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MU students protest lack of progress while Spike Lee films their rally

Concerned Student 1950 says diversity efforts are lagging
Administration says too little time has passed to assess progress

Director is working on documentary on protests and football team’s involvement in them

BY JASON HANCOCK
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Special to The Star

COLUMBIA - Concerned Student 1950 says the group’s demands for combating racism at the University of Missouri are not being taken seriously. On Monday, about two dozen students tried to take their concerns directly to MU leaders.

The group, whose protests in the fall led to the Nov. 9 resignation of the university system president, staged a lunchtime rally on the Columbia campus.

And director Spike Lee and his crew, in town to work on a film about the Black Lives Matter movement at MU, were there to film the protest.

Concerned Student 1950 leaders say they don’t have faith in administrators’ efforts to improve the racial climate on campus, such as a working group that includes student representatives. So the group’s rally on Monday eventually headed to administration offices in Jesse Hall.

The protesters were met by a locked door at interim chancellor Hank Foley’s office. And Chuck Henson, interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity, talked briefly in the hallway with the protesters before retreating to his office.
The university issued a video statement later from Henson noting that he had been in his current position only about 100 days, and in that time a working group including leaders from nearly every student group had met three times.

“The working group is working and the protest that happened on our campus today is unfair and might leave a wrong impression about the amount of progress we have made and the climate on our campus today,” his statement said.

He said there hadn’t been enough time to assess how well the university was moving forward.

“We are dealing with issues that took more than 100 years to develop here, and it is certainly going to take more than 100 days and three meetings to address,” he said.

But the brief hallway meeting with Henson earlier had left protesters unsatisfied.

Imani Simmons-Elloie, a member of Concerned Student 1950, said it wasn’t surprising that university leaders wouldn’t talk to them.

“We try to reach out, and they shut the door on us all the time,” she said. “It’s always portrayed that the black kids are crying wolf, but the media was here to see that they close the door on us.”

The midday protest ended in Traditions Plaza, where members of Concerned Student 1950 camped out last fall in protest of racism on the school’s Columbia campus.

Ayanna Poole, a Concerned Student 1950 member who graduated in fall of 2015, said she came back to campus Monday to join the protest.

“We have to keep fighting,” she said. “We have to keep putting pressure on (the administration). We have to keep letting them know we aren’t trying to work within the system that is meant to work against us. We are here to dismantle the system. This policy that was created is not for people that look like us.”

Protesters also slammed the Missouri General Assembly, where Republican legislators have condemned the student protests and the university administration’s reaction to them.
Marshall Allen, a founding member of Concerned Student 1950, said lawmakers and university administrators were shifting attention away from “the real problems.”

Lee, who was not giving interviews Monday, was in Columbia to see a documentary about Concerned Student 1950 at the True/False Film Fest. He is working on a film titled “2 Fists Up” that will be released digitally on May 31 as part of his ESPN Films series “Spike Lee’s Lil’ Joints.” The film will focus on the Black Lives Matter movement at MU and the Tigers football team’s involvement.

The MU protests gained national attention last fall when the football team lent its support by threatening to strike and not play the rest of its season.

Concerned Student 1950 leaders said the protest had been planned for a while and was not a response to Lee’s being in town. Besides filming the protest Monday, Lee and his crew interviewed several protesters afterward.

“It just so happens that Spike was here,” said Marshall Allen, a founding member of Concerned Student 1950. “We had this planned already. Spike had no part in this except the filming.”

*The Star’s Mará Rose Williams, Chris Fickett and Greg Hack contributed to this report.*

**Concerned Student 1950 protesters march through University of Missouri campus**

By Rudi Keller

Monday, March 7, 2016 at 7:13 pm

*Demonstrators with Concerned Student 1950 on Monday encountered a locked door at University of Missouri interim Chancellor Hank Foley’s office and saw an impromptu meeting with interim Vice Chancellor Chuck Henson cut short after a message was whispered in his ear.*
With Academy-award winning director Spike Lee filming for ESPN, the demonstrators marched from the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center to Jesse Hall, passing through the MU Student Center and Memorial Union along the way.

“A lot of people don’t see that we are trying to reach out, and they shut the door on us all the time,” Imani Simmons-Ellioe, a member of Concerned Student 1950, said after the demonstration. “We’re the black kids that are crying wolf to everybody else.”

The demonstration was sparked in part by a Feb. 25 letter from Henson, interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity, that said Concerned Student 1950 members had not responded to invitations to meet. In his letter, Henson said a working group of faculty, staff and students was the proper venue to deal with race issues.

In a video statement released late Monday afternoon, Henson defended the working group’s activities.

“The working group is working,” Henson said. “And the protest that happened on our campus today was unfair and might leave the wrong impression about the amount of progress that we have made and the climate on our campus today.”

Fall demonstrations by Concerned Student 1950 put MU in an international spotlight when graduate student Jonathan Butler engaged in a hunger strike, and the Missouri football team announced a boycott of athletic activities in support of their demands. UM System President Tim Wolfe resigned Nov. 9, and Henson was hired one day later.

The administration’s handling of the protests and other matters that exposed deep distrust between Wolfe and former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin have contributed to legislative plans to cut the UM System budget by about $7.6 million. The budget bill enacting the cuts will be debated this week in the Missouri House.

Compounding the problems for MU, the American Association of University Professors on Monday announced it would appoint a three-member team to visit the Columbia campus March 22 and 23 to investigate the firing of Assistant Professor Melissa Click. The Board of Curators voted to fire Click late last month because of her behavior — caught on video during Nov. 9 demonstrations — attempting to block journalists from recording the scene.

If the investigation finds that the board violated standards of due process, the association might censure the university.

During the march Monday, the demonstrators — about three dozen in all — chanted “The working group ain’t working” and “If we don’t get it, shut it down.” They told Henson the working group “is you telling us what you want us to do.”

In Jesse Hall, the group chanted “Hey Foley! You in there?” and “Diversity is not a topping” before discovering Foley’s door was locked. Henson emerged from his upstairs office to meet
with the demonstrators and tried to explain the activities of the working group, which he said has met three times since its formation.

He was met with skepticism and returned to his office after an aide whispered in his ear.

Marshall Allen, a founding member of Concerned Student 1950, said Henson’s decision to leave the conversation was disrespectful.

“If I were talking to you right now and you just stopped and walked away, you are not interested in what I have to say whatsoever,” he said.

