

UM System faculty, staff may see salary increase soon

By [Victoria Guida](#)

January 24, 2011 | 2:24 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — **The salary freeze for University of Missouri System faculty may be melting.**

Although students will likely see a tuition increase in the coming fiscal year, some of the new revenue might go toward higher pay for teachers who earn it. The UM System Board of Curators will consider this week whether to include a merit-based 2 percent average salary increase for faculty and staff.

If approved, a pool of dollars in the budget would be allocated for award-based merit raises, budgeted at an amount equal to 2 percent of payroll, said Nikki Krawitz, the UM System vice president of finance and administration.

"Some people might get nothing, and others might get 4 or 5 percent," Krawitz said.

Merit would be determined based on the annual evaluations of professors performed by the four campuses in the system. Faculty members are evaluated based on teaching, research and service.

Christian Basi, associate director at the MU News Bureau, said faculty members are assessed by student evaluation forms and departmental reviews.

For staff, merit-based raises would work in essentially the same way — based on performance reviews, Krawitz said.

According to information presented at the board's last meeting, the four-campus system ranks low in terms of average faculty salaries in its respective peer groups, which are made up of comparable institutions.

MU is last — 35th out of 35 institutions — in the [Association of American Universities](#) in average faculty salary. The University of Missouri-Kansas City is 17th out of 25 in its peer

group; Missouri University of Science and Technology is 11th out of 16; and the University of Missouri-St. Louis is 29th out of 31.

As previously reported by the Missourian, the average faculty salary of the AAU is \$96,382. The average at MU is \$81,656.

Harry Tyrer, fiscal affairs committee chairman for the MU Faculty Council, said he thinks a lot of faculty would be "greatly relieved" if the increase were to happen.

"I think a lot of faculty were very ... demoralized by facing the prospect of the third year of no raises," he said. "You can't buy kids' clothes and their food on good intentions."

A salary increase, Tyrer said, would be helpful in recruiting and retaining faculty members.

"The realistic issue is trying to maintain competitiveness — to make sure that the faculty that we hire are the best," he said.

Krawitz agreed the system needs to be proactive to keep and hire new faculty members by being able to offer them a competitive salary.

Diane Bartley, chairwoman of the Staff Advisory Council, said staff would be "thrilled" if the increases were to happen.

"There haven't been raises for several years, but expenses have been going up," Bartley said.

It is unfortunate the raise would be the result of a tuition increase for students, Tyrer said.

"If it happens it'll be great. It'll be great for me. It won't be great for them (students)," he said. "The thing I don't like about getting the raise is there is going to be a tuition increase."

Krawitz said the merit increases have "nothing to do with tuition" but are simply about building a budget that takes care of both physical and human capital.

"The decision on how much to increase tuition is a decision about tuition," she said. "One doesn't drive the other. It's one of the factors."

Tyrer said he will wait and see whether the increase happens.

"Until I hear the administration say, yes, they're going to do it, then I'll feel a lot more comfortable," he said.

St. Louis Business Journal

University of Missouri, Coventry Health Care, blame mail mix-up on computer glitch

St. Louis Business Journal - by Kelsey Vollenmann

Date: Monday, January 24, 2011, 11:42am CST

University of Missouri System officials have notified several hundred participants in the university's Choice Health Care Program that Coventry Health Care mailed benefit statements and ID cards to the wrong addresses this month.

The error affected participants in the Choice Health Care Program, which covers faculty and staff employees and their dependents, said university spokeswoman **Jennifer Hollingshead**. Employees at all four campuses (St. Louis, Columbia, Rolla and Kansas City), she said.

According to Coventry Health Care, which administers the university's medical benefits plans, a computer glitch aligned names with the wrong addresses. This mailing error caused benefit statements, health services letters and new ID cards to be mailed to the wrong people. While some of these items contained personal information, such as name, member number and birth date, no social security numbers of the participants were disclosed, officials said.

