



## K-State 2025 Strategic Direction Action Plan and Alignment for K-State First—FYS, CAT Communities, KSBN, and GPS

### 1. What is your College's/Major Unit's/Department's mission/vision and how does your organization contribute to achieving the University's vision for K-State 2025?

**K-State First Vision Statement:** K-State First will become one of the premier first-year programs in the nation by providing effective and inspiring courses, communities, and experiences that integrate high-levels of learning with active engagement in college life.

**K-State First Mission Statement:** K-State First is an integrated effort to create an outstanding university experience for every first-year student at Kansas State University. The program provides new students with a transition to college-level learning and college life in four important ways:

- By fostering campus community and feelings of belonging
- By offering opportunities for diverse activities and interactions
- By raising academic expectations with engagement and compassion
- By empowering students with a strong sense of personal responsibility and social agency

Bringing together exciting small classes taught by exceptional faculty with a vibrant student life experience, K-State First helps students establish the foundation for a successful college career.

### 2. What are your College's/Major Unit's/Department's **key activities and outcomes** and how do they link to K-State 2025 themes/common elements and outcomes? (If your plan includes more than one theme or goal with specified activities and outcomes, you may repeat the table as necessary)

Key Activities	Short Term (1 to 5 Years) <i>Key Outcomes</i>	Intermediate (6 to 10 Years) <i>Key Outcomes</i>	Long Term (11 to 15 Years) <i>Key Outcomes</i>
1. Grow K-State First [KSF] in order to serve more students	<p>FYS program growth of 15% per year from 2013 to 2016. CAT Communities program growth of 10% per year from 2013 to 2016 [T2-4]</p> <p>Focused effort to include more first-year STEM courses and communities [T2-4]</p> <p>Expansion of FYS and CAT Communities programs into the spring semester [T2-4]</p> <p>Increased efforts to include transfer students in all KSF programs [T2-4]</p> <p>Exploration of learning formats in addition to the seminar and learning community [T2-4, T2-1, T2-2, B-8]</p>	<p>Continued growth of the FYS and CAT Communities programs in such a way as to put us on track to meet our long-term outcome #1 [T2-4]</p> <p>Development of initiative to work with professors and units new to KSF [T2-4]</p>	<p>Increased number of seats in KSF classes so that 50% of each first-year class may enroll in a FYS or CAT Community [T2-4]</p>

<p>2. Improve retention and graduation rates of students in the FYS and CAT Communities programs</p>	<p>A retention rate for students enrolled in the FYS and CAT Communities programs that is 5% higher than University average [B-6]</p>	<p>Demonstrated, ongoing ability to improve University retention rates by providing students with learning experiences that facilitate their transitions to college-level learning and college life [B-6]</p> <p>A six-year graduation rate for students enrolled in the FYS and CAT Communities programs that is 5% higher than University average [B-7]</p>	<p>A retention rate that is 5% higher than the average of our peer/benchmark schools [B-6]</p> <p>A six-year graduation rate that is 5% higher than the average of our peer/benchmark schools [B-7]</p>
<p>3. Expand and improve our communication efforts</p>	<p>Campus outreach campaign</p> <p>Expanded and improved communication efforts with campus community, parents, students, and prospective students through website, outreach programs, social media, print media, and video</p> <p>Shared and easily accessed assessment data on our website</p> <p>Preparation and publication of an annual report</p> <p>Development of communication campaign to share information about quality and accomplishments of faculty and students</p> <p>Development of specific on-campus communication campaign to draw attention to significance, impact, and value of KSF faculty</p>	<p>Refinement of communication plan so that it impacts not only University community but a national audience as well</p> <p>Development of effort to highlight and communicate success of faculty, including support for them in securing teaching awards at all levels</p>	<p>Excellent reputation for providing effective and inspiring courses, communities, and experiences that integrate high-levels of learning with active engagement in college life</p>

