



MU News Bureau

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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

New chancellor gets an earful about turning Mizzou around

By: Ashley Jost

Watch the story:

http://video.stltoday.com?ndn.trackingGroup=91130&ndn.siteSection=ad_stltoday&ndn.videoId=32941733

COLUMBIA, Mo. • With just over a month under his belt as the chancellor at the University of Missouri-Columbia, Alex Cartwright said he had gotten an earful about how to improve a university that has faced a series of struggles in the past two years.

But on Wednesday he also issued a challenge to students and faculty at a school where he is still finding his bearings.

“I say to people, ‘I am not easily offended and I want you to tell me what you honestly think,’” he said. “If you’re not honest with me, we can’t improve as an institution.”

Cartwright gave his first extended interviews and media availability Wednesday on the Columbia campus since he arrived Aug. 1 from the State University of New York, where he was the provost.

Throughout the day, it was clear that Cartwright is on the same page with University of Missouri System President Mun Choi in terms of how to plot out a recovery for a school that has faced declining enrollment and financial cutbacks.

The two leaders were named as replacement for the top brass that was ousted after student protests in 2015 that centered on issues of race.

Cartwright still hears about 2015, and he's fine with it.

"Human nature is that we very quickly focus and remember negative experience," Cartwright said Wednesday. "Actually, it's a good thing because then you know how to avoid them."

Choi [shared a similar sentiment recently with the Post-Dispatch](#). He questioned how the system or campus could ever recover if leaders were unwilling to address what happened, despite neither of them being around when it happened.

Cartwright says he has had some uncomfortable talks about Mizzou's sordid last few years, and he's happy to hear concerns. But he throws back a question: "What should we be doing?" That's yielded good feedback in his first five weeks, he said.

Similar to Choi, who's 53, Cartwright, 52, said he was hopeful that he could finish out his career at Mizzou.

"Missouri just feels like home," he told a crowd of reporters. "There's just something about here that feels pretty special to me.

Cartwright was asked Wednesday about what his legacy would be — a question he answered only indirectly.

"Leaders will come and go at institutions, but what happens with the institution, how you set up the culture and what the institution wants to become is more critical than any of the leaders," he said. "I would love to see that this institution starts to take on that personality. That it realizes how great it is and that it can truly become a national leader."

New University of Missouri Chancellor Cartwright discusses protests and plans for the future

By RUDI KELLER

There are more online degree offerings, research opportunities and students in the University of Missouri's future, Chancellor Alexander Cartwright said Wednesday.

What is uncertain, he said, is how he would handle another episode where scholarship athletes refuse to participate in their sport in protest of some university policy or personality.

The November 2015 protests that ended with the resignations of President Tim Wolfe and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin burst into the national and international news cycles when members of the Tigers football team announced they would boycott practices and games. The team members, later backed by Coach Gary Pinkel, said they would not play until Wolfe resigned as demanded by the Concerned Student 1950 demonstrators camped on Carnahan Quadrangle.

In a wide-ranging session with reporters Wednesday, Cartwright noted the potential for athletics to showcase the institution and build pride among supporters.

“There is no hiding the fact that if you look at many of the people who go to schools with major college athletics, they stay connected with that institution because they see the sports on national TV,” Cartwright said.

But when asked whether athletes who repeated the 2015 boycott would face disciplinary action for violating conditions of their scholarships, Cartwright said he didn't know. An engineer by training, he gave an engineering answer to how he would handle events.

“It is very difficult for me to say what's the right approach to a problem unless I know the boundary conditions,” Cartwright said. “The boundary conditions today are completely different from the boundary conditions in 2015, so I don't know how we would react because I won't know it until it happens.”

Cartwright took over as chancellor Aug. 1, ending a 21-month period when the campus was under interim leadership. The former provost and executive vice-chancellor of the State

University of New York, Cartwright received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Iowa.

He's heard a lot of positive things about MU and is impressed by the level of support around the state, he said. Cartwright also said he wants people to know he can accept hearing negative things as well.

"I want everybody to realize they can say anything to me," Cartwright said. "I say to people, I am not easily offended and I want you to tell me what you honestly think."

During the session, which lasted about 75 minutes, Cartwright answered questions about his future — "I'd love to retire here, to be honest," he said — and recent news developments, repeating the university's commitment to students enrolled under the DACA program.

It is a little early to have a grand vision of what he would like to accomplish, Cartwright said. He took over his job after the implementation of severe budget cuts and while a review of programs with an eye to additional cuts is underway. The academic year began with an enrollment drop that leaves the campus with 5,000 fewer students than in fall 2015.

But he laid out ideas, foremost a renovation of the university's reputation and reach. He promised if the Land Grant Compact, which will pay the unmet tuition costs for students eligible for Pell grants, is oversubscribed, the additional funds needed to support those students will be found.

The concept of the land grant college is fundamental to his plans, Cartwright said. The name land grant is applied to universities in each state that benefited from grants of federal land, provided in laws passed in 1862 and 1890. The grants provided funding to support scientific agriculture and engineering education.

"I would love to see that we become this model, new land grant institution for the country. To me, that is critical."

President Mun Choi, who took over his post March 1, has said he wants to overhaul the university system so the campuses work more closely together. He supports those goals and praised Choi's work ethic and personality.

"He is the best person I could think of working with, honestly," Cartwright said. "I think our vision is really well aligned, we both want the institution to be exceptional, we both want and are willing to make difficult decisions that will get us there, and I think that is critical in a relationship, for us to have well-aligned goals."

One area Choi identified early is the online offerings of the university. Each campus has its own enrollment system and taking courses available online from different campuses is difficult. Choi said he wants to streamline the process.

MU offers 10 online undergraduate degree programs, including nine where no attendance on campus is required, and 43 master's degree programs, with 36 that can be completed without

physical presence on campus. Last year, 2,439 students were enrolled as online or off-campus students, up from 1,332 in 2007.

There needs to be more variety in the programs and a way to take courses easily from any campus, Cartwright said. The campuses are in discussions on how to make that happen, he said.

“If you were to envision broadband reaching all areas of Missouri, then everybody has an opportunity to be engaging with one of our institutions, then we need to make sure we have the online programs that they are looking for,” Cartwright said.

At the State University of New York, Cartwright developed an engineering lab that won accolades in 2013 from the Society of Manufacturing Engineers for developing materials that can be used for spectral analysis at low cost.

The Laboratory for Advanced Spectroscopic Evaluation was developed from a start-up grant from the university when he was hired and older equipment used by a former faculty member, he said. The material for developing high-profile laboratories is in place at MU, he said.

What is needed to build up those materials, he said, is a good sales pitch. Cartwright said his course in rhetoric was the most important course he ever took. It taught him how to speak and write with his audience in mind, not for himself.

“How do I write so that you read a proposal and you are all of a sudden captivated by this idea?” Cartwright said. “There are lots of great ideas. You read the proposal and the proposal somehow kills the idea because it doesn’t sell it well.”

MISSOURIAN

Chancellor: MU, as AAU, land-grant university, can become trailblazer

By: Edward McKinley

Alexander Cartwright, MU’s first permanent chancellor since late 2015, has high hopes for his new home: He wants MU to champion a new model of a land-grant institution.

In a Jesse Hall conference room, Cartwright answered questions from about 20 members of the news media for just over an hour. He repeatedly emphasized the need for enhanced engagement

between MU and the state, and he called for a culture to be instilled where innovation, risk-taking and creativity can blossom. This combination of improved coordination between the school and its community and an emphasis on a successful academic culture was wrapped up by Cartwright in the term “New Land-Grant” institution.

Although MU is bleeding from its largest revenue streams, state funding and tuition, Cartwright said, “There is tremendous opportunity for us, as a comprehensive, land-grant, AAU institution, to address grand challenges of Missouri and grand challenges of society, and that is something that is unique to an institution like this.”

Of the 62 members in the Association of American Universities, an invitation-only club of research universities, only 18, including MU, are land-grant institutions. These are schools created from the Morrill Acts of 1862, 1890 and 1994, and their shared goal is to provide education for members of the working class across the country, according to the [Association of Public Land-Grant Universities’ website](#).

Universities across the countries used to be ivory towers, Cartwright said, where knowledge was gathered and hoarded by only those who could afford to attend. Although much less prevalent than it once was, that mentality persists. Cartwright wants it completely erased.

“We will not have distinctions between the walls of the university and the community,” he said.

He wants the school to be “porous,” where members of the community come in and students and faculty from the school go out. His hope is that research done at MU will be shared with Missouri communities and directly affect the lives of state residents. The goal is to improve the extension and engagement opportunities offered by MU for Missourians, he said.

MU can begin to accomplish this by removing barriers to creativity and innovation for the school’s researchers and providing them with the resources and encouragement they need to turn their great ideas into a reality, he said.

Cartwright, whose degrees were in electrical engineering, said the most helpful class in his academic career wasn't an engineering or a mathematics course — it was diction, he said. Learning how to better mold arguments helped him win funding throughout his career because he was able to draft proposals clearly highlighting his good ideas. There are countless people at MU and across the country who have great ideas, Cartwright said, but for those ideas to become a reality, the researchers need to be able to express themselves in a proposal. Campus leadership could provide help with proposals.

MU could also help by removing other barriers, he said, such as easing the administrative burden placed on researchers. Cartwright estimated that as much as 40 percent of a researcher's time is spent ensuring compliance with restrictive university policies. Those rules are far too cumbersome, he said. By placing unneeded restraints on researchers, MU is taking away time to focus on their projects and, as a result, losing out on valuable innovation.

MU is working to raise faculty members' salaries, Cartwright said, because they are not competitive with peer institutions. Even though there are budget cuts to every division and department of the school, it is vital to raise faculty salaries for MU to retain the top-tier talent it has, he said.

One example of how MU is demolishing walls separating schools from their communities, Cartwright said, is with the [Missouri Land Grant Compact](#). Announced Aug. 24, the compact provides grants that will cover tuition and fees for thousands of low-income Missouri residents starting next fall. Funding for the grants draws from money freed up by strategic budgetary cuts this summer and funds already being spent on need-based financial aid. If more students than expected are eligible for the compact's grants, then MU will need to locate additional funding, Cartwright said. If this happens, he's confident the school will be able to fundraise enough. MU plans for the program to continue indefinitely, he said.

Both Cartwright and University of Missouri System President Mun Choi are engineers and have each hammered home the importance of research to MU's status as an AAU, Research I institution, but Cartwright on Wednesday also spoke to the importance of MU's humanities and liberal arts programs.

“I’ve talked quite often about technologies and the advances of technologies, but it isn’t technology that defines who we are. It’s the cultures,” he said. “We connect because of all the things that have to do with art or music or the humanities. We connect with people, and it’s those things that define us as people.”

Cartwright said that in the face of an ongoing review of the school’s academic programs, he is committed wholeheartedly to the humanities programs at MU. His children are musicians and that has made a tremendous impact on their lives, he said, and if he had the opportunity to go back in his life, he would learn to play an instrument.

He said humanities and liberal arts degrees are extremely important to the school and noted that even if humanities or liberal arts graduates may not make as much money initially upon graduation, the degrees are of comparable value to any other in the long run.

Return on investment is a vital part of a student’s decision to go to college and where they go to college, Cartwright said, but return on investment means more than earning potential. Return on investment is “not just a dollar,” he said; it’s also how education contributes to quality and satisfaction in life.

“We have to rethink what it means to get a degree and what a degree means,” Cartwright said. “Return on investment means, ‘How effectively have we educated our students to understand that they need to continue to learn throughout their entire lives?’ If we can teach that and have people understand that you can’t just be stagnant in your education — you can’t just think that you get a four-year degree and then that’s it, forever — then I think we’ve done our job.”

Cartwright articulated the importance of athletics to the well-being of a university.

“We need to be thinking about how we use that as both a way to enrich the student experience here and to also enrich the identification of people with the institution,” he said. Athletics are a tremendous opportunity to foster connection between students or alumni and their school, he said, and seeing MU on national television is a great way to build engagement. He also pointed out that the athletics department almost entirely pays for itself.

Cartwright said he believes his relationship with MU athletic director Jim Sterk is “incredibly strong.”

“I actually really like working with Jim,” he said. “I think he has a view of what athletics is and what it should be that is well aligned with my view.”

Asked by a reporter how he would respond if football players were to strike again, Cartwright declined to speculate. He said he hoped to deescalate any such issue before it got to the point of a protest. He said that any future situation would be different than the past, that he didn’t want to reflect on decisions others made and that he would know what to do if it ever happens. He said the situation is like solving an engineering problem, where the constraints of any issue are unique, so he wouldn’t want to speculate unless he knew the exact nature of the situation.

When he was further pressed to answer if pulling athletes’ scholarships was ever appropriate, Cartwright sighed. “Under certain circumstances, I’m sure they are,” he said. “I just don’t know when. I don’t know. I don’t know. I don’t actually know.”



MU Chancellor holds first press conference since taking position

By: Alexis Reese

Watch the story: <http://www.komu.com/news/mu-chancellor-holds-first-press-conference-since-taking-position>

COLUMBIA – University of Missouri Chancellor Alexander Cartwright hosted a conference with local news media for the first time since assuming the position.

