

TO: The Eastern Kentucky University Faculty Senate  
FROM: Senator Michael T. Benson  
DATE: September 8, 2014  
RE: September Campus Report

With the rest of the campus, I joined in celebrating the life, career, and contributions of Professor Robert Miller during the memorial service held on campus in June. We shall miss him, his erudition and expertise as it related to the parliamentary procedures followed by the Senate.

I wish to welcome you all back to campus and tell you how good it is to have ECU again full of faculty, staff, and students. This year promises to be a very significant one as we move several initiatives forward. Thanks for your continued service.

Items of interest to report:

### **Significant Diversity Gains Help Fuel Enrollment Increase**

Preliminary fall enrollment figures paint a very encouraging picture.

As of August 26, a total of 16,454 students had enrolled for fall classes, up 1.8 percent from the same date a year ago. That number includes significant increases in underrepresented populations: Black/African American students at ECU now number 997, up 11 percent. The number of Hispanic/Latino students is up 19 percent, to 344.

Other points of pride relative to our student demographic include:

- New freshmen this year total 2,733, up 7.3 percent and the highest number since 2000.
- Currently, almost 1,500 students are taking online courses, an area of rapid growth, especially the last two years, as more and more programs are offered as fully online degree options. Online credit hours are up 15.6 percent.
- Honors Program enrollment has jumped 7.5 percent overall since last year. The program welcomed 125 new incoming freshmen this fall, up from 103 in the Fall 2013 class, an increase of 21 percent.
- More and more transfer students are attracted to ECU, as indicated by a 6.5 percent increase in new transfer undergraduates over 2013. Approximately 10 percent of Kentucky Community and Technical College System students go on to attend Eastern.
- Enrollment in the University's dual credit program for high school students increased 21.8 percent over the past year and 62 percent since 2012-13. Eastern now partners with 38 schools; 646 students are enrolled for Fall 2014.
- Graduate School enrollment is up 7.8 percent.
- Total credit hours are up 2.1 percent.

The increases can be attributed to several factors, including but certainly not limited to:

- Improved retention rate
- More aggressive recruitment and retention strategies
- Earlier scholarship awards and additional diversity scholarships
- Earlier and more persistent communications with prospective students
- Greater use of social media
- Renewed commitment to building relationships
- Enhancements to the campus visit program
- More attractive housing options
- More attentive and intensive academic advising
- Greater connections with faculty
- Student Success Collaborative
- “Bridge” program for incoming students with developmental needs

Final, official enrollment figures for Fall 2014, as well as official retention and graduation rates for this past academic year, will be announced later this semester.



## **INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE** **Eastern Kentucky University**

### **EKU On the Rise**

Progress within Two Years



- 4.5 % increase in 6 yr graduation rate\*\*
- 6.9% increase in 5 yr graduation rate\*\*
- 2.8% increase in 4 yr graduation rate\*\*
- 13.2% increase in New Freshmen \*\*
- 4.9% increase in New Freshmen retention\*\*
- 22.4% increase in enrollment of New Freshmen from Kentucky\*\*
- 14.5% increase in enrollment of Black or African American students\*\*
- 24.6% increase in enrollment of Latino students\*\*



\*Based upon unofficial Fall 2014 data of 8/25/2014

\*\*Increase calculated for last two years

## Numerous Campus Improvement Projects Mark New Year

Dozens of projects are changing the face of the Richmond campus.

Some are physical, such as the upcoming demolition of a residence hall, repurposing of other facilities, the addition of pedestrian-friendly green space, classroom technology upgrades and athletics facilities improvements. Others are more cosmetic and related to ongoing branding efforts, such as new street and facility signs and additional flags and banners citing some of the University's recent national-scale achievements.

All of these efforts are aimed at enhancing the campus environment for students, employees and guests.

These projects include:

- Groundbreaking on Oct. 23 for Phase 2 of the New Science Building, which will house the Departments of Biological Sciences and Geography and Geology. The addition is expected to be complete by late 2017.
- Technology upgrades in 21 classrooms and several administrative spaces across campus. One project benefited the First-Year Writing Program by providing a fully functional multi-media space with four high-definition presentation areas for collaborative work and presentations. Another involved the creation of a gaming development lab in the Department of Computer Science for students to develop and test games.
- The addition, by lease arrangement, of Grand Campus, a previously private student housing complex across Lancaster Avenue, to the University's residential housing stock.
- The demolition of Combs Residence Hall this fall. The second phase of that project features a pedestrian entrance to campus in the former Combs space.
- The addition of an arboretum, to be designed by Kentuckian Jon Carloftis, a nationally known garden designer, in space now occupied by the outdoor tennis courts near Martin Hall. Eight new tennis courts will be built near the Greg Adams (indoor) Tennis Center on the south side of campus. That work is expected to take place this fall.
- The addition of a reading porch on the south side of the John Grant Crabbe Main Library, made possible by a gift from Ron and Sherrie Lou Noel, whose earlier gift enabled the addition of the Noel Studio for Academic Creativity, also in the Library. Construction is expected to begin this fall. The porch will eventually look out over a newly created pedestrian mall to replace what has been a lackluster, industrial space. Work on the mall will begin once steam line replacement work in the area is completed by late September.
- The construction of a multi-purpose facility, replacing the east side grandstands at Roy Kidd Stadium, to house classrooms and small conference rooms, a nutrition and dietetics center, training facilities, a new football locker room, offices for football

