stokes said. “I look forward to engaging our many campus stakeholders in the coming weeks.”

Stokes became Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost in February 2015. Since then, she has overseen the hiring of eight of the University’s 13 deans, the Associate Provost and Vice Provost for Enrollment Management. The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX were established also under her direction.
MU Spokesperson Christian Basi said Stokes will continue to serve as provost in addition to her role as interim chancellor and is expected to continue as provost position when a permanent chancellor is named.

The UM System statement says the announcement of a new chancellor is expected in the coming weeks.

“Dr. Stokes has been a pivotal member of the leadership team at MU. I am looking forward to working closely with her to accomplish the important goals of achieving excellence in research, teaching, economic development and outreach,” said President Choi in today’s statement.

**New interim chancellor appointed for University of Missouri**

By Xin Liu


COLUMBIA - **Dr. Garnett Stokes was appointed interim chancellor of University of Missouri-Columbia by MU's Board of Curators on Tuesday.**

According to UM system's news release, the appointment of Stokes will be effective May 3 until the announcement of a new, permanent chancellor, which is expected in the coming weeks.

Stokes has served as the executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost at MU since 2015 and was the interim president of Florida State University. She will succeed current Interim Chancellor Hank Foley, who has accepted the position of president of the New York Institute of Technology.

MU also announced that Gary Ward will serve as interim vice chancellor for student affairs, in addition to his current role as vice chancellor for operations, effective May 8.
UM System appoints interim chancellor at Mizzou

By Greg Dailey

COLUMBIA — The University of Missouri System appointed a temporary chancellor at its largest campus.

Dr. Garnett Stokes assumes the role of interim chancellor at the University of Missouri after the position was vacated by Hank Foley.

Stokes has most recently served as the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost at Mizzou, a release stated.

“I am pleased that Dr. Garnett Stokes has agreed to serve as interim chancellor of the largest campus in the UM System at this critical time,” UM System President Mun Choi said in a release. “Dr. Stokes has been a pivotal member of the leadership team at MU. I am looking forward to working closely with her to accomplish the important goals of achieving excellence in research, teaching, economic development and outreach.”

Foley will be begin his role as president of New York Institute of Technology starting June 1.
Can ‘smoke-free’ policies nudge LGBT people to quit?

Generated from News Bureau press release: Smoke-Free Policies Help Decrease Smoking Rates for LGBT Population

Cigarette smoking among lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) people in the United States is higher than among heterosexual adults—nearly 24 percent of the LGBT population smoke compared to nearly 17 percent of the straight population.

But a new study finds evidence of less smoking and greater intentions to quit among LGBT smokers who live in communities with smoke-free policies.

“Past research indicated despite overall declines in smoking, higher smoking rates persist in the LGBT community, due in part to social norms,” says Jenna Wintemberg, instructor of health sciences in the School of Health Professions at the University of Missouri.

“LGBT people face hostility and can feel excluded from social spaces, leading individuals to create their own spaces such as bars and nightclubs, which are often targets for marketing and promotion by the tobacco industry.”

Researchers surveyed participants during Missouri Pride festivals with questions about where they live, personal tobacco use, and support for smoke-free policies. Of those who live in smoke-free communities, 94 percent were more likely to want to quit smoking compared to just 76 percent of those who lived in places without smoking bans.

The findings are published in the journal Nicotine and Tobacco Research.

“Smoke-free policies have several positive outcomes for all people, not specifically those who identify as LGBT,” says Jane McElroy, principal investigator of the study and associate professor of family and community medicine. “These outcomes include overall lower smoking rates and changes in social norms regarding smoking.”
Further, only 35 percent of Missourians from the study sample live in an area with a comprehensive smoke-free law, compared to 82 percent of the population nationally.

Kevin Everett, associate professor of family and community medicine, and Bin Ge, statistician in the medical research department are study coauthors. The Missouri Foundation for Health supported the Out, Proud and Healthy project.

