



MU News Bureau

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MISSOURIAN

Rate of MU grads getting jobs is higher than SEC average, survey shows

NANCY COLEMAN

Generated from News Bureau press release: [Mizzou's 'successful career outcomes' rate of 90.4% is significantly above peer average](#)

More than 90 percent of MU graduates found "successful career outcomes" in the past year, according to a recent survey announced in an MU news release.

The survey is based on responses from about 76 percent of students who graduated in fall 2016, spring 2017 or summer 2017. The "successful career outcomes" include public service or military involvement, as well as continued education, according to the release.

MU's rate ranks above that of other higher education groups, according to the release. The average rates from fiscal year 2015 — the most recent data available — for the Association of American Universities' public institutions, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and schools in the Southeastern Conference all fall around 75 percent.

The survey, which was conducted with the National Association of College Employers, also found that about 74 percent of recent graduates are employed and about 66 percent have a full-time job. Both of these statistics also rank above the AAU, APLU and SEC averages, according to the release.

"This indicates that folks outside of MU see our graduates as an asset that they want to add to their organization, be it a large company, a small company," Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies Jim Spain said. "So this really does demonstrate that our students are very competitive and very successful, and that's kind of a validation, if you will, of the work that our faculty and students are doing."

Spain said MU will use the survey to go back through the data and identify the factors that are contributing to students getting jobs. The goal, he said, is to enhance those specific opportunities to further increase the career outcome rate .

MU also plans to create a new support system for students to get back in touch with recent graduates and help them find jobs after they have left the university.

"Now, we don't have an intentional follow-up," Spain said. "We want to work with them to help them with the search process so they can reach their successful goals of finding that first great job or connecting with a graduate program or professional program."

Although several of MU's individual schools and colleges have done similar research, Spain said, this is the first time MU has conducted this survey campus-wide using the same survey instruments among the schools. He said MU hopes to use this survey as a first-year baseline to refer back to in the future.

MU started conducting the survey a year ago in response to new [statewide performance funding metrics from the Department of Higher Education](#), Spain said. MU now has to report the data from the survey to the department through the UM System.

Spain said 4,429 students responded out of the 5,835 who received the survey. The survey was circulated through email and distributed at classes, commencement ceremonies and events.

Students were sent reminders to complete the survey both before and after graduation, and information on LinkedIn was used to fill in gaps in the data "with careful review and verification by staff members," according to the release.

MU graduate takes long road to the finish line

By **BRITTANY RUESS**

Generated from News Bureau pitch and web story

The journey to graduation was long for Christina Jackson.

The 30-year-old St. Louis native graduated from the University of Missouri on Friday with a bachelor's degree in graphic design — an accomplishment 12 years in the making. She was one of more than 2,300 students to receive their degrees this weekend in ceremonies that began Friday and will wrap up today when School of Journalism students get their degrees and ROTC students are commissioned.

Jackson first set foot on the MU campus in 2005, going in undecided but later discovering her love for graphic design. She had just turned 18 when she started feeling overwhelmingly weak — walking very short distances was exhausting — while visiting her older sister in Atlanta.

When she returned home, Jackson was diagnosed with lupus, an autoimmune disease that damages tissues and organs. Her condition was under control for years thanks to medication and Jackson continued to thrive at MU.

But when her mother's insurance company stopped paying for Jackson's medications, everything changed. She had aged out of her mother's insurance plan.

"My doctor tried to fight it, but he didn't win, so he was kind of forced to put me on" other medication, "but it didn't work," Jackson said. "They didn't give us notice ... No notice at all."

Without her medication, Jackson suffered seizures, a stroke and complete kidney failure. In her last semester at MU, she had to leave and focus on her health. She had already spent a lot of time in University of Missouri Hospital for her illness. Leaving MU meant not graduating with the class she started college with, a realization that was heartbreaking for Jackson.

Jackson, who is petite, had retained so much fluid from her kidney failure that she swelled up and her skin started to tear. Marks around her body are reminders from that time in her life.

“My teachers said they were more concerned about me surviving than missing school,” Christina Jackson said.

The stroke damaged the left side of her vision and her memory. Retaining information can be difficult still today.

At one point, a neurologist once told Paula Jackson her daughter wouldn’t live much longer and the family should start making funeral arrangements. Paula Jackson now gets to call her daughter a survivor.

“God brought her back to me,” she said.

Christina Jackson underwent two types of dialysis over four years and was eventually put on a kidney transplant list. Christina Jackson randomly received a call one day, informing her she was a backup candidate for a kidney and needed to get to Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis immediately.

