

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

October 7, 2024

3:30 p.m.

The Faculty Senate of Eastern Kentucky University met remotely on Monday, October 7, 2024 via Zoom. Chair Kay called the second meeting of the academic year to order at approximately 3:30 p.m.

The following members were absent: L. Edwards*^, D. Fifer, J. Fry*, S. McGuffin*^, J. Plutt, L. Zyzak

** Indicates prior notification of absence*

^ALT Jens Arneson attended for L. Edwards

^ALT Bianca Fisher attended for S. McGuffin

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Senator Day moved to approve the September 9, 2024 minutes as written, seconded by Senator Lauk. **Motion carried.** (YES = 49 votes NO = 0 votes ABSTAIN = 1 vote) (See also: [Individual Votes](#))

REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT: David McFaddin

Essential Education

At this year's employee convocation I discussed the need for ECU to continue to evolve as we address Essential Education. I have asked Dr. Winslow and many faculty members to focus on key objectives:

- Equip students with the ability to analyze complex issues and devise innovative solutions that address challenges in a rapidly evolving workforce.
- Foster the ability to collaborate across various disciplines, promoting a holistic approach to problem-solving in an ever-changing technological landscape.
- Encourage students to cultivate a mindset of continuous learning, enabling them to adapt to new trends and shifts in both the workforce and broader society.
- Ensure students develop and integrate essential skills crucial for both degree attainment and sustained success in their professional and personal lives.

For more information, please see the email sent to faculty earlier this week outlining the charge for this critical strategic initiative.

[CEAHS and Model Laboratory Synergy Project](#)

Thank you to Dean Smith and her team as well as Dr. John Williamson and the Model Laboratory School team for their introductory work on the College of Education and Applied Human Sciences (CEAHS) and Model Synergy project identified in the ECU Strategic Plan. We announced the new location of the Model Laboratory School on Kit Carson Drive and began the faculty work group on ways our colleges can continue to collaborate with Model Lab.

[EKU College of Osteopathic Medicine \(EKU-COM\) Update](#)

Deloitte was on campus late last month and met with Deans and faculty members to discuss the ECU-COM proposal. We provided additional academic, community and financial data regarding the need for the ECU-COM. In addition, Deloitte facilitated discussions with members of the community, campus and state to explore the access to wrap-around programming like nursing, psychology, occupational therapy and pre-medicine programs.

In addition, to reflect our commitment to this project, ECU hired Brad Hall as the Executive in Residence. Brad's role is to be focused on the components of the ECU-COM project including operational and accreditation completion.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Planning

Human Resources is preparing for the upcoming Department of Labor (DOL) announced revisions to the FLSA which include increasing the salary threshold required to qualify for exempt status from \$43,888.00 annually for a full-time worker to \$58,656.00 annually effective January 1, 2025. While it is possible that these changes may be delayed due to Federal litigation, we must take steps now to prepare for all scenarios. We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available.

Hummel Planetarium

At the ECU Board of Regents meeting, ECU Chief Campus Operations Officer Brian Makinen informed the board of concerns regarding the ECU Hummel Planetarium. ECU engaged a structural engineer to assess the property and provide recommendations. Based on the engineer's assessment, it was determined that the 1976 building was a safety issue for individuals both inside and in the surrounding area around the facility. Hummel Planetarium has not hosted public events since 2020 due to the facility needing internal upgrades including projection screens and technology. The next step will be a formal recommendation from Dr. Makinen to the Board of Regents at the November board meeting.

Allegiant Announcement

Earlier this morning we signed a contract making Eastern Kentucky University part of Allegiant Air's Accelerate Pilot Pathway Program. This exciting opportunity aligns ECU Aviation with our strategic plan of identifying partnerships to advance our students workforce goals. ECU stands alongside other prestigious institutions in the Accelerate Pilot Pathway program, including Purdue University, Kent State University and the University of North Dakota. ECU students will have the ability to bypass the traditional regional carrier hiring model and move directly into a leading airline carrier upon graduation. Thank you to our aviation faculty, especially Dennis Sinnett and Dr. Tim Ross, for their dedication on this project.