Mizzou lab helps veterinarians treat joint pain in dogs

Watch story: http://fox2now.com/2017/05/02/mizzou-lab-helps-veterinarians-treat-joint-pain-in-dogs/

Generated from News Bureau press release and video: Veterinary Motion Analysis Lab Could Lead to Better Treatments for Small Animals, Orthopedic Procedures in Humans

By Katherine Hessel

COLUMBIA, MO (KTVI) – New technology at the University of Missouri is helping veterinarians study how to keep man’s best friend pain free.

Six-year-old Maebly has arthritis in both ankles and is one of the first patients at the new motion analysis lab at Mizzou.

“Millions and millions of dogs in the US suffer from some sort of arthritis in their joints and that number is increasing,” Dr. Bryan Torres said.

The lab, which opened in January, helps veterinarians see how well a therapy or surgery is working to relieve joint pain.

Torres said when the animal comes in with an injury doctors can monitor where they are at that time, prescribe a surgery or therapy and then reanalyze their movement.

“We are able to take a look and say, have we made an improvement, have things changed, do we need to alter what we are doing to get the best result from that patient,” Torres said.

Torres starts monitoring his patients by sticking markers on them. These show him how the limbs and joints are moving. Then he has the dog walk across force plates which show how they are baring their weight.
“We have the ability to look at how much weight they are baring on their legs and how their limbs and joints are moving in space all in real time,” he said.

Torres said the information they get from this new technology can help vets everywhere come up with better treatment plans for an animal in pain.

Based on Maebay’s tests throughout the months Torres can see that her arthritis hasn’t changed so he will need to schedule her for surgery.

This is the only lab like this in Missouri. Torres said the cost of this can vary depending on the situation but it is usually in line with other diagnostic visits.

Mizzou: no changes to study abroad program amid travel alert

By Sarah Bono

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=35bef0e1-a6c2-4dc3-b2bd-77d371c2ca9a

COLUMBIA, Mo. - **One day after the United States issued an Europe Travel Alert, the University of Missouri said it would not be altering its study abroad program - vet.**

The State Department announced the alert on Monday after recent attacks in the United Kingdom, France, Russia and Sweden.

Mizzou said its 116 students studying in Europe are being notified about the alert.

"The university is in constant contact with our students as they travel abroad as their safety is our No. 1 priority," said Liz McCune with the MU News Bureau.

The university also said it will continue to monitor the situation and make changes if needed.

If you are planning to travel throughout Europe, the State Department encourages travelers to check the website of the U.S. embassy or consulate in your destination city for any recent security messages.
Also, be prepared for additional security screenings and have an emergency plan in place.

The alert is set to end September 1, 2017.

The Briefing: Board of Curators’ April meeting, international enrollment drops, campus carry resolution fails, Take Back the Night

By Katherine Stevenson and Zia Kelly

*UM Board of Curators discussed tuition rise, facility renovations at meeting last week*

Tuition may be increasing by 2.1 percent for both in-state and out-of-state students for the 2017-18 school year, according to the agenda presented at the April 27 and 28 curator meeting. The final vote was tabled until after the Missouri legislature passes the final 2018 fiscal year budget, which is set to happen later this month.

*Additionally, per credit hour fees are proposed to rise for students in the MU College of Engineering, College of Business and the College of Arts and Science.*

At the meeting, the curators discussed transitioning the four campuses to a differential tuition system, which would set higher tuition rates for higher cost and higher earning majors. The curators said more discussion about the possibility would take place at their September meeting.

The curators also began discussion about facility overhauls at all four campuses, including a new building for the MU School of Music and total renovations of facilities in Waters, Mumford, Whitten, Stanley and Lefevre halls.

Though the curators began discussing possibilities for capital funding, they will not request funds from the state for any of these projects until the 2019 fiscal year.

*International enrollment applications affected by political climate, U.S. economic conditions*

International graduate student enrollment was down 16 percent as of March 15, according to the director of graduate admissions and student services. More than two-thirds of international students at MU are graduate students; the drop in enrollment is the first since 2006 and may affect the competitiveness of MU as a land-grant research university.
The drop in enrollment does not mean a drop in international student population because there are often more applicants than graduate positions.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said the political climate, including recent executive orders and changes to immigration policy, are possibly a reason for decreasing interest in MU and other American universities. Economic conditions in the U.S. and around the world may also play a role.

