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UA3/9 Commencement / China / 2011 Kentucky General Assembly

WKU President's Office

Gary Ransdell

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Commencement/China/2011 Kentucky General Assembly

faculty-all-bounces@lists.wku.edu [faculty-all-bounces@lists.wku.edu] on behalf of Gary Ransdell [gary.ransdell@wku.edu]

Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2010 11:21 AM

To: faculty-all; staff-all

Fellow Faculty and Staff:

As we bring this fall 2010 semester to a close, Julie and I want to wish all of you a safe and warm holiday break. If you travel, please be careful. Enjoy family and friends. Rest well. Thank you for a highly productive semester.

Commencement

A record commencement is planned for this weekend. Graduate students on Friday. Undergraduate students on Saturday. Nearly 1,500 students in all. Thank you in advance to all of the faculty who will participate and the dozens of staff who volunteer to orchestrate such a special ceremony.

China

I just returned from several days in China. Amy Eckhardt, Lindsey Westerfield, and I met with officials at Nanjing University, where our Chinese Flagship students will study. We also visited Nanjing Foreign Language School, China's top high school, where carefully selected superior students go on to the world's best universities. We met with Navitas officials and representatives in Beijing about recruiting Chinese students to WKU. Most of my time, however, was spent at the 5th annual Conference of Confucius Institutes. In nearly every country across the globe, 322 C.I.'s are now doing amazing scholarly, cultural, and social activities. It was an incredible and rich blend of language among institutional presidents and C.I. Directors. A few weeks ago, I asked Dr. Wei-Ping Pan to be an Assistant to the President and advise me on Chinese matters. His ability to read, write, and speak the language and understand the subtle cultural nuances of tradition and business interplay have proven to be most helpful. As Director of our Confucius Institute, he is in daily contact with Chinese officials about what we can and will be doing to build our Chinese programming at WKU. Our Confucius Institute will be emerging as a significant coordinating enterprise, which will help our faculty, staff, and students better understand and embrace the emerging Chinese language, culture, and economy on the world stage. I appreciate Dr. Pan's help which, of course, is in addition to his duties as Director of our Institute for Combustion Science and Environmental Technology (ICSET).

2011 Kentucky General Assembly

When our WKU schedule resumes in January, we will be heading into the 2011 Kentucky General Assembly. It is a short non-budget session, so we do not expect budget actions that will affect us, but we will be seeking authorization for a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree and, of course, tracking any legislation which might affect us in a positive or negative manner.

Again, Merry Christmas to all and Happy New Year.

Go Toppers!

Gary Ransdell