CASE is a professional association serving educational institutions and the advancement of professionals who work on their behalf in alumni relations, communications, development and marketing. The following story was included in their most recent publication.

Angry Students, Alarmed Alumni

How institutions are navigating student protests over campus racism

By Lekan Oguntoyinbo

As massive student demonstrations against racial injustice swirled on the University of Missouri campus in fall 2015, officials worked desperately to stay on top of the rapidly evolving national story, which was alarming many alumni and donors.

In early November 2015, a black graduate student started a hunger strike to protest what he deemed the university's lackluster response to incidents of racial harassment, and the protests intensified soon after.

Representatives of the nation's most prominent news outlets trooped to the central Missouri campus in Columbia. Then, in a potentially financially damaging blow to the university, some black members of Missouri's football team announced a boycott of all football-related activities if the president didn't resign.

By November 9, University of Missouri System President Timothy Wolfe, the focus of black students' ire, announced his resignation. A few hours later, R. Bowen Loftin, chancellor of the system's flagship campus for just a year, quit as well.

"I didn't know the chancellor was resigning until he called me three minutes before the press conference to tell me," recalls Tom Hiles, the university's vice chancellor of advancement.

The timing couldn't have been worse.

A month before, in October 2015, amid great fanfare, the "Show Me" state's premier public university had launched a $1.3 billion comprehensive fundraising campaign, the largest in its history. Funding priorities include boosting the endowment; creating five to 10 signature research centers or institutes, each backed with endowments of at least $10 million; and building state-of-the-art academic facilities.

The initial response was positive. The kickoff highlighted a $25 million gift. Loftin appeared poised for a successful tenure as fundraiser-in-chief of the 177-year-old university.

But the complaints of racism that had festered for years boiled over. On September 12, 2015, after being called the N-word—for the second time—the student body president expressed his frustration with campus bigotry in a Facebook post. He detailed transgressions against a Muslim, a transgendered student, and people with disabilities. Students held a "Racism Lives Here" rally to raise awareness of the issues, but in October, a swastika was drawn in feces in a residence hall bathroom.

As the protests gained traction, some big donors became jittery. One donor contemplating a $12.5 million gift said he'd wait, Hiles says. Giving to the annual fund and the athletic program fell off, as did applications for admission.

Missouri is among more than 80 colleges and universities to experience student protests in recent years. Underrepresented students have publicly called on their institutions to address the often toxic environments they face as minorities. These efforts range from the viral 2013 #BBUM hashtag campaign—Being Black at the University of Michigan, a social media tactic marginalized students adopted worldwide—to dozens of protests in 2015–16.
The demonstrations have undermined advancement efforts, with alumni and donors questioning whether students have taken over. The protests are also forcing institutions to scrutinize their campus and address overt, subtle, and systemic racism.

**What students want**

Student activism is nothing new, but the diversity issues students are pushing institutions to address are more complex, says Benjamin Reese, vice president for institutional equity at North Carolina's Duke University. Changing demographics—increasing numbers of sexual, religious, racial, and ethnic minority students, for instance—“push us in leadership to create an environment that is more suitable for development and learning.”

“It’s about whether there are subtle practices or processes that mitigate against having a diverse environment,” says Reese, past president of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, who often travels to U.S. campuses to lead workshops on implicit bias and unconscious prejudices.

What's driving the protests? Why now?

“Race has gotten a new focus partly because of problems with police in some communities and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement,” says Reese, referring to the activism that gained momentum during protests of the 2014 police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. “Those factors have contributed to students around the country highlighting conditions in the academy that haven't been fully addressed or where the needle hasn't moved.”

Many of the students' demands aim to reignite progress. The most common include the hiring of more minority faculty and senior administrators, the admission of more minority students, the resignation of faculty and administrators who are unsympathetic or ignorant to their plight, and the removal of racist symbols, particularly statues of historical figures known for their racist beliefs or policies.

