

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Planned Protest Against KU Budget Cuts

Lawrence, Kansas - February 1, 2021 - The faculty group OneKU will join the KU Graduate Teaching Assistants Coalition (GTAC) outside Allen Fieldhouse on Tuesday, February 2nd, at 5.30p for a demonstration against the university's planned budget cuts. The event will take place before the KU v. Kansas State basketball game.

The Teaching Assistants Coalition is rallying against a proposal to freeze their annual pay at \$17,750 for at least the next two years, an amount they call a poverty wage.

OneKU is demanding that the KU administration decline to implement a new Kansas Board of Regents Policy which gives top administrators a free hand to dismiss employees without regard for tenure or due process protections, with just 30 days notice. The KU administration claims the COVID context has created a historic budget crisis, but the Regents' measure bypasses current policy that requires administrators to show financial exigency in such firings. Leaders at every university under the Regents umbrella other than KU have publicly stated they will not implement this reckless and unprecedented policy.

A statement from Elizabeth Esch, Associate Professor of American Studies and Araceli Masterson-Alga, Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese reads: "The event organized by OneKU is an expression of what researchers, teachers, and students do best: we generate communities. The crisis at KU was not created by students and their families, the faculty, the graduate students, or the researchers who make this university, and it did not start with COVID-19. We hope that the events this week will serve as a reminder to ourselves that we are a 'whole,' and that our communities are worth defending."

"Let's Defend KU, not Defund KU."

The groups welcome friends, community members, and family to join the event and request every participant to wear a mask and respect six feet of social distancing to protect the health of all involved. Participants will meet in Lot 117 (by Watkins Health) at 5.30pm and walk over to Allen Fieldhouse shortly after.

OneKU will provide more information on the KBOR policy in a follow-up Town Hall in the evening of Thursday, February 4th.

OneKU is a faculty group organized to promote and defend quality public higher education through a workplace governed by equity and fairness. We advocate for the University's mission as a research institution dedicated to the creation of knowledge for the public good.

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