In his video statement, Henson said members of the working group should exhibit "an attitude of patience and extend grace to the process and to each other."

"We’re dealing with issues that took more than one hundred years to develop here and are certainly going to take more than one hundred days and three meetings to address,” Henson said.

MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken did not offer an explanation of why Foley’s door was locked or why Henson was called away from the hallway discussion.

Lee declined to speak with reporters about his film project. He does "Spike Lee's Lil' Joints," a series for ESPN Films. The documentary about Concerned Student 1950, titled “2 Fists Up,” will be released May 31, the network said in an email.

Lee’s presence was not the reason for the demonstration Monday, Allen said. Lee has tried to understand the roots of students’ frustrations and what led to the fall demonstrations, Allen said.

“We appreciate the fact that we have people who want to come and know the truth,” he said.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Concerned Student 1950 confronts MU diversity chancellor over letter**

ALLISON COLBURN, 11 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Concerned Student 1950 members confronted an MU administrator Monday about a letter he wrote calling for them to stop making demands to change the racial climate on campus.
As part of a march, the several dozen demonstrators stopped outside the Jesse Hall office of Chuck Henson, interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity. They formed a horseshoe around Henson at his office door, and several speakers passionately denounced a key theme of his Feb. 25 letter — that the activist group had not established a collaborative relationship with the university and had not met with Henson.

They said Henson had met with Maxwell Little, a founding member of Concerned Student 1950. Henson quickly acknowledged that was true but said he hadn't met with the group collectively.

One response to that came from demonstrator DeShaunya Ware. "It's your duty to reach out to your students, but you want your students to reach out to you," she said. "The Working Group is not for our demands. The Working Group is you telling us what you want us to do."

Ware was referring to MU's Working Group, described on the university's website as a joint effort between Henson's diversity office and student leaders: "The purpose is to make sure that invested student leaders know what the administration has done and intends to do to address the broad request for a better relationship and a better community on and off campus."

The weekly meetings are open to the public. The next one is at 6:45 p.m. Thursday in Cornell Hall's Bush Auditorium. The topic is "Defining Shared Governance — University Structure and the Roles and Rights of Faculty Members."

In his letter, Henson told Concerned Student 1950 that some demands can't be met because they are illegal and that the time for "threats and arbitrary deadlines is over."

He also invited the group to attend sessions of the Working Group, which began meeting Feb. 17.

Demonstrators said Monday that the Working Group is not achieving its goal to create an inclusive, collaborative relationship among student leaders, faculty members and administrators.
The activists spent fewer than five minutes talking with Henson. Ware, the last to speak, was still talking when Henson abruptly walked back into his office, saying he needed to take a phone call. Ware then said Henson’s action showed that the student activists are not valued and accepted at the university.

Henson’s office was the fourth stop of the march, which began shortly after 11:30 a.m. in front of the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center. Chanting as they walked, members of the group went first to the MU Student Center, then to Memorial Student Union, Speakers Circle and Interim Chancellor Hank Foley’s office in Jesse Hall. There, students knocked on the door and tried opening it without success.

Walking with them and shooting video with his phone was award-winning director Spike Lee. He was in Columbia shooting footage for his digital shorts series "Spike Lee's Lil' Joints" and attended a Saturday night screening at the Missouri Theatre of "Concerned Student 1950" at the True/False Film Fest.

Two tweets about Lee’s presence in town were sent from the Concerned Student Twitter account prior to the demonstration but were deleted within a few minutes. One tweet said: “The film of Concerned Student 1950 did NOT bring Spike to Mizzou.” The second said: “Spike planned to come to Mizzou when he met @DevaSTating_14 at NAACP Image Awards last month” — referring to Ware's Twitter handle.

The march drew news media, as well as videographers who appeared to be with Lee. Later Monday, Henson released a video statement in which he called the protest unfair.

“The Working Group is working, and the protest that happened on campus today was unfair and might leave a wrong impression about the amount of progress that we have made and the climate on our campus,” Henson said. "We're dealing with issues that took more than 100 years to develop here and are certainly going to take more than 100 days and three meetings to address."

Henson’s Feb. 25 letter was a response to Concerned Student 1950’s reiteration of its demands with additional deadlines added. The group’s first deadline — for a budget to cover more
funding, resources and personnel for social justice centers on campus — was Feb. 29. No budget was announced.

Interim UM System President Mike Middleton also released a statement on Feb. 25, saying, “The time for demands has passed.”

**Concerned Student 1950 protests Henson’s Working Group Initiative to improve campus culture**

Chuck Henson in response to the protest: “We are moving forward, and the point of the Working Group is to move forward together.”

**Concerned Student 1950 protested MU’s continual lack of administrative action to end systemic racism on March 7.**

“The Working Group ain’t working,” Concerned Student 1950 organizers and supporters said through megaphones as they marched throughout campus.

Concerned Student 1950 leaders said the Working Group, interim Vice Chancellor Chuck Henson’s initiative to improve campus culture, has been passive.

Henson released a video via Twitter at 2:27 p.m. addressing the protest.

“The Working Group is working and the protest that happened on our campus today was unfair and might leave a wrong impression about the amount of progress that we have made with the climate on our campus,” Henson said in the video. “We are moving forward and the point of the Working Group is to move forward together.”

The Working Group has only met three times, which isn’t enough time to assess process, Henson said in the video.

“Everybody who comes to the Working Group needs to come with an attitude of patience and extend grace to the process and to each other because we’re dealing with issues that took more than 100 years to develop here and is certainly going to take more than 100 days and three meetings to address,” Henson said in the video. “The idea is to build up relationships because that’s how the work gets done.”
Concerned Student organizer Brianna Kato said since the Working Group has been established, Concerned Student 1950 has been sitting and listening for it to take action, and that is not what Concerned Student is on campus to do.

“We are not tolerating it any longer,” Kato said. “We don’t get the chance to discuss issues, our [demands] (http://www.themaneteater.com/stories/2016/2/24/concerned-student-1950-reissues-list-six-remaining/) have not been met, and until then, we will continue to fight,” Kato said. “We are not trying to work with (MU administrators) on these decisions, we are here to dismantle this fucked up system.”

Henson, the interim vice chancellor for inclusion, diversity and equity, announced the group on Feb, 17.

