



MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

May 4, 2017



CBS Affiliate in Pittsburgh, PA

The Better You Dress, the Better the Service According to University of Missouri Study

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MISSOURIAN

[In wake of floods, MU Extension hopes to aid in recovery process](#)

THOMAS OIDE, 14 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — [As floods wreak havoc throughout Missouri, MU Extension offices are trying to do what they can to assist people and keep them informed.](#)

The purpose of MU Extension is to help people make informed decisions on topics like agriculture, nutrition, gardens, business and emergencies. There is at least one Extension office in every county.

Debi Kelly, a horticulture and local food specialist at MU Extension Jefferson County, in eastern Missouri south of St. Louis, said the office doesn't often receive calls during natural disasters but afterward as people try to repair homes and property.

"Put yourself in their shoes," Kelly said. "What you're more interested in is protecting as much as you can. That's where your focus is. Once everything has gone down, you start thinking where do I go? But right now, you're just in saving mode."

For now, she is pushing out information through several Facebook pages: what to do if the flood destroyed important papers; how to drain the house so that mold doesn't grow; and information about free storage space and housing.

She said the Facebook post that received the most response recently was about how to clean a well after a flood.

"A lot of times, people don't know where to turn," Kelley said. "It's important to have all the information out there so people can access it as they go through the different phases (of the flood)."

Frank Wideman, a natural resources engineer at MU Extension Perry County, said few roads there were passable because of the recent floods. Wideman said he plays a similar role as Kelly: pushing as much information out as possible to make sure people are informed about what they need to do. Wideman said he is also the lead coordinator of the recovery response in the southeast Missouri region, which means he's responsible for making sure that clients and counties in the region are aware of the information available.

Wideman said Perry County, in southeastern Missouri north of Cape Girardeau, is still recovering from the tornado that traveled through there in February. Through that experience, he learned that monetary donations are more valuable than donations of physical goods. After the tornado, the office received 36,000 bottles of toothpaste and 36,000 toothbrushes for 100 affected households.

"The community can use the economic benefit," Wideman said. "It could allow flood survivors to replace the things that they need. A lot of stuff that people donate is not exactly what they need. In general, dollars are better than stuff."

In Howell County, in south-central Missouri, Willis Mushrush, the business development specialist for MU Extension there, said callers have been "asking about everything you could possibly ask about."

"It's primarily homes and businesses that have been damaged," Mushrush said. "But there's also been questions about soil and crops."

"We're just taking things one step at a time, and we're waiting for it to be declared a federal disaster," he said. "Right now, it's just about helping people."

Mushrush said the Howell County MU Extension office has been disseminating information like that coming from the offices in Jefferson and Perry counties. But he said office staffers have also been heavily involved in the cleanup. Staffers collect and sort clothes to be given to churches throughout the community. They've helped find food and shelter for mobile home residents whose houses were swept away by the floods.

"It's heartbreaking," Mushrush said. "Never thought it would happen here."

Next steps for MU Extension offices include the creation of multi-agency resource centers, which allow affected people to go through and talk to agencies that provide anything from financial assistance to help replacing a refrigerator. Kelly said Jefferson County will host two or three of them in the next couple weeks. Wideman said the Perry County office will help surrounding areas find space for a resource center.

Howell County has not started the process of scheduling one yet.

"But we are going to make sure we're available," Mushrush said. "We're going to wait to find out what the actual need is in the community. We have several organizations working on it, and we're working on it with them."



Mizzou reviews campus parking conditions amid traffic congestion concerns

COLUMBIA, Mo. - **The University of Missouri will soon roll out some parking changes that will impact students taking summer classes and, possibly, fall classes.**

"In an effort to reduce congestion and indirectly enhance pedestrian safety on campus, we hired an outside consultant to review our parking operations," said Liz McCune, associate director with the MU News Bureau.

The consultant made recommendations including shifting some visitor and student parking areas. McCune said the campus is already seeing some relief from congestion due to some of the suggestions being implemented.

Students taking summer courses will be allowed to buy a 12-week permit for \$63 while the campus continues to make the changes.

In April, the Campus Parking and Transportation Committee suggested the campus offer top floors of parking garages to students at the surface lot rate of \$18 a month.

