

Message from Presidents Capilouto and Bilas about Tailgating
October 5, 2012

Colleagues and Students,

In response to serious safety issues that occurred before and during the recent game with Western Kentucky University, the University made the decision to impose restrictions on tailgating along a narrow area of Cooper Drive during last week's football game. Some of the behavior that had escalated in this area in recent weeks compromised the safety of our students, safety officers, and the broader UK community.

As safety is — and must be — our first priority, we hope an important message about the primacy of safety and the importance of appropriate behavior has been sent. At the same time, however, we want all students and the broader community to enjoy our campus and the positive tradition associated with tailgating at UK.

In an effort to move forward in a constructive and collaborative way, the two of us have met and discussed — along with student affairs officials and safety officers — how to best proceed with this matter. As a result of consulting with student leaders across campus and safety officials at the university and the city, the restrictions on tailgating along Cooper Drive between University and Sports Center Drive that had previously been imposed for this Saturday's game are being lifted. We are taking additional steps to ensure a safe and secure environment so that the tradition of tailgating can continue this weekend and, we hope, going forward for the rest of the season.

Moreover, we are committed over the next week to further engage in discussions and strategy with respect to a long-term plan for how tailgating can and should best proceed in this area. We hope to have a firm plan for how to ensure an enjoyable, responsible, and safe environment — one where students play an important leadership role — for Homecoming later this month as well as future tailgating.

We both want to thank other student and university leaders, as well as safety officials, who are working collaboratively on addressing these issues as we all work toward the same goal — a fun, safe and responsible environment that everyone can enjoy.

Thank you.

Eli Capilouto
President
University of Kentucky

Stephen Bilas
President
UK Student Government