

KU News Release

June 26, 2009

Contact: [Rebecca Smith](#), KU Libraries, (785) 864-1761.

## **KU becomes first U.S. public university to pass an open access policy**

LAWRENCE — The University of Kansas has become the nation's first public university to adopt an "open access" policy that makes its faculty's scholarly journal articles available for free online.

The move aligns KU with Harvard and Stanford universities and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which have similar policies in place.

Scholarly articles — the method by which a professor presents original research results — normally are published in peer-reviewed journals and available only through paid subscriptions.

Under the new faculty-initiated policy approved by Chancellor Robert Hemenway, digital copies of all articles produced by the university's professors will be housed in KU ScholarWorks, an existing digital repository for scholarly work created by KU faculty and staff in 2005. [KU ScholarWorks](#) houses more than 4,400 articles submitted in digital formats that assure their long-term preservation.

Professors will be allowed to seek a waiver but otherwise will be asked to provide electronic forms of all articles to the repository. KU's Faculty Senate overwhelmingly endorsed the policy at a meeting earlier this year, but additional policy details, including the waiver process, will be developed by a senate task force in the coming academic year, said Faculty Senate President Lisa Wolf-Wendel, professor of education leadership and policy studies. The task force will be led by Ada Emmett, associate librarian for scholarly communications.

"Academic publishing has become increasingly commercial and unavailable to other scholars, or to the general public, in recent years," said A. Townsend Peterson, distinguished professor of ecology and evolutionary biology and curator at the Natural History Museum and Biodiversity Research Center at KU. "This new policy offers a voluntary means of opening doors to much of KU's journal-based scholarship. This policy represents a first step towards a new means of scholarly communication, in which the entire global academic community has access to the totality of scholarship. We all can participate in the scholarly exchange that leads to new knowledge creation."

Peterson said open access policies such as KU's will bring greater visibility to the authors' work and will showcase the breadth and depth of the faculty's contributions to academic research and to the university's mission.

"Granting the university the right to deposit a copy of scholarly journal articles in an open digital repository extends the reach of the scholarship, providing the widest possible audience and increasing its possible impact," said Lorraine J. Haricombe, dean of libraries.