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COLUMBIA DAILY
TRIBUNE

MU ends uncertainty, will join SEC



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Southeastern Conference Commissioner Mike Slive, left, and University of Missouri Chancellor Brady Deaton embrace after the announcement Sunday at the MU Student Center that Missouri will join the Southeastern Conference. The move is expected to be effective July 1, with competition to begin in all sports for the 2012-13 academic year.

By Dave Matter

Flown in from Birmingham, Ala., and sporting a bright gold tie, Mike Slive forever changed the course of the University of Missouri with one sentence yesterday.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” he told an overflow crowd at the MU Student Center, “we are pleased and we are proud to welcome you to the family of the Southeastern Conference.”

By then, the worst-kept secret in college sports had already been revealed, but the presence of Slive and University of Florida President Bernie Machen in Columbia yesterday punctuated MU's historic move from the Big 12 to the SEC. Trailing behind Marching Mizzou as it blasted the school fight song, Slive, the SEC commissioner, and Machen, chairman of the SEC board of directors, joined MU campus leaders for a pep rally and news conference to announce Missouri as the SEC's 14th member. Both parties expect the move to be effective July 1.

On a day that settled months of uncertainty, MU Chancellor Brady Deaton touched on the school's frontier origins.

"We were that first university west of the Mississippi River, setting the pace for a nation as it developed," Deaton told a group of MU athletes, coaches, students and fans. "Now we are taking a step with one of the fastest-growing regions in the country in one of the most promising, illustrious athletic conferences in our country today, the Southeastern Conference."

Slive confirmed earlier reports that Missouri will be part of the SEC Eastern Division, joining Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee and Vanderbilt. Fellow Big 12 exile Texas A&M will join the Western Division, which also consists of Alabama, Auburn, Arkansas, Louisiana State, Mississippi and Mississippi State. Slive said an SEC transition team is working to determine which Western Division member MU will play annually as a permanent football rival. Arkansas and Texas A&M are the leading candidates.

As for Missouri's departure from the Big 12, Deaton said Missouri and the conference have not settled on an exit penalty — Big 12 bylaws require a percentage of league revenue be withheld for departing members — but he does not expect any legal hurdles to delay MU joining the SEC next year.

"While there's ongoing work to be done, we're confident we'll be able to successfully erase any concerns about those issues," he said.

Missouri's Big 12 secession has been unfolding for weeks. On Oct. 21 in Kansas City, the UM System Board of Curators granted Deaton authority to handle negotiations for the remainder of the process. By that point, Deaton had stepped down as the chairman of the Big 12 board of directors and stopped participating in significant conference policy decisions.

MU's marriage with the SEC severs a century-long association with original members of the Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Association, which formed in 1907 and became the Big Six, Big Eight and, in 1996, the Big 12. The Big 12 has been picked apart since summer 2010 as Nebraska (Big Ten), Colorado (Pac-12) and Texas A&M (SEC) preceded Missouri's departure.

In late September, as many as four Big 12 schools — including Oklahoma and Texas — were in discussions with the Pac-12 until the league decided against a second round of expansion. Disheartened by the Big 12's instability and revenue disparities, Missouri initiated contact with the SEC "very early during the football season," Slive said.

“We were looking for long-term stability as a university, who we were associated with, who we were going to develop long-term partnerships with, who we could have financial security in our planning,” Deaton said.

Machen said MU will be “a fully functioning member of the SEC” starting next year. Slive confirmed, saying MU will immediately take home the same share of league-generated revenue as current SEC members. Last year, SEC schools earned an \$18.3 million cut of league revenue. Missouri made \$10.4 million in Big 12-generated revenue last year, according to tax reports obtained by the Tulsa World.

“One of the great hallmarks of this league,” Slive said, “is that when you’re a member of the SEC, you are a member in every sense of the word.”

In a statement released shortly after MU announced its SEC plans, interim Big 12 Commissioner Chuck Neinas called the decision disappointing.

“Mizzou has been a valuable member, with a Conference connection to schools in the Big 12 that dates back to 1907,” Neinas’ statement read. “I personally believe this decision is a mistake and that Missouri is a better fit in the Big 12. Once we have received a formal notice of withdrawal from Missouri, we will furnish it to our Board of Directors. The Board will review the situation and take appropriate action.”

Among the unresolved issues is Missouri’s 119-year-old rivalry with Kansas. KU officials and coaches have indicated they’re not interested in playing Missouri in nonconference games, a sentiment MU Athletic Director Mike Alden said he hopes will change.

“To suggest that to have conference affiliation be a requirement why one would have to participate against another institution, I don’t know if that necessarily holds water,” Alden said.

Deaton’s opening remarks struck a similar tone, a desire to bridge Missouri’s past with its future.

“We’re not abandoning our past at all,” Deaton said. “In fact, we’re expanding upon it. And we’re fulfilling that historical frontier tradition that has marked the University of Missouri from its very beginning. And we’re building a new future, one that we can be very proud of.”

Reach Dave Matter at 573-815-1781 or e-mail dmatter@columbiatribune.com.

Missouri is eager for equality

Texas-centric Big 12 was a turnoff for MU.



[Parker Eshelman](#) | [Buy this photo](#)

SEC Commissioner Mike Slive, Florida President Bernie Machen, MU Chancellor Brady Deaton and MU Athletic Director Mike Alden pose after Sunday's announcement.

By [David Briggs](#)

If Don Walsworth, a former University of Missouri curator and a major donor to the MU athletic department, needed confirmation which school called the shots in the Big 12, he got it during a home basketball game against Texas two years ago.

Walsworth and his guest, Longhorns Athletic Director DeLoss Dodds, were watching the game courtside when the conversation turned to the economic chasm between UT and Missouri. The message was clear. With mounds of money — Texas' \$144 million in revenue that year was nearly triple what MU earned — came power.

"Don't get in a pissing contest with Texas because you're not going to win," Walsworth recalled Dodds saying.

Walsworth respects Dodds and said the boast was made with tongue in cheek.

"But when a guy jokingly says something," Walsworth said, "he's going to kind of mean it."

That imbalance is among the many reasons Missouri officially abandoned the Big 12 for the Southeastern Conference yesterday.

School officials have yet to discuss in detail what led them from their vows of Big 12 solidarity two months earlier to a decision Chancellor Brady Deaton jubilantly labeled yesterday as "historic." Deaton and Athletic Director Mike Alden were not made available to reporters after the pomp-filled public ceremony at the MU Student Center.

But by all accounts, Missouri sought fairer treatment and stability, with the turning point coming in early September when Oklahoma President David Boren said that OU was actively looking at other conferences.

"That just reinforces that image of being unstable," Alden said before the Tigers' home opener football game. "So how do you recover from that?"

