

Mizzou Weekly

Nov. 17, 2011 Volume 33, No. 13

Mizzou challenges KU to benefit United Way



TIGER QUILT University Hall employees, from left, Bonita Lenger, Karen Borgers, Brenda Dennis and Katina Volle crafted this quilt featuring tiger stripes and black and gold accents for the United Way online auction. Bids will be accepted at unitedway.missouri.edu/auction until 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18.

ONE MIZZOU UNITED

Less than 48 hours remain in student fundraising challenge

The clock is ticking down to the close of Live United Week, which ends Friday, Nov. 18. Since 2009, Mizzou students have competed against their University of Kansas counterparts to see who can donate the most to their local United Way. The Tigers are 2-0 against the Jayhawks in the MU/KU United Way Challenge. Last year's campaign generated \$6,188 for Heart of Missouri United Way, compared to \$3,897 for United Way of Douglas County (Kansas). This year, MU's goal is \$10,000, and at press time, the Tigers had raised \$10,540, exceeding that goal.

Faculty, staff and fans can contribute to the cause while getting a jump on holiday shopping by participating in the [online auction](http://unitedway.missouri.edu/auction) (<http://unitedway.missouri.edu/auction>), which opened Nov. 14 with about 80 items. Bids must be placed by 5 p.m. Nov. 18.

Among the auction items is a black and gold quilt made by administrative staff members Karen Borgers, Bonita Lenger, Brenda Dennis and Katina Volle. The four University Hall employees collaborated on the quilt, which features a combination of tiger stripes and black and gold accents, and a quilted tiger paw pattern on the back.

The 70-by-82 inch quilt was the brainchild of Borgers, who works in the treasurer's office and serves on the university's United Way marketing committee. "I thought we could make money with a quilt, and I knew there were some ladies in the building that did quilting," she says. "From time to time they would bring their projects in and show what they had made. I knew they did nice work."

Borgers says she does a little bit of sewing, but quilting was a new challenge. "It's harder than you think," she says. "Bonita and Brenda really deserve the lion's share of credit. They spent a lot of their precious time on the quilt."

In addition to the tiger quilt, auction items include a Les Bourgeois VIP tasting and tour, a Carl Edwards autographed collectible car, spa and golf gift certificates, a private party at the Missouri Theatre, and tea with the first ladies of the University of Missouri, Anne Deaton and Cindy Owens.

To make a fashion statement while trumping an infamous rival, shoppers can also invest in T-shirts. [One Mizzou Lives United shirts](http://uwheartmo.org/one-mizzou-lives-united-t-shirts) (<http://uwheartmo.org/one-mizzou-lives-united-t-shirts>) are available in honey gold and traditional gold, and youth sizes were added this year. T-shirts cost \$15 (\$10 for youth sizes). Purchases made by Nov. 18 will be included in the MU/KU student challenge.

MU/KU challenge donations count toward the [university's United Way campaign](http://unitedway.missouri.edu) (<http://unitedway.missouri.edu>) goal. As of 10 a.m. Nov. 16, MU and UM System employees in Columbia have pledged \$635,699 to fund community programs supporting education, income, health and emergency needs in mid-Missouri. At press time, 4,325 of 20,266 faculty and staff had participated in the campaign. A donation of \$4.33 from each of the remaining employees would push the university over its goal of \$690,000, which is \$40,000 more than 2010's goal.

The University of Missouri is the largest single employer contributor to [Heart of Missouri United Way](http://uwheartmo.org) (<http://uwheartmo.org>). Tim Rich, executive director for the Heart of Missouri United Way, said he was inspired because, despite the university's hiring and wage freezes, employee contributions have consistently topped themselves from each previous year.

"It's almost counterintuitive," he said. "There was one year that individual contributions across the country were in a 10 percent decline, yet in the Columbia area, at least with the United Way, we continue to give more."

While helping people with their needs today through extensive Safety Net (basic and immediate) services, Heart of Missouri United Way's Community Impact work also creates deep and lasting changes in our community by addressing the underlying elements that are the building blocks for successful lives and communities: education, income and health. The organization partners with 31 community agencies — such as Rainbow House, Boys and Girls Club, Job Point and Voluntary Action Center — 27 of which are located in Columbia.