“The Working Group is not a town hall,” Henson said in a [statement] (http://diversity.missouri.edu/announcements/2016/henson-update-Feb2016.php) introducing the Working Group. “It is a group including me, members of the Division of Inclusion, Diversity and Equity, and student leaders campus-wide. The Working Group is keeping students apprised of the various activities of my office. Simultaneously, I am depending on these students to offer constructive criticism and ideas. In this way, together we are transforming our culture.”

Concerned Student 1950 organizers and supporters met at the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center and marched through the Student Center, Memorial Union, Speakers Circle, Jesse Hall and Traditions Plaza.

They tried to enter the Office of the Chancellor, but it was locked.

Henson then came out to explain that MU administrators have met with Concerned Student 1950 three times.

After a few minutes, someone from his office pulled Henson away from his conversation with Concerned Student 1950 leaders to take care of an unrelated matter.

Although he said he would be right back, Concerned Student 1950 organizers refused to wait for Henson’s return; they said his leaving proves that MU administrators do not care about the students.

Concerned Student 1950 organizers also said MU administrators have been lying about meeting with them, and that their time to make demands is not over.

Members of Concerned Student 1950 have attended the Working Group meetings, according to previous Maneater reporting.

“Not only has there been constant disrespect, but there has also been negligence and denial about what is going on on this campus,” Kato said in regard to Henson’s letter. “The administration needs a working group to figure this shit out. We are resisting it, continually because it is not working; there has not been a lot of inclusivity.”

We need a working group that is representative of marginalized students, a Concerned Student 1950 leader said.

Concerned Student 1950 leaders said they do not feel protected by the UM System’s Student Codes of Conduct because it doesn’t mention hate crimes against black people.

“Why do they need us to come together to tell them how to do their jobs?” a Concerned Student 1950 organizer said to students in Memorial Union. “I ain’t get no paycheck.”

If MU administrators would do their jobs of handling systemic oppression and displacement against black people on campus, they would not need the Working Group, Concerned Student 1950 organizers said.

“We are trying to pull all of our ideas to make a better community, to make a better Mizzou,” Kato said. “The time is now. We have the opportunity to take this into our own hands as students to work together, black, white, I don’t care, but everybody needs to really realize what’s going on, systematically here and in our country. That is why we are here and we continue to fight. We are not going to stop.”

**Black Students Protest at U of Missouri**

Black students at the University of Missouri at Columbia set off a nationwide protest movement last year over conditions facing minority students in higher education.

On Monday, the Concerned Student 1950 movement at Mizzou again marched through campus, finding a locked door to the interim chancellor's office on the way, protesting what members call inadequate efforts to improve the climate at the university, The Columbia Tribune reported.

A task force has been appointed by the university, and officials say it is making progress, but the student protest movement questions whether it is sufficiently involved...
in shaping the task force's agenda, and whether it is working speedily enough. Spike Lee, the film producer, joined Monday's protest, filming it for ESPN.

Henson Responds To Working Group Protestors

Watch story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=ede7ace8-c1ac-4c62-8c6b-243793a097c8

Concerned Student 1950 protests at Mizzou again

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=7d688941-6b5b-4dd3-9fa0-56fe478ef1ea
http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=6684c894-5749-4ca9-9778-a8b7e46741f9
http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=fc91703a-1086-4eb5-a227-cc867f29eaad

COLUMBIA, Mo. -
Protesters with Concerned Student 1950 say they're tired with nothing being done about racial problems at Mizzou. The group met at the Black Culture Center on the Mizzou campus Monday, saying they want action, not presentations or talk.
One protester yelled out her support for former Mizzou professor Melissa Click. Click was dismissed from the school following her actions at two protests related to Mizzou in 2015.

The group tried to meet with interim chancellor Hank Foley, but got no response from his office.

At one point, filmmaker Spike Lee showed up at the protest and spoke to the crowds. There are reports from several he is at Mizzou to make a movie for ESPN's "30 for 30" franchise. Lee apparently came to Columbia for the True/False film festival. One of the films at the festival was a short documentary about Concerned Student 1950.

MU student who went on hunger strike no longer with Concerned Student 1950

COLUMBIA, Mo. -
The MU graduate student who helped lead campus demonstrations in the fall says he is no longer a part of the protest movement, Concerned Student 1950. Jonathan Butler declared on Twitter he wanted to "clear some things up" especially in light of what the group is planning Monday.

On Twitter the organization is calling for people to meet at 11:30 a.m. on Monday outside MU's Black Culture Center, wearing all black if possible. Under the event's details, a question asks "Is the Working Group 'working'?" #STILLCONCERNED.

Butler declared he was going on a hunger strike in early November to force the resignation of former UM system president Tim Wolfe. He later gained support from the football team, which drew national attention after joining the strike.

On Monday Butler tweeted "For several reasons I have chosen to withdraw myself from the group and pursue other forms of activism... as well as taking time for self care so I can process the events of the past semester(s) and begin to heal."

Butler claimed he has not worked with Concerned Student since last November. ABC 17 News has reporters at Mizzou Monday trying to talk to members of Concerned Student 1950.
We know Spike Lee has been in CoMo since this weekend.

We know the famous filmmaker took in a screening of "Concerned Student 1950", a student-produced documentary that debuted during the True/False Film Festival.

We know Lee spoke with at least two Mizzou football players, J'Mon Moore and Marvin Zanders, while he was in town.

We know he was on campus filming on Monday.

And now we know what Lee is up to.

It's not a "30 for 30", as Indiewire.com reported. It's an ESPN Films digital short that will be a part of the series known as "Spike Lee's Lil' Joints." The piece, which is scheduled to for a digital debut on May 31, is titled "2 Fists Up." An ESPN spokesperson provided a summary of the piece, calling it "an examination of how the Black Lives Matter movement sparked activism at the University of Missouri, its football team, and across the rest of The United States."

That sound you hear is the Mizzou athletic department once again buckling its seat belt.

Most figured the Mizzou boycott would one day become documentary material. Few expected an ESPN project to be in the works already. Few expected someone as well-
known and polarizing as Lee to be calling the shots. He enters the picture at an interesting time.

Since the football team realized just how much power it had, and decided to use that power for a cause it deemed fit, and the athletic department stood by that decision, much of the discussion since has revolved around making sure athletes dictating university decisions doesn’t become a trend.

A vocal portion of the fan base, a group that includes some donors and season ticket holders, is still steamed about the boycott, former UM system president Tim Wolfe’s resignation and Gary Pinkel’s plush retirement package.