For Missouri, which was not blameless for the instability after its one-way flirtation with the Big Ten in 2010, the final threads of trust were broken. When the Big 12 was saved — again — after the Pac-12 rejected Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas and Texas Tech over concerns about the Longhorn Network, Missouri was the only conference school that did not agree to a six-year grant of its television rights.

MU leaders viewed the short-term commitment as another sign of the Big 12's dysfunction.

"When people start talking about limits of how long they're going to be together, kind of like a pre-nup, that's not necessarily something that we'd see as being strong when you're looking at a league," Alden said yesterday.

Deaton, who had previously worked to preserve the Big 12, said he shifted his position after listening to feedback from university leaders, alums and boosters. Missouri's secession plans became apparent Oct. 4 when he resigned his position as the chairman of the Big 12 board of directors.

“The continuing message that came through was as we looked at continuing instability in the conference that we were in was to take steps to give us a sense of where we are going in the future, to look at alternatives,” Deaton said.

Missouri, however, may have initiated talks with the SEC before Deaton resigned his post. Slive said MU contacted the SEC “very, very early” in the football season.

In the SEC, a more lucrative union where television revenue is shared equally and no single school in a conference stacked with powers is kingfish, Alden said Missouri saw a better life. Even as the Big 12 made concessions the school once coveted — equal revenue sharing, no high school games on the Longhorn Network — MU moved forward.

“It just had to do with, ‘Are you treated equally?’ Is everybody going to be at the table? Who are those teammates, what’s your footprint like nationally and how long are you all going to be together?” Alden said. “That comfort we saw and we have seen in the SEC has been something that’s been outstanding.”

Slive followed with a light jab at the Big 12, which has lost four members in the last 18 months.

“Mizzou is only the fourth institution in the 78-year history of the SEC to be admitted to the conference. There’s a lot of stability,” he said. “In our bylaws, there’s about a half a sentence about what it takes to leave. If you don’t want to be with us, you don’t have to be with us. And nobody’s left.”

Asked about the grant of rights Boren described as “very strong handcuffs,” Slive grinned.

“I’m not sure that I know what a grant of right means, to be honest with you,” he said. “I really don’t. I try to follow the media reports. I don’t know what that means.”

Reach David Briggs at dbriggs@columbiatribune.com.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Mizzou students welcome SEC move

BY JASON HANCOCK | jhancock@post-dispatch.com > 573-635-6178 | Posted: Tuesday, November 8, 2011 12:10 am

COLUMBIA, Mo. • A rainy, windy and overall gloomy day greeted University of Missouri students as they returned to class Monday morning. But just one day after their school made the long-anticipated announcement that it was leaving the Big 12 for the Southeastern Conference, even gray skies weren't enough to dampen the enthusiasm.

"This is just awesome," said sophomore Erin Graff as she watched a replay of the school's announcement on a giant TV in the Student Union. "The Big 12 might not even be around in a couple years, so this was just a great move."

Freshman Morris Grant shared Graff's enthusiasm, although his was tempered with the realization that it might be a while before his Tigers see the football success they have had in the Big 12.

"The SEC is going to be tough. For a few years, we're probably going to lose a lot," he said. "But soon, if we can get the right recruits, I think we'll be able to hang with them."

The prospect of a few losing seasons is worth it for the chance to play in the country's premier college athletic conference, said freshman Jamaal Camper.

"The school is going to get more publicity, more TV exposure, more money and better recruits," Camper said. "Especially more money."

Moving to the SEC could mean \$2 million more in revenue each year for Missouri, even more if the conference renegotiates its TV contract, according to The Associated Press.

Missouri's decision to join the SEC is anything but a surprise. The school has been flirting with the conference for months, since Texas A&M became the first Big 12 team to bail on the conference for the SEC earlier this year. And two weeks ago, the SEC inadvertently posted for a short time on its website that MU had already been admitted.

The only downside, said sophomore Brandon Spruill, is the possibility that the Nov. 26 football showdown with the Kansas Jayhawks in Arrowhead Stadium could be the last time the two rivals meet on the field.

Student after student mentioned the Kansas rivalry and bristled at the idea that it could go away now that the two schools no longer share an athletic conference. The first Missouri-Kansas football showdown took place in 1891.

"I hope we can keep it going," Spruill said.

While Missouri officials have said they hope something can be worked out, so far the feeling doesn't appear to be mutual.

"I don't see us playing them in the future," Kansas football coach Turner Gill said Monday. "I think the rivalry for Kansas and Missouri would be something that belongs in the Big 12 Conference."

The university's official Twitter account was a little less diplomatic, proclaiming shortly after Missouri announced it was leaving the Big 12: "Missouri forfeits a century-old rivalry. We win."

An editorial in the University Daily Kansan student newspaper castigated Missouri for betraying the rivalry and added, "Students ought to feel insulted by Missouri's move."

And Kansas City Star blogger Yael T. Abouhalkah declared: "MIZ + SEC = LOSER."

But at Mizzou, the focus was on the future, not the past.

"Hey, I don't really care all that much if we ever play them again," said Grant, the Missouri freshman. "It's not all on us. Everybody wanted out of the Big 12."

Spruill said it's unlikely he'll be regularly making the much longer road trips to catch the Tigers play their new conference foes in cities such as Lexington, Ky., Gainesville, Fla., and Columbia, S.C. But he's ready to show off mid-Missouri to a new crop of rivals.

"I'm looking forward to the home games for sure," he said.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

MU is in for a big change with move to SEC

BY VAHE GREGORIAN • vgregorian@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8199 | Posted: Tuesday, November 8, 2011 12:25 am

COLUMBIA, Mo. • When Mizzou makes its move from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference, it will swap such familiar traditions of conference rivalry as the "Rock Chalk Jayhawk" chant of Kansas for the "Rocky Top" of Tennessee, Texas' Bevo for Georgia's Uga and Baylor's Bear claw signal for Florida's Gator chomp.

But other tradeoffs, such as Oklahoma's Boomer Sooner for Auburn's Toomer's Corner, won't be as apparent under the SEC's projected schedule scheme.

And don't necessarily expect nearby Arkansas to suddenly be a frequent MU opponent after a nearly 50-year gap in their regular-season football meetings, either.

A day after MU's announced move to the conference, SEC associate commissioner Charles Bloom posted on his Twitter account Monday that the league will continue to play eight league football games even as it adds Texas A&M and Mizzou and goes to two seven-team divisions.

"There has been no discussion on (a) nine-game schedule," he added.

The model calls for annual games against all teams within the division, one against a designated annual rival from the opposite division and just one game a year against one of the other six schools in the opposite division.

