Letter from distinguished professors urges rescinding of new KBOR
termination policy
Submitted by Communications and Marketing
The following is a letter from more than 100 university distinguished professors of K-State
and the University of Kansas Medical Center and distinguished professors of Wichita State
University and the University of Kansas.
Dear Members of the Kansas Board of Regents,
We, the undersigned distinguished professors from Kansas Board of Regents universities,
strongly urge the immediate rescinding of the KBOR's new termination policy. We applaud
Allison Garrett (Emporia State), Tisa A. Mason (Fort Hays State), Richard Myers (Kansas
State), Steven A. Scott (Pittsburg State), and Richard Muma (Wichita State) for refusing to
use the policy. It is harmful to our individual campuses and to the Regents system as a
whole.
As Regent Shane Bangerter notes, these are indeed “extreme times.” The chronic
underfunding of Kansas higher education has become suddenly acute. However, Regents
universities already have a policy crafted specifically to address such extremity--declaring
financial exigency allows universities to downsize in the face of financial emergency. In
consultation with KBOR, each campus has already developed, via shared governance, the
necessary procedures: these should be implemented if a campus determines that they are
needed. Best practices for university management require transparency and proper
procedure.
To jettison best practices with this substitute policy not only reveals a lack of respect for
each campus' system of shared governance, it threatens long-term damage to the missions
of each institution. It undermines the purpose of tenure, which is to allow faculty to pursue
their scholarship without fear of repercussions. Academic freedom is the foundation upon
which we build discovery, robust research, scholarship and creative activities. It also fosters
an environment essential to recruiting and retaining excellent faculty in the future. Finally,
the new policy undermines the morale of current staff and faculty at precisely the time
when each campus needs extraordinary effort and resilience from them.
Sincerely yours,