Leadership HEARTS, Norms, and Virtues at the University of Kansas

Barbara A. Bichelmeyer

Nancy E. Snow
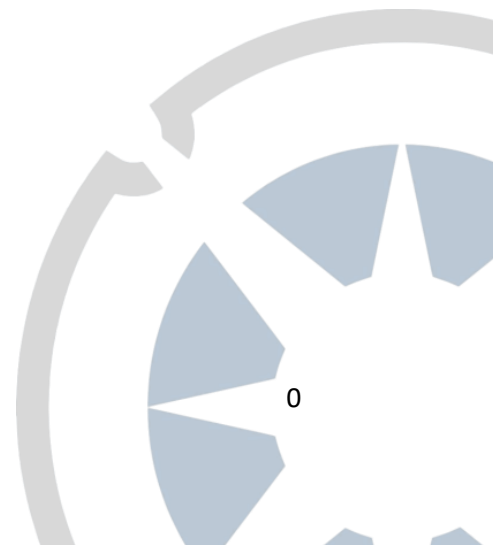
Leadership HEARTS, Norms, and Virtues at the University of Kansas

December 10, 2023
Barbara A. Bichelmeyer and Nancy E. Snow

The Problem

No one who pays attention to news today needs to be told that higher education is rife with problems. New technologies based on the capabilities of the Internet, such as online education, big data, social media, smart phone apps, and artificial intelligence are disrupting the ways in which we've done our work. Public surveys clearly indicate our constituents have negative perceptions about our institutions, and that increasingly, constituents do not recognize the value of a college diploma. We have very real pressures to change -- new competitors who offer highly popular educational programs in new formats such as competency-based education that we don't have the infrastructure to deliver; new accountability requirements dictated by governing boards and regional accreditors; and changing student demographics such as the upcoming enrollment cliff which will begin in 2026 as a result of low birth rates during the Great Recession of 2008. We face financial constraints after years of decreases in state funding for colleges and universities, while problems stemming from poor financial management are evident at some of our greatest research institutions such as Pennsylvania State University, Rutgers, West Virginia University, the University of Arizona, and our own institution, the University of Kansas.

Each of these challenges create very real difficulties for higher education, and all of these challenges have very real negative impacts for our institutions and for our many constituents. Yet, what if it turns out that these are NOT the most urgent problems with higher education? Here, we present the premise that the foundational problem with higher education today is we don't realize what we don't know; which is to say that our many attempts to fix higher education are focusing on the wrong things, because our real problem is that we don't know ourselves. To be very specific, our proposition is that the problems we face in higher education are the direct result of the fact that we don't know:

- what kind of organization we are,
- what value we contribute,

- and how to measure the quality of our work.

How have we historically described higher education as an organization?

One of the most controversial statements one can make among university faculty is to claim that higher education is a business. Any such statement is usually met with the retort that such views diminish the importance of our work (a view with which we don't disagree). However, because we in public higher education take hard-earned income from taxpayers, grant payments from funding agencies, and tuition payments from students, we are in fact engaged in commerce as a fee-for-service provider, and therefore, we are an economic entity.

However, if businesses use people to make money (which we recognize is a coarse overgeneralization), we could argue that we are an "anti-business" in the sense that we use money to make people. Still, we do tell people that, if they give us their money, we will help them learn to do things they've never previously been able to do, and we'll help them solve problems and meet challenges they've not previously been able to address. Therefore, we think, we are not only an economic entity, we are an economic entity that holds a sacred trust because when we take a student's money on the promise of increasing their knowledge and skills and we don't deliver, that student is worse off than they were before they enrolled in our program – in that they've spent their resources, they are left without the promised knowledge and skills, and in future it will be more difficult for them to generate the income that will allow them to pay off the loan they took out to pay their tuition to our institution.

So, having recognized that we are, in fact, an economic entity, we must determine what kind of economic entity we need to be in order to address the challenges we face.

How have we historically described the value of higher education?

One major consequence of not knowing what kind of organization we are, is that we are also confused about what value we provide to our constituents. Though we are certain that higher education is a good investment for all who fund it, we have historically described the value of our tripartite mission (research, teaching and service) in faculty-centric terms. Rather than focusing our value proposition on our constituents, we have focused on our faculty because they are the subject-matter experts whose knowledge and skills generate the creative

discoveries we sell to funding agencies, they are the foundation of the academic programs we sell to students, and they are the source of services we sell to states, federal governments, and the global community. We use this faculty-centric perspective to describe the value proposition of higher education: we refer to research as knowledge-creation by faculty, rather than to describe research as building on past discoveries and current exchanges between scholars and practitioners; we refer to instruction as the dissemination of knowledge through faculty-centric lectures, rather than as an engaging educational experience that is co-created by faculty and students; and we refer to service as the application of faculty's knowledge, rather than as collaborative participation between community members of all varieties (including faculty) to address our shared challenges and contribute to the greater good.