If leaders approve that proposal, some covered parking will be open to students in the Hitt Street parking garage at \$21 per month. Students will be offered spaces on top floors at \$18 per month for all other parking garages.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Budget plan could zap medical benefits for nearly 8,000 Missourians

By Kurt Erickson St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 12 hrs ago

JEFFERSON CITY • Nearly 8,000 nursing home residents and Missourians who receive in-home care may no longer qualify for state assistance later this year under the latest budget proposal advancing in the Capitol.

On a day when a report showed growth in state tax revenues slowing in April, negotiators in the House and Senate moved to raise the threshold needed to qualify for state medical assistance. Deeper cuts to reimbursement rates to nursing homes and in-home caregivers also were approved.

The state would save millions of dollars by tightening eligibility for Medicaid services, but it could mean job losses from the closure of nursing homes and more elderly and disabled overwhelming hospital emergency rooms, where treatment is more expensive.

The proposal, which now heads to the full House and Senate, was called necessary after the GOP-controlled Senate [failed to repeal a tax credit for elderly renters](#) that would have freed up enough money to offset cuts first floated by Gov. Eric Greitens in his February budget address.

“This is just bad, really bad,” said Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, D-St. Louis.

But, said House Budget Committee Chairman Scott Fitzpatrick, “Our job is to pass a balanced budget.”

Fitzpatrick, R-Shell Knob, said senators could reverse the reductions if they were to repeal the tax credit in the waning days of the legislative session.

The cuts in spending came as the Legislature scrambled to put the finishing touches on a \$27.8 billion budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

They have until 6 p.m. Friday to get a final document on the governor’s desk or face the prospect of a special session.

The push to finish came amid news that revenue growth had slowed in April.

Fiscal year-to-date revenue collections increased 3.1 percent compared to the same period last year. That's a drop from the growth rate through March when tax money flowing into the state's general checkbook showed an increase of 4.3 percent.

Budget writers have based spending on the state's proposed budget on a 3.8 percent growth rate.

For Republicans in the House, the cornerstone of their budget plan is [fully funding the state's school aid formula](#). The Senate initially balked at the additional cost, but rank-and-file Republicans and Senate Democrats overruled GOP leaders and joined the House in boosting funds for schools by more than \$40 million over what Greitens had sought.

But reaching a final agreement on other big ticket items has been elusive.

Although Greitens delayed the release of his budget plan by two weeks, much of the holdup has centered on dysfunction in the Senate, where daily meltdowns have become commonplace, leaving hundreds of pieces of legislation in limbo as the May 12 session deadline draws nearer.

Sens. Bob Dixon, R-Springfield, and Shalonn "Kiki" Curls, D-Kansas City, launched into an impromptu a cappella rendition of "Kumbaya" Wednesday morning, hoping to bring peace to the chamber.

"We have eight days. The people don't want us to point fingers," said Dixon.

But in a sign any truce might be short-lived, Sen. Maria Chappelle-Nadal, D-University City, threatened to tie up the Senate if her [legislation helping homeowners living near the West Lake Landfill in Bridgeton](#) wasn't sent to the governor.

She may be unhappy no matter what. The budget proposal calls for \$1 million in state buyout assistance for homes in the Spanish Village subdivision. She had initially sought \$12 million, but agreed to reduce the amount to \$3 million in the Senate budget proposal.

The budget plan, meanwhile, includes no tax increases and no general wage increases for most state workers, who are the lowest paid in the nation.

The two chambers also agreed to make equal reductions to all state institutions of higher education of 6.5 percent. Earlier versions had the four-campus University of Missouri System losing as much as 9 percent of its core state funding.

Nasheed lashed out at a plan to cut \$1 million for graduate programs at Harris-Stowe State University.

“This to me seems like there has been an attack on one of the historically black colleges,” Nasheed said.

“It’s racist to me.”

The latest version also reverses a \$31 million cut to the Missouri State Employee Retirement System that the House had proposed.

The budget blueprint also cuts eight administrative law judges who oversee worker compensation cases at the Department of Labor. It also reduces inspectors for prevailing wage laws.

On transportation funding, the measure includes no significant increase in money for road and bridge upgrades, but it does ban spending on the development of toll highways.

It also eliminates grants for drunk driving checkpoints. The cut brought a swift rebuke from Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

“Using the budget to eliminate a proven countermeasure against drunk driving is disgraceful,” said MADD National President Colleen Sheehey-Church.

MISSOURIAN

Missouri budget back on track to meet deadline

DYLAN JACKSON, 9 hrs ago

JEFFERSON CITY — There was little fanfare as select members of the House and Senate wrapped up their budget compromise late Thursday night.

