

Faculty Regent Report to Faculty Senate

October 4, 2021

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

Since our last meeting, the Board of Regents held their quarterly meeting on Thursday, September 23. The next meeting of the Board is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, December 9. Since the meeting occurred in-person (Powell 219), the video was not livestreamed and/or video. The highlight of the meeting was the enrollment update. A brief synopsis of the meeting is described below. Additionally, some CPE-related news items that may be of interest are also provided.

Board of Regents Meeting Summary

The meeting agenda from the September 23rd meeting is available at the following [link](#).

The most significant information before the Board was the report given related to enrollment, student success, and campus programming for students. Additionally, helpful was the context provided by Dr. Richard Crosby in the Faculty Senate update regarding the teaching and meeting environment in the midst of significant COVID concerns.

- **Enrollment & Student Progress Update**

- For Fall 2021, the freshmen population is up 9% (n = 2,529). Also, transfers are up 11% (n = 1,044) year-over-year.
- Underrepresented populations are up 4.6%, mostly in the two or more races definition (8.6% increase). These increases, particularly in freshman, mark the most significant freshmen population growth in nearly ten years and with ongoing maintenance and/or growth of these numbers coupled with retention of these students, total headcount enrollment will be able to be flat or grow in future years after several years of decline.
- The BookSmart program continues to be viewed favorably as a possible contributor (among several) to supporting the growth in the new student populations.
- Residence halls currently have 3,800 students living on-campus and nearly 70% of the freshman class lives on-campus.
- Significant investments of the repurposed student recreation fee have led to the development and implementation of of the Exceptional Eastern Experience (known as "E3"). Signature future concerts and programs were described including T-Pain, Pete Davidson, and JP Saxe as well as success thus far.

- **Strategic Plan Update:**

- The overview of the draft strategic plan (*Experience Excellence*) was presented by President McFadden. The mission, vision, overarching goals (Knowledge, Innovation, and Transformation), and values are on pdf pages 19-24 of the [meeting agenda](#).
- Dr. Jennifer Wies and Dr. Bethany Miller continue to co-chair the planning process.
- We are in Phase 3 of the strategic planning process, the engagement phase. During this semester and Spring 2022, the process requires the solicitation of feedback

about the plan by faculty, staff, and community members, as well as unit-level planning.

- The next phase, Phase 4, is the implementation phase, planned for Fall 2022.
- **Financial Update:**
 - The Board received a financial update regarding the prior quarter (through June 30) which is also the final quarter of the university's fiscal year.
 - The university budget was \$245.8 million, and the overall revenue was below budget (\$242.4 million) and accordingly, expenses were managed and finished at \$241.3 million) for the year.
 - Tuition continues to represent the most significant revenue source for the university. Actual tuition revenue for 2020-21 was \$140.2 million.
 - Tuition revenue in the prior year was \$149.4 million, showing a \$9 million difference.
 - State appropriations were flat in 20-21 (\$63.9 M) versus 2019-20 (\$63.8 M).
- **Board Actions & Executive Session:**
 - The Board approved prior minutes, personnel actions since the last meeting, policy updates for Model Lab School, and a resolution to rename the old recreation center space now used as the Olympic Sports Training Center for the Division of Athletics.
 - The new space was named after the very successful, now retired, [Coach Rick Erdman](#).
 - The Board did vote to go into Executive Session for deliberations on the future acquisition or sale of real property when publicity would be likely to affect the value of the property.
 - Following Executive Session, the Board reconvened and approved the acquisition of approximately 300 acres of property adjacent to the university's Meadowbrook Farm for a purchase price not exceeding \$2.5 million.
- **Summary of the Board of Regents Meeting by local media**
 - The Board meeting received coverage by the *Eastern Progress* and the *Richmond Register*. Their summaries are linked here:
 - **Eastern Progress:** https://www.easternprogress.com/news/eku-board-of-regents-meets-renames-olympic-training-center-and-discusses-strategic-plan/article_6e38b640-1e51-11ec-b1b1-031f65a9db61.html
 - **Richmond Register:** https://www.richmondregister.com/news/eku-regents-approve-purchase-for-300-acres/article_eceb67a9-562a-5923-a049-c1deb67593d3.html

CPE Updates

- Since my last update to the Senate, Dr. Kellie Ellis, Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Communication Disorders Program, was forwarded among three faculty statewide for consideration to serve as the faculty representative on the Council on Post-Secondary Education Board. On September 17, [Governor Beshear appointed Dr. Ellis to that role](#). Congratulations Dr. Ellis!

- **Education Pays!:** The CPE’s report, *Early Economic Return on Higher Education Investment Report* was recently released that uses data following 43,655 Kentucky students who graduated from Kentucky high schools in 2011. The longitudinal data from 2011 to 2019 and the results, including data they describe as evidence that ‘Education Pays’ are described in their news release. The news release also links to the report. [For more info, click here.](#)
- **CPE Strives to Connect Education to Workforce Needs:** The CPE recently received a grant from the Lumina Foundation to partner with Complete College America to focus on “Purpose First” strategies. The objective is to help students see the missing link between their career choices and their excitement as first-year students. The effort will try to get students to identify majors earlier in their college career among those striving to find purpose. Read more in the [CPE press release here.](#)

Evaluation of the University President

- As faculty, you should have received an email from the “Faculty Senate Executive Committee” inviting you to participate in the Faculty Senate’s evaluation of the President. Your confidential participation is valued and is occurring alongside concurrent evaluations among the Staff, Students, and External Community & Statewide Stakeholders.
- Together, the insights generated by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee along with the other constituencies are of great importance to the Board in gathering this feedback for enabling the Board’s annual (and statutorily required) evaluation of the University President, while also identifying opportunities for ongoing improvement.

Lastly, as always, please accept my thanks to you for your engagement with Faculty Senate and with your students. Please feel free to share this report with your colleagues, and as always, please know that I would welcome any advice or suggestions from you or our faculty colleagues. You may reach me by email (jason.marion@eku.edu) or phone (513-317-9508).

Respectfully submitted,



Jason W. Marion