Considering the word choices we use and the ways in which we talk about what we do, is it really any wonder that the general public has difficulty seeing our institutions as relevant or useful to their everyday lives? From this lens, it's understandable that they perceive our faculty to be arrogant and estranged in an ivory tower that is deeply out of touch with the very real challenges that are common to humanity and that we all experience.

So, if we are able to recognize it is no longer adequate (if it ever was) for the value proposition of higher education to be faculty-centric and knowledge-centric, then we must determine what our value proposition needs to be in order for our institutions to be seen as relevant to our constituents.

How have we historically measured the quality of our work?

Our tripartite mission in higher education of research, teaching and service requires our faculty to be critical thinkers in our disciplines, to find flaws in previous research, to critique the work of our colleagues, to engage in peer review of academic programs, to evaluate our students' coursework, to certify knowledge through transcripts, and to award diplomas as certificates of competence. The structure of higher education understandably privileges faculty who hold terminal degrees and tenure, holding rights and responsibilities as gatekeepers of our disciplines and evaluators of others, with the unintentional consequence of creating implicit norms that hold us above accountability to our accreditors and our state funders.

Given our faculty-centric focus, it's hard for us to understand, much less empathize with, why it would be that our constituents perceive our institutions and faculty as having a sense of entitlement, rather than a spirit of service to those who provide funding for our work. Worst of all, from the perspective of our constituents, is their sense that we put ourselves above accountability to our students – for when our students fail, we have often blamed them for not being smart enough, not hard-working enough, or not being able to navigate our byzantine structures – rather than blaming our overly complex infrastructure, our expensive textbooks, our inaccessible advising, bureaucratic transfer policies, high costs, or any of the many other factors that lead to student failure.

So, we must acknowledge that we have measured the quality of our research, teaching and service in faculty-centric and knowledge-centric ways that do not always bring out the best in ourselves and at times cause more harm than good. Though to be fair, let's also acknowledge that we inherited our focus on knowledge and subject matter, which grows out of our founding as a conservatory of the artifacts of civilization, along with the ivory towers and moats and gates that protected these fragile materials from the "barbarians" at the gate (as suggested in Thomas Cahill's book, *How the Irish Saved Civilization)*. It was from our foundation as a Conservatory that we grew into the structure of the universities we have today. We have organized and rationalized our institutions by separating academic disciplines into schools and departments, and we discuss our tripartite research and teaching and service mission as though they are separate purposes of the university. These very-siloed perspectives are simpler to navigate than the real complexities and paradoxes inherent in higher education today. However, navigating something that is so complex and paradoxical with such simple models is ultimately what makes our institutions so dysfunctional, because we need to be both conservators of knowledge and innovators through research and discovery; we need to go beyond the dissemination of knowledge to create engaging educational experiences that provide both feedback and support to students; and we need to provide service that advances society beyond the status quo while serving those who live within it.

The faculty-centric, knowledge-centric, subject-matter-focused, siloed approaches that we use to organize and rationalize our work in the academy have left us with measures of quality that create either/or thinking, winners and losers, and confusion and frustration from our constituents about who really benefits from the higher education enterprise. We must

recognize the limits that have been placed on institutions of higher education by measuring our quality in faculty-centric and knowledge-centric ways; we need to develop better measures for evaluating quality that simultaneously meet the needs of our faculty, our students, the disciplines we represent, and the communities we serve.

It is not hyperbole to say that we desperately need to ascertain and apply better/more helpful models than those we've historically used to describe our organization, our value-proposition, and our measures of quality, because the outcomes that have derived from our faculty-centric, knowledge-centric, subject-matter focus have caused large-scale, immeasurable, very real pain and very real harm to the constituents whose lives we purport to make better. The impact of our faculty-centric, knowledge-centric approach to higher education is most damaging to the people who are most vulnerable, the very people we say we are most committed to helping. We see it in colleagues whom we leave unsupported, or worse, force out of our institutions to seek better conditions in the private and for-profit sectors. We leave our communities hanging when we ignore their calls for workforce development, or when they need real support to solve the grand challenges we all face. Most damaging, we harm our students who need not only knowledge and skills, but more basically and more importantly, care and support and mentoring to learn how to use the knowledge and skills they acquire to deal with the personal and ethical challenges they face in a more complex world than has previously existed.

There was a time, as Thomas Cahill pointed out, when the world needed the kind of conservatory that the Irish provided. But that world is long-passed and the organization of higher education as guild and gatekeeper doesn't work anymore – for anyone, including ourselves. Yes, higher education needs to change in order to meet the real needs of our colleagues, our students, and our world. We must move from being knowledge-centric and faculty-centric to become learning-centric and person-centric, because ultimately, this change is actually for ourselves. Faculty everywhere are exhausted from having to do it all, we're suffering from constant judgement and lack of support, we seek connection and compassion, we know that we can't live our best lives by focusing solely on critical thinking and evaluating others, and we desire to bring our whole selves to our work, with appreciation, creativity, and with opportunities for growth and development. Paradoxically, our fundamental problem in higher education has been that we think we are not the problem, that others are the problem, and we're waiting for someone else to come fix the problem. Our

solution, as sages have pointed out in the past, starts with ourselves, with becoming the change we wish to see, and in shifting our way of being in the world that exists today. Critical thinking has engendered a critical spirit that is not helping the academy. We must start with a fresh perspective, and this fresh perspective must begin with those of us who aspire to lead our institutions. To point out the obvious, such change is and will be a work in progress.

