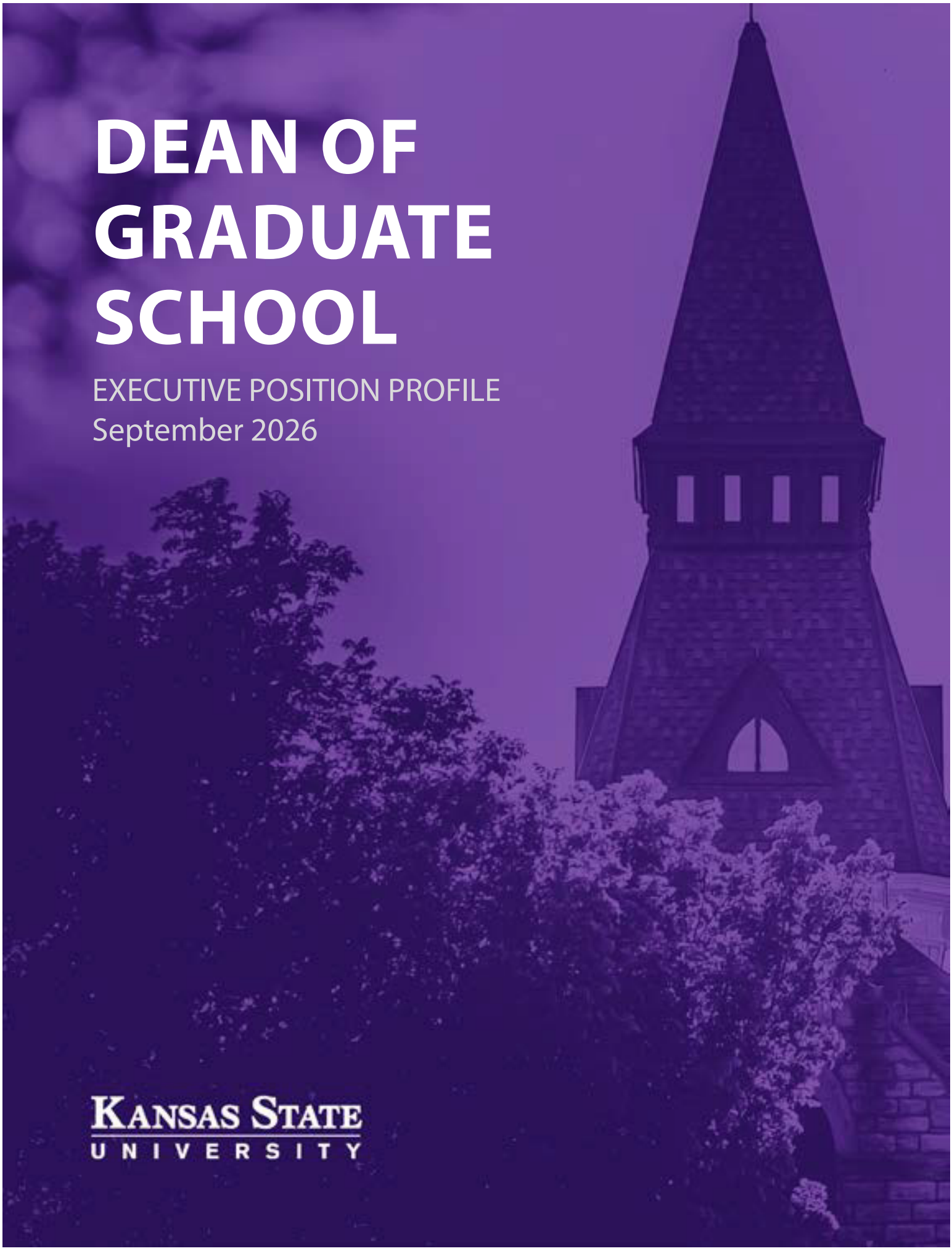
DEAN OF GRADUATE SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE POSITION PROFILE
September 2026



KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

The Opportunity

The Dean of the Graduate School will assume this role during an exciting time as the university advances innovative graduate program and strategic enrollment efforts. This is an extraordinary opportunity for a dynamic, outward facing, student-focused leader to serve as the Dean of the Graduate School within a public R1, land-grant university.

K-State's graduate enterprise serves about 4,200 students across 200 graduate degree and certificate programs, with programs offered across three campuses and more than 70 graduate programs available online. Another 500 DVM students are enrolled in K-State's College of Veterinary Medicine. The Dean will work closely with the president, provost, deans, vice provosts, vice president for research, and other senior leaders to formulate and implement a comprehensive and visionary strategy that engages prospective and current graduate students from Kansas, across the country, and internationally.

