



TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY
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Student killed in accident

BY AUSTIN HORNBOSTEL
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Freshman Connor Cunningham of Edwardsville, Illinois, died last weekend from injuries sustained during a car accident.

At about 8:30 p.m. Oct. 18, Cunningham was walking near Jefferson and Fible Streets when he was hit by a car driven by a 41-year-old male from Tennessee. The Kirksville Police Department responded to a call about the incident and Cunningham was taken to Northeast Regional Medical Center, where he died from the injuries he received during the accident.

Cunningham was 19 years old, lived in Dobson Hall and was a member of Truman State's ROTC program and social fraternity Pi Kappa Phi.

According to a press release from the City of Kirksville, the KPD still is investigating this incident and no charges have been filed against the driver at this time. The Adair County Coroner's Office is assisting with the investigation, according to the release. KPD officers still are in the process of interviewing witnesses and gathering information, so the



Submitted Photo

A photo of late freshman Connor Cunningham. Cunningham was hit by a motorist during midterm break and died from the injuries he sustained.

KPD has no set time frame for the completion of the investigation.

Dean of Student Affairs Lou Ann Gilchrist said Truman is planning a memorial for Cunningham, similar to the memorial hosted in honor of late junior Mackenzie McDermott Oct. 21. Gilchrist said there is not a

date or venue set for the memorial yet, but the planning process will begin after Cunningham's funeral Oct. 23 in his hometown.

Information about the memorial will be posted online on Truman Today and TruView as soon as it becomes available.

University awaits policy decision

BY KASIE GARCIA
Staff Reporter

The Faculty Senate and Student Government are awaiting decision by University President Troy Paino and Provost Susan Thomas about potential changes to Truman State's credit/no-credit policy.

The credit/no credit policy currently allows students to take classes without notifying teachers of their decision to take the class credit/no credit. If the changes are implemented, professors and advisers would be notified when students opt to take a class credit/no credit.

Communication professor Barry Poyner first proposed these changes because of a related situation in his Parliamentary Procedure class. Poyner said one of the enrolled students never came to class. Poyner said he spent a lot of unnecessary time tracking the student down, but discovered the student had enrolled in the class only to have enough credit hours for full-time student status, and thus did not attend class.

When developing the motion to change the credit/no credit policy, Poyner said the goal initially was crafted as a way to meet the faculty's needs but has developed into a way to adapt to students' needs as well.

"I expect my students to put in a hard day's work, but I should be able to know my students' expectations of the course," Poyner said.

Poyner said the changes to this policy would help professors when assigning group work. He said if professors are aware that a student who frequently is absent in class is a student taking the class credit/no credit, they can choose not to assign those students to a group project to avoid added stress for the other group members.

Faculty Senate president Vaughan Pultz said he agrees the changes to the credit/no credit policy will be positive. Pultz said while the Student Government is worried professors will form a negative opinion of credit/no credit students, the notification of a student's decision to take a course credit/no credit will not encourage a biased opinion.

"Currently, we can view the student's major and class rank," Pultz said. "If that does not bias us towards students, why should seeing their grading option bias us?"

While the Faculty Senate was in favor of these changes, the Student Senate unanimously was against changing the credit/no credit policy.

Student Government president senior Andrew Paulman said there is a misconception that students who take classes credit/no credit will not take them seriously. He said it should be students' decision to inform their teachers if they are taking a class credit/no credit.

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Truman students cope with loss

BY AUSTIN HORNBOSTEL
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After two student deaths throughout two weeks, Truman State's Residence Life and Student Affairs staff are working to help students cope with the aftereffects of loss.

Freshman Connor Cunningham and junior Mackenzie McDermott passed away during October. McDermott died of natural causes while studying abroad in Spain and Cunningham died as a result of injuries he sustained in a car accident less than two weeks later. Truman staff, including University Counseling Services and Residence Life, are available to help students process their grief.

