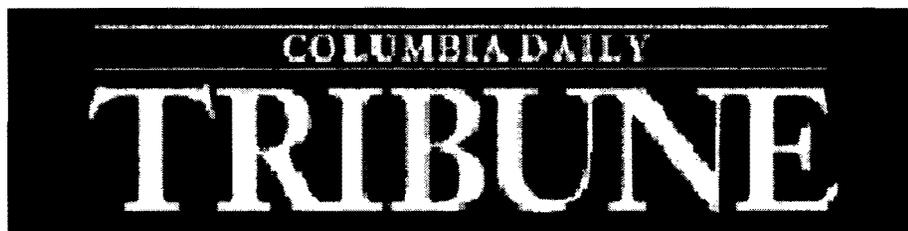


DEC 20 2012



## Emails detail planning for NSEI closure

### Admins debated rules' relevance.

By Janese Silvey

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

**University of Missouri administrators worried they would be violating system rules when they attempted to close the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute this year but ultimately decided the rules did not apply to their specific plans, records show.**

In emails the Tribune obtained through an open records request, Graduate School Dean George Justice wrote that he was concerned faculty members would insist MU follow a rule that requires administrators to set up a faculty panel to listen to the proposal to do away with NSEI.

He also noted that former Chancellor Richard Wallace — when setting up NSEI in 2002 — wrote that the institution could only be dissolved through a process that would require approval from the chancellor, the UM System president and the UM Board of Curators.

Justice and Provost Brian Foster concluded, though, that because they planned to move nuclear engineering programs into the College of Engineering and MU's Research Reactor rather than doing away with them, they would not have to follow that rule.

UM President Tim Wolfe and curators have agreed that NSEI is a campus issue.

The decision to close NSEI has halted specific degree programs, at least for now. The College of Engineering is asking the Graduate Senate Faculty to approve new nuclear engineering emphasis areas attached to existing degrees but not asking to duplicate what's now offered at NSEI.

In a Feb. 1 email — dated more than a month before the March 12 closure announcement — Justice wrote that administrators "may be forced to follow procedures that aren't actually relevant to the more subtle transformations that we're trying to make. And this might end up derailing what would be right for campus."

He then asked Foster: "Or am I overreacting?"

"I don't think you are overreacting at all, but at the same time, I don't think we can *not* go forward to get a better solution for nuclear science that is consistent with the spirit of Richard's letter," Foster replied. "It's going to be testy no matter what."

Emails also show administrators originally planned to announce the closure of NSEI in July. On Jan. 24, Justice wrote that he changed the date to March after a meeting with Chancellor Brady Deaton that emphasized moving "forward on this as quickly as possible."

Justice backed away from the plan to close NSEI on March 15, agreeing to keep the structure intact for current students until they graduate. New students are not being admitted at this time.

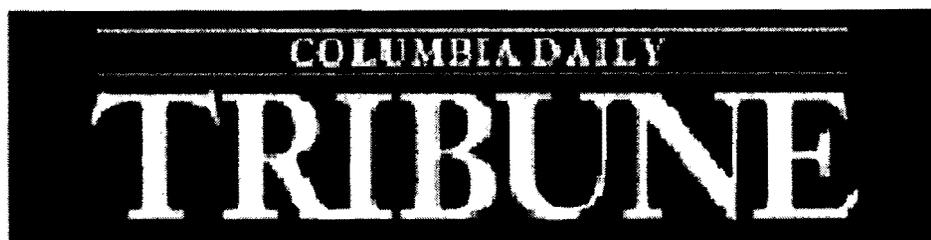
The emails say little about how the change might affect students, although Justice noted: "We need to make sure that current students feel 'safe' with the transition." Foster said additional discussions about current and future students happened verbally.

Justice has said discussions about the future of NSEI have been going on with faculty for years. The records indicate, though, that he did not intend for faculty to know in advance about plans to close NSEI. After detailing a small group of people who should be informed, including the MU News Bureau, Justice wrote: "At the same time, we need to keep a careful lid on this."

That same day, Foster wrote that administrators should consult with NSEI faculty before the announcement.

