

Faculty Senate Meeting
September 9, 2013
3:30 p.m.

President's Report

President Benson addressed the Faculty Senate and expressed his gratitude for the invitation and that he intended to make a few comments and then open the floor up for questions.

He reported attending two CPE meetings thus far. At the last CPE meeting, Barry Poynter and Janna Vice were in attendance as the discussion focused on funding models in Kentucky. One particular institution, Northern Kentucky University, is pushing for a particular funding model. President Benson stated he does not think a funding model should be focused solely on enrollment growth, but should be more focused on outcomes and on institutions meeting specific benchmarks.

For new funds that come into the higher education system, one-third of the proposed funding model would be tied to students that represent minority and first generation college graduates, 1/3 would go toward STEM programs, and the remaining 1/3 would be directed toward research. EKU is prepared to be a rigorous partner in the on-going discussion around the funding model.

President Benson noted that, from his vantage point, it is a bit of a challenge NOT to have more latitude relative to the setting of tuition rates. It is the statutory responsibility of the CPE to set tuition. President Benson stated it was not his point to raise tuition, but believes institutions should have more flexibility. Fundraising is a part of keeping the tuition rate down.

President Benson spent some time with Dr. Wade, Dean of Arts and Sciences walking around his real estate. The goal is to tie into Phase II of the Science Building funding request to allow for more classroom and office space.

The date to have the compression and conversion salary data has been moved to January 1 instead of July 1. Dr. Vice and Mr. Poynter are supportive of this time frame. The merit pay portion of this initiative is going to be a little more problematic due to getting in place parameters where staff can be assessed by department and their respective areas. Some departments have a merit pay policy in place. The plan is to distribute the funds to the supervisors and have them distribute the funds based on the established merit pay criteria. President Benson stated he is a big believer in governance at the local level.

On Monday morning, President Benson attended the Entrepreneurial Awards Ceremony in Somerset and saw how important our stewardship in our service area really is. EKU needs to reposition itself and advocate our role. It was evident how much EKU is wanted and needed in that part of the state. President Benson stated we have a lot of work to do.

Forty-one applications have been received for both the Vice President for Student Success and Vice President for University Relations positions. There is a solid applicant pool for both positions. President Benson stated that he wants candidates who represent our student population and administration and restated his commitment to diversity. He reiterated his belief that diversity, broadly defined, is more than just race and encompasses a much broader spectrum.

President Benson opened up the floor for questions.

A statement was made that EKU should go smoke free to provide a healthy environment.

Q: Why do Adjunct faculty who are here one to three days a week and sometimes not teaching every semester have to pay the \$60 parking fee?

A: President Benson stated the Reallocation Taskforce was charged to find ways to look at revenue across the board. The parking fee was one. This may not be agreeable, but it was a decision that came out of the taskforce. There will be the opportunity to purchase a new ECU license plate that will serve as a parking tag. President Benson announced there will be an increase in adjunct faculty pay starting in spring 2014.

Q: Is the 1/3 of CPE funding coming from new monies?

A: The proposed “new” funding model has the allocation tied to the 3 areas defined above but is for additional funds on top of what institutions receive in their base appropriations.

With no other questions, President Benson made a closing statement. Yes, ECU has problems, but we work at ECU and it is a great time to be here. We are reminded when we come back from summer activities why we are in Higher Ed, and it’s to be around young students.

President Benson thanked the Faculty Senate for their dedication and is looking forward to working with them.