

COSFL Report
Submitted to Faculty Senate November 6, 2006
Representative: Mixon Ware

COSFL representatives met on Saturday, October 21, 2006. Universities represented included: EKU, KSU, Morehead State, Murray State, Northern Kentucky, University of Kentucky, and University of Louisville.

Election of officers was held with the following being elected: Terry Irons, President;; Peggy Pittman-Munke, Vice President; Mixon Ware, Treasurer; Tucker Landy, Secretary.

Representatives discussed establishing a formal mechanism of communication between faculty and CPE staff. The consensus was that a discussion on the COSFL listserv would provide the most convenient means of thinking out a well planned strategy. Particular concern was expressed about the need for input and appeals from departments involving decisions to terminate programs.

CPE Faculty Representative, Mark Wattier reported the following:

The Shared Governance Panel at the CPE Trusteeship Conference was not extremely well attended. In anticipation of this, the proceedings were recorded. After one panelist has an opportunity to revise and extend his remarks, they will available as a transcript. On another issue, CPE President Tom Layzell announced his retirement. CPE Chair Ron Greenberg appointed a search committee, consisting of the CPE Executive Committee, of which Mark Wattier is a member, and the President's Council. Layzell's contract goes to April 15. A replacement is expected by May of 2007 (though, realistically, probably in the summer). COSFL should anticipate taking part in the selection process. Last time, COSFL had a chance to agree upon a set of interview questions; we should be able to do the same this year. Selection of search firms is now underway. Three are to be invited to make presentations to the CPE. It would be helpful for those with any experience with search firms to send comments to Mark Wattier. KRS 164.013, Paragraph 3 lists qualifications for the CPE President, quod videndum est. The lack of any apparent bias toward any region is one of the qualifications. The CPE chair will chair the search committee. Ron Greenberg is finishing up his term as chair of the CPE. In all likelihood, his replacement will be John Turner, whose election CPE Rep. Wattier views optimistically. John Turner has a reputation for studying things closely before commenting. Rep. Wattier also anticipates that relations between the CPE and the Department of Education will improve, but it will take some work. Rep. Wattier is interested in addressing the issue of leadership style in the CPE's president. With regard to the P-16 Council, which is bringing together a number of education organizations to oversee improvements of the primary, secondary, and post-secondary system, there is some interest in developing graduate degrees in education at WKU and EKU. Another area of concern is in encouraging students to pursue the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). The data show that early involvement in mathematics is crucial to getting students into the sciences. NKU's program of distinction in education might be a model worth studying and imitating.

Campus reports:

KSU: our president regularly attends faculty senate meetings, which is quite unusual; tenure and promotion is on hold, which faculty are quite concerned about; domestic partner benefits was voted on by the faculty senate; COSFL members expressed considerable interest in the moratorium on tenure and promotion and its legalities.

Murray State: Dr. Ken Miller is the interim president, but a new president, Randy Dunn, from SIU, is coming soon to step in full time. Law suits are standing with regard to board appointments. Terry Strieter, the faculty regent, has announced his resignation, starting December; an interim will step in; a full-time regent will be elected in spring.

Morehead State: Morehead is undergoing a provost search; the faculty senate is looking at faculty development and workload.

NKU: The domestic partnership issue has been supported by the president; but state legislators are introducing legislation to oppose it; several deanships are undergoing turnover.

UK: a new provost is in place; the Top-20 business plan has been passed with good consultation between the administration and the faculty; the staff has been more proactive on the domestic partner benefits than the faculty, but the faculty senate passed a resolution about two weeks ago; a rule requiring deans to be no older than 65 was revoked, though the Senate Council received some concessions in return that are favorable to faculty concerns; retirement health benefits were threatened, but a revolt by the faculty stemmed the tide. There was further discussion of the ORP issue: institutions are required to support KTRS based on actuarial calculations and universities have chosen to cover increasing costs by reducing contribution to the ORP. KTRS is currently committed to this arrangement until 2018. At ECU, early retirement has been discussed at some length.

U of L: Faculty Regent Bill Pierce reported on the recent vote to implement the policy on domestic partnerships; there was very strong support by the Board of Trustees; only one dissenting voice; U of L is in the midst of several searches for VP and dean positions.

EKU: a provost search is underway; the new business and technology center has been completed and dedicated and a new science center is proposed; a revision of the tenure and promotion system has been passed; a faculty workload study is being done, with special attention to electronic courses; there is also interest considerable in the how ORP costs are covered.