

## College 'Designs' Answers to Energy Concerns

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Design + Energy Initiatives poster

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**LEXINGTON, Ky. (May 4, 2009)** – The [University of Kentucky College of Design](http://news.uky.edu/news/design) [http://news.uky.edu/news/design] continues to be on the forefront of design study through challenging its faculty and students to work on real world problems and issues. In response to the green movement worldwide, UK College of Design has developed an initiative focused on how design affects and can respond to issues associated with energy initiatives both locally and beyond. This program, [Design + Energy Initiatives](http://news.uky.edu/news/), [http://news.uky.edu/news/] and the college's response to some of those energy questions over the past year are the focus of a free public exhibit scheduled for 6 p.m. Friday, May 8, at the [LOT](http://news.uky.edu/news/) [http://news.uky.edu/news/], located at 527 East 3rd St, in Lexington.

Through Design + Energy Initiatives, UK College of Design is taking on the various questions and concerns surrounding energy initiatives. This innovative initiative is timely, as the development of renewable, cleaner and more efficiently produced and consumed forms of energy are at the forefront of challenges our world faces today.

While problems surrounding design and energy efficiency are global, solutions and their implications are more often discovered and experienced locally. The new program at UK College of Design recognizes that innovative solutions arise when knowledge is creatively applied to known problems surrounding energy initiatives.

"Design has a crucial role to play in this process, for design is among the most important engines of innovation," noted Dean Michael Speaks. "Design is not only the final designed product--a table, building, urban plan or landscape--it is also the design thinking process itself, the very means by which a whole variety of plausible solutions are created, tested and transformed into innovations."

To properly study and respond to concerns surrounding energy initiatives, UK College of Design has entered into strategic partnerships with a number of energy researchers, providers and manufacturers, to launch their Design + Energy Initiatives program. The focus of the initiative will be to develop innovative, energy-related design solutions.

To demonstrate the work the college is doing on questions surrounding energy initiatives, UK College of Design is presenting an exhibition featuring projects from the first year of this new program. Projects featured in this exhibit are: the Henderson Project; Solar Decathlon; Project Aeolus; Urban Renewal Furniture Prototypes and Fly Ash Furniture Prototypes.

[The Henderson Project](http://news.uky.edu/news/index.php) [http://news.uky.edu/news/index.php] will be depicted through a selection of large-scale (4 x 8 feet) photographs of HPML1, a recently retired coal-burning power plant in Henderson, Ky. The photographs, by recognized architecture photographer [Frank Doering](http://news.uky.edu/news/) [http://news.uky.edu/news/], inaugurate a multi-year research and design initiative, which will develop strategic design proposals intended to make Henderson a more competitive player in an increasingly knowledge-based, energy-focused economy. The focus of the project is to develop proposals that adaptively reuse the decommissioned HPML1 plant and the town's scenic Ohio River waterfront.

UK's Solar Decathlon team, one of 20 finalists selected by the U.S. Department of Energy, has been designing and building an energy-efficient solar house, which will be displayed and compete on the Washington Mall in Washington, D.C. in fall 2009. The house is being developed by students in UK's College of Design, College of Engineering and College of Agriculture, among others areas of study. The exhibition will feature the UK team's models, drawings, animations and mock-ups of the house.

Project Aeolus is a collaboration with the Kentucky Science Corporation, the Center for Applied Energy Research, and the Center for Manufacturing at UK. The College of Design mapped and modeled targeted sites in Lexington and Louisville for wind capture for the project. Results of the mapping will be on display.

For Urban Renewable Furniture Prototypes, a UK design workshop used common materials that are often discarded and end up in trash dumps as primary material for urban furniture. Prototypes created in this studio will be displayed at the exhibit.

Finally, Fly Ash Furniture Prototypes, the result of a collaboration with the Center for Applied Energy Research, will feature work from the furniture design workshop at UK College of Design. This collaborative project produced full-scale furniture prototypes that use fly ash, a byproduct of coal combustion captured in chimneys and used as a partial replacement for cement in concrete. Prototypes of this furniture created in the studio will also be on display at the exhibition.

The "Design + Energy Initiatives" exhibit is made possible in part by a new Lexington gallery space, the LOT, owned by UK College of Design faculty members [Drura Parrish](http://news.uky.edu/news/parrish.html) [http://news.uky.edu/news/parrish.html] and [Rives Rash](http://news.uky.edu/news/rash.html) [http://news.uky.edu/news/rash.html].