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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

**AP** Associated Press

## Mo. campus editors face possible sanctions

Associated Press | Posted: Thursday, April 12, 2012 4:24 pm | [\(0\) comments.](#)

**Two editors who resigned amid criticism over an April Fools' edition of a student newspaper now face possible sanctions under the University of Missouri's conduct code.**

The Columbia Missourian reports ( <http://bit.ly/IE46Ct>) that the former managing editor and editor-in-chief at The Maneater have been contacted by the university's Office of Student Conduct to schedule disciplinary hearings.

Abby Spudich and Travis Cornejo stepped down from the independent publication earlier this week as backlash over the paper's annual parody edition intensified. As part of the joke edition, The Maneater changed its title to a derogatory term for lesbians and included other sexually-oriented profanity.

Missouri chancellor Brady Deaton wrote a letter to the editor, billed as an open letter to the "Mizzou Community" in which he called the content "thoughtless, disrespectful and hurtful."

"All of us strive to make the University of Missouri a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment, and it saddens us when we see actions that hurt members of our community who may already feel marginalized," Deaton said. "We expect all in our community to treat others with respect and dignity. ... The Maneater staff is taking responsibility for its actions. It is our responsibility as a community to work together to become a more civil and respectful Mizzou. My commitment is unwavering."

Spudich, a junior journalism major, declined to comment to The Associated Press on Thursday on the advice of her lawyer Marsha Fischer, who did immediately respond to a telephone message. Cornejo did not respond to an interview request. But in separate letters of resignation, each expressed remorse.

"I regret deeply the harm I have caused through the publication of the April Fool's edition; this was never my intention," Spudich told Maneater readers on Tuesday.

Cornejo stepped down Wednesday, noting that as editor-in-chief "he took no part in the planning of the April Fools' edition" but was "not wholly without blame."

The university's pending disciplinary case has caught the attention of the Student Press Law Center, whose executive director wrote a letter to Missouri's vice chancellor for student affairs asserting the former editors' First Amendment rights while asking the school to drop its inquiry into potential misconduct.

Frank LoMonte, the group's executive director, referred to a 1973 U.S. Supreme Court ruling overturning the expulsion of a University of Missouri student journalist after another campus newspaper published an editorial cartoon showing police raping the Statue of Liberty.

The organization is not representing the two former Maneater editors, LaMonte noted.

Earlier this month, a Boston University student editor also resigned after its campus newspaper published an April Fools' edition that made light of rape and drug use.

The student papers at both schools are independent publications not directly affiliated with their universities.

# MU drops all charges against former Maneater editors

By Ben Harms

April 12, 2012 | 8:05 p.m. CDT

**COLUMBIA — Former Maneater editors Abby Spudich and Travis Cornejo said Thursday evening that MU will not pursue disciplinary actions against them following the student newspaper's controversial April Fools' edition.**

Both students said they received a call from MU's Office of Student Conduct on Thursday night telling them to disregard the scheduled hearings on possible violations of the code of student conduct.

The Student Press Law Center, a national non-profit student journalist advocacy organization, sent an open letter to Cathy Scroggs, MU Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, on Thursday morning.

In the letter Frank LoMonte, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, asked the university to immediately "pull the plug" on all disciplinary action against the former student editors.

LoMonte defended Spudich and Cornejo on constitutional grounds, citing Supreme Court cases *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* and *Papish v. University of Missouri Curators*.

"Of all institutions, the University of Missouri should be the last university in America to need reminding that even highly offensive speech is constitutionally protected against disciplinary action," LoMonte wrote.

Spudich, former managing editor, and Cornejo, former editor-in-chief, resigned this week after renaming the April Fools' edition of *The Maneater* as "The Carpeteater," and printing several articles many students and members of the community considered offensive.

Adam Goldstein, attorney advocate for the Student Press Law Center, said the organization hoped the letter would cause MU administrators to rethink their decision to pursue disciplinary action.

