

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

**November 12, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

**Powell 219
Eastern Kentucky University**

I. Call to Order

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Eastern Kentucky University Board of Regents convened on November 12, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. Vice Chair Long called the meeting to order. The roll was called, and a quorum was established.

Present

Ms. Caelin Scott
Mr. Aaron Barker
Mr. Alan Long
Ms. Lynnette Noblitt
Mr. Edwin Orange
Mr. Ashley Ward
Mr. Garth Bustle
Ms. Lori Cooksey
Ms. Teresa Hail
Mr. Mike Eaves

Absent

Ms. Laura Babbage

II. Information Items

A. University Reports

i. Brian Mullins, Financial Update

Brian Mullins, Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer, offered a financial update as of September 30, 2025. The presentation is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes.

2. Dr. Sara Zeigler, Academic Affairs Update

Dr. Sara Zeigler, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, offered an update that included highlights focusing on the New Faculty Seminar, Sponsored Programs and Research Administration, and Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) Funding. The presentation is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes.

3. Dr. Tanlee Wasson, Student Success Update

Dr. Tanlee Wasson, Senior Vice President for Student Success, Engagement, and Opportunity, offered an update that included highlights focusing on Fall 2025 enrollment as of October 15, 2025, first-time freshman retention, the Eastern Experience Scholarship Model, the BookSmart Program, and E3 Homecoming Events. The presentation is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes.

4. Dr. Brad Hall, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Program Initiative Update

Dr. Brad Hall, Chief Medical and Strategic Partnerships Officer, offered an update focused on the Proposed ECU College of Osteopathic Medicine Accreditation Pathway. The presentation is incorporated herein and will be included with the official copy of the minutes.

5. Committee Reports

Regent Hail, who serves as the Audit and Compliance Committee Chair, gave a summary of the general activities of the November 10, 2025, Audit and Compliance Committee meeting.

B. Additional Reports to the Board

i. Written Reports

i. Dr. John Brent, Chair of Faculty Senate

Dr. Brent submitted a written report to the board, which was included in the agenda.

ii. Ms. Micah Hunsucker, Chair of Staff Council

Ms. Hunsucker submitted a written report to the board, which was included in the agenda.

iii. Mr. Aaron Barker, Student Government Association President

Mr. Barker submitted a written report to the board, which was included in the agenda.

iv. Ms. Dana Fohl, Vice President of Compliance and University Counsel

Ms. Fohl submitted a written report to the board, which was included in the agenda.

2. Dr. David T. McFaddin, President

President David McFaddin delivered the following report:

November welcomes a season of thanks and appreciation. As I reflect on this year and all that we have accomplished, it is not possible without the dedication and commitment of many. I often say that at EKU, our North Star is always our students. That is only possible due to the passion and tireless work of our faculty and staff. Equally as important is the leadership and vision from you, our Board of Regents. Thank you for your service to our institution and your unwavering support of the transformational power of higher education.

Student Enrollment Goal Met

As many of you know, October was the official mark of the enrollment data with the Council for Post Secondary Education. I am happy to announce that we met our goal of 16,000 students. This was not an easy feat-especially with the challenges of the changing federal landscape and the enrollment cliff concerns. I want to recognize the amazing leadership of our enrollment management team, our dedicated faculty and our talented advisors who all play a pivotal role in helping us continue to reach these significant milestones.

Academic Workgroups

As part of academic intentionality, Provost Zeigler, in coordination with her leadership team, established working groups and committees that are currently finalizing reports for consideration. Provost Zeigler will bring findings on the following topics in December which we will report to the Board later this academic year:

- Interdisciplinary Work With Artificial Intelligence (Lead: Dean Martin and Dr. Wiggins)
- Reassignment Time (Lead: Dean Cannon)
- Compensation Analysis for Part-Time and Overloads in all Modalities (Lead: Dean Baggett)
- Credit for Prior Learning and Competency Based Education
- Essential Education
- Faculty Workload

- Optimization of Advising and Retention Work

BookSmart

Earlier this month, ECU announced some significant modifications to our BookSmart program. Recent federal changes, initiated by Congress passing the budget reconciliation bill during the summer of 2025, created new limits concerning Pell eligibility based on a student receiving other non-Title IV grant aid. These changes, which go into effect on July 1, 2026, necessitated ECU making some changes to help manage Student Aid Indexes (SAI) to ensure no student loses access to their Pell funds. Beginning in Fall 2026, textbooks will now be provided at a negotiated discounted rate versus our current free textbook model. In addition, discussions with faculty led to review of the program. Savings seen through the change in the program will be reinvested in students through scholarships and waiver eligible student tuition. Faculty should still participate in the program to ensure textbooks are available for students through ECU BookSmart. All student questions should be directed to Big E Central. For more information, visit the [BookSmart webpage](#).

