

**3 May 2004**  
**COSFL REPORT**  
**To The EKU Faculty Senate**

COSFL met on Saturday, April 17, 2004. EKU members present were Faculty CPE Member Richard Freed, COSFL Representative and Treasurer Carolyn Siegel, COSFL Representative Gil Smith, and COSFL Alternate Nancy McKenney.

It was decided that the first half of the meeting would be spent catching up with what was happening on the campuses, in particular with a focus on budgets, cuts, salary increases, and other important issues. Briefly, all institutions are instituting tuition and fee increases, from around 7 to 10 percent (KSU) to over 16 percent. Salary increases are expected to range from nothing to around 2.7 percent. Health insurance costs vary from no increase over last year to possibly as much as 8 percent more.

The second half of the meeting was spent with CPE President Tom Layzell. These are the highlights.

- He began by saying that he would be meeting with the State Budget Director in the next week to try to get a commitment of support for higher education funding. Without a budget, bonds cannot be issued and several university building projects have been put on hold.
- Earlier this year CPE established three policy groups -- seamless integration for KCTCS degree holders with universities, work force and development issues, and affordability. Affordability reflects concerns as to what is happening with tuition. What isn't known is the extent to which enrollments might have gone up faster without tuition increases. CPE is hoping to come out at the end of summer with policies on affordability. One thing that doesn't get talked about is the real cost of education -- net cost to students.
- With KCTCS' tremendous growth, the system is now caught in double whammy, with tremendous growth plus cuts. This causes great concern for providing services in a situation where budgets have been cut.
- CPE's challenge is to get as much information as possible to dramatize how higher education is being affected by budget cuts -- students can't get classes, can't graduate on time, faculty leaving.
- CPE is working on web portal, Go Higher Kentucky. It is modeled after those of other states and is designed as one-point access for information about higher education. Eventually students will be able to do about anything on the web site, including applying for admission.
- CPE continues to try to educate legislators about the importance of higher education to the state's economy. They went into this session without high expectations (budget problems, new administration, etc).

- Organizationally, CPE has been moved into Education Cabinet. Previously, it was attached to the Governor's Office and worked through Secretary of the Cabinet. In one respect, the move substituted one Cabinet Secretary for another.
- Two initiatives are on tap for this year, (1) developing a new strategic action agenda, particularly focusing on the importance of higher education for commonwealth and (2) a review of the budget process and benchmark process. Are benchmarks aspirational or actual? Once an institution has them, what is done with them? CPE needs to look at if they are used in a revenue-driven model.

A discussion of these issues continued until the meeting adjourned at 12:32 PM. This was the last COSFL meeting of the 2003-2004 Academic Year. COSFL will reconvene in Fall.

Respectfully submitted:

Carolyn Siegel  
EKU COSFL Representative