

From: [Office of the Provost](#)
To: [KU Lawrence All Staff, Faculty and Affiliates](#)
Subject: Engaging Together to Design the Future of KU
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Engaging Together to Design the Future of KU

Dear Colleagues,

Change is hard. An institution like ours, which has existed for 155 years, has many long-held traditions and patterns of operation that are ingrained in our culture. And yet, we are faced with the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused enormous disruptions to our way of doing things. As a result, we've had no choice other than to make sweeping changes, in record time, to keep our people safe.

These rapid adjustments have challenged us, and they are not yet over. In this moment of change, we will do well to recognize that, amidst the chaos, there is opportunity. How we respond, both to the current crisis and beyond, will determine our strength as a research institution with regional relevance, national prominence, and international influence in the years ahead. We must be willing to take an honest look at ourselves and have the courage to be innovative if we are to succeed as the 21st century institution we aspire to be.

This will be the focus of our [COVID-19 Design Challenge](#). Ten workgroups, called Design Teams, have been formed to carry out specific charges that will prepare us for campus re-opening in the fall. At the same time, the teams' work will align and integrate with KU's new strategic plan, [Jayhawks Rising](#), introduced on February 28th, and our new vision to become "an exceptional learning community that lifts each other and advances society." The 10 teams and their chairs include:

1. **Student and Faculty Success: Learning and Teaching**
Michelle Carney, Dean of the School of Social Welfare; and
Stuart Day, Dean of the School of Professional Studies and
Edwards Campus
2. **Student and Faculty Success: Student Life**
Ann Brill, Dean of the School of Journalism and Mass
Communications; and

Tammara Durham, Vice Provost, Student Affairs

- 3. Student and Faculty Success: Faculty Success**
Chris Brown, Vice Provost, Faculty Development; and
Rick Ginsberg, Dean of the School of Education
- 4. Healthy and Vibrant Communities: Employee Success**
Mike Rounds, Vice Provost, Operations and Human Resources
- 5. Healthy and Vibrant Communities: Open Community**
Bob Walzel, Dean of the School of Music; and
Derek Kwan, Executive Director, Lied Center for the Performing Arts
- 6. Healthy and Vibrant Communities: Jayhawk Cloud**
Mary Walsh, Chief Information Officer; and
Chris Gregory, Director of Marketing and Public Relations,
Edwards Campus
- 7. Research and Discovery**
Simon Atkinson, Vice Chancellor for Research
- 8. Safety**
Andrew Foster, Director of Emergency Management
- 9. Fiscal Recovery**
Barbara Bichelmeyer, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor;
Diane Goddard, Chief Financial Officer and Vice Provost for
Finance; and
Jason Hornberger, Senior Associate Vice Provost for Finance
- 10. KU Advocates and Champions**
Dale Seuferling, President, KU Endowment;
Heath Peterson, President, KU Alumni Association; and
Dave Cook, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs and Economic
Development

The teams are comprised of approximately 200 members of the KU community representing faculty, staff, students, and partners. A leadership team made up of the chairs of each team will ensure that the work of the individual groups is strategically aligned and consistent with the broader long-term goals of Jayhawks Rising. Each team will be asked to identify its vision, the skills or knowledge needed to carry out the vision, necessary resources, possible incentives, and a short-term action plan for the COVID-19 response that will ultimately feed into KU's longer-term strategic plan. All members of the Design Teams will be listed on a [dedicated webpage](#), and the work of the teams will be posted there in the coming weeks and months so all members of the KU community will have opportunities to track their progress as well as offer feedback and ideas.

Though it will not be easy to design a new and different future for KU — because change never is — I am sure we will rise to the occasion, as Jayhawks always have. We will create an even stronger, more agile community of

Jayhawks, learning and working together, wherever we are, to reach our students, no matter where they are. That, most of all, is the hallmark of a great university.

Ad Astra Per Aspera and Rock Chalk!

Barbara

Barbara A. Bichelmeyer
Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor

