

**Subject:** UMKC Forward  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 22, 2020 at 12:38:12 PM Central Daylight Time  
**From:** UMKC Chancellor  
**To:** UMKC-MCOM-UMKC Faculty (fac, regardless of rank or status), UMKC-MCOM-UMKC Staff (all staff, including UMKC Foundation)  
**Attachments:** UMKC Forward committees.docx



April 22, 2020

Dear UMKC community,

During the past week, I have shared with you the financial challenges we face for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 and asked for your assistance as we face some difficult decisions. We expect these issues to persist long beyond 2021. Today, I want to give you an overview of how we are going to redefine and reposition our university for long-term success.

The coronavirus crisis has brought into sharp focus what has been a longstanding issue for us. We simply cannot continue to limp from year to year with across-the-board budget reductions, narrow financial margins and low reserves, which prevent us from investing in areas of excellence and growth and rising to our full potential as Kansas City's university. Instead, we must view this crisis as an opportunity to fundamentally reimagine how we do what we do.

As we deal with the current crisis, we stand at a crossroad. We have to determine how UMKC will emerge from this dark period and evolve into a much more dynamic university – one that will better serve future generations in what is certain to be a very different higher education landscape post COVID-19. Our goal is to put survival mode behind us for good and reemerge into lasting excellence.

We cannot achieve this via business as usual. We have to think boldly to restructure, realign, trim and invest so that we can flourish. To that end, I'm looking to create options to permanently reduce the operating budget of UMKC by about 15 percent. That sum will cover not only expected declines in funding sources, but also will create a pool for strategic investments for our future. Yes, there will be hard decisions ahead, but also the exciting promise of a new UMKC that will serve future generations of students, faculty and staff for decades to come.

The process of achieving these goals will be known as UMKC Forward. It will be fast-paced but collaborative and deliberative, with teams of stakeholders working together to deliver options

for restructuring, realignment and investments.

I have been working with Interim Provost Jenny Lundgren to develop a template for this transformation process, modeled after successful reorganizations at other universities. We have appointed steering committees (attached) to lead two teams that will be working simultaneously.

- Team A (Realign to Flourish) will focus on adapting and restructuring and will comprise two groups– one focusing on academic programs and the other on administrative and university operations. Each group will have several committees.

- Team B (Innovate to Grow) will focus on investments for growth and will also consist of two sub-groups.

Additional committee members will be appointed in coming days. You can share recommendations with the committees or check for updates on the [UMKC Forward](#) web page. This initiative will take place over the summer months, with the goal of implementing some changes in FY21. Other changes will occur over the next two to three years.

Once again, I call on all of you to seize this opportunity to create our own future. Together.

Sincerely,



C. Mauli Agrawal, Ph.D.  
Chancellor