

**Minutes of a Regularly Scheduled Meeting
Eastern Kentucky University
Board of Regents**

March 4, 2021

9 a.m.

Via Video Teleconference: Zoom

Public Viewing Link: <https://epresence.eku.edu/bor-meeting>

Call to Order

A regular quarterly meeting of Eastern Kentucky University Board of Regents was called to order by Mr. Lewis Diaz, Chair of the Board, on March 4, 2021, at 9:01 a.m. with all Board members participating via video teleconference. The public was able to view the meeting through a live stream feed. The roll was called and a quorum was established.

Present

Mr. Lewis Diaz
Mr. Alan Long
Dr. Bryan Makinen
Mr. Eyouel Mekonnen
Dr. Jason Marion
Mr. Juan Castro
Ms. Laura Babbage
Ms. Nancy Collins
Mr. Philip Gump

Absent

Ms. Lynn Taylor Tye
Mr. Vasu Vasudevan

Others Present

Dr. David T. McFaddin, President
Mr. Barry Poynter, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Bethany Miller, Senior Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research
Ms. Betina Gardner, Vice President for University Development and Alumni Engagement, Executive Director of ECU Foundation
Ms. Dana Fohl, University Counsel
Dr. Dannie Moore, Vice President Strategic Initiatives and Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
Mr. Doug Cornett, Assistant Vice President of Communications & Brand Management
Mr. Ethan Witt, Assistant Vice President of Government and Community Relations
Ms. Haley Norberg, J.D., Director of Policy Development
Dr. Jennifer Weis, Associate Provost

Dr. Jerry Pogatshnik, Executive President for Academics and Provost
Dr. Joseph Carucci, Director and Associate Professor of School of Music
Ms. Kelly Smith, University Librarian
Mr. Matt Roan, Vice President and Director of Athletics
Dr. Ryan Wilson, Executive Director of the Office of the President
Dr. Sara Zeigler, Dean of Letters, Arts, & Social Sciences
Dr. Stephen Richter, Director of Natural Areas and Professor of Biological Sciences
Ms. Tanlee Wasson, Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Management
Dr. Tom Martin, Associate Provost for Research & Economic Development

II. Election of Officers

Regent Castro made a motion to reappoint Lewis Diaz as Board Chair, Alan Long as Vice Chair, and Barry Poynter as Treasurer, and to appoint Jason Marion as Secretary of the Board. The motion was seconded by Regent Mekonnen. The motion passed by voice vote.

Information Items

A. University Reports

1. Dr. Bryan Makinen and Dr. Sara Zeigler, COVID-19 Update

Dr. Bryan Makinen, Executive Director of Public Safety and Risk Management, gave a presentation regarding Eastern Kentucky University's response to the ongoing pandemic, including COVID-19 data and statistics from Spring 2021 thus far, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. Dr. Makinen also shared information regarding ECU's partnership with Baptist Health Richmond to develop a robust COVID-19 vaccination clinic on ECU's Richmond campus. Regent Castro asked a question about ECU's counseling center and the mental health services on campus. Chair Diaz expressed his gratitude to Dr. Makinen, Dr. Zeigler and the team of individuals serving the committee and the exceptional work that has been done over the last year to respond, to stay open and to provide outstanding services to our students.

2. Dr. Tanlee Wasson, Student Success & Enrollment Update

Dr. Tanlee Wasson, Vice President of Student Success and Institutional Effectiveness, gave a report detailing ECU's spring 2021 enrollment, retention, engagement and activities data, Fall 2021 admissions and enrollment plans and data so far, the efforts of The Eastern Experience Team, and updates on CARES fund, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. Regent Gump asked, historically what month does ECU see the greatest number of applications for the Fall semester. Dr. Wasson indicated she was not able to give a specific month for Fall semester but explained that in the recruitment cycle at this point, they have already shifted to start recruiting for 2022. Regent Marion shared with the Board that

CPE is concerned about the current amount of FAFSA's that have been filled out by students, because there is some reason to believe that certain parts of the state are more disadvantaged on filling out those forms. President McFaddin indicated that ECU is working closely with CPE to make sure that students understand that they are only taking out what they need and they're using it for the most priority things.

