

Spectrum

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President Floyd reports on statewide tuition tour



President Floyd gathers feedback at a forum in Rolla, Mo. during his recent statewide tour

During a recent statewide tuition listening tour, University of Missouri President Elson S. Floyd engaged Missourians in a series of discussions and forums to solicit views on the advantages and challenges of a fixed tuition plan. Floyd presented his findings to the Board of Curators at its Oct. 7 meeting in St. Louis.

The concept discussed was a guaranteed tuition rate for incoming University of Missouri undergraduate students that would not increase for four years, or the approved duration of their programs. Undergraduate students already enrolled at the University would have a guaranteed tuition rate for four, three or two years, depending on remaining program duration.

At the beginning of the tour, Floyd emphasized that no decision had been made and that the feedback received at the forums would weigh heavily in any decision the University ultimately makes.

During forums in 18 locations across Missouri, Floyd discussed the possible benefits and challenges of guaranteed tuition. Possible benefits include predictability; affordability; increased graduation rates; promotion of financial planning; and timely graduation. Possible challenges include larger than inflationary increases for incoming freshmen; uncertain state funding; and unanticipated expenses.

The fiscal crisis facing Missouri during the past five years has made it difficult to provide stable, predictable tuition rates. The University's educational fees rose in recent years to offset reductions in state funding.

Floyd fielded more than 200 questions and comments from citizens, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, elected officials, business owners, and members of the community.

Reactions to the concept varied. Many parents liked the idea of having a set amount to plan on spending for tuition, preferably several years in advance. Student leaders, however, said freshmen would unfairly have to bear higher costs — sometimes double-digit tuition increases from class to class — to smooth out the four- or five-year costs of guaranteed tuition for other cohorts.

Many audience members also were surprised to learn that unlike private businesses, the University’s personnel costs account for approximately three-quarters of its annual budget, which explains how the University’s cost increases can exceed inflation in areas such as health care expenses.

Other responses included questioning how long college can remain affordable if tuition keeps increasing by sizeable percentages. Audience members also realized the tuition guarantee from the University can only be made in good faith when coupled with dependable levels of state financial support. Citizens asked repeatedly how the University can plan for the unexpected.

The board will be asked to make decisions about tuition policy at its December meeting in Kansas City.

UM faculty & staff benefits announce plan changes, open enrollment

University of Missouri employees have until Nov. 11, 2005, to change their benefits during the annual enrollment change period. As approved by the University of Missouri Board of Curators at its July meeting, there also will be changes to the medical benefits plan.

Premium subsidies will change, as the University is increasing from 70 percent to 73 percent the portion of the premium it pays toward the total cost of coverage for the UM Choice Plus Point of Service (POS) program. Employees’ contribution will be reduced to 27 percent of the total premium cost.

Medical Premium Rates, 2006

	UM Choice Plus POS	Catastrophic Plan	Humana (Kansas City)
Employee	\$98.94	\$43.94	\$118.04
Employee & Spouse	\$218.64	\$102.92	\$260.98
Employee & Child/ren	\$167.16	\$61.50	\$199.64
Employee, Spouse, Child/ren	\$285.24	\$123.50	\$339.14

The UM Managed Health Care program, currently available to employees and retirees in the mid-Missouri area, will be discontinued effective Jan. 1, 2006. Employees enrolled in the program will automatically be transferred to the Choice Plus POS program on Jan. 1, unless they choose to participate in the Catastrophic plan or terminate coverage.

The changes will result in premium decreases for many coverage tiers in the POS program.

Additional Choice Plus POS program changes include annual deductible amounts. An annual deductible will apply to health care services received from a network United Health Care provider; the deductible applies only to services not subject to a copay. The non-network deductible will increase by \$100.

Copay office visit amounts will increase for United Health Care providers, while the copay amounts for University providers will remain the same.

Preventative care services provided by a United Health Care network provider will be paid at 100 percent. Both network and non-network mental health and chemical dependency treatment will be covered at the same benefit schedule levels as medical services.

Prescription drug changes include the annual deductible amount; out-of-pocket amount; mail order coinsurance; formulary; step therapy; and specialty drugs.

Employees enrolled in the dental plan also will see premium changes. Employees only will pay \$12.64 monthly; employee and spouse, \$25.28; employee and children, \$30.66; and employee, spouse and children, \$43.30.

All changes elected during the enrollment change period will become effective Jan. 1, 2006.

No action is required on the employee's part unless he or she wishes to make a change in his or her benefits plan, or unless the employee has dependents age 19 through age 24, which requires completing a new form.

Employees who wish to initiate or continue participation in the Flexible Spending Account program (FSA) with a health care or dependent care spending account must re-enroll for 2006. The deadline to submit the FSA enrollment form is Nov. 11, 2005, and there will be no extensions to this deadline.