As a dynamic leader, the Dean will ensure the growth, development, quality, and continuation of graduate programs and graduate education at K-State, providing strategic leadership and vision to advance graduate education in directions consistent with the Next Gen K-State Strategic Plan. The Dean will work collaboratively with partners across the three physical campuses and within nine colleges to develop an integrated, analytically informed, and collaborative approach to graduate program enrollment. This role requires an ability to advance K-State's graduate programs with a fresh, relevant perspective.

The Dean of the Graduate School provides academic, curricular, policy, research, enrollment, strategic, and administrative leadership on matters related to graduate education at K-State. The Dean cultivates progressive academic and administrative policies related to graduate education, oversees the operations of the Graduate School, and fosters collaborative relationships with faculty, program coordinators, deans, administrators, students, and other Graduate School stakeholders. The Dean ensures plans, policies, practices, procedures, and programs align with university-wide and college-level strategic directions.

The position reports directly to the Provost and Executive Vice President, Jesse Perez Mendez, and serves as a member of the Academic Leadership Council and Deans Council.

For information on how to apply or to submit nominations, please refer to the Search Process section at the end of this document.

Core Duties and Responsibilities

Graduate School Leadership

- Conceptualizes a strategic and innovative vision for the Graduate School's future that will motivate the faculty and inspire students.
- Maintains stewardship over and is a strong advocate for graduate students' success and excellence, providing direction, support, and oversight for graduate education responsive to the needs of our diverse graduate student body.
- Has primary responsibility for admission and records, program development and evaluation, and strategic leadership for graduate and postgraduate education at K-State.
- Oversees key management functions of the Graduate School, including optimizing financial aid resources, applying new technologies, setting priorities with finite resources, nurturing staff development, setting performance objectives, evaluating outcomes, and maintaining accountability.

Curricular and Academic Activities

- Strengthens existing and nurtures the development of graduate programs, new disciplines, degrees, certificates, other credentials, and interdisciplinary approaches.
- Develops policies and oversees periodic reviews of graduate programs to ensure academic quality and provide superior experiences to our graduate students.
- Ensures HLC accreditation standards are met with regards to graduate education.
- Takes an active role in addressing any HLC findings relative to graduate studies, working with the programs, colleges, departments, and administration.
- Assists programs in meeting unit-level accreditation standards as needed and monitors and advocates for curricular processes that give due consideration, rigor, and graduate-level input into the maintenance and development of graduate courses and programs.

Enrollment Activities

- Provides guidance and leadership in the development and implementation of enrollment management strategies, policies, and practices to foster growth and stability, depending on the needs of the graduate programs of the University.
- Works with the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, graduate programs, graduate faculty, Graduate School staff, and others to use and sustain best practices to support student recruitment, progression, retention, and career development.
- Participates in recruitment activities in ways that add stature and value to the recruitment effort and promotes visibility of university graduate programs.
- Collaborates with the Division of Communications and Marketing to develop marketing, advertising and promotional strategies that generate interest and build awareness of graduate programs.

Advancement, Fundraising, Outreach, Research Activities, and Community Activities

- Serves as a strong and active advocate for graduate students and graduate education at K-State.
- Builds awareness for graduate education and enhances external relations.
- Serves as an ambassador for graduate programs and communicates the scholarship, leadership, and research expertise of graduate faculty.
- Fosters collaborative relationships across the university, educational entities, businesses, and other organizations.
- Engages in cultivating and securing funding for all aspects of the graduate education enterprise, working collaboratively with the Provost, deans, the KSU Foundation, and the K-State Alumni Association. Examples include endowed scholarships, professorships, assistantships, and student financial aid.
- Spearheads extramural funding to establish innovative new graduate programs or collaborations between existing programs.
- Promotes active collaboration between graduate students and graduate faculty in scholarly and creative endeavors and where appropriate, promotes undergraduate collaboration as well.
- Secures extramural funding and works with the Office of Sponsored Programs to support grants and research opportunities for graduate research, scholarship and faculty.
- Monitors, gathers data, analyzes, reports, and shares research and scholarship productivity of graduate faculty, students, and staff.
- Develops policies to promote scholarly productivity via peer-reviewed publications among graduate faculty and graduate students.

Requirements

Minimum Qualifications

- Ph.D. or terminal professional degree from an accredited university and qualifications as an accomplished scholar and educator that satisfies the requirements for the rank of professor in one of the university's academic departments.
- Record of success as an academic administrator in higher education with relevant administrative and managerial experience, including development and stewardship of fiscal and human resources, and experience overseeing graduate programs.
- Proven leadership with the demonstrated ability to work effectively with university senior leadership, faculty, and students to craft a strategic vision for graduate programs and enrollment management, engage stakeholders in implementation, and build collaborative relationships across the university.
- Strategic and creative planner with demonstrated organizational, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- Demonstrated a deep understanding of the complexities of graduate enrollment management and demonstrated experience with best enrollment practices, including in the areas of domestic and international student recruitment, admissions, and financial aid.
- Deep understanding of graduate education trends and efforts nationally and internationally and of the challenges and issues facing higher education.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills with a demonstrated ability to articulate matters of complexity and nuance to multiple and varied groups of stakeholders.
- Demonstrated dedication to student and faculty services with a successful record supporting and advocating for graduate students.
- Proven ability to initiate, lead, and facilitate change; adapt to changing conditions; and navigate the complexity and ambiguity of a large public university.

