

# THE MATCHUP

Welcome, Knight Nation and Jayhawks! Today's game is the Knights' Big 12 home opener and KU's first-ever visit to Acrisure Bounce House.



ORLANDO, FLORIDA

**No. 3**

Public University  
for Optics in the Nation  
(U.S. News & World Report)

**\$7 Billion**

In Annual Modeling, Simulation and  
Training Contracts in Central Florida,  
With UCF's Institute for Simulation  
and Training as the Academic Hub

**\$8.1 Billion**

In Annual Economic Impact  
Generated by UCF for Florida  
(Lightcast's Economic Impact Study  
for Higher Education, FY 2021-22)



LAWRENCE, KANSAS

**No. 1**

Graduate Program in  
Local Government Management,  
Ranked Consecutively Since 1998  
(U.S. News & World Report)

**400,000+**

Alumni Around the World

**\$546.1 Million**

Spent on Research and  
Development in FY24,  
the Ninth Consecutive Year  
of Research Growth

## FEATURED FACULTY RESEARCHERS

### UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

#### CAROLINA CRUZ-NEIRA

*Interim Director, Institute for Simulation  
and Training*

A pioneer in virtual reality, Cruz-Neira oversees a world-renowned institute that collaborates with Team Orlando military and industry partners to strengthen national security, healthcare, education and other fields. She has been recognized by [Forbes' 50 Over 50 list for innovation](#), citing her CAVE (CAVE Automatic Virtual Environment) system. Also the Agere Chair Professor of Computer Science, Cruz-Neira has **contributed to the development of immersive systems globally.**

### UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

#### MATTHEW MAYO

*Founding Chair of the Department of  
Biostatistics and Data Science*

Mayo will serve as lead investigator on a \$31 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to help rural children participate in [pediatric clinical trials](#) that focus on environmental influences that may affect their health, from air pollution to sleep habits to diet. The ultimate goal is to support high-quality, multicenter trials that generate valuable knowledge and lead to **improved health outcomes for a wider range of children** across the country.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

## UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA



### Daring to Boldly Invent the Future

UCF has achieved 12 benchmarks required to earn the **state's highest designation — Preeminent State Research University**. [UCF's ascent to become Florida's Next-Generation Preeminent University](#) highlights achievements in student success and research, and the talents of UCF's world-class faculty, dedicated staff and hard-working students. The university increased its four-year graduation rate to 63.8% — a nearly 14% rise over four years — and grew research funding to more than \$285 million. The Florida Board of Governors is anticipated to vote on final certification of preeminence in June.

### Bold New Goals to Shape UCF's Future

President Alexander N. Cartwright has established **bold goals for UCF's future to champion student success and fuel Florida's prosperity**. UCF will aim to exceed the state's new goal of a 70% four-year graduation rate and earn a reputation as one of the nation's most student success-driven universities. UCF aspires to grow from 21,000 engineering and technology students to more than 50,000 to scale engineering and technology education across disciplines and prepare tech-fluent critical thinkers who are ready to lead in industries critical to Florida's future. UCF also aims to become a top 25 public research university by expanding faculty, strengthening industry partnerships and investing in infrastructure that drives discovery and impact.

[ucf.edu/news](http://ucf.edu/news)

## UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS



Photo Credit: University of Kansas

### Driving the Kansas Economy

The University of Kansas is a powerful engine of economic growth and job creation for the state of Kansas. A study from global analytics firm Lightcast [quantifies KU's annual statewide impact at \\$7.8 billion](#), which includes KU activity in operations, construction and research, as well as the expenditures of KU startup companies, visitors, students and alumni.

This activity supports one in every 23 jobs in the state. **More than half of the 54 active startup companies created from KU research or technology are based in Kansas.** And KU alumni hold more jobs in Kansas than the alumni of any other university.

### Leading in Cyber Research

KU is the **only Kansas institution with** [National Security Agency \(NSA\) Center of Academic Excellence designations](#) in both cyber defense and research.

The university's robust offerings in the cybersecurity domain include a cybersecurity engineering bachelor's degree and certificate, as well as three master's degrees and two doctorates in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. KU's Institute for Information Sciences investigates trustworthy AI, high-assurance systems, CPS security, network security and social dynamics. KU is also a Science of Security Lablet designated by the NSA to conduct foundational research that advances the frontiers of cybersecurity.

[news.ku.edu](http://news.ku.edu)