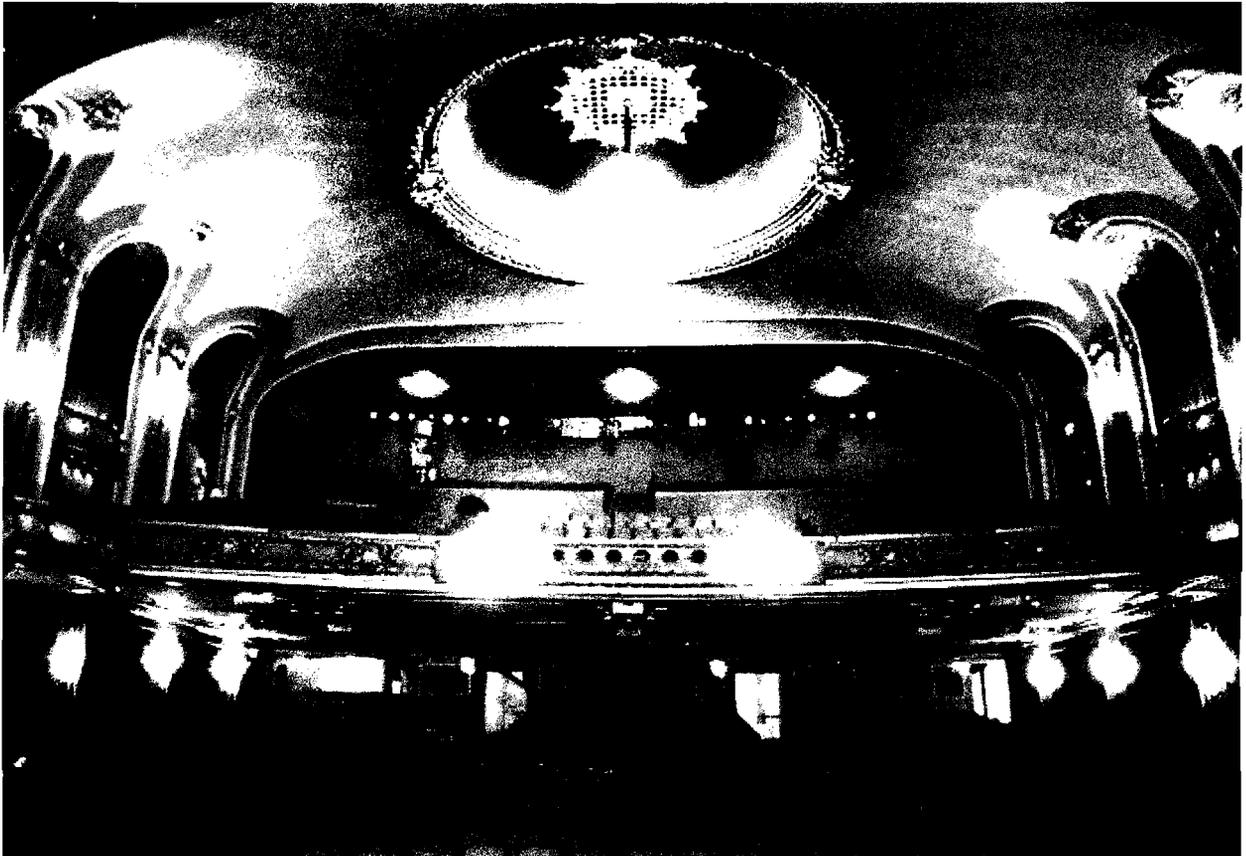


MU set to lease, operate Missouri Theatre



[Don Shrubshell](#) | [Buy this photo](#)

The University of Missouri is working on a deal to lease and operate the Missouri Theatre, above after renovations in 2008.

By [Janese Silvey](#)

The Missouri Theatre will thrive in the hands of the University of Missouri, according to people involved in negotiations.

