

APR 07 2011

The Chronicle of Higher Education

What's in a Name? Researchers Struggle With Terms for New Learning Methods

April 6, 2011, 2:01 pm

By Ben Wieder

Researchers at the University of Missouri at Columbia found no consensus among academics about the definitions of “e-learning,” “online learning,” and “distance learning,” which they say makes it difficult to assess the strengths of each approach.

“As education researchers, we don’t get the true context of the instructional environment, and without that, it is impossible to compare learning results,” says Joi L. Moore, an associate professor in the School of Information Science & Learning Technologies at Missouri, who led the research, which was published recently in the journal *The Internet and Higher Education*.

Wired Campus would like to know, what do you think is the difference between the three? How important is it that researchers settle on a common definition of each?

THE ST. LOUIS AMERICAN

\$1.1 billion in IRS tax credits available for April 18 filings

Posted: Thursday, April 7, 2011 12:00 am

Brenda Procter, a University of Missouri Extension personal financial planning specialist and tax expert in the College of Human Environmental Sciences, says many tax filers are unaware of tax refunds and exemptions. The IRS has more than \$1.1 billion in unclaimed tax credits and refunds from 2007 alone. Procter says those who are eligible can still claim this money if they file by April 18.

"What many people don't realize is that they can retroactively file or amend updated tax returns and receive refunds for up to three years in the past," Procter said. "People who learn they were eligible for a certain exemption or refund from 2008, for example, can still file a return for that year and receive that money."

One tax credit that confuses many people is the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). A person can claim this credit if the child in question lives with them for more than 50 percent of the year and otherwise qualifies them for the EITC.

Procter blames unemployment or change of income mid-year as another reason that people miss out on certain tax credits and refunds. Those who made enough money to be ineligible for many credits last year may not think to claim them this year if they suffered a loss or change of income.



Curators nominee Steward breezes through confirmation hearing

By **RUDI KELLER**

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JEFFERSON CITY — One of the *three* men appointed in January to the **University of Missouri Board of Curators** breezed through a confirmation hearing today with no questioning from lawmakers.

David Steward, founder of World Wide Technology Inc., a \$3 billion company in Maryland Heights, won unanimous approval from the Gubernatorial Appointments Committee as the latest Republican member of the board. A final Senate vote is expected tomorrow.

Craig Van Matre of Columbia and Donald Cupps of Harrisonville, appointed the day after Steward, have not received hearings more than two months after their appointments were announced. Although no specific issues are blocking those appointments, Senate President Pro Tem Rob Mayer, R-Dexter, said the appointment process is one of the few ways lawmakers have of getting the attention of Gov. Jay Nixon.

"They are a big leverage we can use to get the governor to sit down and talk on issues," Mayer said.

Nixon generally keeps quiet on legislative actions. On Friday, he held a news conference to criticize a Republican filibuster against extended unemployment benefits and spending federal education funds.

After the brief hearing today, Steward said he wants to bring a business-like approach to the board, both in making the UM System more efficient and in the search for a new system president. "Gary Forsee had a tremendous amount of business knowledge from his experience at AT&T and Sprint," he said. "That was very healthy, from my perspective."

Forsee resigned to help his wife through a serious illness. The board is conducting a search for his replacement.

The biggest issues for the university overall, Steward said, are making the system more affordable and improving the use of technology. "We have an opportunity to be much more globally competitive in technology," he said.

Steward also is author of "Doing Business by the Good Book," which promotes Bible lessons in business.

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THE TRIBUNE'S VIEW

Frank Haith

Mizzou's new basketball coach

By **HENRY J. WATERS III**

Mike Alden disappeared into the wilderness and emerged arm-in-arm with Frank Haith, an unknown and unexpected candidate to succeed Mike Anderson as head coach of the University of Missouri's men's basketball team.

Tribune Sports Editor Joe Walljasper was prompted to write that Alden must see something others do not and is almost alone in seeing Haith as the right man for the job.

