

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Fees boost college cost

• BY TIM BARKER • tbarker@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8350

MU MENTION P. 2

When prospective students tour the University of Missouri-St. Louis, they invariably ask to see the gym or recreation center. And that makes the tour guides cringe just a little.

It's not that UMSL doesn't have one. It's just that the dingy Mark Twain Center is sort of a pale imitation of what's found on most college campuses today. The jogging track isn't elevated. There's no rock climbing wall. No whirlpool. And there's no juice bar dispensing tasty smoothies.

"It's not something we like to showcase," said Alan Byrd, the school's dean of enrollment services. "For a school of 16,000 students, it doesn't meet our needs."

But things will be changing soon, with work already started on a \$36 million wellness center that will figure prominently in campus tours once it opens in 2015.

It won't, however, be cheap.

Students, whether they use it or not, will pay as much as \$231 a semester — based on the number of credit hours they take — to support the center. And while it might seem strange at a time when so much attention is focused on the cost of college, this is something students volunteered to do.

In a campus referendum this year, they voted overwhelmingly, 2-to-1, to bill themselves in the name of fitness.

Jerica Selby, the former UMSL student government president who is now attending law school at the University of Denver, sees the rec center as a next step in the school's evolution. But she's not expecting miracles.

"I'm not thinking our admission numbers are going to skyrocket," Selby said. "But it's something to satisfy a need for students on campus."

And as Byrd says, "One thing about students, they are willing to pay for things they want."

Across the nation, fees such as this are contributing to what parents and students see as the soaring cost of a college degree. Along with hourly tuition rates, students pay a host of add-ons — many of them mandatory — that include information technology fees, student activity fees, athletics fees, supplemental course fees, health service fees, student union fees and transportation fees.

"It's a way to raise tuition and mask it," said Richard Hesel of the Art & Science Group, a higher education consulting firm in Baltimore. "I suspect it's actually a strategy at a lot of public institutions."

Hesel and others say fees are one way that schools are coping with dwindling support from state governments, as more of the cost of education is shifted to universities and their students. It's a bigger issue at public institutions, where tuition generally is regulated.

In a sense, some of these fees act as a form of differential tuition — the practice of charging some students more for their education. Simply put, some degrees are costlier to provide than others. Nursing, for example, requires a lot of expensive lab time, while English majors require very little in the way of course extras.

So as costs go up for some of the pricier degree fields, schools have decisions to make. And increasingly, they're hitting students in those areas of study with supplemental fees, said Ronald Ehrenberg, director of the Cornell Higher Education Research Institute.

"The alternative would be to raise the average tuition," Ehrenberg said. "Politically, that's more difficult."

There are, however, downsides to differential pricing, because it effectively makes some degrees less obtainable than others, said Sandy Baum, an independent higher education policy analyst.

"Are you going to discourage low-income students from enrolling in high-priced programs?" Baum asked.

MU'S BUSINESS FEE

Since 2002, the University of Missouri has added or expanded 20 supplemental fees at its four campuses, including a business school course fee at its flagship campus in Columbia, a supplemental fee for physics at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla and a theater and dance fee at UMSL.

Some of these fees can add substantially to the cost of a degree. At Mizzou, for example, the standard credit hour costs \$265.60. An engineering student pays \$339.60 an hour for his degree-specific courses, adding thousands of dollars in expenses.

But not all of these fees are obvious in terms of why they are needed.

Among those is the relatively new fee for undergraduate business courses at Mizzou's Trulaske College of Business. The fee was born in 2004 and has steadily risen in recent years, making it one of Mizzou's highest supplemental course fees.

Last year, the Board of Curators sparred over a proposed 97 percent increase in the fee, despite assurances by business college administrators that students wanted the increase in exchange for better services and course offerings. Curators balked at the size of the percentage increase, given the economic climate, and trimmed it in half.

But earlier this year, they added in the amount that had been hacked from the 2011 request, bringing the business course fee to \$70 per credit hour. With the average undergraduate taking 56 business credits, that means a business degree costs nearly \$4,000 extra.

Joan Gabel, dean of the college of business, defended the fee in an email, noting that any increases are carefully considered and student leaders are consulted. She said it insures that students will have "increased access to faculty, engaged advisors and facilitated activities with business leaders." She said it also allows the school to continue its Professional Development Program, which provides workshops, internships, a professional development course and personalized assessments.