MU is going to lease the theater from the Missouri Symphony Society under a contract being hashed out today. The lease will span three years — until federal tax credits awarded to the theater expire — at which time the university will have the option to buy it.

The university will pay \$12,000 per month. The money will come from the university's campus rental account, which is used to secure physical space for the university's needs. After three years, the university will have the option to buy the property for \$3.7 million.

Carole Sue DeLaitte, co-president of the society board, called the deal a "new beginning" for the 83-year-old theater.

"I think music lovers in town, I think historic preservationists, I think the community at large will embrace this as a wonderful partnership and a solution to financial difficulties and uncertainty about the theater's future," she said. "This means that people who love theater and a permanent presence — we can assume the university is a permanent presence in our community — are going to make the best possible utilization of the building for people to enjoy theater, dance, music and public performances of all kinds."

Jesse Hall staff will run events at the theater. John Murray, who manages Jesse Hall, said he expects to hire employees to handle scheduling, and MU will have an office in the theater, 203 S. Ninth St. The Missouri Symphony Society also will have office space there.

In addition to hosting community events held at the theater — such as the True/False Film Festival and Hot Summer Nights — MU likely will add new programming. The university's 1,732-seat Jesse Auditorium averages 230 events a year and can't meet demand.

"I turn away more events than I can tell you," Murray said. "Some days I turn away three or four. Many of those are routing dates because an artist happens to be in the area and have an extra day, so they cut us a deal. We can't accommodate any of those requests."

The theater doesn't replace MU's plan to build a new School of Music facility, although it could scale down that project. MU's College of Arts and Science has been eyeing a new school and performing arts center for more than 20 years.

Plans call for the building to be at Hitt Street and University Avenue and house classrooms, a 350-seat recital hall and 1,000-seat concert hall. Dean Mike O'Brien said the latter section won't be needed if MU buys the 1,216-seat Missouri Theatre.

"Quite frankly, a lot of people in town love the Missouri Theatre and have donated a boatload of money," he said. By purchasing it, "we could knock millions off the cost of a new School of Music building. That seems like a huge win for everyone."

Because the negotiations involve a lease, approval wasn't required from the UM System Board of Curators, but the board would have to approve a purchase. Board Chairman Warren Erdman said curators were briefed about the deal during a closed session.

"As a conceptual matter, yes, I think it's a good idea when we can address a university need — performance space — and do so using an underutilized historic community building like the Missouri Theatre, which happens to be a couple of blocks from campus," he said. "It's a good community-school partnership."

Negotiations have been in the works for months. When asked about it, Curator Craig van Matre of Columbia said he represents the lenders but was involved in the transaction before his June appointment to the board.

Eighty years after it was built, the Missouri Theatre reopened in 2008 with much fanfare after an intense fundraising campaign. Renovation costs spiked to about \$10 million, exceeding donations. In late 2008 and early 2009, subcontractors began filing liens against the theater for unpaid renovation bills. After temporarily closing last year, the Missouri Symphony Society reopened but has relied on volunteers to staff it.

“We’ve certainly been able to meet our ongoing obligations but we have not been able to adequately service the debt,” DeLaite said. “We finished the building just three months before the financial melt-down. We’ve been in a recessionary period since then.”

She stressed that seats, portraits and other items in the theater recognizing donors will remain there and be preserved.

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UPDATE: New curtain rises on Missouri Theatre as MU takes over

By Zach Murdock

August 25, 2011 | 8:23 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — MU and the Missouri Symphony Society reached a deal Thursday afternoon on the short-term future of the Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts.

MU will lease and manage the theater, 203 S. Ninth St., for three years with an option to buy it after that time for \$3.7 million, according to an MU News Bureau release.

MU will lease the theater for \$12,000 per month, paid from the university's campus rental account, which is used to purchase space for campus needs, the release stated.

Negotiations have been in the works for several months, said Carole Sue DeLaite, co-president of the Missouri Symphony Society.