MU is bound for the SEC Eastern division with Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee and Vanderbilt.

Its rival, MU associate athletics director Mark Alnutt said Monday, is "more than likely to be Texas A&M."

So unless and until the SEC adds more schools and MU perhaps is placed in the Western division, that means the Tigers would play Alabama, Arkansas, Auburn, Louisiana State, Mississippi and Mississippi State just once every six years.

And based on an alternating home-and-home format, each of those schools thus would appear in Columbia but once every 12 seasons.

Ultimately, then, MU fans will become much more familiar with the SEC East than the West.

Mizzou might play a few times in the league's other Columbia — South Carolina — before it visits both its other Tigers, LSU and Auburn.

It's uncertain when the SEC will determine all cross-over rivals and release a schedule. Attempts to get an estimated timetable from the SEC were unsuccessful Monday.

The SEC will "create this matrix; I'm pretty sure, knowing them, they already have something in mind," said Alnutt, who works on scheduling with athletics director Mike Alden and MU football coach Gary Pinkel.

At this point, with Mizzou bound for the SEC in 2012 as long as all details of disentanglement from the Big 12 go as anticipated, next year's known MU schedule is Southern Illinois-Carbondale of the FCS on Sept. 8, Arizona State on Sept. 15 and then at Miami (Ohio) on Sept. 22.

The first weekend of the season remains open, and with MU needing a fourth nonconference game Alnutt wondered about a few enticing possibilities.

For one thing, he noted Missouri and Kansas have another year remaining on their contract with the Kansas City Chiefs to play at Arrowhead Stadium, and he reiterated Mizzou's stated stance of hoping to extend into nonconference life in the series with Kansas that began in 1891.

In protest of MU's departure, Kansas thus far has indicated it's not interested, with football coach Turner Gill saying Monday, "I don't see us playing them in the future."

Regardless of how or when MU-KU plays out, perhaps an SEC inauguration game in Columbia would be a good fit in that spot.

"Which I think would be phenomenal," Alnutt said, laughing and adding, "That's just my personal opinion. Don't tell Coach Pinkel Florida is coming for the opener."

Pinkel probably wouldn't have responded, anyway.

During both the Big 12 media teleconference and his weekly news conference in Columbia on Monday, Pinkel essentially declined to comment on the SEC with Texas coming to town on Saturday.

"Our administration has made a decision based on what's best for the future of the University of Missouri and the state of Missouri," he said. "I fully support it. It was certainly based on a long-term decision and, as it sorts itself out, we expect it to be a tremendous plus for this university and the state.

"I'm excited about that, but more excited about the opportunity to play Texas."

Pinkel instructed his coaches and players not to address the matter, and he even sniffed out and doused efforts to steer him back that way in the context of how the move will affect future

recruiting in Texas and the future of the Kansas rivalry. He'll be happy to discuss it, he said, after
the season.



Kan. gov. disappointed in Missouri's move to SEC

The Associated Press Tuesday, Nov. 08, 2011

TOPEKA, Kan. -- Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback says he's sorry to see the University of Missouri leave the Big 12, but he's confident the conference will become the nation's strongest.

Brownback told reporters Monday he thinks Missouri's decision to bolt for the Southeastern Conference is bad for the Kansas City area, where the Big 12 has played its annual post-season basketball tournament and staged Kansas-Missouri football games.

Brownback said he expressed that opinion to Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon and the head of Missouri's Board of Curators.

But he's still bullish about the Big 12's future. The conference lost Colorado and Nebraska last year and will lose Missouri and Texas A&M this year, but is adding TCU and has extended an invitation to West Virginia.

Missouri hopes to continue Border War



Tribune file photo | [Buy this photo](#)

Missouri fans T.J. and Michelle Turley of Rolla cheer in the final seconds of MU's 36-28 victory over Kansas in the 2007 football game in Kansas City. That game is considered by many to be the greatest moment in Missouri football history and vaulted the Tigers to No. 1 in the nation.

By [Steve Walentik](#)

They remain some of the seminal moments in Missouri sports history.

Video

[Missouri announces move to Southeastern Conference](#)

In 1987, Lee Coward hit a last-second jumper to clinch the Big Eight Tournament title at Kemper Arena in Kansas City.

In 1997, Corey Tate made his own shot in the waning seconds of the Tigers' double-overtime upset of nation's top-ranked team at the Hearnest Center.

In 2007, Lorenzo Williams sacked Todd Reesing in the end zone — leaving the quarterback with a lump of Arrowhead Stadium sod in his helmet — to cap a victory that vaulted MU to the top of the national polls.

Each was made more memorable because it occurred in the context of Missouri's Border War rivalry with Kansas. It's a series that goes back more than a century and has produced countless other moments that MU fans still cherish.

Yesterday's announcement that the Tigers are joining the Southeastern Conference in 2012 has put the future of the rivalry in doubt. There has been talk that the Jayhawks, who remain in the Big 12 Conference, won't continue to schedule their eastern neighbors.

KU basketball Coach Bill Self said today he hasn't decided whether he would want to play Missouri again.

"We have absolutely no obligation whatsoever to play Missouri in basketball. None," Self told the Lawrence Journal-World. "If we do so, it will only be done because it's best for Kansas, not done because anybody else wants us to. We couldn't care less what Missouri wants. If, in fact, they want to play us, it will be strictly determined if we want to. It will not be determined by other people, because I'll be honest, the majority of Kansas fans don't give a flip about playing Missouri."

KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little also sounded uninterested in continuing the rivalry. She said in a statement: "We're sorry to see a century-old conference rivalry end. Missouri's decision may have implications for fans and for the Kansas City area, but it won't affect the long-term strength of the Big 12."

Kansas' initial reaction was a little more raw.

"Missouri forfeits a century-old rivalry. We win," read a message on the school's Twitter feed, @KUNews.

Kansas football Coach Turner Gill weighed in on the topic today on the Big 12 football teleconference.

"I don't see us playing them in the future," Gill said. "The rivalry between KU and MU is something that belongs in the Big 12."

Depending on which side you take, Missouri leads the all-time football series 56-54-9 or it is tied 55-55-9. Missouri considers the 23-7 loss to Kansas in 1960 a forfeit victory because KU used an ineligible player. Kansas leads the basketball series 171-94.

As they gathered for the SEC announcement and press conference yesterday at the MU Student Center, Missouri officials weren't ready to sign the rivalry's death certificate just yet.

"Everyone in here recognizes that our rivalry with the University of Kansas is one of the great rivalries in our country," Athletic Director Mike Alden said. "It's gone on for, I believe, 119 years, and it's certainly our hope and our desire to continue to participate against the University of Kansas in every sport that we play — and for the next 119 years."