— Reporting by Megan Cassidy, Angela Dahman and Karen Pojmann

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First round of staff salary restructuring implemented

STAFF SALARIES

Study results in small pay raises for some student services employees

Following the results of a [recent staff salary study](http://hrs.missouri.edu/policies-and-procedures/pay-and-compensation/compensation-and-classification/staff-job-title-and-salary-study.php) (<http://hrs.missouri.edu/policies-and-procedures/pay-and-compensation/compensation-and-classification/staff-job-title-and-salary-study.php>), one in four employees in student services saw a small pay raise Sept. 1.

The 403 employees in the student support services jobs were part of a pilot project that analyzed job titles and salaries at the University of Missouri. Karen Touzeau, associate vice chancellor for human resource services, lead the review and presented her findings at the Staff Advisory Council meeting Thursday, Nov. 10.

She said the objective of the study was to ensure competitive pay and equity for staff members of the university. Although faculty pay rates are frequently measured against peer institutions, Touzeau said there was a lack of reliable information on how salaries stacked up for staff.

In the pilot study of jobs related to student services, Touzeau's team aimed to streamline the pay scale structure by examining which job functions were comparable to each other. Subsequently, many job titles were renamed in order to group similar operations into the same category across campus.

Touzeau stressed to the council that the study was about job evaluation, not a strategy to eliminate jobs or cut costs.

"Job duties did not change, and organizational structure did not change," she said. There were also no job eliminations or pay cuts. In fact, about 100 people who were previously getting paid below the minimum for peer organizations saw a small bump in their paychecks, amounting to about a \$200,000 bill for the university.

"With the new system, all staff jobs will be evaluated using the same criteria and will be paid on the same pay range," Touzeau said.

To establish a more organized pay scale, the team aimed to establish a system-wide hierarchy among job titles. They reviewed 120 job titles in 20 different campus divisions. The review did not involve employee-specific performance.

"It's about the work, not the worker," Touzeau said.

To determine the relative worth of each job, they looked at individual requisites such as knowledge, skills, abilities and the complexity of the assigned work.

Touzeau's team established 17 pay ranges for these student support services jobs and hopes to soon consolidate job titles into several levels, e.g. Specialist, Director and Program Director, to provide a better career path.

"In the past, people would say the only way to get a raise would be to get a reclassification," Touzeau said. Her team hopes that the new titles and scales will give employees the opportunity for advancement without reclassification.

For the next several months, Touzeau's team will be similarly examining other areas of campus staff. They are looking at office administration titles next, and Touzeau said she expects the same adjustments.

"[We found] 127 distinct clerical titles, and I'm sure we don't have 127 distinct clerical functions," she said. "All those titles will fall within five pay grades."

Touzeau said she expects that all of the changes for staff jobs will be implemented in the next two years.

— Megan Cassidy

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MU program helps K-12 schools prevent student suicide

CHILD WELFARE

Debunking suicide myths helps cause

Children don't understand the concept of death. Children are unable to plan suicide. Children are unable to implement suicide. James Koller wants schools across the nation to realize that these assumptions are not only dangerous, but also wrong.

The recently retired professor emeritus in MU's [College of Education](http://education.missouri.edu) (<http://education.missouri.edu>) says debunking the wives tales associated with children and suicide is one of the key goals of his research and training. [LTT SEP]

Under Koller's guidance, a group of graduate students reviewed and summarized about 6,000 pieces of the latest literature on child and adolescent suicide. They condensed their findings into a 196-page document that would serve as a textbook for kindergarten through 12th-grade professionals.

"It's very comprehensive; it's not a cookbook," Koller says. "These people are professionals. They need to be totally informed." [LTT SEP]

The text grew legs earlier this year, when copies reached schools throughout Missouri, under the [MU Partnership of Education Renewal](http://education.missouri.edu/orgs/mper/index.php) (<http://education.missouri.edu/orgs/mper/index.php>) (MPER) umbrella.