John Murray, assistant director of business services and building coordinator for Jesse Hall, which includes management of Jesse Auditorium, said the theater is a great addition to MU because it can host many of the smaller events that would normally have to be held at Jesse. That frees up the auditorium, which is bigger than the theater by about 500 seats, for larger events.

The theater has been in poor financial health for some time. The Missouri Symphony Society has struggled to maintain the debt service on loans related to the theater's 2008 renovation.

Since Aug. 1, 2010, the theater has been run entirely by volunteer staff, except for technical and cleanup crews associated with some performances, DeLaite said.

Jesse's dance card is too full

Meanwhile, Jesse Auditorium, which has 1,732 seats, now averages 230 events a year and can no longer meet the demand for its use, the MU release stated. Jesse was spruced up this summer with new seats and fresh paint.

"Our biggest limitation at this point is available days," Murray said.

Speakers, comedians and classical music performances tend not to sell out Jesse Auditorium but are too big for other venues on campus, Murray said. With the Missouri Theatre at his disposal, these shows — which Murray said are better suited to the acoustics of the theater — can be moved to make Jesse available for other events.

Murray's nearly 25 event employees will split responsibilities working at both venues, he said. In anticipation of this deal, his staff was expanded this year to include 15 to 20 part-time student employees and six full-time event professionals.

The symphony society will continue to use the 1,216-seat Missouri Theatre for its offices and as a base for the Missouri Symphony Orchestra, the Plowman Chamber Music Competition and the Piano Student Showcase, according to the MU release.

Murray said some full-time event professionals will take offices at the theater, though he intends to stay put in Jesse and keep his view of the MU Columns.

Theater 'a living, breathing art space'

MU also will use the theater for events for the School of Music — which DeLaité said has been one of the theater's biggest renters — and for some University Concert Series performances, commencements, Summer Welcome, Greek Week and more, the release said.

Robert Shay, director of the MU School of Music, said the theater will provide more space for university concerts, rehearsals and large student ensembles. But Shay said having the Missouri Theatre as an option "does not displace" plans to renovate School of Music facilities.

Stefan Freund is associate professor in the School of Music and director of the Columbia Civic Orchestra, which performs in the Missouri Theatre several times a year. He said the number one thing the theater needs is stability.

"I'm glad to hear MU will be hosting events because the theater needs to be consistently presenting performances," Freund said. "It needs to be a living, breathing art space."

Freund said the change is a positive one for the School of Music and another means to draw people downtown.

DeLaité said that running the theater is a big job but that MU has the expertise to do it. The partnership, she said, is simply a new era for the theater. It was built in 1928 and has a storied history as a concert hall and movie house.

“It’s a great opportunity for the university, the symphony society and the community,” Murray said. “We’re at a point where we can keep the theater running as a great resource for the community.”



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COLUMBIA'S MORNING NEWSPAPER

A version of this story appeared in outlets across the country.

Missouri colleges plan move to performance funding

by ALAN SCHER ZAGIER The Associated Press

Posted on August 26, 2011 at 3:55 AM

MU mention page 2

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) -- Missouri colleges seeking more state money could soon have to show that the extra dough will help improve graduation rates, keep down costs and enable the schools to be more accountable to taxpayers.

Nearly 200 college and university presidents, provosts, governing board members, state lawmakers and other higher education leaders heard preliminary details Thursday about the move to "performance funding" at an annual higher education summit convened by Gov. Jay Nixon.

The solution isn't a new idea. Missouri was once considered a national model for its efforts to link funding of public colleges to such measurable accomplishments as graduation rates, course completion and research results. But the state abandoned that approach a decade ago amid an economic slide from which state higher education funding has yet to recover.

The approach has been embraced, however, by several states in recent years including Tennessee, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Louisiana.

"This will move us away from a system of spending money based solely on what an institution has received in the past, to a system where we invest money in those institutions that are meeting their goals and whose students are reaching their potential," Nixon said.