He took issue with the idea that shared conference affiliation should be a prerequisite to continue a series and pointed to other long-standing nonconference rivalries, such as Florida vs. Florida State, Georgia vs. Georgia Tech, Kentucky vs. Louisville and Clemson vs. South Carolina.

Reach Steve Walentik at 573-815-1788 or e-mail swalentik@columbiatribune.com.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Kansas coaches 'don't see' playing Missouri after SEC move

By [Harry Plumer](#)

November 7, 2011 | 8:24 p.m. CST



MU Chancellor Brady Deaton, left, University of Florida President Bernie Machen, Missouri Athletics Director Mike Alden and SEC Commissioner Mike Slive stand together at the MU Student Center on Sunday after Missouri announced that it will join the SEC effective July 1, 2012. | [Nick Michael](#)

COLUMBIA — University of Kansas coaches didn't say much about Missouri's move to the SEC, but the message is clear.

Kansas doesn't want any part of a new "long-distance relationship" with Missouri.

"Well, I would just make one little statement just saying that I don't see us playing them in the future," Kansas football coach Turner Gill said. "I think the rivalry for Kansas and Missouri would be something that belongs in the Big 12 Conference."

Jayhawks basketball coach Bill Self didn't mince words in an interview with the Lawrence Journal-World, either.

"We have absolutely no obligation whatsoever to play Missouri in basketball. None," Self told the paper's Gary Bedore. "We couldn't care less what Missouri wants. If in fact they want to

play us, it will be strictly determined if we want to. It will not be determined by other people, because I'll be honest, the majority of Kansas fans don't give a flip about playing Missouri."

Missouri officials have repeatedly expressed a desire to keep Kansas on the schedule for all sports. At its Oct. 21 meeting, the UM System Board of Curators issued a directive to MU Chancellor Brady Deaton to explore the possibility of a neutral site football game in Kansas City against a "traditional rival."

During Sunday's SEC welcome news conference, Missouri Athletics Director Mike Alden cited rivalries like Florida-Florida State, Iowa-Iowa State, Clemson-South Carolina and Georgia-Georgia Tech that exist between teams in different conferences.

"We have a tremendous respect for the University of Kansas. It is our hope and our intention that we have an opportunity to play against the University of Kansas for many years to come," Alden said Sunday. "I think that to suggest that conference affiliation be a requirement ... I don't know that necessarily holds water."

While Kansas bristled at the announcement, Kansas State football coach Bill Snyder had a different tone.

"Disturbed I guess might be somewhat of a good word," Snyder said. "Not necessarily, I mean, each school has to do what's in its very best interest, but I'm certainly disappointed that they will not be with us."

Texas football coach Mack Brown, whose Longhorns come to Columbia to face Missouri on Saturday, expressed a sense of understanding.

"I felt like that each school should do what's best for them. I mean, that's their right, and the rules are in place that you can choose the conference you wanted," Brown said. "At Texas, we do what's best for us, and I think it's great for Missouri to get their wish and move forward."

The rest of the Big 12 coaches wished Missouri the best, and it seemed during Monday's Big 12 football teleconference as if most were happy to have the issue finally dealt with so they could move on.

"Best of luck," Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said. Referencing conference newcomers West Virginia and Texas Christian University, he added: "We've got two good teams right now, and maybe more that are on their way in, so we'll keep playing ball here, too."

Missouri budget officials not worried about cost of SEC move

By Stephanie Ebbs

November 7, 2011 | 8:39 p.m. CST

JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri's decision to join the Southeastern Conference has piqued the interest of one of the state's top budget leaders, who's trying to find out who will cover the cost of the move.

"I've sent some questions to the university folks and have been looking into whether or not alumni could be made to cover the costs," said House Budget Committee Chairman Ryan Silvey, R-Kansas City.

Silvey said he would be disappointed if the financial burden of the switch falls on students or taxpayers. He asked the university about the specific penalty cost and how the university plans to pay for it.

"I have not yet heard back with a definitive answer," Silvey said, adding that he was in contact with a liaison Monday afternoon and expects an answer Tuesday.

Citing a confidential source, the Associated Press reported that the university could be on the hook for paying \$26 million to the Big 12 as a penalty for leaving the conference. Nebraska and Colorado paid a combined \$16 million when they left the conference.

MU officials said the athletic budget would need a boost to compare with other SEC schools and that they might lean on fans to upgrade athletic facilities and scholarships.

Other legislative budget leaders expressed little concern about impact of the cost on the state budget.

"We don't know how much it will be, but we know where it will be paid from," Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, said. "And we know, more importantly from the point of view of the taxpayer, where it won't be paid from. It won't be paid from tuition, nor will it be paid from state dollars."

Negotiations are still under way on the specifics of the move, but SEC Commissioner Mike Slive said MU would be an equal financial partner in the conference beginning July 1, 2012.

"Revenues to the university, with their agreement with the SEC, would be so substantially higher, that alone would be enough to cover it," said Senate Budget Committee chairman Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia.

Schaefer added that the possibility of raising tuition to make up for the costs was "not in the realm of reality." Schaefer said he believes the Big 12 conference is holding a substantial amount of the university's money, potentially enough to cover the exit payment.

Gov. Jay Nixon refused to comment beyond a statement he released Sunday about the conference change.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Editorial: Mizzou doubles-down and joins the SEC

By the Editorial Board | Posted: Tuesday, November 8, 2011 12:00 am | [1 Comment](#)



R.J. Matson/Post-Dispatch

Back in the not-so-distant past when the University of Missouri's football team was truly dreadful, the story was told of a man who bumped into an old acquaintance, a passionate football fan, whom he hadn't seen for years. Where have you been, the first man asked.

"Oh, I had a heart attack. My doctor told me to stay as far away from big-time college football as possible. So I moved to Columbia, Mo."

Not any more. On Sunday, the worst-kept secret in the state became official when University of Missouri-Columbia Chancellor Brady Deaton and Southeastern Conference Commissioner Mike Slive embraced at a news conference-cum-gala in Columbia: Mizzou, a charter member of the Big 12 and its predecessor athletic conferences, next year will join the powerhouse SEC as its 14th member.

We're glad this long-running soap opera is over, but probably not as glad as Mr. Deaton. An agricultural economist by training, much of his time since becoming chancellor in 2004 has been absorbed by various athletic department dramas.

But once you decide to go big on sports, as Mizzou did in the last decade, you have to do whatever it takes to stay big. In that regard, Mr. Deaton and the Board of Curators made the only decision they could.

But in doing so, they've gotten on a merry-go-round that's hard to get off. Last spring, a majority of the presidents of universities with big-time football programs admitted that they don't feel like they can control their athletic departments.

