Mizzou News

Daily Clips Packet

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: Suspect arrested in connection with anonymous threats to campus

UPDATED 3 MIN AGO

Updated Information:

A suspect was arrested in connection with the incident, according to an MU alert update posted at 6 a.m. on Nov. 11. The story was updated with that information.

COLUMBIA — A suspect was arrested in connection with anonymous threats Tuesday night that led to some cancellations on the MU campus.

"University of Missouri Police have apprehended the suspect who posted threats to campus on YikYak and other social media," according to an MU alert updated posted at 6 a.m. Wednesday. MU Alert is the online emergency information center for MU.

"The suspect is in MUPD custody and was not located on or near the MU campus at the time of the threat."

MU will operate on a "regular schedule" Wednesday, according to the alert update.

The MU Student Recreation Complex, however, will operate with some adjusted hours, according to a tweet. It was unclear as of 7:20 a.m. Wednesday if other MU facilities will change their schedules or if classes called off by individual instructors will remain cancelled.

Rumors swirled on social media Tuesday night after anonymous threats were posted on social media app Yik Yak.
MU Alert tweeted at 11:20 p.m., "There is no immediate threat to campus. Please do not spread rumors and follow @MUAlert at http://mualert.missouri.edu for updates."

The MU Police Department was made "aware of social media threats and has increased security," according to an MU Alert message sent at 7:44 p.m.

No buildings had been evacuated on campus as of 9 p.m. Tuesday, MU Police Department Maj. Brian Weimer said. While there was increased security on campus, he said, it was not specifically due to the anonymous social media threats.

The MU Legion of Black Collegians tweeted around 9 p.m. that it would not hold a senate meeting tomorrow. "Stay home, Stay safe," the tweet read.

MU’s Army ROTC sent an email telling its students to dress in civilian clothes on Tuesday and Wednesday; Wednesday is Veteran's Day. The ROTC canceled its Wednesday morning physical training session.

On Tuesday morning, a threat was called in during a meeting between members of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus and student activists at a closed meeting at MU’s Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. Weimer confirmed the incident, according to previous Missourian reporting.

"There was a call made to the black culture center today a little before noon," Weimer told the Missourian. "It was perceived as threatening and we're looking into it."

**MU police make arrest after social media threats**
University of Missouri police have arrested a suspect in connection with threats posted on Yik Yak and other social media services that caused widespread fear on campus Tuesday night.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said in a news release Wednesday morning that police "have apprehended the suspect who posted threats to campus on Yik Yak and other social media last night." The release did not name the suspect, but said the person was in MU Police Department custody.

The suspect was not on or near campus at the time threats were made, Basi wrote.

MUPD Maj. Brian Weimer was quoted in the release saying additional officers were on campus Tuesday night, and students were safe despite the threats. Several students were calling for the cancellation of Wednesday classes, but Basi said in the release that MU will operate on its normal schedule.

At least one of the threats targeted black students. Black students were also the target of threats posted on anonymous platforms Yik Yak and Erodr in December, when posters encouraged the burning of the Gaines Oldham Black Culture Center on campus after a demonstration against racial inequality.

A threat forced the evacuation of the culture center Tuesday night while members of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus met with students, Rep. Brandon Ellington, D-Kansas City, said in a news release. The caucus met with outgoing Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, who is leaving the position Jan. 1, and student members of the group Concerned Student 1950, which has led protests against racial inequality for the past several weeks on campus.

In a message posted on MU Alert at 7:44 p.m. Tuesday, police said they were aware of social media threats and had increased security. A follow-up message at 10 p.m. simply said police were investigating the threats.

"Investigators have been called in specifically to identify" the posts' authors, Weimer said.

Weimer said the MU Police Department had additional officers patrolling campus and would continue to staff extra officers Wednesday. He said MUPD seldom sees similar threats on social media.

Officers were on Carnahan Quadrangle at about 10 p.m. Tuesday while members of Concerned Student 1950 packed up tents and other items from a campsite the students had called home for the past week. The group, which is named for the first year a black graduate student was admitted to MU, had been camping out on the quad to call for Wolfe's resignation or removal from office.
Elizabeth Hurst, a freshman at MU, said she might not attend class Wednesday because of the threats.

"I'm afraid for my peers," she said. "This shouldn't be happening — it's 2015."

Hurst said she wants to know what she can do to help improve the campus climate when it comes to race.

"I will never feel oppression because of the color of my skin," said Hurst, who is white.

Freshman Sam David said as she walked through the MU Student Center that she feels scared on campus at night.

"At first I was scared for" Concerned Student 1950, "but now I feel these people" making threats "may go after students no matter their color," David said.

University police arrest person suspected of threatening Mizzou students online


A person suspected of posting threats on social media aimed at University of Missouri protestors was arrested by university police on Wednesday morning, officials announced.

The MUPD said in a statement the suspect had posted threats "on Yik Yak and other social media." The suspect, who has not yet been identified, is in MUPD custody and was not on or near the University campus at the time of the threat.

The University has added security in the face of increasing online threats, after weeks of protests over racial tensions on campus culminated in the departure of two senior university officials this week.

A post Tuesday night on the college's website said campus police are "aware of social media threats" and are investigating. The university's statement didn't offer further detail, but it came after at least two users posted threats on the anonymous location-based messaging app Yik Yak.
One user threatened to "shoot every black person I see."

Another said: "Some of you are alright. Don't go to campus tomorrow." The message seemed to echo one that appeared on the website 4chan — a forum where racist and misogynistic comments are common — ahead of the deadly campus shooting at an Oregon community college last month.

The posts were widely disseminated across the Internet and local media.

Campus police Capt. Brian Weimer told The Associated Press additional officers were already on campus before the university learned of the threats. University police were working with other state and local agencies to ensure the campus was secure, he said.

A university spokesman couldn't immediately be reached for further comment, but the school's online emergency information center tweeted, "There is no immediate threat to campus," and asked students to not spread rumors.

It has been a tumultuous week for the flagship campus of the University of Missouri system.

The student government president reported in September that people shouted racial slurs at him from a passing pickup truck, galvanizing the weekslong protest movement. A graduate student went on hunger strike to demand the resignation of university system President Tim Wolfe over his handling of racial complaints, then more than 30 members of the Missouri football team went on strike in his support. Those developments came to a head Monday with the resignation of Wolfe and hours later, the top administrator of the Columbia campus, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, was forced out.

A plaza that had been the site of a sit-in by protesters was entirely empty Tuesday night and only a handful of students were seen walking around campus. Police officers from the campus department and city of Columbia were on patrol.

David Wallace, a spokesman for the student government group Missouri Students Association, said the group asked university officials to cancel classes Wednesday in light of the threats.

Gaby Rodriguez, a senior, said she was at work when she heard about the threats.

"It's really disheartening and proves the point of why these protests and boycotts were necessary," Rodriguez said. "I don't think I've ever felt this unsafe at Mizzou," she said, referring to the college by its nickname.

Some students, faculty and alumni have said the protests and top leaders' resignations are the culmination of years of racial tension.

Among other recent events, members of the Legions of Black Collegians, whose founders include a recently retired deputy chancellor, said slurs were hurled at them by an apparently drunken white student while practicing for a homecoming performance.
The university has promised changes.

Chuck Henson, a black law professor and associate dean, was appointed Tuesday as the university's first-ever interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.

The university system's governing body, the Board of Curators, also announced a number of other initiatives, including more support for the hiring and retention of diverse faculty and staff and a full review of all policies related to staff and student conduct.

An Arrest After Threats at the University of Missouri

Police detained a person in connection with threats posed on social media that resulted in the cancellation of some campus events.

**University of Missouri police have arrested a person in connection with threats posed on social media that resulted in the cancellation of some campus events. The arrest comes two days after the university’s president resigned following protests over school administrators’ response to reports of racism on campus.**

“University of Missouri Police have apprehended the suspect who posted threats to campus on YikYak and other social media,” the police department said in a statement Wednesday. “The suspect is in MUPD custody and was not located on or near the MU campus at the time of the threat.”

The *Missourian* reported the university’s Army ROTC “sent an email telling its students to dress in civilian clothes. … The ROTC canceled its Wednesday morning physical training session.”

On Tuesday morning, a threat was called in during a meeting between members of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus and student activists at a closed meeting at MU’s Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. Weimer confirmed the incident, according to previous Missourian reporting.

@MUalert There is no immediate threat to campus. Please do not spread rumors and follow @MUAlert at http://mualert.missouri.edu for updates.
At issue is how the administrators—including Wolfe—responded to those incidents of racism, and whether that was enough. Students made it clear the answer was no, eventually prompting the resignations.

Concerned Student 1950, the student group that spearheaded the call for Wolfe’s resignation, began cleaning up the site on the school’s Mel Carnahan Quadrangle where they had camped in solidarity with Jonathan Butler, a graduate student, who went on hunger strike on November 2 to demand Wolfe’s ouster.

But as my colleague David Graham reported Tuesday, the story in Columbia has also become one about free speech—and attempts to limit it. The video of a crowd attempting to prevent a photographer from doing his job went viral after the resignations. Melissa Click, an assistant professor of communication, was seen in that video calling for “muscle” to remove the photographer from Carnahan Quadrangle, which the protesters viewed as a safe space.

The university’s School of Journalism was planning a vote Tuesday on whether to strip Click of her “courtesy” appointment, but before that vote could take place, Click resigned from the position. Click, who teaches mass media in the Communication Department, also apologized for her actions.

The Missourian reported that Click “would be releasing additional comments on Wednesday after putting together a ‘clarifying statement.’”

Suspect arrested over social media threats at U. of Missouri

Campus police have arrested a suspect who allegedly posted racial threats to the University of Missouri campus on social media, the university said Wednesday.

The suspect is in police custody and was not located at or near the campus at the time of the threat, the university said on its website.

Threats of violence toward black students had raised concerns Tuesday night, as the school remained tense following the the toppling of the school's leadership over racist campus incidents.
Someone using the anonymous social media app Yik Yak wrote they would shoot every black person they see Wednesday. Others tweeting from the university's Columbia, Mo., campus said people used racial epithets as they drove around campus, and a group of men walking with bandannas covering their faces yelled racial slurs at black students.

MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said on Twitter that the suspect had used "multiple accounts" to threaten students. "He was never physically near the campus," the chancellor said.

Shortly after the arrest was announced, Loftin tweeted that class would continue as usual on Wednesday "with increased security."

David Kurpius, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, noted in a CNN interview that Yik Yak has been buzzing since Monday's resignations with people "who are being very hurtful and we're hearing a lot of people from the fringe that does not help the conversation go well."

The student body was sent a mass email on Tuesday, asking students to report "hateful/and or hurtful speech" to campus police.

"Delays, including posting information to social media, can often reduce the chances of identifying the responsible parties," the e-mail said. "While cases of hateful and hurtful speech are not crimes, if the individual(s) identified are students, MU's Office of Student Conduct can take disciplinary action."

Freelance photo journalist Bradley J. Rayford, who has covered unrest in Ferguson, Mo. and Baltimore, Md., tweeted "Black students at #Mizzou are leaving campus right now due to threats received via social media." He added that Some students said they didn't feel safe because of threats on social media and may not come to campus tomorrow.

Some students on Twitter called on the university to cancel classes and issue an alert based on the threats and students' anxiety.

Early Wednesday morning, the university sent out a message saying there was no immediate threat to campus.
**BREAKING: Missouri Police Apprehend Suspect in Yik Yak Threats**

November 11, 2015

The University of Missouri at Columbia announced this morning that police officers have apprehended the person they believe made threats online Tuesday via Yik Yak. "The suspect is in MUPD custody and was not located on or near the MU campus at the time of the threat," said the alert from the university. Reports of online threats to kill black people at the university circulated widely last night and this morning. While the university has increased security on campus, the institution is operating on a normal schedule. Tensions at the university, where many black students say that they have experienced racist acts and a hostile environment, have run high amid protests that led to the ousters of the campus chancellor and system president. The university is encouraging people not to spread rumors, and to report any security concerns.

Mizzou apprehends person suspected in online threats

Nov. 11, 2015  •  By Alex Stuckey

COLUMBIA • The University of Missouri Police Department has someone in custody suspected of posting threats on social media.
Mizzou tweeted this morning that they apprehended an individual who posted threats on YikYak, an anonymous location-based app, and other social media.

Police did not release any details about the person they arrested, including the person's gender, age or hometown. Campus police Major Brian Weimer did not return messages seeking comment.

One of those threats made on social media said: "Some of you are alright. Don't go to campus tomorrow."
The threats come after a tumultuous few days at the university after university system President Timothy Wolfe resigned Monday and, hours later, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin was forced out.

Mizzou tweeted that the suspect "was not located on or near campus at the time of the threat."

The school's online emergency information center website said in a 6 a.m. post that it was "operating on regular schedule."

"Safety is the university’s top priority and we are working hard to assure that the campus remains safe while information is obtained and confirmed," the post said.

The MU Police Department reportedly had increased its presence on campus before hearing of the threats.

**THE KANSAS CITY STAR.**

NOVEMBER 11, 2015

Yael T. Abouhalkah: Black MU students experience a night of fear — and morning of relief

Real threats Tuesday night included ones saying blacks would be killed on campus

Others were not substantiated, such as KKK sightings

And suspect in social media death threat is caught Wednesday morning

Black students and University of Missouri officials spent tense hours dealing with threats and rumors Tuesday night and early Wednesday morning. File photo

BY YAEL T. ABOUHALKAH

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On Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, real and perceived threats and reactions to them filled dozens of social media accounts of black University of Missouri students.

Just a day after President Tim Wolfe and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin had been forced out by protests over racial problems at the MU campus in Columbia, the night of despair and defiance played out on Twitter and Yik Yak.
Some threats were real, including a few that black students would be shot soon. Others, such as reports that the Ku Klux Klan were throwing bricks on campus, remained unsubstantiated.

Then, excellent news emerged around 6 a.m. Wednesday:

**MU Alert @MUalert**
MUPD has apprehended the suspect who posted threats to campus on YikYak & other social media: [http://mualert.missouri.edu/](http://mualert.missouri.edu/)
6:07 AM - 11 Nov 2015

Earlier, here’s how the night of fear played out on the MU campus, starting here around 8 p.m.

**Hailey @mariehaileyy**

I am terrified! We just literally walked passed a racist cult in speakers circle i dont feel safe at Mizzou anymore im ready to go
8:21 PM - 10 Nov 2015

Alarming threats spread on the Yik Yak site, leading to Wednesday morning’s arrest.
Some of you are alright. Don't go to campus tomorrow.

What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

If that is a threat, it is completely inappropriate.

Please tell me you aren't serious.

What the fuck

Please don't say things like that.

I'm going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see.

Woah dude
One and, later, more MU student housing units reportedly were put on lock-down.

Hailey Stolze @HaileyStolze
Currently in @MizzouSigmaK, which is in lock-down mode. Other @MizzouPHA houses are rumored to be on lock-down as well. @TheManeater
9:54 PM - 10 Nov 2015
A professor’s blunt message to students thinking of not coming to class:

<killa2> @youlovejas
My professor clearly doesn't care. He still expects me to go to class for an exam while THREATS ARE BEING MADE!
8:48 PM - 10 Nov 2015

Students said they were looking for safe places to stay Tuesday night.

<R2-D2B> @kidnoble
Black students are literally leaving #Mizzou's campus because there are racists riding around in pickups terrorizing. #ConcernedStudent1950
9:12 PM - 10 Nov 2015

The potential costs of MU’s problems in losing future students showed up this way:

<JUNE 13TH> @A_15__

I just got accepted into Mizzou yesterday 😒. Officially taking that school off my list
11:00 PM - 10 Nov 2015

At one point, the official Mizzou account responded to comments made by Jonathan Butler, the graduate student whose hunger strike helped lead to the ousters of Wolfe and Loftin.

@_jonathanbutler There are no credible threats to campus MUPD and campus officials are on the scene.
&mdash; Mizzou (@Mizzou) November 11, 2015

In the early morning hours, this and other messages of defiance appeared.

Shortly after 3 a.m., this:

<AUTUMN.> @autumnfvll
Black Mizzou shouldn't even consider transferring, that's what they want! We need to stay and fight and change this system!
University of Missouri police arrest suspect after threats posted on social media

University of Missouri police arrested suspect who allegedly posted threats

The suspect was not near the MU campus at the time of the threat

BY IAN CUMMINGS
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University of Missouri police have arrested a person for allegedly making threats against the Columbia campus on other social media, police announced Wednesday morning.

A YikYak post apparently read, “I’m going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see.”

That arrest comes just a day after the school’s president, Tim Wolfe, and chancellor, R. Bowen Loftin, were forced to resign after weeks of student-led protests over racial problems at the MU campus in Columbia, rumors began flying on social media of death threats, Ku Klux Klan sightings and acts of aggression against black students.
The suspect arrested was not on or near the MU campus at the time, police said in an alert posted to MU Alert website and on @MUAlert on Twitter.

Most of the other rumors remain unsubstantiated.

Payton Head, president of the Missouri Students Association, apologized on Facebook for spreading rumors that the Klan had been spotted on campus, noting that “the last thing needed is to incite more fear in the hearts of our community.”

Campus police Capt. Brian Weimer says additional officers are on campus to ensure security.

Police also said they would update the alert website as additional information was confirmed. MU is operating on a regular schedule.

The university’s Board of Curators announced a series of initiatives on Monday to be implemented over the next 90 days to address the racial climate on all four University of Missouri campuses.

**MUPD increases security following Yik Yak threats**

“Some of you are alright,” the first yak said. “Don't go to campus tomorrow.”

Many students were concerned for their safety last night after several threats arose via social media. Police were all over campus investigating the threats.

*Yik Yak threats*

Seversal post on anonymous social media app Yik Yak resulted in the increased police presence on campus.

“Some of you are alright,” the first yak said. “Don’t go to campus tomorrow.”

Students immediately starting posting screenshots of the post on social media.

Leaders on campus, including outgoing Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin and the Missouri Students Association, also tweeted to inform the student body.
Other threatening yaks have since surfaced. MU Alert sent out a statement at 7:44 p.m. stating that the MU Police Department “increased security” in response to the threats. Several sorority houses went into lockdown.

“We’re aware of it and we’re looking and trying to identify who it is,” MUPD Maj. Brian Weimer said.

Later, MU Alert tweeted that there was no “immediate threat.”

Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center threat

Weimer said the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center was also possibly threatened Tuesday afternoon. It received a phone call at 11 a.m. while the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus was meeting.

“The person (who answered the phone call) perceived it as a threat,” Weimer said.

MUPD is still investigating the incident.

This wasn’t the first threat to the Center or that MU has seen surface on Yik Yak. Last December, someone posted threats to the Center on Yik Yak.

“Let’s burn down the black culture center & give them a taste of their own medicine,” the yak said.

The individual who posted the yak was never found.

Joint session

Residential Life Director Frankie Minor stood up and announced the threats during an MU student government joint session early Tuesday, then left. Shortly after, members of joint session voted to adjourn and were escorted from Tate Hall by MUPD.

Residence Halls Association Advisor Lucas Gorham said that the police escort was precautionary.

Individual in Speakers Circle

Around 8 p.m., an individual began yelling in Speakers Circle about freedom of the press, but declined to comment. The individual was observed closely by police.

Police in Speaker’s Circle at the time declined to comment. Weimer said that incident was unrelated to the threats.
Rumors of the Ku Klux Klan being on campus

Rumors of the KKK being present on campus arose over social media shortly after the threats.

“There's absolutely nothing to indicate that (the KKK is on campus),” MUPD Maj. Brian Weimer said.

Missouri Students Association President Payton Head posted on Facebook that the KKK had been confirmed on campus.

“I’m working with the MUPD, the state trooper and the National Guard,” Head said in the post.

Shortly after Head deleted the post and posted a new statement:

“I'm sorry about the misinformation that I have shared through social media. In a state of alarm, I was concerned for all students of the University of Missouri and wanted to ensure that everyone was safe,” Head said in the post. “I received and shared information from multiple incorrect sources, which I deeply regret. The last thing needed is to incite more fear in the hearts of our community. In the future, please receive emergency updates from MUalert.missouri.edu or @MUalert on Twitter ONLY.”

Head could not be reached for an interview, but texted a Maneater reporter a similar statement:

“Please follow @MUalert for all OFFICIAL inquiries as to what’s happening,” Head said in the text. “Many rumors are spreading.”

A Missouri State Highway Patrol representative said they do have units on campus now. She has not heard any info regarding whether they're investigating the KKK.

Weimer said he hadn’t been in touch with the investigator of the unit, so he was unsure of whether the Federal Bureau of Investigation and The National Guard were working with them.

“We may reach out to other agencies,” Weimer said. “They help us a lot … That could, I use the big word could, include the FBI, Highway Patrol, etc. I mean, that’s not unusual.”

Weimer said Head talked to MUPD, but he doesn’t know whether he’d talked to any other agencies. The FBI and National Guard could not be reached for comment.

Class Wednesday

MSA sent email to professors demanding them to cancel class Wednesday, following the various threats.
“Due to the nature of threats on campus, we must remain vigilant to protect students first and foremost,” the email read. “There is absolutely no reason to keep classes in session, as ALL STUDENTS lives are at risk.”

Some professors have already canceled Wednesday’s classes. Provost Garnett Stokes said she’s been in constant contact with leaders on campus. She met with administrators, including Loftin and interim Chancellor Hank Foley Tuesday evening, trying to “carefully” decide whether classes should be in session.

“I have to think about whether it’s is in the best interest of the campus to make that decision earlier,” Stokes said of the decision.

Stokes said she was “beginning to wonder” about when the class cancellation decision would be finalized, but the aim was to make an announcement by 6 a.m. Wednesday. She encouraged anyone who doesn’t feel safe on campus to not attend class Wednesday, regardless of whether it’s cancelled.

MU spokesman Christian Basi could not be reached for comment.

Suspect Detained After Allegedly Posting Online Threats to Missouri Campus

The University of Missouri Police Department (MUPD) has apprehended a suspect who posted threats to the campus on social media.

The threats allegedly said "I'm going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see" and "Well tomorrow mizzou will really make national news. Don't go to campus tomorrow," according to police.

Police have confirmed that the person in custody was not located on or near the University of Missouri campus at the time of the threats and the university is operating on a regular schedule.

There were also reports that members of the KKK were on campus and at least two campus buildings were locked down -- including the Black Culture Center.

Several hours later, university officials gave the all-clear, confirming there was "no immediate threat."
This incident comes just a day after racial tensions reached a boiling point, forcing the university's president, Tim Wolfe, to resign over the handling of what students called "institutional racism" on campus.

Melissa Click, an assistant professor at Missouri's School of Journalism, has resigned her courtesy title, after she was caught yelling at a student photographer during a rally celebrating Wolfe's resignation.

Click released a statement Tuesday apologizing for her actions.

"I have reached out to the journalists involved to offer my sincerest apologies," Click said in the statement. "My actions were shaped by exasperation with a few spirited reporters. From this experience I have learned about humanity and humility."

Tim Tai, the student photographer, was on a freelance assignment for ESPN when he was blocked from taking pictures of hordes of students.

David Kurpius, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, announced that Click had resigned on his Twitter page.

"While the J-School faculty were meeting, Dr. Melissa Click resigned her courtesy appointment with the school," he wrote.

Mo. suspect detained after threat to "shoot every black person"

COLUMBIA, Mo. - University of Missouri police said Wednesday they have arrested a suspect accused of making online threats against black students and faculty, threats that added to racial tensions on campus that resulted in the departure of two senior university officials.

Police did not release a name but said the suspect was not on or near the university's Columbia campus when the threat was made. The suspect is in custody.

"We had additional officers on patrol last night and the campus remained safe," Major Brian Weimer said in a statement. "We investigated a number of reports and tips and take every one of them seriously."

In a statement Wednesday morning, University of Missouri Police said they had apprehended "the suspect who posted threats to campus on YikYak and other social media."
The university's statement came after at least two users posted threats on the anonymous location-based messaging app Yik Yak.

One user threatened to "shoot every black person I see."

Another said, "Some of you are alright. Don't go to campus tomorrow." The message seemed to echo one that appeared on the website 4chan - a forum where racist and misogynistic comments are frequent - ahead of a deadly shooting at an Oregon community college last month.

The posts were widely disseminated across the Internet and local media.

Campus police Capt. Brian Weimer told The Associated Press additional officers were already on campus before the university learned of the threats. University police were working with other state and local agencies to ensure the campus was secure, he said.

Weimer told CBS News correspondent Adriana Diaz none of the online threats had been deemed by authorities to be credible as of late Tuesday night.

Still, Diaz reports, the student protest campsite was taken down overnight. The plan had been for protesters to remove all their belongings but leave the tents up. But it appears the threats led them to completely vacate the protest area.

On Tuesday night, the school's online emergency information center tweeted, "There is no immediate threat to campus," and asked that student not spread rumors.

CBS Jefferson City, Missouri affiliate KRCG-TV quotes Weimer as saying there was also a threat called in to the Black Culture Center on campus. He said someone answering the phone and perceived the phone call as a threat. Weimer wouldn't elaborate on what that threat was.

After the call was received, the doors to the Black Culture Center were locked as a precaution, the station says.

KRCG reporters saw several cars from the school police force and Missouri State Highway Patrol on campus Tuesday evening.

The school newspaper, the Missourian, said Weimer told it no campus buildings had been evacuated on campus as of 9 p.m. Tuesday.

The paper added that the MU Legion of Black Collegians tweeted it wouldn't hold a senate meeting Wednesday. "Stay home, Stay safe," the tweet read.

The paper also reported that, "MU's Army ROTC sent an email telling its students to dress in civilian clothes on Tuesday and Wednesday; Wednesday is Veteran's Day. The ROTC canceled its Wednesday morning physical training session."
A student newspaper, The Maneater, tweeted late Tuesday that two sororities, Phi Mu and Tri Delta, were on lockdown.

The developments were the latest in a tumultuous week for the flagship campus of the University of Missouri system.

The student government president's accounts of having racial slurs shouted at him from a passing pickup truck helped spark a weeks-long protest movement. A graduate student's hunger strike then led to a two-day walkout by more than 30 members of the Missouri football team. Those developments came to a head Monday with the resignation of university system President Tim Wolfe, who had become the target of many of the protests. Hours later, the top administrator of the Columbia campus, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, was forced out.

A plaza that had been the site of a sit-in by protesters was entirely empty Tuesday night and only a handful of students were seen walking around campus. Police officers from the campus department and city of Columbia were on patrol.

David Wallace, a spokesman for the student government group Missouri Students Association, said the group asked university officials to cancel classes Wednesday in light of the threats.

Gaby Rodriguez, a senior, said she was at work when she heard about the threats.

"It's really disheartening and proves the point of why these protests and boycotts were necessary," Rodriguez said. "I don't think I've ever felt this unsafe at Mizzou," she said, referring to the college by its nickname.

Some students, faculty and alumni have said the protests and top leaders' resignations are the culmination of years of racial tension.

Among other recent events, members of the Legions of Black Collegians, whose founders include a recently retired deputy chancellor, said slurs were hurled at them by an apparently drunken white student while practicing for a homecoming performance.

The university has promised changes.

Chuck Henson, a black law professor and associate dean, was been appointed Tuesday the university's first-ever interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.

The university system's governing body, the Board of Curators, also announced a number of other initiatives, including more support for the hiring and retention of diverse faculty and staff and a full review of all policies related to staff and student conduct.
University of Missouri Names Law Professor to Diversity Post

A day after the top two leaders of the University of Missouri stepped down, under fire over the handling of racial tensions on campus, the university on Tuesday named a law professor and administrator to a new high-level diversity post.

The appointment of the professor, Chuck Henson, as interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity fulfills one of the pledges made Monday by the university’s governing Board of Curators to move quickly to address concerns about racism on campus. Student and faculty protesters had accused the administration of not taking those issues seriously enough or acting quickly enough to address them.

On Monday, the president of the four-campus university system, Timothy M. Wolfe, resigned, and the university announced that the leader of the flagship campus in Columbia, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, would step down at the end of the year to take on a research role at the university. Mr. Henson has been an associate dean and professor at the university’s law school, and his academic work has focused on the workings of anti-discrimination law. He was recently appointed by the State Supreme Court to a new Commission on Racial and Ethnic Fairness. Earlier in his career, he worked in the state attorney general’s office, and in corporate law.

Months of protests over highly publicized episodes of racism and other issues, and a hunger strike by a graduate student, put pressure on the administration to act. But it was the threat of a strike by the university football team that brought matters to a head.

The removal of Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Loftin from the top posts persuaded the graduate student, Jonathan Butler, to resume eating, and the football team to keep playing. But protesters said it will take far more to satisfy them, including the appointment of more blacks in the faculty and administration and changes in a campus culture that they say is too tolerant of racism. More demonstrations are expected Tuesday.
University of Missouri officials named an interim vice chancellor on Tuesday to tackle matters of race on campus.

Effective immediately, Chuck Henson will be Interim Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity. Henson is associate dean for Academic Affairs and Trial Practice in the MU School of Law.

“We’re pleased that Professor Henson has agreed to serve in this very important and crucial role at our university,” University of Missouri Provost Garnett Stokes said in the announcement. “We’re looking forward to working with him as we continue to make Mizzou an inclusive and welcoming community for everyone who teaches, works and studies here.”

University of Missouri System President Timothy M. Wolfe and Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin both resigned Monday amid student protests. Some black students accused Wolfe of being tone-deaf and not doing enough to address the racism they are confronted with on a daily basis.

Henson has been with the university since 2009. During that time, he has served as an adjunct professor, visiting professor of law and trial practice professor of law.

His academic scholarship focuses on Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin. He also has taught continuing legal education courses focusing on employment discrimination.

Prior to joining MU, he served as an assistant attorney general and the assistant general counsel for human resources in the Missouri Attorney General’s office. From 2004-2006, he was a vice president with Adelphia Communications, providing legal guidance and management for human resources issues with 15,000 employees in 23 states. He also has worked in private practice in Colorado.

He received his bachelor’s degree from Yale University and his law degree from Georgetown University.

New Mizzou diversity officer urges patience

By DALE SINGER · 14 HOURS AGO

The University of Missouri-Columbia moved quickly Tuesday to fill of its promises in the wake of the departure of its chancellor and the university system’s president.

But the new interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity cautioned that the goals of his position can’t be reached as swiftly as his appointment was made. Chuck Henson, who has been an associate dean at the law school at Mizzou, said change is possible, but it will take time.

“Just because of what happened yesterday doesn’t mean that the pain stops,” he said in an interview. “A lot of people on this campus — my
students here at the law school, my colleagues on the faculty, students on campus, people in the city, across the state — are in pain.

“And there needs to be time to express and process that pain. I think that’s one of the first things that I’m going to be involved in, to help build the relationship.”

According to a statement released by the Board of Curators late Monday, positions like Henson’s will be established on all four of the university system’s campuses, as well as at the system level.

That move was part of a list of demands issued by Concerned Student 1950, the main protest group whose actions in recent weeks culminated in the president’s and chancellor's departures on Monday.

Henson’s appointment was announced by Mizzou Provost Garnett Stokes, who said:

“We’re pleased that Professor Henson has agreed to serve in this very important and crucial role at our university. We’re looking forward to working with him as we continue to make Mizzou an inclusive and welcoming community for everyone who teaches, works and studies here.”

Asked what someone in his new job can do, besides being hired to satisfy the protesters’ demands, Henson said his emphasis will be on listening and on establishing proper relationships on campus.