A task force of campus leaders from two-year and four-year schools will help develop the specific performance measures, with a report expected by year's end. Nixon said he hopes to have the plan in place for fiscal year 2013, which begins in 11 months.

As an example of how the funding model would work, Nixon said that if state appropriations for higher education increase by 5 percent, but a school only meets 60 percent of its goals, that institution would only receive a 3 percent boost.

Nixon said there will be a "small number of clear statewide goals," as well as one performance measure specific to each school.

Campus leaders reacted favorably to the announcement, which Nixon hinted at a year ago at his first higher education summit.

Tom George, chancellor of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, said the approach is consistent with how his school and the other three Missouri system campuses already operate. He acknowledged, though, that the process allows for greater transparency and public accountability -- and could also mollify lawmakers who question the state's commitment to public higher education.

"We're all aboard to look into this. We do it internally already," he said. "Within the University of Missouri system, we have about 80 goals we commonly share. And each institution has their own that mesh with those."

Before Nixon's late afternoon announcement, George and his colleagues heard from a pair of national education consultants who described other states' experiences with performance funding.

Jane Wellman, executive director of the Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity and Accountability, warned the audience that the model -- also known as performance-based budgeting -- has risen and dropped in popularity among policymakers through the years.

"I've seen these systems come and go," she said. "I've seen legislators and governors use them to try to assert too much control in academic decisions."

"There is reason to be skeptical," she added. "But in this budget environment, we have to take it seriously."

A 2002 Chronicle of Higher Education examination of Missouri's previous program, known as "Funding for Results," concluded that the eight-year effort "made only marginal improvements, or even lost ground" in many areas.

Further, the Chronicle found that "where public colleges have made progress, it is difficult to say with certainty that the existence of performance incentives brought about the improvements."

Nixon's predecessor, Republican Matt Blunt, sought support for performance-based funding in 2007, though the effort failed to gain much steam in the Capitol.

Missouri enrollments are up

By *MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS*

As college students return to start fall classes this week, university leaders are happy to see enrollments growing, even a little.

“As a university, we realize that with state revenues declining, the only way to be secure in our financial situation is by growing our enrollment,” said Jennifer DeHaemers, director of admissions at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

As more students on campus translate to more tuition dollars, Missouri schools have stepped up recruitment efforts in the state, out of state and internationally. The result is that categories of campus enrollments are breaking records.

At UMKC, freshman enrollment at 1,137 students barely breaks a record, and preliminary counts show overall enrollment, 13,586, up a mere 0.56 percent from last year. The university had projected 14,176 students.

Even that slight growth, though, has all campus housing full. Residence hall officials this week added a third bed in what had been two-bedroom suites.

At Northwest Missouri State University, early enrollment is 7,150, almost flat, but the Maryville school has 10.7 percent more new freshmen this year.

In Warrensburg, the University of Central Missouri’s 11,568 students are more than 200 over last year’s count, and officials expect even more after the official enrollment tally on Sept. 13.

“This is our sixth consecutive year of fall enrollment increases,” said university spokesman Jeff Murphy, who noted the largest international student enrollment, 537, in UCM’s history.

In Columbia, enrollment at the University of Missouri jumped 1,309 students, setting a record of 33,318 on the first day of classes. Enrollments, which have marched steadily up for 17 years, are only slightly higher for freshmen but reflect nearly 14 percent more minority students.

Vice Provost Ann Korschgen said a decline in the number of Missouri high school graduates was offset by “a significant increase in the number of out-of-state students.” The 8,567 out-of-staters represent 812 more than last year.

Kansas colleges won’t report enrollment until next month.



ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Curators interviewing candidates for University of Missouri president

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS | Posted: Friday, August 26, 2011 7:09 am | No Comments Posted

ST. LOUIS • University of Missouri curators are continuing to meet in private with prospective presidents of the four-campus system, this time at a St. Louis airport hotel.