The renewal program is composed of 22 school districts throughout Missouri, which educate more than 178,000 students. [LTT SEP]

Educators within the partnership benefit from the continuing research of the university, says Dan Lowry, co-executive director of MPER. The Mental Health Leadership Academy, a subsection of MPER, was created to address issues that negatively impact student learning.

Lowry says each year the Mental Health Leadership Academy focuses on one mental health issue that is likely to plague students. Lowry, a former guidance counselor, says he had never been trained on how prevent student suicide.

"As school administrators, we are trained on how to react to suicide, not what to listen for," he says. "When we broached this idea to the 22 districts, everyone went 'thumbs up.'"

Koller and Lowry designed a two-day workshop for school administrators, teachers and guidance counselors based on the recent suicide prevention research. The intensive training sessions also included testimonials from law enforcement, victims and parents of victims to drive the message home. [LTT SEP]

"The incidence of suicide is growing by leaps and bounds," Koller says. "Adolescent suicide is reaching epidemic proportions."

Once school officials received their training and manuals, district-specific implementation was in their hands. Those who attended the sessions were encouraged to use what they learned to adopt a new, prevention-centered, concrete approach to suicide for their colleagues. [LTT SEP]

Koller says he has been encouraged by the amount of time many schools have already dedicated to their "assignment." [LTT SEP]

Deborah Riggs, a school counselor for St. Louis Public Schools, says they have created a step-by-step guide for what to do in case a student threatens suicide. [LTT SEP]

"We didn't have a procedure before this," she says. "We formed a team. We now know what to do when students say that they want to kill themselves." [SEP][SEP]

Riggs says she has already put the guide to work. When a female student told her mother she was going to kill herself, Riggs aided the mother, who subsequently took her daughter to the emergency room. [SEP][SEP]

"The student did get some help," Riggs says. "It turned out that there were extenuating factors that were identified from that visit."

Dr. Koller and the graduate students' research has now been converted into an [online course for primary and secondary school professionals](http://cdis.missouri.edu/suicide-prevention-education-professionals) (<http://cdis.missouri.edu/suicide-prevention-education-professionals>).

The program has received national accolades as well. The MPER Mental Health Leadership Academy was recently awarded the "Michelli Award for Promoting Social Justice," from the National Network for Education Renewal.

Koller and his students say they hope the message will become ubiquitous throughout every branch of the students' network. [SEP]

"We wanted to provide to a wide range of school professionals," says Kristin Birks, a graduate research assistant at the Center for the Promotion of Mental Health Practices in Schools, who helped develop the training module. Birks says they targeted teachers, nurses, counselors and administrators, as well as cafeteria staff, bus drivers and custodial

staff, because no one knows in whom a child will feel comfortable confiding. [SEP][SEP]

"We take for granted that it'll be his or her coach or teacher, but this isn't always the case," she says. "We wanted to spread a nice big safety net to protect as many children as possible."

— Megan Cassidy

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MU to host Mental Health First Aid workshops

SEEING SIGNS

Workshops start Jan. 3 in Memorial Union

It's easy to tell when someone might be suffering from a heart attack, is choking or is unable to breathe. But what does depression look like? How can anxiety be detected?

The University of Missouri Counseling Center will aim to answer those questions as part of a 12-hour course that will be offered for MU faculty and staff.

Christy Hutton of the [MU Counseling Center \(<http://counseling.missouri.edu>\)](http://counseling.missouri.edu) and Sharon Thomas-Parks, CEO of Abacus Behavioral Consulting LLC, will lead the training of the campus community to improve mental health literacy. They will help to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness by hosting a pair of two-day workshops.

The first workshop will take place on Jan. 3 (1 p.m. to 5 p.m.) and Jan. 4 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) with the second session planned for Jan. 5 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and Jan. 6 (8 a.m. to noon). The training will take place in Stotler Lounge of Memorial Union. Eighty spaces are available for each workshop. [\(<https://counseling.missouri.edu/student-services/events/mental-health/index.php>\)](https://counseling.missouri.edu/student-services/events/mental-health/index.php) A [registration form \(<https://counseling.missouri.edu/student-services/events/mental-health/index.php>\)](https://counseling.missouri.edu/student-services/events/mental-health/index.php) is available on the Counseling Center's website.

"We are thrilled to bring Mental Health First Aid to our campus," says Hutton, a psychologist with the MU Counseling Center. "This important educational effort goes a lot further than emergency intervention; it really helps people understand the shroud of fear and misjudgment facing individuals and families who experience mental illnesses and addiction."

Mental Health First Aid teaches participants a five-step action plan to assess a situation, select and implement interventions and secure appropriate care for the individual. The certification program introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact and overviews common treatments.

Thorough evaluations in randomized controlled trials and a quantitative study have proven the CPR-like program effective in improving trainees' knowledge of mental disorders, reducing stigma and increasing the amount of help provided to others.

"In my 25 years of clinical work I have seen so many people who have endured the symptoms of a mental health problem for years before getting the help they needed," Thomas-Parks says. "Mental illnesses, just like physical illnesses, are common and they are treatable."

Attendees will learn about the warning signs and risk factors for depression, anxiety disorders, trauma, psychotic disorders, eating disorders and substance use disorders. The workshop will also cover the available resources to help someone with a mental health disorder.

"We have done the training for our campus residential life staff and received very positive feedback about it," Hutton says. "They found it informative and fun without being overwhelming."

In its pilot year, the program was introduced in nearly 20 states and more than 40 communities nationwide. The National Council certified Hutton and Thomas-Parks to provide the Mental Health First Aid program through an instructor-certification course. MU and all the sites across the nation that replicate this program maintain strict fidelity to the original, proven program.

"We welcome MU's involvement and enthusiasm in the Mental Health First Aid community," says Linda Rosenberg, the president and CEO of the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, one of the organizations that brought Mental Health First Aid to the United States in 2008. "We know this will have a great impact on the mental health communities, and the University of Missouri will be a key player in improving mental health literacy nationwide."

"Mental Health First Aid helps reduce the stigma that is associated with mental health problems and allows a person to get help earlier," Thomas-Parks added. "Early intervention opens the door to living a more satisfying and fulfilling life."

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MU sells research and diagnostic laboratory for \$43 million

DONE DEAL

IDEXX Laboratories acquires veterinary lab

Maine-based IDEXX Laboratories Inc. announced Nov. 7 it acquired the College of Veterinary Medicine's Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (RADIL) from the University of Missouri for \$43 million.

IDEXX focuses on pet healthcare innovation products for practicing veterinarians around the world. The previously-MU Research and Diagnostic Laboratory provides health monitoring and diagnostic testing services to bioresearch customers. It serves the biomedical research community with veterinary laboratory diagnostics including serology, pathology, molecular diagnostics, microbiology and parasitology.

According to Neil Olson, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, RADIL is a great example of MU faculty making discoveries and creating new knowledge that resulted in a very successful business. MU officials thought that privatizing and selling the business would be good for the college, the university and the state by keeping the business in the area. The \$43 million generated by the sale will support the College of Veterinary Medicine and MU. Specific decisions about how the money will be divided and invested have not been made.

Olson said that throughout the process, MU officials consistently stressed the importance of assuring that all RADIL employees would be given the choice to become employees of IDEXX or maintain their jobs with the university; in either choice, their salaries and benefits would either remain the same or be increased. Forty-three staff members and six faculty members became employees of IDEXX. Two of RADIL's faculty members chose to remain at MU.

"The acquisition of RADIL, with its international reputation, track record of innovation and solid relationships with key bioresearch customers, will create a strong foundation for our further participation in this market," said Jonathan Ayers, IDEXX chairman and CEO.

The research and diagnostic laboratory is located at 4011 Discovery Drive in the Discovery Ridge Research Park.

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MU alumnus honored for Joplin tornado warning



MU-trained meteorologist Eric Wise sounded the warning for the May 22 Joplin tornado.

PREPARING CITIZENS

Wise gave more than 20 minutes' warning

The wake of devastation that was left in Joplin, Mo., this past year following a tornado was boundless, but it could have been worse without the warning of one meteorologist. A University of Missouri trained meteorologist was honored last month for his work warning the citizens of Joplin during last spring's destructive tornado.