Cartwright became chancellor in May and joined the university in August.

One move Cartwright made was announcing the Missouri Land Grant Compact, which would cover tuition and fees for Missouri students that are eligible for Pell grants.

He said the students aren't only the ones that would benefit from the grant.

"It'll ultimately help all of us because if we can help people to complete faster, then they don't take on as much debt," he said. "When they don't take on as much debt, then they can more rapidly contribute back into society in a more meaningful way."

Cartwright also discussed the recent decision by the Trump administration to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, also known as DACA.

The program, created by the Obama administration, allows undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as minors to stay.

Cartwright said the university is looking into the situation before making any moves.

"As soon as we know more about where things are changing, then we'll be able to work more closely with them," he said. "It's hard for us to say right now, what we'll do because we honestly don't know exactly what is going to happen."

More than 35 students who qualify as DACA recipients attend one of the UM System campuses.



New MU chancellor discusses plans for student enrollment, engagement

By: Sara Maslar-Donar

Watch the story: <http://www.abc17news.com/news/new-mu-chancellor-discusses-plans-for-student-enrollment-engagement/617232631>

University of Missouri Chancellor Alexander Cartwright sat down with reporters for the first time since joining the university in August and discussed his long-term plans for the university.

Cartwright fielded questions on a number of topics, including the future of Deferred Action for

Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students at the university, as well as how he plans to improve community engagement and increase scholarship opportunities for incoming students.

Cartwright signed the Missouri Land Grant Compact in August, which will offer grants to low income students next year. The scholarships will be offered to Missourians eligible for Pell grants and will cover the full cost of tuition for some honors students. Mizzou estimated the grants could help thousands of students.

That new compact is expected to provide a small boost in enrollment by allowing students who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford college to be able to attend Mizzou.

ABC17 News has already reported on the university's new [strategic enrollment management committee](#), which has been tasked with creating new ways to increase enrollment. Beyond that, Cartwright said he didn't have any other specific solutions.

"That process is complex and it's going to take us a number of months to arrive at the final strategic enrollment plan," he said. "It will probably be out between May and June of next year."

When it comes to DACA, Cartwright said it's hard for university officials to say exactly what they plan to do at this point because the future of the program is uncertain.

"As soon as we know what will happen, we hope to reach directly out to the students and talk to them," he said.

The chancellor provided an update on the current budget situation at the university and said they're currently reviewing all the programs available.

"I think it's a healthy thing to do at this time, to be thinking about which programs we might be sunseting over time," he said.

Students that are currently enrolled in those programs will have the opportunity to complete them, he said. "You don't just cut things just to cut. What you're doing is thinking about then where do we want to invest and how are we going to grow."

Cartwright encouraged better collaboration between the university and the greater community, citing the tremendous economic impact the university has on Columbia and surrounding cities, especially through job creation.

The chancellor also encouraged what he called "difficult conversations" with the community about the university perception and certain programs.

"As soon as I hear about something and it's in our power to make changes that make that better, we're trying to change that," he said. "The feedback from the community is incredibly valuable. I need to know what the community feels."



[New MU Chancellor ready for any challenges that come his way](#)

By: Mark Slavit

Watch the story: <http://krcgtv.com/news/local/new-mu-chancellor-overcoming-challenges>

COLUMBIA — MU Chancellor Alexander Cartwright said he was ready for the challenges facing him since joining Mizzou in early August.

Cartwright, who [was introduced](#) in May as Mizzou's chancellor, said he wanted to help a campus clouded by controversy and setbacks. He said he had a long list of problems as he becomes the new leader of the MU Campus. Mizzou was in the national spotlight because of racial tensions, declining enrollment, a dwindling budget and the disapproval of campus leadership by many state lawmakers.

"We might have a difference of opinion on what investment goes where and those types of things," Cartwright said. "You can work around all of that as long as you recognize that everybody has the same core values in terms of trying to make the institution better."

Cartwright's most recent challenge was the loss of 400 jobs on the Mizzou campus. Campus leaders cut back on their programs because of a \$55 million state budget cut which was followed by a 2.1 percent hike in tuition.

"If you're thinking about solving problems, solutions come about when you try something that hasn't been tried before. You might fail. You might fail 99 out of 100 times," he said. "It only takes that one success for you to actually do something and change actually how things are done."

Cartwright said he wants stability at Mizzou. He replaced Interim Chancellor Hank Foley who replaced former MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin who resigned during the racial turmoil of 2015. Cartwright said he was ready to make bold decisions. The new chancellor planned to regain the support of Mizzou alumni and students while convincing Missouri lawmakers that his school is worth more state funding.

He joined Mizzou from the State University of New York where he served as Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor of the 64-campus system.



New MU Chancellor Discusses Future of the Missouri Land Grant Compact

By: Hannah Haynes

Chancellor Alexander Cartwright started work early last month at the University of Missouri as the first permanent chancellor since R. Bowen Loftin stepped down amid protests in November 2015. Chancellor Cartwright and the university have since announced a major initiative called the Missouri Land Grant Compact.

The Missouri Land Grant Compact plans to make higher education more affordable for Pell Grant eligible in-state students. The compact will cover tuition and fees for any eligible student who is admitted to MU. More than 3,500 students from Missouri will qualify.

According to a press release, the program will meet all unmet financial need, including tuition, fees, books and room and board, for Pell-eligible students enrolled in the Honors College.

At an event for the media on Sept. 6, Chancellor Cartwright said future funding will be determined as the university sees the initial numbers for the program.

“We put the compact in place and we want it to continue indefinitely. We don’t have any plans on it going away. And if we get more students than what we expected than we’re going to have to figure out ways to get that money,” Cartwright said.

In May 2017, MU increased in-state tuition by 2.1 percent. Cartwright said this makes the new program all the more important.

“If I look at the increases that have been at Mizzou, they are lower than a lot of other institutions. And the tuition has been controlled now for quite a number of years and very modest increases over time. But the truth is that, for some students, it’s still not affordable,” Cartwright said.

The Compact will be available for students beginning in fall 2018 and will be open to incoming freshmen as well as continuing and transfer students.

T COLUMBIA DAILY TRIBUNE

University of Missouri wins court battle over intellectual property rights

By RUDI KELLER

The University of Missouri won a court victory Wednesday when a jury awarded the school \$600,000, concluding an eight-year fight over intellectual property rights of faculty members.

The jury found in the university’s favor on two of three allegations — that Galen Suppes breached his contract and duty of loyalty by his actions that the university claims scuttled a deal to market a process for making propylene glycol developed in Suppes’ lab. The jury found in Suppes favor, however, on the allegation that he was responsible for the deal’s failure. The jury awarded \$300,000 damages on each of the two counts where it ruled in the university’s favor.