The 10 curators scheduled confidential interviews with an unknown number of candidates Thursday and Friday morning at the airport Marriott. Those sessions come after a similar round of interviews last week at a downtown Kansas City hotel.

The board is seeking a replacement for Gary Forsee, the former Sprint Nextel CEO who resigned in January after nearly three years as president to care for his ill wife. The system's acting president, general counsel Steve Owens, has said he is not interested in the permanent job.



Study tallies impact of sports

Tigers draw \$118 million into economy in a year.

By Janese Silvey

M-I-Z ... cha-cha-ching. Tiger football and basketball games don't just rev up school spirit at the University of Missouri; they also help pump more than \$118 million into Columbia's economy, according to a recent study.

Students in a master's-level business administration course conducted the study during the spring semester. The Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau and Chamber of Commerce requested the research to have a better idea of the economic impact of athletics.

"Athletics really is a significant economy driver in our community," said MU graduate Zack Odem, who participated in the study.

He joined university and city leaders yesterday to present the findings to reporters and Tigers fans at Shiloh Bar & Grill.

The total figure takes into account direct revenues — tickets and concession sales, parking passes, conference proceeds, in-stadium advertising and spending at restaurants and hotels — as well as estimated indirect effects such as increased wages and re-spending.

The students used data from July 2009 to June 2010. The direct costs were relatively easy to track because the Athletic Department submits annual revenue reports to the NCAA, Odem said.

The group then determined which fans were coming to games from out of town, versus Columbia residents, to estimate hotel and meal costs using a per-person multiplier from a similar study conducted for the University of Nebraska in Lincoln.

Of the total, \$50 million comes from direct athletics proceeds, \$22 million is the estimated spending on meals and lodging, and the rest is estimated indirect economic benefits.

MU Athletic Director Mike Alden praised the study as being defensible and conservative. The numbers don't take into account, for instance, other events held at MU sporting venues, such as the Show-Me State Games and Fire in the Sky on Independence Day.

Alden compared the benefits of having athletic programs to the benefits Ninth Street or Cosmo Park bring to Columbia. "The intangible benefits are critical but tough to measure," Alden said.

It's also hard to calculate the impact Tigers games have on showcasing Columbia to a national audience, Mayor Bob McDavid said, pointing out that Southern Living magazine this week named the city to its list of best college towns in the Southern United States.

And a winning sports program could contribute to MU's record enrollment in spite of a change in Missouri demographics that includes a decline in the number of 18-year-olds, he said.

Alden said his department takes seriously the responsibility to market the university.

"Athletics are not the most important thing happening on our campus," Alden said. "We're one little ol' subsidiary. We just happen to be a visible subsidiary."

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Two MU distance learning programs merge to create Mizzou Online

By [Raymond Howze](#)

August 25, 2011 | 8:52 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — On the 100th anniversary of distance education at MU this year, two distance learning programs are merging into one: Mizzou Online.

The first program, The Center for Distance and Independent Study, offered general studies classes set to the students' own timelines and one bachelor's degree program. The second, MU Direct: Continuing and Distance Education, offered semester courses, graduate degrees and four bachelor's degree programs. All of these will be offered through Mizzou Online.

Stacy Snow, Mizzou Online interim director of marketing, said the merge will bring efficiency to distance learning programs. "We wanted to make it easier (for students) to understand how to get distant education from the university."

More than 8,000 students are enrolled in either a full or hybrid version of an online course. Mizzou Online provides more than 500 courses and more than 75 degree options.

The students currently in online programs will see little change in their courses, Snow said. "The only difference is that the name is different."

Gera Burton and Kim Siegenthaler will serve as interim co-directors of Mizzou Online this year. Two groups, The MU Faculty Task Force and the MU Office of the Provost, along with the interim vice provost for eLearning, will work together on policy and operations for online education as the program is developed, Snow said.

"Before, there were two separate websites and two numbers," Snow said. She said the new program will "serve all distance students' needs under one umbrella."

