



NKU to Take Intensive Look at First-Year Student Experience

Northern Kentucky University is partnering with the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education for a two-year project called “Foundations of Excellence” that takes an intensive look at the experience students have in their first year at NKU.

The self-study will begin this fall. Through the project, NKU will examine the effectiveness of its recruiting, admissions process, student orientation, student support, academic advising and teaching of first-year students.

“This is as critical as anything we’ll do this year,” said NKU President James Votruba. “Our core mission is to serve our students, and the experience we offer to incoming students as they navigate our various administrative systems is critical to their success, retention and graduation.

“We’re talking about a very intensive self-study that will identify the strengths and weaknesses of policies, procedures and campus programs that directly impact first-year students,” he said. The university expects to implement programmatic enhancements to increase student learning, success and persistence.

“What we hope to accomplish is a cleaner, clearer integration of our programs so that students will be able to navigate NKU more easily and will know where to turn for help,” said NKU Vice Provost Pat Moynahan, who is coordinating the project. “This will offer real direction on areas such as class registration, academic advising and financial aid – all critical to the first-year experience.”

New Chase Clinic Open for Business

The NKU Chase College of Law Small Business & Nonprofit Law Clinic is open for business.

The first clinic of its type in Kentucky, the clinic allows law students to work under the supervision of experienced attorneys to represent small businesses and nonprofits in a wide range of legal matters. It provides free services to local organizations that would not otherwise be able to obtain legal help.

“This clinic serves the community as well as our students by providing needed legal services to underserved Kentucky small businesses and nonprofit organizations,” said Dean Dennis Honabach.

NKU Biology Professor Recognized for Undergraduate Research Mentoring

Dr. Kristi Haik, associate biology professor at NKU, has received the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) Biology Division Mentor Award for her efforts in serving as a role model to students and other mentors of undergraduate research nationwide.

The award, in its inaugural year, was highly competitive. CUR represents over 900 colleges and universities across the country and received applicants from all over.

“To be able to say that NKU is the winner of a national undergraduate research mentoring award is so huge because NKU has been pushing hard to

support undergraduate research,” Dr. Haik said. “Everyone here is so supportive. They’re fantastic.”

Dr. Haik’s undergraduate biology students have proven themselves worthy of recognition through their research and publications.

Twenty-three students mentored by Dr. Haik have completed 73 abstracts at local, state and national conferences.

These students also wrote 23 grant proposals, 22 in which were awarded. Many have also co-written publications for various peer-review journals.

DID YOU KNOW?

NKU nursing professor and B.S.N. director Louise Niemer has received the **2010 Kentucky Innovative Teaching Award** from the Kentucky Nurses Association. The award honors creative teaching methods that enhance learning outcomes.