coaches, and a café. Donald and Irene Disney contributed the lead gift for the project. The project is also funded in part by a \$15 million agency bond approved by the Commonwealth that allows ECU to improve some of its athletic facilities. The baseball and softball fields will also be getting upgrades, including bleacher renovations, along with new press boxes and restrooms.

- A 12,700-square-foot addition to the Ashland Building to house 11 faculty offices, a workroom/conference room, a student hub, two new high bay spaces, a lab classroom with prep lab, 80-seat lecture space with a view to an outdoor demonstration area, and more. Construction is expected to begin in October, with completion by August 2015.
- The removal of Model Laboratory School's baseball and softball facilities at the corner of the Eastern By-Pass and Lancaster Avenue, part of an effort to enhance the visual appeal of the campus gateway. The school will utilize fields elsewhere on campus. The University's top capital construction priority remains a College of Education/Model Laboratory School complex, to be constructed at the corner of the By-Pass and Lancaster.
- The replacement of the McBrayer Arena floor in Alumni Coliseum, along with new, much stronger, and more energy-efficient, LED lighting above the floor. Besides the fresh look and design, the floor offers much more resiliency (less wear and tear on knees, etc.) and greater traction and "spring" for student-athletes.
- Electrical upgrades to the entirety of Commonwealth Hall, formerly a residence hall, to be followed by the migration of Human Resources, E-Campus and other campus operations to Commonwealth.
- A federally-funded project to construct a new sidewalk along the east side of Lancaster Road, from Kit Carson Drive (near the Stratton Building) to Hall Drive (near the ECU Center for the Arts), giving students the opportunity to walk safely to campus, rather than drive.
- The construction of a research facility and "bunk house" at Lilley Cornett Woods, a 554-acre, University-owned old-growth forest in Letcher County, near the Kentucky-Virginia border. The National Science Foundation awarded ECU a \$300,000 grant for the research facility, which will serve as a central research hub and make it easier for ECU and other scientists to conduct sustained, high-level research related to the region. The University is funding the "bunk house" portion of the project. The ECU Board of Regents are planning to hold their October board meeting in Hazard and then travel to Lilley Cornett Woods for the groundbreaking of this new facility.
- New seating for Gifford Theatre in the Campbell Building. The old seats, original to the building, which opened in 1974, are slated to be replaced over the Christmas-New Year's break with seats similar to those in the ECU Center for the Arts.
- A completely renovated space for the Construction Management program in the Ault Building.
- Continuing upgrades for Hummel Planetarium, including new equipment. A re-dedication ceremony for the improved facility is planned for this academic year.

## **New Vice Presidents, Dean Join Leadership Team**

As reported at the Fall Convocation, a dean and two vice presidents joined the ECU family this summer.

**Dr. Thomas Erikson** is the new Dean of our College of Business and Technology, succeeding Dr. Bob Rogow, who retired this year.

Dr. Erikson had served as the Dean of the College of Business and Technology at Western Illinois University since 2006. He brings 37 years of experience in higher education, including 23 years as a dean or director. Under his leadership at Western Illinois, the College secured a \$1 million donation to establish a new program in Engineering, obtained AACSB reaffirmation, established a Chief Diversity Officer position for the College, redesigned the MBA program, and developed multiple partnerships with regional, national, and international corporations.

He is also an accomplished scholar, with multiple books, book chapters, refereed journal articles and presentations to his credit.

**Dr. Laurie Carter** joined us as Executive Vice President for Student Success and University Counsel.

Dr. Carter brings nearly 30 years of higher education experience to the position. She was the first Chief Legal Officer and Chief Student Affairs Officer in the history of New York City's famous Juilliard School, where she served 25 years in a series of progressively responsible positions. While at Juilliard, Carter created, implemented and oversaw diversity and inclusion initiatives; created, co-implemented and supervised the Juilliard Colloquium program for first-time college students; created an orientation program designed to introduce students to artistic life in the New York City; expanded career services and educational outreach programs; initiated an international student advisement program; created a student affairs program that included the design, construction and opening of a residence hall; and served as the member of the School's "Planning for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" Committee.