"Presidents would like serious change, but don't see themselves as the force for the changes needed, nor have they identified an alternative force they believe could be effective," concluded a report from the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics.

In abandoning the financially shaky Big 12 — the University of Texas won't share its loot — Mizzou joins the far more stable SEC, with its rich TV football contracts.

Being in the SEC will earn Mizzou more money, but to compete in the SEC will cost more money, too, for things like training facilities, recruiting better athletes and bigger salaries for coaches.

If that's how the university's boosters and alumni choose to spend their money, that's their business. But given the federal budget deficit, Congress might want to review the tax deductibility of donations to athletic booster clubs.

Also: At least eight of Mizzou's new friends in the SEC subsidize their athletic departments from student activity fees — \$5.2 million a year in the case of Auburn University. Missouri doesn't do that now; we trust that won't change.

None of this has much to do with educating Missouri's future workforce, except as successful sports teams sometimes translate to more giving to the rest of the university. With important matters now settled, perhaps the curators will finish hiring a new president for the university system.

A generation from now, most Mizzou fans won't remember when the Tigers were not members of the SEC. The Tigers' days in the Big 12 will seem Precambrian, like leather helmets and Pitchin' Paul Christman or the days of the Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

By then Mizzou will have embraced the southern football culture in all of its glorious excess. Maybe the Tigers will play Kansas, their old rivals, in a non-conference game each year. Maybe they won't. One thing we've learned: If the money's right, Mizzou is in.



MU gets its wish and now must adjust

By Joe Walljasper

Missouri wanted a stable home in a nice neighborhood, a place where it could watch the fickle twists of conference realignment from a safe distance. It found one in the Southeastern Conference, where the idea of a school leaving is so preposterous that the league's bylaws barely touch on the subject.

Missouri wanted to belong to a conference that doesn't let one university call the shots, a conference with strong leadership, a conference with more TV money. In short, Missouri wanted all the things the Big 12 didn't offer. It wanted those things badly enough to walk away from conference rivals it had been associated with for more than 100 years.

What the SEC saw in Missouri was, let's be honest, the television sets of St. Louis and Kansas City. It helped MU's cause that it is a member of the academically prestigious Association of American Universities and has a good recent history in football, but this was mostly about adding a school that increases value to TV contracts.

So it's a marriage of convenience. For it to work out, MU and Missourians are going to have to make some adjustments to fit in.

For example, you're going to have to pretend to care about spring football. I know, I know, I'm not happy about it either. You will be expected to attend the spring game. Yes, even if it's raining.

And if that weren't enough of a sacrifice, during actual games you will not be allowed to leave and return to the stadium. The halftime sneak to the parking lot for liquid reinforcement, as much a Faurot Field tradition as swaying to the "Missouri Waltz," will end, per SEC rules. Had this been more publicized the last few months, perhaps the inboxes of the University of Missouri curators would have been filled with pleas to stay in the Big 12.

The biggest adjustment, of course, will be required of the Missouri athletic department.

To be clear, this notion that the MU football program will become another Vanderbilt is so much nonsense. I know SEC fans are a proud lot and Big 12 fans are upset with Missouri for leaving, but a bit of perspective please. MU won 40 games the previous four years while playing in the second-best league in the nation. Even in this, the worst season of Missouri football since 2004, the Tigers are roughly equal to or better than Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, Mississippi State,

Tennessee, Texas A&M and Vandy. This year, they are a middle-of-the-pack program in the Big 12 or SEC.

Are they going to win SEC football titles? No, but they have never won the Big 12 and last won the Big Eight in 1969. If winning conference titles were the measure of success at MU, every season would be a failure.

There has been much debate about whether Missouri's recruiting in the state of Texas will wane. It probably will suffer a little bit, as much because TCU — a school MU competes with for overlooked Texas recruits — is now in the Big 12 as because Missouri is in the SEC. But I think the bigger recruiting concern for Coach Gary Pinkel is that celebrity coaches Nick Saban and Les Miles might show up on his doorstep and start cherry-picking the few elite players Missouri produces each year. That's what Pinkel and his successors cannot afford to let happen.

Generally speaking, men's basketball in the SEC is a tick below the Big 12. Kentucky and Kansas are equals, and Florida has done more on the national stage under Billy Donovan than Texas has under Rick Barnes, but up and down the lineup, the Big 12 is usually better.

As for the other 18 sports Missouri offers? MU funds football and men's basketball competitively but gets by on the cheap with the nonrevenue sports. It's no accident that Missouri is last by a mile in Big 12 championships won — it is last in coaching salaries and recruiting budgets in most of those sports. That was in a league in which MU's budget was in the middle. In the SEC, Missouri's budget ranks 11th out of 14.

So Athletic Director Mike Alden will have to decide if he's serious about playing to win in nonrevenue sports vs. throwing his new money at football to give the facilities a bigger wow factor. Even before Missouri contemplated the SEC, plans were in the works for adding club seats and suites above the stands on the east side of Memorial Stadium, so expect to see changes on the horizon — literally.

A lot of the issues that purists find distasteful in college athletics are carried out to the highest degree in the SEC. The facility arms race was serious enough in the Big 12, but it goes to another level in the SEC. If football recruiters have sharp elbows in the Big 12, they are sharper still in the SEC, whose reputation for dirty recruiting — and for coaches accusing their conference rivals of dirty recruiting — is legendary.

Fans can spill a wee bit out of bounds, as well, as we saw last year when an Alabama booster poisoned a beloved tree at Auburn's Toomer's Corner. Missourians know a little bit about hating a rival — there was that regrettable incident in which Lawrence was burned to the ground — but that was over an actual war, not a football game.

In the SEC, the distinction between the two is a little blurry. Welcome to the neighborhood. Stability isn't free.

Reach Joe Walljasper at 573-815-1783 or e-mail jwalljasper@columbiatribune.com.

THE MANEATER

THE STUDENT VOICE OF MU SINCE 1955

SEC's financial upside spurs Missouri's big move

Missouri could reportedly earn \$12 million more per year from the SEC's revenue sharing.

By Pat Iversen Published Nov. 8, 2011

MU made a momentous move when it announced its intention to join the Southeastern Conference on Sunday. But Missouri's leaders understand that competing athletically in such a large conference depends on the size and strength of your athletics department.

And in that respect, MU has a ways to go before it can compare with its new SEC brothers.

"We have to keep that pace going and we have to keep moving forward," MU Athletics Director Mike Alden said. "I would tell you that stepping into the SEC, it's important that we recognize how important that is, and that we may need to continue to turn that up even another notch."