She traveled from Columbia to St. Louis for possible surgery. Christina Jackson was told not to expect to receive the kidney, but to be prepared just in case.

The kidney didn’t work for the first candidate, but it was a perfect match for Christina Jackson.

“It was like God was in the center of it,” she said.

Paula Jackson said her family now calls the new kidney Ke-Ke and every year on Aug. 17, the day Christina Jackson underwent the kidney transplant, they celebrate Ke-Ke’s “birthday.”

In August 2015, Christina Jackson came back to the MU campus to finish her degree.

“It was challenging,” she said. “I didn’t think it would be, but it was — in every way.”

At times, Christina Jackson said she felt like giving up. She felt her graphic design skills were inadequate, she started losing energy and passion for her career field and her mindset wasn’t as clear as in her first stint at MU.

AnDrea Jackson, her older sister, said Christina Jackson was able to find success thanks to her support system of MU professors and staff members. Christina Jackson had maintained relationships with them, even when she was away from campus.

Walking across the stage Friday was a surreal moment, Christina Jackson said.

“I finally did it,” she said.

Now, Christina Jackson said she hopes to take a small break before finding a part-time graphic design job. Others have encouraged Christina Jackson to write a story about her journey and it’s something she said she may pursue.

MISSOURIAN

MU honors graduates look to the future at convocation

BY KASEY CARLSON Dec 16, 2017 (0)

MU students graduating with honors and their loved ones filled Jesse Auditorium on Saturday morning to celebrate graduation.

The graduation caps on their heads had a lot to share. There were many variations of “Thanks Mom & Dad,” one that said, “So the adventure begins,” and another that plainly said in gold letters, “I Cheated.”

It was one of the many commencements that took place across Columbia over the weekend. Over the course of commencement weekend at MU, 2,308 students will be awarded 2,509 degrees, with some students receiving multiple degrees. At Columbia College, 326 students walked across the stage at its main campus to receive their degrees on Saturday. Stephens College also held its fall commencement ceremony on Friday night, where 40 students received their degrees.

J.D. Bowers, director of MU’s Honors College, offered congratulations to the honors graduates at MU, as well as encouragement to do things for themselves. He suggested taking up a hobby or taking a vacation, and said that he offers the same advice to parents of the graduates.

“Never, ever stop learning,” Bowers said.

The commencement speaker and recipient of an honorary doctorate was MU alumnus William Baker, a distinguished structural engineer whose career has included designing the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, the tallest building in the world.

Baker said that it was great to be back on campus, and that it looks a lot better than when he attended here. He also talked about the influence MU had on his life and career.

“It was here at MU that I learned the basics of my profession that help me to this day,” Baker said.

Baker also stressed that among his peers, some of the most important things that led to their careers are things that went wrong. His parting advice was from “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy.”

“Don’t panic,” Baker said.

Lynn Reardon’s daughter Cari Reardon graduated this weekend. Cari Reardon is the first of four Reardon daughters to graduate. Her degrees are in health science and occupational therapy, and she did it in three and a half years.

“Really proud of her,” Lynn Reardon said. “She worked really hard to get here.”

Cari Reardon may have just graduated, but she is starting graduate school for occupational therapy at MU in January.

“I’m excited,” she said. “Definitely taking in Columbia for the next year and a half and then ready to start the real world.”

Gaye Carpenter’s son, Michael Carpenter, graduated with a degree in agricultural systems management. She said it was wonderful watching him walk across the stage.

“He’s gonna be able to come back and farm,” Carpenter said. “He’s coming back to our farm, (our) family farm.”

Carpenter said her son will be running his own cow herd, plus helping his parents.

During the ceremony, Bruce McKinney, president of the Mizzou Alumni Association, told students that the MU alumni base is widespread and can be used as a resource in their lives, and that he still hears the chant of “M-I-Z” in random places.

“Mizzou never leaves you,” McKinney said.

More thoughts on Mizzou's status

By BOB ROPER

I penned a column Dec. 3 about how Mizzou, and the University of Missouri System, were doing two years after the disastrous events of the fall of 2015. It was an upbeat assessment, based upon a multiplicity of factors. Because of space limitations I was unable to discuss other factors that in my view provide additional grounds for optimism. This short addendum of a column will thus discuss some additional reasons for my optimism going forward:

- Making Mizzou as affordable as possible for its customers (ie. the students and their parents) is now a key part of UM President Mun Choi's strategic vision, and one that MU Chancellor Alexander Cartwright clearly shares. The rest of these bullet points will describe the good things going on in that regard. First, there is the Missouri Land Grant Compact. This program, which will start in 2018, will cover the tuition gap for Pell grant-eligible students. This gives worthy students from families usually earning less than \$30,000 per year wonderful opportunities that previously did not exist.
- The Border State Scholars program reduces out-of-state tuition by \$2,500 for students coming from one of Missouri's eight border states.
- The Black and Gold scholarship expands MU's existing program for children of alumni who live out of state. It is a substantial benefit for those students who achieve the requisite ACT scores.
- There is a new textbook initiative that can reduce a student's textbook expense by 18 percent.
- There is a new reduction in the cost of a student's most commonly used housing and dining plans.
- There is a special new ROTC scholarship that will cover room and board costs for high-achieving students for their freshman year.

