

COSFL MEETING

October 2, 2009

E.K.U Student Services Building

1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

The Coalition of Senate and Faculty Leadership for Higher Education met at Eastern on Oct. 2, 2009. Representatives were present from E.K.U, Morehead, Murray State, Kentucky State University, and also from W.K.U. and Northern (via ITV connection). E.K.U. representatives attending included Mixon Ware, Malcolm Frisbie, Nancy McKenney, and Karen Janssen.

Report from the Faculty Representative to the CPE:

Nancy McKenney, newly appointed Faculty Representative to the Council on Postsecondary Education, reported on the Council's meeting on Oct. 1st. This was a special meeting to allow Council members to discuss the CPE's 2010-2012 "Operating and Capital Budget Recommendation." This budget is still under development and will likely undergo changes prior to its final approval at the November 6th meeting of the Council. It was emphasized by CPE President Robert King that the development of this budget, which is actually an "appropriations request" that will go to the Kentucky General Assembly in Jan. 2010, is a collaborative process involving numerous meetings with presidents and chief budget officers of the state universities and KCTCS. Eastern President Doug Whitlock was present at this Council meeting, and he expressed appreciation for the collaborative nature of the CPE's approach.

The CPE's appropriations request is broken down into 3 categories: 1) Institutional Operating Funds (educational and general expenditures, including faculty and staff salaries, benefits, scholarships, utilities, etc.); 2) Capital Investments (new buildings, renovation of existing buildings, and updating of technology across the system); 3) Agency Operating Funds (funds supporting statewide educational programs such as Kentucky Adult Education, Kentucky Virtual Library, etc.).

The university presidents, their chief budget officers, and the CPE agreed to certain "Points of Consensus" in this process. These included the following:

- a) The operating and capital request will be simple and abbreviated and will include two parts—Base Funding and Capital Investments
- b) Each part of the request will directly advance the goals of the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997 (known as House Bill 1).
- c) No redistribution among institutions of existing institutional General Fund base appropriations should occur.
- d) General Fund appropriations to institutions should continue to be lump sum with necessary accountability requirements. (In other words the CPE will not micro-manage individual budgets.)

Also as part of this process, each university and KCTCS submitted a 2-page “Strategic Initiative Summary” describing what they would do should any additional money become available for higher education in the next biennium. Although it is unlikely that there will be any extra money, it was thought advisable to prepare for the possibility.

As the faculty representative, Nancy McKenney raised a concern that only one university had listed improvement of faculty salaries as a goal in their document. The CPE President had indicated that graduation and retention should be the primary goals and had praised UK’s document which uses the catch phrase “War on Attrition.” McKenney said that while she certainly supports that kind of goal, it should not be forgotten that we must have excellent faculty to achieve this. When salaries at our institutions are below average, it is difficult to recruit or retain the best faculty. Pres. King assured her that every time university presidents gather, they discuss the need to improve faculty salaries. However, he thinks it may be best not to be explicit about this matter in the budget request at a time when numerous people in the state are out of work.

Report from COSFL President on Governor’s Higher Education Work Group:

COSFL President Peggy Pittman-Munke had attended a recent meeting of the Governor’s Higher Education Work Group (HEWG). She indicated that the Work Group has taken stability of funding for higher education “off the table,” apparently because Kentucky universities get at least 1/3 of their budgets from the state, while schools in other states get a considerably smaller percentage. Instead, the HEWG is emphasizing the issues of transfer and financial aid. A consultant named Patrick Kelly, who works for an organization that does statistical studies, was the primary speaker at the Work Group meeting. He talked at great length about “productivity” of faculty (via such means as online classes and large classes). According to his figures, the total cost of a degree at UK is \$60,000; at U of L, \$48,000; at the regionals, \$35,000; and at KCTCS, only \$6,000.

Discussion of Issues to include in a COSFL Recommendation to the HEWG:

The remainder of the COSFL meeting was spent in a brainstorming session on issues and concerns that members feel should be addressed in COSFL’s recommendations to the Higher Education Work Group. President Peggy Pittman-Munke will e-mail a preliminary draft to the COSFL Secretary Nancy McKenney to make sure that all significant issues from our discussion have been included, and then a document will be sent out via the COSFL list-serv for corrections, additions, and comments from the members. The HEWG is supposed to issue its final report on November 1st, so it will be necessary for COSFL to work rapidly in order to have input into the Work Group’s report.

Next COSFL meeting:

The next meeting will be Sat. Nov. 21st at 10:00 a.m., location TBA.

Minutes submitted by,

Nancy McKenney, COSFL Secretary and Faculty Rep. to the CPE