September in the News

Be sure to check out our news highlights on [pages 2-4](#) in the written report.

Upcoming Events

- October 14 and 15-ECU Fall Break
- October 22 at 10:30am-Dedication of Art Exhibit at the Center for the Arts
- October 24-Lunch and Learn: Budget at Case Dining Hall
- October 25-26-[Homecoming](#)
- October 25-Portrait Dedication for President Mike Benson
- November 5-Presidential Election (University Closed)
- November 14-Board of Regents Meeting
- November 27-29-Thanksgiving Holiday (University Closed)
- December 5-6 -[Fall Commencement](#)

In the Q & A session following the president's report, several senators asked for clarification on the definition of the Essential Education initiative and questioned the stringent timeline specified for the Transformation Committee to work on reforming the general education program by August 26. The senators also asked for more faculty involvement early on in the process.

Provost Zeigler responded by assuring that the General Education Committee (which has faculty representatives from all colleges) and the co-chairs will have seats on the Transformation Committee. Additional faculty will also be added to make sure all areas have input into the process. Furthermore, input will be solicited from the Faculty Senate as well as other groups on campus.

President McFaddin stated that if needed, the timeline can always be pushed back another year.

Senator Brent shared an update from the General Education Committee.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

[Faculty Retention Study Results.](#) Professor Ozan Kalkan, Senate Chair Lisa Kay and Provost Sara Zeigler shared an expanded version of the faculty retention study results presentation that was provided to the Board of Regents. The goal of the study was to determine if ECU has a particularly high level of faculty turnover as compared to other institutions and as compared to our past history. Based on the findings, Provost Zeigler shared the following recommendations:

- Increase the funding pool for tenure-track and tenured faculty lines.
- Survey faculty and staff to learn more about ECU culture and factors that motivate people to stay.
- Design and fund increased support for department chairs.
- Increase funds available for faculty professional development.
- Continue the progress on compensation through pools for across-the-board increases and compression/inversion adjustments.

GENERAL & STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

REPORT FROM SENATE CHAIR: Senator Kay

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met on September 23, 2024.

The Executive Committee discussed potential approaches for providing input on items brought to the Faculty Senate by CAA. The committee suggested that we should always discuss and provide feedback on new programs and program closures, and as well as for any other items senators may want to discuss.

Our “Problem Solvers” group continues to meet. Our next meeting will be on October 16th.

The Faculty Senate co-sponsored a couple of events with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) on October 1st and 2nd: “Human Subjects Research: To Be or Not to Be?” The sessions were led by Gus Benson and Lisa Royalty of the Office of Grants and Research Compliance. They were well attended and provided very helpful information to participants.

If schedules permit, please join us for the next Faculty Lunch and Learn session at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 24. Enjoy a complimentary lunch by signing in at either of the check-in areas at Case Kitchen and take your food upstairs to the Regents Room to engage in meaningful conversation.

A written report was submitted to the Board of Regents for the September 12th meeting. The condensed version of our faculty retention study was also presented at the meeting.

We continue to receive comments via the virtual suggestion box, and we read all of them and forward them as appropriate. We share all comments with Provost Zeigler and Regent Marion. Here are some topics of recent comments:

- New Model school building
- Communication regarding I-75 incident
- BluMine suggestion for regional campuses
- IT security
- Compensation for adjunct faculty
- Course redevelopment contracts
- Commencement information
- IT business partners
- IDC assistance
- Canvas site early availability

You may recall that the virtual suggestion box is supposed to be anonymous. The vast majority of the time it has indeed been anonymous. However, over the past few months, we had three messages that came through with email addresses attached. To ensure anonymity, go to the Faculty Senate homepage at <https://facultysenate.eku.edu/>, right-click on the Faculty Senate Virtual Suggestion Box link in the menu on the left, and select the option to open the link in a private or incognito window.