The Alternative

How should we describe higher education as an organization?

What if, instead of seeing the organization of higher education as being non-economic and faculty-centric, we come to understand that our institutions are actually, in totality and at best, organizations that are more than the sum of the historical siloes of academic disciplines? What if we see that the institution, as a whole, is a comprehensive multi- and inter-disciplinary network of disciplinary networks that brings together faculty, students, staff, alumni and constituents for the cultural, educational and economic benefit of all, including the institution? What if the organization fosters and facilitates connections and engagement within and beyond the academic disciplines, by bringing together our faculty, staff, students, alumni and the communities we serve? And what if this network of networks that brings together academic disciplines and our many constituents unapologetically generates cultural, educational and economic benefits for all members -- through research and discovery that result in innovation and economic development, as well as through educational experiences that help students to develop cognitive skills (such as critical reasoning and empathic inquiry) and ways of thinking (such as the scientific method or journalistic interviewing or grounded research) that allow students to be forever relevant by solving new problems and challenges that will arise throughout their lives? What if we embrace the idea that our academic programs should meet workforce needs, that our research should sometimes be translational, and that our service should improve the human condition? What if we made a concentrated effort to improve the environment of our institutions so that it provides faculty, staff, and student-employees with decent wages and caring support as they engage in learning and work that matters so much to individuals, organizations and society?

How should we describe the value of higher education?

And what if, instead of seeing our value-proposition as generating research, teaching, and service that are separate activities, we come to understand that our institutions are really places where our greatest and highest value comes from bringing methods of research and discovery together with engaging educational experiences to generate broad positive impactful service for our constituents, for academic disciplines and for society? One could think of discovery, education and service as a tightly-linked Venn diagram in which the activities of each circle inform and improve the activities of the others, so that all have a synergistic impact on the entire enterprise. Imagine the dynamic that is created when faculty model their considerable cognitive skills and the structured ways of thinking they use in their research for students by using engaging educational experiences where they teach students to think like researchers. Imagine the dynamic that is created when faculty interact with all of their constituents -- whether or not these individuals hold terminal degrees or have tenure -- as co-learners, inviting everyone they engage with, especially their students, to put their assumptions and hypotheses and ideas out on the table for shared exploration and examination, engaging with each other in empathetic, respectful, and collegial ways. Imagine the dynamic that is created when faculty, students, staff, and community members work together through scholarly inquiry and creative activities that enhance life, improve the human condition, address the grand challenges our societies face, and contribute to a better world. The synergies created by such activities would make it nearly impossible for even the harshest of higher education's critics to plausibly argue that the work of our institutions, our faculty and our students is not relevant to their worlds.

How should we measure the quality of our work?

The knowledge-centric products we've historically used to measure the quality of our work in higher education are simply too static and finite to measure the dynamic qualities of a higher education institution that brings faculty, students, staff, alumni and constituents together in a multi- and inter-disciplinary network of disciplinary networks for the cultural, educational and economic benefit of all, including the institution. So, when a higher education institution closely connects discovery, education and service such that each informs the others in ways that create synergistic impact for all, how should we measure the quality of such work?

We propose that *learning* is the foundational measure of quality which connects all the activities of discovery, education and service with all the constituents engaged in these activities in our highly networked organizations. In other words, the common denominator between the actors and activities in these dynamic environments is the learning that goes on across all activities and across all groups – whether it's faculty learning through their research activities, students learning through service activities, constituents learning through informal networking opportunities, or an almost infinite number of other activities that occur in higher education institutions. Therefore, we think of higher education as a learning-centric enterprise. Further, we consider higher education to have a talent-development orientation, which is to say that, as long as knowledge is embodied in humans, the act of learning is synonymous with and co-requisite to the development of human talent (and we do understand that, with the arrival of ChatGPT and artificial intelligence, we have opened the question as to whether knowledge need be embodied now and in future). Given this talent development orientation, we argue that the quality of higher education is measured based on the activities our institutions provide that facilitate learning, growth and ongoing personal and professional improvement (talent development) for *all* our constituent groups -- not only for our students, our disciplinary organizations, and the society we serve, but also, and perhaps most importantly, for the staff and the faculty who make up our institutions and provide our programs and services on a daily basis. Of course, measuring our quality by focusing on learning and talent development among our students, staff, faculty and the greater community is something we do to some extent already; however, marking talent-development as the foundational measure of quality indicates the difference between being knowledge- and faculty-centric and being learning-centric and talent-centric, in that this measure frees faculty to again become learners in their own right, in spite of their tenure and their terminal degrees. To say that the measure of quality in higher education is learning- and talent-centric is to say that higher education is at its best when we are focused on developing talent in our students, developing talent within our disciplines, developing talent within our institutions and in the communities we serve, developing talent within our faculty throughout their scholarly careers, and developing talent within administration, which altogether means that each of us who works in higher education must, first and foremost, be focused on developing the talent that is within ourselves.

