



## **Faculty Senate Meeting Chancellor's Report**

**Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

*Kelli R Brown*

### **BUDGET/LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

The State budget was signed into law by Gov. Roy Cooper on November 18<sup>th</sup>. The budget included raises for faculty and staff and renovations for the historic Moore Building, a landmark for Western Carolina University and the community, which has sat dormant for more than a decade. Additionally, the budget provides another \$12 million for WCU critical infrastructure and capital needs. Compensation increases in the budget included a 5% biennial salary increase and bonuses of up to \$1,500. The one-time bonuses were included in the December payroll. The first 2.5% legislative increase, along with back pay for the period of July 1 – December 31, 2021, will be included in the January payroll. The 2.5% increase for the second year of the biennium will be made effective July 1, 2022.

The NC General Assembly will begin its short session later this spring. During the short session, some budget and policy updates will be considered. WCU's legislative priorities will be finalized by the WCU Board of Trustees at the March meeting.

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES UPDATE**

The WCU Board of Trustees met on Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> for their regular quarterly meeting. At this meeting trustees endorsed a schedule of fees and rates for the 2022-2023 academic year that would increase the cost of mandatory athletics fees paid by \$86 a year. The proposed fee increase would be coupled with a significant fundraising campaign to help fund the much-needed renovations to WCU's athletic facilities. The proposal now goes to the University of North Carolina Board of Governors for consideration.

Along with proposed fee increase, the board approved a resolution to allow out-of-state undergraduate students on full scholarship to be treated as in-state students.

Trustees also approved recommendations from a feasibility study for the university's division of advancement to start a comprehensive campaign to raise funds to support academic excellence, the student experience, athletics facilities, and annual funds. These recommendations included additional

support in the areas of staffing, alumni engagement, integrative marketing, and communications and events that promote support of the campaign.

The next meeting of the WCU Board of Trustees will be March 3-4, 2022.

## **ENROLLMENT**

Thank you to all WCU faculty and staff for the hard work you continue to do each semester to support and encourage our students. As we head into the Spring 2022 semester, we already have a good idea of the number of students in general and how many of those students were returning from last semester. We will not have final numbers until census date on Monday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, but as of January 9<sup>th</sup>, spring numbers were as follows:

- Total enrollment of **10,979** students.
- **9,281** of these students are undergraduate students and **1,698** are graduate students.
- WCU also has a total of **10,070** students returning from last semester.
- A total of **1,245** students graduated in December 2021.

## **PERFORMANCE-WEIGHTED ENROLLMENT FUNDING MODEL**

The UNC System Board of Governors is considering significant changes to the current funding model. The Board and System Office hope the new model will more clearly connect to the System strategic goals, enable campuses to generate revenue by improving performance, eliminate tuition as a factor in the model, and provide more equitable funding across campuses for similar instruction.

The concept behind the proposed funding model is an incremental funding model that provides a clearly defined State subsidy for the change in performance weighted, resident student credit hours (SCHs).

Additionally, the proposed changes to the funding model would include summer credit hours, something the current model does not do.

If passed by the BOG and approved by the General Assembly in the short session this spring, the new funding model would go into effect next year.

We will provide more details of the new funding model as they become available.

## **CATAMOUNT VACCINE INFO**

*BOOSTER SHOTS* – Faculty, staff, and students can still register to receive the booster shot on campus by going into their health services patient portal. Those receiving their boosters at WCU’s clinic will not need to upload their booster info, however, those receiving a booster at another provided should upload that info as soon as possible using the vaccine submission link under the “My COVID-19 Vaccinations” tab in myWCU.

*UPDATES TO CATAMOUNTS CARE GUIDELINES* – Catamounts Care Guidelines, including current indoor mask requirements, remain in place through the spring semester as we see cases continue to rise. We encourage the use of KN95 masks, where possible, and faculty and staff can obtain these through their department or office by ordering from Facilities Management. If there are any further throughout the semester, they will be communicated as soon as those decisions are made.

## **UNIVERSITY ACCOLADES/IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY RECEIVES GRANT* — A program to foster the development of future technology entrepreneurs, housed in the School of Engineering and Technology, has gained monumental support through an almost \$1.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation. Over the next six academic years, WCU will use the money for scholarships to recruit 30 students for instruction and support in an educational combination of traditional engineering skills and innovative entrepreneurial and business acumen.

*NEW ASSISTANT VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ENGAGEMENT* — Following a national search, James D. Hogan has been appointed to the position of assistant vice chancellor for engagement at WCU. The appointment is effective starting January 1.

*NEW DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF/EXTERNAL RELATIONS* – Following a national search, Christy Agner, has been appointed to the position of deputy chief of staff/director of external relations, effective, Feb. 1. In this role, Ms. Agner will serve as WCU’s legislative liaison.

*GRANT FOR SUMMER READING PROGRAM* — The N.C. Scottish Rite Masonic Foundation recently awarded the WCU Speech and Hearing Clinic with a \$13,000 grant. The grant will be used to expand the Speech and Hearing Clinic’s summer reading program to help reach a larger number of children with language and learning impairments.

*WCU LIBRARIAN PRESENTED WITH AWARD* — Shamella Cromartie, the associate dean of library services, is the winner of this year’s “I Love My Librarian” Award. Recognized by the American Library Association (ALA) for her inclusive approach to pedagogy and empowering scholarship within the campus community, Ms. Cromartie was selected from more than 1,300 nominations from library users across the country.