

Fort Hays State University
House Committee on Higher Education Budget
February 21, 2023
Tisa Mason

Good afternoon, Chair Howe and committee members.

Joining me today is, Joe Bain, General Counsel, Jennie Rose, Legislative Liaison, and Wesley Wintch, Vice President for Administration and Finance.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to be here today and talk about some of our key successes and initiatives. Because this is a budget subcommittee, let me start by addressing enrollment.

Following 19 consecutive years of growth, Fort Hays State University has experienced a drop in enrollment over the past three years. I am here today to explain why we believe that happened and, more importantly, what we are doing to reverse that trend.

First, our biggest loss is enrollment of online students. This fall 45% of our headcount decline, representing just over 500 students, was in online education.

Why? Our online students, mostly over the age of 25, were severely impacted by the pandemic. We heard from our students that education had to be placed on hold while they managed the challenges of jobs, family, and the quarantine. This was particularly true for those in health-related fields, where work demands had to take precedence.

As the country rebounded post-pandemic, we found the online market flooded. With more competition for online students, Fort Hays State University lost market share.

What have we done to adapt?

First and foremost, we are grateful for the continued investment you make in our university and the students we serve. Additionally, we reorganized our marketing department, creating a stronger focus on recruitment. This change has led to new technologies and strategies, widening the recruitment funnel.

I am happy to report we are seeing positive results. This spring we have about 150 new online students, as compared to last year. I believe this puts us on a growth trajectory, while we continue to establish new strategies.

Our China program accounted for 43% of our overall headcount enrollment decline, representing just under 500 students. We basically have no control over our China enrollments. The ministry of education did reduce our quota, so we were able to plan for this decline.

How are we adapting?

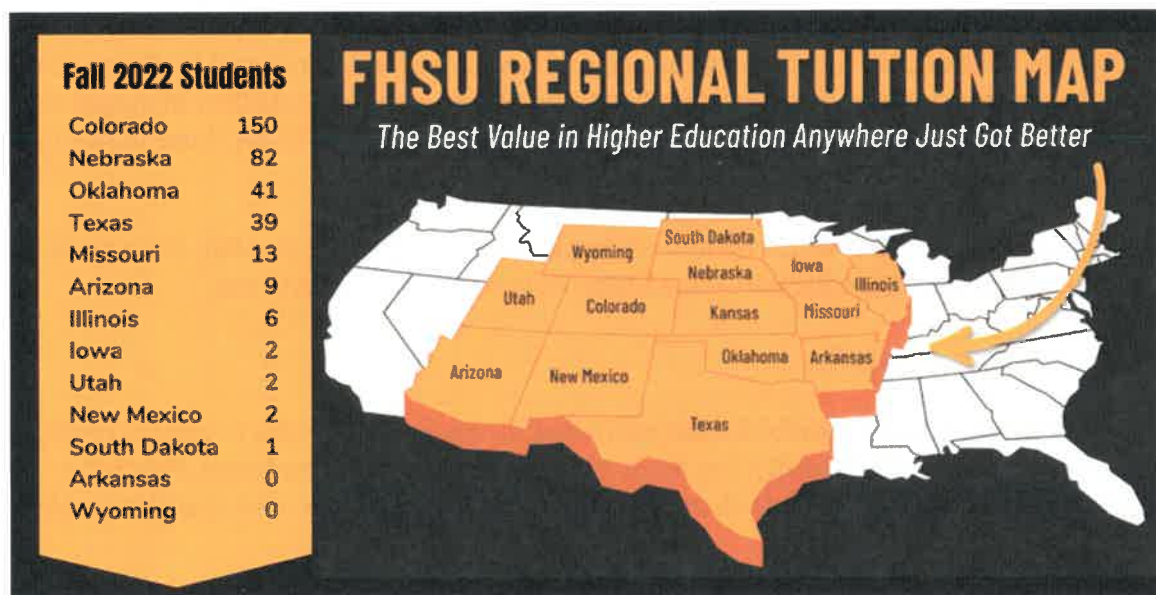
We manage our expenses. A decline in our China enrollment means a reduction in net revenue — it does not mean a deficit.