“It’s not just the kind of thing to assuage the immediate demands of the protesters,” he said. “I see this particular job as being one where that relationship grows and develops and gets established and becomes enduring.”

But Henson hesitated before answering whether the recent turmoil at Mizzou could have been avoided if someone had been in his new post six months ago.

“I’ve never been really good at knowing what would have happened if an action hadn’t taken place or had taken place in the past. I know that the provost and the chancellor were working on the issue of creating this position months and months and months before now. I guess from my perspective, things happen in a certain way at a certain time for certain reasons.”
At this time, Henson said, people have to be patient.

“I think it would be a mistake for anybody to think that just because a vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity was appointed, that suddenly everything would heal, everything would get better and everything would become new,” he said.

“I see this as being a start, a committed start and a dedicated start to working on cultural change. Redefining ourselves, to establish a shared set of norms.”

**No settlement with Wolfe at this time**

Loftin’s position as chancellor will be filled on an interim basis by Hank Foley, who has been a system vice president and a vice chancellor on the Columbia campus, both in the area of research.

Wolfe remains on the job until an interim president is named. John Fougere, a spokesman for the system, said that choice will be made as quickly as possible.

The Board of Curators have called a closed session for 4:30 Wednesday afternoon on the Columbia campus.

Wolfe’s contract, which originally was set to expire in February of this year, was extended by the Board of Curators last year through the end of June 2018. His salary is $459,000. Fougere said Wolfe did not discuss any financial settlement with the curators Monday when submitting his resignation. Fougere said he had no information on whether a settlement will be forthcoming.

**Expanding programs with a shrinking budget**

But hiring diversity officers, and anyone else needed to carry out the programs announced by the curators Monday, will strain an already tight budget for the university, according to Mizzou economics Professor Michael Podgursky. The result could be fewer faculty members and fewer classes for students to enroll in.

“There are tradeoffs,” he said in an interview. “We do have a fixed budget, and if we do more of X, we will do less of Y. I think everyone’s got to understand there aren’t unlimited resources. We’re in a very difficult budget
situation, and as we try to spend more resources on these things, it will mean there are fewer resources for other things.”

On the day after the two resignations, Podgursky said he didn’t notice any fallout on campus in the two classes he taught. He called the whole situation “perplexing,” with a boycott by football players becoming the tipping point that led to the resignations of two top officials.

“We have a Board of Curators that decides who the president of the UM system is,” he said. “I don’t think the football team and the football coach should be deciding who the president of the UM system is.”

Should the next system president be a businessman, as Wolfe and his predecessor were, instead of an academic? After a long pause, Podgursky responded:

“We need a good leader. I think you can get a good leader out of the academic community and you can get a bad leader out of the academic community, and vice versa. I think it’s got to be someone who will stand up for the principles of the university, the mission of the university, like freedom of speech and student rights. They’re important in higher ed.

“And you have to create an environment where students feel safe and comfortable and not threatened. I think someone from academia could do that, but a non-academic could do that too. I just think we need some good leadership.”

Podgursky, who has been at Mizzou for 21 years, said that until the last few months, he thought the racial situation on campus had been good. But like Henson, he said the climate has to be viewed in the context of the larger community.

“In a world where there’s free speech, mean things will get said. We should try to make it a comfortable environment, but at the end of the day, you can’t control everything everyone says everywhere. So I hope everyone can understand that and try to muddle through,” he said.

**Reporting hateful speech**

Meanwhile, on Tuesday the campus police department at Mizzou issued guidelines on how it would like to hear from students about what it termed hateful or hurtful speech. But the message didn’t sit well with the American
Civil Liberties Union of Missouri, whose executive director said it “simultaneously does too much and too little.”

In an email, the campus police asked students who “witness incidents of hateful and/hurtful speech” to call police immediately, give a summary of the incident and a detailed description of the individuals involved, plus a license plate and vehicle description. If possible and safe, the police said, students should take photos with a cell phone.

While such speech may not be criminal, the email added, prompt reporting can lead to action taken under the campus code of student conduct.

A campus spokesman defended the process, saying that even if speech is protected by the First Amendment, the university is committed to upholding core principles of respect, responsibility, discovery and excellence. But Jeffrey Mittman of the ACLU criticized the approach taken by the police.

“Racial epithets addressed to a specific person in a threatening or intimidating manner can be illegal,” he said in an email, “and may require action by police and/or university administrators. But, no governmental entity has the authority to broadly prohibit ‘hurtful’ speech — or even undefined ‘hateful’ speech, or to discipline against it.

“Conversely, institutional racism and a history of turning a blind eye to systemic inequities does require action. But mistakenly addressing symptoms — instead of causes — and doing it in a way that runs counter to the First Amendment is not the wise or appropriate response.”

Foley Begins New Job as Interim Chancellor in Six Weeks
MU officials name interim chancellor, diversity leader

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 1:18 p

In the wake of the resignations of both University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin because of racial tensions at MU, the university has named two interim leaders.

Chuck Henson, an associate dean with the MU School of Law, will serve as the university’s interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.

The position was created Monday as part of a list of initiatives the UM System Board of Curators announced to address the racial climate of the UM System campuses. Henson has worked at MU since 2009.

The Curators appointed Hank Foley, MU senior vice chancellor for research and graduate studies, as MU’s interim chancellor. Foley also serves as executive vice president for academic affairs, research and economic development for the UM System. He will start as interim chancellor Jan. 1.

Loftin said Monday that he would transition Jan. 1 to a new role as director for research facility development. Loftin’s announcement bookended a nearly six-hour Board of Curators meeting that started with Wolfe’s resignation.

“Over the last several years … we’ve made great progress and aligned this university to become the very best it can be in terms of research,” Loftin said. “I will be able to assist the campus community in developing the kind of research facilities it needs.”

Donald Cupps, chairman of the Board of Curators, thanked Wolfe and Loftin at a press conference Monday before discussing the new initiatives. The initiatives will be implemented in the next 90 days, Cupps said. The efforts include:

- The UM System will appoint its first-ever chief diversity, inclusion and equity officer. Each UM campus also will recruit a chief diversity, inclusion and equity officer.
• A full review of all UM System policies related to staff and student conduct.
• Support for students, faculty and staff who have experienced discrimination.
• Support for hiring and retaining diverse faculty and staff.
• Establishing a diversity, inclusion and equity task force for the UM System to audit existing programs and develop short- and long-term strategies. Each campus will have a similar task force.

The curators said consultants will conduct an assessment of diversity and inclusion efforts at MU. The flagship campus will begin mandatory diversity, inclusion and equity training for faculty, staff and incoming students. Officials also will continue a comprehensive review of student mental health services at MU.

Cupps said it has been a difficult time for the entire UM System and that everyone involved had to put the interests of the university ahead of their personal interests.

“The problems that we’ve experienced cannot be blamed on President Wolfe; it can’t be blamed on Chancellor Loftin,” Cupps said. “It’s got to be blamed on all of us.”

Cupps said the Curators will name an interim president as soon as possible.

“We want to do the best thing for the university,” Cupps said. “We want what’s best for the student. We have a national image to protect and to enhance.”

Students attend UM universities expecting to have an exceptional learning experience, Cupps said Monday, adding that parents send their students to UM campuses with that same expectation.

“It saddens me to learn that some have experienced discrimination and acts of hate directed towards them,” Cupps said. “We must provide a safe environment for all of our students, our faculty and our staff members.”

Loftin has been chancellor at MU since February 2014.

His announced resignation came the same day the deans of nine different MU colleges and schools requested his dismissal.

In a letter sent Monday to Wolfe and the Board of Curators, the deans expressed their “deep concern about the multitude of crises on our flagship campus” and called for Loftin’s dismissal.

Craig Roberts, professor in plant sciences and former Faculty Council chairman, said he has spoken with some faculty members who disagreed with Loftin’s resignation and the deans’ letter.

“There are several faculty members who are furious about this because the deans played this game,” Roberts said. He declined to comment further. David Kurpius, dean of the School of Journalism; Gary Myers, dean of the School of Law; Thomas Payne, dean of the College of
Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; and Kristofer Hagglund, dean of the School of Health Professions, did not return calls before deadline.

During the past month, a group of students called Concerned Student 1950 — a reference to the first year MU admitted a black graduate student — held demonstrations that called for Wolfe’s resignation and attempted to bring attention to race issues on campus. Jonathan Butler, an MU graduate student, went on a hunger strike for a week as part of the effort. Butler did not respond to emails seeking comment on his health before deadline. 

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UPDATE: Interim vice chancellor named one day after position created by curators

14 HRS AGO

COLUMBIA — MU has named Chuck Henson the interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity at MU one day after the position was created by the UM System Board of Curators.

Henson is the associate dean for academic affairs and trial practice at the MU School of Law.

He will be reporting directly to MU Provost Garnett Stokes in his new role, Henson said in a phone conference call to reporters Tuesday evening. His appointment comes a day after a tumultuous Monday in Columbia, where UM System President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin resigned in the same day.

"We have been planning this position for about three or four months," Stokes said in an interview Tuesday morning. Henson will have a $25,000 annual stipend added to his current salary of $154,000 for his new position, she added.
MU currently has a chief diversity officer, Noor Azizan-Gardner, who was officially appointed in 2012 as part of the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative. Henson said that Noor will report to him, as his position goes beyond the diversity initiative.

Henson said one of his first steps will be improving the campus climate by increasing the diversity numbers of faculty and staff.

"Part of the process is diversifying faculty recruitment," Henson said. "We can always do better with getting them here and making offers and hope that they come to MU."

One of the demands made by Concerned Student 1950, the student group that led the call for Wolfe's resignation, was an increase in the percentage of black faculty and staff to 10 percent by the 2017-18 academic year.

Henson has been with MU since 2009. His specialty of study is Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and national origin. He also teaches classes focused on employment discrimination.

What University of Missouri shows us about student activism

After years of being characterized as cynical and apathetic, are students getting their political clout back?
University of Missouri President Tim Wolfe announced his resignation on Monday in an emotionally charged speech that brought to life the deep tensions between conservative and liberal views on race.

“The question is: why did we get to this really difficult situation? It’s my belief that we stopped listening to each other. We got frustrated with each other and we forced individuals like Jonathan Butler to take immediate steps to affect change,” Mr. Wolfe said in his speech. “This is not, I repeat, not the way change should come about. Change comes from listening, learning, caring, and conversation. We have to respect each other enough to stop yelling at each other and start listening. Unfortunately, this has not happened.”

Wolfe’s resignation is a major move for the 35,000 students at the University of Missouri – seven percent of which are African American – and not just because it signifies a deep-seeded racial problem that is plaguing America. It signifies what seems to be a revival era for student activists.

Or, at least, the first time students “won.”

Student activism on college campuses has been ongoing since the 1960s, when students marched in protest against the Vietnam War. In the 1980s, students protested over the Iran-Contra affair and apartheid in South Africa; in the
1990s, sweatshop labor and global warming. Many in the media have criticized the millennial generation for their political apathy, “colorblindness,” and self-obsession. But the Missouri case has highlighted an important shift in student activism – students are not only still protesting, but the protests are affecting change. And it comes at a time when activism is, if anything, taking on new forms of life.

The movement against racial discrimination at the University of Missouri has been ongoing for weeks. Jonathan Butler, a graduate student, went on a weeklong hunger strike in the hopes that Wolfe would resign for his inaction against the “racist, sexist, homophobic, etc., incidents that have dynamically disrupted the learning experience.” But historically, rarely have student athletes been involved in student activism until the University of Missouri’s football team inserted itself into the conversation.

The Christian Science Monitor’s Jessica Mendoza writes,

Recommended: University of Missouri president resigns amid more student athlete activism

It points to a growing trend toward activism by student athletes, who in the past have tended to stay on the sidelines when it came to issues of social justice. And it comes amid a year of protests and national debate over race relations that some have likened to a new civil rights era.

The Missouri protest comes at the same time as students at Yale University recently cause a kerfuffle over appropriate Halloween costumes – students are accusing the administration of not being sensitive enough to concerns over culturally insensitive costumes. This is following a recent controversy where a male fraternity was accused of turning away a female student of color.
Editorial: Winning the battle at Mizzou is signal for hard work to begin

Nov. 10, 2015 • By the Editorial Board

Take a victory lap, students, athletes and faculty protesters at the University of Missouri. You’ve earned it. You, too, university administrators and curators. Enjoy this moment. You’re on the same page now, and it’s been a long time coming.

The tough part is going to be maintaining your momentum. Once the excitement and exhilaration are gone, the uphill battle begins. It’s going to take hard work, diligence, extraordinary communication and outstanding leadership to make further gains.

Time to roll up your sleeves and get to work.

Talking to one another is a tremendous place to start. Turning away the hate mongers on both sides is the next step. That’s not going to be easy. They’re out there trying to undermine the good that has been done already. They will test your courage, commitment and fortitude. Some of the oppressed are nudging toward becoming the oppressors. That must not happen.

Mistakes have been made as this new path is being forged, and they will continue to be made. Keeping in mind the goals of a campus that has successfully challenged the status quo, and where campus leaders have pledged to create an environment in which hate is not tolerated and repercussions are swift and certain, should be your blueprint.

There is perhaps no better place for significant and lasting social change to begin percolating than on the campus of a public university. It is a laboratory with an academic agenda where big ideas can flourish. The agenda should keep civil rights always in the forefront, and should include scholarship, racial and religious tolerance and cultural acceptance.

Timothy M. Wolfe came to be president of the Missouri system from the business world, where devotion to creating an all-inclusive environment is not as important as satisfying the all-important shareholder. Ultimately, Mr. Wolfe failed to respond forcefully enough to calls for help from students who felt marginalized on the Mizzou campus, and he was forced to resign. That was followed hours later by the announcement that Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, accused by the deans of nine different MU colleges of creating a “toxic environment through threat, fear and intimidation,” would assume a lesser role at the university.

These ousters at the hands of the university system’s board of curators were correctly seen as victories in an effort to achieve the kind of environment in which every student feels his or her worth is validated. But let’s not pretend they came about because of troubled consciences.

That would be a stretch of the imagination. The history of racial strife on the MU campus goes back to 1950, when the first African-American student was admitted to the school. That was more than 60 years after the first black students were admitted to public universities in some neighboring states.

It would be naive to think that Mr. Wolfe or anyone else can eradicate racism on a college campus or anywhere else. But what he and other leaders can do is make it unacceptable to use epithets, slurs and racial or religious violence. They can stop pretending that each incident is isolated and dedicate themselves to rooting out and exposing the evil that encourages bigotry.
The problems that led to the current state of affairs began nearly two months ago when the head of the MU student body wrote a Facebook post about being called a racial slur. Tensions escalated with a black student group last month saying a racial epithet had been directed at them while they were on campus, and then a student went on a hunger strike to draw attention to the problems.

Add to that religious intolerance, when someone drew a swastika with human feces in a bathroom on campus, and academic concerns over the treatment of graduate assistants and some university decisions regarding Planned Parenthood.

Still, Truman the Tiger didn’t roar until the University of Missouri football team, with the backing of head coach Gary Pinkel, threatened on Saturday to strike. Athletes with a social conscience, the players said they would not play as long as Mr. Wolfe remained in office. Maybe the calculus included the team’s season, not stellar from what one reads on the Post-Dispatch sports pages. That doesn’t diminish the athletes’ effort to create social change and to be trailblazers for something that will have meaning beyond the gridiron.

Officials, who have been so proud of Mizzou’s inclusion since 2012 in the vaunted Southeastern Conference, blinked when it came to the $1 million MU would have owed Brigham Young University if they forfeited their upcoming game. Authorities cared about the health of the student on the hunger strike. They cared about the racial and religious hostility exhibited on campus.

But they didn’t act until the football team united behind the protesting students.

Donald L. Cupps, chairman of the board, announced that task forces would be formed, a diversity officer would be hired and faculty and staff would be developed to be more representative of the student population. He also said blame for the problems must be shared.

“The problems that we have experienced can’t be blamed on President Wolfe. It can’t be blamed on Chancellor Loftin. It’s got to be blamed on all of us,” Mr. Cupps said. “It’s the fellow students that say things they shouldn’t or do things they shouldn’t. It’s the faculty, staff, employees that do not do what they should do. As board members, we have to examine ourselves.”

As the future unfolds, some takeaways are that racism and religious oppression on the MU campus cannot be ignored. They must be exposed and spoken against. Solutions must be demanded. Perpetrators must be punished. If the campus in Columbia, Mo., is to truly become a welcoming place for students from all cultures and backgrounds, administrators cannot ignore the truth.

Mizzou hunger-strike figure from Omaha, son of top railroad exec

Nov. 10, 2015 • By Joe Holleman

Jonathan Butler, a central figure in the protests at the University of Missouri, is an Omaha native and the son of a railroad vice president, the Omaha World-Herald reports.

Butler refused food last week in a move to force the university system’s president, Timothy M. Wolfe, from office. Wolfe resigned Monday and Butler ended his hunger strike.
Jonathan Butler played high-school football at Omaha Central High, where he won a state championship, and earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Mizzou, the newspaper reports. He is working toward a master’s degree in educational leadership and policy.

He is a member of a prominent Omaha family. The newspaper says that Butler's father is Eric L. Butler, executive vice president for sales and marketing for the Union Pacific Railroad. His 2014 compensation was $8.4 million, according to regulatory filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Eric L. Butler and his wife, Cynthia Butler, serve as pastors of Joy of Life Ministries, the newspaper reported. Along with Jonathan Butler, the couple has two other children.

Butler, who was seen walking on the Mizzou campus on Tuesday, has declined to be interviewed by the Post-Dispatch, other than to say he was feeling better.

Curators call special meeting for Wednesday afternoon

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 4:21 pm

The University of Missouri Board of Curators has called a special closed session meeting for Wednesday afternoon.

The curators cite exemptions to Missouri's open meetings and records law allowing closed meetings for communication with lawyers and consideration of negotiated contracts and personnel matters in a meeting notice posted on the University of Missouri System's website.

The meeting will be held two days after UM System President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin announced their resignations, Wolfe's effective immediately and Loftin's effective Jan. 1. The resignations came after growing calls for Wolfe to step down over his response to racial incidents at MU.
Carnahan Quad's tent community starts to come down after campus protests

9 HRS AGO

COLUMBIA — At midday Tuesday campers and visitors sat comfortably in their community of more than 20 tents gathered on MU's Mel Carnahan Quadrangle, but by nightfall there was a hustle to take it down.

Concerned Student 1950 put up the first few tents on the night of Nov. 2 as a show of support for Jonathan Butler, who had embarked on a hunger strike in an effort to force UM System President Tim Wolfe's removal from office, which was realized on Monday. While only a few were participating at the time, more than a week later it was a different story. More campers joined the group and on Tuesday a steady flow of visitors came in and out of the site.

As the community grew, so did relationships among the students who have made this place their temporary home.

Senior, Nicholas Colbert, 22, said, "I met a lot of people and formed friendships."

Colbert said the tents were a safe space for like-minded people to talk, laugh and joke. That had been necessary for himself and others, he said, after stressful days of protesting.

Tents — large and small — stood atop muddy cardboard boxes and a tarp early Tuesday afternoon. As night fell multi-colored Christmas lights illuminated the interior of a tent that was designated as a common area. Plastic utensils, paper plates and food filled two tables. Another tent was stocked with food, while the others were reserved for sleeping.

Four heat lamps were placed in the middle of the campground, but only one was lit and another used as a stand for a radio.

Tuesday evening, campers and visitors spoke quietly among themselves ready to get to work and waiting for directions. Faculty, staff and friends came to help take down the place that has
become a temporary home to about 20 students. Concerned Student 1950 published a flier on its Twitter account Tuesday evening that a clean up would be taking place at the quadrangle at 5:30 p.m.

Joan Hermsen, an associate professor of sociology, said she saw the campsite grow more and more everyday from her office window. She thought they could use some extra hands, she said on Tuesday night.

It was MU student Porter Hopps IV's, 21, first time on the campsite.

"I came to help and support my friends, peers," he said after seeing a flier on Twitter about clean-up. "They had enough courage to fight for my voice and the voices of others, so the least I could do is come help. Freshman Petar Marinov was ready to stay until it was absolutely time to leave.

I'm not gonna leave until everyone else does," Marinov said. "Whenever the original Concerned Student 1950 founders, whenever they say it's time."

Marinov said he has barely seen any of his friends since he began camping six nights ago. He's been spending most of his time in his new home.

The atmosphere Tuesday was a far cry from Monday, when hundreds of students converged on the quad after Wolfe announced he would resign. There's now only a memory of students lounging in folding camp chairs and laughing as a young man placed a bouquet of yellow, green, blue and purple daises — set in a Ziyad chickpeas can — on the table in front of them.

Badger Johnson, a 28-year-old graduate student, said he has grown a lot and had fun while at the campsite. He said he was able to bring down his walls and wishes more people were able to experience what he has.

"This is the most time I've spent with black people my whole life," said Johnson after his fifth night of camping out. "It was real obvious there needed to be more white allies."
MU student Malik Jones, who camped at the site for the past two nights, said he was sad to see camp disassembled. Jones normally lives at the MU residence hall, Defoe-Graham.

He said he met new friends this week and that much of the discussion among the campers was about life in general, and not solely the protest.

Still, the camp has been a “beacon” for Concerned Student 1950, he said. He emphasized that the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center serves as general community space, but the campsite portrayed a more specific message.

“This is here only for the protest,” Jones said. “Everyone knows that it’s here.

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Concerned Student 1950 dismantles campsite on quad

By Megan Favignano

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 9:45 pm

The University of Missouri students dismantled their campsite on Carnahan Quadrangle on Tuesday night, exactly one week after first setting up their tents.

Members of Concerned Student 1950, a group of student activists protesting a climate of racial tension at MU, started sleeping in tents on the quad last Tuesday as part of a larger effort calling
for UM System President Tim Wolfe’s ouster. Student protesters said Wolfe had been negligent in dealing with race issues on campus.

Wolfe resigned Monday, but the campsite remained as students began discussing their next steps to push for a more inclusive campus.

Students decided to dismantle the campsite Tuesday before heavy rain and storms are forecast to roll through the region Wednesday. Students taking down tents and packing up food Tuesday night said they were not sure whether the camp would be set up again after the storms were no longer an issue.

Michelle Froese, spokeswomen for Missouri Student Unions, said the university invited students with Concerned Student 1950 to store belongings from their campsite in the MU Student Center. Froese said students were allowed to sleep in the student center basement Tuesday night to ensure they were not camping outside when storms hit.

If storms are still a threat Wednesday night, Froese said MU might extend the invitation to allow students to stay a second night.

Mizzou seeks to reassure students, parents in wake of resignations

Mizzou football players stood up for the student body - 'The Herd'

Nov. 10, 2015  •  By Kevin McDermott

In the wake of racially charged student protests at the University of Missouri and the exits of two top officials, the university sent out emails Monday and Tuesday seeking to assure students that change is coming — and to assure parents that the students are safe.

One of the emails encourages MU parents and the students to view of the turmoil of the past few weeks as "a learning opportunity."

University of Missouri System President Timothy M. Wolfe announced his resignation Monday, as curators were beginning an emergency meeting over the direction of a campus fractured by protests and accounts of discrimination. His action sent thousands of students to the heart of the campus to celebrate. Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin announced later Monday that he would assume a lesser role.
In an email to students Monday, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Cathy Scroggs noted that, "For more than a year, student activists have challenged all of us to do more to eradicate the culture of racism that persists at Mizzou."

"I want to assure you, we are working toward real, enduring change," Scroggs wrote.

The email goes on to call for "personal action" by students, faculty and administrators. "We need to look inside, examine our own biases and think carefully about the things we say and do that cause others to feel hurt, unwelcome and excluded," Scroggs wrote. "We need to call each other out when we witness behavior that does not align with our community’s core values."

The letter concludes: "The healing starts today. The hard work continues. Together, we will make a better Mizzou."

On Tuesday, MU’s Office of Parent Relations followed up with an email to MU parents, assuring them that "student safety remains our No. 1 priority."

"All protests have been peaceful, and the MU Police Department has worked with all parties to ensure that the campus continues to be a safe place," says the email.

It states the campus "is operating as normal and on our regular schedule," with "a small number of classes" canceled Tuesday and Wednesday.

"Finally, we want to encourage you and your students to see this as a learning opportunity," states the letter. "College campuses are often the starting point for cultural change, and by witnessing and participating in difficult conversations, students are gaining skills for the real world."

The letter tells parents who have concerns that they can reach the office via email at parents@missouri.edu, or by calling our parent hotline at 888-631-1098.

Meanwhile MU police on Tuesday emailed new guidelines to students for “Reporting Hateful and/or Hurtful Speech.” The email lists a process for students "who witness incidents of hateful and/or hurtful speech." They include calling police and providing a detailed description. Even if such speech isn't a crime, police say in the email, students can be disciplined by the university.

The resignation of Wolfe and the reassignment of Loftin followed weeks of tension on campus over alleged incidents of racial harassment. Protesters charged that Wolfe had failed to adequately address the issues.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UM curators' announcements partially meet students' demands

10 HRS AGO

COLUMBIA — Tim Wolfe's resignation as president of the University of Missouri System is not the end of the fight for social justice for student groups at MU.
At a rally Monday, Concerned Student 1950 member Jonathan Butler outlined additional requests to the ones issued in October to legislators and administrators.

Concerned Student 1950’s initial list of demands, issued Oct. 20, seemed to directly influence the multiple initiatives released Monday by the UM System Board of Curators. Although some diversity issues were addressed, not all of the demands from Concerned Student 1950 and other activists were included.

**Which Concerned Student 1950 demands were met:**

**Wolfe’s departure, apology:** Concerned Student 1950 asked for a formal apology from Wolfe and his resignation from office. His apology came last week, and he announced his immediate resignation Monday morning during the Board of Curators meeting.

**Diversity training:** The group demanded the creation and enforcement of mandatory racial awareness and inclusion curriculum throughout all MU departments for all students, faculty, staff and administration. The curators announced a plan to launch a diversity, inclusion and equity leadership training and development education program; this training, as outlined in a UM System news release, will include the Board of Curators, the UM System president and administrative leadership. For MU specifically, a mandatory diversity, inclusion and equity training will be implemented for all faculty, staff and future incoming students.

**Hiring black faculty and staff:** The curators announced additional support for hiring and retaining diverse faculty and staff, which could potentially meet Concerned Student 1950’s demands for an increase in the percentage of black faculty and staff to 10 percent on a campuswide scale by the 2017-18 academic year.

**Mental health:** The group demanded the university increase funding and resources for mental health facilities such as the MU Counseling Center and mental health professionals, boost mental health outreach across campus, increase awareness of the counseling center and reduce wait times for prospective clients. The curators made reference to two changes regarding mental health: to provide additional support for students, faculty and staff who have experienced
discrimination and disparate treatment — which will be addressed within 90 days — and to continue a review of mental health services.

**Strategic long-term plan:** The group demanded the composition of a strategic 10-year plan by May 1 that will increase retention rates for marginalized students, sustain diversity curriculum and training and promote a safer and more inclusive campus.

The curators said they will ensure that each UM System campus will have a chief diversity, inclusion and equity officer who will report to the chancellor. MU announced Monday that Chuck Henson, associate dean for academic affairs and trial practice in the MU School of Law, will be interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity. MU’s chief diversity officer, Noor Azizan-Gardner, was appointed to the position in 2012 and will report to Henson. The curators also announced the assessment of existing diversity and inclusion efforts on campus.

The curators also announced the creation of a similar officer who will preside over the UM System, a position that will be filled in the next 90 days, according to the release.

The curators also plan to create a diversity, inclusion and equity task force to develop both a short-term and long-term strategy for the UM System in an evaluation of current programs, policies and practices.

**Some unaddressed demands listed by the group are:**

- An amendment to UM System policies to involve the participation of students, faculty and staff in selecting a UM System president and MU chancellor.

- Most of the Legion of Black Collegians' demands presented to the university in 1969, including reorganization of hiring black staff and faculty, and a contingency fund to supplement salaries of potential black faculty and staff.

- The inclusion of students, staff and faculty of color in vetting, maintaining and overseeing diversity and inclusion training on campuses.

- More specific demands concerning mental health at MU.

- The timeline and specific details of a long-term strategic plan to promote diversity on campuses.
The increase in funding, resources and personal for social justice centers at MU.

Unaddressed demands made by the Forum on Graduate Rights

After Wolfe's announcement, the Forum on Graduate Rights released a statement indicating members also believed the struggle was not over.

"A broad spectrum of student advocacy groups across campus must be included in the process to select a new President in a meaningful, empowered way," the statement from the Forum on Graduate Rights read. "We will continue to speak out and advocate for the rights of all marginalized groups on campus."

The curators' initiatives announced Monday, after Wolfe resigned and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said he would step down as chancellor, were directed at diversity issues on campus, but they did not address demands made by the Forum on Graduate Rights. Loftin guaranteed graduate student employees will receive health care on Oct. 14. An announcement was made Thursday reinstating full tuition waivers for graduate student with quarter-time assistantships for the 2016-17 school year.

Here are the unaddressed demands:

- A guarantee that no graduate student be paid at a rate below the individual poverty line regardless of their appointment status, department or college.
- A fully subsidized student health care plan for all graduate student employees that is guaranteed for the full term of their graduate student employment.
- Immediate action on the part of the university to ease the burden on international students caused by the loss of their health insurance subsidy.
- More, and affordable, university-sponsored graduate student housing.
- A return of affordable, on-campus, university-sponsored child care facilities for graduate students.
- A waiver of supplemental fees imposed by colleges, schools and departments for all graduate student employees.
Missouri Athletes Invoked the Moral Authority of Martin Luther King Jr.

By Ellen J. Staurowsky

NOVEMBER 11, 2015

The decision last weekend by more than 30 black football players at the University of Missouri at Columbia to boycott all team activities, including games, unless the president resigned was unprecedented in higher education. The players’ protest amplified the already dramatic events that had been escalating on the flagship campus for weeks and marked a bold activism on behalf of their community off the playing field.

Their action brought widespread attention to racial discord on the campus. It was quickly effective, and it showcased the power that athletes have and should use more often to effect change for themselves and their community.

If not for the high profile of the athletes, there would not have been a national awareness that a graduate student on a hunger strike was risking his life to improve the university, or that an entire movement led by the Legion of Black Collegians had been going on for several weeks. And how many more people learned through the players’ protest that black students had been subjected to racial epithets or that a swastika had been smeared on a wall?

The players have said that the racial dynamics on the broader campus are not reflected within their own team but that they feel it is important to stand in solidarity with all black students on the campus. Invoking the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., one of the players posted on Twitter: "The athletes of color on the University of Missouri football team truly believe ‘Injustice Anywhere is a threat to Justice Everywhere.'"

The full implications of their actions will take some time to fully appreciate, but there is a victory for the players in this moment: When facing injustice, they stood up to mobilize the power at their disposal.

As the sophomore defensive end Charles Harris put it: "Let this be a testament to all athletes across the country that you do have power. It started with a few individuals on
our team and look at what it’s become. Look where it’s at right now. This is nationally known, and it started with just a few."

But for all of the righteousness of the moment, the clear independence of the players’ action and their assertion of power has generated ambivalence, despite the official position of the athletic department, and the team, of unity. One report surfaced that some players and coaches were angry about the refusal of the involved players to participate in practice.

In the aftermath of President Wolfe’s resignation announcement, it was athletic department officials who took the podium to spin a different message than the one the athletes had articulated. The players’ actions were represented as emanating solely out of a concern for the health of a fellow student, not for the loss of confidence and credibility in the university’s corporate leadership. This attempt to distort or silence the message of outspoken athletes is all too common.