3. Mr. Barry Poynter, Financial Update

Barry Poynter, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, presented a financial update comparing the University's financial position in January 2021 to that in January 2020, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. Regent Castro asked about any fixed cost on the University Club at Arlington. President McFaddin wanted to remind the board members for those auxiliary employees who are not full deployed in areas such as Arlington, Whitehall, and the Center for the Arts, have redeployed into critical and essential areas. Some of those employees have been critical in contact tracing and supporting the testing and vaccination clinic.

4. Dr. Jennifer Weis, Strategic Planning Update

Dr. Jennifer Wies, Associate Provost, and Dr. Bethany Miller, Senior Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, gave a presentation on Strategic Planning approaches and survey results to revise ECU's mission, values, and goals, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. Regent Marion asked how the Board members could provide assistance and inputs to develop strategic plans. Regent Castro commended the level of diversity Eastern Kentucky University maintains regardless of the challenges of campus location.

5. Mr. Ethan Witt, Legislative Update

Mr. Ethan Witt, Assistant Vice President of Government and Community Relations, gave a brief update on the state budget, KERS employee contributions, and on the current legislative session, which includes House Bill 192, House Bill 8, Senate Bill 135, House Bill 145, and House Bill 158, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes.

Chair Diaz took a moment to thank Mr. Witt & President McFaddin for their knowledge of the issues and their proficiency in educating members of the General Assembly regarding the needs of the university. With respect to HB 158 he also expressed his appreciation to Dr. Pogatshnik for working with the leadership of the Aviation program to achieve its potential.

[At 10:04, the Chair announced a 5 minutes recess. The meeting resumed at 10:12.]

B. Additional Reports to the Board

1. Written Reports

a. Dr. Marco Ciocca, Faculty Senate Chair

Dr. Marco Ciocca, Chair of Faculty Senate, submitted a written report to the Board, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. Chair Diaz noted that with respect to faculty concerns over the Book Smart Scholarship, and how it relates to the Open Source textbook, that it is his view, one activity supports the other. As the private pay utilization is reduced year over year, this lowers the price point of what the university absorbs with Book Smart and enables more open source textbooks. He expressed his apologies if it wasn't clearly communicated that it is the Board's intention to support both programs.

b. Dr. Caelin Scott, Staff Council Chair

Dr. Caelin Scott, Chair of Staff Council, submitted a written report to the Board, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes.

2. Mr. Eyouel Mekonnen, Student Government Association President

Mr. Eyouel Mekonnen delivered the following report:

Hello, my name is Eyouel Mekonnen, and I have the privilege and honor of representing my peers as the 65th Student Body President of the Eastern Kentucky University. We are in the middle of the semester, so most of our metrics and all of our numbers are turning, however, I do have a great deal of update for the Board. I wanted to start by what I started the spring semester with, which was I kept asking the entire association what is our "why" and defying our purpose, vision and our mission. I always ask myself where world leaders come from. Those people that change the world, those people that shift cultures, those global impactors, are they made, and if they are made, what are they made out of? I don't know if there is an exact formula, but I know for a fact that it doesn't switch once they turn 25, 30, or 45, because Malala was only 15.

Coming from black history month in February, into women's history month in March, I wanted to highlight a couple of our members that I have the great privilege of working with. The first member, Tamera Crutcher, the Chair of the Student Rights and Safety Committee, the student senate told me last year that she was the first person in her family to ever be published in a newspaper. The pride that she had, I knew that it would carry on to everything else that she did. Star Robertson, who is a second member I am highlighting, who is my chief of staff, just joined Student Government this August, but has proven herself to be one of the most helpful people in our administration. Especially with her passion of making ECU better, and her dissatisfaction with just settling the average is very inspiring. And lastly, Britany Bowens, who took on the role of the Director of Diversity, and changed it from a role into an office, which now has a fund that was delegated from the Student Senate, to where she has a committee that works with different groups on campus to facilitate the initiatives by listening to students.

A couple of focal points we are focusing on towards the end of the semester is alumni relations and engagement. We recognize that at the end of the day, we are part of the university. And so we come here, and we learn, get skills, and then we leave to the workforce. We want to make sure that our members have great connections and great network with their predecessors, those who came 20, 30, 40 years before them. Hopefully, I will be reached out to 30, 40 years down the line by someone that is in the Student Government who said “I was able to find your contact information through our network”.

Student investment is also something we are looking at. If we don’t invest in our youth right now, we are failing tomorrow’s test. So, without very targeted investment into higher education, it will be very challenging to sail chaotically.

