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# Truman State University INDEX

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## Considering



Photo illustration by Kathleen Barbosa/Index

Student Senate currently is circulating petitions to see if students support the pursuit of gender-neutral housing for the University. Junior Aaron Malin, President of the Student Association, said Senate decided to pursue this issue after multiple senators received comments from other students about their interest.

### Student Senate circulates petitions to gauge gender neutral housing interest

BY DAN ROMINE, Staff Reporter

Junior Aaron Malin, President of the Student Association, signed an executive order Jan. 30 to allow Senate to circulate petitions to gather signatures and gauge student interest regarding gender-neutral housing.

The signatures will be collected during February and presented to Student Government in the form of a resolution supporting gender-neutral housing by the end of March.

"[Gender-neutral housing] was prompted by the fact that the students demanded it coupled with the fact that it's beneficial to the University," Malin said. "We've been contacted by a number of students who

have expressed interest. But more than that, we've recognized that a number of the universities in Missouri have already adopted it. That it's a factor in terms of competitiveness."

Malin said the Student Senate Diversity Affairs Committee currently is circulating the petition to see if there is student support behind gender-neutral housing. While a number of students have already expressed support for gender-neutral housing, Malin said one major obstacle to the program is the conservative culture of the area. He said there is no quota of signatures that need to be obtained, but rather the signatures are

used to gauge support for the resolution.

"A lot of times this is framed as something that leads to promiscuity and part of the conservative culture we live in, especially in this area, can sometimes push back," Malin said. "This issue is not sexual. It's not designed for students who are in relationships with each other."

Malin said if gender-neutral housing is implemented, it would probably start on a small scale — likely in the on campus apartments and not the residence halls.

He said a large portion of participants in the program likely would be LGBT students, Please see GENDER, Page 7

## KPD crime statistics fluctuate

Police Department releases 2012 crime report statistics during State of the City

BY DAN MIKA  
Staff Reporter

Kirksville Police Department released crime statistics that occurred during 2012, during which burglaries, rapes and thefts increased. There was a decrease of assaults.

Some of the increases and decreases could be attributed to a new system used to record crimes.

The crime totals last year included 100 assaults, 118 burglaries, 656 thefts and five rapes, according to the "State of the City" report. Assaults dropped five percent from the year before, but burglaries rose 33 percent and thefts rose 74 percent during 2012, according to the Kirksville Police Department yearly crime report.

The rise in crime could be attributed to the department's new records management system, said Kirksville Police Department Chief Jim Hughes.

The department upgraded to a new system during the end of 2011 that changed the way certain types of crimes are recorded, Hughes said. The old system flagged crimes depending on how the complaint was classified when it was called in, but the new system can be edited by the officer if the call wasn't properly classified, he said. For example, Hughes said there were 287 domestic violence calls during 2011 and 141 calls during 2012.

"In the old system, when someone calls dispatch and says, 'Hey, somebody's [beating up] my neighbor, I think it's a domestic crime,' it would get counted as a domestic violence," Hughes said. "So let's say they get there and there's a loud television program on. Under the new system, the officer can say that it's a noise disturbance."

Hughes said this possibly could account for an increase in some areas of crime last year. "For some of these [crimes], we don't know if there's a real increase or decrease or if there's just a blip in the software," Hughes said.

He said the Department doesn't know if the statistics from 2011 are inconsistent until there are a few more years of data with the new system to compare it with. However, Hughes said the Department has no reason to believe the statistics are wrong, only "moved around a little bit."

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## Senate proposes technology fee

BY PAIGE YUNGERMANN  
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Student Senate is proposing a \$17 per semester student iTech fee to cover the cost of technology and library upgrades. This fee potentially will go into effect during fall 2013.

Senior Kelsey Smith, iTech Fee Task Force Committee Director, said the fee would cover increased bandwidth, possibly extend library hours, upgraded subscriptions to various online academic databases, e-book collections and a subscription to Discovery Tools, a search service that would allow library users to do a Google-like search of all library databases.

Student Senate will vote on the proposal Feb. 10. If it passes through Student Senate, the student body will vote on the proposal March 4 to 6, followed by a Board of Governors vote during April. The proposal was created in response to a Student Senate survey sent out Jan. 28 and taken by approximately 900 students.

"Because this is something for the whole student population, we're looking at things that would be interdisciplinary, so one department or major won't get more benefits than the other," said Janet Romine, Library Public Services Head.

Student Senate President junior Aaron Malin said without this fee, Truman State is unlikely to make the upgrades due to lack of funds. He said Internet bandwidth especially needs to be updated, but the University is not able to allot money to do so.

"If it doesn't come from us, it's not going to come from anywhere," Malin said.

Romine said if the iTech fee is not passed, the library still will consider making upgrades based off the survey results, but any potential upgrades will require a reallocation of the library budget or funds from the iTech fee.

"We're making the shift to e-resources," Romine said. "Without the fee, it's not like we wouldn't move forward on certain things, but we wouldn't be able to do it at the extent that an extra revenue source would help us."

Smith said Southeast Missouri State University is the only other major public university in Missouri that does not have a technology fee. She said the average technology fee for Missouri state universities is about \$50 per semester.

While the Board of Governors will have the final vote whether or not to implement the iTech fee, Malin said this fee will not be put into

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## Policy change leaves ROTC program unaffected

BY ASHLEY JOST  
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A national memo released last month addressing changes in women's roles in the military will, when implemented during 2016, provide new leadership and combat opportunities for women.

The effect it has on the training and education of students in the ROTC program is minimal.

Secretary of Defense General Martin Dempsey rescinded the direct combat exclusion rule for women, which eliminates gender-based barriers to service, said Lieutenant Colonel Steven Peterson, Military Science department chair.

"It doesn't necessarily mean that women have not been in combat before," Peterson said. "Women have been fighting admirably in combat for years. [Now] they will be afforded the opportunity to take part in certain specialties in the army that they've never been able to in the past."

Peterson said some of these new opportunities could potentially include infantry, armor, Special Forces and field artillery, most of which the students involved in ROTC have the chance to gain a basic knowledge of.

The women in the ROTC pro-



Submitted Photo

Sophomore Kelsey Porter does push-ups as part of the Army Physical Fitness Test Jan. 28 in the Student Recreation Center. Porter is one of 21 women involved in the ROTC program, which will remain unphased following the national announcement that reversed the direct combat exclusion rule for women.

gram consistently have received the same training during their time at the University, Peterson said, so the change only affects their opportunities later on for

those who plan to pursue military careers as officers.

First Lieutenant Charli Anderson, a Truman State alumna and

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