Detailed information about benefits plan changes will be sent to employees and retirees in October. Human Resources also has scheduled informational meetings on each campus and at UM Health Care. For more 2006 plan change information and employee meeting schedules, contact your campus benefits representative or visit www.umsystem.edu/hrs/benefits.

University of Missouri briefs

Mills honored as recipient of Pacheco Leadership Award

R. Dean Mills, dean of the School of Journalism at UM-Columbia, is the 2005 recipient of the Manuel T. Pacheco Academic Leadership Award.

Mills has served as dean of the School of Journalism for the past 16 years. Under his leadership, the school has created three research centers and currently serves as the headquarters for five professional organizations. He has led numerous fundraising efforts, including a \$31 million gift,

the largest in the University's history, to create the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute. Mills also has worked to increase the number of endowed chairs and to improve the quality and diversity of students in the school.

He received a bachelor's degree in Russian and journalism from the University of Iowa, a master's degree in journalism from the University of Michigan, and a doctorate in communications from the University of Illinois.

Mills received a plaque and a \$2,500 award at the Leadership Development Program dinner on Sept. 19.

The award, created in 2002, is presented to an academic administrator who exemplifies outstanding academic leadership at the University of Missouri.

Board approves naming & changes to naming rules

The Board of Curators approved naming the UM-Columbia Life Sciences Center after U.S. Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond at its Oct. 7 meeting.

The board also approved a revision to the Collected Rules and Regulations regarding the naming of University buildings, which allows individuals to be honored with building names during their lifetimes and while they are still in public service.

Bond has been a long-time advocate for life sciences at the University, including securing \$33 million in federal funding toward construction of the Life Sciences Center, which was completed in 2004.

Charton appointed director of Strategic Communications

University of Missouri President Elson S. Floyd appointed former Associated Press journalist Scott Charton director of Strategic Communications.

The appointment is part of a reorganization and consolidation of University Relations. These functions now include web-based communications, media relations, television and radio production, publications and marketing.

Charton spent 22 years as a journalist for The Associated Press. During a sabbatical from the AP earlier this year, he worked as a communications consultant for the University of Missouri.

UMC South Farm designated as a research park

The Board of Curators approved the designation of South Farm as a research park pursuant to Statute 172.273 of the Missouri Revised Statutes.

The South Farm, part of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources at UM-Columbia, will continue to be utilized as a working farm for teaching, research and extension, but also will contribute to economic development by designation as a research park. The joint

project will include the University of Missouri Office of Research and Economic Development and UM-Columbia.

Curators' professors named

The Board of Curators approved the appointments of a curators' teaching professor and a curators' professor at UM-Rolla.

Oran Allan Pringle, professor of physics, was named curators' teaching professor, and Michael Schulz, professor of physics, was named curators' professor. The appointees will receive a \$10,000 annual stipend as long as they hold their respective positions. Both appointments are effective Jan. 1, 2006.

Gardner named vice president for research & economic



University of Missouri President Elson S. Floyd announced Aug. 25 the appointment of John C. Gardner as vice president for research and economic development.

Gardner, who most recently served as associate dean of research and outreach in the University of Missouri-Columbia College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, began his new duties Oct. 1.

In his new role, Gardner will coordinate the University of Missouri's statewide activities in the critical area of research and economic development.

"I am convinced that the University of Missouri and the state of Missouri will be best served by having a single officer charged with the responsibility of ensuring that our economic development initiatives are carefully coordinated with local, state and federal agencies to achieve maximum results for the people of our state," Floyd said. "I believe Dr. Gardner is well-qualified by virtue of his experience and knowledge of Missouri and the University to take on this challenge."

In his capacity as associate dean for research and outreach in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Gardner managed the research program of the college, both on the UM-Columbia campus and among the 21 sites and 14,562 acres owned and operated by the Agricultural Experiment Station across Missouri. He also helped lead the agriculture and natural resource extension activities through University of Missouri Extension.

“I am humbled but excited to accept this appointment,” Gardner said. “I believe this position will provide tremendous synergy as we find new and exciting ways to foster the University’s and the state of Missouri’s research and economic development for the new economy.”

Prior to coming to UM-Columbia in 1999, Gardner was one of the founders and the general manager/CEO of AgGrow Oils, a grower-owned L.L.C. in North Dakota that produced, processed and marketed specialty oilseeds. AgGrow formed a joint venture with Cenex Harvest States of St. Paul, Mn. in 1999.

Gardner also served as director of the North Dakota State University Carrington Research Extension Center for 10 years, where he directed research on landscape-scale production of dryland and irrigated crops, vegetables and beef production systems.

He received a bachelor’s degree in agriculture from Kansas State University in 1978, a master’s degree in agronomy from Kansas State University in 1980, and a doctorate in agronomy and crop physiology from the University of Nebraska in 1988.