Meanwhile, Concerned Student 1950, the student protest group the football team aligned itself with to help push Wolfe out, continues to demand certain changes on campus it believes are necessary to combat institutional racism.

The university, which has taken steps it believes will help inclusion, appears to be growing tired of the protest group’s perception that strides have not been made.

Did I mention the football team starts spring practice on Tuesday?

Perfect time to make a movie.

Will the athletic department roll out the red carpet, or lock the doors?

I can't imagine new Tigers head coach Barry Odom signing off on a camera crew following his players around as some of those questions that were never really answered get brought up all over again.

Questions like ...

• Just how much division was there among the team regarding the boycott?
• Did Pinkel know exactly what he was getting into with that tweet?

• How did players feel once Pinkel later backtracked?

• Does the football team still see itself as an ally of Concerned Student 1950?

• Could more partnerships be in the works?

I could go on. But you get the point.

I wouldn’t expect Lee to adopt the Mizzou-friendly angle that is all but guaranteed when the SEC Network cameras start rolling. Mizzou has a lot less leverage against big ESPN than its SEC-centric arm, and Lee makes gripping, sometimes controversial films because he is willing to shine light on topics others tiptoe around, or can’t reach.

Mizzou loves to control the message. In this case, that could be a challenge.

A story the athletic department would love to close the book on could be in line for another fascinating chapter.

**Spike Lee making documentary on MU football boycott**

By David Morrison

Monday, March 7, 2016 at 2:00 pm

**Director Spike Lee is working on a documentary for ESPN Films about the Missouri football team’s boycott in the fall.**
Lee was in Columbia on Saturday night to attend a screening of the student-made documentary “Concerned Student 1950” at the True/False Film Festival, and, according to Indiewire.com, he is interested in using some of the documentary's footage for an upcoming ESPN project.

Lee's film, titled "2 Fists Up," is planned for digital release May 31 and is "an examination of how the Black Lives Matter movement sparked activism at the University of Missouri, its football team, and across the rest of The United States,” according to an ESPN release. It's part of a series of 15- to 30-minute documentaries Lee has shot for the network called "Spike Lee's Lil' Joints."

Missouri sophomore quarterback Marvin Zanders tweeted a picture Sunday afternoon of him and junior wideout J'Mon Moore speaking with Lee, and Lee was on campus Monday to interview subjects for the film and accompany the Concerned Student 1950 group, shooting footage on his cell phone and with a video crew, as it protested at multiple spots on campus, including a stop at Jesse Hall.

Moore and Zanders were among the original group of nearly three dozen African-American football players who tweeted out a photo Nov. 7 of them linking arms with hunger-striking protester Jonathan Butler, along with a message pledging that they would not return to football-related activities until Butler and Concerned Student 1950’s main demand — University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe’s removal from office — was met.

A photo on the Twitter account of then-Coach Gary Pinkel on Nov. 8 showed most of the Missouri team and staff locking arms in support of the original players’ stand — even though later statements from Pinkel indicated that he was supporting his players, rather than their aims — and Wolfe resigned Nov. 9.

Clarification: An earlier version of this story quoted a report from Indiewire saying that Lee was shooting a documentary on the Missouri football team protest for ESPN Films' "30 for 30" series. ESPN clarified that the project is instead part of "Spike Lee's Lil' Joints."

**Spike Lee on Mizzou campus to focus on football team boycott**

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Movie director Spike Lee visits the University of Missouri campus to work on an ESPN documentary about the football team's threatened boycott last fall.
The Columbia Daily Tribune (bit.ly/1TFS1pS) reports Lee was in town on Saturday night to attend a screening of the student-made documentary "Concerned Student 1950 at the True/False Film Festival.

Lee's film titled "2 Fists Up" is planned for digital release May 31. ESPN says the film examines how the Black Lives Matter Movement sparked activism at the University of Missouri and the rest of the U.S.

Lee also was on campus Monday to interview subjects for the film and record footage of the Concerned Student 1950 group as it protested at multiple spots on campus.

Spike Lee Documents Concerned Student 1950 Demonstration for Upcoming '30 for 30' Film

Filmmaker Spike Lee was in Columbia Monday shooting footage for a short documentary about the University of Missouri football team for ESPN’s 30 for 30 series.

Lee conducted interviews with students and faculty on Monday about the past and present campus climate, last November’s Concerned Student 1950 protests and the Mizzou football boycott.

“I’ve always thought about the power that the student athletes have and how it can be utilized and I think that the Mizzou football team here did utilize it and they were instrumental in the resignation of ex-president Tim Wolfe,” said Lee.
He also followed and filmed a Concerned Student 1950 demonstration throughout campus Monday. As his first visit to Mizzou, Lee was impressed by what he saw.

“I’ve met brilliant, young minds here at this campus: committed, intelligent, eloquent. So it’s been a great experience,” said Lee.

Lee said he and his crew will fly back to New York Monday to begin the editing process. He says he has a deadline to finish the short documentary before the end of the month.

“We hope to come back and screen it on campus before it goes on ESPN,” said Lee.

Lee says he interviewed Interim UM System President Mike Middleton, who welcomed the idea of hosting a screening on campus.

Over the weekend, Lee also attended a screening of a short documentary about Concerned Student 1950 that premiered at the True/False Film Fest in Columbia.

**Concerns about “The Working Group”**

Concerned Student 1950’s demonstration Monday was in response to the University of Missouri administration’s efforts to create dialogue around race on campus.

The group’s message Monday was that The Working Group, a group put together by Interim Vice Chancellor of Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Chuck Henson, is not working.

“Our goal is not to work within the system. Our goal is to dismantle the system, so that’s why we’re here. So if we don’t get it, shut it down,” a member of Concerned Student 1950 said during the demonstration.

Members of Concerned Student 1950 marched from the Black Culture Center to the Student Center, Memorial Union and Jesse Hall. Along the way, they spoke to student spectators and tour groups, saying that students should not be doing the administration’s job by discussing how to address racial issues.

For much of the march, Lee followed along filming in the middle of the action with his cell phone while his film crew stood further back and also documented the action.

The protesters visited Jesse Hall and confronted Henson, telling him they don’t believe the Working Group is fulfilling its stated goal. Henson defended the Working Group, which began meeting on February 17, in person, and later in an online video statement released Monday afternoon.

“We’re dealing with issues that took more than 100 years to develop here, and it’s certainly gonna take more than 100 days and three meetings to address,” Henson said.
Henson addressed the demonstration, saying the group was not interested in having a conversation with him when they visited his office. Shortly after that statement, he left to take a phone call while the group was talking to him.