Suppes is a former tenured engineering professor fired by MU for reasons that included harassment of students and willful violation of university rules. The verdict came at the end of an eight-day trial.

Russell Jones of the Polsinelli law firm, representing the UM System, asked the jury for an award of \$3.7 million. After the verdict, Suppes said the result was a kind of victory because the jury ruled against the university on the charge he improperly interfered with the business deal.

“Their attorney bills were well in excess of” the award, Suppes said. “It makes a huge statement for the type of university this is when they stop a grievance and file a lawsuit and don’t even recover what their attorney costs were. That is a huge statement of what this university is about.”

The university defended its decision to sue Suppes in a statement issued Wednesday night by the MU News Bureau. Suppes has sued the university and 10 university employees in six unsuccessful lawsuits, according to the statement. Suppes is currently appealing a ruling in favor of the university’s process for removing tenured faculty. Under university rules, faculty who achieve innovations or create inventions while on university time or in university labs must notify the university they have made a patentable discovery and assign their intellectual property rights to the university. The university pays the costs of patenting the invention.

In return, the faculty receive one-third of the royalties and a share goes to their academic department.

The university stated the University Patent Committee met four times to deal with ownership issues for two dozen of Suppes’ inventions, ruling against him each time.

“The university will continue to protect its intellectual rights, as well as those of the faculty and taxpayers,” the statement reads. “Protecting and commercializing the intellectual property created by university researchers is pivotal to the growth and strength of our research and economic development programs.”

In his closing argument, Jones said Suppes was motivated by greed. The sale of propylene glycol — a key component of antifreeze and deicing solutions for aircraft — made from soy byproducts was potentially worth millions annually in royalties.

“Rules are no good if they don’t apply to everyone,” Jones said.

The demand for millions in compensation didn’t make sense, attorney George Smith said in closing arguments on Suppes’ behalf.

“What the university was doing here is counting their chickens before they hatched. That entire analysis was based on faulty, flawed and unrealistic evidence,” Smith said.

Smith and James Kernell represented Suppes. Judge Gary Lynch of the Southern District Court of Appeals presided over the case.

Suppes’ disputes with MU over intellectual property rights began almost as soon as he was hired in 2001 as a tenured faculty member of the College of Engineering. During the trial, Jones

presented evidence showing that he altered forms notifying the university of his patentable discoveries, filed for patents in his own name for inventions created at MU and refused to sign documents.

The university documented more than 30 occasions where he did not follow rules for assigning rights before the lawsuit over propylene glycol was filed in 2009 and another 19 afterward, Jones told the jury.

In the battle over propylene glycol, Suppes claimed that key elements of the discovery were achieved before he was hired by MU. In 2006, MU announced that it had a deal with a company called Senergy Chemical to scale the process to create industrial quantities and license manufacturers around the globe.

The deal fell apart when a Korean company, which was preparing to invest in production facilities, discovered a key patent was in limbo. The absence of Suppes' signature on a patent application led the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to declare the application abandoned. Suppes also sought to market the process to Senergy's competitors, including Dow Chemical, and claimed that a firm he created, Renewables Associates, owned all the intellectual property rights to the process.

"What in the world made him think this was OK?" Jones asked.

Suppes sought to protect all his rights and gave the university the rights due it because he was on faculty and also sought to protect rights he claimed the university did not own, Smith said.

"He may have been a pain in their rear end, but he stuck to his principles," Smith said. "We can't fault a man or woman for doing that."

It is impossible to know for certain, Jones told the jury, because Suppes did not testify. He used that fact as a hammer at the end of his argument to the jury. In a civil trial, unlike a criminal trial, a jury is allowed to consider why someone failed to testify, Jones said.

"You can infer from the fact that he didn't get up there and testify that anything he was going to say was bad for his side," Jones said.

Jones was not being completely truthful with the jury, Smith said. He could have called Suppes to the stand at any time.

"My job is to look at the evidence they put on and see if they've proven their case," Smith said. "If I don't think they've proven their case, I don't need to put anybody on."

MISSOURIAN

Former MU professor must pay \$600,000 in damages to university

By: Rachel McKee Taylor

Galen Suppes, a former MU chemical engineering professor, was ordered to pay \$600,000 in damages after a 12-person jury voted in favor of the UM System Board of Curators on Wednesday in an intellectual property lawsuit.

The jury found him liable for two of the three claims alleged by the curators: that he was in violation of his contract with the UM System and for working in competition against the system.

In a statement Wednesday night, the UM System affirmed the ruling.

“The university will continue to protect its intellectual rights, as well as those of the faculty and taxpayers. Protecting and commercializing the intellectual property created by university researchers is pivotal to the growth and strength of our research and economic development programs,” the statement read.

The case, which began Aug. 25, involved technology Suppes developed that converts glycerin to acetol, propylene glycol and antifreeze.

The curators sued Suppes in April of 2009, claiming he had filed for patents on inventions and assigned rights to outside entities without approval from the UM System.

Suppes then countersued a few months later. On Tuesday, presiding Judge Gary Lynch granted a motion filed by the defense to dismiss all counts in Suppes’ counterclaim.

Suppes licensed the propylene glycol technology to the Mid-America Research and Development foundation in 2005 through Renewable Alternatives, a company he started in 2002, [according to previous Missourian reporting](#).

Attorney Russell Jones, representing the UM System, said that in assigning the exclusive rights to the technology to his company rather than UM System, Suppes breached his contract with the system.

[According to the collected rules and regulations of UM](#), the system owns the rights to all inventions developed within the inventor's scope of employment. When a university employee invents something, the person must fill out an invention disclosure form for the university, assigning the university the rights to their invention.

If the inventor believes that the invention was made outside of the scope of their employment, the person can request a waiver, allowing them rights to the invention. An employee is not allowed to file for a patent unless the university has waived its rights to the invention.

The UM system argued that the technology was developed with university equipment on university property, and thus belonged to the university.

Suppes' defense attorney, George Smith, argued that both Renewable Alternatives and the system owned the technology.

But Jones told the jury that on 34 occasions, Suppes altered forms, either changing or deleting the language that would grant the system the rights to his inventions.

Jones argued that these actions caused delays that cost the system time and money in addition to harming relationships the university had with other companies, specifically Senergy Chemical Corp. Jones said that the total loss to the university due to Suppes' actions was \$3.7 million.

"This was greedy and this was wrong," Jones said.

When confronted about his actions, Suppes blamed others for what went wrong, Jones said.

“One name was missing from the list of people he was blaming,” Jones said. “That name was Galen Suppes.”

But Suppes’ attorney argued there was no proof that those actions actually cost the university money. Smith said there were no records of employees working overtime or of the university hiring more employees to address the issues involving Suppes — that if Suppes refused to sign something, it was not with the intention to harm the university’s relationships with anyone.