"We faced the difficult choice of either increasing fees or cutting back this support," Gabel wrote.

SIUE'S APPROACH

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville has taken a different tack with course fees, relying on smaller supplemental fees, much more liberally applied. In 2003, the school offered around 200 classes that carried flat fees — many in the \$20-\$50 range. Today, nearly 400 classes carry those fees.

The reason is that teaching methods are changing, said Bill Winter, the school's budget director.

Archaeology classes, for example, now push students out into the field to participate in digs, requiring the purchase of tools. And some social work classes hire actors to perform scenarios that students might later encounter in their professional lives.

And every fee, he said, is put through a rigorous test to make certain it is justified.

"This isn't a stick-your-finger-in-the-air to see how much you can charge," Winter said.

The school also has seen substantial increases in some of its mandatory fees during the last 10 years. The athletics fee more than tripled to \$165.70 to help pay for the move to NCAA Division I basketball. There's a new \$72.60 fee to pay for the new student success center. And the fitness center fee saw a hefty hike to pay for an expansion of that facility.

In each case, most of the students wanted these things, Winter said, echoing the words of other administrators sensitive to the subject of rising costs.

"We need to have every student help pay for it. But not every student uses every service," Winter said. "In order to make it work financially, we do need to have the involvement of all the students."

Not lost in these fee discussions is the criticism by those who don't agree with the idea of giving the students what they're asking for. Critics accuse universities of taking a "country club" approach toward their facilities — particularly with souped-up recreation centers — and squandering money that might be better spent on academics, research and faculty.

It's an argument that ignores reality, said Robert Archibald, professor of economics at the College of William and Mary and co-author of the book, "Why Does College Cost So Much?"

Archibald notes that the upscale gyms aren't all that different from those throughout most cities. There are things — such as wireless Internet, private dorm rooms and good food — that are simply expected to be there: "They reflect the lives of the students."

A wide range of fees — many of them mandatory — are charged to students on college campuses. Below are some found in the region.

University of Missouri-Columbia

College of Education course fee • \$38.90/credit hour

School of Journalism course fee • \$60/credit hour

Student activity fee • \$164.88/semester

University of Missouri-St. Louis

Athletic fee • \$130.20/semester

Metro pass program fee • \$24/semester

Business School undergraduate course fee • \$39.60/credit hour

Missouri University of Science and Technology

University Center debt • \$125/semester

Health service fee • \$92/semester

Engineering course fee • \$74.20/credit hour

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Student fitness center • \$81.75/semester

Information technology • \$102.75/semester

Textbook service • \$175.50/semester

Sources: University of Missouri, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville



NEWSMAKERS Q&A: Tim Wolfe | University of Missouri System president

By Janese Silvey

Saturday, August 25, 2012

Q: University of Missouri System campuses continue to see record enrollments even as state support has steadily declined. How will the system continue to deal with these conflicting trends?

A: We have record enrollment because we have four campuses that have established a brand valued by students. Today, the UM System educates about 75,000 students and has been responsible for nearly 90 percent of full-time undergraduate enrollment growth during the past decade at our state's public four-year institutions. Yet our commitment to access and affordability has not wavered. We have increased tuition on average only 2.86 percent annually during the last five years, compared to 6.1 percent in surrounding states, and we've increased institutional grant aid to help needy students. We're constantly looking for efficiencies to use toward our core mission of teaching and research, and we're currently in a strategic planning process to better align our resources.

Q: One of your more controversial decisions was to phase out the current UM Press. Were you surprised by the reaction and, in hindsight, would you have done anything differently when making that announcement?

A: Change is always hard. Because of our challenges, we have to be more efficient and effective in all areas. In fact, we felt that the press could be more effective if more closely tied to our academic and research missions. If I could do it again, I would have given even more consideration to a wider array of stakeholders before making the decision. That said, I still am confident we are headed in the right direction with the help of our faculty, campus leaders and other constituencies.

Q: You've traveled the state talking about how the UM System and its four campuses advance Missouri. What are some lesser-recognized ways the university advances the state and its residents?