Preferred Qualifications

- Demonstrated record of innovation and accomplishment in graduate education at a major research university.
- Firm grasp of the opportunities and advantages of a land-grant university and R1 status.
- History of grant funding and research innovation.
- Data savvy with proven ability to utilize data in the analysis of decision-making and operations and experience implementing new technologies to support operations.
- Demonstrated success in external fundraising and philanthropy.
- Active involvement in the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS).

Search process

For full consideration, please apply by October 21, 2026

To be viewed by the search firm, you must apply directly at: https://acesrch.applicantstack.com/x/detail/a21esjyxxnir

Please apply through the application link and do not email applications.

Applications will be reviewed as they are received and should include a cover letter and curriculum vita. Ideally, cover letters should not exceed two pages. All applications are treated confidentially.

Inquiries, referrals and nominations are also treated confidentially.

Inquiries and questions:
Please send to **KStateDeanGrad@acesrch.com**

Nominations and referrals:
Please send the nominee's name, title and contact information, if available, to **nominations@acesrch.com**

Kansas State University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, national origin, disability or status as a protected veteran.

Upon acceptance of a contingent offer of employment, a candidate may be subject to a background check per K-State's background check policy.

Applicants must be currently authorized to work in the United States at the time of employment.

About K-State

Founded in 1863 as the nation's first operational land-grant university, Kansas State is a Tier 1 research university with more than 20,000 students, 1,300 faculty members, 3,000 staff members and three physical campuses: the main campus in Manhattan; the Kansas State Salina campus, home to aviation and technology programs; and K-State Olathe, which serves the industry and workforce needs of Greater Kansas City.

K-State has nine colleges, Graduate School and K-State Online and offers more than 400 degrees and options, from bachelor's to doctoral degrees. K-State Research and Extension also serves the citizenry with a presence in every county throughout Kansas and supports research in more than 20 K-State departments. K-State has an annual budget of more than $900 million.

With more than 200,000 living graduates, the K-State Alumni Association ranks in the top 10 among Power Five conferences for the percentage of graduates who are members.

Private giving to the university is around $200 million per year, and the value of K-State's long-term investment pool is $1 billion. The university and foundation recently completed a major fundraising campaign that raised $1.6 billion.

About the Graduate School

Since 1868, the Kansas State University Graduate School has prepared students for advanced careers in research, scholarship and professional practice. Today, K-State serves about 4,200 graduate students across 200 graduate degree and certificate programs, with 57% of graduate students coming from outside Kansas. Graduate programs are offered across three campuses, with more than 70 graduate programs available online and more than 80 accelerated bachelor's/master's degree programs.

The Graduate School works across the University to advance innovative graduate programs, strengthen academic and professional preparation, support graduate students and faculty, and foster research addressing complex challenges. Its mission emphasizes a graduate education culture responsive to an evolving economy and connected to communities at the local, state, regional and international levels.

About the Community

Situated in the heart of northeast Kansas' scenic Flint Hills, Manhattan's 55,000 citizens enjoy a dynamic region with shopping, dining, entertainment and nightlife. Manhattan is also conveniently located for quick access to major urban centers. In addition to being less than two hours from Kansas City, the Manhattan Regional Airport offers multiple jet flights daily to Dallas-Fort Worth and Chicago.

Additionally, the city of Manhattan has been a valuable partner to Kansas State University in facilitating growth of the institution. That's why the Princeton Review routinely recognizes Manhattan and Kansas State in the Top 5 community Town & Gown Relations. Manhattan has also been ranked No. 2 Best Place to Live in America by Livability.com.

