

# MIZZOU

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## Around the Columns

### One Mizzou campaign focuses on unity, respect

Two racially charged incidents in two years prompted Mizzou students to launch a grass-roots diversity initiative to promote a culture of respect and responsibility on campus. The goal of the campaign, called One Mizzou, is to help students, staff and faculty acknowledge their differences while maintaining respect for one another.



Chancellor Brady J. Deaton called April 7 his proudest day as chancellor when MU students launched the One Mizzou initiative. The ceremony was held in the MU Student Center. Photo by Rob Hill

One Mizzou was conceived after an 18-year-old freshman was arrested in February for allegedly spray-painting a racial slur on a statue outside Hatch Hall. That incident, just one year after two students were arrested for scattering cotton balls in front of MU's Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center, sparked outrage and a broad discussion about the campus environment.

The student-led group plans to sponsor online diversity training and other events, including a contest in which students will compete to create a diversity-themed video to be shown at Summer Welcome.

At the April 7 kickoff event at the MU Student Center, MU Chancellor Brady J. Deaton described the formation of One Mizzou as a "historic, watershed moment" at MU. "This truly is the proudest moment I've had as chancellor, to stand before you and salute the wonderful work you've done," Deaton said.

Students have also supported including a diversity-intensive course in the general education

curriculum. But, in May, the general faculty rejected a proposal drawn up by the MU Faculty Council. Ballots were sent to 1,200 faculty members; 210 voted for the proposal, which would have required all undergraduates to complete a three-hour course designated as “diversity-intensive,” while 232 voted against it.

Council Chair Leona Rubin said “multiple factors” contributed to the proposal’s defeat. Some faculty members were concerned about the process for approving courses that would be designated diversity-intensive. Others believed students were already knowledgeable about diversity issues and a course requirement was unnecessary. Still others thought the focus on “social inequalities” was too narrow. Rubin said she expects the council to revisit the issue during the 2011-2012 school year.

Deaton is hopeful that more information about the process for approving diversity-intensive courses will alleviate faculty concerns.

“I was disappointed to learn that the faculty narrowly defeated the addition of a diversity-intensive course requirement,” he said. “However, I remain certain our faculty are as committed as I to supporting diversity on our campus.”

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