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[Home](#) > KU chancellor reaffirms the need to teach evolution

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## [KU chancellor reaffirms the need to teach evolution](#) [3]

In a letter to faculty, staff, and students at the University of Kansas, the university's chancellor Robert Hemenway reaffirmed that "Evolution is the central unifying principle of modern biology, and it must be taught in our high schools, universities and colleges." "On a personal level," he added, "I see no contradiction in being a person of faith who believes in God and evolution, and I'm sure many others at this university agree." Chancellor Hemenway's [letter](#) [4] comes, of course, as Kansans are [bracing](#) [5] for the state board of education's final vote on the state's science standards, which the board rewrote, over the [protests](#) [6] of their authors, in order to deprecate the scientific status of evolution.

Hemenway is not the only official at the University of Kansas to deplore the board's tampering with the science standards; in August 2005, the university's provost David Schulenberger [told](#) [7] the *Lawrence Journal-World* that the debate over the place of evolution in the state's science standards was damaging the university's national reputation and its ability to attract the top faculty and students. The protests are not limited to just the University of Kansas: in September, first a group of thirty-eight Nobel laureates and then the American Association for the Advancement of Science [criticized](#) [8] the board for its attempts to rewrite the standards in order to discredit evolution.

Meanwhile, at a public event in Independence, Kansas, on September 22, Steve Abrams, the chairman of the Kansas state board of education, was anything but coy about his views. According to the [Lawrence Journal-World](#) [9] (September 24, 2005), "During a question-and-answer period to a mostly receptive audience of church-going social conservatives fed up with evolution, Abrams said one couldn't believe in the Bible and evolution. ... 'At some point in time, if you compare evolution and the Bible, you have to decide which one you believe,' Abrams said. 'That's the bottom line.'"

Abrams's remarks reportedly prompted Tim Emert, a local lawyer, former state Senate majority leader,

and former State Board of Education chairman, to leave the event. He told the *Journal-World*: "There are just so many problems in public education, to create this divisiveness over something that when it translates to the classroom is not going to make any difference, I think is just a sad commentary on the State Board of Education. ... I believe that you can believe that God created the earth, and I believe evolution exists and I can't second guess God about how he created it."

[Anti-Evolution](#) [10]

[2005](#) [11]

[Kansas](#) [12]

[+ read](#) [3]

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[10] <https://ncse.com/news/anti-evolution>

[11] <https://ncse.com/news/2005>

[12] <https://ncse.com/news/kansas>