KU officials hope for more production, less tumult in 2008

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If 2007 was a tumultuous, yet productive, year for Kansas University, 2008 is shaping up to be a bit more productive and perhaps a bit less tumultuous.

KU Chancellor Robert Hemenway has said curing cancer is the university’s top priority. To do that, KU leaders said they needed a new affiliation agreement with KU Hospital and broader affiliations with other hospitals, such as St. Luke’s in Kansas City, Mo.

That affiliation process finally came to an end last month with the approval of the new KU Hospital-KU Medical Center agreement. But that conclusion brings KU to 2008 with a major challenge: implementation.

“I think we’ll really be able to build stronger, better clinical and research programs together,” KUMC Executive Vice Chancellor Barbara Atkinson said.

In addition to getting more money for research from both KU Hospital and St. Luke’s, KUMC and KU Hospital will embark on construction of a medical office building. With groundbreaking scheduled no later than Jan. 1, 2009, 2008 will be filled with site prep and planning for the new building.

Atkinson had said getting that building was her first priority when she became dean of the School of Medicine five years ago.

While the hospitals provide a good portion of the funds for KUMC, the state legislature still provides a large chunk of the funds for KU as a whole. And KU, along with the other state universities, has an ambitious request for more money before the legislature.

All told, the state higher education sector is seeking $150 million more in 2008 than in 2007.

In talking to several legislators, they’re very concerned at the increase in tuition,” regent Dan Lykins said. “It’s greater than the cost of living.”

KU was also successful in getting two new programs on the regents’ list of programs worthy of state investment: U Kan Teach, which produces secondary math and science teachers, and an expansion of the School of Pharmacy.

If funding for those projects is approved by the legislature in 2008, pharmacy expansion could begin mid-year, when the university’s new budget year starts. The U Kan Teach program has already started with funding from private sources, but would be benefited by more state money.

In addition to those major projects, 2008 also expects to bring about a new strategic plan for the university.

“In my estimate, we must create a universitywide strategic plan that includes all our campuses,” Hemenway said. “We want to have a plan by spring semester’s end.”
More than 500 water wells in western and south-central Kansas will be measured the first week of January by the Kansas Geological Survey, based at the University of Kansas.

Geological survey water specialists measure the wells annually in a cooperative program with the Division of Water Resources within the Kansas Department of Agriculture, which will measure an additional 900 wells. Combined, the geological survey and water resources division measure wells in 47 counties.

Weather permitting, geological survey crews will begin measurements in areas near Colby and St. Francis Jan. 3 and 4, move south to the Sharon Springs and Syracuse areas Jan. 5 and 6, and finish up near Hugoton and Liberal Jan. 7.

Data collected from the wells signal changes in groundwater quantity. Most of the measured wells are drilled into the High Plains aquifer, which includes the well-known Ogallala aquifer. It underlies much of western and south-central Kansas.

“The High Plains aquifer is the primary water source for almost every single use in this region,” said Brownie Wilson, water-data manager at the geological survey. “It’s a vital resource.”

Landowners, municipalities and businesses can use the water-level data when making decisions about drilling and water use. Government agencies and groundwater management districts make water-planning and water-management decisions based on the findings.

Previous annual measurements have shown a trend of declining water levels in the Ogallala portion of the High Plains, although specific areas may experience slight increases or no change in levels. Measurements taken in January 2006 indicated an average water-level decline of 0.57 feet in all measured wells in 2005, greater than the average decline of 0.14 feet in 2004.

The 2005 declines were just half that of the annual average declines observed between 2000 and 2006—a period partially affected by drought. Most of the measured wells are privately owned and used for irrigation. All wells are measured with the owners’ permission.

“Landowners are key to this program’s success,” said Brett Wedel, manager of the geological survey’s measurement program. “Access to specific wells, many having been in the program for more than 30 years, is essential to getting a representative and historically significant sample of the aquifer.”

The 1,400 wells measured by the geological survey and the water resources division are spread throughout the High Plains region and are located approximately one to every 16-square-mile area to provide even coverage. In Kansas there are approximately 35,000 permitted wells, which does not include domestic wells. About 80 percent of those are in the High Plains aquifer region.

Water levels are checked in January to avoid localized fluctuations caused by irrigation at other times of the year.

Measurements of individual wells made in January 2007 (as well as historical measurement data) are available at the geological survey’s Web site. Results of measurements made in January will be available at the same site in late February.
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<tr>
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<td>John Charles Wickey</td>
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Lawrence Journal-
World, on University of
Kansas in China:

The world is becoming
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KU recently announced
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ment to develop a direct
exchange with the presti-
gious Peking University.

Leaders at the Chinese
university reportedly are
particularly interested in
sending more graduate stu-
dents to KU and in fostering
strong exchange programs
for faculty and scholars from
the two schools.

Although KU has direct
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sities, the partnership with
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cant because of the school's
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The university has about
30,000 students, more than
200 research institutes and
42 colleges and depart-
ments, according to a KU
press release.

At about the same time
the Peking University pact
was being signed, KU's
Confucius Institute was
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Confucius Institute of the
Year by the international
organization that covers
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the world. It was one of only
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This is quite an accom-
plishment for an institute
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Both because of its huge
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Forming ties with China
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growth.

Much emphasis has been
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tional cultures and education.

The Confucius Institute
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nership with Peking
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steps in KU's efforts to
accomplish that goal.
Officer graduates from KU Training Center

Cpl. Greydon Walker, a member of the Eudora Police Department, was one of 57 graduates of the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center.

