Report on the Board of Regents meeting Mar 6

1. We approved all committee actions from Jan 31. I reported on these during the February meeting of the Senate – so there is nothing new here.
2. Renovation of Health Science Complex. This item was not on the committee agenda of Jan 31, however since the renovation needs to be completed by the start of the fall term, it is a time sensitive item. There were several questions that I could not answer during the SEC meeting, however I now have answers:

The funds up to 1.5 million can be spend on this. The board agenda items stated this came from Academic Affairs carry forward. However this is incorrect. The funds were generated over several years from carry forward generated within the College. Thus spending of these funds is an internal college affair and does not go through the general budgeting process. The reason these funds are collected within CHHS is that the revenue of doctoral programs is protected (by law). These programs must be self-supporting and any excess revenue generated must be used for spending within that program.

The funds are used to convert three classrooms seating 90 students each to two classrooms seating 140 students each –this will allow the nursing program to increase their incoming class. The question at the SEC was: Why not use this money to increase the number of faculty in the program, are smaller classes not better?

There are two answers:

1. Nursing has open faculty positions that they cannot fill due to salary constraints and more demand then supply for nursing faculty nationwide.
2. Currently they already have an incoming class of over 90 students and they teach using two classrooms with one faculty presenter and video conferencing- a situation that is not ideal and may conflict with what accreditation of the nursing program requires. This requires a remedy.

Because of these answers the board approved the renovation project with no opposition.

We also talked about the possibility of a corona viral outbreak in KY and WKU’s reaction to such an occurrence. However the speed of events forced drastic action on us, that at the time of the board meeting seemed still avoidable.

Claus Ernst

Faculty Regent.