Last but not least, student representation and student participation. We have our elections coming up on the 23rd of March. We are working on the campaign of making sure that students know about the election, students are engaged in the election, students are voting and writing the election, because a well-informed student body is productive student body. Productive student body is really what Student Government is, and what makes the Student Government something that can be useful to our campus community. With that I will close with the essence of our importance to our campus community. We are not important just by the virtue of our position, and by the virtue that the Board recognizing us as an official student representative body. I believe we are very important because students can find a place to exercise their inspiration, and turn that into action. Because we have assembled a government that works to represent student body, that promotes self-governance, participation and policy making and decision-making processes the university community. And most importantly to foster a well-informed citizen, and so once they leave ECU, if they have been an engaged informed student, the chances are, they will probably be a well engaged citizen.

With that, I will take any questions or thoughts that the Board might have.

Regent Castro agreed with the importance of alumni engagement through student body, and appreciated and encouraged Regent Mekonnen’s initiative.

Chair Diaz expressed his gratitude for the pride the SGA has shown in updating their office space in the Powell building, providing something for the Presidents and officers that come behind them. On a more personal note, as a fellow immigrant, he appreciates that Eyouel raised his hand to lead, was voted in by the student body, and the work that Eyouel does reminds all of us why America is the land of opportunity, and ECU is the school of opportunity.

3. Dr. David T. McFaddin, President

President McFaddin delivered the following report:

As we gather here for our first board meeting of the new year, I truly feel there is light at the end of the tunnel. We are beginning to see a return to what will constitute normalcy in a post-pandemic world. We are eager and working diligently every day to ensure that an exceptional Eastern experience will be what greets students in the days ahead. Every area of campus is focused on this goal and there is an unwavering commitment to delivering on that promise.

But before I go forward, I would ask that everyone join with me in remembering and supporting the thousands of people in our service region that are suffering from weather catastrophes the likes of which have not been seen in this area in decades or longer. I'm sure many of you have seen the photos and the video of the devastation in our own county and neighboring counties to the southeast. We had a crippling ice storm, then catastrophic flooding all within a very short period. To ensure ECU remains a positive presence in the region, we are working on providing some relief to those communities, those plans are currently being developed as we meet today.

Navigating an evolving and impactful public policy environment, remaining student-focused and putting the well-being of our students and employees first during the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all of us to innovate and lead in new and thoughtful ways. I think back to the OVC Conference tournament in early March 2020, and it's the last memory I have of "normalcy." I know we are all longing for a return to something that feels like normalcy. It's been on my mind this week as we prepare to play in what will be our final OVC Tournament before we move to the new ASUN Conference in July. It seems like it has been a long year, but we have learned from the experience and we will be better on the other side of it, which is coming soon.

While the challenges have been great, they have also brought focus to this University about what our priorities are and what they should be going forward. This spring, we plan to have an in-person commencement ceremony, which will be the first one since I became president. Commencement is one of the events I most look forward to because it is the culmination and celebration of all the hard work of our soon-to-be graduates, who are about to go do extraordinary things in their communities by providing vital services and making the places they live, work and play better. I am excited for May to get here so we can all celebrate together.

In the fall of 2021, we plan to create a new and exceptional ECU experience for our students and our entire campus community. We will continue to prioritize the health and wellbeing of our community, but we also intend to expand our opportunities to provide the best ECU experience possible. I'm excited about the future of our institution and what's coming in a post-pandemic ECU.

We have created an entirely new, student-focused recruitment and retention strategy called the ECU Advantage. One of the most important components of The ECU Advantage is the BookSmart Program, which provides textbooks to undergraduates free of charge for the 2021-2022 academic year. Not only is this program a critical component of recruiting and retaining students, but it is part of an overall strategy of putting a laser focus on student success, access, and affordability. It's important that we all become ambassadors for the BookSmart Program, for the ECU Advantage and for recruiting and retaining all students to provide as many opportunities as possible to our students. This is a critical time in the history of University, and we are all part of the solution.

Our enrollment is our lifeblood. Our state funding allocation is now down to about one-third of our overall revenue stream, and enrollment comprises the rest. We must do everything in our power to recruit and retain students to this institution. Anyone who has the ability and

opportunity to be a Colonel should be touched by this University in some way. I'm proud of the work we're doing toward focusing on students, but we must be ready to take advantage of a return to normalcy in the fall and to bring as many students here as possible.

