

Faculty Regent Report to Faculty Senate

02 March 2020

Dear Senators,

Over the last several weeks, many senators and several of our other faculty colleagues (including AAUP forum attendees) have been particularly supportive and helpful to me in my role. Your questions, guidance, and even encouragement have helped me be a more effective regent. During the next several months, your input will continue to be not only valuable to me, but will be immensely important to the university as we address immediate matters while also looking towards the future. As always, please know you are always welcome to communicate your thoughts to me.

The Board of Regents (BoR) met Friday, February 28th from approximately 12 p.m. until 4:45 p.m. in the Powell Student Center. A more detailed summary of the meeting will be provided in greater detail to the faculty in the near future. The full agenda is linked [here](#). Several of the items likely of interest to the Faculty Senate are as follows (in order of appearance before the board):

- [Philip Gump](#), Enterprise User Systems Lead in the Office of Information Technology, was recently elected Staff Regent, and Staff Regent Gump was administered the Oath of Office by Dr. Robert R. Blythe, Mayor of Richmond.
- Matt Roan, Director of Athletics, provided his first report in his role to the BoR.
 - EKU's 320 student athletes report an average GPA of 3.059, which represents the 16th semester the mean GPA exceeded 3.0. EKU's six-year graduation success rate (GSR), an important NCAA metric, is 88%.
 - The Department of Athletics budget is \$14.55M and \$11.8M has been spent to-date. The majority of expenditures occurred in the fall semester and Mr. Roan is confident the department will stay on budget for the fiscal year.
 - There are two on-going capital projects related to athletics, which include the resurfacing of the outdoor track and the sand volleyball courts, both of which will be able to be shared use with the university community.
- The BoR received financial and construction updates.
 - Mr. Barry Poynter's report indicated the university's expenses are tracking closely with the budget, and through watching expenses, we should finish the fiscal year on budget.
 - Mr. Brian Wilcox reported that the new Student Recreation & Wellness Center is on budget and has a contingency balance of \$959,855, and the Powell Student Center is on budget and has a contingency balance of just over \$2M. The BoR was given assurance that the contingency balance will be used within the terms and conditions of the student fee and the bonds which were used to finance the project. Specifically, these funds will go towards continuing to improve these facilities and potentially enhancing the areas in/and around the center of student life, including the Powell Plaza.
 - The pool in the new Student Rec & Wellness center will open March 23.
 - Progress is also being made towards construction of a pedway overpass for the Eastern Bypass near Alumni Coliseum and the Center for the Arts.
- A development and alumni engagement report was provided by Dr. Betina Garnder.
 - Approximately \$8.35M in fundraising occurred in the last fiscal year.
 - The university's Giving Day will be April 14th.
 - The Make No Little Plans Capital Campaign is ongoing.
- An enrollment update/enrollment strategy presentation was provided by Dr. Tanlee Wasson.
 - Over the last five years, across Kentucky's public universities, enrollment is down 4%.
 - Over the last five years, enrollment in the KCTCS system is down 2%.
 - Among private universities, enrollment is up 36% in the last five years (mostly online).
 - Kentucky will see a declining number of high school grads the next five to seven years.
 - College-going rates are also going down as well.
 - Our overall enrollment (grad & undergrad) in 2016 was 16,881. For 2019, it was 14,980.
 - Many strategies were presented to increase enrollment. These strategies emerged from two days of enrollment strategy workshops held the last month.

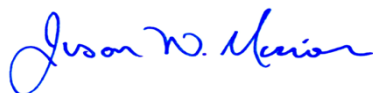
- The BoR approved the Kit Carson Commons Project easement.
- Dr. Sherry Robinson presented two academic policy revisions and Ms. Haley Norberg presented several administrative policy revisions, adoptions, and repeals.
 - The policies as presented in my email to the faculty on Wednesday, February 26th were relatively unchanged. The social media policy was presented with a clearly stated exemption of application to student media, such as *The Eastern Progress*, and the campaigning activity for university employees policy included language in the policy adoption area acknowledging the Faculty Senate's contributions.
- Program reinstatement (BS-Family & Consumer Sciences Education/Teaching and Associate of Science in Nursing), and program revisions (BS- General Dietetics, M.A.Ed.-Communication Disorders, BS-Forensic Science, BA-Broadcasting & Electronic Media, Master of Public Health) were approved, and an online Master of Social Work was approved conditional upon the Faculty's support.
- The SGA (Regent Lipscomb) presented a resolution honoring Dr. Sheila Pressley and they have a planned series of diversity and inclusion events to honor her and have named a week after her which they plan to continue annually.
- Our outstanding faculty including Dr. Margaret Ndinguri, Dr. Lindsay Calderon, Dr. James Maples, Dr. Michael Bradley, and Kelly Smith, along with administrative staff member John Roden truly "wowed" the board with their outstanding board innovation fund proposals. All the proposals were supported. Chair Diaz said that these proposals, especially the faculty and staff who brought them, made this the most inspiring time he has experienced on the board. Kudos to our faculty! Interim VP for Research, Dr. Tom Martin, and our Provost, Dr. Pogatshnik, were acknowledged for their work in supporting this endeavor.
- The scheduled 2020 meeting dates are June 4, September 10, and December 10. A special meeting may need to be called in April if state legislative actions immediately influence EKU following their 2020 legislative session.
- The Board had to enter executive session pursuant to the statute to allow for confidential discussion regarding received proposals following the board's request for proposals pertaining to a presidential search firm.
- Lastly, and particularly of great interest to you, the board returned from executive session and approved a search firm ([R. William Funk and Associates](#)). The university counsel was authorized to draft contract language with the search firm.

For wrapping up my report, I want to commend Mr. Ethan Witt, our Director for Government & Community Relations along with interim president, Dr. McFaddin, for their hard work organizing Colonels at the Capitol this last week. They created an environment whereby folks from around Madison County, and especially our Provost and myself, could encourage and educate legislators about our unique strengths and opportunities to do more with more legislative and budgetary support.

Also, my kudos go to Dr. Erik Liddell for his continued commendable work with the Chautauqua lecture series. Our next speaker for the series is [Dr. Matthew Pinalto on March 5th](#), where he will be presenting "*Finding Time for Patience in a Busy World*". Such a topic is very appropriate right now. Additionally, for those who have a love of this region and telling our story, I encourage you to check out this last week's speakers' page ([Elaine McMillion Sheldon](#)) for some of the best video and storytelling work I've seen for the Appalachian region. We are blessed to have such a wonderful lecture series and program on our campus.

In closing, if you have any questions or comments, feel free to reach out to me anytime. Your commitment to the faculty, university, and our profession is greatly appreciated.

Warmest regards,



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Faculty Regent, ECU Board of Regents