A: We believe the four campuses and health care system of the UM System touch every person, every day. We are the state's doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists and medical researchers. We educate nearly half of all undergraduate — and the majority of graduate — students at public

four-year institutions in the state. We drive innovation through life-changing research, serve as a catalyst for job creation, spur economic development and have experts in a variety of topics working in all 114 counties. "Advancing Missouri" isn't just something we say — it truly is what we do.



Faculty vote no on asking for press reversal

Wallace assures them of say in future plans.

By Janese Silvey

Published August 24, 2012 at 11:07 a.m.

Updated August 24, 2012 at 2 p.m.

The University of Missouri Faculty Council yesterday agreed with administration that the UM Press should be housed on the Columbia campus rather than under the umbrella of the system.

That came after former MU Chancellor Richard Wallace promised the council that administrators will rely on faculty advice and are committed to making sure the university continues to have a high-quality academic press.

He also indicated more information is coming that might alleviate concerns.

"Hopefully next week we can share information about the current thinking as to where we might go and how badly we need an advisory committee," he said.

Faculty from all four campuses will be asked to nominate committee members next week, and the advisory group also will include authors. Asked whether it would tap into the expertise of current UM Press employees, Wallace said the answer will come "next week."

The council voted twice against calling on UM President Tim Wolfe to reverse his May 24 announcement that current UM Press operations would be phased out.

In July, MU announced plans for a new press model that would be directed by Speer Morgan, an MU English professor and editor of the literary magazine *The Missouri Review*. The model was based on a proposal Morgan sent to Steve Graham, associate vice president for academic affairs, in April. Now, administrators are "rethinking everything," Wallace said.

The Faculty Council voted 11-9 against asking Wolfe to rescind his decision and stop layoffs. The group tabled a longer version of a resolution that would essentially call on the UM System to commit to scholarly publishing.

That's not a problem, Wallace said, assuring the council that the university will continue to have an academic press that uses a peer review process.

In light of Wallace's comments that new information will come next week, some faculty members wondered whether that meant Wolfe had reversed his original decision to close the current press. Art Jago, a professor of management, proposed a resolution thanking him for doing so and asking him to now reverse all related actions. The resolution — an attempt to force Wolfe to clarify the situation — was voted down.

Some did express concern about the university's reputation in light of the controversy. More than 5,000 have signed a petition against the move, and 45 authors have requested rights to their books back.

But professors agreed to move forward.

"There's no denying the damage is done," said Rebecca Johnson, an associate professor in nursing and veterinary medicine. "We need to allow the advisory board to do its work and help get it fixed."

Many council members said they do not want the UM Press to go back to being a publishing house operated by system administrators and agreed having it on campus makes more sense.

Clair Willcox, former editor in chief at the press, said he sensed little concern at the council meeting for the employees who worked to build the press's reputation and are now being laid off.

"For some council members," he said, "the press seemed to be kind of a prize that they had been promised, and now they didn't want to relinquish it or share with the other three campuses."

theman eater

Editorial: UM System mismanages press discussion

Since announcing plans to phase out the University of Missouri Press in May, UM System President Tim Wolfe has faced backlash for his plan to dismantle the publishing sector of the UM System.

Months after Wolfe made the decision to cut the press and the Board of Curators approved it, the mismanagement behind the decision is finally being revealed.

Wolfe's decision to close the press wasn't an inherently bad decision. The press has been losing money instead of making it and cuts needed to be made. The announcement that the press would shut down, while disappointing, was logical. For this reason, the blame does not fall on Wolfe and the UM System Board of Curators for their plans to "re-imagine" or "phase out" the press, but the way it was handled by the governing body of the UM System as a whole.

The problem lies in how the decision was made. The MU Faculty Council wasn't consulted about the decision before the announcement in May and the public was kept in the dark. A press that has existed since 1958 and published 2,000 books deserves better than to be dismantled without input from the faculty and staff who have helped to give it the reputation it has today.

Both the public and faculty have protested the changes to the press since they were announced. Supporters of the press have protested in curators meetings and have met to find a way to save the publishing body of the UM System. As of Aug. 23, 5,200 people have signed an online petition in an attempt to save the press, according to MU Faculty Council documents.