"If an institution takes the position that anytime someone publishes something that is offensive but constitutionally sound then it's OK to expel them, that creates a chilling effect on journalism," he said.

Goldstein said even the threat of government punishment for something someone said violates the First Amendment, and he hopes this doesn't happen again at MU.

"Mizzou should know better," he said. "There's just something different when you're talking about one of the best journalism schools in the country."

Additionally, Goldstein said that apart from being unconstitutional, the university's disciplinary actions didn't make sense, as the students had already resigned from their editorial positions. They must also deal with the effects their actions could have on future careers in journalism.

"Whatever they were supposed to learn from this, I think they learned it," Goldstein said.

As for the students, they're both relieved the university has decided to discontinue the investigation.

"I'm very relieved," Spudich said. "I can go back to living my life."

## **GUEST COMMENTARY: MU can't punish free speech**

By Sandy Davidson

April 13, 2012 | 6:00 a.m. CDT

**Travis Cornejo resigned as editor-in-chief of The Maneater in the wake of the April Fools' Day parody. On Thursday, the Office of Student Conduct called Cornejo and said, in effect, to ignore its Tuesday letter to him. Thank goodness.**

The letter had spoken of two "possible violations of University regulations":

- Obstruction or disruption of teaching, research administration, conduct proceedings, or other University activities, including its public service functions on or off campus. Specifically: You allegedly participated in the editing process of the April Fools' Maneater Publication which disrupted the University community by printing offensive articles.
- Disruptive or disorderly conduct or lewd, indecent, or obscene conduct or expression. Specifically: You allegedly participated in the editing process of the April Fools' Maneater Publication in which several articles were disruptive, lewd, offensive, and indecent to people in the University community.

The First Amendment was not designed to protect pretty speech. Pretty speech needs no protection. The First Amendment protects offensive and sometimes even lewd, disruptive and indecent speech.

The University has already been through a similar brouhaha and came up on the losing end in the U.S. Supreme Court's 6 to 3 decision in Papish v. University of Missouri Board of Curators, 410 U.S. 667 (1973).

Barbara Papish, a graduate student at the School of Journalism, got expelled for selling a newspaper, the Free Press Underground, on campus. The newspaper's cover featured a political cartoon of policemen raping the Statue of Liberty and the Goddess of Justice. The newspaper also contained an article about a member of an organization called "Up Against

the Wall Motherf\*\*\*er." He had been acquitted of assault in New York. The headline read "Motherf\*\*\*er Acquitted."

The University's Student Conduct Committee found that Papish had violated a section of the General Standards of Student Conduct that required students "to observe generally accepted standards of conduct." The standards specifically prohibited "indecent conduct or speech." Before Papish was dismissed, the chancellor and Board of Curators affirmed the decision. Using federal law, 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Papish took her case to federal court in Kansas City, charging that state officials had violated her right to freedom of expression. Although she lost there, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed. The High Court said Papish was "dismissed because of the disapproved content of the newspaper..." The Court held: "The mere dissemination of ideas — no matter how offensive to good taste — on a state university campus may not be shut off in the name alone of 'conventions of decency.'"

Offensive parodies have also received broad protection. The U.S. Supreme Court in Hustler Magazine, Inc. v. Falwell, 485 U.S. 46 (1988), extolled the virtues of the First Amendment even where offensive speech is involved.

Hustler magazine ran a parody advertisement, with the Rev. Jerry Falwell talking about his "first time" with his mother in an outhouse. The parody went from the outhouse to the courthouse when Falwell sued Hustler magazine and its publisher, Larry Flynt. Falwell's attorney asked the Supreme Court, in effect, to hold that even in cases involving a parody, the state's interest in protecting public figures from emotional distress was sufficient to deny First Amendment protection to that speech. The Court refused.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote the unanimous Falwell opinion. In its glowing endorsement of free speech, the Supreme Court made clear its interest in preserving the "free trade of ideas" — even when the speech is patently offensive and is intended to inflict emotional distress. The High Court expressed concern over the chilling effect on political cartoons if plaintiffs who could not collect for libel were allowed to collect for emotional distress. "The appeal of the political cartoon or caricature is often based on exploration of unfortunate physical traits or politically embarrassing events — an exploration often calculated to injure the feelings of the subject of the portrayal." History is on the side of "caustic" cartoons, the Court said: "[F]rom the early cartoon portraying George Washington as an ass down to the present day, graphical depictions and satirical cartoons have played a prominent role in public and political debate."