Concerned Student 1950 members say they do not trust the administration to handle diversity and inclusion issues.

“Why would we trust them to dismantle the systems that they created? Why are we putting our trust in administration? They made this. They did this, so we’ve got to dismantle it. We’re not gonna work with them. No more, no more, never again,” a Concerned Student 1950 member said.

Ayanna Poole, one of Concerned Student 1950’s founders, says members the group have been active in Working Group meetings, but the campus climate has not improved. Poole says every action has had an element of political gain. She feels the Working Group has not accomplished anything through lectures and policy discussions.

Last month, Henson wrote an email to members of Concerned Student 1950 asking them to stop making demands and instead focus on other methods toward progress.

**Jonathan Butler publicly distances himself from Concerned Student 1950**

One of the original eleven members of Concerned Student 1950 is no longer affiliated with the group. On Monday, Jonathan Butler took to Twitter to make the announcement. Butler began an eight day hunger strike in November 2015 that garnered national attention and eventually culminated in former UM System President Tim Wolfe’s resignation.

In a series of tweets Monday, Jonathan Butler wrote “In light of some information I received about what will be happening on campus today I would like to clear some things up: I am no longer affiliated or organizing with the group “Concerned Student 1950.” I have not organized with them since November of 2015. For several reasons I have chosen to withdraw myself from the group and pursue other forms of activism. “

Marshall Allen is one of the original eleven members of Concerned Student 1950

“With everything going on last semester, especially with him being the proprietor of the hunger strike, I would just chalk it up to self-care, if anything. […] I’m not looking at it as at attack other than I just need to breathe,” Allen said.

Wolfe’s resignation was just one of eight broader demands that Concerned Student 1950 made. The issue is that there isn’t consensus between students, faculty and staff on exactly how to improve the campus climate.

“That is the million dollar question … we don’t just get up and decide we’re gonna go protest or we’re just gonna go be – go and halt the way that things work on a daily basis. These are true things that happen, you know. We’ve been in meetings with administration, we’ve been in
meetings with faculty members, we’ve been in all of these different spaces where we’ve had time to work and bounce ideas off each other and nothing’s happening, you know,” Allen said.

KBIA tried to speak with Butler after he gave Spike Lee an interview for his documentary on campus Monday, but Butler said he did not have time today for an interview with KBIA regarding his split with 1950.

Spike Lee films Concerned Student 1950 for ESPN digital short

Concerned Student 1950 member Kendrick Washington: “First of all, Spike is an educator. This is something that he follows. He’s not new to understanding institutionalized oppression, racism, any of that.”

Oscar-nominated film director and entertainment icon Spike Lee came to MU to shift the narrative, said Marshall Allen, an original member of student movement Concerned Student 1950.

Lee has been on campus since the Saturday screening of the Concerned Student 1950 documentary, produced by journalism students Varun Bajaj, Adam Dietrich and Kellan Marvin, at the True/False Film Fest. On Monday, ESPN spokesman Jay Jay Nesheim said that Lee was at MU for a “digital short,” part of his “Spike Lee’s Lil’ Joints” series that will air May 31.

This specific short is titled “2 Fists Up” and is “an examination of how the Black Lives Matter movement sparked activism at the University of Missouri, its football team and across of the rest of the United States.”

Lee is the founder of 40 Acres and a Mule Filmworks. A graduate of Morehouse College, a historically black university in Atlanta, Lee has directed movies about racial issues such as “Malcolm X” and “Do the Right Thing.”
This most recent project, on which Lee declined to comment as he walked with and filmed protesters Monday, fits seamlessly with his passion for sports and race, Concerned Student 1950 member Kendrick Washington said.

“First of all, Spike is an educator,” Washington said. “This is something that he follows. He’s not new to understanding institutionalized oppression, racism, any of that. So, his questions and his approach was more a reflection from his work and our drive behind the movement, so it was a dialogue. We were discussing oppression on various settings.”

On Monday, Lee also had a sit-down interview with graduate student Jonathan Butler, who went on a hunger strike in November 2015 with the goal of removing UM System President Tim Wolfe from office.

Butler tweeted Monday morning he was no longer affiliated with Concerned Student 1950.

Hours later, Lee and members of his production team followed a Concerned Student 1950 protest from the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center to Traditions Plaza.

When Allen was asked about this and if Lee was involved in planning the protest, he said: “It just so happened that (Lee) was here.”

Many have reported on this group, but Allen said the way Lee has done it has been different — “a good different.”

“One of the first things he does it that he captures what it takes behind the scenes,” Allen said. “Everybody only sees us when we’re doing demonstrations and when we’re angry, but the first question that Spike Lee started asking was, ‘What does it take to do this?’ We appreciate the fact that we have people that want to come and know the truth.

“He’s someone who wants to come and actually shift the narrative of the monstrous, the vilifying, the demonizing of black students on campus speaking out, so we really do appreciate people who come to actually find out the truth.”

Washington concurred and spoke with a similar appreciation.

“I think I can speak on the behalf of Concerned Student, but we are extremely appreciative of Spike’s presence — him wanting to hear our narrative is a great feeling and it’s an accomplishment,” Washington said. “We know people care about our movement on a national level and our dedication inspired him to come to know more about us.”
Spike Lee makes film on MU November protests

Columbia, MO — Filmmaker Spike Lee is on the Mizzou campus today.

Lee is making a film about Concerned Student 1950.

According to members of Concerned Student 1950, Lee is making a film about their movement, and he is focusing on the protests that grabbed the nation's attention in November.

Today, Lee is interviewing the original members of Concerned Student 1950.

He is asking them about the groups formation and what has happened since the November protests.

‘We Got to Capture What You Didn’t Get to See’: Filming Concerned Student 1950

Four months after Concerned Student 1950’s protests over race relations at the University of Missouri at Columbia forced two top university leaders to resign, the advocacy group’s movement continues. On Monday, protesters
marched on the campus with a special guest — the pioneering filmmaker Spike Lee.

On Saturday, Mr. Lee attended the "True/False" film festival’s screening of a student-made documentary that chronicled the protests of Concerned Student 1950 as they happened. (The Maneater, a student newspaper, reports that Mr. Lee was following the protesters to film a digital short for ESPN.)

