

Faculty Senate Report
April 2022

I hope everyone enjoyed a restful Spring Break and are motivated to finish this spring semester strong. Spring is typically an exciting time in the life of a college campus, filled with opportunities to celebrate the accomplishments of the past academic year as well as sending a fresh set of graduates out into the world. Thank you for your efforts this year in making ECU a great place to work and study.

Legislative Update

The Kentucky legislature placed a significant amount of resources in higher education initiatives this session, with ECU securing funding in several key areas. These items are included in the compromise budget proposal between the House and the Senate and all are awaiting signature on Governor Andy Beshear's desk.

- Model Laboratory School: \$90,000,000 to construct a new Model Lab School in year 2 of the biennium (July 1, 2023)
- Performance Funding Model: \$97,307,100 in FY 2022-23 and \$97,307,100 in FY 2023-24 to fund the performance funding model. This is a significant increase over current levels.
- Alumni Coliseum: \$31 million
- Employer Contribution: \$8,909,700 in FY 2022-23 and \$8,023,100 in FY 2023-24 to cover the KERS employer contribution cost increase. This represents 100% and 90% respectively of the total cost increase.
- KCFEF: \$300,000 is being transferred from the Kentucky Coal Field Endowment Fund to fund Clay County Eastern Kentucky University Scholarships at ECU Manchester.
 - \$100,000 in the current fiscal year; \$100,000 in FY 2022-23; \$100,00 in FY 2023-24
- Center for the Arts: \$200,000 in FY 2022-23 for Center for the Arts.
- Approval to issue additional agency bonds to renovate residence halls.
- Budget language was added requiring collaboration between ECU's College of Education and Model Lab to advance childhood education in the Commonwealth.

Strategic Planning Process

The first phase of the strategic planning process is ending. Currently, the team is reviewing those plans and will begin formalizing documents. I appreciate all of your hard work through this process. I am excited to move from our planning to our implementation process.

COVID Update

National, state and local data show significant declines in COVID infection rates and health care utilization related to COVID. In Madison County and on campus, we have reduced COVID infection rates to a manageable level where indoor masking is considered optional so we currently are operating under a campus-wide mask optional status. We will remain diligent in

protecting the health of our ECU community and will adapt as necessary. I appreciate your willingness to be flexible on this issue.

ECU will continue to adhere to the Commonwealth's current guidelines for isolation and quarantine as conditions warrant. We also will continue to provide surgical-style and KN-95 masks to those who wish to have that masking option.

While contact tracing efforts were vital during the early months of the pandemic, we are now transitioning away from contact tracing and asking members of the ECU community to continue to notify those they have been in close contact with during the infectious period. The contact tracing volunteers served our community well and assisted many of us with necessary information. I want to thank them for their dedicated service.

All members of our campus community should continue to self-report through the self-monitoring tab located on ECU Direct. Anyone who is experiencing symptoms, has tested positive, or has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for the virus should utilize this form so that we can continue to monitor its containment

Presidential Installation

I am looking forward to celebrating the long standing tradition of the Presidential Inauguration. I cannot extend my appreciation enough to the Installation Committee for their hard work on the ceremony. They have a full week of events planned and I look forward to celebrating with each of you. Visit the full installation schedule at www.ecu.edu/installation.

In particular, please mark your calendar for Friday, April 29, 9 a.m. at the ECU Center for the Arts. The ceremony provides an opportunity for me to share my vision for the future of our great institution as we celebrate being One Eastern. The reason the theme "One Eastern" was chosen is because we want to remind our community that we are working together toward one goal: to provide a transformational experience for all who walk through our gates.

I am proud to serve as the 14th president of this institution and will remain focused on leading with excellence and innovation. I trust that you will join us in this tradition.

Commencement

Recognition ceremonies for our spring graduates will occur Friday, May 13 at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. in Roy Kidd Stadium. I know that many of you will want to celebrate this monumental occasion with our students, some of whom probably never thought they would get over this finish line. It's important to recognize every student who walks across that stage because it is now that their lives may now commence into greatness.

We appreciate our local legislative leaders, who worked tirelessly with me and Eastern's legislative team over the past few months to secure this important funding that ensures the future of ECU remains bright.