Mizzou is in the especially tough position of not just having to deal with the aftermath of 2015. It must also deal with the winds of "creative destruction" roiling all of higher education as well: reduced state funding; online learning; cost issues; trade school and apprenticeship options; etc.

Still, one has to be impressed with the current team at all levels. I think that they can be successful. As a proud Missourian, and Mizzou Law School graduate, I certainly hope so.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Almost 900 degree programs statewide don't meet Missouri's productivity standards

By Ashley Jost St. Louis Post-Dispatch

JEFFERSON CITY • Half of the nearly 1,800 degree programs offered at Missouri's public colleges and universities are falling short of state standards for graduates and other measures, according to a statewide review.

Though that may sound alarming, education leaders say it's a sign of the changing times in higher education.

Zora Mulligan, [Missouri's commissioner for higher education](#), said she was not concerned about the volume of programs an audit has identified as underperforming.

“It indicates student behavior is changing,” she said. “That’s really what this is a map of.”

The Missouri Department of Higher Education is figuring out which programs, from associate degrees to juris doctors, are hitting their marks over the past three years.

The state undertook a similar process in 2011, when colleges voluntarily cut 119 degree programs.

This time, with a few weeks to go in the audit, colleges have already agreed to cut or phase out 241 degree programs. Several universities are still negotiating with the state on certain programs.

Rusty Monhollon, assistant commissioner for academic affairs at the state higher education department, called it “remarkable” that after six years there were so many programs that didn’t meet graduation standards.

The productivity threshold varies by type of degree program.

Certificate programs, associate and bachelor’s degree programs all need to have graduated, on average, 10 students in the past three years. For master’s degrees and a series of higher-level certificate programs, the threshold is five students. Doctoral programs need an average of three graduates.

The graduate benchmark is the easiest one to quantify, but there are others, such as whether the program meets statewide needs, whether it contributes to the school’s mission, whether it’s worth the money it costs to run the program and whether its graduates get good jobs.

An interim report on the audit released this week shows that 66 percent of associate degree programs fall below the threshold, as do 41 percent of bachelor degree programs.

The state and the schools are still debating which programs are worth terminating, though technically schools are not required to do anything about the degrees.

Engineering to education

Missouri’s community colleges have voluntarily agreed to cut 123 of the almost 390 certificates and associate programs offered. Schools have convinced the state that 93 additional programs are worth keeping either long term or temporarily so that schools can work on improving them. An additional 100 programs are still in negotiations.

At St. Louis Community College, 28 programs are slated to be phased out, according to the state. One program is still being negotiated, and 13 programs were saved.

The college's Board of Trustees was scheduled to vote on phasing out a host of programs at the Nov. 30 board meeting but decided to hold further discussions.

Among the programs the school is considering eliminating is an associate degree in computer science. School leaders say they want to roll out a new associate of science degree in "STEM" — science, technology, engineering and math — that would be a new option for those students who would have been interested in computer science, while broadening the options in other STEM-focused areas.

Advocates for the computer science program say the college should keep it and update the curriculum to make it more attractive to students at a time when technology jobs are supposed to be in high demand.

Additional programs at the college that could be cut include associate degrees in mass communication, mechanical engineering, civil engineering and art education.

Other schools, particularly four-year universities, aren't quite ready to share which programs they're fighting for or considering eliminating.

The University of Missouri-Columbia, University of Central Missouri, Missouri University of Science and Technology and Southeast Missouri State University were already conducting independent program reviews, and because their approach aligned with the state's, the department has let them continue that process.

The interim report shows that among 15 programs below the threshold, the University of Missouri-St. Louis could be phasing out four or more.

There are few details about how the process is going at Harris-Stowe State University, where eight programs are not meeting the productivity standards.

At Mizzou, 63 programs were identified by the state as unproductive. So far, seven have been voluntarily terminated, 20 saved and 36 are still in discussion. Mizzou began its own program

review earlier this year and is expected to announce results in the coming months. The goal was to find areas that could be cut so money could be diverted to what leaders call “programs of excellence.”

