

# Undergraduate Students to Get Free Textbooks with ECU BookSmart

Eastern Kentucky University announced today, for academic year 2021-2022, every undergraduate student will receive their required textbooks for free.

The initiative, called ECU BookSmart, is a new and innovative program developed by ECU and powered by the long-standing partnership between the University and Barnes & Noble College.

BookSmart will provide all required textbooks and course materials for students on all Eastern Kentucky University campuses, as well as eCampus students. Textbooks and course materials will be delivered to students in a customized Big E Box, or they can be picked up at the Barnes &

Noble @ ECU Bookstore on campus prior to the start of classes.

"ECU BookSmart was developed by our ECU team as the first program of its kind in partnership with Barnes & Noble College in Kentucky. With today's announcement, it's undeniable that Eastern Kentucky University is the School of Opportunity," said ECU President Dr. David McFaddin. "Over the last year, we have been focused on adding affordability and accessibility elements to a program we call the ECU Advantage. With the addition of free textbooks to the ECU Advantage, a college degree from ECU is now more accessible and affordable than it has been in many years. We

are investing in our students so they will be prepared to succeed when their classes begin."

"Barnes & Noble College has proudly partnered with Eastern Kentucky University for over twenty years, and we are very excited to support the University in bringing the ECU BookSmart program to life. We know that this program will go a long way in driving affordability, access and achievement for ECU students," said Michael P. Huseby, chief executive officer and chairman, Barnes & Noble Education, Inc. "We believe that all-inclusive course material delivery models are the future of higher education, and with the launch of ECU BookSmart, our partners

at ECU are proving that they are leaders in the education space."

The ECU Advantage, now with the added power of the BookSmart Program, ensures ECU students of a scholarship model that rewards high achievers, helps low-income students, keeps a keen focus on the service region, and does so while continuing to deliver high-quality programmatic offerings that will give graduates the skills needed to power their communities with ECU degrees, and so much more.

"Because of the BookSmart Program, no ECU student will have to drop an undergraduate class because they realize they can't do the work

without the book they couldn't afford to buy," said Dr. Tanlee Wasson, senior vice president for student success. "No ECU student will choose not to take an undergraduate course because the books are more than she can afford. No ECU student will have to weigh the cost of an undergraduate textbook against meeting essential needs like food, housing, or transportation."

"Eliminating financial barriers to success is our job," said Barry Poynter, senior vice president for finance and administration. "We've all seen the national studies showing an average annual cost of textbooks for an academic year at about \$1,200. Removing a barrier to

academic access and student success of this magnitude is opportunity in action. We are directly reducing the cost of attendance at ECU by providing textbooks and course materials to our students, and also providing some additional stability."

The ECU BookSmart program will reduce financial barriers and lead to greater success for our students. All undergraduate ECU students will have the required textbooks and course materials they need to be successful no matter where they are--on campus or online.

For more information about ECU BookSmart, go to: <https://go.eku.edu/books>.

## Ky. pandemic numbers hold mostly steady as vaccine is being shipped

By Al Cross  
Kentucky Health News

The coronavirus pandemic in Kentucky stayed mainly on a slightly downward tick Saturday, as Gov. Andy Beshear and his health commissioner urged Kentuckians to keep observing precautions while vaccines slowly roll out.

"Late yesterday, the FDA approved Pfizer's vaccine for Covid-19," Beshear noted in a press release. "That's great news, but it will still be some time before everyone can get vaccinated and we have to stay vigilant until that time."

He added, "It is morally imperative that we get the vaccine to the most vulnerable Kentuck-

ians first, and that is why we are starting with our long-term care facilities and front-line health care workers. In the meantime, please keep doing what you know is right: wear your mask, keep your distance from others and don't have large gatherings. Together we can defeat this virus."

Beshear said Kentucky's first shipment is expected to arrive early next week. Responding to a New York Times survey, his office said the state would get at least 147,000 doses of vaccine before the end of the year, including at least 38,000 from Pfizer doses and 109,000 from Moderna, which is expected to get FDA approval next week.

Pharmacy chains CVS and Walgreens have national contracts to handle vaccination of residents and staff at nursing homes.

Because the Pfizer vaccine requires ultra-cold storage, only 11 Kentucky hospitals will get it at first; the Moderna vaccine is expected to go to many if not most of the 85 other hospitals in line for vaccine.

The United Parcel Service hub in Louisville, which will handle the shipping of about half the Pfizer vaccines, will start getting them Sunday, WKY reports.

The state reported 3,558 new cases of the virus Saturday, relatively close to the new seven-

day rolling average of 3,244. The percentage of Kentuckians testing positive for the virus fell for the ninth consecutive day, to 8.79%.