<p>4. Expand and improve our research and assessment efforts.</p>	<p>Implementation of SLO assessment program for KSBN, GPS, CAT Communities, and FYS</p> <p>Continued tracking of student rating, GPA, retention, and graduation rate data</p> <p>Development of faculty and learning assistant surveys</p> <p>Development of plans for changes to program, curriculum, and faculty development based on assessment and research efforts</p> <p>Presentation at national conferences based on research and assessment</p>	<p>Meaningful changes to program, faculty development, and curriculum based on assessment and research</p> <p>Publication of research articles based on KSF efforts</p> <p>Reconsideration, refinement, and possible expansion of SLO assessment program</p>	<p>Improvement in retention graduation rate from changes based on assessment and research [B-7, B-8]</p> <p>National reputation for excellent research on college student success, college student transition, and high-impact teaching and learning</p>
<p>5. Contribute to University's effort to increase percentage of undergraduate students involved in research</p>	<p>Expanded use of undergraduate research in FYS and CAT Communities [B-8]</p> <p>Professional development workshops for faculty who want to use undergraduate research in their first-year courses and communities [B-8]</p>	<p>Partnering with Center for Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors to develop specific initiatives to involve first-year students in research [B-8]</p>	<p>Demonstrable KSF contribution to the increase in the percentage of undergraduate students involved in research [B-8]</p>
<p>6. Expand integration of KSBN, the common reading program, at individual, curricular, and community levels</p>	<p>Development of strategies to integrate the common book into the curriculum of predominately first-year courses [T2-4]</p> <p>Expansion of KSBN campus-wide programming [T2-4]</p> <p>Creation of a KSBN student group</p> <p>Exploration of online interfaces for participants [T2-4]</p>	<p>Development of strategies to encourage book adoption in local community</p> <p>Development of strategies to ensure every first year has the opportunity to use and discuss the book in an academic setting, living environment, or social organization [T2-4]</p> <p>Development and implementation of effective online interfaces [T2-4]</p>	<p>Opportunity for every first-year student to have multiple meaningful engagements around common book inside and outside class [T2-4]</p> <p>Widespread campus participation in reading program and events [T2-4]</p> <p>Meaningful community participation in program/events</p>

<p>7. Expand the GPS mentoring program.</p>	<p>25% increase in number of guides in the program [B-6, T2-6, T2-4]</p>	<p>Further increase in number of guides as needed to realize long-term outcome #7 [B-6, T2-6, T2-4]</p>	<p>Opportunity for every first-year who chooses to be paired with a trained guide [B-6, T2-6, T2-4]</p>
<p>8. Improve the effectiveness of the GPS mentoring program.</p>	<p>Creation of a guide development program [B-6]</p> <p>Creation of a database for tracking and assessment of students, guides, and mentoring efforts [B-6]</p> <p>Creation of GPS Advisory Board [B-6]</p>	<p>A retention rate for students enrolled in GPS that is 5% higher than University average [B-6]</p> <p>A six-year graduation rate for students enrolled in GPS that is 5% higher than University average [B-7]</p>	<p>A retention rate for GPS students that is 5% higher than average of benchmark schools [B-6]</p> <p>A six-year graduation rate for GPS students that is 5% higher than average of benchmark schools [B-7]</p>
<p>9. Partner with Housing and Dining and other Student Life units to develop co-curricular programming designed to create successful transitions for first-year students to college-level learning and college life</p>	<p>Expansion of "K-State First: Beyond the Classroom" program [T2-4]</p> <p>Collaboration with Housing and Dining in the refinement and development of the Residential CAT Communities [T2-4]</p> <p>Active participation in university discussion about improving our living-learning communities [T2-4]</p>	<p>Partnering with Housing and Dining and other Student Life units to develop additional specific student success initiatives connected to living-learning communities [T2-4]</p> <p>Development of SLO assessment program for KSF/Housing &amp; Dining joint ventures, with emphasis on community building and living-learning communities</p>	<p>Recognition of KSF/Housing and Dining initiatives as highly effective in promoting retention of first-year students [B-6]</p>
<p>10. Develop and retain faculty members who are exceptionally effective instructors</p>	<p>Expanded and regularized Faculty Development program [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p> <p>Expanded collaboration with CATL on first-year education [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p>	<p>Expansion of incentive/reward structure to retain and reward highly effective KSF faculty [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p> <p>Support for faculty in publishing and presenting the scholarship of teaching and learning [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p> <p>Establishment of professional development funding for KSF faculty [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p> <p>Refinement and growth of Faculty Development efforts [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p>	<p>National reputation for valuing first-year student teaching [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p>