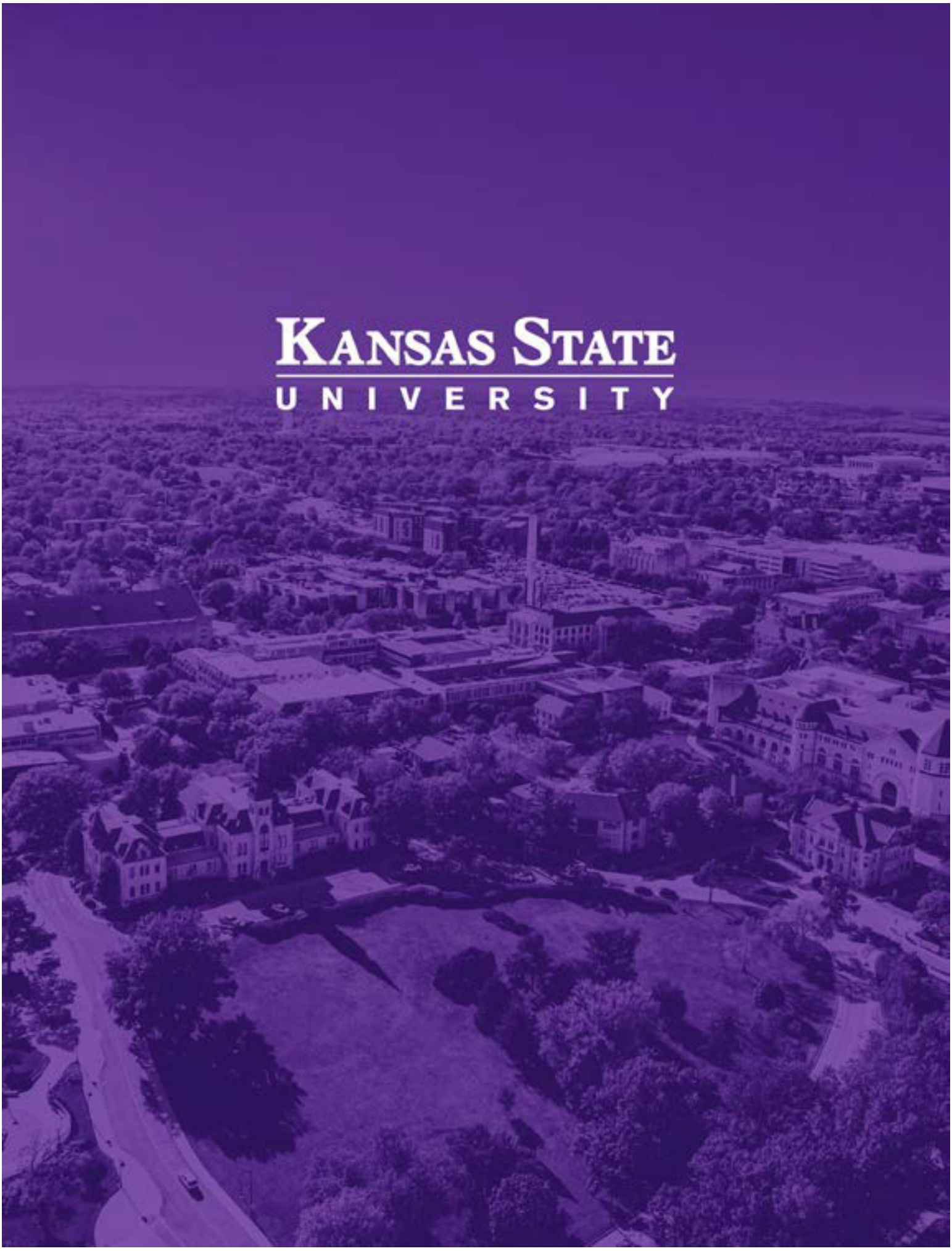
Manhattan is affectionately known as the "Little Apple," a nod to its East Coast namesake, but has a vibrant culture all its own.

Here is just a sampling of what residents look forward to year-round:

- A cost-of-living index of 89% of the U.S. average, according to the Council for Community and Economic Research.
- Shopping, dining and socializing in Aggieville, a local entertainment district with a fun, energetic vibe.
- A vibrant, revitalized downtown area with fine dining options and local boutiques.
- The Flint Hills Discovery Center, featuring exhibits about the beautiful surrounding region.
- Beautiful outdoor life at Sunset Zoo and The Gardens at K-State.
- Recreation opportunities at the Konza Prairie, Tuttle Creek Lake and State Park, Linear Trail and more.
- A vibrant health care community, including a 150-bed acute care facility and an independent state-of-the-art surgical center. Other nationally ranked facilities are within an easy drive.
- The university's McCain Performance Series, which hosts acclaimed Broadway musicals, comedians, musicians and other entertainers.
- Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art celebrates regional art and brings art and artists from around the world to the heart of Kansas. The museum's collection continues to focus on the art of Kansas and the region.
- Exciting Big 12 athletic events from a Power 5 conference.
- Colbert Hills Golf Course, ranked as the top public golf course in Kansas
- Excellent K-12 education. The local high school ranks among the top 5 percent of U.S. high schools, and the district is home to several Kansas Master Teachers.

Learn more about the Manhattan community at manhattan.org or manhattancvb.org.

To learn more, please visit the University Executive Profile at https://www.k-state.edu/hr/executive-profile/.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