

President's Report  
Faculty Senate  
January 12, 2009

Please accept my greetings and best wishes for a New Year and for a successful and rewarding Spring Semester and my apologies for missing this meeting of the Faculty Senate.

I have accepted the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Commission on Colleges) invitation to serve as the president on the visiting committee to Troy University (Troy, Alabama) in April. As the Senate meets, I will be in Atlanta attending an orientation session with the other members of the visiting committee.

When I came back to work at EKU on an interim basis, there was no plan for Joanne and me to occupy the Blanton House, which has been a condition of employment for all my predecessors since 1912. With the change to my status came encouragement to move into the house for the benefit that accrues to the institution in using the facility for official entertaining and development work. It also has the added benefit (?) for me of being very conveniently located close to the office (perhaps too close). Some modest wiring work in the attic has addressed the life safety concerns and two rooms have been repainted. I have replaced, at my own expense, the television sets in the house and added, again at my own expense, some home theater equipment. Joanne and I are in the process of finishing our move into the house.

The Board of Regents is moving ahead with plans to implement an evaluation of my performance later in this semester. Faculty Regent and Senator Frisbie will, I am sure, describe the current status of that project with you in today's meeting. I look forward to the process, which will include substantive faculty, student, and staff participation.

The economic downturn and its impact on Kentucky's economy remain as concerns. The business of the odd-year, short legislative session will soon be underway. That process will help determine the magnitude of our current year budget reduction. The only real estimates we have is that the range will likely be between two and four percent. There is a concern, as well, for the 2009-2010 fiscal year and the possibility of further cuts. I will continue to keep the University Community advised of the fiscal situation. Coping with this challenge will require all of our cooperative efforts and effective communications. Preservation of our core mission and avoiding forced layoffs by taking advantage of attrition opportunities will continue to be our focus.

You have heard me report earlier that I was planning to visit Korea and China this coming March. I decided to eliminate that trip because of the budgetary situation. Last week, however, I received an invitation from our Chinese partner institution, Liaoning University of Technology,

to participate in a biennial international higher education conference in China in late May of this year. I have been asked to be a presenter at the conference. The invitation included the kind offer to cover my expenses. This would give me an opportunity to visit China and Deagu Haany University in Korea at limited expense to the University.

At an earlier meeting of the Senate, I reported that the Commencement Committee has recommended that we end the practice of holding summer commencement ceremonies. I asked for the advice of the Senate on that matter. The timing is now such that a decision needs to be made. Dr. Piercey can speak to the matter which has budgetary considerations.

Later this week, Robert King will assume his duties as President of the Council on Postsecondary Education. He is the former Chancellor of the State University of New York system and I look forward to developing a positive working relationship with him. Dr. Richard Crofts, who has been serving as Interim President, deserves our appreciation and gratitude for the steady influence his leadership has brought to the CPE and its relationship with the campuses.

One of the things Dr. Crofts initiated has been the inclusion of “good news” reports from each of the campuses in the agenda books for CPE meetings. The following page is the report from ECU that will be included in the agenda book for this Friday’s CPE meeting.