Changing behavior

Though the state interim report lists the numbers and not the exact degrees each institution is examining, there are a few identified trends about low-producing program areas.

For example, 86 percent of engineering technology programs at community colleges across the state are below the productivity threshold.

About 90 percent of construction trade programs, along with 84 percent of computer science degrees and certificates, are in similar straits across the 12 community colleges.

Monhollon highlighted part of the report that shows students are starting programs, gaining the skills they need to get a job and then leaving those programs.

At universities, 80 percent of foreign language programs didn’t meet the standards. Neither did 56 percent of the education programs. That metric is complicated, as there are specific tracks an education major can pursue, from special education to early childhood.

Mulligan said that the process hadn’t been easy but that it was worthwhile “in the context of the resources that are available,” referring to several years of declining state funding.

A final report on the agreements made between the state and each college is expected in January.

MISSOURIAN

MU researchers receive \$1.5 million to improve cardiovascular stents

GRANT SHARPLES

Generated from News Bureau press release: [Mizzou multi-disciplinary team receives \\$1.5 million grant to develop better cardiovascular stents](#)

Current stent technology can lead to blood clots, but MU researchers have received a \$1.5 million grant to find a potential solution.

Roughly 600,000 stent procedures are conducted annually in the U.S., according to a study in [The JAMA Network](#). Stents are small tubes made of wire and mesh used for improving blood flow from coronary arteries to the heart muscle, according to the [American Heart Association](#). They can prevent heart attacks by keeping a clogged artery open through catheterization.

"Current stents are very good, but there is room for improvement," said William Fay, an MU professor of medicine and medical pharmacology and physiology. "Given that they're used in so many people, even if there was only a minor improvement, it would still have the potential to impact many people."

There are two types of stents: drug-eluting and bare metal. When drug-eluting stents were introduced, they were considered a major medical advancement. Bare metal stents could result in the re-narrowing of the arteries, allowing blockage to return. Drug-eluting stents prevent re-narrowing so they are more popular than their bare metal counterparts.

However, there is a problem regarding drug-eluting stents. They slow the healing process of the artery after the stent is inserted. This requires patients to be on blood thinners for six months to a year to avoid blood clot formation as a result of slow healing, Fay said.

"It would be nice if there was a way to have a stent that could reduce the cell proliferation that would plug up the stent without delaying the normal healing process," he said. "That's where this new stent technology developed by this collaborative team may come into play."

Nanova Inc., an MU-affiliated company, is working to combat detrimental effects from stents. The company is developing a new stent with a coating that prevents the re-narrowing of arteries and blood clot formation. The coating generates nitric oxide, a chemical compound with blood-vessel-healing properties, on the stent's surface.

Test results on pigs were positive in terms of limiting arterial re-narrowing, said Douglas Bowles, chair of the Department of Biomedical Sciences in the MU College of Veterinary Medicine.

The Nanova stent was equally effective as a drug-eluting stent in this aspect. There is also indirect evidence indicating Nanova stents are superior to drug-eluting stents in blood clot prevention, Bowles said.

There are two more major steps to take. The researchers must conduct more safety studies to pass requirements from the Food and Drug Administration. Once those requirements are met, they will be able to conduct human clinical trials.

"Heart disease is still the leading cause of death in the United States," Fay said. "While the stents have made a huge advance and impact on heart disease, they still have limitations. This could be a new strategy to help improve the treatment of those patients."



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MISSOURIAN

Missouri has competitive Hyperloop route, but maybe not 'one of the best they've ever seen'

By: Patrick Mueller

Imagine never having to make the monotonous drive on Interstate 70 again to get from St. Louis to Kansas City, or vice versa. Imagine taking less than 30 minutes out of your day to make the trip. If Hyperloop One builds a route in Missouri, that'd be a reality.

Hyperloop is a transportation system that functions like a high-tech train, moving people in tubes from city to city at speeds similar to air travel.

Patrick McKenna, director of the Missouri Department of Transportation, said Missouri is an appealing candidate for a Hyperloop route.

"Officials at Hyperloop One have referred to the route as one of the best they've ever seen," he told the Kansas City Business Journal on Oct. 19.

But did Hyperloop One officials say the St. Louis-Kansas City route is one of the best they've seen?

What is Hyperloop?

Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, [published a white paper for Hyperloop in 2013](#), which was presented to former President Barack Obama later that year. According to its website, Hyperloop Technologies Inc. [was established in Los Angeles in 2014](#).

Earlier this year, the company successfully tested its propulsion system with the car in the tube, and the company projects three Hyperloop systems will be completed by 2021.