In sum, we believe that, instead of higher education working as we have historically described, our institutions work best when they work like this:

|	HISTORICAL	ALTERNATIVE
ORGANIZATION	Not an economic entity, an entity that is a discipline-specific and faculty-centric, lacking perceived relevance from constituents	A multi- and inter-disciplinary network of disciplinary networks that brings together faculty, students, staff, alumni and constituents together as a community of learners for the cultural, educational and economic benefit of all, including the institution
VALUE-PROPOSITION	Research, teaching and service are separate activities	Discovery, education and service are tightly connected (as in a Venn diagram) with each informing the others to create synergistic impact for all
QUALITY MEASURE	Knowledge-centric and product-orientation: Quality is measured by artifacts that demonstrate what one knows, such as journal articles, invited lecture, and conference presentations, editorial boards	Learning-centric and dynamic, talent development orientation: Quality is measured by activities that demonstrate learning, growth and continuous improvement for all constituent groups, including students, staff, disciplinary organizations, society, and also faculty and administrative leaders

We believe that the higher education institution we've described above is what we already are when we are at our best, and we've experienced its existence in pieces and parts over time across various institutions. Our goal is to do what it takes to consistently create such institutions at greater scale. To this end, the question we now pose is, what must we do differently to become what we can and should be, so that we may calm our critics by better addressing the needs of today's world?

The Approach

At the University of Kansas (KU), we're engaged in a transformational effort to make our campus a multi- and interdisciplinary networked community of learners where we bring together all constituent groups in synergistic activities of discovery, education and service that privilege learning over knowing, in a talent development enterprise.

This work began in earnest on February 29, 2020 – just days before we were forced to move to remote operations due to the pandemic -- when KU leaders convened to roll out a new strategic plan titled "Jayhawks Rising." The vision that frames this strategic plan states that KU aspires "to be an exceptional learning community that lifts each member and advances society." Our articulated mission reflects our tripartite focus on research, teaching, and service in its statement that we will "educate leaders, build healthy communities, and make discoveries that change the world." The plan identifies six core foundations of our institution, including requirements of our governing body, the Kansas Board of Regents; our institutional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission; membership in the Association of American Universities; our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging; priorities set through a regular three-year cycle of surveys of our key constituents (students, faculty and staff); and recognition of our responsibilities as an international entity. Requirements and accountabilities that stem from these six core foundations inform our three institutional priorities of research/discovery, student success, and healthy vibrant communities. These three institutional priorities each have several key objectives that are long-term goals for the university. In turn, each objective involves several strategies that are selected in August by campus leaders (including faculty, staff, and student governance representatives, and a broad selection of academic and service administrators). These strategies then become the focus of improvement for the upcoming academic year. Each objective and its annual strategies are co-led and monitored by teams of "objective leaders"

