



Mich. budget timeline could change with resolution

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Rocky Horror Show to debut Friday at Wharton Center

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Seniors usher in new winning era for women's soccer team

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CITY CENTER II

City Council to vote on 5th financial extension

By Kate Jacobson
THE STATE NEWS

Despite two foreclosures and a trail of \$140,000 in delinquent taxes for the City Center project, the East Lansing City Council will discuss giving its developer a fifth extension to secure additional financing.

If granted by the council, the extension would give Strathmore Development Company until mid-December to align the remaining financial pieces of the project. The council meets at 7 p.m. tonight in City Hall on Abbott Road.

The \$16.4 million mixed-use development slated for the corner of Abbott Road and Evergreen and Grand River avenues almost had the majority of its properties sold in a Sept. 17 sheriff's sale. At the last minute, Strathmore and the development's lender, Huntington National Bank, reached an agreement that stopped the sale. The bank cannot comment on the details of the plans with Strathmore, said Maureen Brown, a spokeswoman for Huntington National Bank.

Strathmore President Scott Chappelle did not return phone calls or e-mails from The State News on Monday and several days in the previous week.

Despite the monetary struggles associated with this project, city officials said they plan to stick with Strathmore and move forward to redevelop the vacant lots on the west end. Strathmore projects in and outside the state also have experienced similar difficulties, including delinquent tax payments and foreclosures.

"I can't speak for the council, but our greatest efforts will be on protecting the city's financial interest," City Manager Ted Saxon wrote in an e-mail. "We want to ensure that once a project is started, it will be completed."

Some East Lansing residents are not in favor of the project, but can see why city

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CONSTRUCTION

Farm Lane still not completed

By Meredith Skrzypczak
THE STATE NEWS

Students will have to navigate around barricades and signs on Farm Lane for at least eight more days, after officials pushed back the completion date of the Farm Lane underpass project, which previously was scheduled for today.

The project, which started in 2007 and originally was scheduled for completion in August, will lower Farm Lane under railroad crossings in the area between Throbridge and Service roads.

The Michigan Department of Transportation, or MDOT, notified MSU of the delay Monday morning, citing paving completion and other issues, University Engineer Robert Nestle said.

2090

In the early '90s, growing popularity of video conference lectures at MSU initiated a move away from the physical classroom.



1995

About 30 million people use the Internet worldwide.

30 MILLION

1996

CSS 110, Home Computing, became the first online class offered to MSU undergraduates and lifelong learning students.

1998

The School of Criminal Justice began to offer its masters of science in criminal justice online. This was MSU's first complete online degree.



2001

MSU offers classes using approaches that blend online material with face-to-face meetings.

2007

MSU Global Learning Ventures begin to offer noncredit professional development and personal enrichment courses online.



2009

About 1.6 billion people use the Internet worldwide. This fall, MSU has 4,469 students enrolled in 177 different undergraduate and graduate online courses.

1.6 BILLION

SOURCES: JERRY HEAD, DIRECTOR OF MSU GLOBAL LEARNING VENTURES AND BRENDAN GUENTHER, DIRECTOR OF MSU VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, CIA WORLD FACTBOOK.

GRAPHIC BY ANDREA ZAIGATA/THE STATE NEWS

To see students sharing their opinions about online classes, visit stateneews.com/multimedia.

PLUGGING IN



Courses taught via Internet offer pros and cons for MSU students

By Marissa Cumbers
THE STATE NEWS

MSU students have the option to attend class in their underwear because of the growing number of online courses offered by the university. And this semester, more than 4,000 students are taking advantage of that luxury.

In fall 2009, 375 students were enrolled in online courses. This number has since increased more than 100-fold, with 4,469 students enrolled in online classes this semester, according to a report from MSU Virtual University Design and Technology, the university department in charge of online courses.

"It really gives schedule flexibility, and it encourages more people to enroll," said Brendan Guenther, director of MSU Virtual University Design and Technology. The introduction of online classes at MSU stemmed from the growing popularity of video lectures and students' desire for schedule flexibility in the early '90s, Guenther said.

"It started as somewhat of an experiment," he said. "There were a few faculty members that were early adopters and recognized the potential of online learning." In 1996, MSU began its first online undergraduate course, Crop and Soil Sciences 110, Home Computing. By 1998, the School of Criminal Justice became the first MSU school to offer a complete master's program online.

"Some of our early online programs were just a natural outgrowth for the societal needs of convenience

in education," Guenther said. Now, using the Internet is second nature to students, and MSU caters to the millennial generation by offering 117 distinct online courses in 46 different graduate and undergraduate subjects.

Reaching across the digital divide

Despite increasing enrollment in these classes, online classrooms pose new challenges for instructors and students.

Verifying that class content makes it past football scores and drink specials into a student's brain can be a difficult for any professor, and MSU assistant zoology professor Stephen Thomas said getting through to students can be tougher with online courses.

"It is harder not seeing your student's face and being able to immediately understand whether you made your point," Thomas said. "You have to be a little more mindful about how you assess whether your students understood the point you were trying to make."

For students, online class-

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ACADEMICS

CLS meeting abruptly ends in frustration

By Heather Guenther
THE STATE NEWS

A meeting among university officials and members of the Chicano/Latino Studies program escalated into an emotional one-sided shouting match Monday as students pleaded for the removal of the program's director.

Provost Kim Wilcox, several college deans or their representatives and associate provosts met with a group of about 30 undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty members frustrated with the CLS program's leadership. CLS Director Sheila Contreras was not present at Monday's meeting.

The meeting was the group's second in less than two weeks with Wilcox and abruptly ended at about 5 p.m. as students, some in tears, began to walk out

of the meeting, which was held in Room 443 of the Administration Building.

Wilcox acknowledged the students' frustration, but made it clear toward the beginning of the meeting any possibility for the removal of Contreras was off the table.

"I don't doubt that you are frustrated," Wilcox said. "I think it's clear (College of Social Science Dean Marietta Baba) has no intention of replacing the director and I have no intention of replacing the director."

Baba became a lightning rod for criticism at the meeting as several students argued she told members of the CLS Office Operations and Implementation Advisory Committee they could evaluate Contreras as part of an investigation into student concerns.

"Charges are being hurled

around here at 100 miles an hour," Baba said. "I said I would take forward any recommendations brought to me based on evidence, rational discourse and a majority vote."

Gabriela Alcazar, an international relations and social relations and policy junior who is part of CLS, left the meeting after she said Wilcox repeatedly disregarded students' concerns about Contreras' actions and accusations of Baba's lies about the purpose of a CLS advisory committee.

"I feel disgusted by the lack of response to any of our questions on behalf of the administration and I was disgusted by their outright lies," Alcazar said. "We're going to keep fighting. If the administration really thinks that we're backing down from

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