



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on January 13, 2016

University of Missouri Student Enrollment Down After Last Year's Protests

The University of Missouri is beginning to pay a price for the political correctness of a large portion of its faculty and student body — which may be sending a warning signal to other universities.

Administrators fear that the university's decline in student applications for admission this year is a result of last year's protests, in which at least 30 black football players — alleging that the university's president, Tim Wolfe, had been negligent in not adequately addressing concerns of black students about alleged multiple racial incidents on the campus the previous few months — declared they would not practice or play until Wolfe stepped down. As a result, both the president and chancellor resigned.



In an e-mail, Admissions Director Chuck May stated, “While we don't have any clear data, we know that the events this past fall have had an impact, and we are answering any questions that parents and students have about those events.”

Applications for admission to the university have decreased nearly five percent from the previous year. The drop in graduate student applications — 19 percent — is even more dramatic.

After last year's season, some recruits who were considering playing football for Missouri opted to de-commit from playing for the Southeastern Conference program.

The Missouri Legislature has also expressed outrage at what happened at the University of Missouri, demanding the termination of Melissa Click, an assistant professor in communications at the school. David Kurpius, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, contacted *The New American* recently to clarify the professor's role at the college: “Dr. Melissa Click is an assistant professor in the MU Department of Communication in the College of Arts and Science,” he stated, adding, “Until November 10, she held a courtesy appointment with the School of Journalism, which allowed her to work with a small number of graduate students on their master's or doctoral committees. She never taught a course in the journalism school.”

What the legislators found so particularly outrageous about Dr. Click was that she called for a student photo-journalist on freelance assignment with ESPN to be removed by physical force from covering a student protest at Carnahan Quad on the campus. Ironically, the student, Tim Tai, was personally sympathetic to the protest.

Click was captured on video ordering Tai to leave the Quad. When he countered that he was simply doing his job as a journalist, she turned to the crowd of protesters. “Who wants to help me get this



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reporter out of here? I need some muscle over here!," she shouted. Several in the crowd then began to push Tai in an attempt to block him from taking photos.

What is particularly ironic about the entire incident is that the University of Missouri once had the reputation of having the top-rated journalism school in the United States. In their letter calling for Click's dismissal, the Missouri legislators noted the troubling irony of a communications professor such as Click not upholding the critical right of freedom of the press:

The fact that, as a professor teaching in the communications department ... she displayed such a complete disregard for the First Amendment rights of reporters should be enough to question her competency and aptitude for the job. It should be evident that these actions are inappropriate, illegal, and unacceptable for a faculty member at the University of Missouri.

Another employee of the university, Janna Basler, assistant director for Greek Life, was also criticized by the legislators for pushing into the student reporter as he was attempting to cover the protest.

The actions of Basler and Click illustrate that the modern college campus has far too often been a bastion of leftist indoctrination and intimidation, and has now become the site of actual physical violence against those who do not meekly accept the worldview of the Left.

But instead of condemning the actions of college employees who attempted to suppress the First Amendment rights of a student reporter, some liberal professors on the Missouri campus were instead outraged about what they call the "meddling" of the legislators.

"This is just a beginning in dismantling systems of oppression in higher education, specifically the UM system," predicted Marshall Allen, a member of Concerned Student 1950, a liberal protest group on the campus. Students are also calling for "full shared governance" over the university, and to have a say in the hiring decision of the next president. They also are demanding to see the black faculty grow to 15 percent within 10 years.

With some football recruits having second thoughts about going to a school in which the football team threatens to strike in favor of this or that liberal cause, and a number of non-athlete students opting to look elsewhere for a place to spend their tuition dollars, the University of Missouri is paying a price for appearing to champion leftist causes. Attempting to stem the erosion of new student applications, faculty members have even taken to making personal phone calls to accepted students, encouraging them to not let these events keep them from attending the university.

Once seen as bastions of free speech, universities have in countless cases become institutions of authoritarianism. A recent poll by McLaughlin & Associates, sponsored by Yale University's William F. Buckley, Jr. Program, revealed that the free exchange of ideas is not a highly valued commodity on the modern U.S. college campus. The poll queried 800 undergraduates across the country, with the startling revelation that 72 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, "Any student or faculty member on campus who uses language that is considered racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise offensive should be subject to disciplinary action."

One must ask: Who will make these judgments as to what is racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise offensive? After all, some regard any criticism of President Obama as "racist." Others castigate the Roman Catholic Church as "sexist" for its doctrinal position of not ordaining women to the priesthood. A Christian student or faculty member who expressed that the entire Bible is the Word of God will be labeled "homophobic" by many. The very existence of conservative political, economic, or social views is taken as offensive by the American Left.



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A recent article in *The Austrian*, published by the Mises Institute, charged that academia “is the greatest offender” in the push for criminalization of certain types of speech.

It is to be hoped that an increasing number of students will choose not to support such authoritarian attitudes, by enrolling in universities that exist to advance learning in an atmosphere of free speech, and bypassing those institutions that have degenerated into indoctrination centers for progressive causes.

Photo of protest at University of Missouri: AP Images

Steve Byas is a professor of history at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College in Moore, Oklahoma. His book, History’s Greatest Libels, challenges some of the greatest lies of history about some of the greatest personalities of history, such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Warren Harding, Clarence Thomas, and Joseph McCarthy.



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