The **University of Missouri's** contract with Coventry for about 38,000 participants in the Choice Program is approximately \$625,000 per month, Hollingshead said. The system has had a deal with Coventry since 2008, and 2011 is the first year of a four-year agreement with Coventry.

University officials said an employee brought the matter to their attention on Jan. 14 and they immediately contacted Coventry to find out what had happened. On Jan. 20, Coventry provided university officials with an explanation of the situation and answers to some of their questions. The university then mailed letters to employees affected by the software error on Jan. 21 to apprise them of the situation.

Roman Kulich, president and CEO of Coventry Health Care/GHP in St. Louis, said the computer error occurred between Jan. 6-10. "After correcting the error, we began working with officials to notify those affected," Kulich said. "We implemented new system safeguards to prevent this type of error from happening again."

"We have asked Coventry to take steps to attempt to recover the misdirected mail, and we have provided participants affected by this error with steps they can take to protect themselves," said **Kelley Stuck**, who oversees UM faculty and staff benefits programs.

The problematic mailing involved Choice Health Care Program members and did not affect participants in the Catastrophic Medical Program or the Retiree Indemnity Medical Program, officials said.

None of the services included mental health or pharmacy services.

Last year, Bethesda, Md.-based Coventry bought Mercy Health Plan (MHP) from the **Sisters of Mercy Health System** in Chesterfield, Mo., for an undisclosed sum. Coventry (NYSE: CVH) is a diversified, national managed health-care company. It operates health plans, insurance companies, network rental and workers' compensation services companies. Coventry reported 2009 revenue of \$13.9 billion. Coventry operates as Group Health Plan (GHP) for commercial and Medicare products and HCUSA for Medicaid products in the St. Louis area and as Coventry Health Care in other markets.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Local digest

COLUMBIA, MO. > Health system releases confidential data — **University of Missouri system officials have notified several hundred participants in the university's Choice Health Care Program that health care communications were mailed from Coventry Health Care to incorrect addresses earlier this month.**

According to Coventry Health Care, which administers the university's medical benefits plans, a computer malfunction aligned names with the wrong addresses. The error caused benefit statements, health services letters and new identification cards to be mailed to the wrong people, according to the university.

While some of these items contained personal information, such as name, member number and birth date, the university said no Social Security numbers of the participants were disclosed. University officials say they have taken steps to avoid similar problems in the future.



Computer error puts UM employee benefit data in the wrong hands

By **JANESE SILVEY**

Published: 11:58 a.m. CST, Jan. 11, 2011

Hundreds of **University of Missouri System** employees across the four campuses received each other's personal health care information earlier this month.

Coventry Health Care, which administers the university's medical benefits plans, blamed a computer glitch for aligning names with incorrect addresses. The mailing error meant benefit statements, health services letters and new identification cards were sent to the wrong people. Some of the items contained personal information, such as member numbers and birth dates, but Social Security numbers weren't disclosed.

Those affected were participants of the university's Choice Health Care Program.

Roman Kulich, president and CEO of Coventry Health Care in St. Louis, said the company discovered the error between Jan. 6 and Jan. 10 and took immediate action. After correcting the computer error, the company began working with UM officials to notify the employees affected. University administrators mailed letters to the employees.

"We are clearly concerned by this, as the privacy of health plan participants' information is of the utmost importance to us," Kelley Stuck, who oversees UM faculty and staff benefits programs, said in a statement.

Employees received an internal memo today asking them to contact Coventry if they've received someone else's information, UM spokeswoman Jennifer Hollingshead said.

The university also is asking health providers to confirm identities of those seeking services under their insurance number and to carefully review Coventry correspondence to ensure services actually have been provided. Stuck said Coventry is cooperating fully with the university and "has assured us that this matter is their highest priority."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

UM employee information mailed to wrong addresses because of computer error

By [Victoria Guida](#)

January 24, 2011 | 6:31 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — A computer error earlier this month caused personal health information about 750 University of Missouri System employees to be sent to the wrong addresses.