The university is working with students who are applying from nations affected by the travel ban. The largest number of these students come from Iran.

*Resolution asking for a rule change to allow firearms on campus failed in full Senate*

A resolution proposed by a senator in the Missouri Students Association asking for the UM System Board of Curators to change the rules to allow guns on campus failed in full Senate on April 26 by a vote of 14-9.

The resolution also failed in committee the previous day but was brought before the Senate because of a 2016 MSA resolution stating legislation with at least 50 signatures on it must be heard before the entire body.

Arguments for passing the bill included statistics from a survey conducted by the Associated Students of the University of Missouri that said 39 percent of MU students favor restricted or unrestricted concealed carry on campus. Opposition included a senator who argued violent crime rates would increase if the resolution passed.

Missouri does not have a law restricting concealed and carried firearms on campus. The rule banning firearms on campus comes from university administration.

A student with a sign that read “MSA wants the most vulnerable to be defenseless” was escorted out of the Senate.

*Stories shared, funds raised at Take Back the Night*

The rally held April 27 in support of survivors of sexual assault, abuse and violence saw about 100 students and community members gather at Traditions Plaza. This year’s Take Back the Night, an annual event to bring awareness to issues of sexual violence, featured multiple parts.

Attendees first marched around campus, carrying signs and chanting, “Claim our bodies, claim our rights, take a stand, take back the night.” The march ended in Traditions Plaza for the “Speak Out” portion of the event, during which those affected by sexual violence shared their stories.

Organizers also fundraised for True North, a domestic and sexual violence shelter, and Leadership through Education & Advocacy for the Deaf, a resource group for those with disabilities, by selling T-shirts during the event.
Take Back the Night was hosted by the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center.

**Top Disappointments: Budget cuts continue to plague the university**

By Zia Kelly

Within a month of being sworn in earlier this year, Gov. Eric Greitens released two budgets that each made major cuts to state higher education funding. **This came as MU was already losing money as freshman enrollment continued to drop.** With state funding and enrollment both on the decline, it’s clear MU will be in a disappointingly bad spot when it comes to money.

The first budget, a mid-fiscal year round of cuts in January, withheld $19.82 million from MU, leaving the university scrambling with four months left in the semester.

In the second wave of cuts, MU campus leaders will be required to cut an additional $20 million from the university’s budget as part of the total $57 million in proposed cuts that the UM System will need to make during the 2018 fiscal year. The amount of money the system may need to cut within the next semester would equal the total budgets of the MU School of Business, School of Law and College of Engineering combined, according to a news release from UM System President Mun Choi.

Although campus leaders are still creating a plan to address these cuts — which will be approved by Choi and released to the public on June 2 — one thing is clear: Students and faculty will be hurt by the state’s continual underfunding of higher education.

Students in higher-cost or higher-earning majors may end up paying more in tuition, if the UM System Board of Curators implements a policy known as “differential tuition,” which the legislature suggested in their April meeting. In-state tuition may also increase if the curators remove the in-state tuition cap, which they expressed interest in doing during their February meeting.

Both in-state and out-of-state tuition are currently projected to increase by 2.1 percent for the 2017-2018 school year, the UM System Board of Curators discussed during their April meeting. This is the maximum amount that the system is currently able to raise in-state tuition by state law without a waiver.

“Tuition most certainly will increase for students across Missouri as a direct result of these cuts,” said Steven Chaffin, the executive director of the Associated Students of the University of
Missouri. “There’s always room to become more efficient and to identify what our priorities are, which could reduce the magnitude of tuition increases.”

As a result of just this semester’s round of budget cuts, capital projects such as a new building for the School of Nursing could be put off, and some departments may have fewer professors to teach courses.

Heads of some academic units have said certain staff and faculty positions will go unfilled next semester, and research funding for some faculty members may be affected as a result of this round of withholdings.