Two years ago, controversy erupted when college football players at Northwestern, the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill embarked on the All Players United Campaign, a silent protest marked by players wearing the initials "APU" on their armbands and gear. On the surface, athletic authorities offered support for the actions of the players, but college football coaches expressed an expectation that players could speak out only when they had received 100 percent support from their teammates and only after they had consulted with the coaching staff before they spoke out.

Indeed, within the confines of the highly regulated and regimented world of a Division I-A college football program, "unity" relies on a delicate ecosystem of relationships that exists within it and the tenuousness of those relationships (player to player; player to coach; player to audience): the pressure of being ready for a scheduled game on national television; the financial stakes of a multibillion-dollar industry; and the demands of a viewing public and fan base whose support for social justice may evaporate quickly, replaced with suspicions that players compensated with athletic scholarships had misplaced priorities in a hypercompetitive football culture where winning is the overriding goal.

This raises the question of whether the Missouri players placed themselves in jeopardy of losing their scholarships by boycotting. The Washington Post’s Sarah Larimer reported that the NCAA, when asked that question, said the terms of financial agreements varied from college to college. It seems odd that the rule makers did not point out that, under the NCAA regulation governing fraudulent misrepresentation, the players actually did run the risk of losing their scholarships. Perhaps it just wasn’t a convenient time to disclose that.
It is probably a testament to what the Missouri players’ accomplished that no one dared mention the possibility. Significantly, the young black men on the Missouri football team who lent their voices and their metaphorical muscle to a fight for justice were carrying on Martin Luther King’s work, situating the quest for fair treatment as a matter of civil rights. Their rights — as athletes, as students, as citizens, as workers — are by necessity rooted in civil rights. The rest of King’s quote that was referenced in the player’s tweet proceeds:

"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny," King wrote in his "Letter From a Birmingham Jail." "Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

As the reverberations of the day’s events echoed in college and university administrative offices, there was a recognition of the power of players to shine a light on issues that needed to be addressed, to heed the symptoms of problems that beg for change. College presidents and conference commissioners, athletic directors and administrators, should attend to the lesson here.

Ellen J. Staurowsky is a professor of sport management at Drexel University.

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After Missouri’s Leadership Exodus, Hard Questions Loom on Race, Power, and Culture

By Katherine Mangan

NOVEMBER 11, 2015

COLUMBIA, MO.

As the sun rose on Tuesday over a tent encampment in the heart of the University of Missouri’s flagship campus here, a few sleepy protesters shook off their blankets and made their way to classes. Football practice was set to resume in the afternoon, the threat of a costly boycott averted, and the graduate student whose
A weeklong hunger strike had alarmed his friends and campus administrators was eating again.

By all accounts, the resignations of the university’s top two administrators represented a remarkable coup for student protesters who had demanded new leadership to deal with their concerns about racism, the treatment of graduate students, and other issues on the campus.

But the looming question now is what happens next. How does a university of 35,000 students create a climate in which students, faculty members, and the staff can feel comfortable talking about race? What concrete steps can the university system take to make the campus more welcoming to diverse students? And how does it do that in a careful, collaborative way, while being mindful that protesters might expect quick results in an age of Twitter activism?

Those are just a few of the questions that a 12-member committee, made up of faculty, students, and staff, will continue to wrestle with over the next several months.

"The students just won. Two kings’ heads rolled," said Berkley Hudson, an associate professor of journalism and chair of the Faculty Council Committee on Race Relations, as he reflected on Monday’s resignations of Timothy M. Wolfe, president of the university system, and R. Bowen Loftin, chancellor of the flagship campus. Mr. Loftin said he would step down on December 31 to take a research-focused position with the university.

One committee member is Jonathan Butler, the graduate student who drew national attention to the protesters’ demands by refusing to eat until Mr. Wolfe had resigned. Having Mr. Butler on the committee will help keep students’ frustrations and concerns foremost in the minds of the panel’s members, Mr. Hudson said. Still, vexing questions remain and will take time to answer.

"How do we confront the fears and misunderstandings about race?" Mr. Hudson asked. One possible solution would be having trained facilitators lead discussions in ways that would make people feel comfortable opening up, he said.

"We have to find a way to have these difficult conversations. If we don’t, we’re going to have Confederate flags driving up and down the street and anonymous Yik Yak attacks," he said, referring to angry and threatening social-media posts by those who have objected to the protests.
‘Unacceptable and Offensive’

Organized as a group called Concerned Student 1950, named for the year the university admitted its first black student, student protesters in October published a list of demands that included a handwritten note of apology from Mr. Wolfe and an acknowledgment by him of his "white male privilege." The protesters also demanded a "racial awareness and inclusion curriculum" overseen by a committee made up of "students, staff, and faculty of color."

Mr. Wolfe said on Monday that many of the demands had already been included in a draft of a systemwide diversity and inclusion strategy, which the system has been developing and plans to release in April.

"We want to find the best way to get everyone around the table and create the safe space for a meaningful conversation that promotes change," he said.

Like many colleges across the country, increasing diversity is one key challenge facing the university. About 8 percent of the students on the flagship campus are black, but only 3 percent of the faculty members are, Mr. Hudson said.

Academic departments need to have not only the will but also the money to recruit, nurture, and retain minority faculty members, who might be reluctant to move to a community in the Midwest with a history of racial tensions.

Some of those steps will be part of the system’s approach in the future, according to Donald L. Cupps, chairman of the university system’s governing body, the Board of Curators.

He issued a statement on Monday apologizing on behalf of the university "for being slow to respond to experiences that are unacceptable and offensive." He said the board was committed to making the "significant changes" needed to heal racial tensions.

The board will appoint a diversity officer for the system, review all system policies relating to staff and student conduct, and provide more support to students, faculty, and staff who have experienced discrimination. The system will also provide more support for hiring and retaining diverse faculty and staff members, the board said.

The flagship campus will have mandatory diversity training for all faculty, staff, and future students.
Jacqueline Kelly, a retired faculty member, stopped by the protesters’ encampment on Monday afternoon to thank the students she’d been supplying with blankets and water over the previous several chilly nights.

Ms. Kelly said she hoped the university would hire new leaders who were more proactive in responding to complaints about racism. "Silence sends the message that these behaviors and attitudes are OK," she said.

"I feel strongly that what these bright, determined students are doing, the administration should have done a long time ago," she said. "It’s a new day, and I couldn’t be prouder of the students and the football team." A group of players had threatened to boycott football events until Mr. Wolfe had resigned.

Alexus Carson, a sophomore who brought her younger sister and friends to witness the historic day, said that when she read a tweet on Monday morning saying that the president had resigned, she ran out of class to find students cheering and dancing on the main quad.

"It was like the tension had lifted and there was such a feeling of empowerment," she said. "I’m personally glad that President Wolfe stepped down. It’s not going to stop racism on campus, but it’s going to create a spiral effect and give hope to everyone."

Shortly after word began to spread about Mr. Loftin’s resignation, on Monday afternoon, several members of the football team filed into the encampment and broke their silence with a few prepared statements to the news media.

As they were leaving, J’Mon Moore, a sophomore on the team, told reporters he met with Mr. Butler several days into his hunger strike after learning about his protest from a classmate. "When I first saw him, he collapsed. That’s what drew my attention," he said. He told his teammates about Mr. Butler’s protest and, within an hour, had the team on board. "We wanted to use our platform to stand behind him and, at the end of the day, that’s what we did," Mr. Moore said.

At least one member of the football team, speaking anonymously to an ESPN reporter, said team members had actually been divided on whether to boycott practices, and he doubted that the team would have gone ahead with the threat if it had a stronger record. (The team is currently 4-5.)

One onlooker said he was still trying to make sense of the tumultuous turn of events. Nick Jordan, a junior, said he was shocked by how quickly both the chancellor and the president had gone. "I think it got to the point of no return where both of them had to
go, but in a way, it seems like there was a rush to conclusion," he said. "I don’t know if everyone knew all the facts."

A Sense of Proportion

Looking on at the cluster of national media figures outside the encampment, Eric Wetz, a senior who is white, said the entire controversy had been blown out of proportion.

"One man can’t be responsible for a few racist incidents by a couple of intoxicated students," he said of the president’s forced resignation. "I’m against allowing a small group of students to control the university and having one guy say, I’ll harm myself unless I get my way."

But a freshman, who for solidarity and safety reasons would identify herself only as Concerned Student 1950, defended the group’s tactics.

"We weren’t being heard, so we had to be dramatic and strategic," said the student, who is black. "We didn’t think that the hardest thing to check off our list — having the president resign — would be the first thing we’d accomplish, but we’re going to continue fighting to make the grounds of this campus inclusive."

On Tuesday a protest leader said the tents would stay up until all of the students’ demands had been met. "This is just the beginning," said Curtis Taylor Jr., a senior. "People need to critically examine their role in perpetuating racism. These were not isolated instances."

Asked what needed to happen for the campus to heal, one faculty member said it was premature to answer that question.

"Healing comes after everyone is fully aware of the underlying racism and discrimination that led to the protests and feels that they can and will do something to address it," Casandra E. Harper, an associate professor of educational leadership and policy analysis, wrote in an email. "I don’t think we’re there yet as a campus."

Winning the revolution is half the battle
By Joe Walljasper

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 2:00 pm

The real trick of a revolution is not just overthrowing a government, it’s creating something better in the aftermath. To fully capitalize on what just happened at the University of Missouri and improve the racial climate on campus, the job is to build the biggest consensus possible to make the best of a national spotlight that will be here today and gone tomorrow.

On that front, there were a few missteps Monday from the protest campsite and the athletic department. I don’t want to lose sight of the big picture here, that a small group of protesters got a boost from a handful of football players, and they used their combined powers to take down the University of Missouri’s highest-ranking official. Whatever you think of the outcome, that’s an impressive bit of activism and a historic event.

Hence all the TV trucks with satellite dishes.

The biggest wigs in the Missouri athletic department seemed quite conflicted about whether to take a victory lap or run for cover.

The MU athletic department decided the best way to explain a football boycott spearheaded by a group of idealistic young black players was to put two graying white guys in front of microphones and decline to make players available.

There was a clear effort to control the message by limiting the open mouths at the Mizzou Athletics Training Complex, as Athletic Director Mack Rhoades and Coach Gary Pinkel did all the talking. They repeatedly said their decision to back the players in their boycott had everything to do with concern over the health of hunger-striking protester Jonathan Butler and nothing to do with the ouster of University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe, whose departure from office was the goal of the protest.

The official word was that the players told Pinkel they didn’t want to talk to the media — which, if true, makes me wonder if the players are making all the major decisions in the football program now — but that explanation didn’t seem to hold water because when reporters were able to catch up with the key figures in the football boycott on campus, players such as safety Anthony Sherrills and wide receiver J’Mon Moore were willing to talk.

I’m not sure who in the athletic department came up with the strategy to muzzle players — or not firmly request that they speak — although I’m sure it sounded like a great plan to MU assistant professor of communications Melissa Click, who did not cover herself in glory at the protest site on Carnahan Quad. Click, who could use a refresher course on the First Amendment, reacted to a student photographer doing his job in a public place by saying, “Hey who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle.”

Foolish actions like that divert attention from the point of the protest.
Judging by the Twitter feed of the Concerned Student 1950 group on Monday, there is distrust of the media’s motives. But it just didn’t make any sense to prevent journalists who were trying to publicize the event from creating the best stories and photos possible. It’s hard to take an iconic photo with 10 bullies blocking your view. Isn’t the point of a protest to alert the most people to the cause you’re championing?

To its credit, the Concerned Student 1950 group realized the mistake and took a whole different tact Tuesday. Signs telling the media to stay out were taken down and a public-service announcement was distributed that reminded protesters that media play an important role in telling the protesters’ story.

Moving forward, as the protesters and their football allies hope to make substantive changes in the university’s racial climate or maybe even have some role in choosing the next president, there has to be a transition from militancy to diplomacy, which means building the biggest tent and welcoming the most people possible.

Mizzou protesters vow to carry on amid the aftershocks of upheaval

Nov. 11, 2015 • By Koran Addo

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Members of the Mizzou student activist group Concerned Student 1950 said Tuesday the movement to spark change on campus isn’t over just because University of Missouri System President Timothy M. Wolfe is out of office.

The movement, which group members say first took root well over a year ago, is partly in solidarity with the protests in Ferguson and partly in response to a climate on the University of Missouri-Columbia campus, which they describe as unwelcoming to minority students at best, and at worst openly hostile to people of color.

Wolfe resigned amid demonstrations calling for his ouster, one student’s hunger strike and a pledge by university football players not to take the field again until Wolfe left office.

“We are not declaring victory because Tim Wolfe resigned,” said Maxwell Little, one of the original 11 members of Concerned Student 1950. “People misinterpret this as a racial movement. This is a human rights movement. If you consider yourself a person, this movement is about you too.”

In speaking to reporters on Tuesday, the group ended its media blackout — which reached its climax Monday when group members and students at large were captured on video advancing on student journalists, forming a moving human wall to keep reporters and photographers out of the Carnahan Quadrangle where the group has set up an encampment.
On Tuesday, some group members, who did not give their names, each referring to themselves as Concerned Student 1950, said they intend to keep the campsite up indefinitely, possibly until university administrators meet their demands.

In addition to removing Wolfe from office, the group has demanded a seat at the table in selecting a new president; the creation of a racial awareness curriculum; a pledge to increase black campus and staff respectively to 10 percent by the 2017-18 school year; and increased funding for hiring additional campus mental health professionals.

Outside of policy changes, one group member described the movement as a campaign to change the hearts and minds of the larger community of 35,000 students.

In some quarters on campus, however, people feel the changes brought about by the movement have been too severe.

Wolfe’s resignation on Monday was followed hours later with the decision by Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin to leave his post at the end of the year.

“I think people have the right to have an opinion, but getting the president and the chancellor to resign is a little bit too far,” sophomore Tommy Moldthan said. “How is he supposed to stop people from being racist? Putting myself in his position, I don’t know what I would’ve done.”

Moldthan, who is white, said the rhetoric coming from Concerned Student 1950, specifically the contention that black students feel unsafe on certain parts of campus, is overblown.

“Obviously, there’s going to be some racism on a campus this size. Some people are always going to be ridiculous. How can anyone prevent that?”

‘A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY’

For administrators, Tuesday was spent seeking to reassure students that change is coming and to assure parents that students are safe. Chuck Henson, an associate dean from the MU School of Law with a background in civil rights law, was named as interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.

Meanwhile, an email to MU parents and students asked them to view the turmoil of the past few weeks as “a learning opportunity.”

“We need to look inside, examine our own biases and think carefully about the things we say and do that cause others to feel hurt, unwelcome and excluded,” wrote Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for student affairs. “We need to call each other out when we witness behavior that does not align with our community’s core values.”

The letter tells parents who have concerns that they can reach the office via email at parents@missouri.edu, or by calling a parent hotline at 1-888-631-1098.

Meanwhile, MU police on Tuesday emailed new guidelines to students for “Reporting Hateful and/or Hurtful Speech.” The email lists a process for students “who witness incidents of hateful and/or hurtful speech.” They include calling police and providing a detailed description.

Even if such speech isn’t a crime, the email says, students can be disciplined by Mizzou.

Mizzou police were investigating threats on social media Tuesday night, and Loftin asked students in a tweet to call 911 immediately if they needed help. Students tweeted screenshots of threats made on an anonymous social media app called Yik Yak, one of which said, “I’m going to stand my ground tomorrow and shoot every black person I see.”
The MU Alert account on Twitter asked students to not spread rumors, and said the account was the “only reliable source in emergency.”

Some professors opted to cancel class or give students outside work to do. Some fraternities and sororities were on lockdown Tuesday night, students reported.

‘IT PERMEATES EVERYTHING’
While Tuesday’s scene on the quad was more subdued than Monday’s jubilant atmosphere, a few hundred yards away, at Traditions Plaza, dozens of Mizzou’s graduate students held a rally reiterating that the fight for campus equality isn’t over. Graduate students have stood in solidarity with Concerned Student 1950, drawing parallels with what they describe as their own unfair treatment.

Graduate assistants are students pursuing advanced degrees. They grade papers, conduct research and teach classes. They’ve held a number of protests in recent months, fighting back against what they describe as the gradual erosion of their benefits.

Shortly before the start of the school year, the university stripped them of their health insurance subsidies and scaled back their tuition waivers. Mizzou administrators have since restored the subsidies and extended the tuition waivers through next school year.

But so far, there has been no movement on calls for restoring affordable graduate housing and childcare, which students enjoyed in the past.

Shortly after the rally, graduate students held a silent march from Traditions Plaza to Jesse Hall.

As they marched, a campus tour guide hosting a group of prospective students paused to let the marchers pass.

One prospective student asked about the racial climate on campus. It’s a question that will likely dog university administrators as the campus now holds a place in the national spotlight, along with Ferguson — about two hours east by car — as still another example of persistent racial disharmony in the U.S.

Nothing will change until people in the majority make an effort to step outside of themselves to try to understand the black experience, said Reuben Faloughi, another member of Concerned Student 1950. “It’s like air,” Faloughi said. “That’s the best way to describe it. It permeates everything. It’s an entire climate and an entire culture. It’s in the classroom, it’s in our student organizations. Even if you don’t feel it, it’s very real to some of us.”

Kevin McDermott, Jessica Bock and Valerie Schremp Hahn of the Post-Dispatch contributed to this report from St. Louis.

St. Louis student activists say Mizzou cohorts must keep pressing for campus changes

By KAMEEL STANLEY • 21 HOURS AGO
St. Louis-area student activists said University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe’s resignation has re-energized the student protest movement that sprang up around Ferguson a year ago.

**Mizzou students’ demands for a more diverse and inclusive campus are similar to those made by St. Louis student activists.**

Saint Louis University junior Jonathan Pulphus said Wolfe’s resignation proves that students’ actions can change systems.

“It made my morning,” he said Monday. “What’s happening at Mizzou is a big win for the movement and we want for them to continue to pushing and for whatever support they need to know that they have us and we want to stand in solidarity with them.”

Pulphus has spent the past year pushing for changes under what’s known as the “Clock Tower Accords,” a 13-point agreement which calls for conversations about race on SLU’s campus and more resources for the African American studies department.

Some of the things the Mizzou students called for:

- A handwritten apology from Tim Wolfe
- The removal of Wolfe, and a new amendment that would require a diverse group of students, staff and faculty pick the new president
- The creation and enforcement of a campus-wide racial awareness and inclusion curriculum
- A increase in black faculty and staff (to 10 percent) by the 2017/2018 academic year, as well as an increase in mental health professionals of color
- A 10-year plan to increase retention rates for marginalized students

“There are these myths that the efforts of students, of people in general who do protests, that they are better off just working within the system and not confronting, not questioning, not pushing against the system, that without work, we can just wish it all away,” Pulphus said. “That we can just be hopeful it’ll be better off tomorrow.”

Washington University sophomore Reuben Hogan, 19, said victories like these revive hope. But he said it’s sad to think that it took a hunger strike and the football team’s refusal to play for administrators to act.
"But, even if the most powerful reason was money, it still means something when you have the ability to stop oppression without being in a position of power," Hogan said.

Pulphus said he hopes Wolfe’s resignation means that Mizzou students activists will get their demands met.

But he says the harder work will begin after Wolfe leaves.

Urgency wanes as time goes on, the student said, and it’s easy for the work to get clogged in meetings and committees.

“The question is how to move forward," he said.

An earlier version of this story had an incorrect figure in the list of Mizzou students' demands.

Activists say fight is not finished after university leadership shakeup

By Alan Burdziak

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Tuesday morning was quiet and calm at Carnahan Quadrangle and the Concerned Student 1950 campsite, where more than 20 tents and several dozen activists remained a day after hundreds filled the area, celebrating the resignation of University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe.

It was not clear how long the quad would remain a campsite after Concerned Student 1950 members said Monday at a news conference, just a few hours after Wolfe quit, that it wants to meet with system officials, the Board of Curators and Gov. Jay Nixon about shared governance. Members also said they would issue another list of demands, without specifying what would be on the list.
Two members of the group declined to speak with a Tribune reporter Tuesday, keeping in line with directions from organizers to not talk with the media and to direct reporters to an email account. As of the Tribune’s deadline, no one had responded to an email seeking comment.

Later, reporters posted on Twitter that the group had taken down signs that barred the media from interacting with protesters and was handing out papers that said the group welcomed reporters.

Also on Tuesday, the Black Law Students Association issued a statement of solidarity with Concerned Student 1950, which is seeking to curtail racism and improve race relations on campus. The statement endorsed Wolfe’s resignation.

“For all Mizzou students, this is a step in the right direction, but the question still remains: What will Mizzou do to actively combat institutional and systemic racial issues on our campus?” the statement said.

Speaking Monday at Traditions Plaza to hundreds of supporters and reporters from local, national and international outlets, the activists cautioned that their fight was not over. Visibly weak from his hunger strike that ended when Wolfe quit Monday morning, MU graduate student Jonathan Butler said it was “disgusting and vile” that it took so long for Wolfe to act on issues of racism on campus. He also told people to not only focus on what happened Monday.

“Look at why did we get here in the first place, the struggle, why we had to do what we did,” Butler said.

The group’s calls for Wolfe’s job intensified over the past week. Butler began his hunger strike Nov. 2, and activists with Concerned Student 1950 camped in tents near Traditions Plaza. The protesters were upset administrators had not done enough to address racism on campus after a series of recent events. The 11 founders of the group blocked Wolfe’s car during the Homecoming Parade on Oct. 10, but Wolfe did not get out of the car and talk to them.

At Carnahan Quadrangle on Monday morning, hundreds of people showed up to support the group. Shortly after Wolfe announced his resignation, supporters of the group locked arms around the quad to keep media out of the campsite where protesters and organizers had stayed.

Supporters brought Butler into the quad and announced his hunger strike had ended. They chanted slogans including “The only thing we have to lose is our chains” and “It is our duty to win!” Protesters danced and sang in a large group on the lawn, but elation soon turned to cautious optimism when the 11 Concerned Student 1950 members took the stage.

Organizers said they will continue to fight for equality at and that they will post a new list of demands in the near future. Butler, citing graduate students’ protests over health insurance, tuition waivers and other benefits, said the ideas championed by Concerned Student 1950 and graduate students intersect.
“This was not Jonathan Butler, this was the Mizzou community — for one of the first times I’ve seen — coming together,” Butler said.

Some students and faculty who did not participate in the celebration but watched the events unfold said they supported Concerned Student 1950. Kayla Leach, a communications major at MU, said Wolfe’s resignation was a good starting point but that more changes should be made at the administrative level.

Later in the day, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin said he would leave his post Jan. 1.

“It needs to start with the leadership,” she said. “Changes really start top-down, and by holding our leadership accountable, then you can begin to hold accountable who comes next.”

Racism on campus is a frequent occurrence, she said, recounting one night when someone shouted obscene language and racial slurs at her six times as she walked across campus.

Kate Sansone, a communications and psychology major, said she has not had the same experiences but that she sympathizes with people who have.

“When you don’t feel safe on campus, you don’t feel that you have the equal opportunity to learn like everyone else does,” Sansone said. “You don’t feel that you have the same freedom and safety. You don’t feel like you’re welcome.”

Like many others Monday, Kyle Smith said Wolfe quitting was little more than a start.

“It’s a positive step in the right direction,” said Smith, a junior communications major. “I don’t think it’s over at all, though. The hateful are gonna come out, and they might retaliate or whatever, but I do think it’s a step in the right direction.”

Smith said it will be important to find the right leader to succeed Wolfe.

While most people on the quad were excited, freshman Pat McKelvey worried the national and international coverage might hurt MU’s reputation. Wolfe needed to go because he did not respond correctly, McKelvey said, but he said the image of the school could hurt Concerned Student 1950’s goal of diversifying the campus.

“We were just called a racist campus on national TV,” McKelvey said, referring to a report he saw on ESPN. “I don’t think you’re going to be a destination for African-American grad students or faculty” if the campus is seen as racist.

This story was first published online on Monday, November 9, 2015 at 3:20 p.m.
Before protests, U. of Missouri saw decades of race tension

Nov. 11, 2015 • By ALAN SCHER ZAGIER and SUMMER BALLENTINE

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — This week's events at the University of Missouri seemed to unfold rapidly, with little warning. But some students, faculty and alumni say the protests and sudden resignation of the president and chancellor are the culmination of years of racial tension on the state's flagship campus.

The history of racially charged incidents dates back generations.

When the university denied admission to black law school applicant Lloyd Gaines, the issue led to an influential 1938 Supreme Court decision that helped pave the way for the civil rights movement.

Three decades later, during the unrest of the late 1960s, the Legion of Black Collegians emerged at Mizzou to press for increased minority representation among students, staff and faculty — a goal student protesters say remains unmet.

And the 2011 suicide of black swimmer Sasha Menu Courey after she was allegedly raped by several football players led some to question the campus commitment to investigating sexual assaults.

"Who built this university?" asked student government President Payton Head. "Who was building buildings in 1839" when the school was founded?

"Slavery wasn't abolished until 1865," Head said. "But we don't talk about that history here at the University of Missouri."

Head's social media accounts of having racial slurs shouted at him from a passing pickup truck helped spark a renewed protest movement at Missouri that culminated Monday with the resignation of university system President Tim Wolfe. Hours later, the top administrator of the Columbia campus, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, was forced out.

Other students — and some black professors — describe similar threats, from being targeted with slurs to tense confrontations with campus police over seemingly innocuous matters for which they say their white counterparts receive far less scrutiny.

"It's an inevitability," said Delan Ellington, a senior history and anthropology major from Chicago. "I felt lied to. I was led to believe this is a very inclusive campus.

Journalism professor Cynthia Frisby said she was spat at while jogging several months ago by a driver who displayed a Confederate flag on his truck, extended his middle finger and called her the n-word. Frisby said she was referred to in the same way by fellow faculty members.

In her 17 years living in Columbia and working on campus, Frisby told the Columbia Missourian, she has been called the n-word "too many times to count."
Late Tuesday night, tensions rose again on campus after the university announced it was aware of "social media threats" and had increased security.

The announcement posted on the university's website didn't detail the nature of the threats, and a university spokesman couldn't immediately be reached for further comment.

A plaza that had been the site of a weeklong sit-in by protesters was entirely empty, and police officers from the campus department and city of Columbia were seen on patrol.

David Wallace, a spokesman for the student government group Missouri Students Association, said the group asked university officials to cancel classes Wednesday in light of the threats.

Earlier in the day, the university named Chuck Henson, a black law professor and associate dean, as its first-ever interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity. The appointment followed an emergency meeting of the four-campus system's governing board Monday. The meeting concluded with promises of restoring a "culture of respect" while providing additional, though unspecified, support for aggrieved students and a renewed commitment to bolster minority hiring and recruitment.

Members of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus met Tuesday with protest organizers, including leaders of the group Concerned Student 1950 — named for the year the school admitted its first black student. Also joining the meeting was graduate student Jonathan Butler, whose weeklong hunger strike led to a two-day walkout by more than 30 members of the Missouri football team.

The meeting was held in the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center, a main gathering spot for black students named after a civil rights pioneer who successfully sued to gain admission to the segregated University of Missouri law school but never enrolled. Lloyd Lionel Gaines disappeared in a 76-year-old mystery with little likelihood of being solved.

The university that denied him admission to its law school honored Gaines with a posthumous honorary degree in 2006. The Missouri Bar awarded Gaines an honorary law license that same year.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the state had to either admit Gaines or establish a separate law school for blacks. Missouri chose to create a bare-bones law school for blacks in a former St. Louis beauty academy, leading Gaines to move north and earn a master's degree in economics from the University of Michigan. He was last seen leaving a Chicago boarding house in 1939.

One of Gaines' attorneys from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was a young Thurgood Marshall, who would go on to argue the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education desegregation case in 1954 before spending 24 years as a Supreme Court justice.

When unrest began to mount this fall, the university scrambled to respond, announcing plans in early October to offer diversity training to all new students starting next semester, as well as faculty and staff.

On Friday, the now-former chancellor issued an open letter decrying racism after a swastika smeared in feces was found in a campus dormitory. Loftin's delayed public response drew condemnation from Jewish student groups and a coalition of 35 organizations, on and off campus.

Among other recent events, members of the Legions of Black Collegians, whose founders include a recently retired deputy chancellor, said slurs were hurled at them by an apparently drunken white student while practicing for a homecoming performance.

Resentment of Wolfe escalated after black protesters blocked his convertible during the homecoming parade and subsequently criticized the university leader for not speaking with them.
Protests again flared Tuesday as hundreds gathered in the shadow of Jesse Hall, the main administration building, for a graduate student-led rally.

"I'm very proud of the protesters that they got what they wanted," said Evan Kleekamp of Chicago, a 2013 graduate whose mother is black mother and father is biracial. "But the president is just a symbol of the culture."

Kleekamp described the campus as segregated and said minorities feel safe only in certain areas where they congregate and white students do not join them. He said he frequently had been called epithets concerning his race and sexual orientation in local bars.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

First-person stories of everyday racism

19 HRS AGO


To add perspective to our community conversation on race, we've been asking readers how they encounter racism. Personal experiences and stories are powerful tools in building understanding of difficult topics.

Here's a sampling of what readers wrote to us and told us. Want to add your voice? Weigh in here. And please share the link with people you think might be willing to respond.

"They'll look at me, and then they'll clutch their bag a little tighter."

"Not only did he spit at me, he called me the n-word and gave me the finger."

Listen as more Columbia residents tell you about racism they've experienced, overt or implied.

Marquise Griffin: "They made gorilla noises at me"

Marquise Griffin, 22, says he has been directly affected by racism since he moved to Columbia five months ago.
Saad Al Khashrami: "I can't fit in this culture and be a part of it"

NOTE: This audio clip contains profanity. Saad Al Khashrami, 30, is from Saudi Arabia. He has been in Columbia for a little more than a year and a half.

Anthony Onuzuruike: "If you see something wrong, do something"

Anthony Onuzuruike, 22, says he deals with people assuming certain things about him because he is black.

Nate Kotisso: Good English isn't reserved for white people

Nate Kotisso, 21, talks about the micro-aggressions that often go unnoticed.

Darren Swanson: "People would drive by and yell racist things at me"

Darren Swanson, 20, shares about times when he was called racial slurs growing up in Missouri.

At Second Missionary Baptist Church on Sunday morning, three churchgoers shared philosophies on race.

Lamar Roberts: "We may be a predominately black church, but anyone's welcome here"

Lamar Roberts, 55, is also known as the man who plays the flute on MU game days outside Memorial Stadium.

Derric Kelly: "In my eyes we're all one, and people are people"

Mary Ratliff: Job equality needs to be addressed

Mary Ratliff is the state and local president of the NAACP.

Pastor Clyde Ruffin: "It's hard to understand why certain people dislike you for no apparent reason"

On Sunday, Pastor Clyde Ruffin of Second Missionary Baptist Church gave a sermon in response to recent acts of racism at MU. He spoke about being called "the name," referring to the n-word. Ruffin said that that word is historically charged with racism. He told the congregation to "stand firm on the truth that God is the only one who knows who you are, and God calls you blessed."
The Rev. Molly Housh Gordon, minister at Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, wrote to her congregation about why she supports Butler's hunger strike despite her personal discomfort.

Calls for the Concerned Student 1950 group to be more reasonable in their demands sound strikingly close to calls from white moderates during the Civil Rights movement to "just wait," to "be patient" and to "trust the process" of white-run government. To these calls, Dr. King replied: "Frankly, I have never yet engaged in a direct-action movement that was ‘well timed’ according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation."

