

TO: The Eastern Kentucky University Faculty Senate
FROM: Senator Michael T. Benson
DATE: October 1, 2014
RE: September Campus Report

Since my report last month to the Senate, several significant events have taken place, and I am pleased to provide a brief summary.

Programs Approved in Clinical Psychology, Social Justice Studies

Two new degree programs approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education last month are especially appropriate and timely – not only for ECU but for the service region and Commonwealth.

Our new Psy.D. program in Clinical Psychology will address a significant health care void, particularly in rural Kentucky, as it focuses on preparing practitioners to work in underserved rural areas.

Upon its launch in Fall 2015, the program will provide opportunities for specialized training in substance abuse, mental health administration, school-based mental health, suicide risk assessment and prevention, and working with traditionally underserved populations, including veterans and their families, adults and children with developmental disabilities, and individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. Additional specialized training opportunities will include forensic psychology and applied behavior analysis.

Given the challenges and constant pressures on public higher education, I would argue that it is **always** good to be first in the Commonwealth, and this will be the first practice-oriented Psy.D. program at a public university in Kentucky. Spalding University in Louisville offers the only other Psy.D. program in the Commonwealth; the University of Kentucky and University of Louisville offer research-oriented Ph.D. degrees in the field.

Dr. Dustin Wygant will head the program. Incidentally, Dr. Wygant earned another national honor recently. He is the recipient of the prestigious Samuel J. and Anne G. Beck Award presented by the Society for Personality Assessment for outstanding early career research in the field of personality assessment. Dr. Wygant won a similar award from the Society in 2010 when he was selected as that year's John E. Exner Scholar.

Our other new program of note, and another "first" for Kentucky, is a bachelor's degree program in Social Justice Studies.

This interdisciplinary program will critically examine the cultural, economic and political dynamics of societal conflict and struggles for social justice among and between various groups and institutions. The program is housed in our School of Justice Studies but differs substantively from a Criminal Justice and Criminology degree, contending that the study of "justice" goes beyond the study of crime, law and the criminal justice system to place it within a more expansive economic, political and social context.

The CPE has emphasized the importance of preparing students capable of advancing the social, cultural and environmental health of the state, and these two new programs certainly meet that goal. Representatives from ECU were present at the CPE meeting in September at Kentucky State University to address questions and to witness in person the successful approval

of these programs. Congratulations to all who made these new degree programs possible for our students.

Grant, Partnership Enhance Environmental Public Health, Occupational Safety

Eastern also advances the environmental health and occupational safety of the region and Commonwealth through federal grants and partnerships.

A \$247,000 federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has enabled us to launch the Kentucky Environmental Public Health Traineeships Program. This will allow the University to attract more students from underrepresented populations and high-poverty areas into the growing field of public environmental health and, equally importantly, prepare them to work where their services are most needed.

Over a three-year period, ECU's Master of Public Health-Environmental Health Science program will place 42 of its students in local and state health departments in medically underserved regions of the U.S., especially central Appalachia and Kentucky's urban areas.

Dr. Jason Marion is heading this new program.

Further, this past month, an agreement was signed between the ECU OSHA Training Institute Education Center in the Perkins Building and our academic program in Occupational Safety and Health across Kit Carson Drive in the Stratton Building that will give working professionals across the country as well as students the opportunity to enhance their skills while at the same time earning undergraduate credit at ECU.

Our OSHA center is one of only 27 such centers nationwide, and the Occupational Safety academic program is one of our largest, serving more than 600 students in online and traditional campus settings.

Justice and Safety Faculty in National Spotlight

Two of our School of Justice Studies faculty in the College of Justice and Safety were in the national spotlight in recent weeks.

On Sept. 9, Dr. Peter Kraska, professor and chair, Graduate Studies and Research, School of Justice Studies in ECU's College of Justice & Safety, testified at a high-profile U.S. Senate hearing titled "Oversight of Federal Programs for the Acquisition of Military-Grade Equipment by State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies." Kraska testified at the invitation of U.S. Senators Tom Coburn (Republican from Oklahoma) and Claire McCaskill (Democrat from Missouri), both ranking members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

More recently, Dr. Vic Kappeler, Foundation professor and associate dean of the School of Justice Studies, was invited by The White House Office of Public Engagement to participate in a "policy review listening session" and discuss federal programs and policies related to equipping state and local law enforcement agencies.

Both Dr. Kappeler and Dr. Kraska are frequently sought as experts by nationally prominent newspapers and magazines as well as television networks.