"We need to have some kind of communication with the NSEI people, I'm afraid, before this all goes public — that will be nasty, but I think it may be more nasty if we don't," Foster wrote. "I guess I'm just saying that the coordination/alignment/timing of these three matters — NSEI, Truman, Grad School — has to be very well thought out."

When the March announcement — which also included news of restructuring the Truman School of Public Affairs — came out, NSEI faculty members said they had no previous knowledge of the plan.



## **MU puts nuclear engineering grad admissions on hold**

By Janese Silvey

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

**Students wanting to enroll in University of Missouri graduate-level nuclear engineering programs next fall currently don't have any way to apply.**

MU administrators have closed admissions to the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute, which houses nuclear engineering degree programs. The College of Engineering has not yet secured approval from the Graduate Faculty Senate to add nuclear emphasis areas to its graduate programs. Even if approval is granted, the college is not asking to duplicate NSEI programs. That means students interested in master's or doctoral degrees in nuclear medical or health physics or nuclear power have no options at MU.

Graduate School Dean George Justice announced in March that NSEI would close. At the time, administrators envisioned moving nuclear engineering programs into the College of Engineering and creating another nuclear engineering center at the MU Research Reactor. Those plans have not solidified.

Administrators and the professors who make up NSEI are negotiating and say they hope to resolve the issue in time to admit students next fall. Sudarshan Loyalka, a curators' professor in nuclear engineering, said NSEI faculty are agreeable to moving out of the Graduate School into another college as long as the four professors transition together, keeping current programs, research projects and grants intact.

Justice said if faculty are willing to move to another academic unit such as the engineering school, admissions can reopen. But "if academic authority for the current Nuclear Engineering programs isn't moved early enough for this admissions cycle, students won't be admitted for fall 2013," he said in an email.

Provost Brian Foster said he's interested in having an interdisciplinary nuclear engineering unit within the College of Engineering, but not NSEI.

"I don't think we're doing anybody any favor if we admit new students in an administrative unit that is not going to exist in the future," he said. "What I'd really like to see — my first choice — would be that NSEI faculty agree that they're the owners of their engineering focus but be part of a broader nuclear focus and admit students to that along with other concentration areas."

Loyalka argues that it's not that simple. NSEI's medical physics program was accredited last year after a lengthy process, and that accreditation won't simply transfer if the structure of NSEI changes, he said. Plus, faculty members have contracts that were specifically awarded to NSEI as it now exists, he said, including federal grant dollars to recruit students.

In emails obtained by the Tribune, students wanting to enroll in NSEI expressed confusion about why they can't apply online. Names of the students were blacked out of the emails, but one student sent a message in late October saying his or her friends were already receiving acceptance letters to graduate schools. The student expressed a willingness to wait for MU to open admissions to NSEI, "for I believe this program is one of the best in this country."

In a reply dated Oct. 5, Justice told one student programs would be open for admissions "in the near future."

The UM Board of Curators has stayed out of the NSEI discussion, calling it a campus issue. Told last week that students were not being allowed to apply, incoming board Chairman Wayne Goode said he is concerned and would ask about it.

Closed admissions aren't the only potential impact of NSEI changes. Some in the industry this summer said MU's attempted closure of NSEI might hurt Missouri's chances to secure federal funding that Ameren Missouri and Westinghouse Electric Co. were seeking to build and operate small modular nuclear reactors. That funding ultimately was awarded to the Tennessee Valley Authority and Babcock & Wilcox.



## NSEI: A 'campus issue'?

By Janese Silvey

Posted December 19, 2012 at 2:15 p.m.

"It's a campus issue."

**I've heard that repeatedly from curators when I've asked them about MU's attempts to close the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute.**

But at what point does a campus so badly mess something up that curators intervene?

And, yes, incoming board Chairman Wayne Goode agreed last week that calling the NSEI issue "a mess" is a fair characterization.

Goode said he'd been kept abreast of the issue until around September when correspondence ceased. He assumed things had been worked out.

They have not.

Students can't apply to graduate-level nuclear engineering programs at MU this coming fall. That's a problem, Goode admitted, saying he'd inquire about the status.

Curators might have been better off being involved in the decision from the beginning like former MU Chancellor Richard Wallace envisioned. When Wallace created the structure of NSEI in 2002, he specifically wrote that it could not be dissolved without going through a process that would require approval from the chancellor, the UM System president and the Board of Curators. These days, Wallace has wanted to stay out of the situation but one has to wonder whether he predicted closing NSEI in any other way would have the exact repercussions the university is seeing today.