Here are more written submissions from readers.

Ragh Singh, 30, came to the United States from India in 2006 as an international student. He has been in Columbia for a little more than two years.

"Even after being in the United States for more than nine years and having become a naturalized U.S Citizen and currently working in the University of Missouri as an academic and career advisor, I often have to try harder to amalgamate in the greater American society due to the color of skin and my accent and that I am as American as an apple pie to my students and colleagues all the time. As unfortunate as it is, in several social circles I am still perceived to be the "other." To some I bring in the factor of cultural exoticism, while to others my mannerism are too complicated to understand.

"Time and again to be successful in my academics and my work responsibilities, I have been expected to adapt to American standards. Living in the 21st century America one would think we have moved beyond issues of race, and yet the struggles of the "other," the oppressed minority from race, gender, sexuality, and disability, continue to be factors that are not taken in account from admission to other hiring policies. We talk about change and yet our institutional policies lack the very substance that would bring about that change. Again, dialogue on racism can only bring about change if it is pushed and implemented by the very institutions that often knowingly or unknowingly have supported its existence in the past and present."

Kari Utterback, 30. Utterback is a Columbia resident and the Volunteer Director for Pride Fest.

I think I experience this by people around me thinking that race isn't their concern, because they are "color blind." Obviously though, color is seen. Color blindness leads to not recognizing that we all have different lived experiences. And, that some folks are treated differently, or paid differently, or not hired,
or followed in the store, or experience white flight in their neighborhoods. And have had these experiences their entire lives. I experience racism on the daily when someone is talking about their lived experience, but someone else tries to justify that person being persecuted. Or worse, a bystander is silent. Race is not a binary system. It is not white and everyone who isn't white. Race is a spectrum. And, when someone tells you they have or are experiencing racism, the only acceptable response is "I believe you."

**Phillip Overeem, 53.** *Overeem is the Writing Specialist and Professional Tutor for Stephens College's First-Year Experience program. He's had experience teaching language arts to middle school and high school students in Springfield and Columbia.*

Phillip Overeem, 53, has seen instances of racism as a student and teacher. He recalled a time from sixth grade he questioned what his teacher was presenting.

As a privileged white male in my 50s who has spent over 30 years teaching in public schools and four working in a college environment, I have watched it occur: Between students, between teachers and students, between administrators and students, between administrators and teachers — in a word, institutionally.

An important moment in my early life was encountering a racist presentation by a sixth grade teacher about Dr. King and the civil rights movement, which, after researching it, convinced me not to trust authority on such matters. Most of the few black students I went to high school with (1975-1980) were somehow housed in an annex across from the school — I am assuming this was a special ed class. That observation plus my teaching experiences support the reading and research I've done, which convinces me that black students are over- and misdiagnosed as special education cases more frequently than other students.
Steve Paul: There’s nothing simple about the story of race and rebellion at MU

Campus protest and its results have super-charged the post-Ferguson atmosphere.

Chalk another one up for the complicated and fractured state of Missouri.

Conversations on diversity, journalism and social progress should dominate the school’s future.

BY STEVE PAUL

paul@kcstar.com

There are so many threads to unravel and examine in the story of race and rebellion at the University of Missouri.

Student demonstrations to shed light on a culture of racial insensitivity and an uncaring, slow-to-respond administration led to the departure of the university system’s president and the chancellor of the Columbia campus.

A hunger strike by one student leader, a tent-city occupation, a sympathy move by the MU football team, and a complicated dust-up over “media” coverage, journalism and interpretations of the First Amendment have super-charged the post-Ferguson atmosphere of racial tension and social justice.

Chalk another one up for the complicated and fractured state of Missouri.

Clearly, the Columbia campus has been shaken. It will be scrutinized closely as new leadership is chosen and as the campus community enters a period of (presumably) civil conversation. Cultural diversity, campus demographics, the meaning of power and repression and empathy for marginalized members of the MU student body will be among the talking points in that dialogue. They will also be the markers for social progress at the university in the years to come.

Of course, those who resist the idea of discourse along those lines will continue to toss unhelpful stink bombs along the Twitterized way.

Jonathan Butler, a graduate student, spent eight days on a hunger strike, vowing to continue until university president Tim Wolfe left office. Butler might have raised the protest bar for graduate students everywhere. His complaints began before the current semester started, when
grad students learned the university was yanking a health-benefit subsidy. That badly handled affair — the subsidy was soon restored — segued over the last couple of months through a series of ugly encounters involving slurs aimed at prominent black students and a confrontation with Wolfe that escalated because he declined to get out of his car and talk.

On Monday, after his goal had been reached, Butler greeted his fellow protesters with chants — “this is not a moment, it’s a movement” — and the raised-fist declaration: “I am a revolutionary.”

Anyone with a memory or a sense of the campus revolts of the 1960s — over the Vietnam War, free speech and social justice — couldn’t fail to feel the echo.

With a protest movement unfolding at Yale University right now, and with a serious strain of anti-academia spreading throughout state governments, you can safely bet that we are in for a new period of complaint and philosophical collision on campus.

MU students were working Tuesday to smooth over their own collision with Tim Tai, the student photographer who was trying to take pictures of the rally as a freelancer for ESPN. When bullied by demonstrators inviting him to depart a public space, Tai gracefully stood his ground on behalf of the First Amendment. He had as much right to be there as they did, he tried to tell the obstructionist students. Tai justifiably earned praise on Tuesday from the dean of Missouri’s heralded journalism school.

And then there’s the unfortunate matter of Melissa Click. She is the faculty member, captured on that viral video centered on Tai, who demands his ouster from the grounds and calls for help: “I need some muscle over here.” Click is an assistant professor of mass media and communications who holds a “courtesy appointment” in the journalism school. Dean David Kurpius announced on Tuesday that journalism faculty members were taking another look at that appointment. Slam dunk, I’d say.

Not surprisingly, Click has gone underground and apparently has been hiding from journalists ever since. She’ll be (sorry) academic click bait from here on out.

Sure people have a right to their feelings — to tease out this last thread — but when you’ve taken your feelings to a highly visible public forum, you have made a social compact with those who are tweeting, writing about and picturing you.

In later comments, Tai was plaintive and self-critical about the intrusions of journalism. But as he well knows, everyone’s freedom depends on the responsible practice of it.

The encounter was being reframed on Tuesday as a “teachable moment.” Let’s hope.
Op-Ed: A History of Racism at the University of Missouri

By Brent Staples

Timothy Wolfe’s resignation on Monday from the presidency of the University of Missouri system will not resolve the racial tensions that forced him from office. His tone-deaf style certainly inflamed the problem at the flagship campus in Columbia. But racist acts and utterances aimed at black students and black faculty have been an issue there for many years.

Cynthia Frisby, a journalism professor, crystallized this history in the Missourian newspaper this week. In nearly 18 years at the university, she wrote, “I have been called the n-word too many times to count.” She recalled jogging along a road in May when a white man in a truck flying a Confederate flag stopped, spat at her, called out a racist slur and sped off.

And passersby in pickup trucks were not the only perpetrators: “I have had a few faculty call me the n-word and treat me with incredible disrespect. Yes, faculty.”

Racist mockery is something of a local sport. In 2010, two white students who scattered white cotton balls in front of the Black Culture Center during Black History Month were allowed to plead guilty to littering.

The campus was roiled again in December when an anonymous post on a social media site – likely written by students – read: “Let’s burn down the black culture center & give them a taste of their own medicine.”

Things stood thusly this fall when the president of the Missouri Student Association, who is black, reported that he was walking across campus when a group of men in a pickup truck yelled a racial epithet at him. Then last month, a swastika was drawn on a residence hall in human excrement.

Mr. Wolfe seemed not to grasp the nature of the problem and showed no aptitude for defusing it. His encounters with minority students were nothing short of disastrous. Discord spread quickly through the student body, into the faculty and finally into the football team, where players announced over the weekend that they would play no more games until the president resigned. The prospect of losing millions of dollars clarified the minds of those in power.
When the board that governs the university named Mr. Wolfe in 2011, it trumpeted the fact that it had chosen a businessman, not an academic who had actually run a university. Clearly it should go a different route this time.

The new president can start by casting off euphemism and referring to the problem by its name. It’s not “race relations” or “racial insensitivity.” The malady that black people at Missouri have been describing for quite some time is racism.

Political reaction to Wolfe, Loftin resignations colored by liberal, conservative viewpoints

By RUDI KELLER

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 2:00 pm Comments (19)

The political reaction to Monday’s events at the University of Missouri ranged from U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill hinting she played a role in pushing Tim Wolfe to resign as University of Missouri System president to Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder denouncing “mob rule” and Gov. Jay Nixon for a lack of leadership.

McCaskill appeared on CNN before Wolfe resigned to say she expected to see changes at the university. Later, she told Rachel Maddow on MSNBC that she had “certainly been in contact with the administration” and the family of Jonathan Butler, the graduate student who engaged in a hunger strike.

Kinder, speaking with conservative radio host Dana Loesch, said he opposed giving in to protesters’ demands.

“We are close to a point where the next kook who announces he goes on a hunger strike can hold the entire governance system of the university hostage,” said Kinder, a candidate to replace Nixon in 2016.

Wolfe’s resignation, followed quickly by that of MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, emphasized how politically difficult the fall semester has been for the Columbia campus. Crosscurrents of discontent
created the whirlpool that pulled the two leaders under for very different reasons. Wolfe was head of the four-campus university system, while Loftin continues to oversee the flagship Columbia campus until Jan. 1.

Wolfe was unable to come to grips with simmering racial issues. The Legislative Black Caucus issued a statement from Rep. Brandon Ellington, D-Kansas City, praising the students for forcing Wolfe out.

“The resignation of University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe demonstrates that leaders who ignore injustice or cling to the status quo do so at their own peril,” Ellington said.

A black conservative group, Project 21, issued a statement from co-chairman Horace Cooper that called Wolfe’s resignation “a victory for the racial totalitarians.”

Former House Speaker Tim Jones, a Republican who is now chairman of the Missouri Club for Growth, posted on Twitter that “#Mizzou looks like Lord of the Flies today.”

Loftin has been buffeted by abortion issues tied to the university’s relations to Planned Parenthood, criticized from the left for being too quick to appease Republican lawmakers and from the right for not moving swiftly enough to sever ties to the abortion provider.

Loftin also was unable to survive a faculty rebellion that included all permanent deans calling for his removal.

A statement from Planned Parenthood tied its issues with Loftin with the student protests against Wolfe. “Butler, and the students and faculty who joined him, understand that issues of racial justice and access to health care — including safe, legal abortion — are interconnected and cannot be fought alone,” Cecile Richards, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, said in a prepared statement.

Local politicians were generally supportive of the steps taken to find new leadership.

State Reps. Stephen Webber and Kip Kendrick, Columbia Democrats, issued a joint statement offering their help to heal the rifts. They said the leadership changes offer a chance “to move forward as a community. The Missouri Board of Curators must engage in a meaningful dialogue and take concrete action so every student at the University of Missouri feels safe and welcome.”

Webber’s rival for the 19th District state Senate seat, Rep. Caleb Rowden, R-Columbia, issued a similar statement. “Our Mizzou family has reached a pivotal moment — will we allow ourselves to be
defined by conflict and strife?" Rowden said. “Or will we come together and create a positive dialogue and a productive vision for this institution we have all grown to love?”

Curator who helped pick Wolfe says his resignation 'sets a terrible precedent'

By DALE SINGER • 5 HOURS AGO

When Tim Wolfe was being interviewed as a candidate to be president of the University of Missouri system four years ago, curator Wayne Goode of Normandy was wary of hiring a businessman to head the four-campus system.

But after Wolfe resigned Monday in the wake of growing protests over racial incidents at the university's flagship campus in Columbia, Goode said he not only was won over by Wolfe’s management of the system, he worries about being able to recruit suitable candidates to replace him.

“It could be very difficult,” Goode said of recruiting a new president, in an interview a few hours after Wolfe announced his resignation in Columbia before a hastily arranged closed-door meeting of the Board of Curators.

“I would think any candidate for president would be pretty leery to come in to a university that allowed a relatively small number of students to use an issue like this to demand the resignation of a president who really couldn’t, in my opinion at least, be personally blamed for those occurrences at all.

“I think this sets a terrible precedent, not only for the University of Missouri but for universities elsewhere. It’s almost an invitation for chaos.”

Wolfe won’t be the only top administrator the university needs to hire. R. Bowen Loftin, the chancellor of the Columbia campus who also has been under fire from student protests, announced late Monday that he would be moving out of that role into one where he will be coordinating research for the university.
Protests against Wolfe followed several racial incidents at Mizzou but escalated after the homecoming parade in Columbia. Several protesters approached Wolfe’s car, which bumped one of them, Jonathan Butler. In response, Butler began a hunger strike that eventually galvanized the campus demonstrations, bringing in faculty members and football players who vowed not to play in this weekend’s game in Kansas City.

Wolfe made a variety of attempts to smooth over the growing unrest, but he was met with bolder resistance with each passing day. In advance of Monday morning’s executive session of the curators, he announced his resignation. Butler immediately said he would end his week-long hunger strike. And the football team said it will take the field after all.

**Shift in target of protests**

Race and other issues have stirred protests and demonstrations in Columbia for weeks against Loftin. The *Columbia Tribune* reported Monday that nine deans on campus had drafted a letter to the curators urging that Loftin be fired. The English department at Mizzou had cast a vote of no-confidence against the chancellor last week.

At the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Chancellor Tom George issued a statement Monday afternoon noting that the racial incidents that ignited the demonstrations in Columbia are not isolated.

“We live in a greater society that continues to wrestle with systemic racism, social justice and equal opportunity,” George wrote in his letter to UMSL students, faculty, staff and alumni.

“The University of Missouri–St. Louis has many guiding principles – none more important than civility, diversity and inclusion. As one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse campuses in Missouri, UMSL is committed to maintaining a climate where all students, faculty, staff and visitors can explore their interests, refine their talents and flourish.”

George said efforts to counteract problems due to race have increased since the death of Michael Brown in nearby Ferguson in August of last year.

“But we need to do more,” he wrote. “This morning, I asked members of the Chancellor’s Cultural Diversity Council to organize a forum during which members of the UMSL community can express their views and share their ideas about making UMSL better.
“I will participate in this and other forums and meetings, but do not plan to outline their format or agenda. I believe leaving the details and scheduling to the Council better ensures the openness that will yield the type of results that will benefit us all.”

He said Wolfe’s departure, and the protracted protests in Columbia, have increased pressure on him to act at UMSL.

“As you might expect,” George said, “I have started receiving phone calls and emails from varied individuals and groups on and off campus wanting to discuss their experiences and views on this campus and other UM campuses. Some just want to know what comes next. I don’t have a quick fix or answer to all the issues, but I will try to respond as quickly as I can to each and every request to meet or for information.

“I think it best at this point to accept President Wolfe’s resignation as an opportunity to talk more – and louder – about longstanding issues … bringing about positive change at UMSL and influencing change in the larger community.”

While Monday’s drama was being played out in Columbia, a demonstration against racism was also being held at Yale.

And while the departure of Wolfe met one of the demands from the group known as Concerned Student 1950 – named after the year that the university admitted its first African-American student – many others remained.

They include that the university create “comprehensive racial awareness and inclusion curriculum throughout all campus departments and units, mandatory for all students, faculty, staff, and administration” and that by the academic year 2017-2018, the university increases the percentage of black faculty and staff campuswide to 10 percent.

**Unprecedented situation**

Goode – who as a lawmaker was instrumental in setting aside the Normandy property that became the UMSL campus – said that discussions of race did not really arise in interviews with Wolfe when he was being considered for the presidency.
“That wasn't a big issue in the selection process at all,” he said. “The assumption is that anyone being hired at that level in this day and age is very much attuned to those issues and would do whatever needed to be done to address them.”

He added that the way the issue played out in Columbia was difficult to anticipate.

“I've never quite seen a situation come about like this,” Goode said. “It's not that the occurrences weren't serious. But on the other hand, from what I could see, they weren't monumental. And there weren't individuals identified who had carried out a couple of the situations that were described, where anyone could point out who they were and make it easy for situations to be addressed.

“I think Tim, for what he saw as the good of the university took the blame. But I personally don't think he was to blame.”

Asked whether the situation would have unfolded differently if the president were someone with more experience in higher education, rather than in business, Goode said he did not think that factor was much of an issue.

“I think Tim was managing the university in the best interests of faculty and of students as well,” he said. “He has done a lot to improvement management within the university.

“I was one of the more reluctant curators at the time, when we were going through the hiring process, in regard to hiring someone who didn't have an academic background. But in watching and participating in the management of the university since Tim's been there, I think he's done a very good job, and his management skills were just what was needed.”

Protests that had been aimed at Loftin switched to Wolfe with a suddenness that surprised Goode, and in a way that he thought was inappropriate.

“I think campus problems should first be addressed at the campus level,” he said. “That's where this should have better addressed and more quickly, the response should have been quicker.

“Unless things get really out of hand, you don't see, and I don't think you want to see, either the president or the Board of Curators getting into the daily operations of the four campuses. I think the anger among the students was
misdirected, and I don't know what caused it to go that way, other than that they wanted to target somebody that was going to get the most attention, locally, nationally. That certainly happened. So that's where we are.”

University of Missouri in midst of change after turmoil

Nov. 11, 2015 • By JIM SALTER and JIM SUHR

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — After weeks of racial turmoil forced the departure of the University of Missouri system's president and the Columbia campus' chancellor, the university has assured parents and students via email that administrators "are working toward real, enduring change” benefiting minority students.

Here's a look at what has happened, and what's on the horizon:

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WHAT HAPPENED?

Many students, faculty and staff have been upset with top administrators almost from the outset of the fall semester. The university announced it was eliminating subsidies that helped pay health insurance costs for graduate student, and the university later severed ties with Planned Parenthood after political pressure from Republican state lawmakers. While both of those matters were remedied, racial unrest, including slurs yelled from a pickup truck at the student body's black president, led to "Racism Lives Here" rallies on campus. Pressure from protesters helped lead to Monday's resignation of the University of Missouri system's president, Tim Wolfe, and the chancellor's decision to step down at the end of the year.

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WHAT'S THE PLAN FOR FILLING THE ADMINISTRATIVE VOIDS?

The university system's governing board has said an interim system president would be named soon, though there's no word about how quickly successors to Wolfe and Loftin may be named. The board planned to meet Wednesday but didn't say what topics the meeting will cover. Concerned Student 1950, the group behind the protests leading to Wolfe's departure, are demanding a say in those executive decisions.

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WHAT IS THE UNIVERSITY DOING TO IMPROVE THE RACIAL ATMOSPHERE?
Chuck Henson, associate dean for academic affairs and trial practice at the law school, was named Tuesday to the new position of interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity on the Columbia campus, with similar positions to be created and filled on the system's other three campuses. The school already had announced plans to offer diversity training to all new students starting in January, and the system's governing board has promised a full review of other policies, more support for victims of discrimination and a more diverse faculty.

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HOW ARE MISSOURI POLITICIANS GETTING INVOLVED?

Members of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus met Tuesday with protest organizers, including Concerned Student 1950 leaders, in the Columbia campus' black culture center.

"The issues going on up here are systemic," said state Rep. Brandon Ellington, a Kansas City Democrat and caucus chairman. "This is something that didn't happen overnight."

Concerned Student 1950 has said Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon, faculty representatives and the system's governing board will be given a list of the group's demands.
7:15 p.m.

New York Jets defensive Sheldon Richardson says he isn't surprised the University of Missouri football team was able to have a large impact when players staged a two-day walkout as part of protests over the school's handling of racial issues.

Richardson played for the Missouri football team from 2011-2012. He made his comments Tuesday at the Jets' team's practice facility in Florham Park, New Jersey.

Two days after the Missouri football team joined the protest, the president of the University of Missouri system, Tim Wolfe, resigned.

Richardson said, "congrats to my boys," and that he was "proud of them."

He said that because of the money the team makes for the school, he wasn't surprised the players had an effect. He said, "It's a numbers game."

6:45 p.m.

The University of Missouri system's governing board plans to meet Wednesday afternoon.

The Board of Curators' meeting comes two days after system President Tim Wolfe and Columbia campus Chancellor R. Bowen resigned after protests of their response to complaints about racial strife on campus.

A news release says the curators are scheduled to meet at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday and go into executive session at 4:35 p.m. The release doesn't say what the board will be talking about.

Wolfe's resignation is effective immediately. Loftin will resign Jan. 1 and take a new position promoting research efforts at the university.

6:30 p.m.

Student protesters at the University of Missouri are removing an encampment in the center of campus that they've called home for more than a week.

Group members and their supporters began breaking down tents, folding up blankets and removing their belongings Tuesday evening as forecasters predicted possible severe weather for Wednesday.

The severe weather threat includes the possibility of tornadoes.

Participants weren't sure whether the tents would return after the severe weather passes.

Students have been protesting the schools' handling of racial issues on campus.

6 p.m.
An assistant professor of communications at the University of Missouri is apologizing for confronting a student who was videotaping during protests on university's campus.

Melissa Click says in the statement released Tuesday that she regrets her actions a day earlier. She is seen in the video challenging student Mark Schierbecker and calling for "muscle" to help remove him from the protest area.

Schierbecker was filming a confrontation between a student photographer and protesters, who were preventing him from taking pictures. The confrontation drew national attention and criticism.

Click says she has apologized to Schierbecker and he accepted her apology. She also apologized to all journalists and the university community for detracting from the students' efforts to improve the racial climate on the Columbia campus.

4:30 p.m.

The dean of the Missouri School of Journalism is praising a student photographer who was confronted by protesters trying to block him from recording their demonstration.

Dean David Kurpius said in a statement Tuesday the school was proud of senior Tim Tai, who was trying to take pictures Monday of protesters celebrating after hearing that President Tim Wolfe had resigned. A video of the confrontation has gotten a lot of attention online.

Kurpius said the news media have First Amendment rights to cover public events, and Tai handled himself professionally and with poise.

The statement stresses that Melissa Click, an assistant professor who called for someone to help her physically remove a videographer from the scene, has only a courtesy appointment to the School of Journalism, which was reviewing that appointment Tuesday.

1:30 p.m.

About 200 people have gathered on the University of Missouri campus to hear graduate students decry the school administration's handling of racial issues on campus.

Timothy Love, a black graduate fellow in the English department, called for the school to require courses that address racial issues. He told those at the rally that students have "a long fight ahead of us."

Other speakers called for shared governance and urged graduate students to unionize.

The graduate student organization believes that unionization would help all minority student groups on campus and address some equity issues.

Protesters on Monday helped force the resignation of the University of Missouri System's president and the chancellor of its flagship campus, which is in Columbia.

11:35 a.m.

The University of Missouri has named its first-ever interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity.
University of Missouri Provost Garnett Stokes said Tuesday that Chuck Henson will fill the role. Henson is associate dean for academic affairs and trial practice at the School of Law.

His appointment comes a day after the University of Missouri System's president and Columbia campus' chancellor announced their resignations amid student anger over their handling of racial issues.

The university has said it also plans a review of all policies related to staff and student conduct and to provide more support to those subjected to discrimination. It also pledges to work toward employing a more diverse faculty and staff.

Task forces addressing inclusion will be required on all four of its campuses.

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11:15 a.m.

Members of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus are scheduled to meet with University of Missouri protesters after the ouster of the university's top two campus leaders.

State Rep. Brandon Ellington, a Democrat from Kansas City, says the caucus also plans to meet with university officials later Tuesday after they meet with the students on the Columbia campus. Ellington says he expects about a dozen of the 19 members of the Black Caucus to participate in the meetings.

Complaints about racism had been brewing for months at the flagship University of Missouri campus. Students took action, which led to the announcement Monday that the university system's president and the campus chancellor would resign.

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1:30 a.m.

Some University of Missouri students say protests over the killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown last year in Ferguson inspired the push for reforms at their college.

Among them is Reuben Faloughi, a third-year doctoral student, who said Monday that his experience with activism after Brown's shooting death by a police officer "planted the seeds that students can challenge things."

Complaints about racism had been brewing for months at the flagship University of Missouri campus in Columbia. Students took action, which led to the announcement Monday that the university system's president and the campus chancellor would resign — as well as the promise of even more changes.

Mike Sickels, another doctoral student, also credited protests in Ferguson, a St. Louis suburb about a two-hour drive from Columbia, as inspiration.

**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

A day of celebration and confusion

BLAKE NELSON, 21 hrs ago
COLUMBIA — UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned Monday morning, after weeks of mounting racial tension on campus.

It was clear the center of power had shifted. It was not clear whether anything else had.

Not far from MU’s Traditions Plaza, a private party kicked into high gear next to the protesters' campsite. Their original four tents had swollen to at least 20 — blue canopies and mesh shelters and tables spread across the grass. This was no longer a small protest on public space.

Journalists from around the country lined the sidewalks, holding microphones and cameras. One photographer stood on top of the metal tiger statue to see the action at the center. The center was the place to be. Someone cranked up music and students began dancing. Some mobbed together in the center. Others stepped away and danced by themselves.

The reason they had space to dance, and the reason reporters from New York and Los Angeles and Columbia had to grab zoom lenses if they wanted a photo, was the ring of students on the edge of the grass, blocking entrance to the lawn. (One reporter even watched a protester, an older white woman, use a backpack to strike a student photographer trying to take a picture).

An opening was briefly created for Jonathan Butler, the student who ended his weeklong hunger strike the moment Wolfe resigned. Butler left the center surrounded by a crowd of supporters, pressed closer than the Secret Service walks to a president.

Then the ring closed again. In the center: mainly black students cheering, chanting and hugging. In the circle: white and black students with linked arms. On the outside: mainly white people.

The space between each group was wide.

Several yards away, a group of three white students stopped to watch the dancing with incredulous looks on their faces. One looked down at several small children sitting nearby. “You brought your children to this?” he said to himself.
Big institutions move slowly. But a former IBM executive became a former president just 38 hours after student athletes announced they were done with football as long as Wolfe kept his job.

The scene was like the Homecoming Parade protest a month ago.

In the center: President Wolfe and his wife, seated in the back of a shining red convertible. In the surrounding circle: black students with their arms linked, chanting and yelling. On the outside: onlookers, many white, many of whom seemed utterly perplexed by the scene in front of them.

The center had changed. The outside — not yet.

Tavis Smiley on Mizzou shakeup: What happened there 'can catch fire on campuses across the country'

By KELLY MOFFITT • 16 HOURS AGO

Tavis Smiley, the host of PRI’s weekly Tavis Smiley Show, said on Tuesday’s “St. Louis on the Air,” that the protests at Mizzou and the subsequent shakeup in the university’s administration were “heartwarming” to see. He also said that “what happened in Missouri can catch fire on campuses all across the country, if people aren’t careful about taking these issues for granted.”

“Young people seem so disconnected from what really matters in their lives,” Smiley said. “To see young people be self-resilient and self-determined and to recognize the agency they have to make a contribution, to make a difference to advance the causes they care about, that was exciting for me.”

Smiley said he was proud of MU football coach Gary Pinkel for standing by his players, who said they would not be involved in the program until fellow
student Jonathan Butler’s hunger strike was ended. He also said that the whole incident should be a “shot across the bow” to those who thought “they could ignore that racism is still the most intractable issue in this country.”

He also said he thought the era of athletes who took a stand for social justice issues was over, referencing Bill Russell, Jim Brown, Muhammad Ali, Kareem Abdul Jabar, Arthur Ashe and Billie Jean King, among others. “You just don’t see that kind of courage, conviction and commitment and character in athletes today, amateur or professional,” Smiley said. “To see these athletes take a stand is a powerful situation.”

Smiley also echoed a thought that has been the source of much chatter surrounding the resignation of UM System President Tim Wolfe and reassignment of MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin: It only happened because of the football team and the money associated with the sport. That might not be a bad thing, or something without historical precedent, Smiley said.

“At the end of the day, it is all about green,” Smiley continued. “When these African American athletes figure out that money talks, and everything else walks, that makes a difference too. Dr. King understood that. This is not the first time that the black tradition, the best of the black tradition, has understood that economics and social justice are oftentimes linked.

“Sadly, it is a statement about America that we only seem to get serious about issues when money is involved. We can’t seem to do the right thing for the right reasons.”

Economics and social justice is something Smiley is well versed in—he has been traveling around the country on an “Ending Poverty: America’s Silent Spaces” tour, where he brings together panels to chip away at what contributes to poverty in the U.S. On Thursday, he’ll be in St. Louis to moderate a panel of experts on the topic of poverty and police-community relations. Guests include St. Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar and FOCUS St. Louis’ Director of Development Felicia Pulliam.

“There’s a highway into poverty these days, but barely a sidewalk out,” Smiley said. “Many Americans find themselves entrenched in poverty and can’t find a way out. So when you talk about poverty, it’s not really a conversation about poverty…it is about poverty, income inequality and economic mobility.”
Smiley believes the issue of poverty is a matter of national security. “Put another way, it is the new slavery,” he said. “That’s not hyperbolic. Poverty is threatening our democracy. … This is not a skill problem, it is a will problem. We could eradicate poverty in the next 25 years, if we had the will.”

Related Event

What: Town Hall Discussion: 'Ending Poverty: America's Silent Spaces'
When: Thursday, Nov. 12 at 6:00 p.m.
Where: Saint Louis University’s Busch Student Center, Wool Ballroom, 20 N. Grand Blvd.,
More information.  RSVPs encouraged.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

DAVID ROSMAN: Wolfe's resignation not a solution to racial discrimination

The resignation of the UM System president will not fix the problems associated with discrimination at MU or in Columbia.

For those of you who believe that I do not have the experience of discrimination based on race, you are right. As a white American, I have never felt the negativity of racial bias based on my skin color. I do believe, however, that I was denied career promotions and transfers because of my Jewish heritage. Religious discrimination does exist in my world.

What I find interesting is that UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned Monday morning because there is continued discrimination on the UM campuses. The calls for his resignation had grown to the point where he could no longer be an active and positive leader of the UM System.

It started with one voice, graduate student Jonathan Butler, calling for a hunger strike for the sole purpose of unseating Wolfe, supported by Concerned Student 1950 — a group whose name is a reference to the year the first black student was admitted to MU. Students have been camping on
the university's Mel Carnahan Quadrangle in support of Butler. Student athletes were willing to boycott their football practice and games in support of Butler and his mission. The movement had grown exponentially.

There is nothing wrong with these protests and I admire the fact that these men and women were willing to stand up for what they believed to be right. They are angered that the Wolfe administration appeared to be doing nothing to remedy the problem of racism at MU.

Years ago, I had the opportunity to attend a number of management programs sponsored by the Peter Drucker Institute. During a seminar on problem solving, the instructor said something that I have taken to heart. Allow the employee (in our current case, the students) to express their anger over a problem. However, in the same breath, they must provide a viable solution to that problem. Just saying that there is continued discrimination at MU and calling for Wolfe's resignation is one thing, but what exactly do you want the UM System to do concerning an atmosphere of racial bias and discrimination?

The problem is that these same students seem to have no solution to the problem. Yes, there were demands for action to take place and results of those actions were clearly stated. It is "how do we get there from here" that marks the larger problem. What will actually resolve the problem of discrimination? From reading the news reports and other documents, Butler, Concerned Student 1950 and others have not, as of this writing, submitted real solutions.