Current faculty and staff positions may be in jeopardy during the next round of cuts. In an email sent to students, faculty and staff last month, Choi said that non-tenure track faculty and staff positions may be subject to cuts in academic units that are deemed underperforming or that have low enrollment.

**Top Disappointments: UM System officials given inappropriate bonuses**

By Nancy Coleman

It’s hard to pinpoint the most disheartening part of the UM System audit that was released in March.

It might have been the $1.2 million doled out in incentive payments to top administrators over several years. Maybe it was the approximately $407,000 spent in “excessive” vehicle allowances. Perhaps it was the fact that a former chancellor who resigned amid multiple scandals was still given a salary thousands of dollars above what he should have reasonably made in his post-resignation administrative role.

All of these numbers alone would have been upsetting, but the timing of the report’s release may have been the last straw that made the audit such a big blow to students and staff. MU’s financial woes had been a prevalent part of the news cycle all year, but after higher education took the brunt of the state budget cuts and an already low enrollment projection kept getting lower, finding out that an extra $2.3 million went to the administrators at the top was the icing on the cake.

Even then, it wasn’t just the timing or the numbers, but the way the money was given out. The audit found no standardized system for giving administrators bonus payments. The goals to meet were basic job requirements, the process for deciding exactly how much each administrator
earned was ambiguous at best, and none of the bonuses were documented in public compensation information. And on top of lacking both consistency and transparency, the auditor found the whole thing in potential violation of the state constitution.

And that was just the $1.2 million in incentive bonuses. The rest of the $2.3 million included, among other things, vehicle payments that were up to three times higher than what administrators realistically needed reimbursed and former Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin’s $100,000 retention payment — which he kept despite, you know, not retaining his position.

The system has made some strides to make things right, with UM System President Mun Choi bringing the incentive payments to an end after the audit was released. But if this is how system administrators handle their own finances, we’re not sure how they’re going to move forward and handle running a university — much less four — in a state of financial crisis.

Darious Lucas planned birthday trip to cover murder plot, state says in first day of trial

CLAIRE MITZEL AND CARTER STODDARD, 11 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Although Darious Lucas thought of James Richardson as a brother, he killed him anyway, Boone County Assistant Prosecutor Stephanie Morrell said Tuesday in outlining the state's case against him.

Lucas, 26, is being tried in Boone County Circuit Court on two counts of first-degree murder in the fatal shooting of Richardson and another Columbia man, Kenneth Long. Both men were 42 and lived in Boone County.

The double homicide happened on Sept. 19, 2015 off of the 6900 block of East Mexico Gravel Road, but the why was only suggested in Morrell's opening statement: The offense was that Richardson lied to Lucas, Morrell said, so Lucas decided to kill him and Long, an eyewitness.

Morrell told the jury the state would prove the crime was premeditated because Lucas had taken steps to establish an alibi: He and his girlfriend, Adrian Carpenter, told people they were planning a trip to an amusement park in Ohio to celebrate his birthday when the actual plan was to kill Richardson.
Long was shot to death, an apparent casualty of having been with Richardson when Lucas showed up, she said.

But Public Defender David Wallis said all of the state's evidence against Lucas was circumstantial.

"In the end, it's going to be insufficient ..." he said.

For example, he said the state would try to persuade the jury that the ammunition used in the shootings, Radically Invasive Projectile, was rare. And although video evidence would show Lucas's girlfriend buying it in a store before the shootings, the ammunition can be bought nationwide and anyone could have used it.

**Dr. Deiter Duff, an assistant professor of pathology at MU, testified that he had never seen the type of bullet he found in the victims' bodies during an autopsy. Duff said he found multiple bullet fragments in the body of each victim. The prosecution said the the fragments are consistent with with the advertised effects of Radically Invasive Projectile. The bullets are meant to fragment on impact.**

Lieutenant Philip Smith of the Boone County Sheriff Department's enforcement branch said most bullets he encounters are ball-shaped projectiles or hollow point rounds with a full metal jacket.

"I don't see bullets like this very often," he said.