“That’s crazy,” Smith said.

The jury deliberated for three hours before reaching a verdict:

The jury found 10-2 that Suppes breached his contract with the university by failing to assign invention rights to the university.

The jury found 9-3 that Suppes did not interfere in business relationships between the university and other companies.

The jury found 10-2 that Suppes failed in his loyalty to the university and acted in direct competition to the UM System over the propylene glycol technology.

Suppes was ordered to pay \$600,000 in damages to the UM System.

Suppes was fired from the university in 2016, MU noted in its statement.

“Recently, following a unanimous recommendation by a 12-member faculty panel, Suppes was fired by MU over charges that included intimidating and harassing students, fellow faculty and department chairs; neglect of duties; and intentional violation of university rules,” the statement said.



MU wins lawsuit against former professor for \$600,000

By: Daniel Litwin and Annie Hammock

Watch the story: <http://www.komu.com/news/mu-wins-lawsuit-against-former-professor-for-600-000>

COLUMBIA - A jury ruled in favor of the University of Missouri Wednesday night in a lawsuit against a former professor.

Curators accused the professor of interfering with marketing of an innovative antifreeze product.

The university sought \$3.7 million in damages, and the jury granted \$600,000. The jury said former professor Galen Suppes violated the university's intellectual property rights.

Suppes was a chemical engineering professor of 16 years.

The university was signed on to an exclusive deal with Senergy Chemical to produce a type of propylene glycol made from soy diesel byproducts, a project that Suppes and his company, Renewable Alternatives, were involved in.

The lawsuit said Suppes:

- Delayed the business relationship between UM, Missouri Soybeans and Senergy Chemical
 - Refused to recognize the University's rights to the product
 - Attempted to profit from the invention himself
- Suppes' defense team countered by saying it was negligence and incompetence on the part of the university and its business partners that eventually tanked the deal.

The university's lawyer, Russell Jones, said Suppes ignored his employment contract to sell the product on his own.

"Good fences make good neighbors, and the fences here are the rules," Jones said.

Under University of Missouri rules and regulations, if a faculty member creates an invention in "the scope of his or her duties," the university will have complete ownership and control of the invention. However, when a manufacturer comes to the university with a production deal, the inventor gets one-third of the university's royalties.

Suppes filed a long list of patent applications on his own for the invention under Renewable Alternatives, claiming full intellectual property over the product.

Jones said, when Missouri Soybean approached Suppes over whether he had full rights over the product, he used Renewable Alternatives to assure Missouri Soybean that everything was compliant.

"He started Renewable Alternatives, he owned Renewable Alternatives, he signed the contract for Renewable Alternatives," Jones said.

The prosecution presented more than 50 instances of Suppes deleting or changing language on invention disclosure forms to prevent giving intellectual property rights of propylene glycol to the university.

Defense lawyer George Smith argued the damages the university was seeking against Suppes were much too high.

"It is absurd. It is outrageous," Smith said.

Smith said the university's claimed losses are only speculative, and that the prosecution never mentioned a monetary figure for the cost of production delays or lost patents. Though initial projections for the antifreeze placed production at over four million pounds, only 20 pounds were ever produced

"If there's any money to be given for failure, what's 80 cents times 20? \$16," Smith said.

Another point of contention was an abandoned patent that was key to the production of the antifreeze technology. Suppes failed to sign documents getting the patent off the ground, and the university claims he refused to sign despite its reaching out.

The jury was asked to agree with these points presented by the university's attorneys:

- Suppes failed to execute the assignments requested by the university
- Suppes filed a patent application without a written waiver from the university

- Suppes used his company, Renewable Alternatives, to sell Missouri Soybean the new technology while claiming full ownership
- Suppes was aware of and interfered with business relationships between Missouri Soybean and the university
- Suppes acted in direct competition with his employer over rights of propylene glycol technology, and therefore breached his duty of loyalty
- Contract obligations were not performed
- The university was damaged

[Editor's note: We have edited this story with a verdict.]



Jury rules in favor of University of Missouri in intellectual property case

COLUMBIA, Mo. - The University of Missouri won a court battle over intellectual property rights on Wednesday.

The university filed the lawsuit against former engineering professor Dr. Galen Suppes back in 2009.

The suit claimed the university was damaged when Suppes violated his contract and university rules by "altering forms used to assign to the university inventions made by him, that he purported to license technology owned by the university that he had no authority to license; and that he interfered with university research sponsors and potential licensees of the technology."

The jury ruled in favor of the university on two out of three verdicts, finding that Suppes breached his contract and duty of loyalty.

The jury ruled Suppes' actions caused \$600,000 in damage against the university.

However, the jury ruled in favor of Suppes on the university's claim that the former engineering professor intentionally interfered with a business deal to commercialize the intellectual property in question.

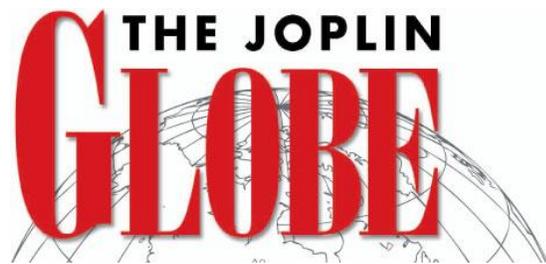
The university was seeking \$3.7 million in damages.

This is not the only lawsuit between the university and Suppes.

In a written statement, the university said, "In six separate lawsuits, Suppes unsuccessfully brought claims against the University and 10 university employees."

The statement went on to claim Suppes was fired after accusations that included harassing students, faculty and department chairs; neglecting duties and intentionally violating university rules.

The statement concluded, "The university will continue to protect its intellectual rights, as well as those of the faculty and taxpayers. Protecting and commercializing the intellectual property created by university researchers is pivotal to the growth and strength of our research and economic development programs."



UPDATED: PSU among universities pledging support for DACA students

By EMILY YOUNKER

A day after President Donald Trump announced his decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, colleges and universities across the country, including one in the Four-State Area, are pledging support for their DACA students and calling on Congress to address the issue.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities, of which Missouri Southern State University and Pittsburg (Kansas) State University are members, said in a statement that its leaders were "profoundly disappointed" with the Trump administration's decision.

"On multiple occasions, the president himself has expressed personal sympathy for young Dreamers, giving them hope that his administration will lead the effort to devise a legal solution to address their undocumented status," said the association's president, Muriel Howard. "In terminating the program without proposing policy alternatives, the White House is abandoning these young and talented individuals to a fate that is as unnecessary as it is cruel."