EKU-Danville Campus Spearheads Restoration of Historic African American Cemetery

The history behind an historic but long-neglected African American cemetery has come to life, thanks to the hard work by volunteers from the ECU-Danville campus and others in the Danville-Junction City area.

The restoration project took a giant leap forward recently with the donated services of ground-penetrating radar, which allowed volunteers to find even more headstones and vaults.

It all began more than a year ago when the ECU-Danville Genealogy Club adopted the three-acre Shelby City African American Cemetery as a community service project. Since then, more than 150 grave shafts, many of them belonging to men and women who were born into slavery, have been identified. Volunteer hours have totaled well over 1,000, and there's still much work to be done. Workers have come from both our Richmond and Danville campuses.

The project received a major lift with a \$10,000 Regional Stewardship Grant from ECU CARES, the acronym for our Center for Appalachian Regional Engagement and Scholarship in University Programs.

I would like to thank Cindy Peck, director of our Danville campus, who has been the guiding force behind the project.

National Honors Continue to Come to University

National honors continue to come to the University, and one of the latest put our Model Laboratory School in the spotlight.

In its America's Top High Schools 2014 survey, *Newsweek* ranked Model 238th among the nation's approximately 25,000 public high schools, placing it among the top 1 percent in the nation.

Only one other Kentucky school made the list of 500 exemplary schools.

Also in recent weeks, U.S. News and World Report again ranked ECU in its top tier of southern regional universities. Eastern ranks 62nd among 92 universities in the top tier.

And finally, for the sixth consecutive year, ECU has been named a Military Friendly School by Victory Media, ranking in the top 15 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools nationwide that are doing the most to embrace America's service members, veterans and dependents and help them reach their educational goals.

Partnership with NBC Learn Will Also Benefit Local Schools

A launch event will be held on Monday, October 6th, to celebrate a new partnership between ECU and NBC Learn that will benefit not only the campus community but also Model Laboratory School and Madison County Schools.

Eastern is the first institution in the Commonwealth to gift the educational resource to a local school district.

NBC Learn is dedicated to making available on demand to teachers, students and parents more than 12,000 stories from the NBC News Archives going back almost a century. Collections are updated daily with current events, with material from such programs as NBC

Nightly News, The Today Show, Meet the Press and Dateline NBC, as well as the networks of MSNBC, CNBC and Telemundo.

The learning materials are correlated to state standards and the Common Core, and aligned to more than 25 K-12 and 30 higher education collections. The videos are generally short, enabling instructors to engage and enlighten students without spending too much class time.

The NBC Learn collections will be provided through ECU Libraries and available through Internet streaming or via download. They are also accessible as a stand-alone resource or as a Blackboard building block, which allows users to embed videos directly into Blackboard learning management systems.

New Book Club Provides “A New Read” on Diversity

Beginning this week, faculty, staff and students will be getting “a new read” on diversity.

The Diversity Book Club is a new initiative aimed at addressing societal issues and concerns related to diversity, equity and inclusion. It is sponsored by the University Diversity Committee and the ECU Office of Equity and Inclusion.

The first meeting is scheduled for this Wednesday, Oct. 8, from 4:30 to 6 p.m. in the Faculty Lounge of the Keen Johnson Building. The club will continue to meet the second Wednesday of every month, at the same time and location. The club is open to all members of the campus community, and refreshments are provided.

For more information, contact the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

Inauguration Activities Planned

Be watching for more announcements about Inaugural and Homecoming week events. Some of the proposed activities include:

- Faculty and staff luncheon on Tuesday, Oct. 21, at 11:30 a.m. in the Wellness Center.
- Community service projects by our students, also on Oct. 21.
- A presentation by celebrated poet Nikki Giovanni, at 6 p.m. Oct. 21, ECU Center for the Arts.
- Student talent show on Wednesday evening, Oct. 22, Brock Auditorium.
- Groundbreaking for Phase 2 of our New Science Building on Thursday, Oct. 23, at 4:30 p.m.
- Chautauqua lecture by Kenneth Adelman, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, also on Oct. 23, at 7:30 p.m., Brock Auditorium.
- Inaugural ceremony on Friday, Oct. 24, at 4:30 p.m., ECU Center for the Arts; community reception to follow the ceremony.
- Homecoming Parade on Saturday, Oct. 25,
- Football game with Southeast Missouri at 3 p.m. on Oct. 25, Roy Kidd Stadium.
- and, a few weeks later, a concert by Daughtry on Monday, Nov. 10 at the Center for the Arts.

Thanks for your continued service to Eastern Kentucky University.