Additionally, we continue to build international partnerships. We have active partnerships in 11 countries and five more partnerships in development. This fall we served 129 international students from these non-China partnerships.

Our on-campus headcount this year accounted for 12% of the overall enrollment decline. This can be attributed to a large graduating class, as well as a slightly smaller (22) freshman class.

Some successes we are seeing...

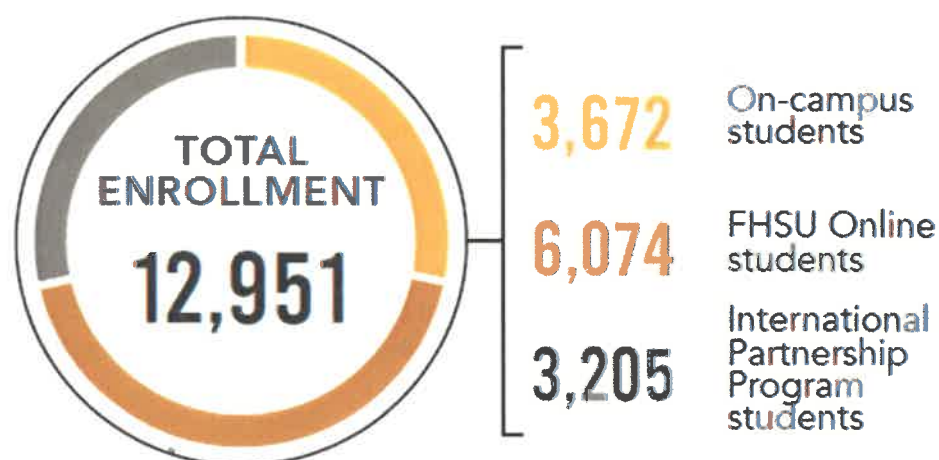
- The 13-state on-campus regional rate, effective this academic year, resulted in a 49% increase in undergraduates from these states.
- Our residence hall contracts were up by approximately 100 beds. Our students who live on campus are positioned for greater success than those who live off campus.
- Our retention rate, approximately 76%, was up about three percentage points.



In summary, this academic year, Fort Hays State University, a regional university on the western plains, is serving close to 13,000 students on campus, online, and across the globe on our partner campuses. These students represent every county in Kansas, every branch of the military, all 50 states, and 46 countries. Our impact on higher education remains very strong.

FALL 2022 ENROLLMENT BREAKDOWN

The Fort Hays State model is based on meeting the evolving needs of students. We identify emerging career fields and then create affordable, flexible, and challenging academic programs that prepare our students for a lifetime of professional success.



This brings me to three forward-thinking strategies we are developing:

First, our voluntary affiliation initiative. Our voluntary affiliation initiative was created to deliver streamlined educational opportunities for our students and, at the same time, partner with businesses and communities to meet workforce needs, and help grow the economy of western Kansas. Benefits include...

- For students: increased access and new pathways to their educational goals whether it is a certificate; stackable credentials; or an associate, bachelor, or graduate degree. Also, expanded opportunities for internships so students will be work-ready upon completion.
- For businesses: developing a powerful coalition to focus on workforce needs and providing appropriately trained workers ready to work on day one.
- For Kansas: encouraging students to seek education, job opportunities, and permanence, in smaller communities, which are the heart of our rural state.

Second, a digital master plan. Fort Hays State University is concluding work on a digital master plan designed to identify and measure student engagement and success. This data will allow us to shape our future in three ways: improved data-driven teaching strategies; better planning for future technology infrastructure, resources, and adaptations; and better alignment of our master plan for improved effectiveness and efficiency.

And third, expanded professional development and continuing education. We are expanding our infrastructure to increase access to employee professional/workforce development programs, certificates, executive education, leadership and strategy coaching, alternative and stackable credentials such as digital badges, credit for prior learning, and services ranging from training and consulting programs to continuing education opportunities.

Let me turn now to affordability and our business plan. FHSU has the most affordable tuition among our peers. During our enrollment decline, we thoughtfully, and proactively planned for a downturn, while investing in strategies for a strong future.