For the past year, Dr. Carter served as Vice President for Arts Education at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.

The most recent addition to our leadership team is **Nicholas J. Perlick**, our new Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations. Since 2009, he served as Director of Development at Middle Tennessee State University, where he played a leading role in a centennial campaign that is poised to exceed its revised goal with more than a year remaining.

Mr. Perlick provided comprehensive oversight of MTSU's academic fund-raising programs, leading a 10-person Office of Development staff. He designed and implemented a comprehensive planned giving program, crafted MTSU's first-ever comprehensive strategic plan

for development and engaged deans and other leadership from eight academic colleges to develop campaign plans. He also served as the 2013 Conference Chair for the Tennessee Advancement Research Council.

Previously, he served as Executive Director of the Middle Tennessee Medical Center Foundation from 2006 to 2009, as well as a director of development at The Ohio State University.

### **Transfer Agreement with KCTCS Will Streamline Process**

It is now easier than ever for KCTCS students to transfer to ECU, thanks to a statewide, multi-program agreement which KCTCS President Michael B. McCall and I recently signed.

The statewide memorandum of agreement facilitates the seamless transfer of KCTCS students to ECU by:

- \* providing a structure through which transfer-related student information reports will be exchanged between KCTCS and ECU.
- \* identifying students who are likely to consider transferring from KCTCS to ECU.
- \* enhancing advising services and transferability of credits through ECU's Colonel Connection program by providing regularly updated DegreeWorks audit of the student's progress toward a four-year degree at ECU. Each participating student receives regular advising from an ECU advisor, thus minimizing lost transfer credit.

This seamless transition for transfer students between their community college experience to a four-year institution is essential as we seek to graduate more students with bachelor's degrees across the Commonwealth. Eastern is committed to working side-by-side with KCTCS and its regional campuses as we provide greater access to higher education for all Kentuckians.

### **Freshman Academy for Diverse Students Established**

Our African/African American Studies program has partnered with several campus offices to launch a new program aimed at promoting the retention of all students, with particular focus on minority students.

The Freshman Academy for Diverse Students is designed as a year-long interactive learning experience that will provide first-year students with the information, encouragement and direction they need in order to navigate college life and reach their academic, personal, and professional goals at ECU.

The program will kick off on Sept. 19 with a one-day college skills conference. Participants will attend various interactive workshops geared toward problem solving and providing practical

resources to aid student success. Students will then participate in a variety of academic and social activities throughout the year.

Students who complete the program will have the opportunity to win a \$250 book scholarship for use in Spring 2015, and a \$1,000 tuition scholarship toward 2015-2016 tuition.

Participation in the program is by self-selection. All ECU students are invited to participate but must be registered and attend the Sept. 19 conference in order to take full advantage of Academy resources and scholarship opportunities.

Dr. Salome Nnoromele, director of the African/African American Studies Program, is coordinator of the Academy.

### **LEED Gold Plaque Shows Commitment to Environmental Stewardship**

ECU's commitment to environmental stewardship is exemplified by a plaque Housing Director Kenna Middleton and I accepted recently from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Our New Residence Hall on Kit Carson Drive was recognized as the first LEED Gold-certified residence hall on a state university campus in the Commonwealth. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, and that is exactly what the campus community demonstrated in the planning for the University's first new residential facility in 40 years.

Very few facilities anywhere, let alone residence halls on state university campuses, obtain LEED Gold status. In order to earn the coveted honor, the ECU facility met stringent standards related to sustainability, energy and water efficiency, indoor environmental quality, materials and resources used in construction, and design innovations.

Increasingly, prospective students consider an institution's environmental policies and footprint, among many other factors, when choosing a college or university. Our yet-to-be-named New Hall gives students one more reason to choose ECU.

### **Message to campus (sent on 9/4/2014) re Student Fees**

Welcome back to campus fellow Colonels! It has been a busy summer, and as you look around campus, I hope you will see that we are striving every day to enhance the Eastern experience. Happening all around us are projects involving new construction, renovation of existing structures, and removal of outdated and dilapidated facilities.

