Dear KU Faculty, Staff, and Students,

In reaction to the opposition expressed by many to the Kansas Board of Regents (KBoR) Social Media Policy passed on December 18, 2013, a workgroup was established to recommend alternate language. The workgroup presented its thoughtful and widely acclaimed recommendations on April 16 to the KBoR Governance Committee. These recommendations eliminated the disciplinary language from the policy in order to preserve academic freedom and university employees’ First Amendment freedom of speech rights. The KBoR Governance Committee has revised the policy incorporating much of this language but, importantly, did not eliminate some of the most problematic components of the original policy. This new version will be voted on at the May 14 KBoR meeting. KBoR is asking for input this week on the new draft of this policy. This policy affects all Kansas Regent University faculty and non-student staff.

There are at least three things you can do to provide feedback to both the original and revised policy language:

1) Send communication reflecting this to the KBoR President and CEO, Andy Tompkins (atompkins@ksbor.org) and ask that the communication be forwarded to each of the nine regents.

2) Respond to the request for feedback found at the following site before the deadline of Friday, May 2, at 5:00pm: http://www.kansasregents.org/recommended_amendments_to_current_social_media_policy

3) Attend the KBoR meeting at 1:30 on May 14. This meeting will take place in the Board Office, Suite 520, Curtis State Office Building, 1000 SW Jackson, Topeka. Faculty and staff are encouraged to attend. Please indicate if you are planning to attend using the following doodle poll: http://doodle.com/224tkw4ns5qwc345

Your input and participation is important on this issue because this policy has the ability to detrimentally affect all public higher education institutions in the State of Kansas. The policy as it currently stands, as well as the revised language, arguably infringes upon the right to freedom of expression guaranteed by the First Amendment, and conflicts with the essential principles of academic freedom and shared governance. It will undoubtedly harm recruitment and retention efforts at Kansas Regents institutions and therefore sacrifice the quality of student education. Your action and voice is urgent and critically important.
Sincerely,

Nancy Kinnersley, FY 14 University Senate President
Christopher Steadham, FY 14 Faculty Senate President
Jonathan Mayhew, FY 15 University Senate President
Jim Carothers, FY 15 Faculty Senate President
Mike Krings, Unclassified Senate President
Betty Colbert, University Support Staff Senate President
Emma Halling, Student Senate President