Falwell's attorney argued that the parody ad should be distinguished from the "more traditional political cartoons" because the ad was so "outrageous." But the Court said that using "outrageousness" as a standard in the area of political and social speech is simply too subjective. It would let juries impose liability based on their tastes or dislikes. The Court wanted "to give adequate 'breathing space' to the freedoms protected by the First Amendment."

A Mizzou administrator threatening to violate a student's First Amendment rights even after the U.S. Supreme Court slapped down the University for similar behavior and even after the Court gave broad protection to lewd parodies? Now that's offensive and outrageous!

No, The Maneater parody edition is not clever. It is offensive, but it is also expression protected from state interference on a state university campus.

As for the facts, the allegation that Travis Cornejo participated in the "editing process" of the parody edition is simply incorrect. Cornejo says he did not edit it. The former editor of The Maneater, Zach Toombs, said the April Fools' edition is done by staff, not the editor-in-chief. Professor Emeritus George Kennedy, who chaired the Student Publication Committee 20 years ago, also confirmed that The Maneater's tradition is that the editor-in-chief not participate in the production of the April Fools' parody issue but to be surprised by its content.

In short, the missive from the Office of Student Conduct was wrong on both the facts and the law. Now Cornejo can ignore what he should never have received.

Perhaps what the University needs is some sensitivity training — gender and LGBTQ sensitivity training to avoid offensive language on the part of The Maneater staff, and First Amendment sensitivity training to avoid future legal gaffes by administrators in the Office of Student Conduct.

*Sandy Davidson, Ph.D., J.D., is a professor at the Missouri School of Journalism.*

## Memory Problems After Cancer: 'Chemo Brain' May Not Be Sole Cause, Study Suggests

The Huffington Post | By [Amanda L. Chan](#)

There may be more than one factor responsible for "chemo brain" -- the term used for memory and attention impairments often experienced after undergoing chemotherapy for cancer, according to a small new study.

**Researchers from the University of Missouri found that women who had breast cancer surgery but had *not* yet undergone chemotherapy also experienced similar memory problems.**

And importantly, the women who were most likely to experience these problems were also the ones who were more stressed or didn't cope with their stress in a direct way, researchers found. Their research is published in the *Journal for Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings*.

"It appeared that passive coping strategies, such as denial, disengagement and helplessness, contributed to this relationship." Stephanie Reid-Arndt, chair of the Health psychology Department at the University of Missouri, said in a statement. "This suggests lacking proactive ways to deal with stress can contribute to patients' experience of cognitive difficulties."

The study included 36 women who had undergone breast cancer surgery, but hadn't gone through any chemotherapy or hormone-replacement therapy. Researchers found that 27 percent of them had evidence of verbal fluency deficits, and 14 percent of them had some sort of memory impairment.

How much stress the women reported having was correlated with these impairments, according to the study.

The researchers suggested that women can cope with stress by acknowledging their feelings.

"Teaching patients proactive ways to deal with stress can help them improve their quality of life as well as maintain their cognitive function," Reid-Arndt said in the statement.

A recent study in the journal *Cancer* also showed that small memory problems plague cancer survivors regardless of whether they underwent chemo or not, Reuters reported.

"It's a very, very subtle thing. We're not talking about patients becoming delirious, demented, amnesic," Barbara Collins, a neuropsychologist at Ottawa Hospital who wasn't involved in the new study, told Reuters. "We're talking about a group of people that are saying, 'I'm pretty much still able to function, but I find it harder ... it doesn't come as easily, and I can't do as many things at the same time.'"