Kellan H. Marvin, a junior double-majoring in documentary journalism and sociology who co-directed the documentary, Concerned Student 1950, began following the group early last fall, before it began making national news. She spoke to The Chronicle about what it was like to be so close to the action, and what she has learned. The conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

Q. Can you explain to me what the documentary covers?

A. Our documentary covers everything with the Concerned Student 1950 movement, starting with the homecoming protests where they disrupted the parade, all the way up to Tim Wolfe’s resignation. Our first day of continuous filming was November 2nd, and our last day was the 13th. So basically, all through November we’ve been working on this. We had about 60 hours of film. To be honest with you, it still hasn’t sunk in, and I don’t know when it all will.

Q. Your team seemed to have a lot of access with the protest. How did you guys get it?

A. We had better access to the group, and we could stay at the campsite where they were protesting during the time leading up to Wolfe’s resignation. So we had a closer look at that side of the story than other media could get. Even before we started filming, Adam and Varun [the co-directors Adam Dietrich and Varun Bajaj] helped
set up camp and kind of built the relationship that way. So it wasn’t always a relationship where we were always expecting to film, so they trusted us a little more. We established that relationship early on and had an agreement to be respectful and turn the cameras off when people needed a five-minute break.

Q. What were some of the advantages of being embedded in the camp?

A. I would film overnight and early morning. I think that is something that was so unique — that we got to capture what you didn’t get to see — since other media wasn’t allowed and it wasn’t a part of the story that they were interested in. There were a couple of demonstrations that the group had planned that were a little more private than just going around campus. You see in the film: They have this rehearsal of a tour of the "Real Mizzou," and they go through, date by date, and list all of these racist incidents that led up to the creation of Concerned Student 1950. And that is just part of the story that the national media wasn’t that interested in. I think being there helped us actually legitimize the pain that they were experiencing while trying to get their education.

Q. What was it like being on the campus at this time? Could you feel that something really big was happening?

A. Everywhere you turned, it was all over Twitter, it was all over Snapchat, and it was just all over everything. But I think that was the point, you couldn’t get away from it. They wanted you to not be able to ignore this issue anymore. It was really when the football team announced they were all going to protest that we knew it was going to be a national story. We knew it was going to be big, but I don’t think we ever dreamed it was going to get as big as it got.

Q. What was the message you wanted to convey in the documentary, the side you wanted to show?
A. I was just frustrated that everyone wouldn’t want to look at the pain that the students were experiencing on campus because it is uncomfortable for them to talk about. It is uncomfortable, it is painful, it was a very emotional time, but I hope that it comes across in the film by offering that perspective that was dropped in the national narrative. If I have one goal, it’s just for people to believe that black students on campus have a different experience. It’s painful, and it shouldn’t be painful to get your education. I hope that it can add some legitimacy to the movement and change the way some skeptics view their decisions and demands.

Q. Did you have any worries while making the film?

A. I had a lot of anxiety about how the film being released would affect the members of Concerned Student 1950. The dust had finally started to settle, and then the film premieres, and suddenly it’s at the forefront, at least in Columbia, again. I had been stressed out about if they were going to start getting death threats again. Are they going to feel unsafe? Is this going to reopen old wounds? That’s still something I’m trying to come to terms with. When we premiered the film, at the Missouri Theatre, which seats 1,200 people, and it was full, and we brought five of the original 11 organizers out on stage, every single person in the audience was screaming their head off and applauding. I’m just so happy for the group because they’ve become like family, and I care about them so much.

Academic Retention Services seeks to connect with minorities, expand its staff
Graduate assistant Marcus Ferguson: “ARS has a special touch with the students because when they come in here, we don’t rush them in and out. We spend our time with (them).”

Over the past two semesters, Academic Retention Services has undergone leadership and operational changes, but its mission to serve students has stayed the same.

When ARS Director Donell Young was hired in July 2015, Vice Provost of Undergraduate Studies Jim Spain asked him to create a committee to expand the reach of ARS.

“Instead of one size fits all, we’re going to develop programs that are going to be helpful for students based on their academic preparedness,” Young said.

Last semester, students requested that ARS become more active in minority communities, but Young and graduate assistant Marcus Ferguson both emphasized that serving underrepresented students was already their priority. The department serves all students that come to MU on diversity-based scholarships, such as the George C. Brooks Scholarship, and reaches out to minority students without scholarships.

To make this easier, ARS is expanding its staff. There are currently five full-time staff members, two graduate assistants and student staff. Ferguson said some schools have larger ARS buildings and more staff than MU does, but they serve half the amount of students. Former Missouri Students Association adviser Farouk Aregbe will soon join Young as an ARS coordinator, and the office will soon hire a third one.

More staff will make ARS more effective in serving multiple students, Ferguson said.

“ARS has a special touch with the students because when they come in here, we don’t rush them in and out,” he said. “We spend our time with (them).”

He said students come to ARS to discuss issues they are facing, not just academically but also personally, such as being a minority on campus. Ferguson said Young was a mentor to him when he was an undergraduate at MU.

ARS seeks and receives student feedback regarding its programs in order to better serve the student population. One way ARS does this is through a workshop called “You Talk, We Listen,” which invites students to express their opinions about how ARS helps them and how it could improve.

“A lot of times in college, you’re being talked at and you’re not really being heard,” Ferguson said. “This is (the students’) opportunity to talk back.”

Young divided the committee into five subcommittees that focus on different aspects of the strategic plan the committee is crafting: peer mentoring, financial awareness and literacy, a summer transition program for incoming freshmen, faculty involvement with students, and developing future programs to help students reach their individual goals for success.
Young spent his first semester as ARS director working to form strong relationships with administration, faculty, staff and students. These relationships are another way ARS seeks and receives student input. The department has been reaching out to various student organizations and has been increasing its social media presence, he said.

Spain said in an email that ARS is collaborating with the Honors College and the Fellowships Office. In the fall 2016 semester, ARS will support a Freshman Interest Group and two sections of the College Success Seminar class. According to the MU course catalog, SSC 1150 is a two-credit-hour course that helps students use their strengths to develop individual methods for collegiate success.

“Academic Retention Services is making exciting progress and will be positioned to successfully implement their new strategic plan,” Spain said.

Columbia man charged with rape

Watch the story http://www.abc17news.com/columbia-man-charged-with-rape/38391256

National professors' organization to investigate Melissa Click's firing from MU
By Kevin McDermott
A national organization that represents university professors has announced a “formal investigation” into whether the firing of University of Missouri assistant professor Melissa Click violated standards of academic freedom.