Essentially, Hyperloop utilizes magnetic accelerators in a low-pressure tube system in order to propel rotors in individual capsules. The vehicles hover slightly off the track in the tube through magnetic levitation. This special environment allows a blazing top speed of 670 mph.

Missouri efforts

In May 2016, [Hyperloop One opened its Global Challenge](#), urging cities and regions around the world to submit their pitches for a Hyperloop network. More than 2,600 proposals were sent to Hyperloop. Missouri submitted its application that fall, and was named as one of the 35 semifinalists in February 2017.

We reached out to Hyperloop One officials, who didn't respond, and to the Missouri Department of Transportation. Special assignment coordinator Robert Brendel directed us to links about the challenge.

On Sept. 14, 2017, Hyperloop announced its winners via a press release. Even though it didn't win, the Missouri route was designated as one of 11 finalists invited to continue developing the proposal.

In response to being named a finalist, state officials established the Missouri Hyperloop Coalition in October to continue the conversation. The coalition includes MoDOT, the University of Missouri System, St. Louis Regional Chamber and the KC Tech Council.

Dan Katz, Hyperloop's director of global public policy, [told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) that the creation of the coalition helped the Missouri route's future chances.

"They were on the edge in that competition," Katz told the newspaper. Now, he said, "they are as competitive" as any on the initial list.

The company had previously weighed in as part of Missouri's aggressive pitch for attracting Amazon to either St. Louis or Kansas City for its second headquarters. Hyperloop One CEO Rob Lloyd is featured in a short video about the potential for the transportation system in the state, which is available on the [state's Amazon HQ pitch website](#).

The video is sponsored by the state's Department of Economic Development, but the praise comes from Lloyd himself.

Our ruling

McKenna said Hyperloop officials called the proposed route between Kansas City and St. Louis "one of the best they've ever seen."

The Hyperloop One CEO said the coalition proposed a great route. Its director of global public policy said the St. Louis-Kansas City route is "as competitive" as any on the initial list.

But there's no public record that any Hyperloop official ever called the route the best they've ever seen. Hyperloop selected 10 winners of its global challenge. Missouri was not on that list.

We rate this claim Half True.

Healthcare IT News

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University of Missouri Health Care shows why IT is an innovation hub, not a cost center

The latest technology is put to work improving patient care, reducing readmissions and improving the community.

By: Jessica Davis

The University of Missouri Health Care has a unique way of handling technology. Its private-public partnership with Cerner created the Tiger Institute for Health Innovation in 2009, designed to address health concerns in the area and connect providers with each other to improve care quality and costs.

MU Health CIO Bryan Bliven said that mission is at the core of the organization: "It's an intentional culture, the culture of yes."

"Together we deliver care and serve the community," Bliven said. "Everyone in the organization wants to deliver on that, first and foremost."

The focus on innovation gives the IT department more freedom to be creative in its work, as IT isn't seen as just a "cost center to be controlled and managed, it's more of an innovation center," he said. "What can we do through technology to improve the lives and health of Missourians?"

That attitude and the hospital's partnership with Cerner has yielded a long list of accolades, notably the CHIME Transformational Leadership Award in 2016.

Bliven highlighted the work MU Health does to ensure all employees are in tune with the hospital's mission to serve the rural part of the state through education, research and exceptional care.

Indeed, it's that culture within the organization that enables employees to leverage the latest technology to make a big difference in the community.

"It's not just install and maintain technology. We use technology to have better quality care," Bliven said. "That's what people get excited about."

Technology is tied into the entire organization. For example, the team considers its data footprint and how that can maximize value inside and outside the IT shop.

"We've been working on tying our IT goals into the organization's goals moving forward," Bliven said. "We weave our strategy into the entire organization. We'll create a three-year plan to march out against and tie into the service lines the organization deems strategic."

Right now, consumer engagement is top of mind, as well as revenue cycle, Bliven added, noting that a new Cerner revenue cycle platform will go live in 2019.

The health system has also been working on improving readmissions. Bliven said that it identified the ideal goal for the project and leveraged process analytics to find gaps. Bliven's team created a plan based on that data and reduced readmissions by 40 percent.

MU is also using analytics to improve physician documentation and reduce time spent in workflows, while using data to inform staffing needs. And the hospital offers its tech as a service to local physician practices or regional hospitals that may not be able to manage IT on their own.

But through all projects, communication is key, he said. For example, MU Health is going through a move as it's running out of space. So it made sure its staff understood why the move was taking place.

"You have to have those tough conversations," Bliven said. "Once they know the way you want things done, let them own it. Empower your leaders to take ownership, to be part of the mission so they're engaged."