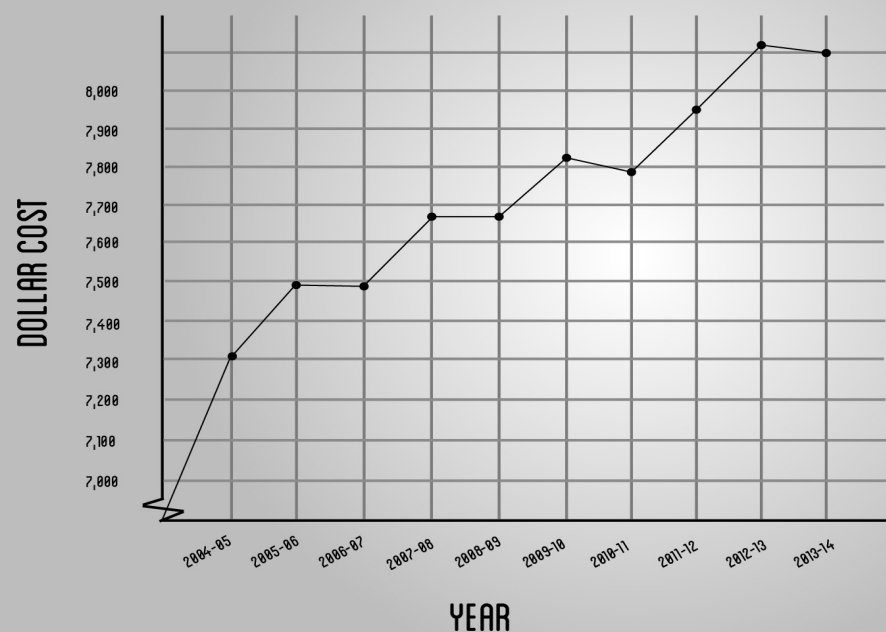
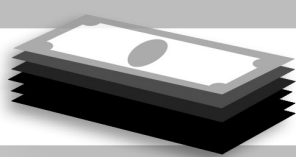


AVERAGE MISSOURI COLLEGE TUITION AND FEES



AVERAGE CHANGE PER FIVE YEARS
5%

ACCORDING TO COLLEGEBOARD

Diverse opinions benefit engaged communities



Sarah Muir

Controversy makes for great news — controversy about the news makes for even better news. Recently, there's been some controversy surrounding the opinions section of this publication. The argument is it's been too conservative, and some of the presented opinions are backwards or just plain wrong. While I haven't gotten around to tallying up how many columns are conservative vs. liberal, I have given this a lot of thought and decided to write an opinion about opinions — it's very meta. Having conservative and liberal columns in a paper can be beneficial for a community as a whole.

Conservative and liberal viewpoints should be published, even if the majority of campus identifies as liberal, in the interest of creating dialogue. When a controversial opinion is published, it gets people talking and engaging with an issue. It creates debate and discussion where otherwise there might not have been any. This is important, especially at a liberal arts college. One of our educational goals should be understanding multiple sides of an issue and being able to participate in debate that goes beyond, "I don't like this because it's conservative and I don't agree with conservatives." That's just lazy argumentation.

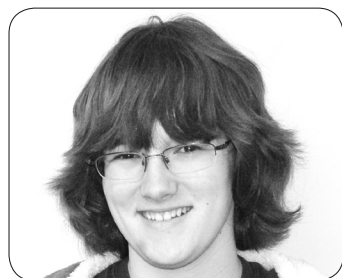
This is even more important when one viewpoint is overrepresented, because it allows the majority to just ignore the other side when most people they encounter agree with them. One-sided columns only would reinforce this problem, whereas multiple viewpoints encourage readers to engage with their values and examine them critically. Contrary to popular belief, it's really cool when people have different opinions and can share them with other people, because all parties are better off for having that discussion.

The dialogue opinion columns should create is an important step to increasing civic engagement. The problem is instead of engaging in deliberative dialogue, people still are just dismissing columns they disagree with.

The good news is that there are two potential ways for students to engage in the discussion. First, you can write letters to The Index to express your opinion and engage in the topic. Second, you can always apply and write your own columns and lead discussions on campus that way. Opinions are not inherently right or wrong — that's kind of the point of opinions — but dismissing them or bashing them in a way that doesn't positively contribute to the public discussion doesn't really accomplish much.

Sarah Muir is a sophomore political science major from Lee's Summit, Mo.

State funds could relieve students' tuition costs



Jessica Hack

Tuition costs — we all dread them. Tuition costs consistently increase and it is difficult for students to pay for college without accepting loans. This leaves students with college debt that can take years to pay off. The current tuition rate for one year at a four-year university could have paid for all four years of college 10 years ago, according to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Something needs to be done about the increasing rate of tuition. The government should redirect funds toward higher education systems rather than other recipients.

Missouri's education department has a separate budget for secondary education and higher education. According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, secondary education, including high schools, receive much of their funding from local taxes, primarily property taxes. These lower education institutions are able to provide education without tuition because the costs are paid for by these taxes and some state funding, often through grants. Colleges and universities do not receive equivalent tax money to help with funding, so they must find other monetary sources to make up for the difference in funding. Unfortunately, this responsibility falls upon the students, notably through tuition fees.

