



# FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY

MARCH  
**CAMPUS  
UPDATE**  
2020



## Construction begins on Fischli-Wills Center for Student Success

A \$5 million gift in 2017 from two lifelong educators whose careers began at Fort Hays State University kicked off the planning for a three-story, \$15.5 million building dedicated to providing support for student success.

The Fischli-Wills Center for Student Success, with a direct connection to the north side of the university's Memorial Union, will consolidate in one place such essential student services as health care, academic advising, career exploration, free tutoring and the Kelly Center, with its counseling and testing services. The offices of the Student Government Association, the Center for Student Involvement and the Office of Student Engagement will also be moved into the new building, scheduled to open in December of this year.

The gift from Richard Fischli and his wife, Dolores Wills-Fischli, which they announced in May 2017, was matched with an estimated \$5.6 million from a \$4-per-credit-hour activity fee approved by students, and with other private and university funds.

Richard and Dolores earned bachelor's and master's degrees from FHSU in the early 1950s, then moved to Southern California for careers in the Los Angeles school district before moving back to their hometown of Logan after retiring. Dolores died in 2018, and Richard in 2019.

The couple were also long-time supporters of the university, beginning early in their careers. They created a scholarship fund that has supported students for many years and their philanthropy will continue to influence FHSU students for years to come through their donation for the Center for Student Success.

## Fort Hays State University brings 4,500 Chinese students online

As Chinese authorities struggled to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, Fort Hays State University and its partner campuses, Sias University and Shenyang Normal University, faced a potential cancellation of the spring term for close to 4,700 Chinese students. Such a cancellation would mean a possible loss of \$6 million in tuition revenue to the university.

Due to travel restrictions, students and faculty are unable to attend traditional face-to-face classes. FHSU officials knew that a move to an all-online format might be the only option for saving the spring term.

Fort Hays State faculty, staff, and administrators have redesigned 30 face-to-face courses to bring learning online for students in China. The team has faced several obstacles along the way, including the Chinese Ministry of Education's hesitance to allow American college programs to deliver their instruction in an all-online format.

Students in China had never experienced online courses before and were unfamiliar with the asynchronous delivery of online learning materials.

Dr. Andrew Feldstein and the team in Fort Hays State's Office of Teaching Innovation and Learning Technologies responded by delivering course material that is mobile-friendly so students can learn on any internet-capable device, including their smartphones.

Thanks to the dedication and proactive innovation of Fort Hays State, the spring term at Sias University opened on time as an all-online university. Shenyang Normal University's spring term will open, entirely online, on March 30.



## FHSU creates a day to recruit teachers

Looking a generation or two ahead about the need for teachers in rural Kansas, Dr. Chris Jochum is trying to get high school students thinking about a career in teaching. His hook is the annual Kansas Teacher of the Year Team visit on March 9 to Fort Hays State University.

Each year, the team tours Kansas universities to promote the teaching profession and discuss issues in education. This year, the stop in Hays will also be Future Educators Day. Jochum, chair of FHSU's Department of Teacher Education, has invited teachers to bring students to the event so they can meet the state's top teachers of 2020.

The purpose, he said, is to "get kids interested in the teaching professions and, hopefully, stay in Kansas." So far, about 150 students are signed up to attend with their counselors, teachers and administrators.

Kansas and the nation are going to need more teachers. Jochum says it is vitally important not only to draw more people into teaching but especially to attract people who will teach in their hometowns.

The schedule for the day includes a time for the students to tour exhibits on various paths in teaching, such as elementary, early childhood, art, history, foreign language, special education, history, math, music, science and more.

## 2 FHSU departments pilot a literacy program with correctional facility

Two Fort Hays State University departments are collaborating this semester on a unique undergraduate research project.

Directed by assistant professors Dr. April Terry (criminal justice) and Dr. Sarah Broman Miller (teacher education), 31 students are working with 10 incarcerated mothers and two grandmothers on a literacy program at the Topeka Correctional Facility to help the inmates connect with their loved ones through reading.

This research project seeks to benefit simultaneously both the inmate population and the prison system itself through a read-aloud program. The hope is to help reduce disciplinary issues, ease the reintegration process, and increase personal success upon release.

The two classes of students met with women at the facility in mid-February and conducted reading-interest surveys. The program is designed to improve inmates' basic reading skills, and the students gave inmates books to keep and read.

Teacher education students will facilitate virtual read-alouds and tutoring sessions in March and April. The student participants from both departments will return to Topeka in late April to help the inmates record themselves reading a Hallmark recordable book, which will be delivered to their children or grandchildren.



## Did you know?

Celebrate research, creativity and experiential learning at Fort Hays State on April 22 at the 2020 John Heinrichs Scholarly and Creative Activities Day.

Visit [fhsu.edu/academic/research/sacad](https://www.fhsu.edu/academic/research/sacad) for more information.

**\$7.1M**

Amount of grant funding received in FY19

**91%**

Success Ratio (#awards/#proposals)



**FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY**

*Forward thinking. World ready.*

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