



A Message from University of Kentucky

PRESIDENT ELI CAPILOUTO



Dear Campus Community,

In the coming weeks, with input from faculty leaders, I plan to announce an acting provost, who will serve up to a one-year appointment in this critical position. The search for a permanent provost will commence in the fall and will include multiple finalists for public consideration.

I write to you today to explain more about the provost selection process and why I've concluded that this is the best path forward for the University of Kentucky at this time.

The process for selecting an acting provost

- Under the university's governing regulations for making senior administrative appointments – what is commonly referred to as GR VIII at UK – I am meeting and conferring with the University Senate Council to solicit recommended names of candidates.
- In those meetings, I will gather input and specific recommendations regarding the best person to fill this position on an acting basis.
- At the same time, and also in accordance with GR VIII, I am forming a committee of faculty and staff members from within the Provost's unit. I will meet with that committee as well to solicit their recommended names of candidates.
- Based on the recommendations of these two committees, I will consider the names suggested and engage in conversations with interested candidates.
- With that critical feedback, I will make a final selection before the end of the academic year of an individual to serve in an acting capacity for up to one year, beginning July 1, 2021.

Why an acting provost

Over the past two months, I've had the privilege to meet with hundreds of members of our community – board members, faculty and staff leaders, administrators and graduate and undergraduate students – individually and in small groups. The idea was to gather input about what we need next in a new provost, following Provost Blackwell's announcement that he will not continue to serve in that position when his term ends

June 30, 2021.

I heard many opinions in these conversations about whether we should launch a national search for a provost or conduct an internal one. The university has employed both models in recent years. I also heard that conducting a permanent search for such an important position needs to be done in person, where the campus community can engage in a thoughtful, sustained process.

At the same time, I did hear broad agreement that successfully navigating our way through and out of the pandemic can be best served by an individual with deep familiarity and knowledge of our campus and who has demonstrated success in bringing diverse groups together to tackle complex problems. It's in that context that I have decided to move forward with the appointment of an acting provost. It represents, in my judgment, the best path forward for UK as we navigate COVID, a critical period in the life of our institution and on behalf of the Commonwealth we serve.

What's next

To that end, an added benefit of this process – hundreds of thoughtful conversations – has been rich dialogue about the future of our campus community: where we are today, where we need to go tomorrow and how we, ultimately, do everything we can to advance the state we serve.

My conversations with so many members of our campus community over the last two months have convinced me that this moment – a moment of both tremendous change and challenge – can be ours to seize if we are willing to take it. I will have more to say about that in the coming weeks.

I look forward to meeting with faculty leaders and other stakeholders as we select leadership for this critical position. I'm even more excited about what the future holds for an institution and community so inextricably linked to the future of a state we were created to serve.

Eli Capilouto
President