

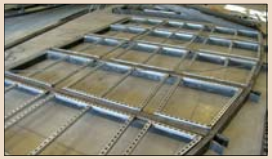


Rockefeller Prairie Trail student projects: Kaw Valley Overlook

While the majority of academic activities at the KU Field Station are in the sciences, the area also offers outstanding educational opportunities for students in the humanities, the arts and the professional schools. Among the most visible projects are those carried out by architecture students.

The Kaw Valley Overlook was the first project commissioned by the KU Field Station through the KU School of Architecture, Design and Planning. It was built by 17 students in the design-build Studio 409 course in fall 2008 under the direction of Prof. Nils Gore. The overlook was conceived as a pre-fabricated structure. It was built of galvanized steel tubes and wood in the school's warehouse on west campus, then carefully transported to the southern end of the Rockefeller Prairie Trail for installation. It consists of a deck and a large bench that derive inspiration from waving prairie grasses and have aesthetic connections to biomorphic forms such as animal vertebrae.

Cantilevered on a limestone bluff at the southern end of the Rockefeller Prairie Trail, the overlook offers a panoramic view of the Kaw River Valley, including an excellent view of Mount Oread, the site of KU's main campus. This area has long been known as Botany Bluff, as it has been visited regularly by KU botany classes since the early 20th century. The overlook draws many people from Kansas and around the world, including K-12 school groups, university classes, scientists and participants in public tours.

The following students, who worked on the overlook project, took the course through KU's master of architecture professional degree program, a five-year undergraduate degree that includes a year of graduate study.

Melissa Allen	Tyler Cini	Adam Freund	Grace Lennon	Kate Penning	Ben Tillman
Ashley Banks	Katie Crowley	Adam Herberg	Laura Meinig	Dan Schaeffler	Beth Valdivia
Stacy Behlman	Anna Davies	Chris Hinton	Dan Nixon	Inga Schuchard	

Photos: KU School of Architecture, Design and Planning, and Kansas Biological Survey