<p>11. Establish a structure and an infrastructure for KSF designed to ensure growth and long term success</p>	<p>Establishment of leadership and staffing designed to ensure the long-term success of KSF [B-6, B-7, T2-4, T2-7]</p> <p>Establishment of an office for KSF on campus [B-6, B-7, T2-4, T2-7]</p> <p>Development of a for-credit peer mentoring class [T2-2]</p>	<p>Refinement of incentives to recruit talented faculty, provide faculty/unit autonomy, and cultivate long-term commitment to the success of the KSF courses, communities, and programs [B-6, B-7, T2-4, T2-7]</p> <p>Continued refinement and growth of peer mentoring course [T2-2]</p>	<p>National recognition of KSF as one of the premier first-year programs in the nation [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p> <p>Substantial and well-documented contribution to the improvement of retention rates and six-year graduation rates at the University [B-6, B-7]</p>
<b>2025 Linkages</b>			
<b>2025 Common Elements/Themes</b>	<b>Short Term (1 to 5 Years) 2025 Key Outcomes</b>	<b>Intermediate (6 to 10 Years) 2025 Key Outcomes</b>	<b>Long Term (11 to 15 Years) 2025 Key Outcomes</b>
<p>Undergraduate Educational Experience</p>	<p>Engaged students benefitting from high-impact educational practices used by excellent faculty and staff [T2-4, T2-7]</p> <p>Increased participation by undergraduates in expanded opportunities for meaningful research [B-8]</p> <p>Effective professional development for faculty [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p> <p>Effective system in place that supports and promotes teaching excellence [B-6, B-7, T2-7]</p> <p>Improved six-year graduation rates and retention ratios [B-6, B-7]</p>	<p>Integrated learning communities that promote student success within a culture of excellence [B-6, T2-4]</p> <p>Excellent reputation for high quality teaching that prepares students for their professional, community, social, and personal lives [T2-7]</p> <p>Undergraduate students engaged in a diversity of experiences that expand their viewpoint</p> <p>Ongoing improvement of six-year graduation rates and retention ratios [B-6, B-7]</p>	<p>Freshman to Sophomore retention ratios comparable to benchmark institutions [B-6]</p> <p>Six-Year graduation rates comparable to benchmark institutions [B-7]</p>

**3. Identify the K-State 2025 Visionary Goal key benchmarks (metrics) that are supported by your action and alignment plan (please check all that apply).**

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Total research & development expenditures | <input type="checkbox"/> Endowment pool  | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of National Academy members              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Number of faculty awards                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of doctorates granted annually                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freshman to sophomore retention rate |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Six-year graduation rate       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Percent of undergraduate students involved in research | <input type="checkbox"/> None  |

**4a. What resources and/or opportunities exist for your College/Major Unit/Department to achieve its vision and outcomes?**

We have a talented and highly effective group of faculty who teach in the program. We have extraordinary leadership from across campus in the Workgroup that oversees KSF. The research on learning communities and first-year programs is clear about their effectiveness in promoting student success and improved graduation and retention rates. Our own assessment efforts indicate that KSF has been successful; they confirm previous findings about the benefits of such programs. Student interest in our programs is high. We have worked effectively in cross-campus, cross-unit collaborations.

**4b. What resources and/or opportunities are needed for your College/Major Unit/Department to achieve its vision and outcomes?**

The colleges and units that support KSF need more faculty members so that they have the flexibility to offer classes of various sizes, including seminar-sized classes for first-year students and interdisciplinary courses within the learning communities. The program also needs a structure and an infrastructure—which would include long-term leadership, regular staffing, a campus office, an appropriate and flexible budget, and other resources for the expansion and improvement of the faculty development program—designed to ensure projected growth and long term success.

**5. How do you propose to acquire the resources needed for your College/Major Unit/Department to accomplish its vision and outcomes?**

Student persistence provides significant financial benefit to the University, and we hope that our program's positive impact on retention will be recognized as a meaningful contribution to the resources needed to improve the undergraduate experience. Given KSF's proven impact on retention, we hope that the Offices of the Provost (from which 75% of our current budget comes) and the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies will use the resources saved by reduced attrition and the tuition dollars generated by the FYS and CAT Community connections classes to continue to fund the program at the level needed to ensure its success. We are also very interested in being part of student recruitment as well as coordinated fundraising/development efforts, including efforts to seek named donors for KSF programs, to improve the undergraduate educational experience at K-State.

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