

## The Blueprint we are Creating

June 29, 2012

Dear Colleagues and Students,

I want to start with one message: Thank you.

As we approach a new academic year, I want to offer my profound thanks and appreciation for how you have welcomed Mary Lynne and me into the UK family. As importantly, I am thankful for the incredible and transformative work that only an institution like the University of Kentucky can do.

As a result of your tireless labors, our university is poised even in the midst of continuing challenges, for even brighter days as we seek to honor the Kentucky Promise to lift our state through education, research and service that has guided us for nearly 150 years.

Among the reasons for my unrelenting optimism are the efforts undertaken over the last several months by hundreds of faculty, staff and students on our campus to provide thoughtful assessment of specific areas of our work. A broad cross-section of faculty, staff, students and administrators has worked countless hours together in small groups to work on what ultimately will be a new blueprint for our institution's future.

Today, I'm writing to let you know about the status of those ongoing efforts and ask for your help in taking the next step toward completing that blueprint. We continue to be guided by the most prominent themes identified in my conversations with you and with our Board of Trustees: strengthening further the undergraduate experience and transforming our infrastructure.

As you may recall from my message to you last December and a subsequent story in the Lexington Herald-Leader -- <http://www.kentucky.com/2011/12/13/1992355/university-of-kentucky-plans-to.html#storylink=misearch>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLR88OybIGY&feature=youtu.be> -- I decided to make a significant investment of one-time, non-recurring dollars to retain a consultant, Huron, to assist our colleagues as they delved deeply into critical questions.

At that time, I also discussed with our Board of Trustees and the University and Staff senates bringing Huron's expertise to the table.

The initial reports are available now for your review at [www.uky.edu/President/HuronReports](http://www.uky.edu/President/HuronReports).

I ask for your feedback. Between now and September 1, I hope you take the time to read these reports and e-mail those team leaders listed below with your thoughts.

As you read and review, I would ask you to keep in mind four fundamental questions:

- 1) How do we create a new budget model that provides for a more transparent system of financial accountability? That means understanding how and where our revenues are generated and how expenses are assigned as we focus on our core functions of educating

students, conducting research, and serving the Commonwealth. The goal: create a budget process and framework that enables us to make better and more informed decisions. Interim Provost Tim Tracy led this team's efforts. Please provide feedback to: [provost@uky.edu](mailto:provost@uky.edu)

- 2) With a more accountable, transparent budget framework, how do we determine fairer, more consistent ways to review, reward and retain our faculty -- those who lead our efforts to teach, conduct research and render service? Our former Senate Council Chair Hollie Swanson ably led this team, whose work will continue in the coming year. Feedback: [hswan@email.uky.edu](mailto:hswan@email.uky.edu)
- 3) How do we demonstrate to our colleagues, to donors and to policymakers that as an institution we have the capacity to move forward to revitalize our campus facilities? This study of debt capacity indicates that, by conservative estimates, we have the ability at this moment in time to take on an additional \$450 million in debt for facility work across our campus -- a testament to many years of strong and responsible financial stewardship. This team was co-chaired by long-time Gatton Professor Merl Hackbart and Angie Martin, our vice president of financial operations and treasurer. Feedback: [angelam@email.uky.edu](mailto:angelam@email.uky.edu)
- 4) Finally, how do we create an administrative structure that is lean and nimble, while capable and responsive to support the work of our faculty, students and staff? We have made some changes, with more to come. Over the last several months, Interim Provost Tracy has continued that work. This initial report outlines additional steps that can be taken to strengthen our efforts. You can reach out to my chief of staff, Bill Swinford, with questions about this initiative at [Bill.Swinford@uky.edu](mailto:Bill.Swinford@uky.edu).

We will be successful. I know because of what we have done together already.

We have undertaken one of the most ambitious student housing projects in the country, a unique public-private partnership unlike any other in higher education that demonstrates our commitment to students and how they live and learn.

You have successfully implemented a modern, challenging and comprehensive core curriculum that will prepare our students for success in an ever-changing, complex world.

You made our hospital the top-ranked health-care facility in the state and secured our largest-ever research grant, designed to help more quickly bring discoveries from the lab to communities.

And you continued to excel each day in teaching, conducting research and providing service even as we made the tough, often painful, decisions that would position us to grow again in the future.

With your input and support, we will create a new blueprint for a new day at UK that will allow us to forge our destiny, rather than have circumstances dictating it for us.

We are a promise -- a promise to the people of Kentucky to be a beacon to light the future. That promise is more relevant and more necessary than at any time.

Working with you for the past year makes me unyieldingly confident that we will honor and extend the Promise for the next generation. Thank you for your commitment to the Promise and to the work ahead.

Eli Capilouto  
President