



FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY



Coping by converting, not canceling

The FHSU community is working to help ensure students still have the opportunity to experience spring-term activities, co-curricular programs and access to campus services even though on-campus classes have transitioned to online delivery.

“Our guiding mission is to convert not cancel,” said Dr. Tisa Mason, university president, in a video address to the FHSU community.

Tiger Nation has aggressively applied that mission and decades of online learning experience to bring on-campus events and services to online for the spring term.

“It’s gone smooth,” said Heidi Pearson, student engagement coordinator of the transition of student activities to online. “We’ve been able to keep things moving forward so students can stay connected, build leadership skills, and continue to find new ways to make a positive change on their campus and in their community.”

Services that have transitioned to online include the Student Health and Kelly Center services via telemedicine and Zoom, student tutoring, Writing Center consultations, intramurals, the Black and Gold Leadership Conference, Student Organization Award Reception, Tiger Wellness Center health and fitness, Ask a Librarian chat service, Novels for Hope, a now Virtual Greek Week, GradFest, Management Development Center training events and more.

With this proactive approach to moving student services, events and activities online, Tiger Nation is not only meeting the immediate need of traditional students but opening the door to a world of online opportunities for students across the globe.

Care teams working to keep students connected

The lives of more than 4,000 Fort Hays State University Students who began this semester living and studying on campus was turned upside down when, in response to guidance from federal, state and regional public health officials, President Tisa Mason announced that all in-person classes would transition to online instruction.

Transitioning students, many with no previous experience in online learning, to this new format presented significant challenges. But, on a campus with a rich tradition for innovation, persistence and strong personal connections between faculty, staff and students, what first appeared as a challenge almost immediately revealed itself to be a tremendous opportunity. The idea quickly took shape of creating “care teams,” groups of volunteers from the university community who could maintain ongoing contact with students, nearly all of whom were no longer living on campus and learning from a distance.

Campus care teams began working with thousands of FHSU students on March 30 to address safety and security concerns and provide insight and timely connections to important academic, health and wellness resources.

Led by Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Taylor Kriley, this comprehensive engagement initiative involves more than 70 faculty, staff and student volunteers organized into teams that are dedicated to serving specific student groups – from freshmen to graduate students.

“I’ve simply been overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response of our campus community,” Kriley said. “Tigers care for each other, and this effort shows the extent of our shared dedication to student success.”

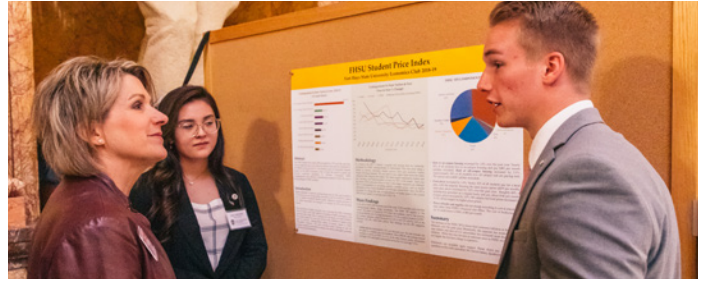
Kelly Center awarded substance abuse and mental health grant

The Tiger Community's Pathway to Help, Hope and Success initiative, created by the Fort Hays State University Kelly Center, was awarded a prestigious Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The university will receive \$264,561 over a three-year period, and Fort Hays State will invest \$264,561 in matching funds. The Kelly Center currently serves approximately 3,000 students a year. This grant will allow the center to reach 4,000-5,000 total students using online and face-to-face sessions.

"This will positively impact our students' mental health, and therefore increase our students' retention, persistence, and success during their university career and beyond," said Kelly Center Director Gina Smith in the grant application.

The grant will help develop a collaborative, evidence-based approach to enhance mental health services for all college students especially for traditionally underserved populations. The project strives to prevent mental health and substance use disorders; promote help-seeking behavior while reducing negative public attitudes; train community partners; and improve the identification and treatment of at-risk college students.



Undergraduate research day at the Capitol

Undergraduate researchers from FHSU presented their research projects on Wednesday, March 4, in Topeka as part of the Kansas Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol.

The event showcases the unique opportunities undergraduate students have to participate with faculty members in research. The undergraduate research experience emphasizes FHSU's commitment to preparing a well-educated and engaged Kansas workforce with the skills to further the economic growth of the state.

Conrad Vajnar, Hays senior majoring in accounting and criminal justice, presented "A Qualitative Study of High Substance Abuse Neighborhood in a Rural College Town." Dr. Ziwei Qi, assistant professor of criminal justice, and Dr. Morgan Steele, instructor of criminal justice, served as mentors on this project.

The study observed the behavior of people living in a privately-owned rentals adjacent to college campus. Findings identified clear patterns of substance abuse activity and suggested that by tracking the activity it would be possible to discover where opportunities for criminal activity might exist. This information could be used to increase guardianship and possibly decrease crime in the residential area. To learn more about research at FHSU visit fhsu.edu/gradschl/ure.



Did you know?

Thirteen organizations that evaluate online higher education programs ranked 40 online degrees, programs and departments at Fort Hays State University as among the best in the nation for 2020.

Rankings Include

07 NATIONAL #1 RANKINGS

01 STATEWIDE #1 RANKING

27 TOP-10 DESIGNATIONS



**FORT HAYS STATE
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