Eastern Kentucky University is once again the recipient of federal stimulus funds, of which about \$5.2 million will be distributed to students. For in depth information about the distribution of CARES Act funding go here: <https://finaid.eku.edu/cares-fund-distribution-student-plan>. This round of funding allocation will be distributed in a similar manner as the first round, and students have been identified in using similar priority groups. It will be distributed as early as this week. This is critical funding for students who are dealing with many pandemic-related issues such as job loss, food insecurity, housing assistance or utility assistance. Making sure our students can manage the very basics of living is vital if we want to give them the best EKU experience possible. The remaining balance of the approximately \$18 million CRSSAA funds allocated to the University in this round of funding is for institution relief, and will help offset revenue losses due to COVID-19.

Our colleges will go through a strategic realignment in July that will expand our offerings and create the College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The College of Business and Technology will become the College of Business. I'd like to thank Dean Dr. Tom Erekson for his assistance in helping create the new STEM College. We will soon begin a national search for the dean of STEM, and we will also conduct a national search for the dean of the College of Business. We will also move forward with a national search to identify a permanent dean for the College of Justice, Safety, and Military Science.

From Alumni and Development, Vice President Betina Gardner reports that we have a \$45.5 million campaign total, and an \$80 million endowment. This endowment total is up about 16% from the fiscal year-end close of \$69 million. Also, a reminder that Giving Day is April 14th the theme this year is "One day, One Goal, One Eastern". I encourage all of you to be a part of this giving day, and be a part of the great things that are coming to this institution.

Regent Gump asked about EKU center for the Arts reopening. The president responded that as of now, the signature events for students will resume in the Fall 2021, however the timeline for the events with ticket prices are still unknown.

Regent Marion asked a question regarding some opportunities and efforts EKU are putting in to use the most of our time and cost.

4. Mr. Lewis Diaz, Chair of the Board

Chair Lewis Diaz delivered the following report:

First, I thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving as Chair.

As we meet today, practically one year after we adjusted our operations in March of 2020, I remain inspired by our ability to adapt, respond and endure.

The ECU community is resilient. Any review of the past year will show that our faculty, staff, and administrators have provided quality educational opportunities even in the face of unthinkable circumstances. Over the last year, more than ever before, ECU has proven that we have experts with the know-how, and the will to succeed no matter what situation we face. We must continue with the same resolve. Just as we lead in coping with COVID-19, we must continue to lead, and create a new normal that is better than any prior normal. It is no small task, but I know that the President, the Cabinet, the Faculty, the Staff, and the Students will achieve this outcome. I know this because Colonels Expect to Win.

As we progress further into the Spring Semester and look towards the Summer and Fall Semesters, all indications point to normal operations. For students, this means an expanded academic in-class offering, increased on-campus activities, including celebrating our events, holidays, and traditions together. Employees will be back on campus for work and reestablish the face-to-face meetings and groups that keep us informed and motivated to help our students and each other become better. A healthy return to campus is another common goal that connects us. I don't think I am alone saying that personally connecting with fellow Colonels on campus is sorely missed.

One of the most noticeable disruptions of the pandemic was the cancellations of graduation ceremonies. Based on the information that we have available today, we expect ECU will provide an in-person graduation ceremony for graduating seniors this Spring. The graduation ceremony is a rite of passage that everyone on this board has experienced, and it is the right thing for our students. They have worked hard and endured much - they deserve that same experience and recognition that each of us received when we completed our degree. President McFaddin and our administrative team continue to work with the Governor's office and health care professionals to ensure that we proceed in a manner that is consistent with the required safety protocols. The work to reinstate in-person graduations in May is part of a broader initiative to reimagine and enhance the Eastern Experience. Students are "zoomed out" and hungrier than ever for a regular residential experience.

As we begin our plans for the fall, with a keen understanding of all that students have missed over the past year, we set our vision to the ECU residential experience. We want to ensure that the new normal is better than the pre-covid normal. As we reimagine the Eastern Experience this fall, incoming Freshman should expect to participate in ECU's First-Year Experience. Sororities and Fraternities will have the option of resuming their normal activities, including rush week. Our athletics department will schedule more quality home competitions for students to enjoy. The Center for the Arts will reopen with an enhanced focus towards making a significant impact on the student experience. Our newly established Institute for Creative and Collaborative Arts will have opportunities to shape the Eastern Experience by driving student-centric artist productions throughout our campus, including the Center for the Arts.