Our balanced budget is based on projected credit hours. In fiscal years '20, '21, and '22, we budgeted for anticipated credit reduction and, as a result, in all three years have had a budget carryover.

We are on pace to continue this pattern in fiscal year 2023. We live within our means and use the income we gain to reinvest in new strategies for growth.

In addition to our affordable tuition, we invest even deeper in the value proposition for our students. Supplementing federal, state and private aid, we annually provide about \$1.5 million in Housing Scholarships, \$2.9 million in Foundation Scholarships, and \$5.8 million in University Scholarships. We continue to remain focused on being the best value in education anywhere.

THE BEST VALUE IN EDUCATION ANYWHERE

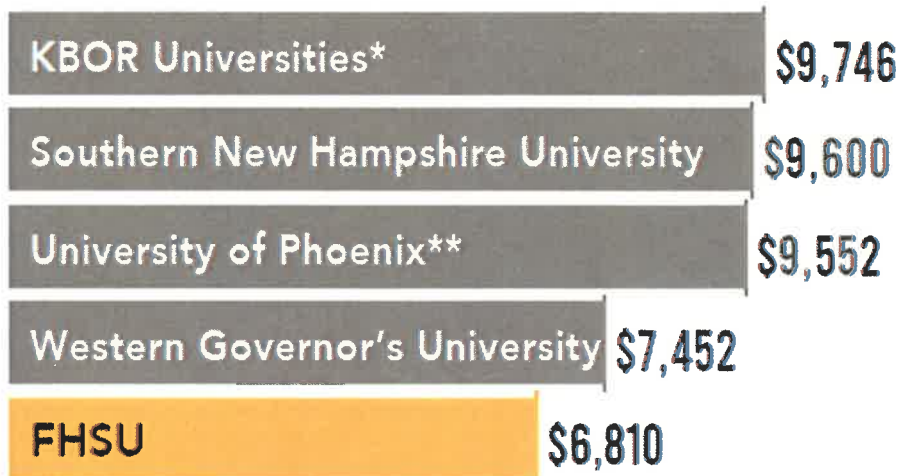
Based on the summary below of average annual tuition and fee costs for full-time, on-campus and online resident students, you simply can't miss the unmatched affordability of an FHSU education.

ON-CAMPUS

Academic Year 2022



ONLINE



ON-CAMPUS GRADUATE



In fact, our affordability is an area where we did include a specific ask in the Kansas Board of Regents approved unified budget request: \$6 million in one-time funding to eliminate the student fee for our Student Success Center. While this particular item didn't make it into the Governor's budget recommendation, we remain committed to maintaining our focus on affordability and think this effort aligns nicely with the state's interest in student success, one-time money, and debt reduction.

I thought you might also be interested in hearing about some investments, for which we are very grateful, that you have made through Fort Hays State University.

Social Work. A special thank you to Representatives Wasinger and Landwehr and Senator Hilderbrand for making changes to licensing requirements, which had temporarily kept our graduates from moving forward in their social work career after graduation.

A unique focus of our program includes our cohort programs in southwest Kansas, designed for students already established and engaged in their local communities. The cohort model enables students to complete a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree without frequent travel or relocation to Hays. To date, 70 students have graduated from our cohort programs in Garden City, Dodge City, and Liberal. In Garden City, cohort program graduates comprise more than half of the total number of licensed social workers in Finney County.

Our social work program continues to make gains in both enrollment and graduation rates. I have included our current practicum placements as a snapshot of how we are serving the state.

Spring 2023 FHSU Practicum Placements

City	State	# of Students	City	State	# of Students
Bedford	VA	1	Minneapolis	KS	1
Beloit	KS	2	Minot	ND	1
Bennington	KS	1	Moorhead	MN	1
Dodge City	KS	7	Mount Hope	KS	1
Garden City	KS	4	Newton	KS	2
Garden City	GA	1	Olathe	KS	1
Glen Allen	VA	1	Ottawa	KS	1
Hays	KS	10	Pawnee Rock	KS	1
Hutchinson	KS	2	Pea Ridge	AR	1
Iola	KS	6	Phillipsburg	KS	1
Junction City	KS	1	Pittsburg	KS	1
Kansas City	KS	4	Salina	KS	4
Kansas City	MO	3	San Diego	CA	1
Lansing	MI	1	Shawnee	KS	1
Larned	KS	7	Spokane	WA	1
Lawrence	KS	1	St. Louis	MO	1
Leoti	KS	1	Topeka	KS	2
Leavenworth	KS	1	Wamego	KS	1
Liberal	KS	9	Wichita	KS	8
Lincoln	NE	1	Winfield	KS	1
Manhattan	KS	1			
McPherson	KS	1			