Last year, Health.com reported on a study published in the journal *Archives of Neurology*, which showed that women who have survived breast cancer actually show changes to their prefrontal-executive function in brain scans. That region of the brain is involved in concentration, information gathering and analysis and impulse control. What's more, researchers found that these changes were more evident in those who've undergone chemotherapy.

"I have patients tell me, 'I'm just working harder and I'm slower at what I do, and I have to check my work and I still find errors, even when I'm working methodically,'" Robert Ferguson, a clinical psychologist at Eastern Maine Medical Center, told Health.com. "This data is consistent with that anecdotal report."

# MU will remember 14 students who died in the last 12 months

By Christine Soucy, Felicia Greiff

April 12, 2012 | 8:14 p.m. CDT

**MU will remember 14 students Friday who died within the past 12 months.**

**MU Remembers is an annual commemoration of deceased students' lives. A ceremony will take place at 2 p.m. in Stotler Lounge in Memorial Union.** During the memorial, tower lights at the Union will be darkened. The 14 include 11 men and three women, undergraduate and graduate students. One was a Missouri swimmer; another was a member of the Missouri National Guard; two were members of Marching Mizzou. All had promising lives ahead.

Here is a look at those who will be remembered Friday.

## **BRIANNA BAKER**

Brianna Baker loved spending time with family and friends.

With her bright blue eyes and quick wit, Brianna brought warmth and entertainment wherever she went, according to an obituary.

Brianna died in a car accident in Illinois on Jan. 22. She was 19 and a freshman at MU studying English.

She played volleyball, was in her high school band and helped with the summer reading program at her library.

## **SASHA MENU-COUREY**

Sasha Menu-Courey was a nationally ranked swimmer for most of her teenage years and had Olympic ambitions.

Every day after school, she would attend swim practice for several hours. When she got home late in the evening, she spent the time left in her day writing in her diary and reading, which were her other favorite activities, her sister Kayla said. Sasha died June 17 at age 20. She had suffered from a mental illness called borderline personality disorder.

Sasha, who was 5 feet 10 inches tall, was quite fit and strong. A sophomore majoring in psychology and journalism, she was a member of the Missouri swim team.

"She could scare my dad in any arm wrestling tournaments," her sister said. Born and raised in Toronto, Sasha came to MU after an hour-long phone interview with the swim coach where she ended up being the one to ask all the questions.

Her sister said Sasha immediately fell in love with the other team members and her coach at MU. They talked about how the team's skill level was perfect for her; it wasn't so advanced that she was overlooked. Sasha had a vibrant, strong personality and loved to wear headbands, scarves, and sunglasses in bright colors like yellow, red, or pink, her sister said.

"She had a crazy laugh. She was lively, and one of the loudest."

Her sister also described her as focused and driven. A characteristic of borderline personality disorder is a tendency to drive away family and people close to her. Kayla said Sasha was often quiet and kept to herself at home, but with her friends she was always a ball of energy. Her teammate, Joseph Hladik, said this about her: "Whether it be walking home from the dining hall and stopping to search for four leaf clovers or dancing in the weight room at 5:45 a.m there truly was never a dull moment.

"She always knew exactly what to say when someone was down and always put a smile on the faces of others."

### **RICK COURTNEY**

Rick Courtney, 49, will be remembered Friday. A student in the MU College of Arts and Science, he died May 7. He had been an attorney in St. Louis.

### **CALVIN GENEREUX**

Calvin "Joe" Joseph Genereux III, 23, died Feb. 19 in an accident in Columbia. He was a private in the Missouri Army National Guard and would have been deployed to Afghanistan the following year. Calvin was also a junior at MU studying psychology. In an earlier

Missourian story, he was described by a friend as reserved, calm and intelligent. He could translate text in Spanish, German, French and Arabic.

His fiancée, Ashley McGee, called him genuine and said he loved to learn, write and read.

He was 6 feet 5 inches tall and athletic. In high school, he was a member of the football team, and he liked to run.

