

TO: Eastern Kentucky University Faculty Senate

FROM: Senator Michael Benson

RE: May Faculty Senate Report

DATE: May 4, 2015

Another academic year comes to a close in less than two weeks. And Eastern is going out with a bang – figuratively and literally.

For the first time in many years, we are planning a University-wide outdoor commencement ceremony, to be held Friday evening, May 15, at 7 p.m. at Roy Kidd Stadium. As you know, each academic college will host its own convocation, either Friday or Saturday.

The Friday night event, at which Lt. Gov. “Crit” Luallen will receive an honorary Doctor of Laws degree and address the graduates, will be capped by a fireworks display in honor of the graduates. In another first, the EKV Aviation Program will lead a fly-over during the ceremony.

This year’s ceremonies will recognize almost 2,800 degree candidates and two outstanding examples of teaching excellence. Our Foundation Professors for 2015-17, Art Professor David Afsah-Mohallatee and History Professor Dr. Tom Appleton will also be honored during the University-wide event. This is the University’s highest such honor, and these two faculty members are richly deserving.

Thanks to all of you for making this past academic year a most successful and memorable one.

In other news from the past few weeks:

Parry Speaks at Eisenhower Presidential Library

If you were tuned into C-SPAN recently, you might have seen one of our own. A C-SPAN crew was on hand when Dr. Pam Parry from our Department of Communication spoke at the Eisenhower Public Library on our 34th president, whom she called the nation’s “most transformative public relations president.” Her book on the subject was published last fall, shortly after Dr. Parry joined our faculty. Congratulations on this accomplishment.

Hartch's Book on Latin American Christianity Earns Second Honor

An ECU history professor's book was recently recognized on a list of 15 outstanding books for 2014 for missionary studies.

The International Bulletin of Missionary Research selected Dr. Todd Hartch's "The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity" for the honor. The same book was honored last year by Christianity Today magazine as the year's best book in Missions and Global Affairs.

Dr. Hartch's latest work touches on the same subject. "The Prophet of Cuernavaca: Ivan Illich and the Crisis of the West" was published recently by Oxford University Press.

National Magazine Touts ECU GURUs as "Model of Excellence" in Student Success

A recent issue of University Business magazine touted our very own ECU GURUs among "models of excellence" for enhancing student success.

Our 30-plus GURUs serve more than 2,000 students daily, answering any and all questions about ECU and campus life. That includes tutoring and other forms of homework help and responding to queries about financial aid, registration, residence halls, and more. They staff three locations on campus, but are also available via Skype, Twitter, Facebook, chat and in person and other settings.

Mock Trial Team Places 11th in National Championship Tournament

Out of more than 600 collegiate mock trial teams nationwide that began the season last fall, ECU's squad finished 11th.

Against some of the best possible competition, Eastern finished with a 6-6 record in the recent National Championship Tournament. Our team began by taking one of three ballots against the University of Arizona, which finished seventh; then swept all three ballots against Ivy League opponent Brown University in the second round. ECU then took two of three ballots from the University of Delaware, the 10th place team, before losing three close ballots to the eventual second-place finishers, the University of California at Berkeley. In all, 48 teams competed in the tournament.

This year's ECU team was composed entirely of Kentucky residents.

Second ECU Student Receives Gilman International Scholarship

More and more of our students are taking advantage of opportunities to study internationally. It was recently announced that a second ECU student had earned a prestigious Gilman International Scholarship.

Senior anthropology major Eric King is headed to Bolivia this summer. Just two months ago, it was announced that junior public health major Tori Caldwell was awarded a Gilman Scholarship to study in Tanzania.

Our campus Office of National and International Scholarships and Fellowships, under the direction of Dr. Minh Nguyen, assists students with the deliberation and application process. The Office offers individual advising assistance to all ECU students in: determining appropriate fellowships or scholarships to pursue, coordinating application materials, selecting recommenders, preparing compelling personal statements, developing project proposals or proposed programs of study, and interviewing.

EKU Wins Category of National Game Day Recycling Challenge

EKU captured first place in the Game Day Basketball Waste Generation category within the national RecycleMania Tournament by diverting nearly 53 percent of all waste when the Colonels hosted Tennessee Tech in McBrayer Arena on Feb. 28.

Eastern edged out Stanford and Clemson to take the top prize in a field of 390 colleges and universities in the nationwide event, which harnesses the competitive energy of sports rivalries to engage students in increasing recycling and waste reduction.

New Coach Leading Basketball Colonels

Not long after Steve Lochmueller was introduced as our new Director of Athletics, he was busy finding the best candidate to replace Jeff Neubauer and lead our men's basketball program to even greater heights. We believe we have just that person in Dan McHale, former assistant coach at the University of Louisville and, most recently, the University of Minnesota.

He comes very highly recommended by all those who have worked with him, including Rick Pitino. In fact, of all the coaching hires made nationwide in the last few weeks, ESPN analyst Jeff Goodman handed out only two A's (well, A-minuses), and our hire of Dan McHale was one. The other went to the University of Texas for hiring Shaka Smart from VCU.

Phase Two of IPEP

I am very pleased to announce that through some savvy and focused budget management and asset allocation by our EKU Finance and Administration folks, we are investing even more funds into our greatest resource: human capital.

Phase II of the Internal Pay Equity Program (IPEP) has been budgeted and will take effect July 1, 2015. Below is a summary of what we have done in the past two years for our EKU personnel in terms of salary increases:

\$3.7 million	2.5% across-the-board increase	Fall 2013
\$500K	Step-in-Grade Program	Spring 2014
\$1 million	IPEP Phase I (29% of total need)	Spring 2014
\$1.3 million	IPEP Phase II (67% of total need)	Summer 2015

The total including the upcoming IPEP Phase II will be \$6.5 million, not including benefits. If one adds a benefits factor of approximately 46% (estimated average), that's an additional \$3 million for a total of \$9.5 million invested in our employees in the past two years.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our students' success and I wish you the very best during the upcoming summer break. As always, I urge you to track what issues EKU continues to face in the coming weeks and months (our next Board of Regents meeting is June 22nd), and we look forward to welcoming everyone back to campus in August. Go Colonels!