After six-decades on this planet and having a seat (though sometimes a distant seat) during historic racial events of our time, I can say, without qualm, that there will always be some form of discrimination based on the lack of education, knowledge and humanity. People will discriminate because of skin pigmentation, religion, sexual orientation…you choose the factors. There will always be an "us versus them" mentality. It cannot be "our" fault that things are wrong, so it must be "their" fault.

I understand that Wolfe's lack of and poor responses concerning the cases of racial discrimination on campus is angering. I understand that the student body, along with the athletics
and other departments and administration were angered enough to collectively force Wolfe out of his seat. But that will not resolve the bigger problem of discrimination.

I am afraid it is not as simple as the resignation of the leadership of the organization. That is only a Band-Aid fix to a very complex problem. The history of racial discrimination and bias is long and involves both real and perceived differences in skin tone, religious beliefs and other differences.

In the mid-1990s, I was the co-chair of a committee called by Colorado Rep. Pat Schroeder to examine affirmative action and the equal employment opportunity laws, and how they affect post-secondary education and employment. At the time both affirmative action and the equal employment opportunity laws were due for renewal before Congress. We concluded that affirmative action and the equal employment laws provided substantial assistance to minorities. We also found that despite the law, discrimination continued to manifest itself in both college admissions and hiring practices. We had no solution to the problem other than stricter enforcement.

Maybe mandatory anti-discrimination and tolerance programs for students, faculty and administration would resolve some of the concerns of the student body. But it will only be able to resolve some, for there are no simple solutions to this very complex problem.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

FROM READERS: MU has a history of ignoring problems
Becky Maltsbarger is a blogger and 2002 graduate of MU. This post was originally published on her blog, This is My Ordinary.

Unless you've been under a rock or don't live in Missouri, you already know that there's been a lot of publicity over the fact that a group of black Mizzou football players stated that they would not play until the university addressed the systemic racism that continues to make headlines in our city. Specifically, they called for, and received, the resignation of the University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe, but only after a veritable onslaught of media coverage. Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin has since announced that he will step down as well.

The backlash on these players in social media was pretty brutal. A lot of people said that their scholarships should be revoked if they didn't play. Others were questioning why this is a big deal. On Twitter (a user wrote), "If you can't take a few feces-smeared swastikas then don't play with the big boys."

What is a big deal is that the coaches supported the movement. How far they would have taken it is unclear. The coaches were "united" but hadn't specifically stated that they would protest the upcoming games if Wolfe did not step down. Coach Gary Pinkel had said that the team would not practice.

Here's my two cents, for whatever it's worth as a 35-year-old, privileged, white female. Mizzou is a mess. The leaders are notorious for sweeping situations under the rug and/or not reacting until media scrutiny forces their hand.

In 2014, a firefighter was killed in a walkway collapse of a Mizzou-owned property where structural repairs were needed, but were not completed due to lack of funds. A lawsuit by the family is still pending. However, looking around campus, there seems to be plenty of funding for new buildings to attract prospective students. The building in question was a sort of "married student housing" for older students. Some of these were families with young children. The building has since been demolished, but it raises the question why it took the death of a firefighter for the university to locate funding.
Also, there has been the somewhat hard-to-follow saga of a female swimmer who allegedly was raped by a football player. After her suicide, her journals showed that she had reported the rape to several faculty members, who are bound to look into such allegations, yet never did. To date, I am unable to find public records that these events were ever investigated.

Football scandals abound at Mizzou. There was the highly publicized and somewhat controversial dismissal of star wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham, who was investigated by police for allegedly assaulting a woman while he was trying to talk to his girlfriend. No charges were filed, and DGB was dismissed from the team. The events were highly publicized.

Now take into account Mizzou's starting quarterback, Maty Mauk. After starting the season and playing four games, Mauk has been suspended for the rest of the season. The details of his suspension have been vague. Coach Gary Pinkel has said that he violated team standards, then also that he is going through some personal issues. After the very public dismissal of DGB, it is difficult to understand the secrecy, until you consider that the police were involved with DGB, and perhaps not with Mauk.

Mizzou has made other news, for cutting graduate students' benefits, then reinstating them after a walkout was highly publicized. The benefits were reinstated for one year, but not secured for the future after that year. After Republican political pressure, they have also cut ties with Planned Parenthood, not allowing Planned Parenthood doctors access to their hospitals, nor Mizzou students to complete training at Planned Parenthood.

I mention these stories only as examples of the way that Mizzou has mishandled events and then kept them intentionally vague in the media. This, I believe, is why the students at Mizzou had taken to protest in what may have appeared at first glance to be an extreme way.

It appears that, looking at Mizzou's track record, being extreme is the only way to have your voice heard. Once the public is involved, and in this case, boy were they, Mizzou had no choice but to listen and respond, lest they face the wrath of the media and public opinion. It's pretty hard to have faith in a university that will not make hard choices or even right choices on their own.
The students using the name #concernedstudent1950 had tried other options, including one student undergoing a hunger strike, and then sitting down with Wolfe with a list of suggestions on how to improve the racial climate at Mizzou, with not unreasonable suggestions like comprehensive racial awareness and inclusion curriculum, hiring additional mental health professionals, especially people of color, and increasing social justice centers. While Wolfe listened, no changes were enacted. Obviously, a football boycott would have been a last resort, an attention getter. The student-athletes risked a lot, potentially scholarships and career prospects. Certainly they had weighed these risks.

In an environment just a two-hour drive from Ferguson, we are both connected and disconnected to the race relations that went on there. But looking around, you'd think we were 20 hours away. It's like it never even happened here. Aside from a few peaceful protests, the only thing that Mizzou had done up to this point is to develop an online diversity program that will be required for students and staff.

I don't know the answers to stop the divide. I don't know how to stop racism. It's a big challenge. But I know that sitting around and doing nothing is not OK. I know that when you're the president of a large university system, you do more than require an online diversity training.

I worried that there may have been consequences for these students, but I am even sorrier that it had to come to this. As a resident of this city, I'm tired of being told half-truths. I'm tired of not knowing what's going on. The brushing under the rug has got to end. The thin veil that the university has been hiding behind needs to become more transparent.

If nothing else, stop treating the public like we're stupid. The secret keeping, enforcing decisions and then telling the public as an afterthought, the vague, "We take this seriously and are looking into it," then doing nothing, makes it look like you have something to hide. Or, that it takes a major movement to force your hand.

I am proud of #concernedstudent1950. I am hopeful for the future of our university.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN
COLUMBIA — Members of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus offered their support to student activists at a closed meeting Monday morning at MU's Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center.

Other Black Caucus members took concerns about campus climate to MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin. The goal of the meetings was "to discuss opportunities to improve racial equality and eliminate systemic injustice at the state's flagship school," according to a Black Caucus news release.

Reps. Brandon Ellington, D-Kansas City, and Karla May, D-St. Louis, among other legislators, attended the meetings.

Legislators said "safety is the most important issue right now," according to the release. During the meeting at the Black Culture Center, a threat was called in.

MU Police Department Brian Weimer confirmed the incident.

"There was a call made to the Black Culture Center today a little before noon," Weimer said. "It was perceived as threatening and we're looking into it."

Jonathan Butler and Reuben Faloughi, members of activist group Concerned Student 1950, were among the students at the meeting.

Butler, an MU graduate student, announced Nov. 2 that he would not eat until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe left office. Wolfe resigned Monday under mounting pressure from legislators, faculty, students and even the Missouri football team.
Legislators met with students because "there's always two sides two every story," May, the state representative, told reporters about 30 minutes before the meeting at the Black Culture Center.

"We wanted to actually sit down and talk to the students and find out specifically what their demands are and how we can be facilitators for their goals," May said. "We wanted to talk to Mizzou, the chancellor, the president's office to find out what's keeping them from meeting the demands."

Journalists were not allowed in the meeting at Black Culture Center. A student leaving the building declined to comment on the conversation between students and legislators.

Some representatives met with Loftin for about two hours, according to the release.

"The racial climate at MU must be addressed immediately, and the Black Caucus remains 100 percent supportive of students seeking change," Ellington said, according to the release.

"We will do everything we can to assist students and MU administrators in implementing meaningful and lasting change to ensure all students, present and future, feel welcome and safe."

Students at University of Missouri asked to report 'hateful,' 'hurtful' speech


Students at the University of Missouri are being encouraged to report “incidents of hateful and/or hurtful speech” to the University Police Department, according to an email sent out by campus police officials Tuesday morning.
An MUPD spokesperson confirmed to FoxNews.com the contents of the email, images of which had made their way on to social media, and said the department had yet to receive a complaint.

“While cases of hateful and hurtful speech are not crimes, if the individual(s) identified are students, MU’s Office of Student Conduct can take disciplinary action,” the email said.

The University’s campus has been the scene of protests for several days, with demonstrators decrying the response to a few alleged incidents they say were racially-charged. A graduate student went on a hunger strike and the university’s football team threatened to not play its game on Saturday in order to bring national attention to the protesters’ plight. The unrest has resulted in the resignation of the university system’s president and chancellor.

The stated purpose of Tuesday’s email was “to continue to ensure that the University of Missouri campus remains safe.” The message encouraged students who witnessed “hateful and/or hurtful speech” to “Call the police immediately,” “Provide a license plate and vehicle descriptions (if appropriate)” and document “the individual(s) with your cellphone.”

Students found to be in violation of the university’s conduct code could be subject to a range of sanctions, from a written notice or loss of privileges to expulsion from the residence hall or university, according to the student handbook.

Mizzou police issue advice for reporting 'hateful and/or hurtful' speech

Nov. 10, 2015 • From staff reports

In the wake of racially charged student protests at the University of Missouri, and the exits of two top officials Monday, the Mizzou police emailed on Tuesday new guidelines to students for “Reporting Hateful and/or Hurtful Speech.”

The email lists a process for students "who witness incidents of hateful and/or hurtful speech." They are:
• Call the police immediately at 573-882-7201. (If you are in an emergency situation, dial 911.)
• Give the communications operator a summary of the incident, including location.
• Provide a detailed description of the individual(s) involved.
• Provide a license plate and vehicle descriptions (if appropriate).
• If possible and if it can be done safely, take a photo of the individual(s) with your cell phone.

The email states that, “Delays, including posting information to social media, can often reduce the chances of identifying the responsible parties. While cases of hateful and hurtful speech are not crimes, if the individual(s) identified are students, MU’s Office of Student Conduct can take disciplinary action.”

University of Missouri System President Timothy M. Wolfe announced his resignation Monday, as curators were beginning an emergency meeting over the direction of a campus fractured by protests and accounts of
discrimination. His action sent thousands of students to the heart of the campus to celebrate.

By the end of the curators’ marathon meeting, Mizzou Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin announced he would assume a lesser role.

The resignations followed weeks of tension on campus over alleged incidents of racial harassment. Protesters charged that Wolfe had failed to adequately address the issues.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Two law professors, ACLU of Missouri believe MU police suggestion could infringe on First Amendment rights

UPDATED 7 HRS AGO

COLUMBIA — After the MU Police Department said Tuesday that students and staff should call them after hearing "hateful and/or hurtful speech," two attorneys took issue with the suggestion.

The department, in its email, said: "While cases of hateful and hurtful speech are not crimes, if the individual(s) identified are students, MU's Office of Student Conduct can take disciplinary action."

Sandy Davidson, an adjunct professor at the MU School of Law who teaches communications law, said that the email could lead to infringement of First Amendment rights.

"You can't restrict free speech based on concepts of decency," Davidson said. "The First Amendment is not to protect 'pretty' speech; it's designed to protect offensive speech."

Gregory Magarian, a Washington University in St. Louis law professor who specializes in free-speech issues, said the vagueness of the email is problematic. The email only says that students should report "hateful and/or hurtful speech," but doesn't define what that is.

"One cardinal rule in law on deciding what speech can be restricted is: Don't be vague," Magarian said. "If you are trying to strike the balance between what is restricted and what is not,
you can't be vague and you can't leave authorities with too much latitude to interpret what speech is OK, and what speech is not."

Magarian said that there could be a "chilling effect" on free speech at MU.

He said that when speech is restricted, but it's not clear which speech is restricted, people are more cautious about what they say.

"It's important to make sure you don't chill, punish or deter speech that is protected and (speech) that doesn't fall into that zone of being threatening or unduly aggressive," Magarian said.

On Tuesday night, the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri voiced its "disappointment" in the new MU Police Department initiative.

"The ACLU of Missouri is disappointed with the recent request by the University of Missouri Police to report ‘hurtful speech,’ which simultaneously does too much and too little," Jeffrey Mittman, Executive Director of the ACLU of Missouri, said in a statement. "Racial epithets addressed to a specific person in a threatening or intimidating manner can be illegal, and may require action by police and/or university administrators. But, no governmental entity has the authority to broadly prohibit ‘hurtful’ speech — or even undefined ‘hateful’ speech, or to discipline against it."

Magarian said though he is not an expert on university discipline, he's puzzled as to why calling the police would be encouraged when no crime is committed.

"Intuitively, you would think that if an incident happens on campus that's not a crime, then that should go to the university first," Magarian said. "And then, if the incident is of such outrageous conduct that it's illegal, too, then the university would refer it to law enforcement."

He added, "Whenever police get involved in any kind of action against someone's conduct, or behavior of speech, it ups the ante — the police are involved, that's serious stuff. And the fact
that police are taking the lead here, maybe they're trying to send the message that the university
takes this stuff seriously, but it seems like an odd place to start."

MU has definite race problems, but the new suggestion isn't the best way to handle the problem,
Magarian said.

"This is not how to handle this problem in the best way," he said. "The vagueness of the terms,
and the way the process works as described in the email is a real problem for some people who
want to say things within their First Amendment rights."

Davidson took issue with the accuracy of the email itself. The email states that harmful and
hurtful speech isn't illegal, but that's not always the case, Davidson said.

"If you put a person in fear of his or her own life, that is a crime," Davidson said. "The email is
too broadly stated when it says 'cases of hateful and/or hurtful speech are not crimes.'"

She cited the Missouri Peace Disturbance Statute, which states when someone's free speech can
be restricted. Included in this statute is "offensive language addressed in a face-to-face manner to
a specific individual and uttered under circumstances which are likely to produce an immediate
violent response from a reasonable recipient."

Davidson said she understands the intent to make MU a more pleasant place, but the freedom of
speech still exists.

"At a state university, you do have a right to free, even offensive speech," she said.
Campus Activists Weaponize ‘Safe Space’

At the University of Missouri, student activists succeeded this week in forcing the resignation of President Timothy M. Wolfe, charging that he has not done enough to address persistent racism on campus. Tim Tai, a University of Missouri student, got a freelance assignment from ESPN to photograph the reaction of victorious activists at the tent city they set up in a public area of campus. As a matter of law, he had an indisputable First Amendment right to photograph events transpiring outdoors on public property.

But student activists did not want their tent city or the people in it photographed, and forcibly prevented him from taking pictures. “We ask for no media in the parameters so the place where people live, fellowship, and sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narratives,” a Twitter account associated with the activists later declared, adding that “it’s typically white media who don’t understand the importance of respecting black spaces.” Tim Tai is Asian American.

“We’re documenting historic events with our photographs, and when people are crying and hugging when Wolfe resigns, it becomes a personal issue that people all over the country can connect with,” Tai explained in an interview with The New York Times. “It’s my job to help connect those people to what’s going on.”

The protests at the University of Missouri were assisted by dozens of players on the school’s football team who declared that they would boycott games until the school’s president stepped down. This important, complicated story can be explored using an impressive timeline published by Missouri’s student newspaper. Tai’s story is one footnote to this larger narrative.

First Amendment protections for photographers are vital. And I agree with my colleague, James Fallows, that Tai demonstrated impressive intellectual and emotional poise. But video of his encounter with protestors is noteworthy for another reason.

In the video of Tim Tai trying to carry out his ESPN assignment, I see the most vivid example yet of activists twisting the concept of “safe space” in a most confounding way. They have one lone student surrounded. They’re forcibly preventing him from exercising a civil right. At various points, they intimidate him. Ultimately, they physically push him. But all the while, they are operating on the premise, or carrying on the pretense, that he is making them unsafe.

It is as if they’ve weaponized the concept of “safe spaces.”

“I support people creating ‘safe spaces’ as a shield by exercising their freedom of association to organize themselves into mutually supporting communities,” Ken White wrote prior to this controversy. “But not everyone imagines ‘safe spaces’ like that. Some use the concept of ‘safe spaces’ as a sword, wielded to annex public spaces and demand that people within those spaces conform to their private norms.”
Yesterday, I wrote about Yale students who decided, in the name of creating a “safe space” on compass, to spit on people as they left a talk with which they disagreed. “In their muddled ideology,” I wrote, “the Yale activists had to destroy the safe space to save it.”

- As the video begins, a man tells the photographer that he is not allowed to push the wall of people which has formed to stop him from moving forward.
- Around the 20-second mark, a woman shouts that the photographer needs to respect the space of students, just as they start to forcibly push him backwards.
- Just after the one-minute mark, having been pushed back by students who are deliberately crowding him to obstruct his view, things grow more surreal as the photographer is told, “Please give them space! You cannot be this close to them.”
- At the 1:24 mark, as the students are chanting at the photographer and some are visibly smirking at him—and as he’s frustrated but doing his best to keep his cool—a protestor tells him, as if he is disrespecting them, “You think this is funny.”
- Around 1:42, after several rounds of students chanting and yelling loudly at him in unison, he raises his voice to politely insist that he has a First Amendment right to be there. And a student interjects that he must not yell at a protestor.
- At 1:50 or so, a student tells the photographer that the members of the large group outnumbering him 20- or 30-to-one need to protect their space as human beings from him.
- Around 2:08, a woman walks right up to the photographer and says, “You know what? Back off of my personal space. Leave these students alone.”
- That woman then spreads out her arms and starts pushing the photographer back more—and as she makes contact with his body other students tell him, “Stop pushing her.”
- At 2:33, the same woman tells the photographer that one of the students doesn’t want to talk to him. He explains that he has no desire to speak with anyone. And she replies, “She doesn’t want to see you,” as if he’s infringing on a right to not stand in a public space in a way that makes him visible.
- Another surreal moment comes at 2:47, when a student who has been there the whole time approaches the wall of people preventing the photographer’s forward progress and says, “I need to get through, are you not going to let me through?” as if the photographer is the one transgressing against her freedom of movement.
- At 3:32 another student says, “They can call the police on you,” as if the photographer is the one breaking the law.
- A moment later, the photographer puts his hands and camera directly above his head to try to snap a photo. The women in front of him pushes her hands in the air to try to block the lens. They make fleeting, inconsequential contact, and a bystander accusatorially says to the photographer, “Did you just touch her?” Because that would be beyond the pale, never mind he has been repeatedly pushed!

And on it goes like that.

This behavior is a kind of safe-baiting: using intimidation or initiating physical aggression to violate someone’s rights, then acting like your target is making you unsafe.
“You are an unethical reporter,” a student says around 5:15. “You do not respect our space.” Not 30 seconds later, the crowd starts to yell, “Push them all out,” and begins walking into the photographer. “You’re pushing me!” he yells. And even moments after vocally organizing themselves to push him, they won’t fess up to the nature of their behavior. “We’re walking forward,” they say, feigning innocence. Says one snarky student as the crowd forces him back, “I believe it’s my right to walk forward, isn’t it?” Then the photographer is gone, and only the person holding the video camera that recorded the whole ordeal remains. Ironically, he is a member of the press, too, which he mentions to one of the few protestors who is left behind.

By then, the mask has fallen. “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here?” an unusually frank protestor yells. “I need some muscle over here!”

The woman calling for muscle? An assistant professor of mass media at the University of Missouri ... who had previously asked the campus for help attracting media attention.

When Campus Hate-Speech Rules Go Further Than the Law

The University of Missouri is encouraging students to report “hateful and/or hurtful” comments, one of several places where codes of conduct are more restrictive than the U.S. Constitution.

DAVID A. GRAHAM

It’s stunning how quickly the story in Columbia, Missouri, has turned from a debate about racism in the university community to a story about free speech—and attempts to limit it.

Most prominently, the video of a crowd intimidating a photographer—a student journalist—and attempting to block him from doing his job went viral. Tim Tai, the photographer, asserted his First Amendment rights with impressive poise and calm, given the pressure on him. (On Tuesday, the faculty of the School of Journalism were voting on whether to strip Melissa Click—an assistant professor of communication shown calling for “muscle” to push a reporter out—of her “courtesy” appointment in journalism.) Suddenly, the focus of the University of Missouri story has become about free speech.
That’s even more true after an email Tuesday from university police, circulated by many people on Twitter, about “Reporting Hateful and/or Hurtful Speech.”

MU POLICE
To: MU POLICE
Reporting Hateful and/or Hurtful Speech

To continue to ensure that the University of Missouri campus remains safe, the MU Police Department (MUPD) is asking individuals who witness incidents of hateful and/or hurtful speech or actions to:

- Call the police immediately at 573-882-7201. (If you are in an emergency situation, dial 911.)
- Give the communications operator a summary of the incident, including location.
- Provide a detailed description of the individual(s) involved.
- Provide a license plate and vehicle descriptions (if appropriate).
- If possible and if it can be done safely, take a photo of the individual(s) with your cell phone.

Delays, including posting information to social media, can often reduce the chances of identifying the responsible parties. While cases of hateful and hurtful speech are not crimes, if the individual(s) identified are students, MU’s Office of Student Conduct can take disciplinary action.

@MadiLAlexander

The email seems practically tailor-made to upset free-speech advocates—particularly the closing lines: “While cases of hurtful speech are not crimes, if the individual(s) identified are students, MU’s Office of Student Conduct can take disciplinary action.”

The email is, of course, correct: Hateful and hurtful speech are not crimes. It is also correct that many forms of hurtful or hateful speech are potentially sanctionable under the university’s disciplinary policy. For example, the code bans harassment:

Harassment in violation of the University’s anti-discrimination policies, is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, on the basis of actual or perceived membership in a protected class as defined in the University’s anti-discrimination policies, that creates a hostile environment by being sufficiently severe or pervasive and objectively offensive that it interferes with, limits or denies the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from
educational programs or activities or employment access, benefits or opportunities.

It also bars “Threatening or Intimidating Behaviors, defined as written or verbal conduct that causes a reasonable expectation of injury to the health or safety of any person or damage to any property or implied threats or acts that cause a reasonable fear of harm in another.” These standards are necessarily flexible and ambiguous, but that also means they’re dangerously vague. Some things are clearly threatening or bullying, but many are less clear. In an environment where, as the video of Tim Tai shows, some members of the university community feel their First Amendment rights are being trampled simply by Tai’s presence exercising his own, who knows what might be characterized as intimidation?

The gap here between what the law proscribes and what the university code of conduct does is not unusual, and students who fall in the middle have taken the conflict to the courts. In many cases, schools restrict what students can do beyond what the law does, or institute review processes far different from the criminal-justice system. Some of these are not controversial: No one objects when a university penalizes plagiarism. But many are plenty controversial—most notably sexual assault and sexual harassment. On many campuses, the burden of proof for sexual misconduct is lower than the necessity that a crime be proved beyond a reasonable doubt—for example, asking only for “the preponderance of evidence.” In some cases, accused students are not entitled to an attorney, or to confront their accusers.

Such policies have often been instituted in response to concerns that universities have not taken victims of sexual assault and harassment seriously enough. Those concerns are often more than evident. But even observers who objected to the old process have expressed reservations. Last winter, law professors at Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania objected publicly to the processes at their respective universities.

The email at Mizzou is analogous. The university’s administration has been criticized for not reacting strongly enough to incidents of racism on campus. In his resignation speech Monday, former university President Tim Wolfe more or less confirmed that accusation. In its haste to reverse that injustice, free-speech advocates argue, Mizzou administrators risk overcorrection that similarly perpetuates injustice—by not just including recourse for students who feel threatened, but affirmatively seeking to encourage reports of hurtful speech.
Mizzou, like all universities, has a legitimate interest in fostering a campus climate where students feel safe and included. (For an eloquent description of how it has fallen short, read this essay by Juana Summers.) Yet Mizzou, like all universities, also has a legitimate interest in encouraging an open and robust discourse. The university hasn’t yet found a good way to balance those interests.

Protesters' confrontations with journalists spark First Amendment debate

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 2:00 p

After protesters repeatedly got physical with journalists during demonstrations Monday in an attempt to control a public space at the University of Missouri campus, a video of one encounter has sparked a national debate on First Amendment freedoms.

On Monday, Maneater photographer Mark Schierbecker recorded an altercation between local student photographer Tim Tai and supporters of Concerned Student 1950 — a group that has drawn international attention protesting a climate of racial tension on the University of Missouri campus. The video received nearly 1 million views overnight — diverting some attention from conversations about race relations on campus after the resignations of UM System President Tim Wolfe and MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

In the video, protesters block and push Tai away from the group’s campsite on the Carnahan Quadrangle while telling him he is infringing on their space. Some protesters laugh as they block the photographer and he repeatedly tells them he has a First Amendment right to be on the public property. The protesters also accuse Tai of acting unethically as a reporter.

Janna Basler, MU Greek Life and leadership assistant director, approached Tai and asked him to leave the area. “Don’t push me,” Basler said, after raising her arm and bumping into Tai. Protesters repeatedly put their hands on Tai during their attempts to get him to leave.

Near the end of the video, assistant professor of mass media Melissa Click discovers videographer Schierbecker is a journalist and yells for bystanders to help her “get this reporter out of here.”

“I need some muscle over here,” she said, before the video cuts out.
Schierbecker contacted the Tribune on Tuesday morning and said he filed a report about the incident with the University of Missouri Police Department. University of Missouri Police Department spokesman Brian Weimer said the department received the report and is investigating the incident.

The experience captured on video was not unique — reporters from various backgrounds and outlets reported physical contact with protesters on Monday. Several reporters posted criticism of the contact on Twitter while others said the experience of journalists on campus was not the story. National outlets such as the New York Times, Los Angeles Times and Fox News picked up Schierbecker’s video.

Reporters who were shoved by students or faculty said they had the right to be in a public location; protesters argued the media was infringing on a “safe space” they had established for the healing of their members. Tai was standing in the area protesters had designated as a “No Media, Safe Space” when the altercation took place.

On the group’s Twitter account, Concerned Student 1950 members said they asked for no media inside designated parameters on the university’s lawn so the group can “be protected from twisted, insincere narratives.”

“It’s typically white media who don’t understand the importance of respecting black spaces,” the group Concerned Student 1950 tweeted on Monday.

Both tweets have since been deleted, and the group is now handing out flyers to campsite occupants encouraging them to welcome the media onto the property.

Not every altercation took place inside of the designated “safe space” area. A Tribune reporter was repeatedly shoved and grabbed on the quad after being approached while standing outside of the “safe space” zone. Additionally, the reporter was pushed after entering the “safe space” to talk with a spokesperson with permission from group leaders.

Leaders of the National Press Club released a statement Tuesday about the viral video and reports documenting the behavior of the crowd of activists.

“Mr. Tai was correct when he told the protesters that he has a First Amendment right to photograph in a public space, just as the activists have a First Amendment right to protest there,” National Press Club President John Hughes said in a prepared statement.

The Missouri Press Association also released a statement supporting the reporter’s First Amendment stance, saying access to public space — such as the grounds of a university funded by taxpayers — is “available to all citizens without prejudice.”
Journalists as the Enemy
U of Missouri activists clash with student photographer, raising questions about protestors and free expression. And role of professor in blocking the student sets off large debate -- and she apologizes.

November 11, 2015

By Josh Logue

On Monday, an encampment of student protesters on the University of Missouri quad featured signs that declared “No Media, Safe Space.” By midday Tuesday, those signs had gone, and students were handing out leaflets reading “Teachable Moment.”

The fliers say, “Media has a 1st amendment right to occupy campsite” and “the media is important to tell our story and experiences at Mizzou to the world,” so “let’s welcome and thank them!”

That represented quite a change in a day.

On Monday, protesters locked arms and surrounded the camp to block press access, a Mizzou faculty member called for “muscle” to remove a student journalist, and that journalist’s video of the confrontation sparked outrage, particularly on social media, over press freedom, First Amendment rights and media’s relationship with students and activists.

The video behind all the furor depicts hundreds of members and supporters of the organization Concerned Student 1950, a driving force behind weeks of protest on campus that have included both a hunger and football team strike and culminated recently in the resignation of the University of Missouri's system president and the Columbia campus chancellor.

In the video, protesters form a giant circle around the encampment, arms interlocked, chanting, at one point, “Ho ho, reporters have got to go.” Mark Schierbecker, the local photographer who filmed and upload the video, soon focuses on a student, Tim Tai, who was there taking photos for ESPN. Tai stands his ground as the protestors try to advance, pushing the press farther back.
“Back off our personal space,” someone says.

“We don’t want you to tell our story, not if you’re going to act like this,” says another.

“The First Amendment protects your right to be here and mine,” Tai insists, several times. The images of a student being blocked was particularly incongruous given that Missouri has long been proud of having a leading journalism school.

The incident echoes another episode in September when students clashed with campus journalists over race and press freedom. A group of students at Wesleyan University urged the student government to cut funds to the campus newspaper after it published opinion essay critical of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Observers watching the Missouri, Wesleyan and other debates are asking, "Can we start taking political correctness seriously now?" Others, meanwhile, are criticizing the press for focusing on First Amendment issues and not the grievances of protesters at Missouri and elsewhere about the treatment of minority students.

To experts on freedom of the press, Monday's incident was not ambiguous at all.

“Legally, the photojournalist [Tai] was on completely rock-solid ground,” said Frank LoMonte, executive director of the Student Press Law Center. “That’s not debatable at all.” The entire episode unfolded in the middle of a public quad at a public university. The protesters had every right to camp out and rally, and Tai had every right to take photos, he said.

Beyond that, LoMonte said, “All journalists use discretion from time to time as to what they shoot and don’t shoot.” Sensitive situations that warrant discretion, like funerals, arise all the time, and “all photojournalists make ethical judgment calls all day.”

Whether something was going on in those tents that would necessitate a call like that isn’t clear, but, LoMonte said, “This is a historic moment, and history belongs to all of us. History is not the private property of the people who make it.”

Concerned Student 1950 did not respond to requests for comment, but as Schierbecker’s video began to get traction online, the group posted several tweets defending the signs and rejection of the media.

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*We ask for no media in the parameters so the place where people live, fellowship, & sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narratives*
“We ask for no media in the parameters so the place where people live, fellowship, & sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narratives,” read one tweet that has since been deleted.

Others who took to social media, Twitter in particular, echoed that sentiment.

Jonathan Butler, the graduate student whose seven-day hunger strike catalyzed the protests and administrative shake-up at Missouri, explained in a Tuesday interview with The Los Angeles Times the original impetus behind the media ban. “We were having some difficult dialogues there, talking about race,” he said. “That’s a very sensitive space to be in and be vulnerable in. It was necessary to keep that space very healthy, a very open space for dialogue, versus it being a space where people are going to cover a story, exoticize people who are going through pain and struggle.”

Butler also echoed charges that the press ought to have been covering the story before it got to the hunger strike stage. “You saying in that moment, ‘That was the only way to cover the story’ -- that wasn't you doing your due diligence,” he said.

Many of the journalists who encountered the “No Media” signs while they still stood were on the receiving end of multiple requests for media coverage from the same protestors. Since removing those signs requesting that media members keep their distance, Concerned Student 1950 has replaced those tweets with photos of the “Teachable Moment” PSA and a student removing the “No Media” signs alongside a note saying, “From original organizers! We’re learning and growing from this.”
As that debate dies down, however, another is brewing.