We received some comments regarding commencement details. There was a slight delay in releasing the commencement ceremony dates and times because Alumni Coliseum is unavailable. Moving forward, that should not be an issue. Students will need to place their online order by 11/8/24 to receive their regalia in time for the December graduation. If students miss this deadline, please have them contact the bookstore by emailing sm249@bncollege.com for assistance. There may be a different deadline for doctoral students. Students can find information about commencement at <https://www.eku.edu/registrar/student-information/>.

We also received some concerns about the plan to open the Canvas sites five days before classes begin. Faculty will be able to post messages indicating when syllabi, etc., will be available. They can also post announcements that indicate that they will not respond to emails until the first day of classes if they wish to do so.

REPORT FROM FACULTY REGENT: Senator Marion

Since our last meeting, the Board of Regents met on Thursday, September 12. The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 14 with an expected start time of 9am. The Board also has an Executive Committee meeting on Thursday, October 31 at 11 a.m. in Powell 229. For the most current information on the Board meeting dates and agenda items, feel free to go to <https://regents.eku.edu/>. Please know that all meetings of the Board of Regents, including committee meetings, are open meetings and guests are welcome to attend.

Re-Cap of Board Meeting on September 12:

The Board meeting agenda from September 12 is available on the ECU Board of Regents website at: <https://regents.eku.edu/agendas-0>

Key highlights from the Board meeting are as follows:

- The Student Success Report with a focus on freshman and overall enrollment, along with housing occupancy rates and future opportunities.
- A financial report that provided a comparison of the budget and expenses for year-end (2024) between the adopted and adjusted budget.
- A Construction Projects Update
- An update related to Information Technology

The presentations shared at the BoR meeting can be observed in a Google Folder of Presentations [[linked here](#)].

For more detailed highlights:

Enrollment

- The Fall 2024 enrollment includes the largest freshman class in history (2,985 students).
- Overall, enrollment is up 4% to 15,598, and enrollment is also up with respect to credit hour generation (185,292 hours, up 4.6%)
- ACT scores were up, and 51% of the freshmen is first-gen.
- Fall online enrollment target was met (4,517 students)
- 72% of Freshman live on campus.
- The overall retention rate fell from 80% to 77% but exceeds the 73.6% average for Kentucky comprehensives.
- Sustained enrollment growth over four years will lead to presumably better financial standing for ECU.

Financial Matters

- The Board heard information regarding Moody's recent updates related to ECU's bond ratings and financial outlook. Moody's affirmed ECU's A2 issuer rating so there is no anticipated financial impact at this time should the university issue bonds in the future. Moody's did revise the university's underlying rating outlook from stable to negative with respect to the A2 rating. The A2 rating is the sixth highest rating and is viewed as upper-medium grade and low credit risk for bond buyers. An A1 rating would be the level above. The reasoning for the change in outlook was related primarily to the university's liquidity and available days of cash-on-hand (savings or reserve funds). The Board conversation included a conversation on the university needing to present budgets in the future that begin to rebuild the university's reserve funds.
 - Prior to the COVID pandemic, the Board and University leadership were planning and [bracing for \\$25 million](#) in reductions due to rapid decline and projected decline in enrollment experienced between 2016 and 2021. From Fall 2016 to Fall 2021, ECU's enrollment fell from 16,681 to 13,984 (<https://irserver2.ecu.edu/factbook/>). The enrollment is now at 15,187.
 - Performance funding that redistributed funds from regional universities to another university in Kentucky, along with a loss of nearly 3,000 students led to the university using reserves considerably to maintain core operations while still finding efficiencies.
- As part of the Board receiving a financial update, Interim CFO Mullins provided an update on the 2024 year end. Ultimately, the university had a -\$8.38M change in net position. The university revenues were \$297.1M and the university expenditures were \$305.4M
 - Part of the revenue challenge that exceeded expectations (negatively) were the amounts of unrealized for tuition. Notably, an appreciable number of students receiving justified (but not state-supported) tuition waivers by state mandate, including students affiliated with foster care and our Veteran populations. Also, there was a considerable amount of money, over one million, in bad debt (students not paying their obligations).
- The President also provided valuable information on the impacts of Performance-Based Funding in Kentucky with respect to our budget at ECU.
- During the Q&A with the Board on financial matters, I did ask about the following:
 - The cost of BookSmart and if it is an instructional item in the budget.
 - The cost is over \$8M and is part of the instruction line in the budget, representing between 9-10% of instructional cost.
 - Credit was given to how valuable the program has been for students, but also additional follow-up on trying to find efficiencies was expressed.
 - The sustainability of the use of Foundation Funds, notably ones that are not overly restrictive.