Practicum Settings

Field of practice	# of Students
Mental Health	31
Child Welfare	22
Schools	16
Healthcare	12
Criminal Justice	1
Addictions	8
Community Support Agencies	8

- 98: Total number of BSW and MSW students engaged in social work practicums during spring 2023
- 42: Total number of communities served during spring 2023, with 30 of those communities in Kansas

Cybersecurity Institute and Technology Incubator (CITI). Thanks to Representative Rahjes, this committee, and the Kansas legislature, our Department of Informatics has launched our Cybersecurity Institute and Technology Incubator.

This program has two objectives. First, leveraging student and faculty expertise to improve the cybersecurity posture for small and medium-sized businesses through student microinternships, capstone projects, and faculty consulting. Services to businesses and experiences for the student talent pipeline, include microinternships in areas such as the following:

- Website Security Evaluation
- Security Vulnerability Report
- Deploying Data Privacy and Security Controls
- Designing Security Training
- Application Security Evaluation
- Software Testing
- Data Clean-Up

➤ Development of Documentation or Compliance Protocols

Our students are engaged in paid, meaningful work, practicing soft skills as they interact with businesses, while the businesses receive essential services for free, as they reduce their vulnerability. Our pilot program of 15 microinternships is taking place this semester with the goal of scaling up to 75 microinternships each semester.

Phase two of our program will focus on the technology incubator. The goal is to develop one to two businesses initially, with the possibility of those being venture referrals to the Small Business Development Center. In general, the mission of any business incubator is to increase the successful development of emerging businesses, in sectors that are supported by a region's unique area of opportunity. Ideally, businesses that graduate from an incubator move out into the community and contribute to the overall vitality, diversity, and growth of the area economy. Incubators provide environments that allow a region to take an active role in growing their own businesses, which will lead to job creation.

New Partnership: KBA & RBI. Our Robbins Banking Institute provides classroom training based on real-world observation from banking professionals. Its internship program enhances relationships with bank professionals, leading to job opportunities. With an aging population of bankers and an increasing number of job openings, the institute expedites the training of students to fill banking positions. We were thrilled this fall to announce a new partnership with the Kansas Banking Association to provide seasoned leadership to the Institute.

FHSU hosts first agriculture forum. Representative Ken Rahjes, Chair of the House Agriculture Committee, and Dr. Grady Dixon, Dean, Werth College of Science, Technology and Mathematics, hosted a day-long forum for approximately 50 ag-industry leaders from western Kansas and 16 state legislators for a series of topic-driven presentations and discussions. Due to this first forum's success, FHSU plans to make it a recurring event.

Even more successes are noted on the last pages of the testimony.

In closing, I would like to ask for your support in thinking about any legislative restrictions on tuition setting. Over the years, Fort Hays State University has been – and will continue to be – an excellent steward of our resources. We have worked intentionally to build elasticity into our tuition and fee model, precisely for a time like this.

As a cautionary tale, last year, after making more than \$2.1 million dollars in reductions for this fiscal year, we planned for a modest increase in tuition. This increase would have made us financially whole, provided a wage increase for our student employees, and at the same time, our students would still have saved more than \$1,000 in tuition and fees, as compared to students attending any other KBOR university, or even most state comprehensive regional universities throughout the U.S. - **even if those universities did not raise their tuition and we did.**

Limiting our ability to operate efficiently by freezing or capping tuition increases by an **across-the-board percentage**, rather than capping increases at a unified dollar amount, puts FHSU at a distinct disadvantage.

Finally, let me say thank you for your support in helping this amazing university bring affordable, high quality education to so many students.

