



FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY



Presidents of FHSU and Kansas community colleges, members of the Kansas Legislature, and administrators and faculty from FHSU and Kansas community colleges.

FHSU and Kansas Association of Community Colleges partner to address critical nursing shortage

United in their commitment to addressing the critical shortage of nursing professionals in Kansas and the nation, Fort Hays State University and the presidents of Kansas community colleges signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on January 19, 2024, to establish a new guaranteed admission program ensuring Kansas community college nursing graduates admission to FHSU. The event took place in the State Capitol Building in Topeka. The presidents were joined by Senate Majority Leader Larry Allen, state Senator Rick Billinger, and state representatives Barbara Wasinger, Ken Rahjes, Dr. Bill Clifford, and Dr. Ron Bryce.

Data from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing indicates that 100,000 nurses left the workforce during the pandemic. The Kansas Department of Labor's 2022 Occupational Outlook report shows that by 2026, the state will face a shortfall of more than 18,000 registered nurses. The impact in rural Kansas is especially dire, and hospitals now face nursing shortages that could lead to closures.

“This workforce-focused partnership is an example of Kansas higher education at its best,” FHSU President Tisa Mason said. “While this guaranteed admission program in

nursing is new, our long-standing partnerships with Kansas community colleges have contributed greatly to the quality of higher education in our state.”

Under the terms of the MOU, FHSU will provide guaranteed admission to students who have completed an accredited nursing program, hold a current Registered Nurse (RN) license, and meet all other FHSU admission requirements.

Changing the way law enforcement manages potential conflicts

In the aftermath of the George Floyd tragedy, Dr. Tamara Lynn, Chair of the Criminal Justice Program at Fort Hays State University (FHSU), recognized the potential value of de-escalation training for students pursuing careers in corrections, probation and parole, juvenile services, and other roles where intense emotion can lead to confrontation. She saw in the nation’s growing list of National De-escalation Training Centers (NDTCs) an opportunity to make a difference at FHSU and across the U.S.

The NDTC Lynn established at Fort Hays State in 2020 is making significant strides in its mission to provide essential de-escalation training to law enforcement agencies across the central United States. The Fort Hays State University Criminal Justice Program acts as the Region 2 headquarters for the NDTC, allowing for coordinated efforts in seven states: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. The NDTC has successfully trained over 1,000 law enforcement personnel across its seven-state region. Participants from California, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, and New York have also completed these indispensable training programs facilitated by trainers from FHSU.

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The program offers a range of training modalities, ensuring that law enforcement officers receive the necessary skills to de-escalate high-pressure situations effectively. From face-to-face courses to online training, the NDTC leaves no stone unturned in its efforts to shape a culture of de-escalation within law enforcement agencies.

Looking ahead, the NDTC has ambitious plans to enhance its training programs further and expand its reach. A grant application has been submitted in collaboration with New York University to integrate Virtual Reality into the training curricula. This innovative step would provide officers with realistic scenarios to practice and refine their de-escalation skills.



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Construction Affiliation Implementation Team hitting its stride

The Construction and Construction Management Affiliation Team, one of the first teams created under the Strategic Affiliation initiative, continues to make remarkable strides. The team's efforts underscore the shared commitment of the dedicated higher education professionals from FHSU, NCK Tech, and Northwest Tech, who are currently working to create more robust and aligned academic programs, eliminate unnecessary administrative barriers, and address regional workforce needs.

Carpentry/cabinetmaking in the spotlight

One notable early success serves as a testament to the team's commitment to flexible and accessible education. The team has conceptualized an innovative curriculum pathway that would allow students to complete a one-year carpentry certificate at a technical college, and seamlessly transition to FHSU's Applied Technology bachelor's degree program for their second-year classes. Once they have completed their second year of study at FHSU, students will be able to transfer their earned credits at FHSU back to the technical college to earn their associate of applied science degree. This approach can significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to complete both a two-year and four-year degree program.

Exploring Reverse Transfer Options

The implementation team also explored the possibilities of other reverse transfer opportunities by identifying ways to enhance FHSU's Construction Management program by adding specialized one-credit-hour construction content taught by technical college industry experts. These would be short courses designed to cover essential construction facets not typically addressed in a four-year plan and offer valuable insights for students aspiring to leadership roles in the field with additional training in various specialties, including earning a commercial driver's license or a welding course.

A big thank you to our Construction Management Implementation Team Industry Partners!

- Commercial Builders
- Hess Services
- Kansas Contractors Association

FHSU Alum Brent Rogers named "Ag Hero of the Month"

U.S. Representative Tracy Mann publishes an "Ag Hero of the Month" recognition as a way to shine a light on the importance of Kansas agriculture to the Big First District and the world. Brent Rogers, a 1998 Ag Business graduate of Fort Hays State, was recently recognized as Mann's Ag Hero for January 2024. Rogers owns Double R Farms in Sheridan County. He and his family live in Hoxie, where they grow wheat and corn and co-manage a cow-calf operation. In 2018, Rogers joined the Kansas Corn Growers Association (KCGA) board, representing corn farmers in the northwest part of the state. In 2020, he was elected KCGA President. Rogers advocates on behalf of Kansas corn farmers across the state and works tirelessly to ensure that Kansas agriculture continues to thrive.

