

## **KU Common Book**

In 2012-2013, the Office of First-Year Experience worked with a graduate-level course in KU's School of Education to develop faculty and student survey instruments to assess KU Common Book. We have augmented the information from these surveys with information gathered from a pre-course survey of students enrolled in Fall 2013 sections of PRE 101, which is the university's extended orientation course.

### **2012-2013 Faculty Survey**

This survey was initially sent to faculty and staff that had previously reported using the KU Common Book in their courses. The survey sample was polluted when the survey link was improperly forwarded to some non-teaching staff.

- 95% of survey respondents thought KU Common Book was a good idea.
- 76% of survey respondents thought that the book selection was relevant to course curriculum
- Notable feedback—some faculty did not feel that students were engaged in the work or ready, willing, or able to participate in book discussions.

### **2012-2013 Student Survey**

This survey was sent to all first-year students, including transfer students, via email. The email was sent to 5,016 students. There were 217 responses.

- 79% of respondents read part of the book, 38% reported reading the entire book.
- 48% participated in at least one related KU Common Book event.
- Students who read at least half of the book were more satisfied overall with the program.
- 42% used the KU Common Book in at least one class.
- Notable feedback—students indicated that they understood why the program existed, but not necessarily the rationale for the selection.

### **Assessment feedback loop**

Based on assessment results, the Office of First-Year Experience and the KU Common Book Committee identified the following areas for improvement:

1. Provide greater support and incentive for students to read the book over the summer.
2. Enhance faculty outreach to expand the use of the KU Common Book in first-year courses.

The Office of First-Year Experience has taken the following steps to address these areas:

- Students' introduction to KU Common Book now occurs as part of the orientation welcome program. This introduction is delivered by staff in the Office of First-Year Experience. Student Orientation Assistants reinforce messaging and expectations about the program in student-to-student sessions. KU Common Book was previously introduced by the Orientation Assistants, so the interaction was peer-to-peer. Incorporating the program into the orientation welcome has given greater visibility to the importance we place on student participation.
- We have simplified our messaging about KU Common Book by asking students to 1. Read and 2. Participate.
- We distributed a reader's guide with the book at this year's orientation. The guide includes ways for students to discuss the book with other new students over the summer using social media.
- To expand faculty outreach, the Office of First-Year Experience organized a faculty panel about KU Common Book for the Center for Teaching Excellence teaching summit.
- We partnered with a faculty member in Urban Planning and KU's Center for Teaching Excellence to incorporate the 2013-2014 KU Common Book into a faculty workshop about addressing the topic of sustainability in teaching across a range of disciplines.
- We reconfigured the KU Common Book committee to include greater faculty representation.