

1 December 2003
COSFL REPORT
To The EKU Faculty Senate

COSFL met on 15 November October 2003 primarily for the purpose of having CPE President Tom Layzell discuss the higher education budget submitted by CPE to the Governor. EKU members present were Faculty CPE Member Richard Freed, COSFL Representative and Treasurer Carolyn Siegel, COSFL Alternate Nancy McKenney.

An amendment to COSFL's bylaws was proposed that would provide four voting members for the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). This proposal will be considered further at the next meeting.

Responding to issues raised about retirement plans and retiree health benefits, COSFL is in the process of compiling a page of Web site links where information for each member institution can be found. A representative from KTRS be invited to a future COSFL meeting in order to provide information about the state retirement system.

WKU COSFL members are collecting information on academic calendars from member institutions. Some changes are being introduced at WKU that affect faculty schedules. An optional winter term is being developed to allow students to pursue study abroad courses and to allow local businesses to work with the university. This is also seen as an opportunity for the University to accrue additional revenues.

Summer school compensation is a new issue submitted for future consideration.

The resent of the meeting was spent with Tom Layzell, who explained the CPE's "Purple Card" request for funding for 2004-2006. The CPE budget request is now on line, linked from a press release http://www.cpe.state.ky.us/announce/News/release2003_11_04.asp. Some highlights from the discussion follow:

- The benchmark funding model guided the CPE's recommendations. UK is at the middle of its benchmark average for state funding; KSU is near the top. All other institutions are well below their benchmarks. CPE is looking closely at the role of the regional comprehensive institutions. It is requesting \$6 million for the Regional Stewardship Initiative that will foster collaboration between local businesses and organizations and regional comprehensives.
- Determining benchmark institutions is an extremely complex task. Graduate, undergraduate enrollment, admissions criteria, PhD's granted, and many other things, amounting to 15 or 20 criteria, are used to determine the benchmark institutions. In the future, the CPE is going to start looking at expenditures, specifically, at how much is being allocated to instruction vs. other categories.

- Concern was expressed about the different regions of Kentucky competing for funding, interfering with priorities established by the CPE. President Layzell said that the university presidents pretty much agree on the need to stay together, presenting a unified message or set of requests to the General Assembly. He has also urged the legislature to work together, rather than compete. Everyone can benefit if there is a single, thoughtful strategy.
- One faculty member pointed out the huge growth in the number of non-faculty professionals across the board at all universities. Part of this may be accounted for by significant growth in technology personnel, who are high-priced and hard to keep. There is also an increase in the number of associate deans, associate vice presidents, and development professionals.
- Question: Why do legislators not understand the long-range economic benefits of investing in higher education? Layzell: Well, they do understand, but they are dealing with a lot of different concerns. They have people being kicked out of nursing homes; they have to respond to all their constituents, who have immediate pressing needs.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM. COSFL will meet again at the end of January. If there are issues that the ECU Faculty Senate wishes COSFL to address, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Siegel
ECU COSFL Representative