A prominently placed statue of Cecil Rhodes was the impetus for protests that started in March 2015 at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. Rhodes was a 19th-century businessman, politician, and racist archimperialist who helped pave the way for apartheid. (Rhodesia, a short-lived, white-minority-ruled country, was named for him, then renamed Zimbabwe in 1980.)

To the students, the statue symbolized the lack of progress in racial equality made since the fall of apartheid more than 20 years ago. They clamored for the statue to come down, and some expressed their feelings by covering it in feces.

Protests ballooned, and images of small groups of students burning vehicles and artwork, invading residences, and firebombing the vice-chancellor's office made international news. The university removed the statue, but the students continue to protest about other issues.

**Staying in constant contact**

Working without a dedicated playbook, Mizzou development officials maintained contact with donors, alumni, and other key constituents. They attempted to strike a fine balance to assure major stakeholders that the university wasn't rudderless, while also explaining that it was in the institution's best interests to address students' concerns.

During the crisis, Hines and his team had an easier time connecting with normally hard-to-reach constituents: "There was this Fortune 100 CEO. I emailed him and said I would be happy to give him information. He called me on my cell in 15 minutes."

The primary concern among many donors: leadership—or the apparent lack thereof.

“They felt the students were running the place," Hiles says. "And I said, ‘The bottom line is while I understand that sentiment, these students are our customers.’ [Interim President] Mike Middleton said he’s not going to apologize for listening to customers. He said it doesn't mean we agree with everything they say, but we will listen."

Many alumni who contacted administrators during the crisis did not believe racism was a problem, Hiles says. Yet some of the emails complaining about the protesting students were overtly racist. Hiles directed his team of gift and alumni relations officers to respond to all emails except for the racist ones. Those he saved. In discussions with
skeptical alumni, he says, "I shared some of these emails and explained that there were reasons for students' concerns."

Despite higher acceptance rates of African-American students in recent decades, many felt unwelcomed. "African-American alumni told me about their experiences here," stories that mirrored the complaints of current students, Hiles says. "Sharing that information—the emails and the experiences of African-American alumni—with donors and other alumni gave them perspective."

Officials acknowledge a failing with broader communication efforts. "The No. 1 comment I've gotten in that retrospective lookback is that 'Mizzou needs a crisis communications plan,'" says Jennifer Hollingshead, who became interim vice chancellor for marketing and communications in late November after the protests. "Mizzou has had a wonderfully in-depth, detailed, well-rehearsed crisis communications plan."

Careful not to criticize leaders during that tumultuous time, Hollingshead says the plan wasn't activated because of conventional thinking about what crises are and when the plan should come into play, such as during a security threat or significant weather event. "The idea that a campus crisis can take the form of a reputational crisis was not held in the forefront of people's minds," she says. If the plan was activated, leaders would have come together for quicker decision-making, set up phone banks, and delegated communications tasks.

Noting the resignations of both the system's and campus's top leaders, Hollingshead adds, "I don't think the plan would take into account that in one day there would have been a void in that leadership. That was pretty historic."

At Cape Town, administrators found that transparency with alumni and donors was key. The institution had to invest much more time communicating with alumni and donors, says Elle Williams, the university's communications officer. Officials listened to alumni and donors' concerns about unrest on the campus while also working to update them on the protests, the reasons behind them, and the efforts to make the campus tranquil and whole again.

"I think we've learned how to respond more quickly to our stakeholders," Williams says, adding that the university strives to alert them immediately about a crisis and update them as events develop. The vice-chancellor's willingness to subject himself to tough questions and criticism from stakeholders and the public has been good for the university and "has been of tremendous benefit to the work of our office," she says.

"Every time that the VC makes a clear and definitive statement, whether or not alumni and donors agree, they respect him and the university for engaging with them on a meaningful level as important stakeholders, as opposed to leaving them to read about it in the media," Williams says.

While it's too soon to say whether the protests are hurting alumni giving, Williams says the university recorded its highest fundraising total in 2015.

**What's at stake**

Like Missouri, other institutions must perform a careful balancing act when they respond to the protests, which can have major legal, financial, and political consequences.