### **DUSTIN HAINSFURTHER**

Dustin "Dusty" Hainsfurther, 21, used to smile at his mother and say, "Live life, Mama." His mother, Tammy, said he would call about every two weeks on a Monday or Tuesday to say he was coming home that weekend. His family lives in Carlinville, Ill.

"He'd come home with smiles and hugs and stories," she said. On June 4, he died from injuries sustained in a car accident. He was less than a minute from home.

His mother remembers him standing at the back window of their home, not long before he died. She said he looked out at the woods and wetlands and said, "I can't thank you enough for raising me in the country. You taught me what I need to know. You gave me wings to fly." Full of dreams and potential, her son wanted live life to the fullest, his mother said.

He was an outdoorsman who loved to hunt geese and ducks. He and his father ran a retriever training business called Webfoot Kennel. He would have been a senior at MU with a personal finance management major and a minor in finance. Hundreds came to his memorial service, his mother said. She remembers her son as an incredibly kind person, who took an interest in everyone.

"His heart and soul were always good," she said.

### **SCOTT JOHNSON**

Scott Johnson, 41, was a teaching assistant in the MU mechanical engineering department. He died Feb. 29 at Boone Hospital Center. He was married and had a daughter, Amber. He is also survived by a brother, Jim, and a sister, Karen.

### **PHILLIP PERRY**

When people remember Phillip Perry, they think of his smile and thumbs-up signal. His mother, Jill, said he would stick up for anyone. In high school, when he caught a boy picking on a girl he knew, he put a stop to it.

"He took her aside and said, 'Don't let people talk to you like that. You're worth more than that,'" his mother said. Phillip died in a car accident just outside of his hometown Hannibal, Mo. on Aug 2. He was a freshman at MU majoring in secondary education.

His mother said people remember his wrestling, but he was much more than that. Before every match, he would kneel on the wrestling mat and pray. On their final day together, his mother said he wanted to hike up to a cave. He thought it would be the last opportunity because his brother, Tyler, was about to move to Las Vegas. So the three of them took that last hike. Phillip stayed back to help his mother. But at the top, she said he dived right off the cliff near the mouth of the cave into the icy water below. He had been afraid of heights nearly his entire life.

## **JEREMY PORTER**

Jeremy Porter died in a car accident on June 26 in Muskogee County, Okla. He was 19 and had just completed his freshman year at MU. He was with a group returning home from a visit to San Antonio to see a friend who just graduated from basic training.

Jeremy received the Wm. McCoy Award in 2009 and the Presidential Award for Academic Achievement. He received numerous scholarships, and he was a saxophonist in Marching Mizzou. Katelyn Amen, who also belonged to Marching Mizzou, said in a previous Missouriian article that Jeremy was extremely passionate about band.

"I just know that his heart was just really in Marching Mizzou," Amen said.

## **SEAN RADCLIFF**

Friends described Sean Radcliff as friendly, welcoming and talkative. Sean also died June 26 in the automobile accident in Oklahoma, according to a previous Missouriian report.

A music major at MU, Sean played the saxophone in Marching Mizzou. Outgoing and welcoming to others, Sean was always looking for ways to help other people, said friends Ryan Gavin, Elliot Naes and Katelyn Amen in the previous report. Amen also said Sean loved to play the saxophone and was good at it. He inspired other band members to be better, she said in a previous report.

## **JUSTIN ROLLER**

Those who knew Justin Roller consider him a hero for what he did before his death.

Justin, 27, died Aug. 17 of a pulmonary embolism. Shortly before the embolism, Justin was on a rafting trip with friends. A young woman fell into the water and was sucked under the raft. His mother, Kathy, said her son did not hesitate to jump in after the young woman. But the current was strong and dragged them both through logs and floating debris. Justin held the woman to his chest, his mother said, using his body to shield the woman.

Doctors couldn't say for certain, but his parents believe the blows from the logs contributed to his embolism.