The process has been grueling, stymied by a Senate civil war which still threatens to derail the spending plan. Any more posturing or stalling means the General Assembly misses the Friday deadline for the budget. While there have been legitimate doubts the budget would be passed on time, it is now on track.

The Senate got a restoration of \$11 million back into the University of Missouri System, compared with Gov. Eric Greitens' initial proposal. That means the system's core funding will be cut by 6.5 percent, compared to the 9 percent cut Greitens recommended in his initial budget. All other higher education institutions also face a 6.5 percent cut.

The committee also restored \$31 million to state employee pensions. Greitens had initially recommended including the funds, but the House had cut them.

The most important victory for the House was a \$45 million increase to fully fund the K-12 foundation formula, which allocates money to school districts.

Because the Senate, unlike the House, didn't pass legislation repealing a tax credit for senior renters, often referred to as "circuit-breaker," the conference committee had to balance the budget with \$52 million less than expected. Without that money, state funding to in-home nursing care as well as nursing homes were at risk.

Under the compromise, about 8,000 would lose care, according to The Associated Press. The cut initially proposed by Greitens was higher, but the committee made up much of this difference by cutting \$71 million from various state construction projects.

Included in these cuts was the planned Applied Learning Center at MU's Trulaske College of Business, which has been scheduled to get a \$9 million match for construction.

Some Democrats used the more intimate format offered by the small conference committee, where they are less outnumbered than on the floor, to advocate for favored spending items.

Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, D-St. Louis, fiercely challenged House Budget Chair Scott Fitzpatrick, R-Shell Knob, on a loss of funding to Harris-Stowe State University, a historically black college in St. Louis.

When the committee sought to eliminate \$1 million from the college's graduate programs, Nasheed threatened to stall the budget and miss the Friday deadline.

"I would highly recommend that you reopen it, or you're going to have a fight on the floor," said Nasheed. "It's racist to me. Historically black colleges are always taken advantage of."

Fitzpatrick said that the college has, per student, the highest amount of state funding at around \$9,000.

In the end, the two spoke privately during a break in the meeting and agreed to compromise at \$250,000.

Fitzpatrick expects the budget bills to be turned in by Thursday morning, and the House is expected to vote on the budget Thursday.

T COLUMBIA DAILY **TRIBUNE**

Judge orders state of Missouri to process abortion license applications ‘promptly’

By Rudi Keller

Planned Parenthood will begin offering abortions in Columbia as soon as possible, spokeswoman Bonyen Lee-Gilmore said after a federal court issued an order directing clinic license applications “to be processed promptly.”

U.S. District Judge Howard Sachs issued the order Tuesday as a follow up to his April 19 order granting a preliminary injunction barring the state from enforcing laws requiring abortion doctors to have hospital admitting privileges and clinics to be licensed as ambulatory surgical centers.

In the latest order, Sachs specifies the statutes and state regulations that are unenforceable.

“No other provision of Missouri law or regulation challenged by plaintiffs is enjoined pending further orders of the court,” Sachs wrote.

That means women seeking an abortion will have to follow laws requiring them to wait 72 hours after consulting with a doctor and clinics must provide mandated materials on abortion alternatives and offer women a chance to see an ultrasound of the fetus.

Planned Parenthood of Great Plains has doctors ready to work in the Columbia and Kansas City clinics, Lee-Gilmore wrote in an email. Once a license is granted, the clinics will begin setting appointments, she wrote.

Sachs granted the injunction in a lawsuit filed by Planned Parenthood of Great Plains and Planned Parenthood of St. Louis after the U.S. Supreme Court last year struck down a Texas law that mirrored Missouri statutes. **Since a doctor at the Columbia clinic lost privileges at University of Missouri Hospital in November 2015, only one clinic in Missouri has provided abortions.**

The state is allowed to inspect and regulate abortion providers “in a non-discriminatory manner,” Sachs wrote. He also warned against using those regulatory powers to block new licenses.

“The court expects current and future licensing applications to be processed promptly, in light of patient needs, and without effective influence from opponents of abortion,” he wrote.

Planned Parenthood called the latest order another victory over abortion restrictions.

“The federal district judge was clear in his order Tuesday that the licensing process should be completed promptly, and we have every reason to believe that it will be,” Laura McQuade, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Great Plains, said in a news release.

In court filings and in a news release issued Wednesday, Attorney General Josh Hawley said the state will appeal the order.

“I am disappointed the court has struck down important safety measures that protect the health and well-being of those women who choose to undergo an abortion,” Hawley wrote.

MISSOURIAN

Columbia Planned Parenthood clinic primed to resume abortion services

JESSICA DENNIS AND MIRANDA MOORE, 15 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Abortions at the Columbia Planned Parenthood could resume as soon as the clinic receives a license from the state, which could happen at any time.

An injunction against state abortion restrictions officially went into effect Tuesday, about two weeks after U.S. District Judge Howard Sachs issued his opinion on the issue. As of Wednesday afternoon, the clinic was waiting to receive its license. Currently, Planned Parenthood in St. Louis is the state's only abortion provider.

Planned Parenthood Great Plains spokesperson Bonyen Lee-Gilmore said in an interview that the Columbia clinic would offer both medical and surgical abortions. Previously, the clinic planned to only offer medical abortions.

Lee-Gilmore said the clinic already has a doctor who can provide abortion services.

"We're ready for the license, and we're waiting for the state of Missouri to complete the process on their end," Lee-Gilmore said. "So it could be anytime."

The injunction eliminates two state abortion-provider requirements:

- A restriction on abortions in facilities not licensed as ambulatory surgical centers, which are facilities that offer surgeries and procedures outside of a hospital.
- A restriction requiring doctors performing abortions to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital

Columbia's clinic lost privileges from the MU Health Care system in December 2015, which halted it from legally performing abortions, [according to previous Missourian reporting.](#)

Planned Parenthood Great Plains and Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri [filed a federal lawsuit](#) in November challenging Missouri's abortion restrictions.

In a memorandum on April 4, Sachs sided with Comprehensive Health of Planned Parenthood Great Plains and Reproductive Health Services of Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri. On April 19, Sachs announced that he would issue the injunction.

Anti-abortion efforts continue in legislature

At the state Capitol on Wednesday, eleven women dressed as cloaked handmaids in protest of a proposal that would limit funding for health care centers that provide abortions.

The costumes mimicked characters in Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel "The Handmaid's Tale" in which women, called handmaids, are forced to give birth. A television series based on the book premiered last week on the Hulu web-streaming service.

Alison Dreith, executive director of NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri, spoke for the women.

Dreith said that while the demonstration was in support of reproductive rights for women generally, the women were demonstrating specifically in opposition to portions of House Bills 10 and 11, appropriations bills that earmark funds for the state Departments of Social Services, Mental Health as well as Health and Senior Services.

HB 11 includes a provision that discontinues funding for health care clinics that provide abortions and centers that refer women to those providers.

The demonstration was inspired by a similar demonstration that took place in Texas on March 20, according to a press release from Progress Missouri.

Rep. Mike Moon, R-Ash Grove, said that while he opposes appropriating taxpayer funds to entities that provide referrals to abortion providers, he respects the right of the women in handmaid costumes to demonstrate as they did.

Moon sponsored HB 1014, which would require the Department of Natural Resources to establish and maintain an exhibit on the history of abortion in the Missouri State Museum. If passed, the law would be known as the "Never Again Act."



US colleges send warm welcome overseas amid dip in interest

NO MU MENTION

COLLIN BINKLEY Associated Press

Many U.S. colleges and universities, seeing declining numbers of applications from overseas, are trying to reassure potential international students they will be welcome on campus despite what they see in the news.

Schools are ramping up marketing efforts geared toward foreign students to combat growing fears that President [Donald Trump](#)'s stance on immigration reflects a United States that is becoming less welcoming to foreigners.

Nearly half the nation's 25 largest public universities saw undergraduate applications from abroad fall or stagnate since last year, according to data colleges provided to The Associated Press in response to public records requests. Eight schools did not provide data, while six saw gains.

"Students are telling us that they don't feel safe here in the United States. That they're concerned about discrimination, racism," said Katharine Johnson Suski, admissions director at [Iowa State University](#), which is not among the largest 25. "This year it was a little more important to make sure that they felt comfortable with their decision."

Iowa State is ramping overseas mailings to sell students on the school's Midwestern charm. Similarly, [Purdue University](#) sent overseas applicants a note from two mayors touting Indiana's "friendly smiles" and hospitality. On a recent trip to India, the president of Portland State

University told prospective students they'd be safe on his campus. Dozens of other schools produced online videos to welcome foreign students.