With his business background, Wolfe's decision to close the press makes sense, especially with his announcement of strategic initiatives to help improve the UM System as it moves forward. What he failed to grasp was that the UM Press exists for reasons beyond its profit margin. Its prestige reflects well on the UM System. A press dedicated to its history and education should be seen by the UM System governing body as a worthwhile investment, not a flawed business venture. A press this old, respected and valuable wasn't going to disappear without anyone noticing. The UM System made the mistake of thinking that it could.

Instead of consulting the faculty or public, the UM System chose to quietly shut down the press. In what seems to be cowardice, it offered no explanation for its decision nor did it look at views other than its own on the issue. The consequence -- a backward conversation on how to change a decision that was already made -- was frustrating, confusing and, ultimately, easily preventable. Communication is key.

Given recent events, this seems to be a growing trend. In March, the curators announced their intention to disband the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute without contacting the affected professors, or even following their own bylaws. The disrespect the board has shown MU faculty over the last few months is unacceptable, and it can't continue. The curators and Wolfe need to reevaluate the way they handle

unpopular changes. If Wolfe wants to come in as a businessman, he should understand that as a manager, he needs to step back and consult the people his decisions affect.

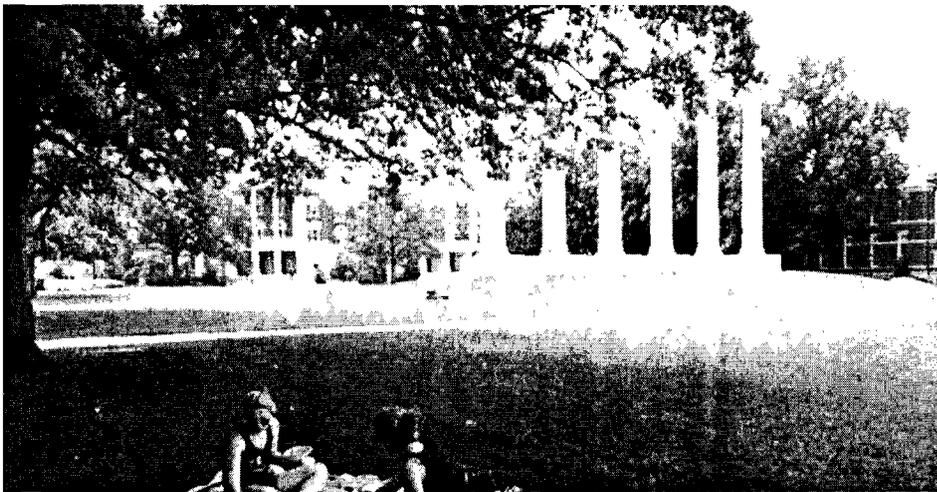
The closing of the UM Press was handled poorly from the start. Instead of being upfront with its thinking, the UM System chose to make sweeping decisions without any forewarning. Decisions that affect MU and the UM System should move forward one step at a time. By deciding to do this alone, the UM System has hurt the community, embarrassed the university and narrowed its own understanding of the UM Press.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

AP Associated Press

Missouri increases Bright Flight scholarship awards



1 hour ago • [THE ASSOCIATED PRESS](#)

NO MU MENTION

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. • Missouri is increasing the size of scholarships it awards in a pair of state programs.

Gov. Jay Nixon says the state's merit-based Bright Flight scholarships will be increased by \$250. That brings the scholarships up to \$2,000 per award, which is still less than the \$3,000 authorized by state law.

Scholarships awarded in the Access Missouri program will also grow. Depending upon the type of college a student attends, the maximum scholarship will increase by up to 3 percent.

Missouri scholarship levels had been set below the maximum allowed under state law because of tight budgets.

San Francisco Chronicle

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

AP Associated Press

MU medical school pairs new students with seniors

August 25, 2012 12:01 pm • Associated Press

New medical students at the University of Missouri quickly learn the nuances of anatomical science, disease treatment and other basic requirements for aspiring doctors.

But a majority of the nearly 100 first-year students in the Class of 2016 will find some of their most valuable lessons outside the classroom, paired with senior mentors who will give an up-close look into the realities of growing old _ and also shatter some well-worn stereotypes.