Philip Yeagle, Dean of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers University in Newark, NJ, said in a December 2012 Huffington Post article that college tuition has increased by 4 percent annually throughout the past 20 years. Yeagle said the great-

est cause of this increasing tuition cost is decreasing state support for public universities.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in Washington, D.C., found of the 43 states that have decreased public higher education funding throughout the past 10 years, 36 reduced funding by more than 20 percent, while 11 have slashed it by more than one-third. As states choose to redirect money once given to public universities toward other budget options, students now are required to pay the price.

Recently, many Missouri state representatives have been pushing bills to increase higher education funding. After multiple calls to Gov. Jay Nixon's office, the Budget Office and the Office of Higher Education, I was able to talk with Sen. Gary Romine (R-3). Romine provided me with information regarding a current bill being pushed through the Missouri Senate.

SB492, sponsored by Missouri State Sen. David Pearce (R-21), would use an allocation model to incorporate performance funding for public institutions. According to the proposed bill, each institution would be required to submit an institutional budget request to the Missouri Department of Higher Education, who then would decide the state funding level the university will receive. Beginning during the 2015 fiscal year, institutions would have more opportunity to receive more state funding. Providing more money to four-year, public universities could prevent increasing tuition costs, halting the annual average 4 percent tuition increase of public institutions.

The need for more state funding for universities like Truman State is ever increasing. Tuition prices are skyrocketing, causing students to take out more loans, putting themselves further into debt. I think state funding assistance needs to grow, not decrease. If the budget of the state were redistributed and new bills passed, more funding could be given to public universities, lowering the tuition costs and decreasing student debts.

Jessica Hack is a sophomore computer science and economics major from St. Louis, Mo.

If you were a director, what would your dream movie look like?

"Probably something to do with the ocean ... Some cool island thing, but not being trapped on an island because that wouldn't be fun."

Alexis Brown
Sophomore



"It would be a really dramatic movie, set in the 1950s. Probably a nautical movie at sea."

Cornelius Allen
Freshman



"I like documentaries. I'd probably direct a documentary about an issue I care about."

Chloe Jackson
Sophomore



"Something like Star Wars mixed with Rocky ... Going around fighting space monsters in a boxing ring."

Zackary Irvin
Freshman



AROUND THE QUAD

Pro-life movement should stop ignoring facts



Mackenzie McDermott

Many Missouri Republicans cheered when a State House committee approved a bill extending the post-ultrasound waiting period for abortions to 72 hours. With only one clinic left in the state — according to a Jan. 22 thinkprogress.org article — this bill is an amazing step toward eradicating abortion in Missouri, right? Less access to abortion means women might decide it's not worth the travel money or trouble, right? No one has ever had an illegal abortion, right?

The pro-life movement would like to pretend all these statements

are true — that limiting access to abortion lowers abortion rates, that telling hormonal teenagers not to have sex stops hormonal teenagers from having sex, that free contraception promotes pre-marital sex. But according to "Facts on Induced Abortion Worldwide" — a 2012 international study by the Guttmacher Institute — has found reduced access to abortions does not correlate with lower abortion rates, whereas access to affordable contraception and family planning programs do.

According to the Guttmacher institute, "The abortion rate is 29 per 1,000 women of childbearing age in Africa and 32 per 1,000 in Latin America — regions in which abortion is illegal under most circumstances in the majority of countries. The rate is 12 per 1,000 throughout Western Europe, where abortion is generally permitted on broad grounds."

Legality and availability do not promote abortion among women, nor does illegality and unavailability stop them — it

only prohibits abortion from being done safely. The best way to prevent abortion is to prevent unwanted pregnancies, which starts with proper sex education and availability of contraception.

"Some 82 percent of unintended pregnancies in developing countries occur among women who have an unmet need for modern contraception," according to the Guttmacher institute.

The United States moving away from affordable modern contraception and available abortion is not progression, it is regression. In developing nations where abortion is highly restricted, unsafe abortions become increasingly prevalent. The U.S. adopting restrictive laws against abortion is an affront to women's health and will not lower abortion rates in our country.

The Republican Party's 2012 national platform states, "We call on the government to permanently ban all federal funding and subsidies for abortion and healthcare plans that include abortion coverage," and,

"We renew our call for replacing 'family planning' programs for teens with abstinence education, which teaches abstinence until marriage as the responsible and respected standard of behavior."

The idea that affordable, subsidized abortions should be eradicated is directly opposed to the elimination of programs teaching "family planning" or sex education. Abstinence-only education has been proven to be ineffective for spreading anything but ignorance of sex education, which increases unwanted pregnancies and the spread of STDs, according to Advocates for Youth.

According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, "Increasing emphasis on abstinence education is positively correlated with teenage pregnancy and birth rates." With unintended pregnancy at the root of most abortions, it seems logical that the pro-life movement would wish to provide access to contraception and sex education, doesn't it?

The Republican platform about abortion, whether you call it "anti-abortion" or "pro-life," is not effective to stop abortions from happening. Instead, the movement advocates is the control of female sexuality and making women who have unintended pregnancies feel shameful about succumbing to their libido. Instead of rallying to lower abortion rates by advocating things that are proven to work, they focus on making women feel guilty about their sex drives.

A three-day waiting period for the one clinic in St. Louis will not stop low income women in rural Missouri from getting abortions — it only will make them more likely to attempt unsafe and potentially life-threatening methods. This is not progress, and this is not a win for women's health.

Mackenzie McDermott is a sophomore English major from Springfield, Ill.