In the words of Chance Anderson, one of our students who participated in Higher Education Day last week, “I am so glad I chose Fort Hays University – not only am I getting the education I wanted, I am being taught by instructors who care about me as a person.”

I appreciate your time today and ask that you consider supporting the Governor’s budget recommendation. I am happy to answer your questions at the appropriate time.



FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY

FHSU at the forefront of workforce development in rural Kansas

New Strategic Affiliation Initiative to focus on bringing economic prosperity to rural Kansas

In January, Fort Hays State University, North Central Kansas Technical College, and Northwest Kansas Technical College proposed a new affiliation partnership to provide stronger, forward-looking educational programs and services to rural central and western Kansas people, businesses, and communities. On February 3, House Bill 2290 authorizing the affiliation was introduced in the Kansas Legislature.

Social Work Cohort Programs making a difference in southwest Kansas

FHSU's social work cohort programs in southwest Kansas were designed for students already established and engaged in their local communities. The cohort model enables students to complete a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree without frequent travel or relocation to Hays.

To date, 70 students have graduated from our cohort programs in Garden City, Dodge City, and Liberal. In Garden City, cohort program graduates comprise more than half of the total number of licensed social workers in Finney County.

Partnership with the Kansas Banking Association brings new leadership to the Robbins Banking Institute

The Institute provides classroom training based on real-world observation from banking professionals. Its internship program enhances relationships with bank professionals, leading to job opportunities. With an aging population of bankers and an increasing number of job openings, the Institute expedites the training of students to fill banking positions.

In the fall of 2022, the university partnered with the Kansas Banking Association to provide seasoned leadership to the Institute. The KBA and FHSU selected experienced banker Tommy Powell to lead the Institute. His responsibilities include advancing the reputation of the Robbins Banking Institute among current banking

professionals and key influencers and recruiting future Robbins Banking Institute student

The Cybersecurity Institute and Technology Incubator's (CITI) initial efforts to focus on student microinternships

Thanks to generous funding from the Kansas Legislature, this new program launched last fall. The FHSU Department of Informatics is leading this effort and working with the Small Business Development Centers, CITI staff, and local businesses to identify microinternship opportunities for FHSU students this spring and summer. Student interns will work on special cybersecurity projects that develop essential technical, entrepreneurial, and interpersonal skills. Regional small businesses will benefit from the infusion of new talent and state-of-the-practice cybersecurity expertise.

Rural STEM teaching licensure grant to train more teachers in rural Kansas

The FHSU College of Education's "Science Teachers for Rural America - A Post-Baccalaureate STEM Teacher Licensure Project" grant proposal was awarded \$1.2 million. The grant provides 30 one-year stipends.

De-escalation training for law enforcement at FHSU set to expand

The National De-escalation Training Center has designated FHSU as the site of a new Central Region Training Center. The Central Region Training Center (FHSU) expects to train 50 officers as senior trainers to continue training the remaining officers employed by their agency and potentially personnel from other agencies. An additional 1,000 officers are expected to complete the 8-hour online training modules developed at FHSU in coordination with NDTCC

FHSU hosts first agriculture forum

Representative Ken Rahjes, Chair of the House Agriculture Committee, and Dr. Grady Dixon, Dean, Werth College of Science, Technology and Mathematics, hosted a day-long forum for

approximately 50 ag-industry leaders from western Kansas and 16 state legislators for a series of topic-driven presentations and discussions. Due to this first forum's success, FHSU plans to make it a recurring event.

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Science Reorganization Completed Ahead of Schedule

The reorganization of the college has brought better alignment with the new KBOR General Education framework (one year ahead of the KBOR deadline), leverages the university's student professional advising model, increased operational and administrative efficiencies, enhanced student support services and mentoring, and delivered more program flexibility for students.

Partnership with Hays Academy of Hair Design helping entrepreneurs succeed in business

Hays Academy students now have the opportunity to take four business courses resulting in a Business Essentials Certificate. Courses in the custom-designed professional development program include personal finance, management practices, basics of accounting and taxes, and social media marketing.

