

University of Kansas *Institutional Initiatives*

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During the 2010–2011 academic year, the University of Kansas developed a strategic action plan to lead to a vibrant future through the university's core missions of teaching, research, and service. This strategic plan, called *Bold Aspirations*, is the product of almost a year of effort by the University of Kansas community. Inclusion, transparency, and communication formed the basis for the entire planning process, and over 160 individuals formally took part as members of a steering committee, four work groups, and four summit planning groups. In addition, there was substantial direct input from the University of Kansas community at large.

Working together, the University of Kansas community has developed the *Bold Aspirations* plan of individual goals, strategies, and initiatives to guide the university toward better serving its students and community. The full strategic plan includes six major goals and 22 individual strategies to achieve those goals. One of the six goals speaks directly and specifically to community and scholarly engagement, stating: “[the University of Kansas will] engage local, state, national, and global communities as partners in scholarly activities that have direct public impact” (*Office of the Provost, 2011, p. 35*).

The intended university-wide outcomes for engaged scholarship include “recognition, facilitation, and support of engaged scholarship; mutually productive partnerships with the community for engaged scholarship; learning and scholarship experiences for students; [and an] increase in scholarly activities by leveraging existing community engagement activities” (*Office of the Provost, 2011, p. 35*).

The *Bold Aspirations* strategic plan also states that the University of Kansas will “promote a culture that openly values engaged scholarship.” To reach that goal, the university will “elevate the status of engaged scholarship as valued scholarship,” “build an accessible database of [University of Kansas] exemplars of engaged scholarship,” and “recognize engaged scholarship in tenure and merit criteria” (*Office of the Provost, 2011, p. 35*).

Additionally, the University of Kansas will “encourage, support, and coordinate engaged scholarship.” To this end, the university will “create the appropriate administrative structure to support engaged

scholarship,” “implement a portal for university partnerships with the community,” and “develop programs for faculty members, staff, and students to support engaged scholarship” (*Office of the Provost, 2011, p. 35*).

Although this strategic plan is in the early days of implementation, it has the full support of university administration and involvement throughout campus. Chancellor Gray-Little, in presenting Bold Aspirations to the Kansas Board of Regents, stated, “As the state’s flagship university, our mission is to lift students and society by educating leaders, building healthy communities and making discoveries that will change the world. Our aspirations will enable us to excel in that mission, which will have benefits for students and Kansans” (*Chancellor outlines, 2011*).

References

- Chancellor outlines KU’s Bold Aspirations. (2011, December 14). Retrieved from <http://www.news.ku.edu/2011/december/14/boldaspirations.shtml>
- Office of the Provost. (2011). *Bold aspirations: The strategic plan for the University of Kansas, 2012–2017*. Retrieved from <http://www.provost.ku.edu/planning/>

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