The University of Texas at Austin successfully defended in court its decision to relocate a statue of Jefferson Davis, who led the slavery-supporting Confederacy during the U.S. Civil War, after the Sons of Confederate Veterans sued, arguing that UT violated the wishes of the donor who paid for the statue. On the campus since 1933, the statue had frequently been vandalized by students, who called it a symbol of racism.

The "Rhodes Must Fall" campaign launched at the University of Cape Town found its way to the U.K., where students demanded that Oriel College at the University of Oxford remove its monument to Cecil Rhodes. The college's announcement that it would consider the students' request set off a furor among alumni and donors, who canceled or threatened to cancel gifts. The college's governing body voted to keep the statue and include historical context on a nearby plaque.

Public institutions also face scrutiny from lawmakers who control state coffers. Earlier this year, a Republican state senator criticized University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross for meeting with students to discuss improving
the campus climate for minorities. Sen. Steve Nass said that Cross needed to "stop wasting time appeasing the political correctness crowd."

For Yale University, the overriding consideration in deciding whether to strip the name of a slavery proponent from one of its residential colleges was the historical and educational value of the name. Protesters called for the college named for former U.S. Vice President John C. Calhoun to be renamed, but the Connecticut university demurred, arguing that doing so would "erase American history" and hide the "legacy of slavery."

Some administrators wouldn't even consider students' requests. In fall 2015, black students at Oberlin College sent President Marvin Krislov a 14-page list of demands that included a 4 percent increase in the enrollment of students of color from the Americas, the Caribbean, and Africa over the next six years; divestment from all prisons and Israel; and designated safe spaces for black students at several campus buildings.

In a statement posted on the Ohio college's website, Krislov said that while some of the demands resonated with him, he would not negotiate.

"Some of the solutions [the demand letter] proposes are deeply troubling," the statement said. "I will not respond directly to any document that explicitly rejects the notion of collaborative engagement. Many of its demands contravene principles of shared governance. And it contains personal attacks on a number of faculty and staff members who are dedicated and valued members of this community."

**Campus healing**

Students may not be getting everything they want, but their efforts are bearing fruit.

The University of Maryland recently renamed the football stadium that bore the name of a former president dedicated to keeping blacks out. President Wallace Loh formed the Maryland Dialogues on Diversity and Community to continue the discussion on race and racism, "even beyond the largely symbolic step of renaming the football stadium," says Peter Weiler, UMD's vice president of university relations.

Georgetown University is trying to track down the descendants of 275 slaves who were sold in the 1830s to help fund the university. Early in fall 2015, President John DeGioia formed a working group of academics, staff, and students to examine the university's historical ties to slavery, devise a plan to atone for its past, and improve inclusivity. A major issue: whether to rename two buildings named for the Jesuit priests and Georgetown presidents who organized the infamous slave sale. Some students believed the committee moved too slowly, and protests erupted.

"That galvanized and accelerated the process," says working group member Adam Rothman, an associate professor of history at the D.C. institution and expert on the history of trans-Atlantic slavery. In response, the university temporarily renamed one of the buildings Freedom Hall and the other Remembrance Hall.

Brown University's Brian Clark, director of news and editorial development, notes the importance of being proactive. Brown has committed more than $100 million to improve inclusivity by increasing financial support to low-income students, doubling faculty from underrepresented groups over the next 10 years, and implementing other initiatives.

Work to create a more diverse campus was triggered a few years ago when Brown sought to atone for the slave ties of John Brown, an 18th-century merchant and slave trader who helped found the Rhode Island institution.

Missouri is also working to improve the campus climate. It's published two documents—The State of Mizzou I and II—providing context for the events of last fall and updating constituents about new initiatives, respectively. Administrators are holding listening sessions to discuss moving forward; a department of inclusion will be headed by a vice-chancellor; administrators will undergo equity and implicit bias training; and a lecture series will explore the African-American experience in the state.