Now in its 12th year, the Heyssel Senior Teacher Educator Partnership is strictly voluntary for new students at the University of Missouri School of Medicine. Sixty percent of the incoming class has signed up for the program, and the participation rate has nearly doubled since the program began in 2001.

"It's a way to help medical students get to know seniors as human beings," said Dr. Steve Zweig, chairman of the school's department of family and community medicine. "Learning from the people you will be caring for is a very powerful lesson, and one we need to be reminded of."

The program's growth mirrors advances in gerontology and geriatric medicine, Zweig said. It's a far cry from his own experiences as a MU medical student nearly four decades ago, treating "desperately ill and delirious" older patients at the Veterans Administration hospital.

University of South Carolina medical school researchers studied the Missouri program and nine similar efforts in 2009 and confirmed many of the anecdotal observations already made by Zweig and his colleagues _ namely, that the human touch goes a long way toward supplementing classroom and lab lessons. The participating universities included Arizona, Duke, Nebraska, Ohio State and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Eldin Duderija, a second-year MU medical student, said he remains close to the retired couple he was paired with last year. The 23-year-old Bosnia native, who moved to St. Louis as a child, said his mentors are "essentially like the grandparents I never had in Columbia."

"It gives you another element to medicine," he said. "It's not always about the science."

For seniors, the STEP program provides a connection to a younger generation while also offering valuable lectures on topics such as exercise, death and dying and senior sexuality, said Marty Hausman, a retired nurse.

"You feel really good about the future," she said.

The newest crop of first-year students and senior mentors met last week at a Columbia hotel for a kickoff dinner. Despite a 50-year age difference, Jackie Herzberg, a new student from Villisca, Iowa, quickly bonded with mentor Nancy Fritsch over a shared love of running. By the end of dinner, they had planned a joint jog on a local trail.

"It's going to be so mutually beneficial," said Herzberg, a University of Iowa graduate. "Having the support of someone knowing so much more about how to navigate the world around them is so important."

Fritsch, a retired teacher now in her seventh year with the program, remains connected to each of her previous student matches.

"It's like having seven grandchildren," she said. "I warn them: This is for life."



MU Health chief plans to retire

By Janese Silvey

Published August 23, 2012 at 3:48 p.m.

Updated August 24, 2012 at 2 p.m.

The University of Missouri Health System is losing another top administrator.

Jim Ross, chief executive officer of MU Health Care, announced yesterday he will retire effective Dec. 31. The announcement comes two months after Bob Churchill announced he would step down as dean of MU's School of Medicine after an internal investigation found one of his former department chairs guilty of billing fraud.

Ross is retiring because his five-year contract with the system is expiring, not because of the controversy, said Hal Williamson, vice chancellor of MU Health.

Williamson has announced replacements for both positions. Mitch Wasden will replace Ross and become chief executive officer while also continuing in his existing role as chief operating officer. The new title means he'll oversee the university's hospitals and clinics.

Les Hall, senior associate dean for clinical affairs at the School of Medicine, has been named interim dean.

The changes reflect a new day for the health system, Williamson said.

"I think for me, personally, it's bittersweet," he said. "I'm losing people I've partnered with and had good successes with over the last four years, and that's sad. But I'm gaining two new partners, both of whom are really committed to doing what we're trying to do here, and that's form a stronger alliance between the health system and the School of Medicine."

It has been a rough summer for the university's health operation. In June, two radiologists were fired after an investigation found they had signed off on certifications saying they performed services that actually had been performed by resident physicians. Ken Rall and Michael Richards are also under investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Asked whether other radiology employees have left or whether the university is facing federal fines, spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said administrators would not comment.

This month, the American Journal of the Medical Sciences printed an apology saying it published a research paper that two MU doctors, Amar Jadhav and Anand Chockalingam, plagiarized.

"It's been a difficult three months for me, but I'm very excited about where we're going," Williamson said. "We're in a great position right now."

Ross is credited with helping MU Health Care earn a "Most Wired" hospital status by Hospital and Health Networks magazine and snagging the health system's first Missouri Quality Award. On his watch, MU opened Women's and Children's Hospital, an orthopedic institute and a neurosciences center.

"Thanks to Jim Ross, MU Health Care is well positioned to continue meeting our mission of improving the health of all Missourians," Chancellor Brady Deaton said in a statement.