Near the end of the original video, Schierbecker finds himself on the wrong side of the circle, but as he approaches the tents, several people, including a University of Missouri communications professor, Melissa Click, demand that he leave.

"Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here," Click shouts. "I need some muscle over here. Help me get him out."

Later, in an expanded version of the video, Schierbecker captures Click behind the circle as she says to the interlinked protestors, "The work you’re doing is really important. We’ve got a lot of press trying to get in. Don’t let those reporters in."

Some have called for Click's dismissal. Mitchell McKinney, chair of the communications department, said in a statement, “The University of Missouri Department of
Communication supports the First Amendment as a fundamental right and guiding principle underlying all that we do as an academic community. We applaud student journalists who were working in a very trying atmosphere to report a significant story.

Intimidation is never an acceptable form of communication.”

Click is not a faculty member at the University of Missouri's renowned School of Journalism, however, she has held a courtesy appointment there, which “Journalism School faculty members are taking immediate action to review,” the school's dean, David Kurpius, said in a statement. “The Missouri School of Journalism is proud of photojournalism senior Tim Tai for how he handled himself,” Kurpius said. “The events of Nov. 9 have raised numerous issues regarding the boundaries of the First Amendment. Although the attention on journalists has shifted the focus from the news of the day, it provides an opportunity to educate students and citizens about the role of a free press.” (This morning, The New York Times reported that Click has cut her ties to the journalism school.)

Click issued an apology Tuesday evening. “I have reviewed and reflected upon the video of me that is circulating, and have written this statement to offer both apology and context for my actions,” she said in a formal statement. “I have reached out to the journalists involved to offer my sincere apologies and to express regret over my actions. I regret the language and strategies I used, and sincerely apologize to the MU campus community, and journalists at large, for my behavior, and also for the way my actions have shifted attention away from the students’ campaign for justice.”

The National Press Photographers Association, of which Tai is a member, reached out directly to Kurpius to express “strong concerns” over Click’s conduct Monday. “Both the students and their teachers are ‘ill informed,’” said NPPA lawyer Mickey Osterreicher about the video, which includes one student who says, “You don’t have a right to take our photos.”

“It should be understood that people do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in a public place. Journalist Tai did not need permission to take anyone’s photograph. It is one thing to politely ask someone not to take a photograph, and quite another to try to intimidate someone from doing so,” Osterreicher said. “We hope the school administration will investigate this incident and take appropriate disciplinary action if necessary.”

Yesterday's incident in Missouri is only the latest to spark concerns that free speech on campus is in danger of eroding. Some, though, are lashing back at the backlash, saying critics of students like those shunning press at Missouri trumpet the First Amendment too quickly and too hastily. “The freedom to offend the powerful is not equivalent to the freedom to bully the relatively disempowered,” Jelani Cobb wrote in The New Yorker.
Missouri protesters change tack and welcome media, day after shooing journalists away

By JIM SUHR, Associated Press

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Protesters credited with helping oust the University of Missouri System's president and the head of its flagship campus welcomed reporters to cover their demonstrations Tuesday, a day after a videotaped clash between some protesters and a student photographer drew media condemnation as an affront to the free press.

Activists removed yard signs warning the media to stay away from a grassy area of campus that has served as an impromptu campsite for the protesters in recent days. Concerned Student 1950, a group which led the protests, put out fliers titled "Teachable Moment" that encouraged demonstrators to cooperate with the media.

"The media is important to tell our story and experiences at Mizzou to the world," the flier read. "Let's welcome and thank them."

That embrace stood in sharp contrast to Monday, when protesters chanted "Hey hey, ho ho. Reporters have got to go," and some of them tried to block a freelance student photographer from covering protesters' celebratory reaction to the system president's departure over what they saw as indifference to racial tensions at the school.

Video of the incident shot by student Mark Schierbecker and posted to YouTube (http://bit.ly/20K6AtG ) had more than 644,000 views as of early Tuesday afternoon. It shows one protester telling photographer Tim Tai, a student working freelance for ESPN, to "leave these students alone" in their "personal space." Moments later, a protester identified as Melissa Click, an assistant professor in Missouri's communications department, is seen confronting Schierbecker and calling for "muscle" to help remove him from the protest area.
Tai can be heard telling those who confronted him, "I have a job to do," and that he has as much right to photograph the event as the protesters do to gather in the public space.

Click, whose department is separate from Missouri's esteemed journalism school, didn't respond to emails or voicemails seeking comment Tuesday. Her office voicemail wasn't accepting new messages and a school spokeswoman didn't respond to a message seeking comment.

David Kurpius, the dean of the journalism school, said Tuesday that Click wasn't on that school's faculty. The faculty on Tuesday was considering whether to strip Click of her "courtesy title," which allows her as part of the university's College of Arts and Science to serve on graduate committees from other academic units.

In a news statement, Kurpius praised Tai for how he dealt with Monday's confrontation, saying he "handled himself professionally and with poise."

The deans of the journalism school and college of arts and science didn't return messages seeking comment.

Ken Paulson, a 1975 Missouri journalism alumnus who heads the First Amendment Center at the Newseum, credited Tai with being "exactly right," calling him "both professional and eloquent in his defense of freedom of the press."

"His job is to report the news in a public place, and nothing is more public than the grounds of a public university," said Paulson, dean of Middle Tennessee State University's media and entertainment college.

While cautioning that the protest movement shouldn't be tarnished by the video, Paulson added that "all journalists face confrontations now and then, and all you can do is quietly assert your right to record history."

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THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

NOVEMBER 9, 2015

Media welcomed at MU day after clash with protesters; communications professor under fire

A video shows students pushing photographer Tim Tai as he tried to shoot photos
A day after clashing with the media over access to the #ConcernedStudent1950 protest, protesters removed the anti-media signs and welcomed the media.

In a notice being handed out Tuesday morning, the protesters acknowledged that the media had a First Amendment right to be there and it was important to tell the story of what was happening.

The change comes after a video on YouTube went viral showing students pushing photographer Tim Tai, who was trying to shoot photos of the #ConcernedStudent1950 protest Monday.

Tai, a 20-year-old senior from St. Louis studying journalism at the University of Missouri-Columbia, was working for ESPN.

In the video, he tells the students that he was trying to do his job and that the First Amendment that protects their rights to stand there also protects his rights to be there.

Tai later said via Twitter that he didn’t mean to become part of the story. He simply was trying to do his job.

ESPN hired Tai Monday morning shortly before MU president Tim Wolfe resigned.

Right after the resignation, Tai ran to the quad where the protesters had been camping out to get photos of their reaction.

“At that point, that was the most impactful picture I was going to get,” Tai said in a telephone interview late Monday.

After about five or 10 minutes, supporters or organizers said it was over and that the media needed to leave.

“I don’t want to make this us versus them,” Tai said. “I don’t want to make it media versus students or media versus activists or media versus protesters. These people have good intentions.”
On the other hand, journalism, especially photojournalism, is intrusive, he said. And as a journalist you have to have the confidence to believe that while it is intrusive, uncomfortable and awkward, there is a greater purpose.

“There is a picture to be made that symbolizes more than just the specific moment, that it symbolizes the human experience that other people can relate to,” Tai said.

Tai said he doesn’t know why it got into a shoving match because he was not intruding on the campsite.

“I don’t have any ill will towards these people,” he said. “I think they were very well intentioned. I guess they saw other principles more important than my right to be there and document the situation.”

Covering news when people don’t like you being there is part of the profession, Tai said. The events Monday were national news that took place on a public lawn and involved people who made themselves public figures.

Tai said he was horrified to see the video and embarrassed that he became part of the story. But his job was to make a picture. That’s why he stood his ground.

He added he was very disappointed when he found out later that university faculty and staff members were among those shoving and trying to deny access to the media.

Janna Basler, director of Greek Life and Leadership, and assistant professor Melissa Click were captured on video confronting journalists.

“I don’t like when subjects and reporters are at odds,” Tai said. “I don’t think that leads to good journalism. I think the best journalism happens when it’s a collaborative process.”

In a statement Tuesday morning, David Kurpius, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, said the school was proud of Tai for how he handled himself during the protest.

“The news media have First Amendment rights to cover public events,” Kurpius said. “Tai handled himself professionally and with poise.”

Kurpius also clarified that Click is not a faculty member in the School of Journalism. She is a member of the Department of Communications in the College of Arts and Science.

Click holds a courtesy appointment with the School of Journalism. The School of Journalism faculty members were reviewing the appointment Tuesday, Kurpius said.
“The events of Nov. 9 have raised numerous issues regarding the boundaries of the First Amendment,” Kurpius said. “Although the attention on journalists has shifted the focus from the news of the day, it provides an opportunity to educate students and citizens about the role of a free press.”

**Activists make peace with media covering Mizzou upheaval**

Nov. 10, 2015 • By Stephen Deere

*UPDATED* at 1:30 p.m. with statement from journalism dean.

The standoff between student activists and media on the quad at Mizzou seems to be reaching detente.

According to several posts on Twitter, the group Concerned Student 1950 is handing out leaflets asking for the protesters to welcome reporters.

The leaflets are titled "Teachable Moment," and state:

"1. Media has a 1st Amendment right to occupy campsite. 2. The media is important to tell our story and experiences at Mizzou to the world.

3. Let's welcome them and thank them."

Concerned Student 1950 has organized many of the protests that led to University of Missouri System President Timothy M. Wolfe's resignation and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin stepping down.

On Monday, as thousands poured into the Carnahan Quadrangle after Wolfe announced his resignation, some students formed a line around activists and told journalists to step back. Some organizers threatened to call police on the media if they refused.

One video showed the activists linking arms and pushing against photographer Tim Tai. A Mizzou from St. Louis County, Tai was working as a freelance journalist for ESPN. Tai told the protesters he was just trying to do his job and that the same First Amendment that protected their right to speak out also applied to him.

The video, taken by Mark Schierbecker, a history and German student from Rock Hill and free speech activist, also depicted a confrontation between Schierbecker and MU assistant professor of mass media Melissa Click. “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here?” she called out on the video. “I need some muscle over here.”

Schierbecker said several people then pushed him to the end of the circle.

The video has gone viral online, and sparked lengthy discussions on social media about the First Amendment and interaction between journalists and protesters.
On Tuesday, David Kurpius, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, issued a statement praising Tai and emphasizing that Click is professor in the communications department, which is part of the College of Arts and Sciences, not the journalism school.

"Tai handled himself professionally and with poise," Kurpius wrote.

Kurpius added that Click had a courtesy appointment with the journalism school.

"Journalism School faculty members are taking immediate action to review that appointment," he wrote.

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

White House press secretary, Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder offer support for journalists

15 HRS AGO

COLUMBIA — The White House press secretary and Missouri's lieutenant governor issued statements on Tuesday in support of journalists who were trying to document events on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle after a debate about free speech and First Amendment rights took social media by storm.

A video posted on Youtube by MU student journalist Mark Schierbecker showed heated exchanges between photojournalists and protesters on Monday after UM System President Tim Wolfe announced his resignation.

At the end of the video, Melissa Click, an MU assistant professor of communications, can be seen and heard calling for "muscle" to get Schierbecker removed from the camp. MU's Greek Life and Leadership Assistant Director Janna Basler was also seen in footage of an incident between freelance photographer Tim Tai and protesters.

Students formed a human chain around the Concerned Student 1950 camp on the quadrangle, which barred reporters from getting too close. In the video, MU staff and students confronted two photojournalists who tried to defy the protesters' move to ban them from the camp, which is a public space. The photojournalists were pushed away from the site.
According to previous Missourian reporting, faculty in the Missouri School of Journalism were voting Tuesday whether to revoke a courtesy appointment for Click and the MU Police Department has increased its presence on campus after threats were made against Click. Click later resigned that appointment.

The video had more than 787,200 views by 4 p.m. Tuesday and attracted the White House's attention.

In a press briefing Tuesday, White House press secretary Josh Earnest was asked what his reaction was to the "high profile" incident.

"I do think that as a general principle, the reason that you have public protests and public demonstrations is so the public can be aware of your concern," Earnest said. "It seems to me that you're going to have a hard time getting that message out if you're going to limit the media in a public place."

Earnest said he had read about the incident but hadn't watched the video.

Missouri Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder also said he supported the photographers, tweeting out a statement Tuesday morning.

"Actions on Monday by University faculty and staff to infringe on students' First Amendment rights directly contradict what is taught at our universities," Kinder said in the statement. "This incident must be examined, and if found necessary, disciplined."

Major Garrett, chief White House Correspondent for CBS News and president of the board of the Missourian Publishing Association, issued a statement on behalf of the association Tuesday night.

"The board of the Missourian Publishing Association stands with all journalists, including students, who work under the protection of the First Amendment," Garrett said in the statement. "We believe that the First Amendment rights of journalists and protestors must be protected, that
one right does not and cannot supersede another and that no one voice or movement owns the public space.

"We celebrate the rights afforded the voice of the protester and the journalist who chronicles it."

This will be updated if and when more statements flow in.

The Washington Post

University of Missouri, please immediately fire employees who taunted media

To watch the video of photographer Tim Tai getting pushed around by a turf-protecting scrum of protesters at the University of Missouri is to experience constitutional angst.

“You don’t have a right to take our photos,” said one protester at the university’s Mel Carnahan Quadrangle following the news that University system President Tim Wolfe and chancellor R. Bowen Loftin would resign amid an uproar about racial issues on campus.

“I do have the right to take photos,” replied Tai, a 20-year-old senior at the university who was shooting the proceedings on Monday on assignment for ESPN.com. A former staff photographer for the Columbia Missourian, Tai was forced by circumstances to double-task as he attempted to take photographs and provide civics lessons.

Following the announcement of the resignations, Tai chronicled a celebration including the protest group Concerned Student 1950. After 10 minutes or so of jubilation, said Tai in an interview with the Erik Wemple Blog, protesters decided that it was time to push the media away from an encampment of tents on the quad’s lawn. “‘Media, get off the grass,’ ” said the organizers, as Tai recalls.

Yet he wasn’t backing up. He wanted some good shots of the tents, and that’s where the trouble started.

“You need to back up.”

“Move back.”
“You lost this one, bro, back up.”

“You’re an unethical reporter; you do not respect our space.”

Those were just a few of the taunts that Tai received as he attempted to do his work. His references to a certain founding document persuaded precisely none of his opponents. “Ma’am, the First Amendment protects your right to be here and mine,” he said. At one point, Tai tangled with a protester about the absence of any law proscribing his presence on this disputed grass. “Forget a law — how about humanity?” protested the protester.

So much for the ideal of the American collegiate quad as a locus of tolerance and free expression. Time to usher in a new ethic of intimidation, a twist that carries some irony at the Columbia, Mo., campus. Back in February 1987, 58 protesters seeking the university’s divestiture from companies that do business in South Africa were arrested for trespassing on the quad. They were dropped in all cases but one, who secured an acquittal on the grounds that the quad was a highly public space.

“The people who were trying to impede the photographer, in effect, were trying to impede his rights to be there,” says Sandy Davidson, a curators’ teaching professor at the University of Missouri school of journalism. Nor was Tai intent on peering into the tents with his lenses. “I was not trying to get into the tents,” says Tai. “I wanted a picture of the tents, placing it in the quad … because that’s part of the story.” Regarding the restraint that the protesters were demanding, Tai felt this wasn’t the time. “I think … there are times when it’s best for photographers to put their camera down,” he says. However: “In this situation, this was national news, breaking news … at a public university and the students involved have become public figures.”

Upon checking his photos, Tai realized that the obstruction worked. “They didn’t turn out well because all the hands were in the way, and you know …,” he says. Were he to be given a redo, he’d likely just move to another spot. “At the moment, I felt I had to stand up for being there,” he says.

Tom Warhover, executive editor of the Columbia Missourian, said the Tai video aligns with recent events. “The protesters all week have asked people kind of to stay out of the tent area proper, if you will, and so we’ve had many confrontations because it is a public space and … other students have a right to be there,” says Warhover, who approves of how Tai carried himself: “I’m pretty proud of Tim’s actions, both standing up for himself and his job but doing it in a way that didn’t provoke.” Through his travels, Tai has learned that on one hand, the protesters “want to protect idea of privacy and protect a safe space where not they’re not overwhelmed with the attention. On the other hand, they want to control the narrative themselves because they feel the media has not treated minority or black stories accurately.”

There’s no excuse for protesters to push a photographer in a public square; there’s no excuse for protesters to appeal for respect while failing to respect; there’s no excuse for protesters to dis the same rights that allow them to do their thing.
And there’s even less excuse for faculty and staff members at the University of Missouri to engage in some of this very same behavior. In his chat with this blog, Tai cited the involvement of Richard J. “Chip” Callahan, professor and chair of religious studies at the university. In the opening moments of the video, Callahan faces off with Tai over whether the photographer can push to get any closer to the tents. “I’m not gonna push them,” says Tai.

Moments later, the protesters resolve to throw up their hands (literally) to show Tai who owns this public roost. Callahan participates in this collective action. As Tai swivels his camera from place to place, Callahan shuffles to block the sight paths.

Callahan didn’t respond to e-mails and phone calls. The university’s media office said it has no comment at this point on the staffers. Not only did Tai identify Callahan as the person at the start of the video, but so did Peter Legrand, a graduate who took courses from Callahan.

At the 2:00 minute mark in the above video, Janna Basler, the university’s assistant director of Greek life and leadership, adds her own thuggish sensibilities to the mix: “Sir, I am sorry, these are people too. You need to back off. Back off, go!” In her showdown with Tai, Basler lays bare how little she knows about photography. As they tussle about a woman with whom Tai had just finished arguing, Basler says, “She gets to decide whether she’s going to talk to you or not.”

Tai responds like someone who’s interested in securing images, not quotes: “I don’t want her to talk to me,” he says as Basler gets in his face. When Tai asks her whether she’s with the office of Greek life, Basler responds, “No, my name is Concerned Student of 1950.”

And the video ends with assistant professor of communication Melissa Click essentially threatening a journalist: “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here.”

These three university employees had a chance to stick up for free expression on Monday. Instead, they stood up for coercion and darkness. They should lose their jobs as a result.

**UPDATE:** The university’s journalism school dean has released a statement reading, in part, as follows:

Assistant Professor Melissa Click, featured in several videos confronting journalists, is not a faculty member in the Missouri School of Journalism.

She is a member of the MU Department of Communication in the College of Arts and Science. In that capacity she holds a courtesy appointment with the School of Journalism. Journalism School faculty members are taking immediate action to review that appointment.
Staffer offers public apology for hassling student photojournalist at University of Missouri

Janna Basler, a staffer at the University of Missouri, tonight issued a public apology for getting in the face of student photojournalist Tim Tai yesterday at the school’s Carnahan quad.

As Tai attempted to put himself in position to photograph a tent encampment on the quad, he argued with protesters about his right to do so. Things got worse when Basler, assistant director of Greek life and leadership, stepped directly in front of Tai, who was on assignment from ESPN.com, and ordered him to scoot. “Sir, I am sorry, these are people too. You need to back off. Back off, go!” she yelled at Tai. She also moved her arms and body so as to prevent Tai from doing his job.

Every eight-line apology has a hole, a cave of depravity that grinds against the spirit of regret. Basler’s is no exception. Her claim that “I allowed my emotions to get the best of me while trying to protect some of our students” carries the twin stink of misrepresentation and unfairness. It suggests that her unconscionable intervention was actuated by noble motives, when in fact Tai posed no threat from which anyone on campus needed to be protected.

To her credit, she’s right about escalating the problems.

University of Missouri Teacher Who Shoved Journalist May Lose Job

WED, NOV 11


After the resignation of the University president and chancellor following a semester of racial strife on the Mizzou campus, many students vowed it was "only the beginning."
University of Missouri Professor Who Blocked Reporter Apologizes
"I regret the language and strategies I used"

Melissa Click, an assistant professor in the department of communication at University of Missouri, issued an apology for blocking reporters from documenting a protest against the school’s handling of racial issues.

Two videos posted online that quickly went viral showed Click trying to block a student photographer from approaching the activists in order to take a better picture and shouting at reporters that they had to “get out.” When the reporter she yelled at did not move, she yelled, “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of there? I need some muscle.”

Click’s apology was shared on the University of Missouri’s Twitter page. “I have reached out to the journalists involved to offer my sincere apologies and to express regret over my actions,” she wrote as part of a longer statement. “I regret the language and strategies I used and sincerely apologize to the MU campus community, and journalists at large, for my behavior, and also for the way my actions have shifted attention away from the students’ campaign for justice.”

David Kurpius, the dean of Mizzou’s lauded School of Journalism, said on Twitter that Click would likely lose her courtesy appointment in the journalism department (which is separate from the communications department) following her actions. Meanwhile, Click canceled classes on Tuesday after receiving death and rape threats, according to the Huffington Post.
Missouri assistant professor under fire for dramatic confrontation with journalist caught on video

The Dean of the Missouri School of Journalism on Tuesday lambasted an assistant communications professor and lauded a photojournalism student for their roles in Monday’s viral video showing a confrontation between that student journalist and protesters attempting to block him from shooting photos on a public quad.

The filmed confrontation appeared to show the University of Missouri protesters, including Assistant Professor Melissa Click, engaging in a clear violation of the First Amendment, since the incident occurred in a public space on the campus of a public university.

The video was posted on YouTube shortly after University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe resigned following a week of protests over his perceived lack of response to a series of racially charged incidents. The Los Angeles Times reported that Tim Tai, a 20-year-old senior at the university working on a freelance assignment for ESPN, went to the protesters' tent encampment to document their reaction to the news.

 Shortly after Tai arrived and began to take photos, the protesters formed a ring around the encampment and began to push away the assembled media. Tai refused to budge.

"The Missouri School of Journalism is proud of photojournalism senior Tim Tai for how he handled himself during a protest on Carnahan Quad on the University of Missouri campus," Dean David Kurpius said in Tuesday's statement.

"The news media have First Amendment rights to cover public events," Kurpius said. "Tai handled himself professionally and with poise."

In the video, Tai tells one demonstrator that he has "a job to do! I'm documenting this for a national news organization. This is the First Amendment that protects your right to stand here and mine!"
One school administrator, identified as Janna Basler, the school's director of Greek life and leadership, is seen on the video confronting Tai. When he asks her name, Basler says, "I am Concerned Student 1950," a reference to the name of the African-American group leading the protests.

Near the end of the video, another adult, identified as Click, tells another reporter, "You need to get out," before asking other protesters for help.

"Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here?" she asks, adding as the video ends, "I need some muscle over here."

Kurpius said Click, who is a member of the MU Department of Communication in the College of Arts and Science, holds a "courtesy appointment with the School of Journalism."

"Journalism School faculty members are taking immediate action to review that appointment," Kurpius said in his statement.

Tom Warhover, the executive editor of the Columbia Missourian, a university newspaper, told the Times he was "pretty incensed" about Tai's treatment.

"I find it ironic that particularly faculty members would resort to those kinds of things for no good reason. I understand students who are protesting and want privacy. But they are not allowed to push and assault our photographers -- our student photographers."

Tai told the Los Angeles Times the situation resembled last year's protests in Ferguson, Mo., which he also covered. The only difference, he said, was "it was the police doing it then."

Professor apologizes for actions at protest site

By THE TRIBUNE'S STAFF

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 4:59 pm

A University of Missouri Department of Communication assistant professor apologized late Tuesday for her actions at a student protest at the Carnahan Quadrangle the day before, when she was captured on video telling others at the protest site to use force to remove a student journalist from the area.
Melissa Click said in a written statement that she had reviewed the video and offered apologies to the journalists involved. She said she also expressed to them regret over her actions.

"I regret the language and strategies I used, and sincerely apologize to the MU campus community, and journalists at large, for my behavior, and also for the way my actions have shifted attention away from the students’ campaign for justice," Click said in the statement released by the Department of Communication. Click said she apologized to one of the reporters in a phone call, and he accepted her apology.

Calls to take action against Click, an assistant professor of mass media, grew after video was posted on YouTube that showed her telling others at the protest site to "get this reporter out of here" after a confrontation with MU student journalist Tim Tai. Students with Concerned Student 1950, a group pushing for better treatment of minorities on campus, were gathered at the site after University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe announced his resignation in response to the group's demands.

The chairman of the Department of Communication issued a statement Tuesday afternoon, but did not mention the embattled department professor.

In the written statement, Professor Mitchell S. McKinney said the department "supports the First Amendment as a fundamental right and guiding principle underlying all that we do as an academic community." McKinney went on to say the department applauds student journalists who were working at the protest site Monday, and "intimidation is never an acceptable form of communication."

However, McKinney said, "we will not be able to comment on any personnel matters."

Earlier Tuesday, MU School of Journalism Dean David Kurpius said journalism school faculty were taking immediate action to review Click's courtesy appointment with the school. The journalism school and communication department are separate, and Click is not a member of the journalism faculty.

Click was not reachable on her office phone Tuesday — an automated message saying the mailbox is full greeted callers.

The video also showed Janna Basler, MU Greek Life and leadership assistant director, among a throng of student protesters confronting Tai. Tuesday afternoon, the Mizzou Greek Councils issued a statement saying they support Basler, but not her actions Monday.

"We understand the importance of upholding students’ First Amendment rights and were disappointed in the video uploaded yesterday, but we do not feel as if her actions at that time were reflective of her intentions to support students," the statement read.

"Our hope is that students, Mizzou staff, and others following this story nationwide take into consideration her success in the position, her character and her unwavering support for her
students. We trust that this University will hold her accountable for her actions while also considering the best interest of its students."

MU professor apologizes for bullying student journalist

Nov. 11, 2015  •  By Alex Stuckey

COLUMBIA, MO. • Melissa Click shut herself in her university office on Tuesday afternoon, and sobbing could be heard through the door. A day earlier, the assistant communications professor at the University of Missouri had helped lead a multitude of activists forming a circle encompassing hundreds of yards to block reporters from an encampment on Mizzou’s Carnahan Quadrangle, following the resignation of University of Missouri System President Timothy M. Wolfe.

A video that went viral Monday evening showed Click calling out for “muscle” to help remove a student journalist from the area. The video sparked a national wave of criticism against Click and other activists.

At 5 p.m. Tuesday, Click emerged from her office and released a written statement apologizing for her actions. She said she had personally apologized to the journalists involved and expressed regret that she had shifted attention from the “students’ campaign for justice.”

“From this experience I have learned about humanity and humility,” Click said.

By then, activists who had shouted “Hey, hey, ho, ho, reporters have got to go” on Monday also had changed their tune. They distributed leaflets urging protesters to respect journalists’ First Amendment rights and to welcome them.

Still, the focus remained on Click, whose fiery demeanor in the video, seemingly in disregard to free speech, had created a sideshow in a story about campus racism and the power of activism.

An online petition calling for her firing was circulating. People had posted her phone number and email address on online forums. Someone had created a Facebook page titled “Hey, hey, ho, ho, Melissa Click has got to go.” Police said she reported receiving threatening and harassing telephone calls.

The Internet hate machine was revving its engine, and university leaders had taken notice.

The Monday video showed activists linking arms and pushing against photographer Tim Tai. A Mizzou journalism student from St. Louis County, Tai was working as a freelance journalist for ESPN. He can be heard telling protesters he was trying to do his job and that the same First Amendment that protected their right to speak out also applied to him.

The video, taken by Mark Schierbecker, a history and German student from Rock Hill and a free speech activist, also depicted a confrontation between himself and Melissa Click.
“Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here?” she called out on the video. “I need some muscle over here.”

David Kurpius, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, praised Tai and emphasized that Click is a professor in the communications department, which is part of the College of Arts and Sciences — not the journalism school.

Click had a courtesy appointment with the journalism school, but Kurpius said faculty members spent Tuesday considering whether to remove the designation.

“We can’t pretend what we saw on the video is everything that happened,” Kurpius said. “It was a short video and to think that we have the full context is to have blinders on.”

Kurpius said Tuesday night that Click had resigned the J-school courtesy appointment.

Mitchell S. McKinney, chairman of the Department of Communication, released a statement applauding student journalists who worked in a very trying atmosphere.

“Intimidation is never an acceptable form of communications,” he said.

He did not comment on Click’s actions specifically.

Click wasn’t the only faculty member who helped thwart journalists’ access. Richard J. “Chip” Callahan, chairman of the Religious Studies Department, was standing behind students forming the blockade on the video. The video shows the students moving toward Tai. When he complained, Callahan said: “Don’t talk to me. It’s not my problem.”

According to public records, Click and Callahan share an address.

Janna Basler, director of Greek life and leadership on campus, also is seen in the video confronting Tai. When he asks her name, she replies: “I am Concerned Student 1950,” the name of the student group at the center of the protests. The name refers to the first year that black students were admitted to the university.

An individual in the Greek life office said Basler was not in the office Tuesday. When she answered the door at her house in a subdivision on the outskirts of Columbia, Basler said only, “I’m sorry, I just can’t.”

The university’s three Greek student councils released a statement supporting Basler, saying they do not believe her actions Monday “were reflective of her intentions to support students.”

Later Tuesday night, Basler posted an apology on the Greek life group’s Facebook page. It read in part: “I regret how I handled the situation, and I am offering a public apology to the journalist involved.”

The students who camped out on the quad Monday had made signs that said “No Media” and “Safe Space.” In recent years, the concept of safe spaces has evolved on college campuses to describe areas where all manner of speech that might be traumatic for some people is prohibited.

In some cases, they have been criticized for stifling debate, frustrating free expression and preventing students from being intellectually challenged.

Joe Cohn, the legislative and policy director at the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, said historically journalists have had a positive impact on public protests, providing a crucial check by preventing police or other government agents from abusing participants.
“It’s been that sunlight that has really helped movements succeed without being subject to tactics designed to shut them down,” Cohn said. “It’s been distressing to see activists turn on the media.”

Reuben Faloughi, a graduate student and member of Concerned Student 1950, said after Monday’s experiences, the group better understands the role journalists play.

“When people are exercising those rights, it’s not always comfortable,” he said. “We look at what happened as a learning experience for everyone involved. Since then, we’ve passed out pointers about dealing with the media. We’re learning as we go.”

Mass media professor under fire for confronting video journalist at Mizzou

Tim Tai was just a stringer on assignment for ESPN — one of many trying to document protests at the University of Missouri over incidents of racism that resulted in the resignations of the school’s president and chancellor.

But Tai, taking photographs of an encampment built on Mizzou’s campus by a group called Concerned Student 1950, was challenged by protesters who didn’t want him there.

“You’re pushing me,” said Tai, a student at the university.

“You don’t have the right to take our photos,” a protester said.

Tai said he did have the right to take photos, citing the First Amendment — “the same First Amendment that protects you standing here,” he said.

“Hey hey, ho ho, reporters have got to go!” the protesters shouted.

After the fracas, Mark Schierbecker, who was shooting the video, approached a woman near the tent city.

“Hi, I’m media,” Schierbecker said. “Can I talk to you?”

“No, you need to get out,” the woman said. “You need to get out.”

“No I don’t,” Schierbecker said.
The woman grabbed Schierbecker’s camera and pushed him away.

“You need to get out,” she said again.

“No I don’t,” Schierbecker said again.

“All right,” the woman said. “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here.”

The woman was later identified as Melissa Click, an assistant professor of mass media at the university.

On Tuesday, David Kurpius, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, released a statement saying Click is a member of the Department of Communication who holds a “courtesy appointment” with the School of Journalism. The Department of Communication is in MU’s College of Arts and Science.

The statement said that faculty members from the journalism school “are taking immediate action to review” Click’s courtesy appointment and noted that the faculty was “proud” of Tai for handling himself “professionally and with poise.”