which generally include one dean and one vice provost to help break down the historical divisions that have existed between academic units and central administration, and to bring both a unit focus and a campus focus to each initiative. Five assessment processes are used by administration on an annual cycle to assess progress on the strategic plan and ensure alignment of all units and employees to the goals, objectives and strategies of Jayhawks Rising. These assessment processes involve annual strategic alignment meetings for academic units and administrative units, academic program assessment and review, annual fiscal planning and reporting, as well as processes involving annual employee evaluations and talent development. Work is currently in progress for each academic and administrative unit to develop, implement and annually report on a strategic plan (including a diversity plan, a research excellence plan, a curriculum map and academic program review plan, an enrollment management plan, a personnel plan, a fiscal plan, and a fundraising plan) that align with Jayhawks Rising.
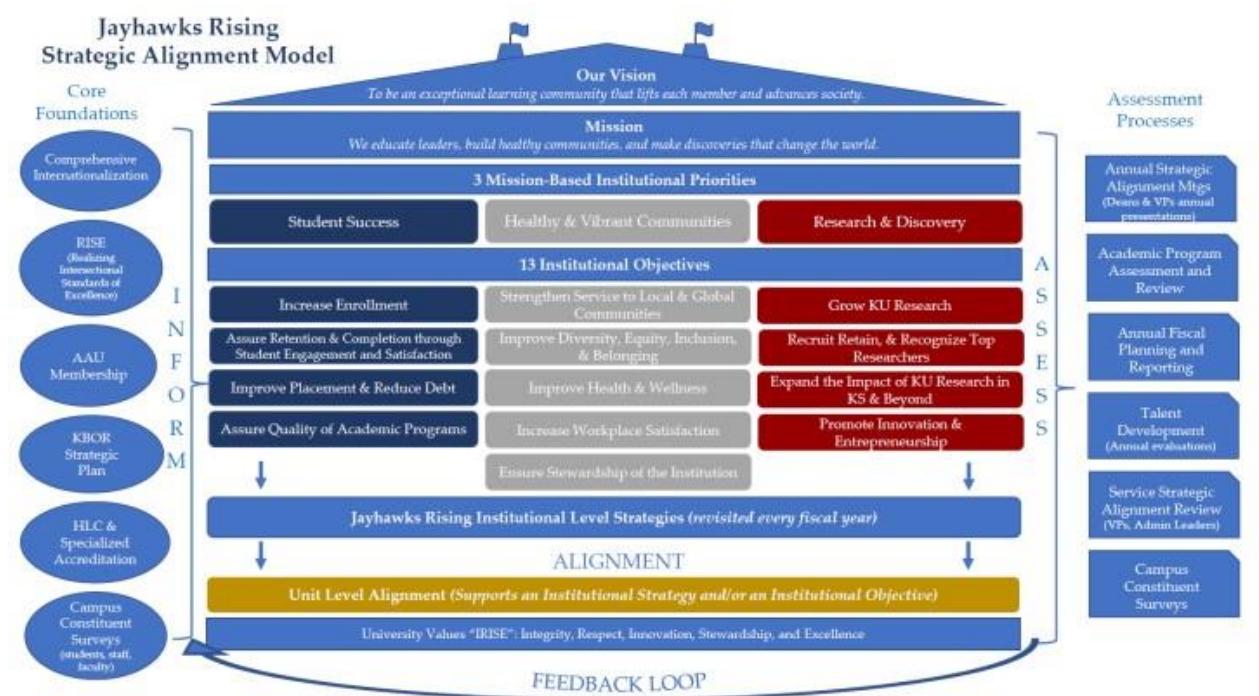
It is important to note that, unlike some institutions of higher education in which a strategic plan is an optional initiative that is additive to the essential work of the university, at KU the strategic plan is the core planning and operational document that drives our decision-making and all of our work. The daily activities of implementing the strategic plan are referred to as strategic alignment, and the Provost's overarching responsibility is to ensure that all academic and administrative leaders carry out their responsibilities in each unit in alignment

to the mission, vision, priorities, objectives, strategies, foundations and assessment processes of Jayhawks Rising.

In addition to the work of strategic alignment, since Spring 2020 a strategic redesign of key offices has been underway, guided by information from and surveys of internal constituents in order to improve service and support transformation, and this work is ongoing. Reorganizations and re-design have occurred in the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging; the Office of Analytics, Institutional Research and Effectiveness; the Offices of the Chief Financial Officer and of Finance; the Office of Faculty Affairs; Human Resources Management and Shared Service Centers; Academic Affairs, Graduate Studies and Academic Success; Strategic Enrollment Management; Information Technology; and Facilities and Operations. In each of these restructurings, we engage in quality improvement initiatives that bring together those with functional responsibilities with the constituent users of their services and programs to redesign offices and their systems, structures, policies, processes, and monitoring and reporting in ways that drive us toward our vision to be an exceptional learning community that lifts each member and advances society.

Yet, as we know from socio-technical systems theory, technical changes such as those listed above are not enough to ensure that an organizational transformation is successfully sustained. In order to create lasting change, we must transform not only the technical systems that frame the work we do, we must also transform our social systems, those that impact the ways in which we work with each other, and most challenging of all, those that impact the spirit with which we do our work.

At KU, a number of initiatives have been completed and many are in process that focus on transforming the social systems that complement the changes we've made to our technical systems. A few key examples include the creation of a Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct, restructuring the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX, cleanup of our Policy Library, the re-design of faculty and staff professional development programs to make them more focused on performance requirements, to make them more streamlined, and to deliver them more frequently and at greater scale; and to make executive development and coaching programs available to support all academic and administrative leaders on campus. This work sets our baseline for becoming more compassionate and considerate memvers of the

community, helping each member be their best for themselves, their colleagues and students, as well as for the institution.

Ultimately, as Provost, I know that, if we are truly and ultimately going to move beyond the knowledge-centric and faculty-centric organization that we've previously been to become what we can and need to be – a multi-disciplinary networked community in which everyone is learning together through discovery, education and service, the most critical and challenging work of all, is be to change the spirit we bring to our work and the spirit we bring to our relationships with each other. This is culture change at its core, and it's culture change that starts with leadership.

One significant (and incomplete) step toward changing our culture, our spirits and our ways of being with each other as we learn and work -- and learn together -- occurred during the 2022-23 academic year, when key administrative leaders joined together with governance leaders representing faculty, staff and students as a Shared Governance Task Force in an initiative to re-focus and re-invigorate our shared commitment to our university values of Integrity, Respect, Innovation, Stewardship and Excellence, and to call on all faculty, staff, administrators and students to engage with each other in ways that embody our commitments to each other. The task force held meetings, town halls, and a working retreat as they developed a "Culture Charter for an Exceptional Learning Community" that articulates a set of agreements that we hope will guide the behaviors of all community members. A communications campaign with opportunities for faculty, staff, and student engagement and participation has been developed and will be rolling out over the course of the next 18 months.