'Here to support them'

Steve Scott, president of Pittsburg State, said Wednesday that the Trump administration's decision to end the DACA program will have "broad and far-reaching consequences" for hundreds of thousands of young people. He said PSU staff members are reaching out to those directly affected by this decision to provide support and guidance.

"These individuals, some of whom attend Pittsburg State University, are now facing an uncertain future through no fault of their own," he said in a statement released locally. "We urge Congress to come together and craft a solution that will allow the young men and women within DACA to achieve their dreams."

It's unclear how many DACA students attend Pittsburg State because it's a self-reported number, but there are at least several affected students there, said Howard Smith, associate vice president of enrollment management and student success.

"Basically, we're here to support them," he said. "Those (students) we do know about, I sent a text out to say that PSU is committed to their education and their progress, and if they want to stop by and talk, I'm more than happy to do that."

Some PSU student and faculty groups are discussing ways to support DACA students on campus, but nothing has yet been completed, Smith said.

Crowder College in Neosho said it is "monitoring and researching" the implications of rescinding the program for students.

"As always, we will continue to provide quality instruction and comprehensive support to all Crowder College students, with no immediate changes in our processes," President Jennifer Methvin said.

Missouri Southern State University officials, through a spokesperson, declined to comment.

Elsewhere in Missouri

Officials with the University of Missouri System, the state's largest university system with campuses in Columbia, Rolla, St. Louis and Kansas City, are urging Congress to come up with a "fair and compassionate solution" to support DACA students.

"DACA students are hardworking, bright individuals who have much to contribute to our society in many disciplines, including the sciences, humanities, arts and social sciences," they said in a statement that was signed by the chancellors of the four campuses as well as the new system president, Mun Choi. "Many have persevered to attend college to better themselves and contribute to American society."

More than 35 DACA students attend the University of Missouri System campuses, and administrators said they would provide "support and guidance" to them.

Officials with Missouri State University in Springfield released the following statement: "Our DACA students and Dreamers across the U.S. have demonstrated they have much to contribute to the future of America. While we have few DACA students enrolled at Missouri State, we support these young adults in their quest for an opportunity in America. We share the hope of many that Congress will act to find a permanent solution to assist these innocent young people."

Some Missouri State students and faculty are organizing a walkout on the campus on Friday afternoon to protest the end of the program and to urge university administration to protect its students. The groups Uniedo Nuestros Orígenes, MSU College Democrats and the MSU NAACP will encourage participants to sign letters to Congress in support of DACA and stand in solidarity with those affected.

"MSU students, staff and faculty recognize that ending DACA is in direct violation of the university's three pillars of public affairs and cannot, in good conscience, stay silent in the face of such a horrific lack of empathy," organizers of the walkout said in a release promoting the event.

About DACA

The Trump administration announced Tuesday it was ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that former President Barack Obama started in 2012. Those already enrolled in DACA remain covered until their permits expire. If their permits expire before March 5, 2018, they are eligible to renew them for another two years as long as they apply by Oct. 5. But the program isn't accepting new applications.

Missourinet

[University of Missouri hopes pigs revolutionize human IVF treatments](#)

Generated by MU News Bureau release: [Piglets Might Unlock Keys to In Vitro Fertilization in Humans](#)

By ALISA NELSON

University of Missouri researchers have discovered a way that could reduce the costs of in vitro fertilization (IVF) in humans. Parents seeking to have children through IVF spend an estimated \$12,000 to \$15,000 per session plus the cost of medications that average between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

University of Missouri hopes pigs revolutionize human IVF treatments

Animal sciences professor Michael Roberts says his colleagues have been trying to improve how stem cells grow in piglets. During their attempts, the researchers found a method using a special liquid that quadruples the speed and efficiency to develop embryos.

“It was a serendipitous discovery, really,” says Roberts. “Generally, there are multiple steps to producing viable embryos that we can then implant in pigs and cows involved in our research; however, it’s costly and sometimes yields very little return. We were seeking a way to do that more efficiently and stumbled upon a method that may have implications in human fertility clinics as well. The idea is it would be safer for the woman, it would be cheaper and it might even achieve a better success rate.”

In IVF involving pigs, scientists first extract eggs from female pigs as well as the “nurse” cells that surround them and place them in a chemical environment designed to mature the eggs. The eggs are fertilized and are allowed to develop for six days. They are then transferred back into a female pig with the hope of achieving a successful pregnancy and healthy piglets.

“The chance of generating a successful piglet after all those steps is very low; only 1-2% of the original oocytes make it that far,” Roberts said. “Normally, researchers overcome this low success rate by implanting large numbers of embryos, but that takes a lot of time and money.”

In one study, the team analyzed various special growth factors used when culturing pig stem cells and added two others. They found that this combination, when added with an insulin-like growth factor created the special fluid environment the eggs needed to become competent for fertilization and further development to embryos that could provide a successful pregnancy.

“It improved every aspect of the whole process and almost doubled the efficiency of oocyte maturation,” Roberts says. “Whenever you’re doing science, you’d like to think you’re doing something that could be useful. When we started it wasn’t to improve fertility IVF in women, it was to just get better oocytes in pigs. Now it’s possible that FLI medium could become important in bovine embryo work and possibly even help with human IVF.”

The university has applied for a patent to encourage commercialization of the new method.

the maneater

MU professor receives \$460,000 grant to research tick-borne diseases

Generated by MU News Bureau release: [USDA Grants MU \\$460,000 to Develop Immunizations for Tick-Borne Disease](#)

By STEPHI SMITH

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently granted the College of Veterinary Medicine \$460,000 for professor of parasitology Roger Stich's research project on tick-borne diseases, specifically anaplasmosis.

Stich, among other professors and graduate students at MU, will research alternative approaches to interfere with the pathogen in ticks. When diseased ticks feed on livestock, they can spread the disease to the animals.

This is just the beginning of what is projected to be a three-year-long project, Stich said. He and his team have been working on it since about June, when they were first awarded the grant.

“It’s going to be a long process. In fact, it may be one of those guys,” Stich said, pointing to graduate students Kyle Hoffman and Samuel Shahzad, “that finishes it up.”

Stich said there has already been a lot of work done before them. The team uses information found from previous research done on ticks, the biology of ticks and the biology of tick-borne pathogens.

“So this is really just another step toward the goal of being able to mitigate tick-borne diseases,” Stich said.

Stich emphasized the seriousness of these pathogens. There are several tick-borne diseases of cattle that heavily impact agriculture. The team is conducting research using anaplasmosis, a disease that can cause anemia, jaundice and even death in cattle. Anaplasmosis is one of the five major vector-borne diseases of cattle worldwide, Stich said.

The research team will be targeting the tick molecules that the pathogen relies on. Because of that, they hope they will be able to understand how to interfere with other pathogens as well.