Wallis also said two key witnesses who said Lucas confessed to the murders while in jail are not to be trusted because their stories differ, and both tried to strike a deal with the state in exchange for information. Wallis said Lucas talked about the murders while in jail because he had information, but not from his own experience. He'd learned what he knew when he was shown a search warrant and interviewed by Boone County Sheriff's deputies.

Jurors also heard from the state's first witness on Tuesday, Sgt. Tracey Cleeton, who was called to the 6900 block of East Mexico Gravel Road on Sept. 19, 2015 after road crew workers found a dead man, Richardson, next to a truck.
Cleeton said the man was lying on his back covered in blood with shell casings around him. In a picture shown to the jury, a bullet hole appeared to be above his left ear. Cleeton said he identified the man as Richardson after he ran fingerprints and checked the registration of the truck.

Cleeton testified that the truck’s interior was spattered with blood in various places, including the passenger seat and seatbelt. A shell casing was also found on the floor, and more blood was smeared on the exterior.

After finding a shoe and shirt that didn’t belong to Richardson, the Sheriff’s Department expanded the search and found another body on the other side of trees and a pond. This was Long, who had been shot in his mid-back.

A diagram of the scene shown at the trial indicated Long was exiting the car when he was shot. He had small abrasions and cuts on his lower back. Duff said contact with twigs or grass in the area between the car and the trees where his body was found could have caused the cuts.

Richardson was shot in the head.

The trial, which could last into next week, continues Wednesday.

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**J-Schools Dump Accrediotor**

**NO MU MENTION**

*BY PAUL FAIN MAY 3, 2017*
Accrediting agencies are facing intense scrutiny from academics, policy makers and the general public, with the latest salvo being the decision by Northwestern University’s school of journalism and communications to ditch its accreditor.

The Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications used some fiery words in explaining the move to voluntarily drop its specialized accreditor, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), which was reported Tuesday by the Chicago Tribune.

“As we near the 2020s, we expect far better than a 1990s-era accreditation organization that resists change -- especially as education and careers in our field evolve rapidly,” said Brad Hamm, Medill’s dean, in a message to alumni. “All fields benefit from a world-class review process, and unfortunately the gap between ACEJMC today and what it could, and should, be is huge.”

Likewise, he blamed the accreditor for impeding innovation at Medill by restricting its curriculum and the ability of students to take courses in other schools at the university.

Medill is one of the nation’s most selective media industry schools, with programs for both undergraduates and graduate students. Northwestern retains its regional accreditation, so Medill students will continue to be eligible to receive federal financial aid.

Much of the broader conversation about accreditation revolves around institutional accreditors, both national and regional, that serve as the gatekeepers for federal financial aid. Criticism tends to focus on whether the agencies are doing enough to prevent fraud and to push colleges to improve graduation and job-placement rates.

Yet specialized accreditors have felt heat as well. Some have questioned the value they add, especially outside medical fields and other disciplines where specialized groups assure the public that graduates of a given program can be considered for licensure. And the tension over innovation at Medill is familiar to most accreditors, as their role of by-the-books regulators of quality often conflicts with encouraging innovation. Some of the criticism of accreditors also comes from prestigious institutions, which feel they deserve less scrutiny than open-access colleges with more worrisome track records.

“This is part of a re-evaluation that’s happening in the education space and in accreditation,” said Judith Eaton, president of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, which recognizes ACEJMC. “The focus on innovation is there across the board.”

Medill is not alone in leaving ACEJMC. The Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley, also recently opted to drop the accreditor.

Edward Wasserman, that school’s dean, said Berkeley made the decision in part because it is enrolls only graduate students. Most of the roughly 115 or so journalism and communications programs overseen by ACEJMC offer undergraduate degrees.
“My basic feeling is that accreditation is a valuable process for undergraduate programs, where it sets standards that negotiate wisely between academic and pre-professional learning objectives,” Wasserman said via email. “Berkeley's program is a stand-alone, two-year, graduate level-only journalism boutique, which is subject to continuous self-examination, generated both by a restless internal culture of self-improvement and a stern and demanding campus and university.”