Eric Wise, weather forecaster for the National Weather Service in Springfield, Mo., was awarded the Operational Achievement Individual Award by the National Weather Association for his expert analysis that provided more than 20 minutes of warning time for the city devastated by an EF-5 rated tornado May 22, 2011.

The May 22 Joplin tornado cut through the center of town and was one of the largest twisters ever recorded in the state.

Wise graduated in 2002 with a soil, environmental and atmospheric sciences degree from the MU School of Natural Resources.

The award is presented to a meteorologist who made a significant accurate and timely forecast for one or more significant weather events and was presented by the association at its annual convention in Birmingham, Ala.

The multiple-vortex tornado that struck the city on a Sunday afternoon was nearly a mile wide.

It ranks as one of Missouri's deadliest tornadoes and is likely the costliest; the cost to rebuild could reach \$3 billion. It was the first EF-5 tornado in Missouri since the Ruskin Heights tornado struck south of Kansas City in 1957. It is also only the second EF-5 tornado in Missouri history dating back to 1950.

The tornado is considered the seventh-deadliest single tornado in U.S. history, and 27th deadliest in world history. The official death count is listed as 159 people from the actual tornado, with another killed by a lightning strike during cleanup operations the next day.

"Because of Eric Wise, the people of Joplin had well over 20 minutes of lead time," said Patrick Market, associate professor of synoptic meteorology at MU. "We know how many people died that day, but we will never know how many lives were saved that day because of Eric's early tornado warning."

— Greta Lieske

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MU honors veterans, past and present

VETERANS DAY

Purple Heart Medal recipient speaks at Veterans Day ceremony



Mizzou's joint ROTC cadets and midshipmen lead the annual Veterans Day parade from Francis Quadrangle to the Boone County Courthouse Friday morning, Nov. 11. From left are Army cadets Clark Maynard, Tim Hagerty and Brian Trump; Navy midshipmen Eric Mitchell and Brian Lasley; Air Force cadet Jessica Ellis and Navy midshipman Christopher Rice.

Photo by Shane Epping

Several campus events commemorated Veterans Day 2011, including a parade, the rededication of the American War Mothers' Memorial, a wreath laying ceremony under Memorial Tower and the unveiling of the U.S. Postal Service's new Purple Heart forever stamp.



Three-time Purple Heart Medal recipient Alex Waigandt, associate professor in the College of Education, spoke at the unveiling of the U.S. Postal Service's Purple Heart forever stamp in Memorial Union's Stotler Lounge. Photo by Rachel Coward

Faculty member and Purple Heart Medal recipient Alex Waigandt spoke at the stamp ceremony Nov. 11 in Memorial Union's Stotler Lounge. Waigandt, associate professor in the College of Education, served in the Marines during the Vietnam War and was awarded three Purple Hearts during his tour of duty.

The Purple Heart Medal dates back to Revolutionary War, when then-Gen. George Washington created the Badge of Military Merit for three sergeants who helped capture accomplices to the infamous traitor, Benedict Arnold.

"Since those dark and uncertain days of the infancy of our nation, there have been 1,910,162 medals awarded," Waigandt said. "There will be more. There will always be those lurking in the shadows who will assume to take our rights. There will also be those who will also give everything to preserve them."



MU Chancellor Brady J. Deaton speaks at the American War Mothers' Memorial rededication ceremony on the east side of Memorial Union. The original memorial was dedicated Oct. 25, 1930, to the 117 University of Missouri students who died in World War I. The stone and a row of trees, originally located on Rollins Street, were removed in 1987 to widen the street. Rededication ceremony speakers, seated, included Gary L. Ward, MU associate vice chancellor for facilities, and Nelda Bleckler, outgoing national president of the American War Mothers. Photo by Rachel Coward

The Badge of Military Merit was not awarded again until 1932, when it was redesigned from a heart-shaped piece of purple cloth to the Purple Heart Medal of today. The first recipient was Gen. Douglas McArthur, and World War I veterans received the award retroactively.