Instead, MU administrators decided the rules didn't apply in the NSEI case and apparently curators and the president have agreed.

If NSEI was a campus issue in March when administrators first announced it would close, though, the impact has since expanded. MU's attempts to close NSEI have hurt the campus academically—students wanting graduate-level nuclear engineering degrees can't even enroll. It possibly impacted the state's chances of securing Department of Energy money awarded to design and build small nuclear reactors,

professionals in the field have said. Other research funded from grants specifically awarded to NSEI also could be in jeopardy, as well as the nuclear medical physics' accreditation.

Curators are, indeed, responsible for making sure the four campuses serve their academic, research and service missions.



## **Adolescent sibling fights can affect anxiety, depression and self-esteem.**

### **Story Highlights**

- Impact on mental health varies by conflict type
- Conflicts over equality, fairness and personal space found to be most common
- Ways to prevent disputes include setting rules and using a calendar for chores

Family squabbles are to be expected, especially during times of holiday togetherness. But a new study suggests that seemingly simple conflicts between adolescent siblings can have negative consequences for teens' later emotional well-being.

Researchers report that conflicts about personal space and property, such as borrowing items without asking and hanging around when older siblings have friends over, are associated with increased anxiety and lower self-esteem in teens a year later. And fights over issues of fairness and equality, such as whose turn it is to do chores, are associated with later depression in teens.

**Not all sibling conflicts are equal, and not all "influence adolescent adjustment in the same way," says Nicole Campione-Barr, an assistant professor of psychological sciences at the University of Missouri and lead author of the study, published today in the journal *Child Development*.**

"Previous research has examined the impact of frequency and intensity of conflicts between siblings, but not how different types of conflict might impact individual adjustment," she says.

Using interviews and questionnaires, Campione-Barr and colleagues had 145 pairs of siblings (average ages 15 and 12) rate different topics of possible conflict with their sibling, noting the frequency and intensity of the arguments.

When researchers examined correlations between the arguments and teens' self-reports of depressed mood, anxiety and self-esteem after one year, topics related to fairness and equality and invasion of personal domain were most common.

"Fights about borrowing things without asking, going into my room without asking, and other issues about privacy invasion, such as being around when my friends are over, are particularly important for adolescents because this is a time in their lives when they're striving for independence and autonomy from the family," says Campione-Barr.

Feeling as though someone's always looking over your shoulder or constantly tagging along and never giving you personal space "is going to make you anxious and nervous and concerned about whether you're your own person and whether you'll ever get to do your own thing," she says. "And it will have a similar impact on self-esteem as well."

Conflicts associated with fairness are mostly about "shared resources and responsibilities within the family," she adds. "If there are a lot of these conflicts, and if they are particularly frequent, it's more likely an indication that one sibling is not getting a fair share of the family pie. They're the ones that are being pushed out and are the less powerful of the two. This is why we think it's particularly problematic for depressive symptoms."

Results related to depression were found in all adolescents, regardless of age or sex, but results related to anxiety and self-esteem appeared to be more common for some siblings than others -- younger brothers with older brothers and girls with brothers had more anxiety; teens in mixed-gender sibling pairs had lower self-esteem.

Prior research has shown that sibling conflict has negative implications for youth adjustment, but this new study, "contributes significantly in showing that what teens fight about makes a difference," says Susan McHale, director of the Social Science Research Institute at Penn State University.

And the findings about the significance of equality and fairness add to research on parents' differential treatment of siblings, which is known to have "negative implications for youth adjustment," McHale says. The new study documents "how these dynamics cross over to affect sibling relationships, and through those, youth depression."

Although parents may be inclined to intercede and negotiate these arguments, "some research has shown that by adolescence, when parents step in too much, it makes the relationship worse and makes conflict worse between adolescent siblings," says Campione-Barr.

Better alternatives for preventing disputes and avoiding favoritism include setting household rules, such as knocking before entering a sibling's room, she says. Also, sticking to a calendar for chores and setting defined time limits for turns with household electronics and other shared devices can help reduce conflicts.