Colleges and universities have received a financial boost in recent years from international students, who are typically charged higher tuition rates than American peers who live in state. Some schools have come to rely on revenue from foreign students, whose enrollment has climbed sharply over much of the past decade, according to federal data.

But the data obtained by the AP provide evidence enrollment figures at some schools could drop next fall.

International applications to the [University of Arizona](#) are down 24 percent compared with this time last year; [California State University, Northridge](#), is down 26 percent. The [University of Houston](#) has seen a 32 percent drop, although it's still accepting applications and its numbers will likely rise.

The U.S. Department of Education did not immediately comment.

Philadelphia's Temple University sparked a chain reaction in November when it posted an online video featuring students and staff members saying "You are welcome here" in multiple languages, set to upbeat piano music. Since then, more than 100 other schools have made similar videos and circulated them abroad. Temple also hosted seven overseas receptions for admitted students, more than in the past.

The University of Minnesota is considering a phone campaign. The [University of Florida](#) has produced videos featuring "global Gators" and is offering online video chats.

"Given the current climate, it seems like this is something which is even more important," said Joseph Glover, provost at Florida. "Obviously we are concerned about the situation, like every other public university in the United States."

Safety concerns are nothing new among international students, but many schools say anxieties have grown since Trump was elected. Some students have said Trump's "America first" rhetoric and his proposal to ban immigration from six majority-Muslim nations have given them pause.

Some application deadlines fell before the election, but even Trump's campaign rhetoric cast doubts, experts say.

Students in India have been particularly alarmed, especially after a gunman shot two Indian men at a Kansas bar in March, killing one, after allegedly saying "get out of my country."

Portland State President Wim Wiewel was in India soon after the shooting to meet prospective students, and the discussion quickly turned to safety. Wiewel and his wife reassured families that Portland is friendly to foreign visitors.

"People in America recognize that even though there are a few crazies around, it's not like it's open season on Indians or Muslims," Wiewel said. "Having us talk to them totally took away their fears. But the problem, of course, is we can't talk to everyone."

Some government officials are trying to tackle the problem, too. Several of the videos feature cameos from state governors or congressional members. A top official from America's embassy in India penned a newspaper column last week stressing that "U.S. colleges and universities take pride in providing safe and welcoming environments."

Along with India, fewer applications have been coming from China and Saudi Arabia, which previously sent large numbers to American colleges. Experts say factors at play include economic turmoil in China and India, but some have blamed the downturn on a "Trump effect."

Officials at the University of New England say Trump's election has complicated plans to recruit Moroccan students. At a February open house in Tangier, the election was a frequent concern.

"Several students wearing hijabs wondered whether they would be welcome in the United States, given the election of Donald Trump and the rhetoric they were hearing," said Anouar Majid, vice president for global affairs at the private school in Biddeford, Maine. "We assured them that the United States is very welcoming."

When he applied to the University of New England, 17-year-old Aymane Lamharzi Alaoui was worried about discrimination, he said. Since then, he has spoken with family members in Boston and believes Americans are more welcoming than some of Trump's comments suggest.

"I know there's an increase in xenophobia and racism in the past couple of months in the U.S.," he said in an interview. "I'm sure there are some places where I wouldn't be very welcome, especially places in the southern United States, but I think most of the country is very tolerant."

For most colleges, it's too early to know how many overseas students will enroll next fall. But many say any loss could be a blow.

At Iowa State, where applications are down 23 percent, international students bring valued diversity, said Suski, the admissions director. And there is also the revenue they provide.

"There will," Suski said, "be a financial impact on our campus come this fall."

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

As Fafsa Tool Outage Continues, Lawmakers Investigate Why It Happened

NO MU MENTION

BY ADAM HARRIS MAY 4, 2017

The Internal Revenue Service's data-retrieval tool will be back online for borrowers in income-driven repayment plans by the end of the month, James W. Runcie, chief operating officer of the Education Department's Federal Student Aid office, told a U.S. House committee on Wednesday. But he offered no respite to those who would like to use the tool to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, the Fafsa, as it will continue to be offline, for them, until October.

The tool mysteriously and abruptly went offline on March 3. It was later revealed that the tool's absence stemmed from a breach that may have affected the data of up to 100,000 people. The IRS estimates that 8,000 potentially fraudulent claims led it to issue tax refunds amounting to more than \$30 million. Wednesday's hearing, of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, sought to uncover how the breach of the tool had occurred, but ultimately, it raised more questions than it answered.

