



David T. McFaddin
President

TO: Eastern Kentucky University Faculty Senate
FROM: President David T. McFaddin
DATE: February 9, 2026
RE: Faculty Senate February Report

February 2026

I hope everyone has recovered from the series of winter weather that hit Kentucky over the past few weeks. I want to commend our faculty and staff for the outstanding work during the winter weather. Unlike many institutions who were forced to close due to treacherous road conditions, we were able to seamlessly transition our students to Plan A. In addition, our teams from facilities, dining and athletics ensured our residential students stayed safe during the storm and until we returned to campus.

EKU College of Medicine (EKU-COM) Update

This legislative session, we are focused on moving the EKU-COM through the next stages of the process. EKU is prepared to present to the Council for Postsecondary Education (CPE) at a special-called meeting, and we fully anticipate approval to advance the EKU-COM proposal to the General Assembly in compliance with SB 77 (2025).

Block Scheduling

Beginning Fall 2026, EKU is moving to a M/W and T/Th block scheduling approach, with fewer class meetings that are longer in duration. Based on discussions with faculty, feedback from faculty and student surveys, and analysis of current course schedules, it is clear that most students already follow this schedule and that faculty support adopting this approach where curriculum allows.

Implementing block scheduling will provide greater consistency across course offerings while aligning with existing practices. It also offers students increased flexibility and more time for in-depth learning and collaborative work. Longer class blocks may also create expanded opportunities for labs, studying and other instructional needs.

The university will continue to operate on a five-day business schedule, and all student services will remain available during their usual hours.

I want to thank the many teams across campus who have contributed to this effort over the past two years. If you have questions, please contact your chair or dean.

Legislative Update

Today is the 23rd day (out of 60) of the 2026 General Assembly. Lawmakers have filed almost 1,000 bills and resolutions and EKU is tracking 125+ bills that could impact the University. Committees are beginning to move more bills through the process, although less than 100 bills have passed their originating chamber. The pace in both Chambers will accelerate in the next two weeks.

Schedule:

- Last day for new Senate Bills March 2
- Last day for new House Bills March 4
- Veto Recess April 2 -13
- Veto Overrides April 14-15
- Adjournment/Sine Die April 15

Eastern Kentucky University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and Educational Institution

Notable Bills:

HB 500 – Executive Branch Operating budget bill was released on January 27 and reduced most state agency budgets by approximately 3% in FY26-27 and 4% in FY27-28. Public Universities received similar reductions. In addition, Asset Preservation and the Model Lab mandate received reductions. ***We expect changes in the bill before it's sent to the Senate for consideration.***

HB 96 - Performance Funding Work Group-adds 8 legislators (Tipton) Passed H on 1/22

HB 94 - Transfer pathways (Grossl)

HB 266 -Adds Speech/Audiology to Healthcare Workforce Investment Fund (Griffie)

HB 310 - Removes weights from Performance Funding Model (White)

HB 376 - Tuition Freeze (Banta)

HB 457 - Increases CPE oversight - financial and presidential searches (Tipton)

HB 490 - Financial criteria added for removal of faculty beyond cause (Thompson)

HB 497 - Tuition Waivers - adds FAFSA requirement, last dollar in (Tipton)

HB 517 - Concealed firearms on postsecondary campuses, + gov't buildings (Rabourn)

SB 22 - Teacher Apprenticeship Program included in Dual Credit Scholarships (Higdon)
(Denotes passage in originating Chamber)

EKU is also tracking multiple bills that could impact K-12 bills, health insurance, professional licensure, student financial aid and veterans. We will keep our Campus Community informed regarding additional legislative action that could impact Higher Education.

President's Excellence Awards

The President's Excellence Awards nominations are open for faculty to nominate colleagues in the areas of leadership, engagement and hospitality, community and belonging, innovation, student support, and research, as well as for the emerging leader award. Each winner will receive an award and \$3,000; the finalists will each receive \$1,000.

Nominations can be submitted through the [President's Excellence Awards website](#) no later than Friday, February 27, 2026.

Budget Planning

As we approach the budget planning process and the closeout of the 2025–2026 fiscal year, I would like to acknowledge and commend the diligent efforts of the Faculty Senate Budget Committee, the Campus Budget Workgroup, and the faculty at large. As a campus, we have responded thoughtfully to the call for fiscal prudence while remaining mindful of the importance of maintaining appropriate reserves and continuing to invest in our employees.

Looking ahead to the development of the 2027–2028 fiscal year budgets, we face additional challenges on the horizon. HB 500, the proposed biennium budget presented last week includes a 7% reduction across all state agencies, including higher education. For our institution, this proposal would represent an estimated reduction of \$6,223,100 by the 2028 fiscal year.

Over the coming months, we will need to work diligently to conclude the current fiscal year in a strong financial position while also planning responsibly for the potential reductions being proposed at the state level. We will be working through department leaders and our budget office to ensure maximum efficiency and financial performance.

December and January EKU in the News

In the News:

- [EKU Researcher Leads Global Bee Conversation Efforts](#)
- [Hired: 5 of the Top Marketable Degrees for Career Success](#)
- [Dementia expert](#)
- [Three-Time Colonel Graduate Found Purpose and a Home at EKU](#)
- [Turn Experience Into a Degree With Credit for Prior Learning at EKU](#)
- [Stories of Strength and Triumph Shine at EKU's Fall 2025 Commencement](#)
- [Chief Justice Debra Lambert, EKU Class of 83, Breaks Barriers as First-Generation College Graduate](#)
- [Protecting the Skies Through Drone Detection Research at EKU](#)
- [Digital University ID card expert](#)
- [EKU Receives KEMI Destiny Award for 7th Consecutive Year](#)
- [Eastern Kentucky University and Lockheed Martin: More Than a Decade of Partnership](#)
- [Graduate Job Ready With EKU's Sales Minor](#)
- [AI expert - Lisa Blue](#)
- [Dementia expert - Adria Thompson](#)
- [Innovative Athlete Injury Prevention at EKU](#)

Upcoming Events

February 25-Board of Regents Meeting

March 9-13-EKU Spring Break

April 16-President's Excellence Awards

April 22-Giving Day

May 7-8-Commencement at Alumni Coliseum

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Dr. David T. McFaddin
President