Explanation of benefits, prior authorization letters, service appeals and new ID cards were the potential contents of the misdirected mailings, said Kelley Stuck, who oversees benefit programs for UM faculty and staff.

Mailings may have contained personal information, such as name, member number and birth date. They did not contain Social Security numbers or mental health and pharmacy records.

Affected employees were part of the Choice Health Program. Close to 20,000 employees participate in UM's health care program, and 90 percent are in the program in question.

"It was a very small number affected," Stuck said.

The problem was caused by a computer malfunction at Coventry Health Care, which provides the university's health benefit plans, Stuck said.

It occurred between Jan. 6 and 10, according to a UM System news release. Roman Kulich, president and CEO of Coventry Health Care in St. Louis, was quoted in the release as saying the organization took "immediate corrective actions to address this error."

The malfunction occurred when a file was rerun after a breakdown, Stuck said.

According to the release, Coventry Health Care has put in place safeguards to prevent future errors of this kind, Kulich said.

A UM employee reported the incident to university officials on Jan. 14, Coventry responded on Jan. 20, and the university notified affected program participants on Jan. 21. Participants in the Catastrophic Medical Program and the Retiree Indemnity Medical Program were not involved.

At first, "they knew there was a problem and identified some errors, but they did not know the extent of the problem," she said. "They were trying to get their facts straight before they contacted us."

Stuck said this is the first time she is aware of such a problem occurring.

"I think Coventry has really made this a priority in terms of not only getting this corrected, but also making sure members were notified and correct information went out," she said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Miller named UM System chief of staff permanently

By Rachel Lijewski

January 24, 2011 | 5:55 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — The interim chief of staff for the University of Missouri System has been permanently named to the position.

Steve Owens, UM System interim president, has named Kathy Miller chief of staff, according to a UM System news release. Miller started as the interim chief of staff in July, after serving as the secretary of the UM System Board of Curators since 1995.

According to the release, Miller's responsibilities as chief of staff include:

- Serving as the UM custodian of records.
- Coordinating activities in the offices of the president and Board of Curators.
- Ensuring the system is in compliance with the Missouri Sunshine Law relating to open records requests.

THE MANEATER

Who will be next UM president? It's all speculation

The curators' search for the next UM system president starts Thursday.

By Jimmy Hibs

Published Jan. 25, 2011

Since former UM System President Gary Forsee's Jan. 7 resignation, speculation has been high as to who his successor will be. Politicians' and businessmen's names are often brought up in the process, and, if former searches for the university's next leader are any indication, could continue to be talked up during the search.

Several names could be brought to the table when the UM System Board of Curators meets Thursday to begin searching for Forsee's replacement, but chairman Warren Erdman said they would remain confidential throughout the process, which has typically taken about one year in the past.

"It would be my intent that we protect the confidentiality of candidates to express their interest," Erdman said at the Jan. 7 meeting. "But at the same token, this is a big decision that affects the University of Missouri and the state of Missouri and it is one that I would intend to have an all-inclusive role for faculty and staff much as we did last time around."

Although no one has declared his or her intention to pursue the job, nor have any curators mentioned potential candidates, several big names in Missouri politics and higher education have either been considered in previous UM System president searches, tossed around by media outlets or are qualified for the position based on previous picks. The following three people are among these names:

Former U.S. senator Kit Bond, R-MO

A longtime advocate of the UM System, Bond's name came up in discussions during the curators' last UM System president search.

For four terms as a senator, 24 years, Bond was responsible for funneling millions of dollars to the system through federal earmarks. With Bond out of office after choosing not to run for a fifth term, the university could consider offering Bond something in return: a job as the face of the university.

Speculation aside, Bond expressed no desire to pursue the job when asked in 2007, and he is now working at a law firm. Bond did not return a phone call left at his office.