"I'm not sure he knew the young woman. It was just somebody who needed help," his father said. A junior mechanical engineer at MU, he grew up in Jefferson City. He was tall, red-haired and stocky. His interests included watching movies and designing and tinkering with projects. He was an Eagle Scout, but for him, it was more about service than his love of the outdoors.

"I wouldn't say the outdoors was his big thing. He did it because he had to," his father said, chuckling. He added, however, that Justin was a skilled and enthusiastic golfer. He also proved himself a talented gourmet cook, making original creations for employees at the Bandana's restaurant he managed.

"He made them feel special when he would cook for them," his father said

## **RASHONDA STANLEY**

Rashonda Stanley's parents remember her as bubbly, loving and positive person. She died Oct. 4 at the age of 22. Rashonda attended University of Missouri-Kansas City on a softball scholarship and graduated in May 2011 with a bachelor's degree in biology. She was a graduate student at MU pursuing a master's degree in physical therapy.

"She had a feisty side," her father, Billy, said. His daughter was the kind of person who always stood up for what she believed in.

"She wouldn't give an inch," her father said. "She had enthusiasm for whatever she did." Her mother, Sharon, said they had a strong mother-daughter relationship. One of her last memories was of her daughter was from a wedding. Rashonda was the maid of honor and her

mother remembers her at the reception, "wild and crazy, taking pictures and wearing different masks."

"She was a beautiful soul," her father said.

## **COLE STEELMAN**

Cole Steelman wanted to be an aircraft controller and continue working on the family farm in Odessa after he graduated from school. He died June 11 when an all-terrain vehicle crashed in Lafayette County. Cole had completed his freshman year at MU, where he was an agricultural business and economics major.

He was athletic and loved to spend time outdoors, whether it was duck hunting, four-wheeling or fishing, said his father, Ronald. Cole grew up on the family farm in western Missouri, doing chores and raising calves. He also was a referee for Little League soccer during spring, and he was a lifeguard at the local pool. At the visitation in his high school, 1,200 people showed up.

"He never met a stranger," his father said. "He would talk to anybody from 3 to 93." Cole was best friends with eight boys who would hang out at the farm, said his mother, Debra. When he was in seventh grade, he and his friends decided to turn an old, dirty chicken house on the farm into a man cave.

"They would even sleep out there in the summer," his mother said. "They would clean their guns and hang out there. Kind of like Tom Sawyer, I always thought." He was president, vice president and treasurer of the Future Farmers of America chapter in Odessa. He was posthumously awarded the American Farmer Degree from the FFA, the highest recognition that they give.

"He loved life," his father said.

## **JIMMY STONE**

Jimmy Stone loved football, his family and giving to others. He played football in middle and high school, participated in fantasy football leagues and kept up with the stats, teams and players, said his mother, Regina Stone.

"And he still played with his buddies out in the backyard," she said. Jimmy died on May 18 from injuries sustained in a car accident in St. Peters. He had just finished his third year as an

agricultural systems management major. He had wanted to go to MU ever since he was a child, his mother said. So much so that he didn't apply to any other colleges.

The summer after he died, his friends held the First Annual Jimmy Stone Football Game in O'Fallon, Mo., to honor his memory.

Every year for Christmas, when his mother asked what he wanted he would say, "Mom, I don't want anything. I have everything I need. Just donate my presents to a kid in need." At Christmas, the Stones adopted a large family in his memory, she said.

"His last act of kindness was donating his organs to help others in need."

### **BENJAMIN WRIGHT**

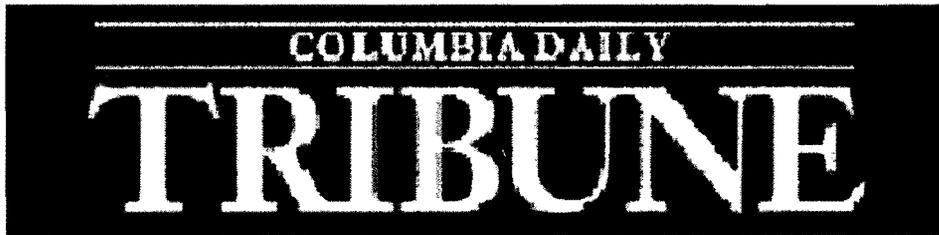
In a note to Ben's mother after he died, a girl from his high school called herself a shrinking violet and wrote that Ben always made her feel important. The junior English major from Farmington died Nov. 22. He was 22.