Personnel Matters

- During the Academic Affairs portion of the meeting, the Board received a presentation that will also be shared with Faculty Senate related to faculty turnover rates.
- During the meeting, I asked about the focus groups done in the Spring Semester with faculty.
 - I was advised these were part of the Academic Impressions work and that the survey (which has been sent out) would use that information along with survey results for informing their recommendations to ECU.

In addition to the Board Meeting:

Trusteeship Conference: Trustees and Regents, and most university presidents, from across Kentucky attended the *Better Together: Progress Through Partnerships* CPE Trusteeship meeting on September 16 and 17 in Lexington. Slides, videos, and reports related to that meeting are provided by CPE at the following page: <https://cpe.ky.gov/trusteeship>

Government Relations Update: On September 19, ECU's Government Relations expert, Amy Scarborough, provided a substantive summary of issues likely before the General Assembly in the next session. Of particular interest was the impact of the 'weighting factors' in the performance funding model that provided UK and UL an additional \$27.7M and \$17.3M for just being research universities. In an equal landscape, with the metrics assigned by the state that are most important, ECU's budget would have increased by \$10.6M this last year. This topic is one that is deserving of great consideration as the model is being actively discussed by the Presidents, selected legislators, and CPE.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Academic Quality Committee. Senator Buck stated that one of their prior charges has been to monitor enrollment and DFW rates in the wake of Covid in particular. The committee voted to recommend that this be done every other year except after a major curriculum or policy change such as the change to the new schedule in Fall 2025. In a circumstance such as that, the committee will plan to collect data for two years in a row.

Dr. Lisa Blue was invited to the October 2 meeting to talk about AI. She is very interested in creating a drafting team to develop a policy for student work and also for instructors in terms of ethical use of AI. Anyone interested in that initiative should contact Dr. Blue. She also asked us to track concerns related to AI, so the committee plans to create a spreadsheet for that and will eventually share that with Chair Kay and Vice Chair Brent to distribute.

We are also trying to schedule a meeting with Dan Hendrickson to discuss the add/drop policy and the implementation of priority registration for student parents.

Budget Committee. Senator Lauk reported that the committee has met and scheduled their meetings for the year. We are focusing on two things this year: 1) tracking athletic spending and 2) doing essentially an audit on foundation fund transfers to see if donor intent is being followed.

At this time, Senator Brent moved to extend the meeting to 5:45pm to allow for time to finish the rest of the committee reports, seconded by Senator Lauk. **Motion carried.** . (YES = 38 votes NO = 6 votes ABSTAIN = 4 votes) (See also: [Individual Votes](#))

Elections & University Nominations Committee. Senator Brooks announced that the committee will meet in two weeks at 3:30pm.

Information Technology Committee. Senator Ginn reported that the committee has met and reviewed their charges for the year.

They also looked at the Board of Regents initiatives for improving technology across campus and discussed their role in possibly helping with some of those initiatives.

Rights & Responsibilities Committee. Senator Ginn stated that the committee has met and reviewed and prioritized the charges for the year.

She reminded that last May the committee recommended forming a draft team to consider revising Policy 1.1.1. However with Lauren Keeler Robbins' departure and with the position still vacant, that work will be on hold for a bit longer until someone is hired for that position.

Rules Committee. Senator Bishop-Ross announced that the committee will meet for the first time this year on October 28 at 4:30pm.

Welfare Committee. Senator Hensley reported that the committee met two weeks ago. She was elected co-chair along with Senator Jensky.