“The news media have First Amendment rights to cover public events,” Kurpius said in the statement.

“The events of Nov. 9 have raised numerous issues regarding the boundaries of the First Amendment,” the statement added. “Although the attention on journalists has shifted the focus from the news of the day, it provides an opportunity to educate students and citizens about the role of a free press.”

In a longer version of Schierbecker’s video, posted to YouTube on Tuesday, Schierbecker is heard saying: “This is public property.”

Covering Schierbecker’s camera lens with her hand, Click says, in a derisive tone: “Yeah, I know, that’s a really good one; I’m a communication faculty, and I really get that argument. But you need to go. You need to go. You need to go.”

As Schierbecker walks away, the professor says: “And don’t let him back in!”

Click, who reportedly made a Facebook plea for media coverage of the protest before Monday’s encounter, was taken to task on Twitter by a number of journalists, including CNN’s Jake Tapper.

“Meet The Sick Mizzou Media Professor Who Threatened A Reporter With MOB VIOLENCE,” the Daily Caller’s said in a headline.
“To watch the video of photographer Tim Tai getting pushed around by a turf-protecting scrum of protesters at the University of Missouri is to experience constitutional angst,” The Washington Post’s Erik Wemple wrote.

“Current research projects involve ’50 Shades of Grey’ readers, the impact of social media in fans’ relationship with Lady Gaga, masculinity and male fans, messages about class and food in reality television programming, and messages about work in children’s television programs,” according to Click’s Web site.

She is also chair of the university’s Student Publications Committee.

Click was not immediately available for comment. In tweets late Monday, Concerned Student 1950 defended its right to create a media-free “safe space.”

“We ask for no media in the parameters so the place where people live, fellowship, & sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narratives,” the group tweeted. “White, black, and all other ethnicities have been able to converse and build from fellowshipping at the camp site. That isn’t for your story,” the group said in its next tweet. The group added: “Marginalized populations are not obligated to educate and converse about our experiences, but we did to make this campus more aware.”

Professor Angus Johnston, a historian of American student activism at the City University of New York, said the protests at Mizzou were more complicated than one video can convey.

“Framing this as an issue of censorship, of the press rights of this journalist being censored, that collapses all of the issues that are being raised by this protest, into one issue,” Johnston told The Washington Post. “And it’s not an issue so much as it is a complaint: The complaint against student activists today is that they don’t support free speech and that they are intolerant of other views.”

In a statement, Missouri Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder (R) decried the confrontation.

“Actions on Monday by University faculty and staff to infringe on students’ First Amendment rights directly contradict what is taught at our universities,” Kinder said. “This incident must be examined, and if found necessary, disciplined.

“Faculty and staff cannot be allowed to pick and choose which rights, viewpoints and freedoms they respect. I renew my call to restore law and order on campus, so the rights of all are protected. The University of Missouri is funded by taxpayers. It is imperative that it be a place where freedom is paramount and all voices are heard.”

On Twitter, Tai, the student photographer, said he “didn’t mean to become part of the story. Just trying to do my job.”

“I don’t have any ill will toward the people in the video,” he wrote. “I think they had good intentions though I’m not sure why it resorted to shoving.”
Then, he added: “I’m a little perturbed at being part of the story, so maybe let’s focus some more reporting on systemic racism in higher ed institutions.”

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The New York Times

‘I Need Some Muscle’: Missouri Activists Block Journalists

By AUSTIN HUGUELET and DANIEL VICTOR NOV. 9, 2015

COLUMBIA, Mo. — A video that showed University of Missouri protesters restricting a student photographer’s access to a public area of campus on Monday has ignited discussions about press freedom.

Tim Tai, a student photographer on freelance assignment for ESPN, was trying to take photos of a small tent city that protesters had created on a campus quad. Concerned Student 1950, an activist group that formed to push for increased awareness and action around racial issues on campus, did not want reporters near the encampment.

Protesters blocked Mr. Tai’s view and argued with him, eventually pushing him away. At one point, they chanted, “Hey hey, ho ho, reporters have got to go.”

“I am documenting this for a national news organization,” Mr. Tai told the protesters, adding that “the First Amendment protects your right to be here and mine.”

The protesters accused him of acting unethically and disregarding

“What is so hard about respecting our wishes?” one protester asked.

“Because I have a job to do,” Mr. Tai answered. That elicited a retort: “We don’t care about your job.”

As the video nears its end, the person taking the video, Mark Schierbecker, emerged from the scrum and approached a woman, later identified as an assistant professor of mass media, Melissa Click, close to the tents. When he revealed that he was a journalist, Ms. Click appeared to grab at his camera.

She then yelled, “Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here.”

At another point in the video, Mr. Tai was also challenged by a university employee. Janna Basler, the director of Greek life and leadership on campus, approached Mr. Tai and, spreading her arms out, demanded that he “back off.”
As he tried to defend his right to be there, Ms. Basler explained, “You are infringing on what they need right now, which is to be alone.”

Ms. Basler and Ms. Click could not be reached for comment.

Months of protests over the University of Missouri administration’s response to racial tensions and other issues led the president of the university system, Timothy M. Wolfe, and the chancellor of the flagship campus in Columbia, R. Bowen Loftin, to step down on Monday. Demonstrators gathered at the heart of the campus broke into cheers with the news.

Mr. Tai said in an interview on Monday that he tried to explain that he had a right to be there.

“We’re documenting historic events with our photographs, and when people are crying and hugging when Wolfe resigns, it becomes a personal issue that people all over the country can connect with,” he said. “It’s my job to help connect those people to what’s going on.”

On Twitter, students who participated in the protest defended their decision to create a “safe space” without journalists.

As the video circulated online, Mr. Tai, who won an award in June for Best Single Photograph in a college journalism awards program, received widespread support, much of it from members of the news media.

The dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, David Kurpius, said in a statement on Tuesday that the school was “proud” of the way Mr. Tai handled himself.

“Tai handled himself professionally and with poise,” Mr. Kurpius said.

He also noted that Ms. Click is a faculty member of the communications department, which is separate from the journalism school. He said she holds a “courtesy appointment” with the journalism school that faculty members would take “immediate action” to review.

Missouri mass media professor faces mass media onslaught
By Dylan Byers

Last Saturday, as the protests at University of Missouri were heating up, one faculty member posted an invitation to the national media on her Facebook page.

"Hey folks, students fighting racism on the MU campus want to get their message into the national media," she wrote. "Who among my friends knows someone who would want a scoop on this incredible topic?"

"The story involves the failure of administrators, a student on day 6 of a hunger strike, and creative, fearless students," she continued. "If you can help, please let me know!"

The faculty member was Melissa Click, assistant professor of mass media at the university's School of Communications. On Monday, Click would become known as the protester who grabbed a journalist's video camera, told him he had no right to be there, then asked for "muscle" to have him removed from the scene.

"Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here," Click shouted to her fellow protesters at Concerned Student 1950, a student and faculty group that says it seeks the "liberation of black collegiate students."

Click's exchange with the cameraman, Mark Schierbecker, came after she and other protesters had argued with a photographer named Tim Tai about whether or not he had the right to be there, then removed him from the scene by walking against him until he was forced to leave.
"Hey hey, ho ho, reporters have got to go," shouted several protesters, including Janna Basler, the director of Greek life and leadership at Missouri. Those exchanges, which were captured on video by Schierbecker, have since gone viral and set off a fierce debate over freedom of expression on college campuses.

Click's behavior, an apparent about face from her call for national media attention, has also made her the unwitting poster child for extreme political correctness and intolerance in American education.

"The student protest at the University of Missouri began as a response to a serious problem — outbursts of vile racism on campus — and quickly devolved into an expression of a renewed left-wing hostility to freedom of expression," New York Magazine columnist Jonathan Chait wrote on Tuesday.

The same argument has been made -- although in less nuanced terms -- on several conservative websites and across social media. At The American Conservative, senior editor Rod Dreher called Click a "fanatic" and a "radical professor."

While Click's image has spread across the Internet -- on websites ranging from The New York Times to Gawker to Breitbart News -- the communications professor has sought to diminish her online presence, blocking access to her Twitter account and removing her profile picture. (Basler has deleted her Twitter account entirely.)

Click also did not respond to requests for an interview on Monday night and Tuesday morning.
On Twitter, Concerned Students 1950 has said that it asked "for no media in the parameters so the place where people live, fellowship, & sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narratives."

By Tuesday afternoon, however, the group had changed course. Reuben Faloughi, one of the group's organizers, tweeted out an image of a flier announcing that media have a First Amendment right to the area and that they should be welcomed and thanked for sharing the group's story with the world. Meanwhile, Click continues to face criticism, online and on campus.

On Tuesday, the Dean of the Missouri School of Journalism accused her and other protesters of trying to block media access "through physical and verbal intimidation" and said it was taking "immediate action" to review a "courtesy appointment" Click has with the Journalism School.

Click is formally a member of the university's Department of Communication in the College of Arts and Science, which is separate from the School of Journalism.

Mitchell S. McKinney, chairman of the Communications Department, tweeted a statement to "applaud student journalists who were working in a very trying atmosphere... Intimidation is never an acceptable form of communication." Katherine Reed, an associate professor in the Missouri Journalism School, also expressed outrage on Twitter on Monday: "MU faculty member [Melissa Click] and staffer [Janna Basler], shame on you for your behavior today. Shame!" she wrote. "Unbelievable how many times [Columbia Missourian] reporters and photographers were shoved and verbally abused during #ConcernedStudent1950 protests," she added.
In an interview with CNN late Monday night, Tai, the photographer, said it was "patently absurd" for Click, Basler and the other protesters to tell him he wasn't allowed to be in a public space. The First Amendment that protected their right to protest also protected his right to photograph that protest, he said.

Both the Missouri Journalism School and The New York Press Club saluted Tai on Tuesday, with the press club praising him for standing his ground "in the face of physical and verbal abuse."

#ConcernedStudent1950: University of Missouri Protesters Clash With Media

As activists at the University of Missouri celebrated the resignation of the school’s president on Monday, journalists arrived at the campus quad to document the moment.

After weeks of protests, activists with the Concerned Student 1950 group had turned their complaints of racism into a national story. But instead of welcoming the continued coverage, the activists pushed back.

When journalists, including a student photographer, tried to take pictures of an activist encampment, several of the activists, including faculty members and other adults, blocked them.
In one confrontation captured on video, Tim Tai, a student at the university's journalism school who had been contracted by ESPN, took photos while activists locked arms and made a widening circle around the camp to keep journalists away.

A faculty member, identified by the Columbia Missourian as Greek Life and Leadership Assistant Director Janna Basler, blocked him and told him to leave.

"You don't have right to take our photos," one student told Tai.

Several began to chant: "Hey hey, ho ho, reporters have got to go."

Tai told them they were all permitted to be there, on public property. "This is the First Amendment that protects your right to stand here, and protects mine," he said.

The episode was captured on video by Mark Schierbecker, who then slipped inside the circle and approached a University of Missouri communications professor, later identified as Melissa Click.

"I'm media. Can I talk to you?" Schierbecker asked.

"No, you need to get out," Click said.

"No, I don't," Schierbecker said.

Click pushed his camera, then turned toward the camp. "Hey, who wants to help me get this reporter our of here? I need some muscle over here."

Schierbecker said it was it his right to be there.

Click then identified herself as a member of the communications faculty. "I get that argument," she said. "But you need to go." She blocked his camera with her hand.

Schierbecker then walked to the outside of the circle, but continued to film. An activist held up a sign that said: "Media: Please Stay Off the Grass."

The activist, a young woman, told him, "Take a good picture of this."
New video shows University of Missouri media professor Melissa Click continuing to harass student journalist

BY JASON SILVERSTEIN

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Updated: Tuesday, November 10, 2015, 4:59 PM

It didn’t end with the "muscle."

The University of Missouri professor caught on camera muscle “to remove a student journalist from a protest continued harassing him for several minutes, and even boasted about her role as a media teacher, as seen in extended video of the infamous confrontation.

Assistant Professor Melissa Click earned national scorn Monday after a video showed her joining students in browbeating photographer Tim Tai, who was freelancing for ESPN to cover the racially-charged protests that led to school president Tim Wolfe stepping down.

Click is heard yelling with students for Tai to stop taking photos and step away from an encampment on school grounds. The protesters repeatedly push Tai as he tries explaining how the First Amendment works.

At the end of the video, another student reporter, Mark Schierbecker, tries talking to Click. She tells him to “get out,” hits his camera and yells: "Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here."

Melissa Click teaches media courses and works with two student publications.

Schierbecker posted a longer video Tuesday morning, showing that Click kept confronting him and rallying students against the media.

When Schierbecker reminds Click he’s filming on public property, the professor puts her hand over his lens and drops her voice to a mocking tone.

“I know, that’s a really good one, I’m a communication faculty and I really get that argument, but you need to go,” she says.
As Schierbecker walks away, Click tells protesters: “Don’t let him back in.” He keeps filming from a distance as Click runs around the encampment. Near the end of the clip, she applauded a student for blocking Schierbecker from filming.

Mizzou’s Department of Communication later Tuesday issued a statement about the confrontation, saying it "supports the First Amendment as a fundamental right," but would not be able to comment on personnel matters concerning school employees.

"We applaud student journalists who were working in a very trying atmosphere to report a significant story," the statement reads. "Intimidation is never an acceptable form of communication."

Click’s media-steeped background gives little clue as to how she became an apparent enemy of the free press. At Mizzou, she teaches media and pop culture, works with two student publications and has championed social media as a tool of civic discussion. Just days ago, she posted a plea on Facebook for "the national media" to

After the video of her rants went viral, she made her Twitter account private and removed her photo from it. Her voicemail box was full Tuesday morning and she did not return requests for comment.

Mizzou Journalism School Dean David Kurpius slammed Click on Twitter, making sure his followers know she is not a part of his school.

"We stand by journalists and our students," he wrote.

Click has taught at Mizzou since 2003 and focuses her research on contemporary pop culture, often through a feminist lens, according to her academic bio. Her recent papers include studies of Lady Gaga, "Twilight," “Fifty Shades of Grey” and Martha Stewart.

In an article for the school-runMissouriannewspaper last year about her GaGa studies, she commended the pop superstar for discussing teen bullying on social media.

“In a culture where bullying continues and suicide is the major cause of teen death, calling attention to the fact that difference can be positive and should be celebrated is important,” she said.

We ask for no media in the parameters so the place where people live, fellowship, & sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narratives


Click serves as chair of the student publications committee, where she works with Maneater student newspaper and the Savitar yearbook. Schierbecker, the student who filmed her, is a Maneater senior staff photographer.

Click’s CV lists several teaching awards, and she has a near-perfect 4.9 score on RateMyProfessor.
Concerned Student 1950 has made repeated calls for restricting media coverage of its public protests, which have earned national attention. The group tweeted Monday: “We ask for no media in the parameters so the place where people live, fellowship, & sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narratives”
'I need some muscle': Bizarre moment University of Missouri media professor illegally KICKS OUT journalist from covering race demonstrations

- Melissa Click, an assistant media professor at the University of Missouri, was caught trying to force journalists out of a public protest on Monday
- Video shows how Tim Tai, a senior photojournalism student was encircled by a group of protesters and pushed from their camp on the quad
- The 20-year-old was on an assignment from ESPN to cover the protesters celebration at the resignation of President Tim Wolfe
- At the end of the clip, Click is seen walking up to the cameraman recording the exchange and demanding he leave the camp
- She tries to knock down his camera and then says: 'Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here'
- Click is on the faculty of the University of Missouri College of Arts and Sciences - not to be confused with the prestigious School of Journalism

The civil rights protests at the University of Missouri took an unexpected turn on Monday, when a media teacher was caught on camera harassing journalists trying to cover the national story.

An activist group called Concerned Student 1950 had been camping on the public lawn, demanding President Tim Wolfe step down from his position for his handling of a string of racism scandals at the university.

When Wolfe finally quit on Monday, instead of celebrating the group took aim at the journalists trying to capture the moment for history, infringing on the reporters’ First Amendment rights by threatening to call the police and physically forcing them out of the camp.

Video shows how 20-year-old photojournalism student Tim Tai, on assignment for ESPN, was encircled by a band of protesters who yelled at him, covered his camera and shoved him away from their headquarters.

At the end of the clip, Melissa Click, an assistant media professor at the university, is seen coming up to Mark Schierbecker, another photographer recording the exchange, to cover his camera and demand that he leave.

'Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here?' she yells out. 'I need some muscle over here.'

She then comes back to the photographer and starts yelling in his face: 'You need to get out. You need to get out'.

When he explains that 'this is public property' and he can stay there because 'it's owned by the university' Click takes on a mocking tone.
'That's a really good one. I'm with the communications faculty and I really get that argument - but you need to go. You need to go!' Click says.

That's when another man, dressed in a red shirt, comes up and politely says: 'Please respect these people's wishes. I think it's very simple'.

'I didn't see you respecting that reporter,' Schierbecker responds.

Eventually Schierbecker walks outside the human wall and continues filming from outside the perimeter. All along the line, students continue complaining about the press and trying to cover his camera.

In response to Click's actions, the University of Missouri Department of Communication said: 'We support the First Amendment as a fundamental right and guiding principle underlying all that we do as an academic community. 'We applaud student journalists who were working in a very trying atmosphere to report a significant story. Intimidation is never an acceptable form of communication. 'We reiterate our commitment as communication scholars to the transformative power of dialogue; we believe words shape our realities and that engaging multiple perspectives is vital. 'We will not be able to comment on any personnel matters.'

Daily Mail Online reached out to Click for comment Tuesday morning, but did not immediately receive response. Yesterday, the professor set her Twitter to private.

Her aggression towards journalists is perhaps strange since just two days earlier she publicly reached out to the media on Facebook to cover the story.

According to her University of Missouri website, Click holds a PhD in communications and focuses her research on 'popular culture texts and audiences, particularly texts and audiences disdained in mainstream culture.'

She is currently researching the readers of '50 Shades of Grey' and the 'impact of social media' on fans of Lady Gaga.

To be clear - Click is a member of the Communications department faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences - not to be confused with the prestigious University of Missouri School of Journalism, one of the best programs in the nation.

And that's not the only shocking part of the video. The behavior of the other student and faculty protesters is just as disturbing.

The video starts with a middle-aged man politely asking Tai to leave, but the situation escalates when a mob of students surrounds the photojournalist and starts shoving him. He tells them they are not allowed to touch them, so instead they put their hands up in the air, blocking his ability to take pictures.

'You don't have a right to take our photos' one of the activists yells at Tai.
Tia then explains that he does indeed have a right to be there, since the First Amendment protects the freedom of speech for everyone in public spaces.

The group then starts chanting: 'Hey hey! Ho ho! Reporters have got to go!'

Another woman, later identified as Janna Basler, the director of Greek life and leadership on campus, walks up and starts leading the group of students in corralling Tia away from the tents.

Concentrating their efforts on Tai, the activists forgot about Schierbecker and he took the opportunity to walk up to a middle aged protester, later identified as Click.

Since the protesters started the camp earlier this year, they have placed signs outside asking media to stay out and respect their privacy. However the quad at Missouri is a public space and therefore they didn't technically have the right to forbid entry.

The Concerned Student 1950 activist group later addressed criticism over their forceful interactions with media on Monday

'We ask for no media in the parameters (sic) so the place where people live, fellowship, and sleep can be protected from twisted insincere narrative,' the group explained

Following the incident, Tai spoke with several news organizations, saying this isn't the first time he's run into trouble covering a story.

As a photojournalist. My job is often intrusive and uncomfortable. I don't take joy in that. You take the scene as it presents itself and you try to make impactful images that tell the story. And sometimes you have to put down the cameras. But national breaking news on a public lawn is not one of those times.

Tim Tai, student photojournalist

Tai photographed the protests in nearby Ferguson, Missouri over the death of Michael Brown last year, but he told the Los Angeles Times that the people trying to stop him taking pictures then were the police.

'As a photojournalist, my job is often intrusive and uncomfortable. I don't take joy in that.

'You take the scene as it presents itself, and you try to make impactful images that tell the story...And sometimes you have to put down the cameras.

'But national breaking news on a public lawn is not one of those times,' Tai told Jonathan Peters of the Columbia Journalism Review.

Several other journalists quickly came to the defense of Tai, and were outraged that the incident happened on the campus of one of the oldest and most prestigious journalism schools in the country.

'I'm pretty incensed about it,' Tom Warhover, executive editor of the Columbian Missourian told The LA Times. 'I find it ironic that particularly faculty members would resort to those kinds of things for no good reason. I understand students who are protesting and want privacy. But they are not allowed to push and assault our photographers - our student photographers.'

Robert Cohen, a photographer for the St Louis Post Dispatch, said it was 'the strangest victory party I've ever seen.'
'It was a victorious day for the protest, and they didn't want it recorded...As photographers, we see this sort of treatment or heavy-handedness when somebody's coming out of a courthouse after they've been handed a felony,' Cohen said.

In a statement on their Twitter account, Concerned Student 1950 wrote: 'We truly appreciate our story told, but this movement isn't for you.'

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**Why Is A Mizzou Communications Professor Telling Reporters To 'Get Out'?**

“I need some muscle over here!”

*Nick Visser* Reporter, The Huffington Post

The University of Missouri campus, in a state of turmoil following Monday's resignation of president Tim Wolfe after months of racial tension, has been thronged by hundreds of local and national reporters.

Some were met with surprising resistance from students -- and a communications professor.

A video shows a student journalist attempting to photograph protestors who have set up a circle barring media from a public space.

The photographer, identified as Tim Tai, struggles to explain his First Amendment right to an obviously annoyed group. "You don't have a right to take our photos," someone says (he does). Another person adds: "You're infringing on what they need right now" (he's not).

The nearly seven-minute clip also shows a mass media professor identified as Melissa Click, who urges the students to block Tai’s access.
As Tai leaves, another journalist who identifies himself as a member of the media asks if he can speak with Click. She immediately becomes enraged, demanding he "get out" before turning to students and yelling, "I need some muscle over here."

"I'm pretty incensed about it," Tom Warhover, executive editor of university newspaper the Columbia Missourian, told the Los Angeles Times. "I find it ironic that particularly faculty members would resort to those kinds of things for no good reason."

She certainly knows that Mizzou, which Vox notes has "a renowned journalism school and a strong culture of student media," cannot bar reporters from covering news on campus. She didn't immediately return an email requesting comment.

Click's costars in the video are college students, demanding respect for the campus they love, much like Penn State students did after beloved football coach Joe Paterno was fired in the Jerry Sandusky sex scandal. Students' media savvy is understandably low. As a recent piece in The Washington Post points out, "college students have been saying stupid things since the invention of college students."

"One of the purposes of college is to articulate stupid arguments in stupid ways and then learn, through interactions with fellow students and professors, exactly how stupid they are," Daniel W. Drezner, a professor at Tufts University, writes about similar protests at Yale.

Click, however, holds no such license to stupidity. She holds a Ph.D. in communications from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her current research focuses on consumers of the 50 Shades trilogy of erotic novels and fan culture surrounding pop star Lady Gaga.

Tai, on assignment Monday for ESPN, told the LA Times he understood the need "to cautiously or delicately approach these stories without overwhelming people."
Video captures Missouri protesters' clash with media

Matt Pearce Contact Reporter

The warning signs circle the protesters' tent encampment like guard towers: No media allowed. The activists say the tent city is meant to be a safe space.

One problem: The tents are in the middle of a public, 1st Amendment-protected university quad.

The story of a student uprising led by black activists at the University of Missouri took an unexpected turn Monday when protesters and student journalists got into a clash over access.

A video of protesters surrounding and shoving a student photographer out of the way has since prompted indignation from journalists who say activists have gone to such great lengths to protect their own privacy and space that they have infringed on the rights of others.

The University of Missouri has one of the nation's largest and most prestigious journalism schools, and the story of the activists who forced the university system's president and the university chancellor to announce their resignations Monday surely rates among the biggest stories in the university's modern history.

Activists with Concerned Student 1950 — the main activist group involved with the recent protests — have strictly limited their contact with the media.
As Concerned Student 1950's members filed off an amphitheater stage Monday afternoon — still calling for more change and more meetings with top university officials — other activists blocked journalists from asking questions.

"Why don't you want to talk to the media?" one reporter asked.

"That's their choice," a man blocking reporters responded. "They don't want to. They don't have to justify that."

Before Tim Wolfe's resignation Monday, the school's football team had gone on strike, and some professors were staging a walkout from their classes.

Photojournalism student Tim Tai, 20, a senior from St. Louis, Mo., had taken an assignment with ESPN and hustled over to the tent encampment Monday after University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe announced his resignation over complaints he had not done enough to address racism on the campus.

When Tai arrived, students were chanting, singing and celebrating. Wolfe's resignation amounted to a major victory to them. Tai tried to capture the moment.

He told The Los Angeles Times that he was looking for pictures that "tell the story" and capture how the protests fit into other demonstrations by black activists around the nation. The glaring daylight wasn't great, but he tried to get shots of the tents, which he said were evocative of similar protests in the university's history.

But shortly after the celebration began, a ring of protesters assembled around the tent encampment and then marched outward to push away the media that had gathered at the scene.

In the video, taken by another journalist and uploaded to YouTube, Tai refuses to budge.
"You don't have a right to take our photos," a demonstrator told Tai, who responds that he has a 1st Amendment right to photograph on the quad.

"Shame! Shame!" the protesters chant at Tai. "Hey hey! Ho ho! Reporters have got to go!"

"I have a job to do!" Tai tells one demonstrator. "I'm documenting this for a national news organization. This is the 1st Amendment that protects your right to stand here and mine! ... The law protects both of us being here."

Other demonstrators — including a middle-aged protester — got very close to Tai and pushed him backward away from the encampment.

One person in the video, University of Missouri professor Melissa Click, can be seen on the video grabbing a videographer's camera and telling him, "You need to get out," and then shouting to other protesters: "Who wants to help me get this reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here!"

The video drew a stern rebuke from the editor of the Columbia Missourian, a university newspaper staffed with professional editors and student reporters and photographers. Tai had been a photographer at the paper a year earlier.

"I'm pretty incensed about it," executive editor Tom Warhover told The Times. "I find it ironic that particularly faculty members would resort to those kinds of things for no good reason. I understand students who are protesting and want privacy. But they are not allowed to push and assault our photographers — our student photographers."

"I got in a bit of a shouting match, and I regret that," Tai said later, sitting inside an empty office at the Columbia Missourian, where he fielded media calls and looked at his social media accounts. A glance at his Facebook page showed that he had 34 new friend requests. A glance at his Twitter account revealed he had hundreds of new followers.
"I really hope I haven't tweeted anything bad in the last year," Tai murmured to himself.

Tai acknowledged that the demonstrators had a point, since he does recognize there are situations that are sensitive to photograph, but he said that he tries to figure out "how to cautiously or delicately approach these stories without overwhelming people.

"I don't think everyone there is super anti-media, but I think there's misunderstanding about what we do," Tai said.

Tai told The Times that he recognized one of the people at the scene as one of his former professors.

Responding to criticism from journalists over the video, Concerned Student 1950 tweeted from its group account, "We truly appreciate having our story told, but this movement isn't for you."

Tai said he wasn't scared by being surrounded and pushed, but he was frustrated.

He was in a similar situation when covering last year's protests in Ferguson, Tai said — except "it was the police doing it then."
DEAR READER: On a historic day for MU, protest against media wasn't most important

13 HRS AGO

Correction

* Tim Tai has been a Missourian photographer but hasn't taken the photo editing class yet. A previous version said he served as a photo editor.

Dear Reader,

I’ve been asked why the Missourian didn’t do its own article on Monday about a confrontation between an MU student photojournalist and some misguided protesters.

The answer’s simple: It wasn’t the most important story of the day. Not close. Minority students and graduate students and faculty and staff took to the south quad in protest. A university system president and a university chancellor resigned. A committed young man ended a seven-day hunger strike. Eleven men and women, identified together in the singular condition “Concerned Student 1950,” made a big imprint in the history of our state land grant institution.

The University of Missouri took a lurching step forward. To where? No one is quite certain.

Tuesday morning, social media was lit up, mostly with outrage, mostly pointed at two university employees who bullied journalists, particularly student journalists such as photographer Tim Tai.

Tai was on assignment for ESPN. Angry people who didn’t want him taking pictures accosted him. Mark Schierbecker filmed the whole thing. The video went viral.

If you haven’t seen it, the synopsis: With protesters linked arm and arm Monday, a circle formed around the tent city that has been a home base since Jonathan Butler’s hunger strike began. The circle pushed
outward against the throng of reporters and photographers there to record this historic day. Tai knew he had a right to be in that public space. He stood his ground, even after he was pushed and verbally attacked.

Make no mistake: I was incensed when I saw the video. I'm still having trouble with it. Most of the journalism tribe around the country is angry, too.

It wasn’t the most important story Tuesday. But it was just the story with the most juice.

Before I go further, let me say:

• Tai did just about everything right. He was firm but polite. He explained his position. He didn’t lose his cool. I could imagine a whole bunch of veteran journalists who couldn’t have done what he did.

• Your right to protest ends when you put your hands on somebody else. Period.

• Journalists, and especially student journalists, had every right to be there.

• Tim has been a Missourian photographer *. He will be a Missourian reporter. In other words, he’s my student, even though I don’t teach a class in photojournalism. We’re protective of our students.

Tim the student has become the teacher over the past couple of days.

Hopefully, he taught a few older people who should know better how to conduct yourself in a civil manner.

He’s still trying to teach others where the lens should be focused.

“I’m a little perturbed at being part of the story, so maybe let’s focus some more reporting on systemic racism in higher ed institutions,” he tweeted Monday night. He told me he wished he could talk with more protesters about the things that are bothering them about the media.

Instead, people are shouting at each other.
It makes for an easy narrative. Us vs. them. One side battling another. Villains and victims.

Easy, and not very helpful.

The Missourian didn’t do a story Monday night. On Tuesday, a report was needed. There were too many angry people to ignore.

One of the university employees in the video, assistant professor Melissa Click, was about to have her courtesy appointment at the School of Journalism pulled. Her home, the Communications Department in the School of Arts and Sciences, wasn’t real happy, either.

Tuesday morning, Concerned Student 1950 opened its arms to journalists, even passing out fliers preaching the lesson of inclusiveness. Tuesday night, Click apologized for her actions.

By 6 p.m., nothing had been heard from MU Greek Life and Leadership Assistant Director Janna Basler, the employee in the video seen pushing and berating Tim Tai.

The Missourian covered the details as they emerged.

It was important.
At the University of Missouri, the Power of a Football Protest

To the Editor:

Re “Campus Protests at Missouri Spur a Day of Change” (front page, Nov. 10), about the resignation of two university officials over racial and other issues:

Congratulations to the University of Missouri football players! You have discovered the power of athletic programs to reform your institution. Let the word go out to every college athletic team: You can correct what is wrong in your university.

And to every college administration: Where you fail in social, institutional or academic issues, there is a center of power on your campus that has just discovered its influence for good. We’ve long known the power of athletics to corrupt.

STEPHEN JAEGER

Los Angeles

The writer is professor emeritus of German and comparative literature at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

To the Editor:

I am an African-American alum of Mizzou, so I am well aware of the host of race problems simmering on that campus. I hope that the resignations of the president, Timothy M. Wolfe, and the chancellor, R. Bowen Loftin, help create some fruitful, real solutions to them.

Of course, their departures cannot change the root of the major problems, which is situated in centuries of institutional racism. However, perhaps a dialogue will open that may change people’s behavior.