Six-feet tall with brown eyes and dark blonde hair, he liked to spend time outside with his friends, especially at the beach for picnics, said his mother, Denise. Ben hung out with an energetic and creative group of friends. His mothers said they made their own fun. One day they would decide they were going to paint a backdrop for a play, maybe paint a seascape. Another day they might illustrate a comic book.

Ben acted in high school, with roles like Lumiere in "Beauty and The Beast." His love of acting led to a stint in Los Angeles, but his mother said he came back to the Midwest because acting was too competitive. He decided to pursue writing at MU instead, and that was when he hit his stride, his mother said. One professor from Mineral Area College, where Ben earned an associate of arts degree, said he was one of the most talented people he knew.

Ben's mother said he was a charismatic, cheerful person who would brighten an entire room with his smile and personality. She added that he loved MU and thought Columbia was a great place to live. She received a letter from the MU director of libraries saying a book would be added to its collection in memory of her son: "Camera Historica: The Century in Cinema," by Antoine De Baccque.

*Did you know these students? We invite you to share memories of them with the rest of the community, in the Missouriian's From Readers section. Please consider sending us your memories and photos. Email them to [submissions@ColumbiaMissourian.com](mailto:submissions@ColumbiaMissourian.com).*



## Missouri S&T tweaks partner benefits resolution

By **JANESE SILVEY**

Published: 10:41 AM, 11/11/2014

Some professors on the University of Missouri's Rolla campus want the system to provide domestic partner benefits to all employees — not just gay and lesbian couples.

That's the latest wording of a resolution heading to the Missouri University of Science and Technology's Faculty Senate next week.

An earlier draft called on the university to expand benefits to same-sex couples only, but a committee tweaked the wording yesterday to add opposite-sex couples, Missouri S&T spokesman Andrew Careaga said. "There was no support for the other version."

The Faculty Senate next week will vote on a resolution that says the group recommends "that domestic partners, both same-sex and opposite-sex," of UM "employees be allowed access in a fiscally responsible manner to all of the same rights, privileges and benefits to which opposite-sex spouses are currently entitled."

**MU's Faculty Council, along with faculty groups on the other two campuses, approved resolutions calling for same-sex domestic partner benefits two years ago.**

There was some discussion among MU professors about a "plus one" option that would have let anyone add another person to benefits packages, but the council ultimately decided that would be too cumbersome and expensive. Faculty members also pointed out during those discussions that same-sex couples do not have the option to marry.

Expanding benefits to same-sex partners likely would tack on about \$1 million to the UM System's costs, said Betsy Rodriguez, vice president of human resources. She has not calculated how much it would cost to expand domestic partner benefits to opposite-sex couples.

"It's hard to get your arms around the definition," she said. "Missouri does not have common-law marriage, so then how do you define it?"

Rodriguez said studies have shown that providing domestic partner benefits for heterosexual couples is more expensive than expanding them to cover only same-sex couples because there are typically higher claims risks. Same-sex partners are more likely to have their own insurance, while some research shows heterosexual partners added to a plan are less likely to have other insurance options.

UM President Tim Wolfe has said he would make a recommendation on domestic partner benefits to the Board of Curators this year. It's unclear what effect the wording of Rolla's resolution, if approved by the Faculty Senate, might have on the curators' decision.

The makeup of the nine-member Board of Curators also could make a difference. There are two vacant seats, both of which were previously held by Democrats. By law, no more than five members of the board can belong to the same political party.

Right now, the board is made up of four Republicans and three Democrats. Gov. Jay Nixon likely is waiting until after the legislative session ends next month to fill those vacancies. It is also likely he will appoint two fellow Democrats.