FHSU to build new shooting sports training facility

Thanks to a generous \$60,000 lead gift from Lorena Kellogg and her late husband, Wilmer, and the dedication of land owned by the Hays City Sportsman's Club, construction of a new training center is slated to begin this spring on a new training facility for the FHSU Shotgun Team. The training center will be built at the Hays City Sportsmen's Club just north of Hays on the 183 Bypass and I-70 and will offer a large meeting room, reloading room, and office. The FHSU Shotgun Team is a national powerhouse, earning eight national championships since it was established in 2005.

Moody's Investors Service affirms FHSU's A1 ratings

In a statement released in December, Moody's stated that Fort Hays State University's A1 issuer rating reflects its importance to the State of Kansas (Aa2 stable) as a provider of education and its strong fiscal discipline to manage expenses amid enrollment declines. Moody's expects that despite demographic headwinds, FHSU will continue navigating the shifting enrollment landscape by exercising solid expense management and producing at least break-even operating performance with stable liquidity.

Federal grant funding a driving force behind several major initiatives

- \$19 million towards the renovation of the Forsyth Library
- \$5 million from ARPA to replace aging HVAC in Gross Memorial Coliseum
- \$2.75 million to expand de-escalation training
- \$1.2 million to support a new science teacher licensing program for rural schools

Defending our institutional data against cyber threats

FHSU recently invested more than \$2 million in new technology to help support our networks and keep FHSU at the front edge of cyber security to protect our valuable data.

Voluntary Separation Incentive Program leads to significant savings

In response to recent enrollment shortfalls, FHSU successfully implemented a voluntary employee separation incentive program that reduced ongoing labor costs at the university by \$2 million.

Breakthrough Enrollment Strategies

Women's wrestling coming to Tiger Athletics in 2024
FHSU is among the first NCAA intercollegiate athletics programs to add Women's Wrestling.
More than 1,400 girls compete in high school wrestling programs in the state of Kansas today.

Redesigned MBA program bucks national trends

Enrollment in FHSU's program has increased by 80% over the past two years, during a time when nationwide, those numbers have gone down for most colleges and universities.

FHSU introduces new "Degree in Three" degree program in business

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 23.1% of all new jobs projected between 2021 and 2031 will be in the leisure and hospitality field. FHSU's new "degree in three" program in Tourism and Hospitality Management provides a more affordable and streamlined pathway for students who want to pursue a career in this exciting field.

Doctor of Nursing Practice graduates shine

2022 graduates of the FHSU doctor of nursing practice program obtained a 100% pass rate on the Family Nurse Practitioner certification exam.

House Higher Education Budget Committee
Fort Hays State University
February 21, 2023

How many full-time students are currently enrolled and attending in-person classes?

- Full-time – On Campus: 3,094
 - Full-time – On Campus Undergraduate: 2,910
 - Full-time – On Campus Graduate: 184

How many part-time students are currently enrolled and attending in-person classes?

- Part-time – On Campus: 254
 - Part-time – On Campus Undergraduate: 201
 - Part-time – On Campus Graduate: 53

How many full-time students do only online classes?

- Full-time – Online Only: 1,865
 - Full-time – Online Only Undergraduate: 1,458
 - Full-time – Online Only Graduate: 407

How many part-time students do only online classes?

- Part-time – Online Only: 3,941
 - Part-time – Online Only Undergraduate: 2,128
 - Part-time – Online Only Graduate: 1,813

How many students could you enroll at your institution given your current campus footprint and funding?

- In fall 2022, our housing capacity was 1,647, of which we had 1,501 filled. That is a 91% occupancy. This gives us an additional 146 open beds that could be filled.
- Our primary limiting ability to grow on-campus enrollment would be funding to hire additional student services support staff, as well as faculty.

What academic areas are you seeing the greatest growth in?

- The following programs have experienced a five-year growth trend:
 - Computer Science
 - Finance
 - History
 - MBA
 - Modern Language
 - Social Work

What academic areas are you seeing the greatest decline in?

- The following programs have experienced a five-year decline trend:
 - Criminal Justice
 - Leadership Studies
 - Management
 - Sociology

- Teacher Education
 - Nursing
- Please note that while these programs have experienced a dip in enrollment, all of them have had an annual budget carryover and are still healthy. Additionally, all substantially exceed the minimum KBOR requirements for low enrollment programs.