Director of Residence Life John Gardner said the deaths of students' peers can impact them in many ways, so the Office of Residence Life is working to understand which students might be most affected by the recent deaths and reach out to those individuals. He said Residence Life staff tries to inform the individuals close to a late student as directly as

possible, but because of Cunningham's accident taking place during midterm break, many of the people close to him were out of town rather than on campus. Gardner said as a

"I think it was Sigmund Freud that said 'good grief is when you can realize that person lives on through the impact and transformation that they brought into your own life.'"

Lou Ann Gilchrist
Dean of Student Affairs

result, Residence Life staff had to make more phone calls to inform those individuals instead of informing them face-to-face, which he said they typically prefer.

While the grieving process varies from person to person, Gardner said he thinks it might be especially difficult for college-age students when

they lose a peer as compared to losing someone such as an elderly family member.

"When you lose a peer suddenly, like it was in this instance with Connor where it was a freak accident, trying to deal with the suddenness and the unexpected nature of that is possibly the hardest part," Gardner said. "Also, I would say [it is difficult] trying to wrap your mind around somebody's life being cut short."

Gardner said if a student is struggling or knows of a student who is struggling, Residence Life encourages those individuals to reach out to any member of Residence Life staff so they can investigate the best approach to help students through their grieving process. He said the University plans to host a memorial for Cunningham next week, which likely will be similar to the memorial hosted for McDermott last Tuesday. Gardner said if any student is interested in being involved with the memorial for Cunningham, they should inform a member of Residence Life staff or the Dean's Office.

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Program promotes walking to school

BY JOHANNA BURNS
Staff Reporter

The Kirksville Walking School Bus program started as part of the Safe Routes to School initiative Oct. 1.

The organization's mission is to improve the health of children nationwide by advancing programs that make it safe for children to walk or bike to school, according to the Safe Routes Partnership website. The Partnership is sponsoring the Walking School Bus program, part of a nationwide push to lower childhood obesity by promoting physical activity.

Trained volunteers pick up and walk students to Kirksville Primary School or Ray Miller Elementary School every morning. The program will end Nov. 21 and begin again during the spring.

Megan Howard, Walking School Bus Coordinator and Truman State University alumna, said volunteers pick up students who live within a mile of either school. For families outside of the one-mile limit, there are drop-off areas where parents can bring their children so they can participate in the program.

The program currently has about 30 participants, but Howard said the goal is to enroll 120 students

by the end of the spring semester. These students would account for 10 percent of the combined population of the two schools.

Howard said Walking School Bus is part of a grant that Kirksville has been working to obtain for five years. As part of the Safe Routes to School Partnership, the grant was issued in two parts. The first part of the money went to improving the sidewalks around the school to make walking to school safer. The Walking School Bus program is the second part of the grant designed to address two main problems schools are facing.

"One [problem] is childhood obesity," Howard said. "The other one is to reduce traffic around schools."

Howard said this program is designed to alleviate fears that parents have about their children walking to school. Volunteers, which include parents and Truman students, undergo background checks and safety regulation training. Howard said the volunteers wear bright vests to make them more visible to traffic.

Senior Kristin Grimsley said the training taught her how to be a good leader for the children and how to work with parents.

"[Howard] talked to us about different safety regulations, different ways to interact with kids, differ-

ent routes, different activities that we could do with the kids and basically how to be an effective leader," Grimsley said.

Grimsley said volunteers walk their routes, picking up children along the way and meet up with the other routes at Brashear Park. The children have a few minutes to play before the volunteers walk them the rest of the way to school.

Parent volunteer Megin Ziebarth said she tries to emphasize traffic safety to children as they walk their route. She said it is important to make walking to school fun for the children so they have an incentive to be physically active.

Ziebarth said that the experience is good for her children because it gives them a chance to make new friends and to learn that it is possible to have fun with friends while walking to school. She also said at first her children didn't want to join the walking school bus because they walk everywhere, but now they enjoy it because they get to see their friends.

Ziebarth said that she recommends the program to other parents and the kids promote it too.

"I tell people it's just a great program that gets you out and about," Ziebarth said. "It promotes healthy living."