But by the time the new coach had finished his news conference yesterday morning, I believe his stock had risen. By noon yesterday we did not know anything about what Haith will become, but we had good reason to be encouraged.

It's only a news conference, but we liked his style, full of the usual enthusiasm but, I thought, tempered with an engaging ordinariness. His superiors, Athletic Director Alden and MU Chancellor Brady Deaton, were able to say without equivocation that Haith has the right values for the Missouri job, and by now we know these are not idle words coming from them. Talk of academics first and athletics second is cheap and usually somewhat disingenuous, but for Deaton and Alden we can believe they do emphasize the character and academic performance of their players, and Haith said he tells his players they don't come to college to play basketball; they come to college *and* play basketball.

Haith's win-loss record at Miami is forgettable, but his player graduation rate is not. During his time at Miami, he graduated 21 of 22 seniors, second only to Duke during that period in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

In a real sense, recruiting a new coach from the ranks of the relatively unknown makes sense. Where did Coach K or Jim Calhoun or Norm Stewart coach before making marks on the national scene? We know about Stewart only because his stint at Northern Iowa is trivial information. What were their records in those schools-along-the-way? Athletic directors or presidents or chancellors saw potential others might not have seen, and now we assume these stars somehow emerged in full sparkle.

Choosing from relative obscurity allows an employer like Alden choices among a wider crowd of prospects. Haith has solid experience, including time with his acknowledged mentor, Coach Rick Barnes of Texas, but at Miami he was not in his destination job. He is 45, about the right age combining youth with experience. Clearly he is excited to be at Missouri.

At this moment, the only sensible attitude among us MU sports audience animals and angels is happy anticipation. Welcome to Coach Frank Haith and his family. I am assuming he will do just fine

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

COLUMN: Cutting education bankrupts our human capital

Author is MU Student

By Austin Fax

April 6, 2011 | 11:49 a.m. CDT

Oh, for the love of balancing the budget. Missouri currently finds itself at the crossroads of implementing policies to create jobs and minimizing its role by cutting government spending. Inevitably, the process leads to hurt feelings by those entities receiving less funding than the previous year.

This year, as is frequently the case, funding for education is in jeopardy, as Gov. Jay Nixon believes higher education funding could face up to a 7 percent decrease. That is a conservative estimate, as some believe it could be as high as a 15 percent cut.

Normally, I tend to err on the side of fiscal responsibility and minimal government spending. The notion of large taxes and an unsustainable budget sickens me. But education is different.

The vast Republican majority in the General Assembly has promised job creation is the number one priority for this session. They have done an excellent job so far, proposing changes in minimum wage law, multiple bills to aid agriculture, and eliminating hindrances on small business. With all that said, as education goes, so does an economy. And cutting funding to universities statewide could jeopardize all the work the legislature has put in thus far.

At heart, I am a student. A student of the law, politics, common sense and reason. My mother is a teacher in the Logan-Rogersville school district, so I have understood the importance of an education my entire life. Blessed with the opportunity to attend college, I also understand how important those three years have been to my life. I acquired intellectual knowledge, but most importantly, I got an education in life.

Human capital is the rare exception to the business model. Unlike normal economics, one can acquire human capital without a loss on the other end of the transaction. Human capital is also the driving force behind our economy. An economy can only thrive when its participants reach their fullest capabilities of innovation and ingenuity. A college education goes a long way in achieving both.

A college education is not a right. Don't let anyone fool you into thinking it is. Governments should be fearful of any spending that results in a minimal return. Education spending is different. In this case, a little spending can go a long way. The Republicans in power have a rare opportunity at hand. The common belief is that education is getting slashed. While our legislators pour over the budget, they should consider their own blessings of higher education. Hopefully this reflection will lead them to take the necessary steps to cut other funds than higher education.

Austin Fax is a junior majoring in convergence journalism at MU with a focus on political discourse. He grew up in Rogersville.