How has the University progressed in reducing its deferred maintenance footprint?

- FHSU consistently and strategically works to address deferred maintenance needs on campus. It has been a part of our campus culture for a long time. Our buildings are generally in good repair, and we work every year to ensure critical systems and facility needs are addressed. In the last three fiscal years, we have spent over \$14 million in deferred maintenance projects.
- FY21: \$2,851,800
 - FY22: \$3,050,000
 - FY23: \$8,413,000
- Total = \$14,314,800**

These projects include items such as roof replacements, HVAC upgrades, steam pipes and loop water systems, classroom remodels, electrical work, fire alarms and safety, sidewalks, roads, exterior building stone repair, electronic door access and more. We have used a variety of funding sources for these projects including EBF, legislative appropriated capital renewal, and university funds.

How much potential demolition is yet needed on your campus?

- None at this time; we have taken care of all demolition as we updated our facilities. We did not access any of the funds made available to universities through last year's legislation.

Does the State of Kansas provide enough financial assistance and need-based aid for students?

- While we are grateful for the assistance provided by the state, we still have students who are utilizing need-based loans to pay for their education. More need-based grants from the state could help alleviate this indebtedness, as well as positively impact completion, while growing the talent pipeline.

How does your institution work with students to ensure they are not overly indebted upon graduation?

- We have several initiatives to help students with loan indebtedness:
- an evolving scholarship program that seeks to identify students who could benefit from scholarships to replace loans;
 - GradReady, a financial literacy program, helps students identify ways to budget and understand different types of college funding and is imbedded into the freshman seminar curriculum; and
 - a modest tuition helps lower the amount of loans students can access due to a lower cost of attendance.

- As indicated in the KBOR data book, FHSU had a student loan default rate of 5.7% in fiscal year 2018. FHSU's peers had a student loan default rate of 6.9%. In 2019, FHSU's student loan default rate was 1.8%, while our peers had a rate of 2.2%*.

**Note: In response to the COVID-19 emergency, on March 13, 2020, the federal government issued a moratorium on student loan repayments. As a result, students' repayments were paused. The moratorium was extended multiple times. Therefore, the data for 2018 remains in place as the best baseline for student loan default rates. Any subsequent years are not statistically significant and do not provide an accurate picture of student loan default rates.*

How does your University recruit non-resident students?

- For on-campus recruitment, last year we added three out-of-state Admission Counselors to support our 13-state regional tuition strategy. The 13-state on-campus regional rate resulted in a 49% increase in undergraduates from these states this past fall. (See diagram and data in written testimony.)
- We also increased our name search program (ACT name buys), mailings, and use of digital marketing to our new regional tuition states.
- For online, we travel to targeted out-of-state recruitment events. We also reorganized our marketing department, creating a stronger focus on recruitment. This change has led to new technologies and strategies, widening the recruitment funnel.

Should out-of-state tuition be eliminated?

- We celebrate our growth via our regional tuition strategy, but also responsibly measure the ROI of expanding our reduced tuition reach. This is critical, as we weigh the pros and cons of eliminating out-of-state tuition. We have learned how important it is to track the ROI to determine whether the enrollment gain will offset the loss of out-of-state tuition and related marketing expenses.

What are the biggest obstacles for students finishing a degree at your institution?

- As indicated through a recent Docking Institute study, 93% of our students work. This can impact on-time completion.
- We provide many resources to support both our on-campus and online students. Students who may need the resources (tutoring, health and wellness, financial resources, etc.) often do not make the effort to take advantage of the help we provide.

Do you support the adoption of the Math Pathways program as proposed by the Kansas Board of Regents?

- Yes, with input from the Regents institutions. FHSU has a representative on the KBOR Math Pathways task force.

Some say adopting the Math Pathways program is the “lowering of academic standards” or the “dumbing down of education”, do you agree with that sentiment?

- No

What is a “meta-major”?

