

Comments from Open Forum #5: Our Future Graduates.

(Demographic questions showed a large number of out-of-country students; students who work on campus and off campus; students who work at least 20+ hours and take a full load)

- On campus jobs do not necessarily pay more; off campus job pays more.
- It is a convenience to work on campus and provides the ability to build networking opportunities. I can get recommendations from my supervisors which is great.
- Working on campus helped me get more comfortable with the campus; more connected. It creates a level of belonging and positively contributes to academic performance.
- My on-campus boss is flexible with my schedule.
- I agree that networking opportunities is a great benefit with on-campus jobs, but my experience is that my on-campus job in the library was less flexible with my schedule than my off-campus job.

Do we need more residential housing?

- Yes, we need more residential halls. We have squeezed extra people into rooms as temporary roommates, and it's like that every year. I'm in my fourth year in the halls. The facilities are great.
- I am a commuter student. I applied to be an RA. I would like to be on campus. I'm in a sorority, and we have a Greek floor. It is hard for us to fill the floor because of the cost of the residential housing. The resident hall is more expensive than an apartment. I would like to see better pricing for students.

What is your perception about the quality of student life on campus?

- I am a new transfer student. The main area of the campus closes at 2:00, but I am an evening student. I may not be on campus when things are going on. I haven't had a chance to get involved. My perception is that there's a disconnect between what we say is going on and what really is available.
- I am a graduate student. There is a safety issue on the campus. I would like to talk to someone about it when this is over.

Should we do more to increase the international student population?

- Yes, we should increase. It makes the campus more culturally diverse. It is great to get to know others from elsewhere.

- If we recruit international students, we should include them more in campus activities. They are segregated at Campbell Hall; we need to include them more on the main campus. It's good that we have the TANK to get around; that is a positive aspect.

How welcoming are we to non-traditional students?

- The Latino population is on the rise in the Covington area. There are a lot of nontraditional Latino students here. It is my job to make it welcoming to them, but when they go to class, they don't see diversity among the faculty.
- I want to speak on behalf of the LGBT community. Other groups have office space on the campus, but we don't have space. There's no women's center either. There used to be one but not now. It is important for these groups to have the same amenities as other groups.
- International students are involved in international events. We need an international student Day. That would make them feel more at home.
- The SGA is trying to get an LGBT space in a centralized area.
- I feel that it is different here than at my other university. There were more partnerships between minority centers and with women's center, as an example. I would like to see more partnerships between faculty, staff, and students organizations to make the campus more welcoming.

Is NKU attractive to and supportive of older students?

- NKU is doing a good job in putting the Student Success Center together. Putting services together is a good move. I know that a lot of the 25+ students are parents.
- I am a drama major. The older students have real job experience and they can explain concepts in a different manner than the teacher which is very helpful. In a networking class, an older student will say "look at it this way."

Why do you take online courses?

- I am a senior and have an internship class, so having online courses allows me the time to do more networking at my internship.
- It gives me the opportunity to make my own schedule with 15 hours. It is a huge advantage. One concern, though, with online classes is the fees. Why does it cost more to take online when I don't take up room in the facilities?
- I've had one online course because there was no on-campus version offered. There are some classes that wouldn't work online. You need the time to talk to the professor. Certain kinds of classes would not be amenable to online because you need the face-to-face time.

- When you don't have in-classroom time, you miss out on discussions and the opportunity to know your professor and get recommendations built on your reputation. I hate online courses.
- Online courses are fine with rote memorization, but brick and mortar is more successful for discussions and deliberations.
- You grow from the actual experience of being in a classroom, and online courses will not be able to replace those college experiences. I learn just as much from the "college experience" on campus as I do in my classes.

What graduate programs should we add?

- I am in a woman's study program and plan to go to graduate school. I'll be going to UC because it is offered there but not here. I would love to see it here at NKU.
- Business students are getting MBAs, but an economics master's program is needed and it would attract high quality students.

What can we do to be more efficient?

- In the health and counseling services, I have had to go through long waits. I know a student who was turned away. Mental health counselors are important. We need to increase the number of counselors. Lack of insurance increases the need.
- I'm from Frankfort and I was shocked to see that KSU is second highest (in state appropriations per student). How is funding determined?
- (GM) It is a reflection of historic allocations. We (NKU) are advocating for a new policy on a funding distribution pattern that would be followed.
- I am an informatics major, so that's why I came here rather than UC. The low class size is a positive. But, we have only one section for some classes because there's no one to teach the class; need more sections.
- What is the biggest expense?
- (GM) the largest part of costs is payroll.

How can we do better with academic success?

- A large number of my friends in my freshman year from the dorm, about 20 of them dropped out due to bad decisions. That could have been avoided if we taught freshmen how to budget their time and finances. When we were in the dorm, there were not that many activities on how to make responsible choices.
- You need to look at the disbursement of financial aid. I had a best friend who didn't get financial aid until two months after school started, whereas I know that UK disburses financial aid in two days.

- NKU doesn't have a sense of pride. It's like this is any other university; there's not a sense of it being NKU. We need to raise the level of pride.
- I appreciate seeing these numbers (from the slides). I hadn't seen it before. We need to focus on quality, not quantity. The fact that we don't get enough money, I can't do much about it. But my professors understanding me is what made a difference. It is a matter of quality. We can say we need to hire more professors, but let's sharpen the ones we already have.
- It is a combination of better marketing needed and more clout in Frankfort.
- Once people learn what NKU is, they know it's a good school and they are impressed, but so many don't know about us.
- On student evaluations, students shouldn't be able to opt out of those. The students who complain the most about faculty are the ones who don't complete the survey.

What is your perception of what we do with those surveys?

- I know some professors use the results to make improvements, but some probably don't.
- For recruitment purposes, I had no idea about NKU until my senior year. You need to market to Kentucky students. Make them feel connected with pride. We get a private level education at a public level cost. It is an amazing university.
- Student evaluations should be more than at the end of the semester. Student evaluations need to get to the faculty during the semester. My teachers know me by my first name due to class size. Students should not wait until the end of the semester to rip the faculty apart.
- Quality has not been a problem. I've had great professors. I grew up in Louisville, and you drive around their campus and everything is red; it creates a feeling. Here there is not a connection. It feels like I'm just driving downtown. There's not a single NKU logo on the plaza. Little things add up.
- A lot of marketing needs to intertwine with other areas on campus such as housing. There's not enough room in housing, so it is hard to market outside the area because there's not enough housing.
- People will stay here if they had pride in the institution.
- We need more ways to improve the mindset/attitude of students early on in the experience. I applied to NKU to do general education classes then to go back to California. I have really enjoyed my classes and my professors. We can do a better job of marketing and promoting NKU to others.

What can we do to change the perceptions of parents?

- People call it the concrete jungle. You are improving the look of the campus, and that makes a difference to the people from the outside. Adding the green space that we have has done wonders.
- My mother graduated from NKU and she has more pride now than ever before.
- A lot of it is our history. Our parents grew up in that era and it's a natural evolution of mindset. We need to draw them back in to BOK events and basketball and such so that they can see that we are not just Nunn Hall anymore. Need alumni involvement.
- Get the parents on a tour. Parents are shocked (in a good way) at what they hear on the tours. Educate the parents.
- I am proud to be at NKU, and I buy the t-shirts and bumper stickers. NKU needs a sense of community and pride and that will spread out to our parents. When the students get more involved, that's the best way you can do it (change parents' perceptions).