The project will consist of many experiments done multiple times to test how the pathogen responds. The experiments will involve ticks that the team will purchase from vendors and view

with molecular and microscopic techniques. They will then allow the ticks to “feed” on cattle and study how the animals respond. The team wants to see how well the immune system of the cattle interferes with the pathogen from the tick.

After they find out how to protect the cattle from the pathogen and tick, they will identify what to target in that animal to make it healthy. Once that is identified, more tests will follow and, hopefully, a vaccine can be created.

“It’s a lot of work; in some ways it’s too much work,” Stich said. “That’s why I have to have two graduate students working on it. And even with two hard-working grad students like these two, we might still need more help.”

Hoffman said most of the day he and Shahzad are doing experiments and it’s their top priority right now.

“Start early, end late,” Hoffman said, referring to his and Shahzad’s schedule. “That’s what research is all about.”

Right now Hoffman is working on two-dimensional electrophoresis, meaning he’ll be able to look at what proteins in the tick will be targeted by the new response of the cattle. Shahzad is working on being able to identify the level of infection that a tick is affected with.

Other professors have helped Stich with this project along the way, including associate professor of epidemiology and public health Patrick Pithua and professor of veterinary pathobiology Gayle Johnson. In addition, Stich has worked with Sathaporn Jittapalapong, who was one of Stich’s first graduate students years ago. Jittapalapong is now dean of veterinary technology and a professor at Kasetsart University in Bangkok, Thailand.

“[Jittapalapong] is a good collaborator even though we’re thousands of miles apart and we don’t see each other very often,” Stich said. “We communicate by email several times a week.”

Stich also said that the project stems from Jittapalapong’s dissertation work about 17 years ago.

Interim Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine Carolyn Henry also helped Stich submit the grant application and provided facilities for him and his team to use for experiments. However, she said, the real work is all attributed to Stich’s dedication.

“This project is because of [Stich’s] patience,” Henry said. “All credit truly goes to him.”

Stich had to reapply for the grant a number of times before he was finally awarded it. Henry confirmed that Stich had spent months on each application over several years.

The total cost of the grant is split two different ways. The direct cost goes toward the project and the indirect cost is what the university uses for upkeep of labs and other bills.

The direct cost is about \$320,000, Stich said. The money goes really fast, he explained, and he's a little concerned it won't all last for the next three years. The team has already had to buy new equipment to replace broken items and will have to pay for graduate student stipends and fully pay for the experiments they will be conducting.

"[The money] goes fast; research is very expensive," Stich said. "It's amazing how quickly the expenses add up."

Henry said that a lot of investigators and researchers feel this way and felt assured that it would be enough to last the next three years. She said it is a "very reasonable budget."

Henry said Stich is a "very talented investigator." She also said he's a good example of how the university works together with other people of expertise, such as Jittapalapong.

"That's what makes our university very special," Henry said.

This is just the beginning, Stich explained. He hopes to see results when the research team officially begins experiments on the ticks and pathogens in cattle.

"[The research team is] very excited and jazzed, and we can't wait to start seeing results," Stich said. "We're slowly getting there, but we're getting there."

the maneater

Study names MU professor as most productive researcher in his field

By ALLISON CHO

On the very top of Dr. Matt Burns' desk in room 109 of Hill Hall sits an impressive collection of what many researchers may not consider important: mugs. With logos ranging from Vanderbilt University to MU, this ceramic display reflects each university Burns has been invited to speak at. As admirable as it may seem, a recent study from researchers Victor Villarreal and Ileana Umaña may lead to the avid reader and father of two finding his collection growing.

A study published this summer titled "Intervention research productivity from 2005 to 2014: Faculty and university representation in school psychology journals" noted that Burns has been the most productive researcher in his field in the past decade.

The study calculates an “authorship credit score” by accounting for the number of articles the author has written and how much they contributed to each article. While over 95 percent of authors included in the study received authorship credit scores of less than one, Burns’ score was 5.21.

“It’s really exciting,” Burns said of the achievement. “It’s always nice to see that you’re being a productive researcher and that people are noticing your work.”

His research focuses on intervention in school psychology. In essence, he looks at methods that help children with learning disabilities in school, primarily with reading and math. He accomplishes this by collecting data from schools with his research team, the Center for Collaborative Solutions for Kids, Practice, and Policy, also known as SKiPP.

“We created [SKiPP] for a couple of reasons, but one of the main reasons was for teachers and parents to have a place to get an idea of what to try with kids,” said Burns, who is currently teaching a class on interventions this semester.

However, Villarreal and Umaña are not the only ones who have acknowledged Burns and his team. In a 2012 study titled “Scholarly Productivity and Impact of School Psychology Faculty in APA-Accredited Programs,” researchers looked at “the most productive scholars who have published in major psychology journals” from 2005 to 2009. Again, Burns placed first, with 40 total articles and a total authorship score of 18.88.

“We hired him as a superstar,” department chair T. Chris Riley-Tillman said.

As department chair for the educational, school & counseling psychology department, Riley-Tillman has worked closely with Burns for the past four years.

“There are rankings back from 2005 that put him as the most published researcher in school psychology,” Riley-Tillman said. “When we hired him, we hired somebody who, in our field, was viewed as one of the top, if not the top, overall researcher.”

Lisa Aguilar is a fifth-year PhD student who has worked with Burns through SKiPP. She explained that Burns encourages everyone on the team to get involved with writing and publishing. Although initially interested in behavioral psychology, she switched her focus to interventions after beginning work with him.

“As a graduate student that didn’t really know what I was doing, he’s amazing because he steered me in the direction [of academic interventions] that I hadn’t really thought of,” Aguilar said. “It’s not only the publications, but he has these personal stories that illustrate the work that he’s done over the last 10 years.”

Helen Young, a second-year PhD student and fellow SKiPP member, emphasized the passion Burns holds for their research.

“It’s funny, sitting in [a] research team or anything really [with Burns],” Young said. “He’ll be sitting in class, and we’ll discuss like, ‘Oh, I have a question about this.’ And he’ll be like, ‘You know what? That would be a great research question. We should do a study on that.’”

Burns expressed a desire to delve into the theoretical side of his work in future research. He cited his earlier work as a school psychologist as the source of his interest in interventions. While using different academic interventions with different students, he was always intrigued by why some succeeded and some didn’t. His start as a school psychologist is also what pushes him to do research that will help classrooms across the country.