Protecting Students

The loss of two prestigious schools is a blow to the journalism and communications school accredits, which still oversees selective programs like Columbia University’s Graduate School of Journalism and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s School of Media and Journalism.

Hamm was less accommodating than Wasserman with his take on ACEJMC, calling the accreditation process a superficial, costly distraction.

“Investing 18 months and hundreds of hours of faculty and staff time within the current flawed system is not useful,” he said.

Story continues.

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

As Stabbing Attack Unfolded, U. of Texas Officials Strained to Curb Misinformation

NO MU MENTION

BY KATHERINE MANGAN MAY 03, 2017

The 30 minutes between the time violence erupted on Monday at the University of Texas at Austin and the time an emergency alert went out to students seemed like an eternity to people who are accustomed to minute-by-minute updates on their phones.

As is often the case when tragedy strikes and the police are rushing to respond, social media quickly filled the void.

By the time official word got out that four students had been stabbed — one fatally — and a suspect was in custody, rumors had been flying about a coordinated attack on fraternity and sorority members, some of whom quickly turned their Greek shirts inside out.

The killer, some tweets suggested, might have been connected with an anarchist group agitated by a raucous immigration protest that was underway nearby.
Neither rumor was true. The suspect, the police said on Tuesday, was a 21-year-old student, Kendrex J. White, who may have had mental-health problems but, as far as they knew, no vendetta against anyone. Mr. White, who the police said had been involuntarily committed in another city recently for undisclosed mental issues, was being booked Tuesday on murder charges.

In a news conference on Tuesday, university officials conceded that they had been too slow to report what had happened and that the delay had given time for bad information to get out.

But they said that from the time the university police received the first call about the lunchtime attack, it took less than two minutes for them to arrive and apprehend the suspect.

By that point, they said afterward, it seemed clear that the situation was under control and so there was no need for a campus lockdown. Their focus, at that point, was on arresting the suspect and getting treatment to the victims.

Their explanation did little to appease students who were upset that they had learned about the attack from social media, and not from Texas authorities.

"Many students and parents are frustrated with how long the university took to notify them of today’s attack," the university’s president, Gregory L. Fenves, wrote in a message late Monday. "I understand those frustrations, and I am committed to faster notification in the future."

Austin’s interim police chief, whose force worked closely with the campus police, concurred.

"There was a lot of misinformation being put out on social media," Brian Manley said on Tuesday. "We need to be the ones putting out the information, and that delay was too long."

Rumors and Speculation

By early evening on Monday, the Austin police, who had been fielding a barrage of 911 calls, tweeted that there were a lot of rumors going around about additional attacks, but none of them were found to be credible.

Story continues.
Spending Bill Gives Flexibility to Borrowers Seeking Loan Consolidation

NO MENTION

BY ANDREW KREIGHBAUM MAY 3, 2017

Language in the omnibus spending bill Congress agreed to over the weekend directs the Department of Education to allow student loan borrowers to select any servicer when consolidating their federal student loans.

It's a change that was long sought by state-based and not-for-profit servicers. Previously, borrowers were required to move their loans to one of several large servicers after consolidating.

Debra Chromy, president of the Education Finance Council, said if a borrower is happy with their servicer, it makes little sense to require that their account be transferred to another company because they decided to consolidate a loan. The group represents many smaller servicers. Chromy said member companies in New Hampshire and Missouri worked with Democratic Senator Jeanne Shaheen and Republican Senator Roy Blunt, respectively, to advocate for the change.

Justin Draeger, the president and CEO of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, said the group has recommended for server-specific branding to be removed from communication with borrowers to create a seamless experience of paying back student loans. "But, as long as we're going to have some competition with loan consolidation, I don't see why any specific qualified federal loan servicer should be excluded from competing," he said.

Clare McCann, a senior policy analyst with New America's education policy program, said the change was policy making via earmark."We really need a wholesale rethinking of how to do student loan servicing in an effective way," she said.

The direction of the federal government will be shaped by the decisions of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, McCann said. After DeVos withdrew Obama administration guidelines for the next round of servicer contracting, advocates and policy researchers are waiting to see what alternative course she will stake out.