Scholarship Model Changes

We also announced this month a new scholarship model creating a more competitive model with our peer sets. The new model will be effective for the 2026-2027 school year. It will increase the scholarship budget for incoming freshmen. In addition, we are continuing to analyze and fine-tune other scholarship categories. Any questions prospective students might have can be answered by Dr. Wasson and the Big E Central team.

College of Osteopathic Medicine Update

We continue our discussions with policymakers regarding the proposed ECU College of Osteopathic Medicine in preparation for the 2026 legislative session. CPE will take up our SB77 compliance as soon as we have final audited financials for FY25 completed for validation. Dr. Thompson and his team have been extremely helpful and supportive as we move toward the next critical step in bringing this vision to fruition. We hosted a Healthcare Forum in Frankfort for legislators that included a Healthcare Executive panel discussion to highlight the critical shortage of primary care across the Commonwealth. We featured students and programs in various health fields that are already making a difference in Kentucky's workforce. We also stressed some key facts that resonated with legislators:

- 94% of Kentucky counties face a primary care shortage, with the Commonwealth ranking 40th nationally for primary care workforce.
- 48 Kentucky counties have no pediatricians.
- 8 Kentucky counties have no physicians at all.
- 107 of 120 counties are designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

This session, we will be laser-focused on securing escrow funds, as well as funds for ECU's proposed Center for Health Innovation, ECU's top priority capital project in the 2026 legislative session. The new center will promote interdisciplinary learning, simulation, and collaboration—preparing graduates to serve where Kentucky needs them most. As the session progresses, Amy Scarborough and Dr. Brad Hall will continue to update the Board and campus community.

Fall Commencement

There is nothing more exciting on a college campus than graduation. We look forward to seeing you at the Center for the Arts. IF you have any questions please contact Dr. Ryan Wilson.

Thursday, December 4, 2025

- 1:00 pm: Master's and Doctoral Graduates from all Colleges
- 3:30 pm: College of Justice, Safety, and Military Science and the College of Education and Applied Human Sciences
- 6:00 pm: College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Friday, December 5, 2025

- 9:00 am: College of Health Sciences and the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- 11:30 am: College of Business

EKU In the News

August:

- Veterans Find Support and Success at ECU
- ECU Students Expand Nursing Practice Overseas
- Foster Music Camp Celebrates 90 Years
- Say Hello to ECU's New Colonels
- Donor Feature: Little Vicki's Legacy and the Ferrante Family's Lasting Gift to ECU
- ECU Sets Fundraising Record
- Anne M. Cizmar has been named associate dean of research administration
- Out of State Tuition Rate
- Move-in Day 2025 and Big E Welcome
- ECU addressing shortage of air traffic controllers
- New study reveals which jobs are most at risk from AI - Dr. Lisa Blue
- ECU lays foundation for careers in construction management

September:

- ECU receives \$500,000 gift from alumna Jeri Isbell to launch Global Scholars Program
- ECU dedicates 'Fanfare' at the Center for the Arts

- Suicide Prevention Expert - Dr. Melinda Moore
- These are the top colleges in KY this year, according to U.S. News and World Report
- Kentucky Universities Harness AI for Personalized Learning and Innovation
- McFaddin delivers State of University address in Richmond
- ‘Go Here, Go Anywhere’: Fire Engineering Takes ECU Grad Around the World and Back
- ECU sparking be-your-own-boss entrepreneurship
- What impact is a tough job market having on ECU students?
- Igniting a Career: Fire and Arson Student Interns with National Park Service
- Dean Tom Martin KCV Award
- Smith joins ECU as associate vice president for public affairs
- Larger E3 concert coming following Alumni Coliseum's opening
- KCTCS/ECU Transfer Partnership
- Global Rounds: ECU Students Expand Nursing Practice Overseas

October:

- Words Matter: ECU Research Reveals the Best Way to Handle Negative Online Reviews
- Eastern Kentucky University Recognized by Washington Monthly for Affordability
- AFSA and ECU Sign Mou
- Pathways to Nursing at ECU
- Scholarship Helps Students Soar to Aviation Careers
- ECU Professor Secures over \$1 Million to Expand Student Research Opportunities
- Unstoppable Mom Finds Success as ECU Transfer Student
- ECU Hosts Homecoming This Weekend, Expect Increased Traffic

Upcoming Events:

November 25: ECU Thanksgiving Meal at Case Dining Hall

November 26-28: Thanksgiving

December 4-5: Commencement at the Center for the Arts

Thank you for your continued support as we move ECU forward with a bold vision for excellence in all that we do. Happy Holidays to you and your families during this season of gratitude and reflection.