The university is working to restore its reputation and boost enrollment, including launching a new admissions marketing campaign. Its commercial during Southeastern Conference football games this fall will take on new significance—"We all feel a sense that the eyes of the country are on us," Hollingshead says—and will be augmented by a print and digital campaign. The message will acknowledge the mistakes made and how campus is improving but remind supporters that the university remains the institution they know and love.
“One of the biggest challenges is that people see the events very differently. For us in marketing and communications, we hold the idea that two truths can coexist,” Hollingshead says. “We want to make Mizzou a better place and more inclusive. That truly is a top priority. At the same time, that doesn't mean we haven't continued to do great things as a university. That's the tricky balance that we need to strike.”

About the author, Lekan Oguntoyinbo, a freelance writer, is a veteran of several major dailies, including the Detroit Free Press and Cleveland Plain Dealer.

How 'grand' is full-time grandparenting?


The University of Missouri-Columbia wants to know.

Karen Traylor-Adolph, a doctoral candidate in the psychology department of the College of Education, and her advisor, Keith Herman, professor of counseling psychology, want grandparents who are raising grandchildren to register their joys, concerns and challenges by Dec. 11, 2016, at bit.ly/grandparent_questions.

The researcher last year requested grandfamilies with children ages 3 to 17 around the country to respond.

“In Missouri, nearly 121,000 children live with a grandparent or other relative,” she said. “Of those children, approximately 17,000 live with their grandparents without a biological parent present.”

These caregivers may not have legal custody of children in their care, making it difficult to apply for or enroll in school and other support programs. They may lack child support from any parent. Their own physical and economic challenges, both present and long-term, add to everyday concerns, said Traylor-Adolph, who also coordinates Missouri Grand Family Coalition and is a family support specialist with ParentLink, a University of Missouri program providing resources and services for Missouri families.

After completing the brief survey, participants receive a Kinship Care Resource Guide and are entered in drawings for gift cards.
Mizzou's Baker a finalist for North Texas AD position
Staff report, 8 hrs ago

University of Missouri interim athletics director Wren Baker is a strong candidate for the AD position at the University of North Texas, the Denton Record-Chronicle is reporting.

Baker, 37, has been Mizzou's interim AD since July 13, when former AD Mack Rhoades left for the same position at Baylor.

Baker also is considered a candidate to fill the full-time role at Mizzou, a position that interim chancellor Hank Foley has not given a timeline for replacing. Baker previously served AD stints at smaller schools Rogers State (Okla.) and Northwest Missouri State.

The Chronicle-Record is reporting that the position is expected to be announced Friday. Central Arkansas AD Brad Teague also appears to be a finalist for the UNT job.

Missouri interim Athletic Director Wren Baker's name has come up in connection with the vacant athletic director position at North Texas.

The Denton Record-Chronicle reported Tuesday that the school is nearing the conclusion of its search for a successor to Rick Villareal, who vacated the post June 20 after more than 15 years on the job.
The paper said Central Arkansas Athletic Director Brad Teague was "one name that has been mentioned by several influential boosters and school officials as a potential candidate." Another is Baker, who was named Missouri's interim athletic director after the sudden departure of Mack Rhoades to Baylor on July 13.

A message left for Baker was not immediately returned.

Baker was hired as Missouri deputy director of athletics for external relations on May 20, 2015, after two years as the deputy athletic director at Memphis. He previously worked as the athletic director at Rogers State University in Claremore, Okla., and then spent two years as the athletic director at Division II Northwest Missouri State.

Missouri is conducting a nationwide search for Rhoades' successor. Last week, the school announced a five-person committee, including former MU linebacker and current attorney Darryl Chatman, Missouri's senior women's administrator Sarah Reesman, former MU quarterback and current member of the University of Missouri System Board of Curators Phil Snowden, former curators chairman and chief executive officer of Walsworth Publishing Company Don Walsworth and MU law professor and faculty athletics representative Christina Wells, that is assisting interim Chancellor Hank Foley in the search.

It is unclear if Baker is considered a candidate to succeed Rhoades on a permanent basis.