Lawmakers in both the House and the Senate have pushed the IRS and the Education Department to hasten the process of getting the tool back online for both Fafsa applicants and people in income-driven repayment plans.

On Monday, Sen. Lamar Alexander, Republican of Tennessee, and Sen. Patty Murray, Democrat of Washington, requested weekly staff briefings on the status of the tool in a letter to Betsy DeVos, the education secretary. The two senators, who serve as the chair and ranking member, respectively, of the chamber's education committee, also asked that the department create an action plan to reinstate the tool before the previously stated deadline of October.

"It's definitely a good sign that they are working to put the ... tool back online as quickly as possible," said Clare McCann, a senior policy analyst at New America, in an interview with The Chronicle. But it's bad news for the millions of Fafsa filers who won't be able to use the tool — which makes the process much easier because it imports existing tax data — to file the student-aid form, she said.

The Path Not Taken

Some legislators on the committee argued a different point, echoing the written statement of Justin S. Draeger, president of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. "Perhaps most troubling" about the current status of the tool, he argued, "is the fact that this situation could have been avoided with better decision making in September 2016, when the potential for abuse of the DRT was first identified."

Why, they asked, was something not done sooner?

Gina Garza, chief information officer at the IRS, told the committee that her agency "took immediate action" and that no data was lost in September, when an attempt was made to view the tax data of an individual using the tool. The IRS began working with the Department of Education in October to strengthen authentication measures in the system.

The Federal Student Aid office "sought to determine the best approach to minimize the vulnerability" — that the IRS had identified — "without causing major disruption to students, parents, and borrowers," Mr. Runcie wrote in his prepared testimony.

Story [continues](#).



‘Running Out the Clock’ on Grad Unions?

Graduate student union bids at private institutions have succeeded, flopped and been challenged since a major NLRB decision last summer -- but none thus far has resulted in a contract for student workers..

NO MU MENTION

BY COLLEEN FLAHERTY MAY 4, 2017

Would-be graduate student unions celebrated the National Labor Relations Board's decision last summer saying that they could organize for elections at private institutions. The board has historically flip-flopped on the issue but hadn't previously recognized the right of graduate students on private campuses to bargain collectively since 2004.

Nearly a year since the board's 3 to 1 vote, however, definitive union successes have been few. Some elections have proved inconclusive, while others have failed or been canceled. And contract negotiations have stalled even where elections showed strong support for unionization.

Some union advocates have accused institutions of killing time until the Trump administration appoints new -- presumably anti-union -- members to empty seats on the NLRB. But administrators and their allies say they're carefully exercising their legal rights -- including those to appeals -- as part of a process with major implications for higher education.

Hunger Strike at Yale

"It's quite apparent to us that they are simply running out the clock until, hopefully, new appointees to the NLRB overturn this entire precedent," said Charles Decker, a Ph.D. candidate in political science at Yale University and one of eight graduate students protesters currently on a hunger strike there.

Decker and his cohorts, who have been fasting for over a week, want to call public attention to the fact that Yale has yet to engage in contract negotiations with them. That's following a February election in which graduate assistants in eight of nine voting departments elected to join a union affiliated with Unite Here.

"We've been organization for a union for years, and we've basically tried everything that we know of to get the administration to sit down with us," Decker said. Yet even after an NLRB-certified election, "they continue to use every legal delay tactic they can."

Sympathetic graduate students and other allies held a vigil with the fasters Tuesday, asking Yale to negotiate. But others on campus have mocked the protest, including the Yale College Republicans, who hosted a barbecue next to the fasters' encampment last week.

Yale, meanwhile, says it's rightfully challenging Unite Here's unusual "micro-unit," department-specific union strategy in which just several hundred out of several thousand graduate students were eligible to vote.

Peter Salovey, Yale's president, said in a statement Wednesday that the university appealed the election with the NLRB because "we are deeply troubled by the undemocratic method of

department-by-department unionization,” resulting in 228 of the 2,600 Ph.D. students in the graduate school casting votes.

“I strongly support the value of free expression on this important question, as on all other questions,” said Salovey, expressing concern for the fasting students, who are drinking water and being monitored by medical personnel. “But threats of self-harm have no place in rational debate when an established dispute resolution process still exists. Respect for law and legal process, civil argument and persuasion: these are the hallmarks of airing and resolving disagreements at a university.”

Story [continues.](#)