[The Vice Chair adjourned for a break at 9:53 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:00 a.m.]

3. Mr. Mike Eaves, Chair of the Board

Chair Eaves communicated a reminder that the Executive Committee is scheduled to meet on December 17, 2025.

III. Action Items

A. Consent Agenda

Prior to the vote, Vice Chair Long asked whether any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration. Regent Noblitt requested that item ii.c., Approval of Resolution re House Bill 424 Compliance, be removed for further discussion. Vice Chair Long requested that item xi., Approval of Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting Dates for 2026, be removed for further discussion.

Vice Chair Long called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, excluding items ii.c. and xi. A motion was made by Regent Bustle. The motion was seconded by Regent Ward. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ii. Approval of Updates for House Bill 424 Compliance

c. Resolution re House Bill 424 Compliance

Ms. Dana Fohl gave a brief background and summary of the resolution. Regent Noblitt raised questions regarding the enrollment figures referenced in resolution item 4, noting that course enrollment may vary by college, and regarding item 6, which references a target of 300 total credit hours per semester per full-time faculty member and whether that benchmark is appropriate at this time. President McFaddin recommended retaining the benchmark as stated. Vice Chair Long asked Dr. Zeigler for additional input; Dr. Zeigler concurred with the President's assessment, noting that the benchmark is achievable and that progress is being made toward that goal. Chair Eaves asked about the anticipated timeline to reach the benchmark, and Provost Zeigler indicated it is a five-year goal.

A motion was made by Regent Bustle to approve the Resolution re House Bill 424 Compliance. The motion was seconded by Regent Scott. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

xi. Approval of Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting Dates for 2026

Vice Chair Long noted conflicts with several of the proposed meeting dates. Following discussion, the Vice Chair Long proposed to amend the schedule by moving the Wednesday, February 18, 2026, meeting to

February 25, 2026, and the September 16, 2026, meeting to September 23, 2026.

A motion was made by Regent Hail to approve the Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting Dates for 2026, as amended. The motion was seconded by Regent Bustle and carried unanimously by voice vote.

B. Approval of Model Laboratory School Tuition & Fees for 2026-2027

A motion was made by Regent Ward to approve the Model Laboratory School Tuition & Fees for 2026-2027. The motion was seconded by Regent Scott. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

C. Approval of White Hall Transfer to the Commonwealth of Kentucky

President McFaddin provided a brief overview of the ownership history of White Hall. Chair Eaves asked whether the deed includes provisions to preserve the character of the property, and President McFaddin confirmed that it does. Regent Bustle asked about anticipated savings related to liability and personnel costs, and President McFaddin estimated the savings at approximately \$100,000 annually.

A motion was made by Chair Eaves to approve the transfer of White Hall to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The motion was seconded by Regent Bustle. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

D. Approval of Renaming of a Road: General James Rainey Way (Previously Keith Lot)

President McFaddin provided a brief overview of the proposed renaming and commended General James Rainey for his service. He noted that the road serves as the entryway to the Veterans Memorial located near the Keith Building and Martin Hall.

A motion was made by Regent Bustle to approve the renaming of the road to General James Rainey Way. The motion was seconded by Regent Cooksey. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

IV. New Business

A. CPE Endowment Match Program Funds

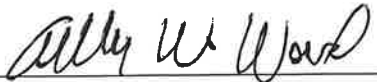
Ms. Dana Fohl provided a brief background and update on the Endowment Match Program Funds. Vice Chair Long called for a motion. A motion was made by Chair Eaves to approve participation in the CPE Endowment Match Program. The motion was seconded by Regent Bustle and carried unanimously by voice vote.

V. Executive Session

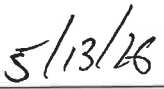
There was no need for an Executive Session.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice Chair Long called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Regent Bustle. The motion was seconded by Regent Scott. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.



Ashley Ward, Board Secretary



Date