The committee would like to schedule a future meeting with either the Budget Committee or the Rights and Responsibilities Committee to discuss faculty overloads and whether faculty are being adequately paid for those and whether or not departments have policies regarding overloads.

Committee meetings are scheduled monthly on the fourth Thursday.

ADJOURNMENT:

Senator Day moved to adjourn, seconded by Senator Hensley, at approximately 5:40pm.

Timestamp	Email Address	Do you approve of the minutes for the September 9, 2024 Faculty Senate Meeting?
10/7/2024 15:36:28	anne.dacci@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:29	raymond.lauk@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:30	rachel.bishop-ross@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:30	casey.humphrey@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:31	timothy.jansky@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:31	stefanie.binion@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:31	maria.bane@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:31	mary.emanuel@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:32	kristen.campbell@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:32	jens.arneson@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:32	james.kirby.easterling@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:33	meg.gravil@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:35	melissa.dieckmann@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:35	erik.liddell@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:35	bob.houston@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:36	alison.buck@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:36	lisa.day@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:37	peter.kraska@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:39	marcia.pierce@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:40	fatima.hasan@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:40	john.brent@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:41	matthew.howell@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:42	chad.cogdill@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:44	jennifer.merrick@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:44	mike.austin@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:45	lisa.bosley@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:47	todd.hartch@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:47	jerry.palmer@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:53	annette.delage@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:36:58	pat.calie@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:03	anne.kipp@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:06	julie.hensley@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:19	aaron.macdonald@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:43	abby.brooks@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:45	tara.stevens@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:46	bernardo.scarambone@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:46	grace.turner@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:46	adria.sutherland@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:51	nedim.slijepcevic@eku.edu	Abstain
10/7/2024 15:37:52	vigs.chandra@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:53	mary.hammond@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:54	linda.sizemore@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:37:57	john.settimi@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:38:00	laura.rowe@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:38:01	julia.graham@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:38:07	fontaine.sands@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:38:25	melissa.wyatt@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:43:09	linda.hunter@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 15:44:21	sergio.sgro@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024	cassandra.ginn@eku.edu	Yes

Timestamp	Email Address	How do you vote on extending time to 5:45p
10/7/2024 17:29:30	anne.dacci@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:30	tara.stevens@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:30	vigs.chandra@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:31	raymond.lauk@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:31	erik.liddell@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:31	jens.arneson@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:32	annette.delage@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:32	maria.bane@eku.edu	No
10/7/2024 17:29:32	chad.cogdill@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:32	todd.hartch@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:32	rachel.bishop-ross@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:33	mary.emanuel@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:33	jennifer.merrick@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:33	james.kirby.easterling@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:34	lisa.day@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:34	kristen.campbell@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:35	bernardo.scarambone@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:35	john.brent@eku.edu	Abstain
10/7/2024 17:29:35	alison.buck@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:35	timothy.jansky@eku.edu	No
10/7/2024 17:29:35	mike.austin@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:36	laura.rowe@eku.edu	No
10/7/2024 17:29:36	pat.calie@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:36	fontaine.sands@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:36	john.settimi@eku.edu	Abstain
10/7/2024 17:29:36	matthew.howell@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:36	linda.hunter@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:36	casey.humphrey@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:38	meg.gravil@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:39	julie.hensley@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:39	sergio.sgro@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:39	aaron.macdonald@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:39	linda.sizemore@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:39	melissa.dieckmann@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:41	adria.sutherland@eku.edu	Abstain
10/7/2024 17:29:42	lisa.bosley@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:44	young.smith@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:45	abby.brooks@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:47	anne.kipp@eku.edu	Abstain
10/7/2024 17:29:47	grace.turner@eku.edu	No
10/7/2024 17:29:52	melissa.wyatt@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:29:57	adria.sutherland@eku.edu	No
10/7/2024 17:30:00	bianca.fisher@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:30:01	julia.graham@eku.edu	No
10/7/2024 17:30:03	raglena.salmans@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:30:06	steve.szabo@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:30:18	nedim.slijepcevic@eku.edu	Yes
10/7/2024 17:41:51	bob.houston@eku.edu	Yes