Williamson said Wasden brings the leadership skills necessary to continue that mission.

"It's sad to see these two iconic leaders here move on," he said. "On the other hand, most people are telling me, 'Wow, you found two really good people to move on and advance the health system.' "

Spirituality Linked With Mental Health Benefits: Study

If you're not in touch with your spiritual side, here's a good reason to start: It may hold benefits for your mental health.

A small new study shows that regardless of what religion you ascribe to, spirituality in general is linked with greater mental health. In particular, spirituality in the study was linked with decreased neuroticism and increased extraversion, researchers found.

"With increased spirituality people reduce their sense of self and feel a greater sense of oneness and connectedness with the rest of the universe," study researcher Dan Cohen, an assistant professor at the University of Missouri, said in a statement. "What was interesting was that frequency of participation in religious activities or the perceived degree of congregational support was not found to be significant in the relationships between personality, spirituality, religion and health."

The researchers analyzed several survey results, which included information from 160 people. Forty of them were Buddhists, 41 were Catholics, 22 were Jews, 31 were Protestants and 26 were Muslims, according to the study, which was published in the *Journal of Religion and Health*.

Recently, a Gallup-Healthways study showed that people who are religious report better health than their less-religious counterparts, HuffPost Religion reported.

Specifically, that study examined how health was better among people who considered themselves "very religious" compared with those who considered themselves only moderately religious or nonreligious.

They found that the "very religious" scored themselves slightly higher than the moderately religious and nonreligious in areas of quality of life, access to doctors, healthy habits, emotional health and job satisfaction. However, the nonreligious people scored their physical health higher than the religious people in the study, HuffPost Religion reported.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Pain-free alternative to dentist's drill is here

Researchers have invented an elegant device invented that they claim is a pain-free alternative to the dreaded dentist's drill, plus it could give fillings a longer life.

The new device created by researchers from the University of Missouri in the US is like an electric toothbrush and cleans out cavities with high energy gas and liquid particles.

It does more than cut through tooth decay - it's called a non-thermal argon plasma brush (NAPB) and as it shoots out electrically charged particles, it kills bacteria instantly.

Bacteria are the cause of tooth decay because the acids they produce can burn through tooth enamel - the hardest tissue in the body.

These bacteria feed on sugar which is why sweet foods promote tooth decay, the *Mirror* reported.

It's because of the toughness of enamel that conventional dentists' drills cause pain.

To penetrate enamel, drills set up strong vibrations throughout the tooth including the pulp where there are sensitive nerve endings. Vibrations from the drill set these nerves on edge.

But with the NAPB there's no drilling and therefore less discomfort for frightened patients because the highly sensitive nerves at the centre of the tooth are spared.

While the average filling lasts around 10 years, fillings done with NAPB are 60 per cent stronger meaning longer times between fillings.



Inequities still exist in unemployment

By Janese Silvey

Saturday, August 25, 2012

Differences in the unemployment rate among white males, women and minorities have decreased over the past few decades in the United States, but they still exist, a University of Missouri researcher says.

"The belief that Americans are achieving equal levels of unemployment is flawed," said Peter Mueser, an economics professor.

Statistically accounting for differences in professions and industry, Mueser and his team developed a more detailed reflection of unemployment experiences in different groups. They found that while overall unemployment rates for women are similar to men, women are more often employed in sectors with generally low unemployment, such as health care and education. The concentration of women in those fields inflates the average and masks higher unemployment rate in other sectors.

To conduct the study, Mueser used a statistical technique to adjust data across professions and industries to account for differences caused by greater representation of some groups in certain jobs. That showed what the unemployment rate would be for each group if all demographic groups had similar distributions across all professions and industries.

The research found that blacks and Asians continue to face higher unemployment rates than whites, and the difference isn't tied to the type of occupations they have.

Mueser thinks that indicates educational programs designed to increase the number of minorities in higher-paying jobs might not be sufficient. "Training more black lawyers wouldn't necessarily result in parity, since even within occupations, non-whites have higher unemployment," he said in a statement.

Mueser thinks recognizing those hidden employment differences could help educators and policymakers develop better programs to get rid of those persistent inequities. The study was accepted for publication in the Eastern Economic Journal.