And yet again I know that, even with all these efforts to change our social systems at KU, this is not likely to be enough to create sustainable transformation of the institution, because it's so easy in the busyness of our days for each of us to ignore, to discount, or to assume it doesn't apply to me. I know that, as Chief Academic and Operating Officer, changing our culture, changing our spirits and changing our ways of being with each other as we learn and work and learn together starts with me.

Ultimately, I understand that who I am, how I show up, and how I engage with others is as important as any other initiative that's been described (if not moreso) to create the

transformation we're engaged in at KU. For this most personal work of change, I have been guided by leadership values that were developed during a facilitated conversation that occurred on December 2, 2021 during an extended All Team Meeting (which includes deans, vice provosts, key directors and vice chancellors). At that point at KU, we were in the thick of dealing with a number of difficult challenges, most significant of which were COVID and addressing a $50 million structural deficit. The agenda for the meeting was to discuss what we would need to do to build trust and to create a willingness to take calculated risks within the leadership team, and to change the culture on campus in ways that would allow KU to become an exceptional learning community. As we considered this question, we engaged in an activity in which we broke into groups and built out the set of leadership values to guide us in our work. The acronym created to represent the shared leadership values and associated behaviors that we would commit to and ask of each other was, and is, HEARTS:

Humility – have self-awareness and be willing to acknowledge that I am not an expert at everything, play to my strengths and trust others to use their strengths to complement our work; actively listen and use emotional intelligence when engaging with others, and treat people with respect no matter what their title or position

Ever-curious – emphasize listening over telling, attend to and respecting the perspectives and needs of others, be willing to evolve in the face of evidence, prioritize the intellectual mission of the institution, and be transparent as possible in interactions

Appreciative – Flip perspectives /framing from negative to positive in my own communication and encourage others to do so, start the day with saying at least one thank you, share remarkable things that happen, recognize peoples' jobs are challenging and ask them how it's going

Responsive – be anticipatory, proactive, competent, and efficient and in carrying out my responsibilities in support of KU and our constituents

Teammate – assume good intentions of colleagues, clearly communicate, respect diverse and divergent opinions, be honest and trustworthy, and work to develop shared purpose

Steward of KU – model courage, openness, and adaptability with responsible/innovative forward thinking to help KU become an exceptional learning community

I aspire to embody these values because I understand how my showing up every day to learn and work with a spirit that manifests in these behaviors can contribute to the creation of the exceptional learning community we aspire to be at KU, a multi- and interdisciplinary network where our faculty, students, staff, administrators and community members come together in synergistic activities of discovery, education and service that privilege learning over knowing, in a talent development enterprise.

I understand that, if higher education is truly about talent development - for our students, our staff, our faculty, our administrators and our communities - then talent development starts with our leaders, it starts with us being the change we wish to see in our institutions, and it is about the ways of being we bring to our institutions. To this end, leaders at KU, myself included, are engaged in executive coaching and professional development to strengthen our abilities to carry out our leadership responsibilities and to be present with leadership HEARTS. We're engaged in facilitated team development activities that foster Positive Intelligence, an executive development program led by Shirzad Chamine that closely mirrors the values in HEARTS.

Ultimately, to be a talent development enterprise means, whether we are students, staff, faculty, administrators, or leaders, we all have something to learn, we are each focused on our own learning and growth, and we are supportive of the growth of others. It means our institution is a place where it's "all for each and each for all."

Of course, this is work in progress. It will be imperfect, which is to say it will be incomplete, no matter how long we are engaged in this effort. It is always worthy work – for the sake of our students, as much for the sake of faculty, staff and leaders, for the communities we serve, and perhaps most importantly, for the future of our institution.

Implementating Jayhawk HEARTS: Preliminary Thoughts

The alternative that Barb sketches is a radical re-interpretation of how higher education is structured and pursued today. Today higher education is characterized by research and

knowledge silos, publications-centered requirements for tenure and promotion, often, the devaluation of the kinds of dedication to students that best promote learning, and the devaluation of service to communities outside the university. The alternative is a model of the university in which the traditional functions of teaching, research, and service are tightly integrated – indeed, inseparably interconnected – and expressed as what the university publicly values and endorses. Central to the success of this venture is that faculty commit to this vision, that they take up and see themselves as taking up the more expansive roles needed to be members of the 'community of communities' that Barb envisions. Implementing the vision of Jayhawk HEARTS at KU is an ambitious task. Luckily, social scientific research furnishes a vast trove of resources that can be brought to bear on this project. Though our study of these resources is in its initial stages and we plan to do further research, we believe that three data-driven approaches offer promising pathways toward change. Messaging and modeling, we believe, will be crucial.