It is an exciting time to be at ECU, and as many of you may know, we announced the receipt of a lead gift – the largest ever gift to ECU Athletics – to support our efforts to create a new grandstand and multi-purpose facility on the east side of Roy Kidd Stadium in August. We have also continued to fund important projects that provide immediate benefit to current ECU

students through various revenue sources. Recent immediate impact projects include:

- Technology upgrades in 21 classrooms and several administrative spaces across campus
- An addition to the Ashland Building to house 11 faculty offices, a workroom/conference room, a student hub, two new high bay spaces, a lab classroom with prep lab, 80-seat lecture space with a view to an outdoor demonstration area
- The provision of office and student space for ELS Education Services Inc., an English language instruction program
- New carpeting in the library (scheduled for completion this fall)
- Our new relationship with Grand Campus, a previously private student-housing complex across Lancaster Avenue, to the University's residential housing stock.
- The new McBrayer Arena floor in Alumni Coliseum, along with new, much stronger LED lighting above the floor.
- Improved the Challenge Course on the south end of campus
- Replaced old carpet with new tile in our Corbin Campus
- New tennis courts (scheduled for completion this fall)

In order to continue to more fully realize our vision of the Campus Beautiful, we have developed a funding mechanism that is forward-thinking and committed to making EKU a premiere public university. In the spring of 2014, CPE approved an increase of 5% to our tuition and fees schedule for 2014-2015. Since we are limited to an overall increase of 8% for the biennium, we will be limited to a 3% increase in 2015-2016. We plan to dedicate a portion of this increase to our continuing efforts to enhance the Eastern experience, including additional resources for athletics.

Nevertheless, this 3% increase will not alone fund necessary campus enhancement projects. As a result, we plan to propose the implementation of a mandatory Special Use Fee of \$75 per semester to be instituted in the 2015-2016 academic year. In order to meet the requirements for introducing a new Special Use Fee, we must demonstrate that all students have been afforded ample opportunity to be informed, voice their opinions, and participate in the decision to endorse the proposed fee. The process will ensure that fee details are disseminated, vetted, discussed, and voted on while school is in session. In order for this new fee to be implemented and the immediate benefits realized, a majority of our students must indicate their willingness to support the fee via a campus-wide vote. This will occur this spring semester in conjunction with the general election of our SGA president and other student representatives.

Given the potential improvements this fee will provide, I would ask for your support of the process as we move forward. We will offer multiple opportunities to discuss this issue in open dialogue, and – as always – I welcome your input and feedback.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. I very much appreciate your helping us ensure that current and future students of Eastern Kentucky University will enjoy the best academic and student life experiences possible. And remember – you can follow these on-going improvements on a daily basis on Twitter @EKUBUILDS.

And finally –

### **Colonels Comply Initiative Promotes Strong Ethical Culture**

As higher education becomes increasingly complex, we must recommit as individuals and as an institution to maintaining a strong ethical culture. Universal compliance with laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures is critical for the future of our institution.

All members of the University community share in the responsibility of compliance. Therefore, we must hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards and aspire to act in accordance with the values of integrity and openness. Our conduct significantly contributes to public trust in our institution and to our reputation for quality and excellence.

To undergird EKU's established policy process, the EKU Board of Regents approved the Colonels Comply program during its June 2014 meeting. Colonels Comply has been implemented this fall to support and enhance compliance with our current policies and procedures as well as with federal and state laws and regulations.

The Colonels Comply program will further EKU's mission and strategic plan by proactively promoting an institutional culture of compliance among students, faculty, staff, and administration through effectively identifying, prioritizing and managing potential violations of law, regulation, and University policy and procedure, and effectively establishing a control environment that reflects the legal and regulatory scheme in which the University is obligated to operate.

The intention of Colonels Comply is to empower all of us to work collaboratively to advance our values by fostering a culture of compliance. This environment is best achieved when constructed upon a strong ethical foundation that supports adherence to the law and institutional policies and procedures while propelling us into our promising future.

One of the key elements of the program is the Ethics and Compliance Hotline. This tool, coupled with compliance risk assessments surveys, educational seminars and other compliance tools, will be forthcoming during this academic year.

To assist the University in this effort, I have asked Dr. Judy Spain, professor in the Department of Management, Marketing and International Business, to serve as Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer. Dr. Spain, along with Beth Ballard, Director of Internal Audit, and Matt Roan, Special Assistant to the President, will form the Compliance Executive Steering Committee. Additional committees, such as the Compliance Oversight Committee and the Compliance Working Group

Committee, will maintain a broad range of University representation and inclusiveness, as we all share in this endeavor.

By working together and supporting one other, our actions can exemplify excellence, and we can pursue integrity in all that we do. Continuing updates on Colonels Comply will be available at [colonelscomply.eku.edu](https://colonelscomply.eku.edu).

Thank you again for your service and best of luck with this exciting new academic year before us.