“I want to help [teachers] by doing the study that will help them with the kid they struggle with the most,” Burns said. “That’s the kid I’m really passionate about. The kid that no one knows what the heck to do with. So we’re going to do the study that shows them, ‘Oh, this is how to figure out what that kid needs.’”

the maneater

Task force to recommend administrative budget action on academic programs

By GALEN BACHARIER

Garnett S. Stokes, provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs, formed a Task Force on Academic Program Analysis, Enhancement, and Opportunities on June 30, taking another step to evaluate MU’s budget decisions.

During the initial phase, which began with several meetings in July and August, the task force has been collecting data relevant to academic programs’ success and progress in order to prepare a general outline and get a sense of where programs stand. On Sept. 1, that outline was released to relevant parties involved and will be released publicly shortly, said Dr. Cooper Drury, co-chair of the task force and associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The goal of the task force is to make recommendations “regarding areas of future investment, potential consolidations, and in some cases, program discontinuance” after analyzing all of MU’s academic programs, according to a press release.

“There are three general goals: Where are areas that we can invest? What are our strengths, our areas of growth?” said Dr. Matthew Martens, co-chair of the task force and faculty fellow for academic programs for the Office of the Provost. “Next, where are our areas that we might be able to combine? Do we have overlap, do we have programs in areas that are kind of doing

similar things and if you put them together, they get stronger? ... And then what are programs that we can't support anymore, for whatever reason?"

The report "will focus on synthesizing relevant data, identifying principles, guidelines, and metrics that will inform additional discussion regarding our academic programs," according to the press release.

"There's quite a bit of quantitative data we can use that can track the number of students graduated, credit hours, stuff like that," Drury said. "We can track research productivity, grant productivity — but then there are other things that are less tangible that are still extremely important. So we're figuring out at this stage how we'll take those things into account, the qualitative measures."

During the next phase, the task force will speak to faculty, administration and student groups to establish a rapport with all departments and try to understand programs on a more personal and insightful level.

"In the second phase, which we've actually started already in terms of meeting with people, our group will get out and meet with various groups to get their ideas, their input," Martens said. "The next phase ... is making sure that along with the perspective of administrators, along with the perspective of faculty, what do students think about this topic, and what are their ideas that we need to take into consideration?"

The final report for the task force will come on Jan. 15 and will contain a final summary recommending specifics about how the MU administration should act on academic programs.

"Our job is to make recommendations," Martens said. "It'll be up to senior administrators on campus and in the colleges to end up making final decisions, but it's going to be important for us to get student input into this process."

The task force is comprised of 15 faculty members in addition to co-chairs Drury and Martens. Stokes' first priority when selecting members for the committee was that they had worked with people throughout campus and thus had a good jumping-off point with many units and departments.

"This was a group of people that ... has experience from across the campus, not just their one unit, and could in a sense, think or see perspectives of other colleges and departments," Drury said.

Representatives from a variety of colleges and departments are represented on the task force, although that was not a stated goal by Stokes.

"It's definitely a diverse group," Martens said. "It's diverse in terms of — and I think this was probably important for [Stokes] to consider as well — gender, race, ethnicity, academic background. So when we look at the folks who are on the committee, there's representation from a wide swath of campus."

The task force's first report, when it releases to public, will provide insight into its plan and give a glimpse into the future of many of MU's academic programs.

"That perspective on where we need to go as an institution, what are our strengths, those sorts of things, we might get some ideas and perspectives that the faculty wouldn't see or the administrators wouldn't necessarily see," Martens said. "We're looking forward to those conversations."

the maneater

MU hires outside consultant to review Greek Life

By DANIEL DOAN

The University of Missouri hired Dyad Strategies in late July to compare MU's Greek Life policies with other universities around the country and recommend any changes. Dyad Strategies will also be providing training and workshops to active members to supplement its policy recommendations.

"We are happy that the University brought in Dyad Strategies to conduct a review of Mizzou's Greek community," IFC Vice President of Public Relations Trevor Beshear said in an email. "The fact that so many stakeholders within the Greek community, including the IFC and our member organizations, have been heard makes us believe this will be a valuable step in strengthening Greek Life at Mizzou."

In recent years, MU Greek Life has been rocked by the scandals of several fraternities, including Kappa Alpha Order and Sigma Pi, which resulted in a **five-year ban for KAO** and a **permanent ban for Sigma Pi**.

However, according to Liz McCune, of the MU News Bureau, no specific incident occurred to bring Dyad in. Instead, vice chancellor for student affairs Gary Ward consulted with the MU General Counsel and, the counsel thought that with the change in leadership at MU it would be a good time to review Greek Life policies.

Earlier this year, Ward was named interim vice chancellor for student affairs in addition to retaining his position as vice chancellor for operations.

Dyad started work at MU in July and will finish in September. Since its founding in 2014, Dyad Strategies has represented over 25 universities nationwide, including Southeastern Conference schools such as the University of Mississippi, Vanderbilt University and the University of Georgia.

“[Dyad Strategies was chosen] because of their national reputation, because they’ve worked so extensively with other universities,” McCune said.

MU will pay a total of \$22,000 for the company’s services, according to McCune. MU is facing a \$20 million budget shortfall this year, forcing a 5-percent budget cut and a hiring freeze.

“We’re scrutinizing all expenditures, particularly during this challenging financial time, and we entered this contract because it will help the university to enhance Greek Life and ultimately the student experience,” McCune said.

Los Angeles Times

Casey Affleck to star in adaptation of 'Stoner'

By MICHAEL SCHAUB

Academy Award-winning actor Casey Affleck will play the title role in a film adaptation of “Stoner,” the “greatest American novel you've never heard of,” by John Williams, published in 1965.

Deadline reports that Affleck will star as the protagonist, William Stoner, a farm boy who discovers he's in love with literature while attending the University of Missouri and later becomes a professor stuck in a troubled marriage.

The film will be produced by Jason Blum, Charles S. Cohen and Daniel Battsek, with actor Ethan Hawke serving as executive producer.

Joe Wright will direct the movie. Wright is no stranger to film adaptations of novels; his previous films include “Pride & Prejudice,” “Atonement” and “Anna Karenina.”

In a statement, Blum said that fans of the cult favorite novel were like members of a “secret club.”

“I’m so excited that Casey, Joe and Andrew have come aboard to help expand this club’s membership,” he said. “This quintessentially American work is being brought to the screen by a terrific international team, and we’re confident their combined perspectives will add rich layers to this moving story.”

“Stoner” was never a popular novel. It's gone in and out of print since its initial publication; the current available edition is published by New York Review Books Classics.

The novel has, however, drawn rapturous reviews from critics, especially in recent years. A 2013 article for the New Yorker called the book the “greatest American novel you've never heard of”; the same year, the Independent called it the “book of a lifetime.”

"Stoner" was the third novel by Williams, who would go on to win the National Book Award for his novel "Augustus" in 1972. Williams died in 1994.