John Carney

Chancellor of the Missouri University of Science and Technology John Carney has spent five years as the head of his campus.

In January 2010, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education recognized Carney with a prestigious leadership award, citing his positive influence on the campus. Carney can also list his school's name change — from UM – Rolla to what it's known as now — as one of his accomplishments as chancellor.

The idea of Carney's promotion to the position of UM System president also seems more feasible when considering that a former Missouri S&T chancellor, Martin Jischke, left the campus in 1991 to become the president of Iowa State University, and later, Purdue University.

Kathy Osborn

In an effort to bring in a candidate with a background in both higher education and business, the curators could consider Regional Business Council Executive Director Kathy Osborn. Considering the fact that the UM System presidency has never been filled by a woman, the curators could break ground with her selection as UM System president.

Osborn spearheaded the consortium shortly after leaving her post as Vice Chancellor of University Relations at UM – St. Louis.

When Forsee was chosen as president, some looked highly upon his background in business, but his lack of educational experience was panned by others. The curators could see Osborn as someone who brings the best of both worlds.

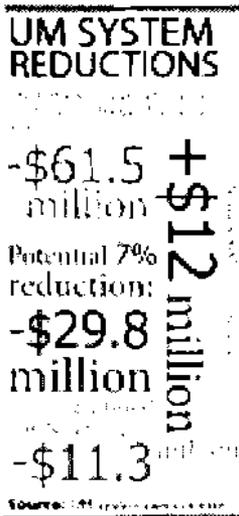
THE MANEATER

Curators' decision on tuition increase comes Friday

The UM System vice president for finance says a "single digit" tuition increase is the goal.

By Allison Prang

Published Jan. 25, 2011



The UM System Board of Curators will set a goal of keeping a tuition increase for 2011-12 "in the single digits" when members vote on potential rate increases Friday, Nikki Krawitz, UM System Vice President of Finance and Administration, said Monday.

Krawitz said the university has been recommending a tuition increase to the curators over the course of the last few board meetings and feels the public is ready for it.

The tuition increase will be one of many efforts UM System officials put forth to close a funding gap of \$72 million, in part created by a proposed 7 percent cut in funding Gov. Jay Nixon proposed last week. During his State of the State address Jan. 19, Nixon said, despite the fall in public university funding, he plans to allocate an additional \$12 million in scholarship funding for students. UM System Interim President Steve Owens responded with gratitude to the proposed cut, which was less than the 15 percent cut UM System officials said they feared at the most recent curators' meeting.

"Given the state's projected revenue shortfalls, we appreciate the governor's support for the state's higher education needs in this tough economic environment," Owens said in a Jan. 20 news release.

According to the news release, a potential 7 percent cut would total up to a \$29.8 million cut for the UM System.

Curators assured students they would not close the entire funding gap for the university with a tuition increase, and Krawitz said the system could look to the same departments and funds they've cut from in the past when making decisions on where to decrease spending in the next year.

She said one of these areas the UM System has cut from in the past has been maintenance repair, along with building funds, funds for professional development, travel and supplies.

"As part of the university's ongoing efforts to improve efficiency, we made \$61.5 million in cost reductions last year through travel, supply expense and workforce reductions; deferred maintenance and repair; and energy conservation," Owens said. "An additional \$11.3 million in cuts and efficiencies also has already been identified in the process of planning for next year's budget."

Krawitz said the UM System is retaining students and getting more into its universities, despite the budget cuts and potential tuition increases.

"Right now, given what the governor has recommended as part of his budget, we assume that we can continue to enroll students where we have the capacity," Krawitz said. "Then we'll continue to do what we've been doing, which is not fill positions when they become open."

MU spokesman Christian Basi said there is still a lot of work for the legislature to do pertaining to the budget, and the final numbers will be ready in May.

Basi said it is premature to comment on potential cuts now.

"We'll be watching this very closely and working with folks as we can to make sure that we have the best budget available for MU in the coming year," Basi said.