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared the medal would be issued to all branches of military service not on recommendation but for wounds or death in service.

Waigandt spoke of the men and women he knew who died defending the U.S.

"Sometimes, late at night, when the world is at rest, I can see the faces of some of my friends ... friends forever young, never having had the opportunity to grow old," Waigandt said. "The Purple Heart is symbol of their dedication, loyalty and sacrifice."

— Trevor Eischen



Mizzou's joint ROTC cadets and midshipmen stand guard of the wreath at the Veterans Day wreath-laying ceremony to honor veterans under the Memorial Union tower. When the tower was completed in 1926, the names of MU students who lost their lives in World War I were inscribed on the inside walls of the archway for future generations to pay their respects. Passersby tipped their hats while walking through the tower, ROTC students saluted when they passed and graduating seniors placed a memorial wreath at the tower during commencement. The wreath-laying ceremony was resurrected four years ago and moved to Veterans Day. Photo by Rachel Coward

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Improving America's Health



FAMILY MEDICINE ICON Professor Emeritus Jack Colwill, a member of the prestigious Institute of Medicine, led MU's Department of Family and Community Medicine for 25 years and raised the visibility of family medicine throughout the nation.

FAMILY MEDICINE

Meet one of MU's Institute of Medicine members

MU doctors who work with Professor Emeritus Jack Colwill understand fully why he was elected to membership in an institute established for the good of the nation.

For decades Colwill has asked difficult questions in his role as a leader in family medicine, nationally and at Mizzou. Those questions include: Will we have access to the physicians we need? How can rural family medicine be improved? What lifestyle changes should physicians ask patients to make?

Visit [Mizzou Wire](http://mizzouwire.missouri.edu/stories/2011/jack-colwill/index.php) (<http://mizzouwire.missouri.edu/stories/2011/jack-colwill/index.php>) to read the complete story by Nancy Moen.

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New online system streamlines textbook ordering process

ADOPT-A-BOOK

On-time orders save students and the university money

University Bookstore now offers faculty and textbook coordinators a paperless workflow for ordering books.

A new software system makes it possible for faculty and coordinators to adopt textbooks online without having to fill out paper forms.

"We had been looking for a software solution for several years that would make it user-friendly for faculty, and we finally found one," says Michelle Froese, public relations manager for Student and Auxiliary Services.

"We do more than 30,000 textbook adoptions a year, so that will significantly reduce our paper usage and environmental impact," Froese says. "But more important, I think that once faculty get into the habit of using the software, it will make the process so much easier for them."

Faculty members received emails this week that included a link to the new system. All they need to do is save the email with the link, and they may log in as many times as necessary to view, edit and submit their textbook information each semester. A short video is included on the landing page that helps them navigate the process.

This new system provides multiple tools to assist faculty in selecting course materials. They can search by ISBN, title or keyword to get a list of matching books with cover images and do a quick check to make sure the edition is right before selecting the book with one click.

Other features include:

- Exploring selections through integrated Google Books Preview
- Using the same books as last term (or the term before) with one click
- Picking books for all sections at once and making one section different
- Selecting custom publishing or course supplies in addition to texts

Froese says that textbook adoptions for next semester have been slow to come in since the Oct. 31 deadline. "We have some adoptions in, but not as many as we would like," she says. "We want faculty to know that there is still time to get this information to the bookstore, and we hope that the new system will make it much easier to communicate changes and additions."

When book orders come in after the deadline, it gives the textbook department less time to research new editions or react to out-of-print and out-of-stock issues. "What a lot of faculty may not realize is that between December and Jan. 1, many publishing houses shut down for one or two weeks for their holiday vacations, which makes it difficult to get books," Froese explains. "This is why we ask for orders so early."

Why are timely textbook adoptions so important?

- On-time orders can result in more lower-priced textbooks for students because they allow the bookstore more time to find used copies;
- On-time orders mean that students can receive more money at end-of-semester buyback because the bookstore knows what books will be used the next semester;
- On-time orders reduce the cost of expedited shipping, which saves the university money;

- On-time orders support the university's compliance with the textbook provision of Section 112 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA).