According to comments made by Alden in June, it appears the school has begun to make those steps. Missouri's budget was \$53.2 million in 2009-10, but Alden has indicated the current budget is closer to \$65 million. That budget would still rank 11th in the SEC with Texas A&M's admission to the conference, but the school still hopes the gains it makes in revenue will change that down the road.

Missouri was enticed to join the SEC mainly due to the conference's more stable revenue sharing plan, which will offer MU a larger payday than the Big 12 could offer.

According to a report from The Associated Press, Missouri could potentially earn \$19.25 million in 2012 from SEC TV contracts, a nearly \$3 million difference from the Big 12's expected output. From 2007 to 2009, Missouri reportedly received \$22.6 million from the Big 12.

The report also stated Missouri expects a larger "per member share potential" (nearly \$12 million more annually) due to the SEC's expanded TV footprint in Texas and the Midwest.

"We're very fortunate we've been able to develop revenue from various sources," SEC commissioner Mike Slive said. "We are stable and we have long term contracts that, I think, really show the long term financial stability of our athletic programs."

Missouri must deal with the financial requirements for leaving the Big 12 before it can focus on the gains it stands to make from the move. When Nebraska and Colorado exited the Big 12 in

2010, the league initially sought \$19.4 million and \$15 million respectively from their final years of conference income according to its bylaws.

According to the report, the school faces a harsher exit fee since it intends to leave in time for the 2012 football season. The fee itself could total \$25.9 million, and would also demand Missouri to turn over the remainder of its 2011 TV revenue and all of its projected 2012 TV money to the Big 12.

The report said the school could've reduced the penalty to \$10.4 million if it had given at least two years notice ahead of its departure. Similarly, the conference reduced the penalties for Nebraska to \$9.25 million and Colorado to \$6.86 million of its income last year.

On Sunday, MU chancellor Brady Deaton denied the university knew exactly how much bolting for the SEC would cost but insisted Missouri would foot any bill.

"We understand the bylaws of the conference and the expectations regarding some range of exit fees," Deaton said. "Let me simply say that the University of Missouri will bear those responsibilities. They are not the Southeastern Conference's responsibilities."

Slive cited the SEC's revenue distribution, which is based on the number of television appearances made by individual institutions, as a reason why the conference appears so stable for incoming schools like Missouri.

"One of the great hallmarks of this league is that when you're a member of the SEC, you are a member in every sense of the word," Slive said. "We share in just everything that we do in an equal way."

Retailers order SEC merchandise after Missouri announces move

By Emilie Stigliani

November 7, 2011 | 5:10 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — The miniature helmets that feature Big 12 teams are gone and so are the T-shirts.

"If we had them, they would go on clearance," said Brent Willenburg, a manager at MC Sports.

Willenburg said the store purposely stopped ordering Big 12 items in anticipation of the Nov. 6th announcement that Missouri would join the Southeastern Conference on July 1, 2012.

Retailers of Missouri and SEC merchandise must now consider if and when to change their product lines.

Although MC Sports has few Big 12 items left, Willenburg said he anticipates the store will get customers looking for old conference memorabilia.

But fans in search of new SEC memorabilia won't have much luck either. MC Sports has not yet received any orders for SEC products.

"It's in the works with our buyer," Willenburg said.

He said the store might expand its assortment of merchandise to include Missouri's new opponents — such as Alabama and Florida — to appeal to traveling fans.

The morning after the announcement, Derek Garrett, manager of Jock's Nitch Locker Room in Columbia, ordered 144 SEC T-shirts. He said the order would allow the store to feel out the market.

Garrett said the store had placed another order for SEC T-shirts in advance of the announcement, but the printers were still finalizing plans on their end. He hopes to get one of the shipments in this week.

Overall, Garrett said, "It's not gonna change what stuff we get in here."

Michelle Dillard, owner of Tiger Spirit, said one person stopped by Monday looking for SEC merchandise, but she hasn't determined whether to carry SEC T-shirts. Previously, the store only carried two items with Big 12 logos on them. She said the store will probably start by offering one style of SEC T-shirt and wait to see what other vendors offer. She anticipates the store will carry a broader selection after MU joins the new conference.

The SEC move will also have an impact on international companies. Fanatics, an online retailer of life and sports merchandise, will also be making some changes to its product line and website.

Brian Swallow, Fanatics' vice president of sales and marketing, said from a retail perspective, the change creates a new market. He said the excitement of Missouri fans will translate to more sales.

"We have some housekeeping to do on the SEC site," Swallow said. Starting in July, the company will include Missouri on the SEC store's website. Also, they will have to buy or produce cross-licensed SEC/Mizzou branded products. The company hopes to offer new Missouri products on the Fanatics website sometime next month.

Swallow predicts that there will be a "fantastic" market for selling new SEC products to Missouri fans because of their excitement to join the storied conference.

"I think Missouri fans will gobble that up," Swallow said.



MU sells RADIL for \$43 million

By Janese Silvey

A Maine-based company has announced its purchase of the Research Animal Diagnostic Laboratory from the University of Missouri.

IDEXX Laboratories Inc. is paying \$43 million for the business, which will remain in Columbia, said Neil Olson, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, who orchestrated the sale.

Founded on campus in 1968, RADIL serves companies that use animals in biomedical research by providing biological and genetic testing services.

The deal is finalized and takes effect at midnight. At that time, all 43 staff members there and six of the eight faculty members will become IDEXX employees, Olson said. The other two faculty members will remain on campus in their teaching and research roles.

The RADIL lab occupies about a third of a facility at 4011 Discovery Drive. IDEXX will rent only that portion of the building, with the rest remaining part of the College of Veterinary Medicine. Olson envisions MU researchers partnering with the company in a variety of ways.

The announcement ends months of speculation about the future of RADIL, which generated roughly \$11 million to \$12 million a year for operations and profits that were split between the college and university.

It's unclear yet how the \$43 million will be split, Olson said, but he said a portion will be used to set up an endowment that will forever generate profits from interest.

The university retained a Chicago-based brokerage firm a year ago to help facilitate the sale. Livingstone Partners will receive a commission fee that equates to about \$900,000, Olson said.

In the past, talk of the sale of RADIL was met with support by staff and faculty there. Lela Riley, former director of RADIL, said last year that a sale would be a "win-win."

IDEXX serves veterinarians around the world. That global platform should spark expansion at RADIL that the university would not have had the resources or facilities to accommodate, Olson said.

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com.

MU's Research Animal Diagnostic Laboratory bought by IDEXX in \$43 million deal

By Alex Baumhardt

November 7, 2011 | 6:50 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — In a \$43 million deal, IDEXX Laboratories Inc., a veterinary diagnostic testing corporation, bought the MU Research Animal Diagnostic Laboratory.