Missouri Theatre deal seen as success in first year



August Kryger

The MU Faculty All Stars perform during the Jazz Under the Stars concert Aug. 16 atop the Missouri Theatre. A year into a partnership in which the University of Missouri is leasing and running the historic theater, those on both sides of the deal say they are pleased with how it's working.

By Janese Silvey

Friday, August 24, 2012

The partnership that saved Columbia's historic Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts marks its first anniversary tomorrow, and the match has proved successful, those involved say.

"We're just really, really pleased with how it's going," said John Murray, manager of Event Production Services at the University of Missouri.

A year ago tomorrow, MU and the Missouri Symphony Society entered into a contract that allows the university to lease the theater for \$12,000 a month. When the lease ends in two years, MU will have the option to buy the Ninth Street property for \$3.7 million.

"I don't see any reason we wouldn't" purchase it, Murray said. "Everything is working so positively, and the feedback we're getting from community groups" shows "everyone is tickled with the way things are being run."

For the Missouri Symphony Society, the arrangement has meant the ability to pay down debt after the 84-year-old Missouri Theatre reopened in 2008 with nearly \$10 million in bills from a major renovation and not enough in the donation coffers to pay them. Before MU took over, the theater had to temporarily close and at one point relied on volunteer staff.

For MU, the partnership provides another large performance space, allowing Murray's office to schedule more events. In previous years, he had to turn away some traveling performers because Jesse Auditorium was already booked.

In one case last year, Murray remembers the crew of a children's production asking to load backdrops and props into Jesse Auditorium a day earlier than planned. That conflicted with another event scheduled at the auditorium, but because he could move it to Missouri Theatre, Murray was able to satisfy everyone.

"In several instances, we double-booked ourselves, so it allowed us to spread out and make everyone happy," he said.

Also happy with the arrangement is MU's School of Music, which now has more access to the Missouri Theatre. The most significant improvement is that university choirs, orchestras and bands can rehearse more frequently in the performance venue, said Robert Shay, the school's director.

"Our old system had been mostly to use Jesse Auditorium, and there were constraints on that space," he said. "We'd go in the day of a concert, rehearse and then play that night."

And the sound is better, too, Shay said, noting Jesse Auditorium is more suited for plays and productions. "It's just a better space for our kind of music, which is acoustic," he said. "Audiences enjoy coming there. It's a more pleasurable experience visually and in terms of listening."

MU's management of the Missouri Theatre allowed the Missouri Symphony Society to bring back the Hot Summer Nights concert series in its six-week entirety, too, society board member Carole DeLaite said.

"So, all the pieces worked well," she said. "The technical crew was fine to work with our volunteers. We had virtually no ticket issues, and the box office was efficient and had good hours. I think we can say that all of those things have gone well."

This school year, MU is scheduled to host the band 38 Special, comedian Joan Rivers and the St. Louis Symphony at the theater.



Remediation

How much should MU do?

By Henry J. Waters III

Friday, August 24, 2012

In a perfect world, the University of Missouri and other institutions of higher education would only accept students able to do college work.

Instead, many colleges spend too much money and effort teaching skills that entering students should have gained before matriculation. This remediation requirement shifts high school responsibility and costs to colleges.

Maybe places like MU should just say no.

This question is asked by MU English Professor Richard Schwartz in his recent book, "Is a College Education Still Worth the Price?" In his book, Schwartz explains reasons why higher education is increasingly expensive and wonders when costly ancillary services might have to be reined in.

Universities, and even smaller private colleges, spend a lot on support services aimed at helping students succeed. In the race to balance budgets, colleges and universities push hard for student enrollment and then must provide extraordinary help to keep many students in school.

Many high school graduates lack adequate preparation, leaving institutions like MU with a hard choice: Either they maintain properly rigorous admission standards and take fewer students, or they fudge their standards and face the consequences. They want high enrollment numbers to help budgets, but they inevitably must compromise academic standards and/or face the cost and hassle of remediation.

This political push for college entrance has a perverse effect on K-12 education. The entire system provides strong incentive to promote students, finally emptying many into higher education remediation programs.