The act requires institutions of higher education that receive federal financial assistance to provide students with accurate course material information, including ISBN and retail price, when available and practical for each course listed in the institution's course schedule used for preregistration and registration purposes.

When faculty do not meet the textbook ordering deadlines, the bookstore cannot create a course module on the website, even if the course exists in the university catalog which, Froese says, can be confusing for students and also is not in compliance with HEOA.

"Faculty spend a great deal of time and effort to select just the right course materials for their students," Froese says. "We believe the new online system will be beneficial to our faculty, as it will make the process of submitting textbook information more efficient and more accurate."

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Sharp named director of Mizzou's Interdisciplinary Plant Group



CAFNR plant researchers Robert Sharp, left, and Felix Fritschi pose in front of a drought simulator last season. Sharp, professor of plant science at the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, was recently named director of the MU Interdisciplinary Plant Group

IPG LEADERSHIP

Focus on water deficits, root growth

Robert Sharp, professor of plant science in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, was recently named director of the MU Interdisciplinary Plant Group (IPG).

The group is a community of faculty, students and professionals pursuing novel, creative and transformative ideas in plant biology from a range of scientific disciplines. Established in 1981, the IPG is designed to provide a flexible research environment that transcends traditional departmental boundaries and facilitates.

The plant group is composed of 54 faculty-led research teams, representing the divisions of biochemistry, biological sciences and plant sciences and the departments of forestry and computer science.

"The overarching research theme of the IPG focuses on understanding how plants respond to changing environments," Sharp said. "Within this theme, IPG research projects can be grouped by studies that focus on genetic diversity, on developmental mechanisms, and on biotic and abiotic interactions."

Sharp earned his PhD in plant physiology from the University of Lancaster, U.K. His research at MU addresses the physiological mechanisms that determine plant growth responses to water deficits with an emphasis on root growth adaptation.

Sharp said that root growth is less inhibited than the above-ground shoot growth under drying soil conditions, and this response is considered an important adaptive strategy to facilitate continued water uptake. His lab interacts with geneticists, biochemists

and molecular biologists in an interdisciplinary effort to understand the regulation of growth under water-limited conditions and, ultimately, to improve crop performance in drought-prone environments.

"The diversity of approaches being pursued and plants being studied as well as the interactive nature of the group enhance the IPG's opportunity to design unique solutions to current problems as well as pressing problems yet to be recognized," said John Walker, outgoing IPG director and adjunct professor of plant science at MU. "As a part of the Food for the 21st Century Program at MU, one of the goals of the IPG is to generate the knowledge base needed to meet the increasing needs for food, fiber and health for the future."

The Interdisciplinary Plant Group is recognized as one of the top plant research and training programs in the nation, Walker said. In May 2008, a Blue Ribbon Team of scientists concluded, "using any metric of success, the IPG is an exceptional program of research excellence ... that has succeeded in promoting excellence in research and teaching at MU."

— Randy Mertens

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Email migration

[Migration of faculty and staff email accounts](http://doit.missouri.edu/e-mail/exchange-2010-faq.html) (<http://doit.missouri.edu/e-mail/exchange-2010-faq.html>) to Microsoft Exchange 2010 began Friday, Nov. 11, and is expected to continue until the end of the month. The hospital and the schools of medicine and health professions are not part of this move.

Mail delivery delays occurred, and moves were temporarily suspended Tuesday, Nov. 15.

After the migration, email users will have 15 gigabytes (GB) of storage versus the 2 GB available today. Stay apprised of system status updates on the [Division of IT website](http://doit.missouri.edu) (<http://doit.missouri.edu>).

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Payroll Office moves to Human Resource Services

On Nov. 10 and 11, the Payroll Office moved from 16 Jesse Hall to its new location in Parking Structure No. 7 within [Human Resource Services](#) (<http://hrs.missouri.edu>), located at 1095 Virginia Ave.

The move follows the organizational integration of payroll into Human Resource Services, which was announced this summer.