The laboratory, located at 4011 Discovery Drive, trains residents and graduate students in the MU Comparative Medicine Training Program.

Eight MU faculty members lead the lab, where students train for careers in laboratory animal medicine and research, according to the lab's website.

The purchase of the lab was a "natural extension" of IDEXX's business strategy, according to a news release from the Maine-based company.

RADIL is a profit-generating business for the College of Veterinary Medicine. News releases from IDEXX and MU didn't say how the \$43 million will be split between the university and its College of Veterinary Medicine.

THE MANEATER

THE STUDENT VOICE OF MU SINCE 1935

IDEXX's purchase of MU lab brings \$43 million to university

The building used to be a part of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

By Ian Frazer Published Nov. 8, 2011

Officials with IDEXX Laboratories announced Monday that they have purchased MU's Research and Diagnostic Laboratory for \$43 million.

The Westbrook, Maine-based company, which is publicly traded on NASDAQ, provides veterinarians in multiple countries with diagnostic and information technology-based products and services.

MU's RADIL, which was formally a business of the College of Veterinary Medicine, performs functions such as pathology, microbiology and molecular diagnostics.

Employees working with RADIL will continue as employees of IDEXX.

"The acquisition of RADIL represents a natural extension of our business strategy and aligns well with our overall corporate purpose — to create long-term value for our shareholders while enhancing the health and well-being of pets, people and livestock," IDEXX CEO and Chairman Jonathan Ayers said in a news release.

Officials from the university said the purchase will return some much-needed funds to the university.

"I think the long-term significance (of the acquisition) is that it brings resources to the college that are very much needed in these times of limited state support," College of Veterinary Medicine Dean Neil Olson said.

Olson said the resources contributed by IDEXX would be used for such purposes as being placed in an endowment to provide permanent funding for the department and allow them to deal with issues related to the purchase and replacement of high technology equipment.

"(The resources) will allow us to deal with some issues that we haven't been able to deal with over the past decade because of state funding cuts," Olson said.

Olson said the RADIL will continue to function normally when IDEXX opens operations today.

CVM faculty member Joe Wagner founded the laboratory in 1968 and, according to a statement by Olson on CVM's website, it "has grown to become one of the two largest entities providing research diagnostic services over the past four decades."

"IDEXX is an excellent match for collaborate programs at MU and the College of Veterinary Medicine," he said in the statement. "I look forward to working with them in the future."

IDEXX expects the acquisition to add approximately \$12 million to its total revenues but not have a material impact on its 2011 financial results.



First lady turns down Missouri food science invite

6:43 AM, Nov. 8, 2011 |

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — A University of Missouri social media campaign to bring Michelle Obama to campus for a 2012 food science symposium has been greeted with a polite "no thanks" by the first lady.

The Columbia Daily Tribune (<http://bit.ly/tnokJ4>) reports that Obama sent organizers of the annual Life Sciences and Society event a personalized letter thanking them but declining the invitation.

A Cornell University professor of consumer behavior will instead deliver the keynote speech at the March 2012 "Food Sense" symposium.

Obama has made physical fitness and nutrition a hallmark of her White House work. Her "Let's Move" campaign pushes for better school lunches, more access to fruits and vegetable and more physical activity among children.

Michelle Obama turns down MU invite

By Janese Silvey

Michelle Obama sends her regrets: She won't be able to make it to the University of Missouri's food conference in March.

Organizers of MU's Life Sciences & Society Program Annual Symposium had launched an aggressive social media campaign to lure the first lady to campus to serve as keynote speaker. This year's symposium is March 16-18 and will revolve around the issue of food sense.

Stefani Engelstein, director of the program, said she received a personalized letter from Obama thanking her and other supporters for the invitation. The letter said she receives far more invitations than she can accept and blamed a timing issue.

Engelstein had hoped to sway Obama by using Twitter, Facebook and form-letter invites from students and faculty. The university's communication team was expected to roll out an official invitation on the MU website on Monday and supporters were expected to send a mass tweet Tuesday afternoon.

Brian Wansink, a professor of consumer behavior at Cornell University, will now deliver the keynote. Wansink is the author of the best-selling "Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Blood drive, Salvatore Giunta to kick off MU Veterans Week

By Melissa Gilstrap

November 7, 2011 | 6:37 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — A blood drive was the first of more than 15 events meant to honor veterans during MU's Veterans Week, which also includes a speech from Medal of Honor recipient Salvatore Giunta.

This was the first time a blood drive has been held on campus during MU Veterans Week. It was sponsored by the Mizzou Student Veterans Association, MU's Reserve Officer Training Corps program and the American Red Cross.

"It's an easy and convenient way to save three lives with a pint of your own blood," said Erin Griffen, a senior in the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps.

The goal for the drive was to collect 30 pints of blood, which requires about 45 donors, American Red Cross representative Craig Jackson said. The drive exceeded its goal with 47 eligible donors giving 44 pints of blood.

Because it was the first time the blood drive had been held, they set a goal that was small and attainable, said John Picray, vice president of the student veterans association. He thought a drive during the week would be a good idea because it is another form of service for the community.

"Anybody and everybody who is eligible to give blood was encouraged to donate," Picray said.

Medal of Honor recipient Army Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta will speak Tuesday at Jesse Hall about his time in Afghanistan. Giunta is the first surviving soldier to be given the decoration for actions occurring after the Vietnam War. The Medal of Honor, the highest military decoration a soldier can receive, is typically awarded posthumously.

Giunta was nominated for the award after risking his life in enemy fire to save a fellow soldier.



MU buys up domain names to block 'xxx'-rated use

By Janese Silvey

There's nothing sexy about mizzou.xxx — and Terry Robb wants it to stay that way.

Robb, director of informational technology at the University of Missouri, has paid a company to keep the Internet domain name from being hijacked for pornography.

The company ICM Registry is behind the new triple-x domain, which aims to provide distinguishable Web addresses for adult entertainment companies and to give users a better idea of the nature of a website before they click on a link.

Before opening up potential domain names to the pornography industry, the company provided an initial period during which trademarked entities could remove their brands from available domain names.

That means MU doesn't have the ability to actually use mizzou.xxx for anything; rather, the university only ensured no one else would.

"Registered trademark owners only had the option — if they were not in the adult community — to remove their names from the registry," said Jocelyn Johnson, a spokeswoman for ICM Registry.

Robb also secured missouritigers.xxx. Preventing the names from being used in the future cost the university \$129 per domain name annually, but Robb said it's worth it.

"You could have some entrepreneurial student maybe who gets the idea of creating an adult entertainment site using the name of the university," Robb said. "Not just a student, but anybody. We don't really want that to happen."