"Decreasing statewide positivity rates are encouraging, but they are the result of difficult choices made to decrease spread of disease," Health Commissioner Steven Stack said in the news release.

Among the daily numbers, the biggest change was in the number of Covid-19 patients on ventilators in Kentucky hospitals; it dropped from 253 on Friday to 199 on Saturday, the smallest number since Nov. 20. Intensive-care use and overall hospitalizations declined slightly, to 423 and 1,711,

## Mullen resigns from Estill animal shelter

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He added that other donated funds pay for tools the animal shelter needs. It has also paid for his training the last three years.

Mullen stated that last year, the shelter received over \$20,000 in grants. One was a \$10,000 grant for a spay and neuter program. A \$2,500 grant required a match.

He described one spay program was for mother animals. The pet owner had to turn in the babies to the shelter.

One grant, \$12,500, is already committed for 2021.

County Judge Executive Donnie Watson has also been working on a grant which will install a pet walking trail at the shelter.

The Estill County Animal Shelter is a regional shelter, meaning that other nearby counties bring their stray cats and dogs to the shelter. Those counties pay Estill County for that service.

Mullen's position will be advertised in-house, according to the county's personnel policy. If no current county employee applies who is qualified, the position will be publicly advertised.

The Estill County Animal Shelter remains open. The number to call is 723-3587.

## Ravenna Council met by teleconference

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Flinchum asked about computers that had been purchased through a grant that Michael Gross helped the city obtain several years ago.

Mayor Tipton said there was a laptop in the police department that wasn't being used, and

they would check it out and see if it was in good working condition.

The council agreed to wait until after the first of the year before having the computers looked at that way they didn't lose any important documents such as W-2's.

They also agreed not to

purchase a time clock at this time. Flinchum said with only three city employees at this time she felt like it was a more feasible solution to just use one of the apps that are free to download to keep track of the employees time.

Mayor Tipton said that she had ordered a scraper

blade to be used this winter and that it would be paid for with Municipal Road funds.

Flinchum said that she knew there was a need for the blade but in order to spend money out of that fund a public hearing had to be held prior to the purchase.

## Police Activity Report

Following a traffic stop on Woodspoint Drive on Friday, Dec. 11, **Martin Lee Dixon**, 37, of Woodspoint Drive was cited for no brake lights and operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol.

Irvine Officer Stewart Morris performed field sobriety tests at the scene. The officer said that Dixon was cited and released due to Covid-19 issue at Three Forks Regional Jail. He is scheduled to be arraigned in Estill District Court on January 27.

Officer Jason Conrad served an Estill County warrant on **Jacqueline Coffey**, 32, of Lee Acres Road on Thursday, Dec. 10 on Stacy Lane.

The warrant was for Coffey's alleged failure to

appear.

**Donald Fields**, 59, of Sugar Hollow Road, Irvine was cited Sunday, Dec. 13 with alcohol intoxication in a public place by Det. Sam Hensley.

The citation states that Fields was walking on the sidewalk near the intersection of S. Court Street and Broadway. The detective said that Fields was staggering and appeared to have trouble walking.

Hensley stated that he asked Fields remove his hands from inside his jacket. When he did so, he dropped a large bottle of alcohol that was open. He also dropped a paring knife with a black handle.

The detective also served an Estill County bench warrant on Fields. The warrant had been

issued because Fields allegedly failed to appear in court.

**Caleb Cole**, 27, of Red Lick Road, Irvine was cited Monday, December 7 on Substation Road, Irvine, for first offense unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and drug paraphernalia -- buy/possess.

Sheriff Chris Flynn received a call from Lester Cole that his son had taken the vehicle on Friday, December 4 without his permission and had not returned it.

The sheriff located the younger Cole and the vehicle, a 1994 blue Ford, at 110 Substation Road.

The citation states that Caleb Cole had the keys to the vehicle and admitted to taking it. The drug paraphernalia was alleg-

edly found in an eyeglass case inside Cole's sweat-shirt.

Deputy Brad Smith assisted with this investigation.

**Jesse Rice**, 51, of Pea Ridge Road, Irvine was cited for operating on a suspended license, failure of owner to maintain required insurance, first offense, and no/expired license plates.

Sheriff Flynn said he saw Rice driving a white 2004 Pontiac on Dawes Road on Monday, December 7.

He said a VIN check of the vehicle came back with a title only. Rice was cited to appear in court on December 23.

Deputy Smith also assisted the sheriff in this investigation.



Dear Santa,

Letters to Santa Claus will be accepted by email or regular mail until Friday, Dec. 18.

Please send Santa letters by email to [news@estilltribune.com](mailto:news@estilltribune.com) or mail to:

The Estill Co. Tribune  
6135 Winchester Road  
Irvine, KY 40336

Thank you!