2021 will be an exciting time to be an ECU Student. I thank all the faculty and staff that are working to highlight and perpetuate ECU's distinct characteristics to create unique academic

and student-life programming for the purpose of distinguishing the Eastern Experience from all other regional comprehensive institutions.

Action Items

Chair Diaz presented to the full Board the following items on the Consent Agenda for approval:

A. Approval of the Minutes for the Full Board Meeting on December 10, 2020

A motion was made by Regent Castro with one revision, changing the title from Mr. Ryan Wilson to Dr. Ryan Wilson, and then to approve the minutes for the December 10, 2020. The motion was seconded by Regent Collins. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

B. Personnel Actions

A motion was made by Regent Babbage to approve the Personnel Actions Report. The motion was seconded by Regent Collins. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

C. Recommended Sabbatical Program Participants for 2021-2022

A motion was made by Regent Babbage to approve the recommendations for the Sabbatical Program Participants for 2021-2022. The motion was seconded by Regent Castro. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

D. Approval of Nominees for Faculty Emeritus

A motion was made by Regent Babbage to approve the Nominees for Faculty Emeritus. The motion was seconded by Regent Collins. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

E. Report from the Council of Academic Affairs

Dr. Wies gave an informational report from the Council of Academic Affairs concerning the MBA online program, and a merger between Art & Design, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes.

F. Policy Updates

Regent Gump requested that the Board vote separately on each policy.

A motion was made by Regent Collins to approve Policy 3.1.1, Fundraising, for adoption. The motion was seconded by Regent Castro. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was made by Regent Mekonnen to approve Policy 5.1.2, Classification of Registered Student Organizations, for adoption. The motion was seconded by Regent Long. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was made by Regent Gump to amend Policy 8.2.2, Employee Leave, to increase the amount of bereavement leave offered by the University from three days to five days. The motion was seconded by Regent Babbage. Counselor Fohl and President McFadden explained that to do so would create financial liability issues and additional reporting requirements for the University, thus Staff Council, who originally requested the change, had withdrawn their request. Accordingly, Regent Gump moved to withdraw the motion with a second by Regent Babbage. A motion was made by Regent Collins to approve Policy 8.2.2, Employee Leave, as written. The motion was seconded by Regent Castro. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was made by Regent Collins to approve Policy 8.3.3, Employee Conduct, for adoption. The motion was seconded by Regent Gump. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was made by Regent Castro to approve Policy 4.1.10, First Time Freshmen Admissions, for repeal. The motion was seconded by Regent Marion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

G. Innovation Fund Presentations & Awards

Ms. Kelly Smith, University Librarian, gave a brief presentation on ECU's Book Smart Program, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. A motion was made by Regent Babbage to approve a \$50,000 innovation fund for the Book Smart Program Round 2. The motion was seconded by Regent Marion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Dr. Stephen Richter, Director of Natural Areas and Professor of Biological Sciences, gave a brief presentation on the plan of Taylor Fork Ecological Area's Wilder Outdoor Education Center, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. A motion was made by Regent Marion to approve a \$50,000 innovation fund for the Wilder Outdoor Education Center. The motion was seconded by Regent Babbage. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Dr. Joseph Carucci, Director and Associate Professor of School of Music gave a brief presentation on ECU's Foster Virtual Commercial Music Camp, a copy of which is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes. A motion was made by Regent Castro to approve a \$25,000 innovation fund for the Foster Virtual Commercial Music Camp. The motion was seconded by Regent Collins. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

H. Athletics Update & Approval and Ratification of ASUN Agreement

A motion was made by Regent Collins to approve the Athletics Update, and Ratification of the ASUN Agreement. The motion was seconded by Regent Long. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

The chair commented on the business model of ASUN that the hosting teams are responsible for arranging the stays for the visiting teams, and it is an opportunity to impact the Richmond community. It is also an opportunity for our campus to bring different talents together for the game weekend to showcase our campus to the visiting team.

I. Resolution Approving Application for COVID-Related Sources of Funds

A motion was made by Regent Collins to approve the Resolution Approving the Application for COVID-Related Sources of Funds. The motion was seconded by Regent Long. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Diaz requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Regent Babbage to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Regent Collins. The motion passed by voice vote, and the meeting was thereby adjourned at 12:16 p.m.


Jason Marion

06/17/2021
Date