It is telling that the months of student protests with faculty support had not gotten either leader’s serious attention. Sadly and clearly, it took the football team’s entering the fray to bring about their exit.

Just as on any Division I campus and many smaller ones as well, the athletic department’s budget determines how affairs are conducted. For example, Mizzou’s football coach, Gary
Pinkel, will earn $4 million this season, while assistant professors there have an average salary of about $84,000.

So the football players’ missing a practice and the threat of forfeiting a game quickly made things happen.

D. WAHEEDAH BILAL

Columbia, Mo.

To the Editor:

I was saddened that the University of Missouri was unable to deal with issues that are becoming more commonplace on campuses across the country.

From one perspective, the lack of leadership exhibited by the president made his resignation inevitable. Ensuring that the university is a safe and comfortable place to learn is the most important job of its administrators. And negotiating reasonable arrangements with the teaching staff on issues like health care should not be that controversial for seasoned professionals.

Nonetheless, students, and now athletes, should use their influence with discretion. Before threatening to shut down classes and cancel football games that are so important to the school and game attendees, campus leaders must be sure that their concerns are noble and reasonable. Small groups of outspoken students should not set the agenda for the much larger student body.

SALVATORE J. BOMMARITO

New York

To the Editor:

One can readily imagine the following conversation among the leadership of the University of Missouri:

“A grad student is starving himself until we resign. Should we quit? Nah.”

“Football players won’t play if we don’t resign. We’re out of here!”

KENNETH A. MARGOLIS

Chappaqua, N.Y.
The Power of a Football Boycott

The University of Missouri football team threatened to strike if the university's president didn't resign. The success of the boycott shows the economic influence athletes can wield.

November 11, 2015

By Jake New

When Tim Wolfe announced his resignation as the University of Missouri System's president on Monday, the decision came after weeks of demonstrations over the president’s handling of a string of racist incidents on campus. Student and faculty groups had been calling for Wolfe’s resignation, and on Nov. 2 a graduate student went on a hunger strike, vowing he would not eat until Wolfe was “removed from office or my internal organs fail and my life is lost.”

Then, on Saturday, Nov. 7, at least 30 members of the university’s football team linked arms with the hunger striker and gave an ultimatum: if Wolfe didn't resign, they would boycott all football-related activities. That included a game scheduled for this coming Saturday. While it would be an exaggeration to attribute Wolfe's resignation -- and that of the Columbia campus's chancellor, R. Bowen Loftin, which will be at the end of the year -- largely to the players' actions (as some have), their strike certainly helped tipped the scales.

And the success of the players’ boycott could have important ramifications for college sports.

“I think the power that players have has always existed, but rarely do you see it channeled in this way,” said Ramogi Huma, president of the National College Players Association and a former University of California at Los Angeles football player. “This really could signal to athletes that every player has this power, especially those in high-revenue sports.”

Huma was one of the architects of the recent attempt to unionize football players at Northwestern University. He said the Missouri boycott demonstrates just how much
sway athletes have on campus after years of institutions pushing sports like football and basketball to become, as athletics directors are inclined to say, the “front porch of the university.”

Huma said the boycott is “clearly transferrable to the college athletes’ rights movement.” Imagine, he said, this sort of boycott happening at a university over its concussion policies or athletic scholarship levels.

“I think this brings us one step closer to understanding that power, and this could plant those kinds of seeds at various campuses,” Huma said. “We haven’t advocated for striking, as it does take a lot of courage and it is risky, but it could end up being a silver bullet on these issues.”

Helping the players at Missouri, Huma said, was the amount of money the university stood to lose if the players had boycotted this weekend’s game. Had the strike taken place, the university would have owed Brigham Young University $1 million, per the two universities’ game contract. “There’s a lot hanging in the balance when there’s so much money at stake,” Huma said.

Even at smaller institutions, football is an important and visible part of the university, however, and the Missouri boycott is not the first time in recent years that players have gone on strike. In 2013, players at Grambling State University, a historically black institution in Louisiana, boycotted football over administrators’ refusal to address poor facility conditions, excessively long travel to games and other issues.

The boycott caused the university to forfeit a game against Jackson State University, leading to a lawsuit against Grambling State. The game was meant to be Jackson State’s homecoming, and that university said the Grambling team’s no-show performance cost it millions of dollars.

It’s the economic impact players have on a university -- whether at a large football program like Missouri or a smaller institution, like Grambling State -- that can empower athletes to take a stand, said Dan Lebowitz, executive director of Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society. If there was any doubt among players of this fact, the Missouri boycott could help change that, he said.

“This could have massive implications for college sports, especially those in the major five conferences,” Lebowitz said. “I think you’re going to really start seeing athletes understand the power this system has given them because of the economics now involved.”

And that won’t apply only to social justice issues. The fact that a university stands to lose so much money when athletes decide not to play a game raises questions about their roles as students, Lebowitz said.

“I think it could regalvanize the movement for paying athletes,” he said. “I think you're going to start seeing a new way of looking at the student-athlete structure and whether or not athletes are in large respect employees that deserve to be paid. It’s hard to argue they’re not when they have this kind of economic power.”
Missouri basketball players stressed unity during unrest

Nov. 11, 2015 • By Dave Matter

COLUMBIA, Mo. • As soon as a group of Missouri football players announced a boycott of team activities on Saturday night, football coach Gary Pinkel’s problem also became basketball coach Kim Anderson’s problem. When Anderson became aware Saturday that 32 of Pinkel’s African-American football players had sided with campus protest group Concerned Student 1950 and pledged to strike until University of Missouri system president Timothy M. Wolfe was out of office, he contacted one of his players to tell his teammates they’d discuss the situation at the next day’s practice.

Anderson decided he wouldn’t prohibit his players from following the lead of their football-playing peers. He just wanted to talk to them first.

The players discussed the situation on a group text message Saturday night, senior forward Ryan Rosburg said. Rosburg has several friends on the football team but knew nothing about the boycott until an ESPN notification appeared on his phone with the breaking news. The players discussed their options.

“The main thing is,” said Rosburg, one of five white players on the roster, “we wanted to be a team. If we had guys with issues with what was going on (on campus) — some guys were, some guys weren’t, whatever it was — we wanted to be a team.”

On Sunday, the basketball players met with Anderson, athletics director Mack Rhoades and deputy AD Wren Baker.

“I wanted to support the guys,” Anderson said Tuesday. “The main thing I wanted them to do if they wanted to do something — I would have supported it — just make sure that they’re fully informed of what they’re doing and that they are together as a group.”

Anderson knew none of his players had a personal connection to MU grad student Jonathan Butler, whose hunger strike became the focal point of the protest and attracted the support of Pinkel’s football players. The players, Anderson said, didn’t have extensive knowledge of the situation brewing on campus.

The team practiced Sunday, then had study hall. Monday was a scheduled day off but Anderson wanted to be proactive on the situation.

“I felt like we had to reconvene on Monday,” he said, “just to talk, see if the guys thought of anything else or had any questions or maybe there was something they indicated they wanted to do.”
“We talked about joining in (the boycott),” freshman guard Terrence Phillips said. “We didn’t know how we were going or do it or when we were going to do it. We discussed it and were going to discuss it again on Monday.”

“We couldn’t make any rash decisions,” freshman guard K.J. Walton added.

When Monday came, the UM system board of curators meeting started with Wolfe’s resignation, shortly followed by Butler ending his hunger strike. The football players then dropped their boycott before the basketball team could settle on a plan.

Unlike some of his freshman teammates, Rosburg was more aware of the student protest group. Most of his classes take place in Cornell Hall, which is adjacent to the campsite on Carnahan Quadrangle that became home to Concerned Student 1950. On Sunday, he kept in touch with some friends on the football team. He was impressed by their unity.

“Whether or not they all agreed about (the boycott), their team bond was more important than their personal beliefs,” he said. “I think that’s pretty powerful.”

Anderson acknowledged that the football players had more “first-hand knowledge” of the situation on campus compared to his team, which includes six first-year scholarship players who are new to campus.

In his time at Mizzou as an assistant coach under Norm Stewart and his current run as head coach Anderson said he’s rarely had black players come to him with racial problems they’ve faced on campus.

“I’m not naïve,” said Anderson, who played at Missouri in the 1970s. “I know we as a campus have problems. But we as a nation have problems. It’s important from this situation that we learn from it, hopefully healing has begun and hopefully we can use this to bring our campus community closer together.

“This is my school. So, I certainly want to do what I can to help. I’m hopeful that we can, all of us can use this period of time from this point forward to heal and maybe learn from what’s happened not only in the past few days but the past few months.”

While Pinkel declined to comment on Wolfe’s resignation the last two days, Anderson addressed it Tuesday, along with the resignation of Missouri chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, both of whom were instrumental in approving his hire last year.

“I think you could tell these are two men who cared a great deal about the school, about the university,” he said. “You could tell that by some of their remarks (Monday). Both of them put what’s best for the university and the campus before themselves or they did what’s best for the university and the campus. I’m appreciative of both of them for giving me the opportunity to be the head basketball coach and wish both of them well.”
Pinkel distances himself from protest group

Nov. 10, 2015 • By Dave Matter

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Sometimes a hashtag is more than a number sign.

Missouri football coach Gary Pinkel did his best Monday to distance himself from the causes behind MU student protest group Concerned Student 1950, but why then did his epic tweet on Sunday include the group’s name?

The photo posted on Pinkel’s Twitter account showed the coach and most of his players and assistant coaches locked arm in arm along with the message: “The Mizzou Family stands as one. We are united. We are behind our players. #ConcernedStudent1950 GP”

The inclusion of the group’s hashtag could have been interpreted as an endorsement of the group’s cause and its ultimate objective to overthrow University of Missouri system president Timothy M. Wolfe.

In an interview on Kansas City radio station WHB 810 on Tuesday, Pinkel said he didn’t know the hashtag of the protest group was included in the tweet.

“What happened was,” Pinkel said, “I have somebody who tweets for me a lot to get information out and that person should not have put that hashtag on it.”

“That organization can do what they want to,” he added. “No judgments on them at all. But that should not have come out.”

Asked if he personally supports the protest group that demanded Wolfe out of office, Pinkel said, “No. Not at all. That had nothing to do with it. It was about a young man that was really struggling. That’s what it was about.”

After the interview, Pinkel cancelled his regularly scheduled Tuesday interview on Frank Cusamano’s show on St. Louis radio station CBS 920 AM.

During his joint news conference with athletics director Mack Rhoades on Monday, Pinkel was asked if he supported the social issues behind the campus protest, specifically the hunger strike by grad student Jonathan Butler.

“The social issues? Really what his position was, that wasn’t what I got involved with,” Pinkel said. “My players, they’re my kids. I love those guys. I got 127 of them. When they say they need my support, I certainly knew about what was going on (at) the university, but it had nothing to do with that. It simply had to do with
my players deeply cared about this guy. (They said), ‘He was dying and would you support me, Coach?’
That’s what I did.”

On Monday, Pinkel admitted to being only vaguely aware of the unrest on campus and the incidents and issues that sparked the protest.

“Honestly, during football season, I knew, I was aware of it,” he said. “You're aware of it. Did I read it and study it and so on and so forth? No. During football I live in blinders. I knew it was serious, but obviously I didn't study it with great detail.”

Pinkel was asked if the players’ protest reflected their feelings about the environment on campus.

“I think there might be some of that there. I think they're involved, yeah,” he said. “That's OK. That's OK if we identify those kind of problems and we get a chance to fix them. But I tell you, I said before, too, my players, one thing when I go out recruiting and all over the place, I always tell people how much all my players love Columbia and love the University of Missouri. OK? We got problems and these problems we're talking about, they exist on every campus in America. But the good news is, I'm going say it again, is we're going learn from this and we're going make it a much better place for it.”
In 2013, Harper produced a report showing that between 2007 and 2010, black men made up 2.8 percent of full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates at the 76 schools in the six big athletic conferences, but 57.1 percent of football teams and 64.3 percent of basketball teams. At the University of Missouri, black men now make up 65.3 percent of its football team, according to the most recently released data from the NCAA.

The young men of Missouri's football team not only showed how they could amplify the short-term public relations hit facing the school when graduate student Jonathan Butler went on a hunger strike. They also threatened the school with a financial loss from an unplayed game and a longterm stigma as a place that's hostile to minorities.

"I do not think they knew until this most recent situation just how much collective impact and influence they could have," Harper says. "Without the black players, you have no football team."

Racial inequity in education has been an issue for a long time, of course, as has a college athletic industry in which young men make millions of dollars for universities in exchange for - theoretically - a free education. So the question becomes: Why did it take so long for college athletes to make use of the power they hold?

Well, they've been trying to use that power on their own behalf, intermittently, for a couple of decades. But until recently, they hadn't made the leap to action in the interest of a broader group with which they identified.

Ramogi Huma has been trying to spur college athletes to collective action since 2001, when the former UCLA linebacker founded the National College Players Association to advocate for better healthcare, expanded scholarships and more time to spend on education. Over the years, there have been a few protests, like a boycott by football players at Grambling State in Mississippi in 2013 over poor facilities and grueling bus rides. Now, he thinks the energy is starting to pick up.

"The comments are the same in the locker room. There's a lot of feelings of injustice among the players, and that hasn't changed," Huma says. The difference is that "players are now more informed. You're seeing players speaking out spontaneously."

Take the University of Arkansas running back who made the "Hands up, Don't Shoot" gesture - a reference to the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. - after a touchdown last year. Or in March, the University of Oklahoma football team that mounted a silent protest of a racist video made by one of the school's white students.

Huma hasn't lost sight, however, of the thing he thinks would give college athletes even greater power: A union. Earlier this year, the National Labor Relations Board declined to assert jurisdiction in a case at Northwestern University, where football players had taken a vote on whether to join the United Steelworkers, letting stand the lower court's decision that they weren't employees. At some point, a union could try again.

If college athletes were deemed employees, they'd enjoy benefits like disability insurance and workers compensation, as well as the power to negotiate contracts with their universities, rather than accepting vague concessions.

"Although I mentioned some of these positive changes that players have won, these are policies that can be rolled back at any minute," Huma says. "They're really just promises."

That additional level of security might also give athletes more power to act on the behalf of other students, as well - although as the Missouri episode illustrates, they currently have a lot more than they've realized in the past.

"There's a real opportunity here for black male student athletes to step up in other places in support of other black students, and in support of themselves," Harper says.
Missouri men's basketball considered protest before Wolfe's resignation

13 HRS AGO

COLUMBIA — After members of the Missouri football team announced they would boycott football-related activities in support of Jonathan Butler and the Concerned Student 1950 movement Saturday night, some wondered if other Missouri athletic teams would follow suit.

As it turns out, the men’s basketball team was asking itself the same question.

Once the football team announced its course of action, men's basketball coach Kim Anderson communicated what he knew about the situation to an unnamed player on the basketball team, who then informed the rest of the team. As a group, the team decided to hold a meeting at 1 p.m. Sunday, prior to its regularly scheduled practice session.

Missouri athletics director Mack Rhoades and deputy athletics director Wren Baker were also present at this meeting. They talked with the team about all the issues in play and potential ways the team could show support if it so desired.

But none of the players knew enough about the issues to consider drastic action such as a boycott. Unlike the football team, which had several players in contact with Jonathan Butler and the rest of the Concerned Student 1950, the basketball team had no personal ties to the protesters. So the group decided to go ahead with its Sunday practice, and then study hall.

The team decided to meet again on Monday, to see if any players felt compelled to take a stand. But by the time the Monday meeting took place, UM System President Tim Wolfe had resigned,
and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin had announced his transition to a new position within the university. The situation had been resolved, Anderson said Tuesday, and there was little need to discuss it further.

Anderson said he would have supported whatever the team had decided to do, as long as the players were fully informed on the issues at hand and came to a decision as a unified group.

“I know that (discriminatory) situations exist that I have read about recently,” Anderson said. “I've never really had a lot of communication with guys that have expressed that to me. Now, having said that, I'm not naive. We, as a campus, have problems. But we as a nation have problems. So I think that it's important ... that we learn from it and hopefully healing has begun.”

Freshman wing K.J. Walton said he had not witnessed any racial incidents while at MU, adding that he thinks Missouri’s campus is “the best campus in the country.”

Freshman point guard Terrence Phillips also said he hasn’t experienced any prejudice or hostile actions toward him since arriving on campus this summer and that he spends a lot of time in Greektown alongside a diverse group of students. Phillips said the events of the last few days made it difficult to concentrate on the team’s regular season opener Friday against Wofford College.

“That’s the way life is sometimes,” Phillips said. “We just have to go on and roll with it.”

Near the end of his press conference, Anderson said he believes Wolfe and Loftin were doing what they thought best for the university and its campus and thanked them for the opportunity to coach the men’s basketball team.
Pinkel: 'I did the right thing, and I'd do it again

By Blake Toppmeyer

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Athletic Director Mack Rhoades called the Missouri football team’s decision to boycott practice and games until University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe resigned “an extreme measure” but called Missouri’s players “leaders in this issue” and reiterated his support for the athletes during a Monday news conference.

Wolfe resigned Monday morning, roughly 37 hours after about 32 black members of MU’s football team announced via social media Saturday night that they would not participate in “

Wolfe’s resignation ended the boycott and the hunger strike of Jonathan Butler, a black graduate student who said Nov. 2 that he’d no longer eat until Wolfe resigned.

Rhoades and Coach Gary Pinkel attempted to distance themselves from Wolfe’s resignation and the football team’s involvement in the resignation, with both saying they supported the team’s actions because the primary goal was to help save Butler’s life.

“I got involved because I support my players and a young man’s life was on the line,” Pinkel said. “Basically, that’s what it came down to. My support of my players had nothing to do with anyone losing their job.”

“Jonathan Butler, his life was at stake,” Rhoades said. “That was real for our student-athletes. That was real for our young men who compete on the football field who maybe have never, ever dealt with that. So our student-athletes, they decided to get involved, and quite frankly, simply, we supported them.”

Pinkel said he had been aware of the protests occurring on campus, but he was presented with the unrest more directly Saturday after receiving a phone call from players who were concerned about Butler’s welfare.

“My guys were very, very emotional,” Pinkel said. “They were very, very concerned with his life, and then at that time they were discussing with me what they planned on doing this weekend. We went back and forth, and I kept asking them, ‘Is it the right thing to do? Shouldn’t
you wait?’ And so on and so forth. I’m talking to guys that have tears in their eyes, and they’re crying. They asked me if I’d support them, and I said I would.

“I didn’t look at consequences. That wasn’t about it at the time. It was about helping my players and supporting my players when they needed me, and I did the right thing, and I would do it again.”

After a Sunday morning team meeting, Pinkel tweeted a photo of what appeared to be most of the team and its coaches, including Pinkel, locking arms. Pinkel’s tweet stated that the football program “stands as one.”

Pinkel said Monday he thinks there were Missouri players who didn’t learn of the boycott until players announced it via social media Saturday night.

“I tried to get them to wait until the next morning, and they wanted to do it then,” Pinkel said. “They were so emotional, and they decided to do it then.”

Pinkel said he wasn’t naive enough to think that every member of the team supported the idea of not playing Saturday’s game against BYU.

“Certainly there were some players that just went along with it, most likely, because it was their football team and their family and they were going to support them,” Pinkel said.

He compared it to the support Michael Sam received two seasons ago when Sam told his teammates he was gay.

Tensions have been high around campus for weeks after a series of racially charged issues that the Concerned Student 1950 group said did not elicit an appropriate response from MU administrators. Last month, the student group, which draws its name from the year the first black student was accepted to MU, issued a list of demands, including Wolfe’s resignation.

Protestors have been camped out on the Carnahan Quad.

The Concerned Student 1950 group’s protest efforts included blocking Wolfe’s car during a demonstration during last month’s Homecoming Parade. Wolfe later apologized for not getting out of the car to talk with the protesters.

Pinkel said he hadn’t been in contact with Wolfe, but Rhoades said he’d been in communication with Wolfe since members of the football team joined the Concerned Student 1950 movement. Rhoades called Wolfe “a caring man” who probably realized that he needed to step down to help begin the healing process.

Pinkel called the boycott unique and said he doesn’t think it’s something that will occur frequently within college football in the future.
Added Rhoades, “By no means do we believe that this is an ideal way to evoke change or answer all of our problems.”

Outside of football, no Missouri team boycotted practices or games. Rhoades said he met with the men’s and women’s basketball teams and their coaching staffs on Sunday and met with all of the school’s head coaches Sunday night.

Pinkel said he never personally spoke with Butler but sent him a supportive text message, with MU captain and starting safety Ian Simon serving as the conduit.

The team didn’t practice Sunday as part of the boycott, but Pinkel said he and his coaching staff went through their normal Sunday and Monday preparations as if Saturday’s game against BYU would be played.

According to the game contract, the university would have had to pay BYU $1 million, plus attorney fees, if it didn’t play Saturday’s game, but Rhoades said the athletic department’s actions weren’t motivated by financial reasons.

With Wolfe’s resignation bringing the end of Butler’s hunger strike, the team will resume practice Tuesday and play its game against BYU at 6:30 p.m. Saturday in Kansas City.

“Our team is excited about getting going again and playing,” Pinkel said, “and we’re looking forward to our game against BYU this weekend.”

This article was first published online on Monday, November 9, 2015 at 6:08 p.m.

MU players say boycott was not about them, about making a difference

By David Morrison

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 2:00 pm

They filed solemnly down Rollins Street from the MU Student Center to the Carnahan Quad, conversing quietly among themselves and with members of Concerned Student 1950 as shutters clicked and cameras rolled.
Just as, about a half-hour earlier, Charles Harris, Ian Simon, J’Mon Moore, Marvin Zanders and Anthony Sherrils filed solemnly into the student center, walked the stairs up to the second floor and entered the Center for Student Involvement to meet with Concerned Student 1950 protesters.

They couldn’t talk just yet, they said. Wait until they get to the movement’s nerve-center campsite on Carnahan.

Once there, the players disappeared among the tents with organizers, who implored reporters to keep their distance until they got their thoughts together. Someone would be out soon.

As they strategized, about 20 more football players made their way to the quad, including senior captains Kenya Dennis and Russell Hansbrough, starting offensive lineman Nate Crawford and starting defensive linemen Terry Beckner Jr. and Rickey Hatley, starting linebacker Donavin Newsom, co-starting tight end Jason Reese and key reserves such as running back Ish Witter and cornerback John Gibson.

Simon, Moore, Harris and Sherrils emerged to meet the media, stone-faced, with the rest of the assembled players standing sentinel behind them. Harris wore a hooded sweatshirt featuring the message, “I Can’t Breathe,” a rallying cry after the July 2014 death of Eric Garner, an African-American man who uttered those words 11 times as New York City Police Department officers restrained him against the sidewalk, causing him to lose consciousness and die.

Simon, also a captain, spoke on behalf of the team about six hours after University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe’s resignation ended graduate student Jonathan Butler’s hunger strike, about 37 hours after Sherrils became the first player to tweet a picture of African-American members of the football team linking arms with Butler and each other and saying they would not practice or play until Wolfe was out of office.

“Our main message is here to distract from the narrative that’s been out in the media. It is not about us,” Simon said, reading a statement from his phone. “We just wanted to use our platform to make a stand as fellow concerned students on an issue, especially being as though a fellow black man’s life is on the line. Due to the end of the hunger strike, we will be ending our solidarity strike, go back to practice and return to our normal schedules as football players.”

“As a football team, we are here to support the movement and use our platform to make a difference,” Moore added.

Initially, Harris, Moore and Sherrils said they couldn’t discuss their involvement with Concerned Student 1950, the group that sent a list of demands, including Wolfe’s resignation and other systemic reforms to the university Oct. 20 and started the demonstration in the quad about a week later.

Eventually, Moore and Sherrils relented on that stance while Harris maintained.

“We were very, very happy” when Wolfe resigned, Sherrils said. “We wanted Jonathan Butler to eat, and he wouldn’t eat unless Tim Wolfe was gone.”
Moore was the one who first met with Butler on Wednesday, three days into his hunger strike. Moore said Butler appeared to be in bad shape.

“When I first talked to him, he collapsed. Like he had fallen,” Moore said. “That’s what grabbed our attention.”

Moore said he spoke with Butler and “made some promises.” He and his roommate Sherrils brainstormed over what they could do to help Butler’s cause, and the idea for a boycott came about. The two took it to Harris and Simon, who were receptive, then started bringing other members of the team to the cause.

Saturday night, more than 30 of them, all African-American, posed with Butler. Sunday morning, after a meeting at the Mizzou Athletic Training Complex, nearly the entire team — including coaches — posed for a picture locking arms and with a message from Coach Gary Pinkel that said, in part, “We are behind our players.”

“A life is way more valuable than a game. That’s what we were doing it for. A life,” Sherrils said. “A lot of guys were ready to lay their scholarship down on the line. Everyone felt strongly about it. We matter. And we have a voice.”

Players were not available for comment at the team’s weekly media day session for the first time during a game week in Pinkel’s 15 years in charge. Team spokesman Chad Moller wrote in a text message that some players informed him they’d be going to a rally on campus during media day, and he wasn’t going to tell them they couldn’t. Others, he said, didn’t have any interest in doing interviews Monday so the team scrapped availability. Offensive assistant coaches, who were scheduled to speak to the media Monday, also were not made available, with no explanation given.

On the weekly “Tiger Talk” radio show Monday night, senior center Evan Boehm told host Mike Kelly that he heard about the boycott for the first time Saturday night. He said he didn’t know much about the issues involved, but he felt he didn’t need to if it mattered to his teammates.

“When my brothers came and gave me a call and let me know what was going on, I told them, ‘I respect you guys, and I’m backing you guys 100 percent,’ ” Boehm said. “And that’s what I did. I saw this Missouri Tigers team do the same thing we kind of did for Michael Sam for” Butler. “It’s a special time to be a Missouri Tiger.”

Sherrils said there was some hesitancy among some factions of the team, “but they’re always behind us. Always.”

Moore said he wasn’t surprised Pinkel supported the players’ decision. He said the Tigers’ 4-5 record and four-game losing streak had nothing to do with their willingness to strike.

“It didn’t matter if we were 9-0 or 0-9,” Moore said.
So game-week preparation begins in earnest Tuesday for Saturday’s game against BYU at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City. Concerned Student 1950’s work is not done in pushing for campus reform. Nor, one would imagine, is the interest of Harris, Moore, Sherrils, Simon and other members of the football team in the progress of the group’s efforts.

They saw how powerful they could be as a supporting bloc. Harris, for one, was not bashful about saying what it could mean for others like them.

“Let this be a testament to all other athletes across the country that you do have power,” Harris said after Simon read his statement, as Missouri director of football operations Dan Hopkins looked on. “It started with a few individuals on our team, and look what it has become. Look where it’s at right now. This is nationally known, and it started with just a few.”

After they finished shooting a short interview with CNN, Harris, Moore and Sherrils walked back down Rollins Street, the way they came.

They paused in front of the student center. Moore cackled. Harris cracked a smile. Sherrils folded his arms and, in a fit of play sulking, took a couple of steps in the other direction.

The three football players, campus activists and college students could not decide where they wanted to eat dinner.

— Steve Walentik contributed to this story

This article was first published online on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 7:00 a.m.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Talk about racism, discrimination in Israel spurs conversation at MU

14 HRS AGO

COLUMBIA — The subjects of racism and discrimination were topics of conversation not only on the Mel Carnahan Quadrangle on Monday but also at a talk at MU’s Neff Hall about the living conditions of Palestinians and African refugees in Israel.

David Sheen, an independent journalist based in Dimona, Israel, spoke for more than 90 minutes about instances of prejudice he said he had witnessed abroad. Sheen said Palestinians face institutional discrimination in realms including housing, labor, recreational facilities and the political round.
The event was organized by MU Socialists and Mid-Missourians for Justice in Palestine and was sponsored by the Islamic Center of Central Missouri, the Mid-Missouri Fellowship of Reconciliation, the MU Department of Black Studies and the MU Peace Studies Program, according to a MU Socialists news release.

One example Sheen cited was Palestinians being denied housing because they had Arabic accents or names. Usually, he said, housing companies simply respond to those Palestinians trying to get housing information that they “do not sell to Arabs.”

Palestinians also face discrimination in the workforce, Sheen said. Sheen showed the audience hiring advertisements that said employers were looking for only Jewish workers, which purposely excludes qualified Palestinian workers.

Sheen, who has been living in Israel for 16 years, said discrimination affects not only Palestinians, but also black Jews and African refugees living in Israel, and that this discrimination has existed in Israel before and since he has lived in the country. Sheen said he believes non-Jews in Israel have simply been ignored by the Israeli government and the media.

“Why do I have to come all the way over from Israel to tell you these things?” Sheen said. “It’s a complete, massive failure of the mainstream media.”

Sheen was born in Toronto, and he moved to Israel in 1999 to blog and work as a graphic designer before joining Israeli newspaper Haaretz in 2010. He told the Missourian in an interview that he considers himself to be an advocate journalist and said "I think it's dishonest to try to pretend to be completely objective."

**Audience responses**

The majority of the audience members who spoke up after Sheen's comments said they agreed with Sheen’s take on racism against non-Jews in Israel, though some people indicated disagreement with Sheen's views.
Ibtisam Barakat, a Palestinian-American author, thanked Sheen for his work and his efforts to address the living conditions of Palestinians in Israel. She said the Palestinian people were forgotten when Israel was established in 1948 and said that "an entire people have been displaced” in their own country.

Dan Swindell, an MU graduate who said he opposed Sheen’s coverage of Palestinians in Israel, stood outside Neff Hall before Sheen's talk to distribute literature critical of Sheen and the Palestinian political party Hamas, including one article from The Times of Israel titled, "7 reasons why the Palestinian crisis & the Black struggle for freedom are absolutely nothing alike."

Swindell called Sheen a "sensationalist" who exaggerated facts and didn't fairly portray race in Israel. While some people voiced their approval of Swindell's comments, others were vocally dismissive of his remarks. Sheen suggested that Swindell give a talk of his own to express his viewpoint and theories.

Another audience asked Sheen about his thoughts on a possible two-state solution for Israel and Palestine where each is recognized as its own nation.

Sheen responded that he did not support such a compromise, and said if Palestinians acknowledged Israel as a "legitimate Jewish state," then it would be “a license (for Israel) to be even more discriminatory toward non-Jewish people,” especially black Jews and African refugees living in Israel.

MU Veterans Clinic to host discussion on traumatic brain injury

By THE TRIBUNE’S STAFF

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 2:00 pm

The Veterans Clinic at the University of Missouri School of Law is hosting a symposium on Veterans Day to discuss traumatic brain injury.
The second annual symposium, “Traumatic Brain Injury: Lessons Learned from Our Nation’s Athletes and Military,” will be from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday in Room 7 of Hulston Hall on the MU campus.

Susan Okie, former medical reporter and national science editor of the Washington Post, in her keynote speech will talk about the aftermath of traumatic brain injuries received in war zones.

Panelists include Amy Odom, director of litigation for the National Veterans Legal Services Program; Alex Pracht, veteran of the U.S. Army and client of the MU School of Law Veterans Clinic; Shawn Lee, veteran and attorney in the law firm of Fox Stretz and Quinn; Justin Trueblood, president of the Mizzou Law Sports Society; Rex Sharp, associate athletic director for sports, MU Department of Athletics; Michael Sam, former MU defensive lineman; and Amelia Tapp, decision review officer for the St. Louis VA Regional Office.

The event is free and open to the public. Registration is requested, but not required. Go to law.missouri.edu/faculty/event/registration to register.