- A meta major is a grouping of majors under a larger umbrella/theme (i.e. Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Business). There are shared courses in a meta major that allow students to transition between majors resulting in hours that transfer between majors. This broadens academic studies beyond a narrow field of study, to better prepare students for opportunities in the future.

Given the heightened focus on Universities as drivers of economic development and workforce, how are the liberal arts programs fitting into that equation?

- Per the recent rpk Group report, multiple liberal arts programs were categorized in the high wage or high regional employment area (i.e. English, History, Master of Liberal Studies,* Master of Professional Studies,** Political Science, Art and Design). While this data focused solely on wage and labor data from Kansas and Missouri, and our student population spans the world, the Kansas and Missouri data does indicate that these fields are preparing students for necessary workforce skills.
- Our FHSU first destination survey data from 21-22 indicates that 87% of the students studying in the Arts and Humanities areas were employed or continuing their education. This is just below the entire University average of 94%.

**Note: The Masters of Liberal Studies allows students to choose innovative concentrations in emerging multi-disciplinary interest areas such as global studies, corporate communications, literary arts, political leadership, public administration, and health sciences. Concentrations to meet emerging workforce development needs are being developed each year in order to maintain relevancy in an evolving field.*

*** Note: The Master of Professional Studies (MPS) degree is a multi-disciplinary master's degree designed to develop advanced professional skill sets in various subject areas not currently represented at FHSU by the Master of Science (MS) credentials. A notable feature of the degree program is the flexibility to combine a major subject area with one or more cognate areas. By customizing one's education, students will gain the professional workforce skills desired by employers in commerce, government, health care, non-profits, and information technology.*

How many international students are enrolled at your University?

- Total Currently Enrolled: 263
 - On campus international students: 141
 - Online international students: 116
 - International Partner Students (China): enrollment for our international partners will not occur for another couple of weeks. We expect to see an enrollment slightly over 3,000 students.

How many countries have students at your University?

- FHSU students represent every county in Kansas, every branch of the military, all 50 states, and 46 countries.

What's significant and important about establishing a relationship between your University and a foreign country?

- It is an important element of our mission: Fort Hays State University provides accessible quality education to Kansas, the nation, and the world through an innovative community of teacher-scholars and professionals to develop engaged global citizen-leaders.
- Revenue from international partners has been a key strategy to drive our costs down for Kansas students.

~~If you are a research University, how do you protect intellectual property?~~

Does your University provide incoming students with a hard-copy of the “Statement on Free Expression” as published by the Kansas Board of Regents?

- We have officially adopted the KBOR Freedom of Expression Statement as our own, linked to the Statement on our home page, developed a Freedom of Expression web page and series of initiatives related to it, and presented the Statement (electronically) to incoming students for student orientation and freshman seminar materials. Going forward, we intend to confirm that a print copy of the Statement is included with other hard copy student orientation materials.

Last month, 28 Presidents from the Florida College System issued a Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Critical Race Theory. Do you agree or disagree with their statement? Do you think the Presidents of the Regent Universities in Kansas should issue a similar statement?

- Without knowing all the context around the Florida College System statement, I am hesitant to offer an “agree or disagree” response. However, there are certainly some points in the statement that appeal to me, things like:
 - The focus on promoting academic freedom, freedom of expression, viewpoint diversity, and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning;
 - Not compelling belief in critical race theory;
 - A college faculty and student body must be free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism, and to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence;
 - A reaffirmation of a commitment to nondiscrimination in hiring, onboarding, and professional development, merit, and civil debate; and
 - Renewing the commitment to the values that are foundational to our mission, and maintaining our country's common good, for which we as public institutions of higher education share the responsibility.
- While I would intend to take direction from the Kansas Board of Regents on this, I do think it could be helpful for the Regent universities to work with KBOR to develop a consensus statement of our own, similar to what was done with the KBOR Freedom of Expression statement. In doing so, we could consider utilizing some of the above points, expanding on or updating KBOR's existing policy Statement on Diversity and Multiculturalism, articulating the ties between diversity and inclusion and our broader enrollment, student success, and workforce development initiatives and challenges, while reinforcing the ethic of care that permeates so much of what we try to do on an individual by individual and day by day basis at FHSU.