Any higher education institution can break this cycle by simply setting unbending standards for admission and continuing classroom success, but few will do so, particularly state institutions where political pressures for easy access and success are strong.

So, a wise observer like Schwartz reports a place like MU is spending a lot of money trying to teach high school skills and wonders how long it can go on.

One can make an idealized argument for an end to remediation in higher education. The model would have every institution set admission and retention standards commensurate with its role — some very high and others less so, right down to the essential community college level — then bring in students accordingly and apply the standards.

For any such thing to happen, higher education must adopt firm standards and lower education must understand the implications. High school graduates will qualify for college based on their abilities to meet the various thresholds. A wide range of acceptability will exist, but some won't make it.

Back in his day, UM President George Russell made a strong try to do just that. He went on a whirlwind tour explaining UM admission standards at high schools around the state, imploring them to graduate better students so more could attend the state university. I don't know whether Russell's foray resulted in long-term gain, but it was the right approach.

Today, academic standards at MU are higher than they have been at times in the past but obviously not challenging enough to obviate an expensive program of remediation.

At one time, few could attend college. K-12 schools focused on imparting basic skills providing most of the education for successful Americans. If high school students today developed stronger basic skills, more would be better equipped to succeed in college without remediation — or in life without college.

We know from our history that learning essential skills does not require electronic devices. Indeed, for the average person the opposite might be true. Smartphones are fun and handy but foment poor writing and sloppy thinking. Writing is the essential education technique. Teachers and parents will have to see to it today's electronic machines are a help rather than a hindrance.

HJW III

Education: the inculcation of the incomprehensible into the indifferent by the incompetent.

— JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES



Columbia schools want more dual-credit courses

By Catherine Martin

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Partially at the urging of Columbia Public Schools Superintendent Chris Belcher, the University of Missouri is discussing offering dual-credit courses at local high schools.

Dual-credit classes, taught at high schools by their own staff members with master's degrees, offer students a chance to earn credit for both high school and college from the same course. Unlike other college-credit programs for high schoolers, such as Advanced Placement courses, the classes don't require students to take a final test to earn the credit.

UM's St. Louis and Kansas City campuses already offer dual-credit opportunities. UMKC marks the 32nd anniversary of its program this year.

In the past, Columbia schools didn't really want MU to offer dual-credit programs because they might jeopardize the strength of the AP program, said Barbara Rupp, MU's director of admissions. Columbia students also have the opportunity to take classes for dual enrollment on the MU campus, Rupp said. Also, dual credit earned through other colleges can be transferred to MU if students end up enrolling there.

But Belcher said he sees unique benefits in offering more college-level courses on high school campuses.

"AP courses really attract that high-achieving college-bound type of student, ... kids that have goals and know they want to do something," Belcher said. "Dual credit is not meant to compete with AP courses but meant to be in other areas that connect with other kids and parents at a lower cost and as an easier entry into the college experience."

Belcher said he eventually would like to see every student graduate from Columbia Public Schools with at least three college credit hours to potentially nudge them toward higher education.

Taking the classes in high school also cuts costs: UMKC charges \$88.54 per credit hour for dual credit, compared with \$361.49 for one credit hour on campus.

Columbia schools already offer dual-credit classes through UMKC. Last school year, 160 students earned dual credit in personal finance, district Chief Academic Officer Sally Beth Lyon said. This year, the district added college algebra. The Columbia Area Career Center also offers dual-credit courses.

Having MU as a dual-credit partner wouldn't necessarily affect students, Belcher said, because they already can transfer credits directly to MU. But he does see other advantages.

"I think because it's in our own backyard, we'd have better connections with curriculum," he said. "We want to make sure our dual-credit classes require the same level of rigor and assessment it would if they took it at the university."

The level of academic rigor is one of the biggest concerns from the university's perspective.

"How do we know these courses being taught in high school are truly the equivalent of courses being taught at the university?" said Nicole Monnier, who chairs MU's academic affairs committee, where dual credit is an issue on the agenda this year.

No decisions have been made, but much of the committee's discussion, Monnier said, is likely to focus on "what kind of structure to set up for oversight." Money also is a consideration, she said. While students are saving money, the other side is a potential loss of funds for the university.

Columbia also is seeking to start a dual-credit partnership with Moberly Area Community College, Belcher said.