The new combined unit of payroll, PAF processing and CAPS center management falls under the direction of Amy McKenzie, who was promoted to assistant director of HR and payroll operations in August.

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Leadership in Diversity

The inaugural [Leadership in Diversity Series](http://cdi.missouri.edu/leadership) (<http://cdi.missouri.edu/leadership>) event has been rescheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 29, from 3:30–5 p.m. in Memorial Union's Jesse Wrench Auditorium. School of Medicine Dean Robert J. Churchill will share strategies applied by the med school to help facilitate an inclusive learning and research environment.

The Leadership in Diversity Series will bring together administrators, faculty, staff and students to discuss the latest opportunities and challenges facing MU regarding [diversity planning](http://diversity.missouri.edu) (<http://diversity.missouri.edu>).

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Pizza and Projects

The [Mizzou Advantage](http://mizzouadvantage.missouri.edu) (<http://mizzouadvantage.missouri.edu>) Undergraduate Research Teams, which create interdisciplinary research-based working groups composed of faculty mentors and undergraduate students, will host another Pizza and Projects event from noon to 1 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17, in Gwynn Hall. Free pizza will be served on a first-come, first-serve basis.

[Douglas Anthony](http://pathology-anatomy.missouri.edu/people/anthony.html) (<http://pathology-anatomy.missouri.edu/people/anthony.html>), MU professor of pathology and anatomy, will present information from his symposium, Building Networks for the Center for Translational Neuroscience. The newly renovated center aims to bridge basic neuroscience and clinical research, encouraging investigators to collaborate in a multidisciplinary environment.

[Sandy Rikoon](http://cafnrnews.com/tag/sandy-rikoon/) (<http://cafnrnews.com/tag/sandy-rikoon/>), director of MU's Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security, will also speak at the Pizza and Projects event. A team of MU researchers compiled the [Missouri Hunger Atlas](http://cafnrnews.com/2010/08/hungry-in-missouri-2/) (<http://cafnrnews.com/2010/08/hungry-in-missouri-2/>) to document, at the county level, the breadth and extent of hunger need, and the performance of public and private programs in meeting that need.

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Smoking, obesity studies need volunteers

Anyone interested in participating in an MU psychological study about personality, smoking habits and health can gain the chance to add an extra \$50 in their wallet. Participants will complete a set of online questionnaires for about 45 minutes and will be entered into a drawing to win one of two \$50 checks. Participants must be either a current or former smoker. For more information, contact the Social Health Laboratory at kev7v3@mail.mizzou.edu (<mailto:kev7v3@mail.mizzou.edu>).

Obese men with Type 2 diabetes are also requested for a separate and unrelated breakfast-eating study. The MU study will examine glucose and hormone response to eating high carbohydrate breakfasts versus a high protein breakfast. Participants must be 25 to 50 years old, not be on insulin, be a non-smoker and must eat breakfast regularly. Any interested can contact Jill Kanaley at 573-882-2519 or kanaleyj@missouri.edu (<mailto:kanaleyj@missouri.edu>).

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Free diversity training

The Chancellor's Diversity Initiative offers free online conflict and diversity training for faculty and staff. Differing beliefs, values, communication styles and personalities can cause conflicts between colleagues. The training aims to strengthen the workplace and reduce clashes.

[“Diversity, Difference and Conflict: Awareness and Skills Building for Enhancing Workplace Effectiveness](http://cdi.missouri.edu/conflict)

(<http://cdi.missouri.edu/conflict>)” takes 20 to 30 minutes. For questions or more information, contact Marlo Goldstein Hode at mbgnb9@mail.missouri.edu (<mailto:mbgnb9@mail.missouri.edu>).

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Nominations needed for Inclusive Excellence

Nominations are requested for the 2012 Mizzou [Inclusive Excellence Awards](http://diversity.missouri.edu/about/inclusive-excellence/) (<http://diversity.missouri.edu/about/inclusive-excellence/>), which are part of the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative. The deadline for nominations is Jan. 29, 2012.

The awards recognize members of the MU community who encourage, embrace and celebrate differences and foster a better campus climate.

Awards will be presented Wednesday, Feb. 29.

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