(1) Lessons from Hybrid Corn Seed

An early study from the field of sociology and economics sheds light on effective messaging as well as modeling. Ryan and Gross (1950) studied mechanisms for the acceptance and diffusion of a major agricultural innovation, hybrid corn seed, in two Iowa communities. The authors note that not one farmer in the areas studied had adopted hybrid corn seed in 1926, yet every commercial operator was planting it by 1941 (Ryan and Gross 1950, 665). We can distil the gist of this study for our purposes by focusing on three factors: early and late adoption of hybrid corn seed, sources of knowledge, and age. For early adopters, the salient source of knowledge was salesmen. For later adopters, the salient source was neighbors who had already adopted the seed. Later adopters relied on neighbors who had used the seed to provide a kind of 'experimental laboratory' to test its merits. Following an initial slow period, growth in the use of the new seed accelerated rapidly, followed by a decline as the most resistant adopters came on board (see Ryan and Gross 1950, 663). Interestingly, younger farmers tended to adopt the new seed earlier than older farmers, with the mean age difference between the earliest and the latest adopters being more than 18 years (Ryan and Gross 1950, 688).

Three key lessons for the successful implementation of Jayhawk HEARTS can be gleaned from this study. First, we see two sources of messaging, and one source of modeling.

Salesmen could be seen as parallel to university administrators, as they were the first to roll out the new product. Salesmen/administrators are one source of messaging; however, unlike salesmen who did not model the actual use of hybrid corn seed, KU administrators are enjoined to model Jayhawk HEARTS. Farmers who were initial adopters could be seen as both messagers and modelers, and as paralleling faculty and staff who embrace Jayhawk HEARTS as a new way of belonging to the university community. As regards universities, it's certainly true that administrators can be effective messagers and modelers, but we shouldn't discount the abilities of faculty to ignore administrators. The administration/faculty divide can run deep. But if so, those faculty and staff who take up Jayhawk HEARTS will be crucial to effective implementation. They will be the 'experimental laboratories' in which the new vision for the university as a talent-development enterprise will be developed. Visible and measurable improvement in their quality of life, I believe, will be key to the success of the project.

Second, the hybrid corn seed study suggests that implementation will proceed at an uneven pace. Uptake of Jayhawk HEARTS could be slow at first, but as faculty and staff experience the benefits of the new vision for the university – that is, as their quality of life improves – the pace of uptake should increase. Finally, after the majority of faculty and staff have come on board, the pace should slow down as recalcitrant faculty and staff finally embrace the new vision (or remain mired in their ways).

Third, the age difference reported between earliest and latest adopters of hybrid corn seed is truly interesting. Younger farmers, it seems, were more open-minded than their elders about giving the new innovation a chance. This tracks anecdotal observations I've made over the years with respect to some faculty: Other things being equal, younger faculty seem more open to new ideas and change than older faculty who might have become complacent, cynical, or otherwise disengaged from a willingness to experiment with new ideas. Of course, one can always encounter exceptions to this. Younger faculty might be highly trained in the "siloed" approach to higher education, and unwilling to adopt a change as far-reaching as the Jayhawk HEARTS approach. Older faculty, especially those who feel marginalized or bored, might be fed up with the status quo and ready for a more inclusive environment. Crucial for active engagement, we think, is that faculty at all career stages come to see themselves as integral to KU's talent development enterprise.

Goldstein and Cialdini (2007, 171) offer a focus theory of normative conduct based on the distinction between descriptive and injunctive social norms. Descriptive norms refer to what most people actually do, whereas injunctive norms refer to what is socially approved or disapproved in any given situation. That is, injunctive norms refer to ". . . perceptions of what *ought to be* done" (Goldstein and Cialdini 2007, 171; emphasis theirs). The authors posit that the different types of norms influence behavior through different mechanisms. In barest outline, descriptive norms require less cognitive processing, and rely on situation-specific observations of what others do. Injunctive norms, by contrast, are more cognitively demanding because they require understanding a culture's moral rules (Goldstein and Cialdini 2007, 171-172). The challenge for KU, as we see it, is to replace current descriptive norms with injunctive norms that promote change in the way people at KU see themselves and their roles in the university.

One way of effecting this change is to enable people to focus on injunctive norms that encode the values of Jayhawk HEARTS. In addition, as Goldstein and Cialdini (2007, 177) write:

> . . . one's behaviors seem to be relatively unaffected by normative information – even one's own – unless the information is highly prominent in consciousness … Given that relevant norms must be salient to trigger the appropriate norm-congruent behavior, those attempting to persuade others to engage in a particular behavior face the dual challenge of making the norm focal not only immediately following the message reception, but also in the future.

What kinds of messaging are most effective in eliciting a desired behavior? Goldstein and Cialdini (2007, 180-186) describe several experiments in which five different types of messaging were left on cards in hotel rooms to encourage towel reuse for the sake of preserving the environment. Of the five types of messages -- environmental protection, enviromental cooperation, benefit to the hotel, future generations, and a descriptive norm that contained an injunctive component -- a specification of the latter was the most effective in motivating towel reuse. It stated:

JOIN YOUR FELLOW GUESTS IN HELPING TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT.
In a study conducted in fall 2003, 75% of the guests who stayed in this room (#xxx)
participated in our new resource savings program by using their towels more than
once. You can join your fellow guests in this program to help save the environment
by reusing your towels during your stay (Goldstein and Cialdini 2007, 185).