Click was fired last month, after she was caught on video last fall calling for “some muscle” to help remove a student reporter from MU's Columbia campus during student protests over racial issues. Her actions draw national outrage and demands from more than 100 Missouri state lawmakers for her dismissal.

The American Association of University Professors issued a statement Monday raising the question of whether there was adequate cause to fire Click.

The statement said members of the organization will visit the campus in late March, meeting with administrators, Click and others to determine whether the firing "disregarded the institution’s own stated policies, and whether conditions for academic freedom and tenure at the institution are sound."

According to the statement, the group will decide in June whether to issue a censure of the MU administration. A censure "serves as a warning to prospective faculty members that their rights may not be respected at the university,” said the statement.

AAUP to investigate Melissa Click's firing
REBECCA SMITH, RACHEL PHILLIPS, 11 hrs ago
COLUMBIA — The American Association of University Professors will investigate Melissa Click's firing, AAUP associate secretary Hans-Joerg Tiede wrote Monday in a letter to MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley and UM System Board of Curators Chair Pamela Henrickson.

The AAUP's letter responded to concerns that its investigation is premature since the curators have yet to respond to Click's appeal of her dismissal.

"Allowing her to appeal a summary dismissal to the body that dismissed her, rather than a duly constituted faculty hearing committee, is not consistent with these (AAUP-supported) standards," Tiede wrote. "For that reason, we see no need to await the outcome of the appeal."

The letter said Click's reinstatement was "the only acceptable resolution" and said that if she got her job back and the university adhered to due process in the future, an investigation would no longer be necessary.

After conferring Monday with AAUP staff, Executive Director Julie Schmid approved the creation of an ad hoc committee made up of three university professors:

Henry Reichman of California State University at East Bay; professor emeritus of history and committee chair

Nicholas Fleisher of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee; assistant professor of linguistics

Shelia Kennison of Oklahoma State University; professor of psychology.

Based on the committee's findings, the AAUP may vote to place the university's administration on its censure list, AAUP spokeswoman Laura Markwardt said in an email. The censure list informs potential faculty members that university administrations may not guarantee an environment of academic freedom.
The committee will talk with the Board of Curators, administrators, Click and other faculty on March 22 and 23. The goal of the visit is to "ensure that all parties will have a full opportunity to present their respective positions," according to Monday's letter.

Once the ad hoc committee has gathered the results of its investigation, it will decide whether the curators violated the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, other AAUP-supported procedures and the UM System's stated policies. The committee will also evaluate academic freedom and tenure in the UM System as a whole, Markwardt said in an email.

The investigative committee will report to the AAUP's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure. Based on that report, Committee A has the ability to recommend censure, Markwardt said, and will decide whether to do so when it meets in early June. If censure is recommended, delegates will vote at the annual meeting June 18, Markwardt said.

Committee A members will "use their judgment as to whether a particular report indicates violations of our principles that are severe enough to warrant censure," Tiede said in an email, and the AAUP expects the report to be published in May.

Reichman said that if it had the chance, the committee would provide help to reach an acceptable settlement for all parties.

"The committee will endeavor to speak with as many interested parties as possible, including from the UM administration and board," he wrote Monday in an email.

The curators voted 4-2 to fire Click on Feb. 24 after an investigation was conducted into her actions last fall. Click, a former assistant professor of communication, was filmed Nov. 9 calling for "some muscle" to remove MU student and independent journalist Mark Schierbecker from Mel Carnahan Quadrangle.
The Missourian also released footage of Click's confrontation with police officers during the MU Homecoming Parade in October. Both videos contributed to calls for her to be fired and were mentioned in the investigative report compiled by St. Louis law firm Bryan Cave.

The AAUP's most recent letter follows a warning from the AAUP to curators and administrators of a possible investigation in a letter sent March 3.

The AAUP also wrote to Foley on Feb. 2 and Feb. 26 regarding Click's suspension and firing, urging that standard procedures be followed. The UM System's Collected Rules and Regulations outline a process by which complaints of faculty irresponsibility are handled through a series of hearings.

Tiede said the AAUP comprises about 40,000 U.S. professors and academics and has a chapter at MU. Galen Suppes, chair of the MU AAUP chapter, could not be reached for comment Monday.

Professors association to investigate Melissa Click firing

COLUMBIA - The American Association of University Professors announced Monday afternoon it will investigate the University of Missouri Board of Curators' decision to fire embattled former Associate Professor Melissa Click.

Association leadership met Monday to decide whether it would look into the case. In a statement to KOMU 8 News, AAUP said it will send staff to MU to investigate:
Dr. Julie Schmid, executive director of the American Association of University Professors, today authorized a formal investigation in the case of Professor Melissa Click at the University of Missouri. Last week the board of curators of the University of Missouri system summarily dismissed Professor Click from the UM faculty. Normative practice among American institutions of higher education is that a faculty member with indefinite tenure—or a probationary faculty member within the term of appointment—may be dismissed only following demonstration of cause in an adjudicative hearing before a faculty body.

The investigating committee will consist of three AAUP members from other institutions who will visit Columbia, Missouri, on March 22 and March 23 to meet with administrators, board members, faculty leaders, and Professor Click. After ascertaining the facts and the positions of the principal parties, the investigating committee will determine whether the board in dismissing Professor Click violated the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure and derivative AAUP-supported academic procedural standards, whether its actions disregarded the institution’s own stated policies, and whether conditions for academic freedom and tenure at the institution are sound.

Click was fired Feb. 24. Curators listed several reasons for terminating Click, including her conduct during the MU Homecoming parade and during the Nov. 9 protests on MU campus.

At the time of Click's firing, curators said, "The board believes that Dr. Click’s conduct was not compatible with university policies and did not meet expectations for a university faculty member. The circumstances surrounding Dr. Click’s behavior, both at a protest in October when she tried to interfere with police officers who were carrying out their duties, and at a rally in November, when she interfered with members of the media and students who were exercising their rights in a public space and called for intimidation against one of our students, we believe demands serious action."

AAUP to investigate Melissa Click case

The executive director for the American Association of University Professors has authorized a formal investigation into Dr. Melissa Click's dismissal from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

The UM Board of Curators dismissed Click in February, following her actions at two protests in 2014. According to the AAUP, a faculty member with "indefinite tenure, or a probationary
faculty member within the term of appointment, may be dismissed only following demonstration of cause in an adjudicative hearing before a faculty body."