The Denton Record-Chronicle reported that North Texas could name its new athletic director as early as Friday after a teleconference with the school's regents.

Should the job go to Baker, Missouri would need a new interim athletic director while continuing the search for a permanent one. Missouri's most senior administrators are executive associate athletic directors Reesman, Bryan Maggard, Tim Hickman and Mary Ann Austin, all of whom have spent more than 20 years in the athletic department.
MU Interim AD a Finalist at North Texas


New model is first to predict tree growth in earliest stages of tree life


Land managers, forestry professionals and conservationists seek to predict how trees will grow so they can better manage existing forests and regrow forests after logging operations. Previous tree growth models can reasonably predict how trees grow once they are about 20 years old and achieve "crown closure" with the trees in the forest around them. Crown closure occurs when trees in a specific area grow wide and tall enough that their canopies connect. Now, University of Missouri researchers have created a new statistical model that accurately predicts tree growth from when they are first planted until they reach crown closure.

For their study, Lance Vickers, a former doctoral student at MU, and his adviser David Larsen, a professor of forestry in the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, built tree growth statistical equations that describe the process of early tree growth. Larsen says being able to accurately predict how a stand of trees will grow as soon as they are planted is important for
forest managers to effectively grow and maintain forests. He says the model can be applied to forests in any climate zone.

"Only about 10 percent of planted saplings will survive to reach crown closure when they are about 20 years old," Larsen said. "If forest managers can accurately predict which 200 out of 2,000 saplings will survive in a given acre of forest, those managers can spend their time more efficiently by protecting those trees and cutting back trees that will not survive, but still compete with surviving trees for resources."

To create their statistical model, Vickers and Larsen collected data from the Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project (MOFEP) which is a state-funded project that is studying Missouri forest ecosystems over the course of 100 years. Vickers and Larsen used tree growth data from dozens of trees that have grown since the project began in 1990 to develop their tree growth model. Larsen says the long-term tree growth data they collected helped to make this new model much more flexible than previous growth models.

"One of the reasons previous models are unable to predict early tree growth is the huge amount of variability that exists when a number of trees are growing near each other," Larsen said. "The angles tree grow, how much water they consume and the terrain of the land are just a few of the dozens of factors that play roles in which trees will survive past adolescence and which will not. This new model takes all of those factors into account and has helped to create a new understanding of how trees grow in proximity to each other."

The study, "The Impact of Overstory Density on Reproduction Establishment in the Missouri Ozarks - Models for Simulating Regeneration Stochastically," was published in Forest Science.

**THE KANSAS CITY STAR.**

JULY 26, 2016 6:41 PM

**Missouri basketball will take precautions for upcoming Italy trip**

*MU is aware of security concerns, feels safe ahead of tour*

BY TOD PALMER
tpalmer@kcstar.com

COLUMBIA - **Missouri men’s basketball isn’t naïve about the volatile climate in Europe — including recent terrorist attacks in France, Belgium, Turkey and**
Germany — but it won’t keep the Tigers from making a 10-day trek to Italy beginning next week.

“We’ve taken a lot of precautions on this trip,” third-year Mizzou coach Kim Anderson said. “There’s always been questions about security and things that happened in the world. I know North Carolina State canceled their trip, but we feel very good and very safe.”

That doesn’t mean Anderson and the Tigers’ athletic department are taking security for granted.

**MU has invited an FBI liaison to speak with the team about traveling to a foreign country, since it’s a new experience for most of the 15 players who are taking part in the excursion.**

“It’s not really a panic thing,” said Anderson, who played two professional seasons in Italy after his career with the Tigers. “It’s more of an informative thing, so our guys can ask questions.”

With help from the compliance department, Missouri also upgraded the cell phone plans of everyone in the traveling party to include international roaming, which should facilitate and streamline communication.

Story continues: [http://www.kansascity.com/sports/college/sec/university-of-missouri/article92015637.html#1](http://www.kansascity.com/sports/college/sec/university-of-missouri/article92015637.html#1)