Towel reuse rates in this unit-based descriptive focus condition (with an injunctive
component) were 49.3% -- significantly higher than the other messages, and higher than the
other, similarly written descriptive conditions that incorporated a different focus, for
example, "Join you fellow citizens …" and "Join the men and women …" Referring to social
identity theory and social categorization theory, the authors comment that this finding
suggests that people are more likely to follow norms focusing on groups that they find
psychologically meaningful. However, the finding is also inconsistent with these theories
insofar as people are unlikely to identify strongly with hotel patrons who have occupied the
same room. Despite this, the authors note the possibility that a perception of belonging to a
unit could be a strong mediator of conformity to norms (Goldstein and Cialdini 2007, 185-
186). Needless to say, the phrase 'Jayhawk HEARTS' appeals directly to the unit of KU,
which should be meaningful to people who work at the university; HEARTS invokes a
positive emotional relationship with the unit.

The focus theory of normative conduct suggests that signage promoting Jayhawk HEARTS
should be strategically placed throughout the university, thereby keeping the message salient
to people's focus in an ongoing way. Consistently with the hybrid corn seed study, a third
study suggests the importance of modeling for eliciting behavioral change.

(3) Composting: Modeling is More Effective than Messaging

Sussman and Gifford (2011) did a study of effective composting at local, independently-
owned fast food diners and shopping mall food courts in Canada. Consistently with previous
studies, they found that diners were more likely to compost appropriately (without
contaminating composted material with non-compostable items) when they saw confederates
of the experimenters modeling composting behavior (see Sussman and Gifford 2011, 336).
The authors offer two explanations for this result: Seeing others compost activated social
pressure to conform; and seeing others compost provided information about items that should

and should not be composted. As the authors put it, " . . . models showed other diners how to compost" (Sussman and Gifford 2011, 336). Sussman and Gifford (2011, 323, 335) note that signs did not significantly increase composting rates, either alone or in conjunction with models. They also note that composting rates were significantly lower in shopping mall food courts than in local diners, and offer two explanatory reasons, namely, the culture of consumerism that exists in shopping malls, and the fact that diners might have been more confused about compostable items (Sussman and Gifford 2011, 336-337).

Two lessons stand out from this study. The first is that modeling desired behavior matters. Consequently, it will be important for those who want to see KU become a talent-development enterprise to model what that means, being very explicit in explaining how their behavior supports that vision of the university. The second lesson underscores the need for the first. Seeing universities as talent-development enterprises implies new understandings of the traditional focus on research, teaching, and service that faculty have had. I suspect that many faculty, immersed as they are in siloed interpretations of what they do, will be at a loss to understand what the new vision of the university requires in their daily lives. In short, they will need to be shown, by administrators and by other faculty, how to be talent-developers.

Conclusion

In her part of this paper, Barb has sketched in considerable detail her diagnosis of the problems that beset higher education today, her alternative to the present approach, and the steps that KU has already undertaken under her leadership to promote institutional change. My part has furnished some initial thoughts drawn from social science about how data-driven implementation might take place. To be sure, further study to better understand the most effective mechanisms for change and to build effective capacities for change is in order. Based on what I've presented here, leveraging the notion of Jayhawk HEARTS through messaging, and especially, modeling, offers a promising start for disseminating the new vision of KU as a talent-development enterprise throughout the institution. As observed both in the Ryan and Gross (1950) study and by Sussman and Gifford (2011, 338), the diffusion of innovations proceeds when early adopters lead by example. Invoking Rogers's (2003) diffusion of innovations model, Sussman and Gifford (2011, 338) posit that social learning, specifically, vicarious learning by observation, is a "bottom-up" source of change. They maintain that "top-down" processes can also contribute in a a complementary fashion. If so,

near-complete change at KU can take place only when those throughout the ranks embrace the idea that they are agents of change. Effectively motivating people to undertake this role, whatever their respective positions, is a challenge that will require our ongoing attention.

References

Cahill, Thomas. 1995. *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. New York: Nan A. Talese.

Goldstein, Noah J. and Robert B. Cialdini. 2007. "Using Social Norms as a Lever of Social Influence." In *The Science of Social Influence: Advances and Future Progress*. Edited by Anthony R. Prakanis, 167-91. New York: Psychology Press.

Rogers, E. M. 2003. *Diffusion of Innovations*. 5th edition. New York: Free Press.

Ryan, Bryce and Neil Gross. 1950. "Acceptance and Diffusion of Hybrid Corn Seed in Two Iowa Communities." *Research Bulletin* 372: 661-708.

Sussman, Reuven and Robert Gifford. 2011. "Be the Change You Want to See: Modeling Food Composting in Public Places." *Environment and Behavior* 45(3): 323-43.