

# Truman, A.T. Still to partner for 7-year medical program

BY BRENTLY SNEAD  
Staff Writer

Truman State and A.T. Still University officials signed an agreement that enables students to complete their medical studies within seven years.

The Pre-Med/Med Accelerated Track, also known as the "3+4" agreement, creates a way for students to attend Truman for three years then transfer to ATSU to complete their degrees.

Roberta Donahue, health sciences department chair, said it will be a very specific course of action for students.

"The agreement allows selected Truman State University health and exercise science students to start at [ATSU] after suc-

cessfully completing their third year at Truman, prior to completing their degree from Truman," Donahue said.

Donahue said after successfully completing their first year at ATSU, first-year medical school credits will be transferred back to Truman. She said the students will then be awarded their B.S. in health science or exercise science during August of that year.

Donahue said Truman and A.T. Still are still determining the details for students to become a part of the PMAT program, but the basics have been set up.

"The basic process is that starting in fall 2016, interested first-year health science and

exercise science majors could submit a basic application stating their interest in the program," Donahue said.

**"The 3+4 agreement will give Truman health and exercise science students the opportunity to complete their goals sooner by completing three years at Truman and transitioning to [ATSU]."**

— Janet Gooch, dean of the school of health sciences and education

Donahue said students would not formally apply until after their fourth semester at Truman and would have to meet or exceed all admission criteria at the time of application

— such as a 3.5 overall and prerequisite science GPA and documentation of clinical, community service and leadership experiences.

Donahue said students are selected during their junior year and will be awarded reserved admission to ATSU for the following year.

Janet Gooch, dean of the school of health sci-

ences and education, also helped develop the agreement. Gooch said she thinks the program will help students.

"The 3+4 agreement will give Truman health and exercise science students the opportunity to complete their goals sooner by completing three years at Truman and transitioning to [ATSU]," Gooch said.

Gooch said the schools offer high quality programs, which she thinks attracts high quality students, and said she thinks this new program will work out well for both schools.

The collaboration offers one more opportunity for the two universities to work together to provide exceptional

learning experiences for students, Gooch said. She said she hopes Truman and ATSU students who train to be doctors in Northeast Missouri might be more likely to stay in the area following graduation and contribute to the medical workforce in that area of the state.

Gooch and Donahue were also assisted by Susan Thomas, executive vice president for academic affairs at Truman, Margaret Wilson, dean of Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Norman Gevitz, Truman's senior vice president for academic affairs, ATSU and several others to make this program accessible to students.

**CDC | The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued an advisory that women not on a form of birth control should abstain from alcohol consumption.**

As many as one in **20** children in the United States might have

## FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy.

**FASD CAN LEAD TO:**

- Low birth weight and growth
- Problems with the heart, kidneys and other organs
- Damage to parts of the brain

These can lead to behavioral and intellectual disabilities, as well as lifelong issues with school, social skills and substance abuse.

Source: [cdc.gov/vitalsigns](http://cdc.gov/vitalsigns)

**CONCEAL CARRY | Officials discuss concealed carry on college campuses.**

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During the student government debate, Pelsang said concealed carry would deter and possibly even prevent crime on campus, and it would keep campuses from being soft targets for potential shooters.

"This [is a] soft target issue," Pelsang said. "It is very pressing, and I think it's very important that we discuss it further in length. It will affect all of us, and I cannot [express] enough that we need to continue this dialogue."

In opposition, Conover said the criteria to allow for an alternative to concealed carry on campus outlined in SB 731 are not financially feasible.

Conover said to follow protocol to gain the exemption from concealed carry Truman's campus, it would cost \$1.5-\$2.2 million to install metal detectors and hire security guards.

"That's not even close to in the budget," Conover said. "The state government is not willing to contribute any funds to get a security guard or to get a metal detector, so really it's a false choice."

Hollstrom said campuses are among the safest places in America, and Kirksville in particular is a low crime area.

Senior Caitlyn Bess, Student Senate legislative director, said while the bills moved quickly through the State Senate when the legislative session first started, they stalled in committee. Bess said the latest activity involving the bills was public hearings that happened two weeks ago.

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Dr. Anne Schuchat, CDC principal deputy director, said most women will not know if they are pregnant for the first month or so, which is an important time frame because of the possibility women might still consume alcohol and risk Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, according to the press release.

"Take care of the unplanned part, and it solves everything the CDC addresses," nursing professor Melissa Holcomb said.

Holcomb said it is important for women to understand and practice fertility management. Because alcohol is a known teratogen, it is important to take necessary precau-

tions to prevent unplanned pregnancies, she said.

"If you aren't planning on getting pregnant, please use the most effective form of birth control that is most tolerable to you," Holcomb said.

However, Holcomb said it also is important for men and women to be responsible and educated if taking part in sexual activity. Holcomb said if a woman suspects she is pregnant and it is unplanned, she should take a test to determine if she is pregnant or not, then seek care and consult a doctor to determine the full range of her options. She said alcohol does not need to influence a decision to continue a pregnancy if it was consumed around the time of conception.

"Social support, physical safety, involved partner, emotional tolerability should be how you decided if you want to continue with the pregnancy," Holcomb said.

**"Take care of the unplanned part, and it solves everything the CDC addresses."**

— Nursing professor  
Melissa Holcomb

Holcomb said even if a pregnancy was unplanned and alcohol was consumed before a

person knew they were pregnant, it will be all right in the grand scheme of things. But if women want to get pregnant and stop using contraceptives, they should avoid alcohol, Holcomb said.

FASD is a very real problem in America, and this CDC warning has put a bigger spotlight on it, Holcomb said. In an article by the National Center for Biotechnology Information, researchers went in-depth about how alcohol is a serious teratogen and should not be consumed during pregnancy. In this study, scientists performed extensive research of the effects of alcohol use during pregnancy, according to the article.

Based on eight studies of 10,000 children ages

6 months through 14 years, there is a harmful correlation between binge prenatal drinking and child development, according to the article. Overall there is no known safe amount of alcohol to consume while pregnant, according to article.

Being consciously aware and knowledgeable about how to prevent unplanned pregnancies or have a healthy baby, planned or unplanned, was the main emphasis of the CDC warning. Students can go to the Student Health Center for advice about contraceptives and being safe during sex, and the Student Health Center offers forms of contraceptive.

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