Long distance education at MU began in 1911 with correspondence courses. That office grew into the Center for Distance and Independent Study, Snow said. The MU Direct: Continuing and Distance Education office brought its degree programs in the '90s.

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University Extension protecting core programs. (AUDIO)

by Bob Priddy on August 26, 2011

in [Agriculture](#), [Business](#), [Education](#), [Environment & Conservation](#)

The University of Missouri's 97-year old outreach program is trying to avoid significant cuts in services as its budget continues to erode. University Extension has taken a thirteen percent budget cut in the last two years, putting a strain on its programs. It has shifted some things to other parts of the University. It is saving \$800,000 by ending partnerships with nine rural Telecommunication Community Resource Centers.

Director Michael Quart says these things are being done to protect traditional areas—agriculture and natural resources programs, 4-H youth development, business development, community development, and human and environmental sciences. He says those are the programs people need and the ones they ask for.

He calls budget discussions in Washington “scary,” and hopes a 16 percent cut in federal funding proposed by the House doesn't make it through the Senate,. Quart says this is the first time in his career that all three sources of funding for extension programs have declined.



English professor to lead MU Honors College

University of Missouri English Professor Nancy West has been named director of MU's Honors College.

She replaces Stuart Palonsky, who retired as director of the Honors College after 20 years.

West has been at MU since 1995 and previously has served as associate chair of the Department of English. In 2004, she earned a William T. Kemper Award for Outstanding Teaching and has racked up other teaching honors.

Her vision for the Honors College is to provide MU students with a fuller experience that involves close interaction with faculty, independent research, service learning and civic participation, according to a news release from the university.

"One of the Honors College's most important responsibilities should be to forge more such connections for our students so that they'll have even more opportunities to put their talents to use," West said in the statement. "And we need to promote these accomplishments widely. I want people across campus, across Missouri and across the world to know the extraordinary things they're doing."

Before arriving at MU, West taught at the University of North Carolina. She has a bachelor's degree in English from Rutgers University and master's and doctoral degrees from the University of North Carolina.

MU English professor to lead Honors College

By Melissa Gilstrap

August 25, 2011 | 7:49 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — As its new director, Nancy West wants MU's Honors College to have a wider audience.

"One of my goals this year is to generate as much attention to the college as possible, to make it more visible on campus and in Columbia," said West, an English professor at the university.

She succeeds Stuart Palonsky as director of the Honors College, which was founded in 1959 and is one of the oldest in the nation.

"Dr. West has a distinguished record of scholarship, has been an excellent teacher and mentor to students and has been able to share new and interesting ideas about programs we should consider at the Honors College," said Jim Spain, vice provost for undergraduate studies.

West has been on the MU faculty since 1995 and has held several teaching and leadership positions.

West was awarded her doctorate in 1992 from the University of North Carolina. At MU, she became an associate professor in 2001 and was named a full professor this year.

West teaches 17 upper-level and lower-level English and visual media classes at MU, including "The Life, and Afterlife, of Sherlock Holmes," "Special Themes in Literature" and "Locating Literary England." Her classes are often cross-listed with the Honors College and the Campus Writing Program.

She was awarded the William T. Kemper Award for Outstanding Teaching in 2004 and two Gold Chalk Awards for Excellence in Graduate Teaching.

Outdoor classroom



August Kryger | Buy this photo

By August Kryger

Rose-Marie Muzika, center, points out a woody vine to her forest ecology class yesterday in the Gans Creek Wild Area. The University of Missouri began classes this week. Muzika, who chairs MU's forestry department, said giving students hands-on experience with trees and plants is much better than staying in a classroom. "Looking at a picture of a leaf in a book is not the same as actually seeing the real leaf," she said. Muzika said her ecology class will be going outside for labs all semester, regardless of the outside temperature. "We're ardent scientists," she said. "Some professors are out here in triple-degree heat teaching classes."

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