The training center is a unit of the University of Kansas Continuing Education.

Walker received a certificate of course completion and Kansas law enforcement certification from the Kansas Commission on Peace Officers' Standards and Training, the state's law enforcement licensing authority.

The training course fulfilled the state requirement for law enforcement training. Classroom lectures and hands-on applications helped train officers to solve the increasingly complex problems they face in the line of duty.

About 350 officers enroll annually in the 14-week basic training program. The center offered continuing education and specialized training to more than 2,500 Kansas officers last year.
LAWRENCE (AP) — A proposal to build an upscale hotel on Mount Oread has stirred up concern about the city’s skyline and the preservation of a historic neighborhood at the center of the University of Kansas campus.

The seven-story Oread Inn would be close to the student union and would replace a few rundown buildings and already-closed businesses. The proposal also includes retail businesses.

Some architects and historic preservationists say the hotel’s design doesn’t fit with the historic neighborhood. They worry that a hotel atop the hill will alter the view of the city.

“People don’t understand how big and massive this building is going to be,” said Dennis Brown, president of the Lawrence Preservation Alliance. “It is going to change the skyline.”

A landmark for settlers traveling west, Mount Oread was a staging area for marauders before the Civil War and it was later the site chosen for the university.

Developers say the Oread Inn would fill an upscale niche that’s now unfilled at the campus. “Of the Big 12 schools, we are the only college community that doesn’t have a hotel on campus or within one block of campus,” said Nancy Longhurst, general manager of the Eldridge and a member of the Oread Inn project team.

City Commissioner Mike Amyx said the project could be a great fit for Lawrence and the university.

“It’s a real positive,” Amyx said. “It could be a wonderful project for the city, and it’s connected pretty closely to the University of Kansas. It would be great for alumni or visitors to the city.”

There are two historic districts near the potential hotel site. The city’s Historic Resources Commission, which oversees protection of historic buildings, unanimously voted to reject the hotel project because of its size and design.

City commissioners overruled that decision but did send the project back to the committee when the developers tweaked the design.

The new design had a facade designed to blend better with surrounding buildings and the overall height was reduced by 6 feet.
HUTCHINSON — Kansas City, Kan., Police Chief Sam Breshears congratulated 57 graduates of the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center at a Dec. 21 ceremony at the 4-H Encampment Building on the Kansas State Fairgrounds.

Among the graduates was Zach Ellison, deputy with the Neosho County Sheriff's Department.

The graduates, who began their training course Sept. 10, represented 38 municipal, county and state law enforcement agencies from across Kansas. They were the 194th basic training class of graduates.

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The center trains the majority of municipal, county and state law enforcement officers in Kansas and oversees the training of the remaining officers at seven authorized and certified academy programs operated by local law enforcement agencies and the Kansas Highway Patrol.

About 350 officers enroll annually in the 14-week basic training program. The center offered continuing education and specialized training to more than 2,500 Kansas officers last year. Funding for the training center is generated from court docket fees from municipal and state courts. No funds from the state's general revenue are used to operate the center.
The world is becoming ever smaller, which is why it is welcomed news that Kansas University is forging important new relationships with higher education in China.

KU recently announced that it had signed an agreement to develop a direct exchange with the prestigious Peking University.

Leaders at the Chinese university reportedly are particularly interested in sending more graduate students to KU and in fostering strong exchange programs for faculty and scholars from the two schools.

Although KU has direct exchange programs with three other Chinese universities, the partnership with Peking University is significant because of the school’s international reputation. The university has about 30,000 students, more than 200 research institutes and 42 colleges and departments, according to a KU press release.

At about the same time the Peking University pact was being signed, KU’s Confucius Institute was being honored as a Confucius Institute of the Year by the international organization that covers about 210 institutes around the world. It was one of only four institutes in the United States and 20 in the world to receive the designation.

This is quite an accomplishment for an institute that was only dedicated in May 2006.

Both because of its huge size and its focus on building its economy, China is perhaps the most important developing nation in the world.

Forming ties with China and its top universities gives KU an important connection to that country’s economic and educational growth.

Much emphasis has been placed on giving university students in Kansas broader experience with international cultures and education.

The Confucius Institute honors and the new partnership with Peking University are important steps in KU’s efforts to accomplish that goal.
KU announces fall 2007 graduates

The names of more than 1,600 candidates for degrees for the fall 2007 semester at the University of Kansas have been announced by the Office of Registrar.

Graduate and undergraduate degrees are conferred in December based on work completed during the fall semester. Because KU conducts only one formal commencement ceremony each year, many students graduating in the fall or summer terms will return for the traditional walk down the hill and into Memorial Stadium on Sunday, May 18, 2008.

Those listed from the area are Matthew Peterson Nyquist, son of Bob and Janie Nyquist, receiving a Bachelor of General Studies/Religious Studies, and Benjamin Arnold Pera, son of Rev. Stephen and Ruth Pera, receiving a Master of Arts in Mathematics, all are from Lindsborg.

Five of KU's 13 colleges and schools conducted recognition programs or hooding ceremonies earlier this month to honor those planning to graduate at the end of the semester: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Engineering, the School of Law and the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications.
Lawrence, KS - The names of more than 1,600 candidates for degrees for the fall 2007 semester at the University of Kansas have been announced by the Office of Registrar. Included among those is Sarah Beth Leonard, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Journalism. Sarah is a Sublette High School graduate and is the daughter of Risa Stevens.

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