The AAUP will send three members to Columbia later in March to meet with Click, administrators, and faculty leaders. Depending on the results of the investigation, the AAUP may vote later this year to censure the UM administration. If that happens, the AAUP would make public its findings that "unsatisfactory conditions of academic freedom and tenure have been found to prevail" at the University of Missouri.

Police ID man killed by Columbia bus near university campus

*The Associated Press*

COLUMBIA, MO. - Police say a 66-year-old Columbia man was killed after being killed by a city bus while he was crossing the street at an intersection.

*The Columbia Daily Tribune* reports David Birkenbach was walking across Stadium Boulevard around 8 a.m. Monday when a bus attempted to turn left onto Stadium Boulevard. Police say Birkenbach was legally in the crosswalk when the bus driver failed to yield and struck the man while completing the turn.

Police spokeswoman Bryana Larimer says neither alcohol nor drugs were a factor in the crash.

The 22-year-old bus driver is a temporary, part-time employee who was placed on unpaid leave pending the outcome of an investigation into the incident.

Eight passengers were on the bus at the time of the crash.
Building ‘Bridge Leaders’ for Minority Professors and Students

Clarence G. Williams grew up in the segregated South and earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at historically black institutions, where African-American faculty members mentored him and inspired him to pursue a career in academe.

But when Mr. Williams arrived at the University of Connecticut, in 1969, to pursue a doctoral degree in higher-education administration and counseling psychology, black faculty members and students were few. He felt isolated at Connecticut, but one of the people he says played a pivotal role in helping him succeed as a Ph.D. student was a white man.

Today, Mr. Williams — a former special assistant to the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with a focus on minority affairs — calls that man a "bridge leader." It’s a term Mr. Williams uses for non-minority faculty members and administrators who work to bridge racial and cultural divisions in order to make their campuses more welcoming and nurturing to minorities.

While interviewing black students, administrators, and members of the faculty and staff at MIT for a book about their experiences at the college, Technology and the Dream (MIT Press, 2001), Mr. Williams says a common theme was the presence of non-black faculty members and administrators who encouraged and supported them.

That pattern caused him to seek out bridge leaders elsewhere to learn more about their commitment to inclusion, to refine his concept of the role they play, and to discover how to foster that type of support at other institutions. He has collected his research on
a website that includes video interviews with bridge leaders and those who have benefited from their help.

"What I’ve found is that there are many people, even in high-level positions on campus, who can have a tremendous impact on bridging racial divisions," says Mr. Williams, who was hired by MIT in 1972 as assistant dean of the graduate school and is now retired. "When we get top institutions to begin working on this, and they see that it works, other institutions will jump in line."

Mr. Williams says most non-minority faculty members at predominantly white institutions can do more to support black and other underrepresented minority students and faculty members. Non-minority academics, he says, should acknowledge and empathize with the realities faced by their minority colleagues and students; be willing to push the status quo; and offer thoughtful and intentional overtures that signal a commitment to diversity. Sometimes those who want to step up are not sure how to proceed, he says.

Meanwhile, if minority faculty members and students don’t see openings to connect, they will often seek out those on a campus who share their racial and cultural background. Mr. Williams says minority mentors are bridge leaders in their own right — they are making a positive impact on minority students — but their numbers are few.

Mr. Williams, the founder and director of the Blacks at MIT History Project, urges minority faculty members and students to broaden their idea of just who can successfully mentor them.

Mr. Williams spoke recently with The Chronicle about bridge leadership and the role it can play in minority faculty and student success. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.
Q. What can non-minority faculty members do to signal to their minority colleagues that they might make a good bridge leader, or at the very least be supportive?

A. When a black assistant professor comes into a department, you’re looking for anybody who seems positive. Just basic things: Are they friendly? Are they asking you to lunch? Tenured faculty members, and particularly people in power positions, have to show some signs of being open and willing to support black faculty members and show them that they can get a fair shot.

Most young faculty members, barring color, are looking for these signs — but black faculty members even more so. They’re looking for some signs of support, something that says, "This is a place where you can do your work and really get a fair shot at succeeding."

I tell people to look at how people respond to you when you ask about things you don’t know. Are there people who are consistently positive toward you? How do they treat other people like you? If you’re in a department where you never even see any dialogue between white faculty members and black faculty members, then you assume it’s not possible. Seeing is believing.

Q. What’s happening in higher education and beyond that makes developing bridge leaders so critical right now?

A. If you look at the politics going on in our presidential election, you can see that there are a lot of naïve and uneducated people when it comes to understanding race in our country. For us in higher education, we really have to groom our young men and women of all races to be prepared to have a sense of justice and respect for each and every person — no matter who they are. They need that in addition to expertise in their fields, and bridge leaders can play a role in that.
Q. How do you make the case for bridge mentors to black faculty members and students, some of whom have had not-so-great experiences in predominantly white environments?

A. Black faculty who have been mentors, for the most part, are overworked. And unless they get tenure, it really can be a real problem for them. It’s an extra burden that they carry. That is why I feel so strongly that we have to push the bridge-leadership concept.

The people who can help you navigate these environments aren’t always black. There are some people who are supportive and can be helpful who are not black. They’re not as many of them as we would like to have, but we have to keep pressing and keep making the point and keep working with those small number of people that we have and multiply that.

Q. When were you first exposed to a bridge leader?

A. I actually did not have a bridge leader in higher education until my graduate-school training. My mentors and key people who helped me, beginning on the undergraduate level, have all been black folks.

When I went to graduate school at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, I was in counseling and psychology in the School of Education and there were no black faculty and no black graduate students there. My first year there my adviser was, of course, a white faculty member. He left at the end of my first year and made sure that all of his other advisees were assigned to someone else.

I spent a whole year without an adviser until a black professor who had been a senior faculty member at a historically black institution was hired, and he asked somebody to tell me to come see him. That’s who I did my work under to get my Ph.D.
In the meantime, I had an internship at the counseling and testing center on campus, and the director of that center became the first non-black person who became a real bridge leader for me. I never would have gotten hired in the counseling and testing center had it not been for him. And he made sure there was no difference between me and the other people he worked with.

Q. What should administrators do to make it clear that cultivating bridge leaders is important to them?

A. Top administration must find ways to reward this kind of behavior. When you are fighting trying to get tenure, you don’t get any credit for doing the kind of things we’re talking about here. Top administration have to value this and then find ways to give faculty some credit for it.