That's not to say MU won't ultimately be tied to a porn site, though. Although legitimate trademarked companies can remove their names if they end up being used for pornography, variations of Mizzou not trademarked can still be used, Johnson said.

Mizzou doesn't show up on the company's current list of domain names, but that's because trademarks are still being verified, Johnson said. When the online database is updated, users will be told that "mizzou.xxx" isn't available.

Legitimate adult entertainment companies can start vying for site names under the xxx domain during a "land rush" phase that starts tomorrow. General availability for xxx domain names starts Dec. 6.

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU buys .xxx domain names to protect trademark

By Alicia Stice

November 7, 2011 | 5:23 p.m. CST

Purveyors of porn won't be able to buy sites borrowing Mizzou name

COLUMBIA — MU is one of almost 80,000 institutions and companies that have purchased Internet addresses designed for pornography providers — but not for the reason you might think.

MU bought the addresses mizzou.xxx, missouritigers.xxx and missouri.xxx to prevent those names from being associated with adult entertainment websites.

"If somebody wanted to buy (the domain) and run a porn site, they could," Division of Information Technology spokesman Terry Robb said. "People could mistakenly go to mizzou.xxx, and there you are. It's our trademark name, and a porn site obviously should not use our trademark name for their activities."

MU spends \$129 per year for a block on the addresses. Robb said the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers alerted trademark holders in September that they would need to protect their trademarks. The corporation is the global organization that monitors and approves top-level domains.

The .xxx addresses are being sold by ICM Registry, the company that controls the domain. The .xxx domain will make adult websites easier to find for people who want them and easier to avoid for people who don't, said Jocelyn Johnson, a public relations representative from the firm representing ICM Registry.

"ICM Registry has been working on .xxx for almost 10 years now, in terms of getting it prepared and getting it approved," Johnson said. "So when it was approved last spring, it had been in the works for a while."

Between Sept. 7 and Oct. 31, almost 80,000 companies registered names under the .xxx domain. This was the "sunrise period" in the registration process, during which companies

with trademark names could buy the Web addresses, Johnson said. The company is not releasing information about how many of these companies were registering names because they wanted to block pornographic websites from using their trademark names.

"Companies applying to remove trademarks needed to submit an application and supporting materials to prove they were, in fact the trademark owner," she said. "Once the application was submitted, ICM Registry had a third-party company verify the legitimacy of the trademark and owner."

A new registration phase begins Tuesday, when companies in the adult entertainment industry can buy website names, even if they don't have a trademark. In early December, anyone can buy a .xxx website name, and most of the registered websites will begin publishing content, Johnson said.

UM to change mental health coverage

By Janese Silvey

Jen Schaffer relies on a trio of specialists to keep her obsessive-compulsive disorder in check.

Starting in January, though, two of those specialists will no longer be in the network under her University of Missouri health care package. The UM System is switching from using United Behavioral Health to administer mental health coverage to Coventry, which in turn contracts mental health out to MHNet Behavioral Health. Five years ago, administrators switched to UBH because Coventry did not have a strong mental health network, but with the MHNet contract, things have changed.

Coventry already administers the physical health side of UM's plan, said Kelley Stuck, associate vice president for compensation. "Any time you piece together providers, you do that because there's not a better choice," she said. "It never works well for information flow, billing and claims. Coventry now has a strong mental health network and has grown to the point it's time to go ahead and consolidate into a single vendor."

Stuck said the switch made sense for the four-campus system as a whole. For 89 percent of employees, providers they used under UBH will automatically be in Coventry's network, she said. But Stuck acknowledged there are gaps in Columbia and said Coventry is trying to recruit providers here to join the network.

Schaffer, an academic adviser, is concerned because her providers have indicated they might not be willing to contract with MHNet. That includes a psychologist who is an expert in OCD. If Schaffer keeps seeing him, her deductible will be \$500, and she will have to pay 20 percent of all other costs. "Because I have a pretty severe condition, and because I can afford it, I'm willing to do so," she said. "But someone else on campus might stop going because he doesn't have money to pay the deductible."

Another MU employee who asked not to be identified plans to stop seeing a therapist if costs rise. That employee relies on a specific counselor to get through tough situations.

"The client-therapist relationship is built on trust, which comes from a history of working with each other," the employee said. "If I have to pay out-of-pocket expenses to see her, I may not seek the help when I need it. I'm not willing to start over with another therapist, and I can't afford more than my current \$25 co-pay."

Schaffer thinks some employees might not be aware of the change. Even though it was on a brochure sent to employees, Schaffer said it wasn't obvious enough. She learned about it at a health care forum on campus.

Some providers are scrambling to figure out how it affects their clients. Sheila Greenberg, a licensed psychologist, said MHNet sent her information with fee schedules for two types of providers, and she's not sure which category she fits in. "I'm trying to find out before I sign up and agree to do the work," she said.

Stuck said UM held about 50 forums across the four campuses and "went above and beyond" to get information to employees. It's up to Coventry to contact providers, she said.

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com.

THE MANEATER

THE STUDENT VOICE OF MU SINCE 1953

MU's new drug testing policy causes debate

The policy is new, starting this semester.

By Sean Na Published Nov. 8, 2011

Effective fall 2011, the MU School of Medicine and School of Nursing require incoming students to get drug tested before they enroll in classes.

Drug testing in the medical school was first introduced by Linn State Technical College. But the MU School of Medicine did not get this idea from LTC.

"MU medical students are tested because their education requires them to train in hospitals and clinics that require testing, and like other health care providers in those facilities, medical students are entrusted with and committed to the health, safety and welfare of patients," School of Medicine Communications Director Rich Gleba said.

MU senior and nursing student Amelia Sherinski said the drug testing is an essential procedure for medical students.

"I think the tests are helpful in finding out who is truly qualified to be in medicine," she said. "No patient would knowingly sign their safety over to a known drug user, so the testing by the hospital is absolutely necessary in order to stop these individuals from potentially causing harm."

She also said alcoholic or drug-addicted students should not be practicing medicine and the tests make sure they can't.

Columbia attorney Dan Viets said he questions this approach to benefit the medical industry. Although the motive has good intentions, Viets said, it is still an illegal action.

"I don't care what the motive is," he said. "Their method is illegal."

Sherinski stressed that patient safety should be considered primarily before considering a constitutional matter.

"I agree that drug-testing could be viewed as a violation of one's privacy, but the individuals being subjected to these tests know what they are getting themselves into when they decide to pursue careers in medicine," Sherinski said. "To me, that makes the constitutional issue null and void. Furthermore, the individual being tested is not the key player in this situation. In the public institution we are concerned with, patient safety is at stake. As health care professionals, patient safety is our number one priority."

This is the first semester this practice has been in effect.