

Professional Concerns Committee

Minutes for November 6, 2025

Hybrid Meeting (SU 109 and Zoom Conferencing Software), 3:15 pm

Members in Attendance: Deborah Amend, Ali Balapour, Eric Barker, Robert Brice, Ada Cenkci, Whittney Darnell, Gina Fieler, Jaesook Gilbert, Allyson Graf, Shelli Janning, Jang-Chul Kim, Julie Mader-Meersman, Dee Mornah, Jered Moses, Makoto Nakamura, Joe Nolan, Michael Providenti, Tamara O'Callaghan, Kathleen Quinn, Holly Riffe (Chair), Ihab Saad, Catie Shelton, Jessica Taylor, Maggie Whitson, Matt Zacate

Guests in Attendance: Janel Bloch, Chris Curran, Faculty Senate President Jacqueline Emerine, Grace Hiles, Suk-hee Kim, Danielle McDonald

Members Not in Attendance: Erin Kelley, Kurt Sander, David Tataw

1. Call to Order, Adoption of the Agenda
 - The meeting was called to order at 3:15pm.
 - The agenda was amended to include a discussion of posthumous emeritus status.
2. Adoption of the minutes from the October 16 meeting.
 - The minutes for the 10/16/2025 meeting were adopted as distributed.
3. Chair's Report and Announcements
 - Darrin Wilson will attend an upcoming meeting to help us understand what is happening with the budget, including budget options and models.
 - We need to support staff through shared governance and to help staff when they feel they do not have a voice.
4. Emeritus faculty discussion
 - The Departments of Psychological Science and Mathematics and Statistics worked on this proposal together.
 - The proposal is to expand the current emeritus process in the Handbook to include deceased faculty. Currently, the Provost can address this on a case-by-case basis. A Handbook change would formalize a process for faculty.
 - The criteria for emeritus status will not change.
 - This will be on the agenda for a vote in the next PCC meeting.
 - Discussion:
 - Edit: Two periods should be moved within quotation marks.
 - Request to add the title Emerita in addition to Emeritus. The selection of the title would be a choice. Response: Adding Emerita will be added as an agenda item for PCC in the next calendar year.

5. Wrap-up Current Discussion on Policies

- Update:
 - Housing remains at mandatory one year instead of increasing to two years
 - Dress Policy deleted examples
 - ADA Policy (policy seems fine, some questions on procedures. Please see Faculty Advocate for HR ADA issues)
 - Security Cameras: reviewed, microphones are not used
- Discussion:
 - ADA Policy, for faculty – there are no instructional spaces on campus that allow the technology provisions in the room to be accessed from a seated position. Adaptive technology (wireless keyboards and mice) go missing or need parts. NKU IT provides support within their mission. Requests for this to be addressed go back to fall 2023. Adjustable chairs to reach the podiums to not work for people in mobility devices (like scooters). There is a faculty person who will volunteer to demonstrate this. Multi-height tables and height adjustable podiums could help.
 - Suggestion to involve Mary Paula Schuh and Amy Gellen in this discussion.
 - Request to include faculty, staff, and students with disabilities in the discussion.
 - Subcommittee formed including Deborah Amend, Ali Balapour, Shelly Janning (Chair), and Kathleen Quinn.
 - This subcommittee will investigate space in buildings and classrooms.
 - Suggestion to have a long-range plan to make all classrooms and buildings with universal accommodations/accessibility. In the interim, allow and/or map/upgrade a minimum number of classrooms per building and give priority scheduling to faculty needing accessible room.
 - More than just ADA, this will also help to accommodate people with various body types.

6. Chris Curran: Update on NKU Strategic Planning efforts

- The first year of planning was to develop a plan with a deadline to have this approved by the board last summer. At that time there were forums and surveys.
- At that time there was a push to talk about holistic budgeting and connect the plan to the budget.
- This semester there is an attempt to connect the plan to metrics. However, the plan goes to the administration and comes back to the committee in a new version.
- The plan does not have a metric for fundraising. This should be a priority given the situation with state and federal budgets.
- As a non-profit, NKU files 990s. NKU's Foundation in 2023 has \$135M in that account. This is not the "rainy day fund."

- Problems with the new technology for admissions: 1) applicants get stuck and then we lose them and 2) fake applicants get into the online programs and file fraudulent FASFAs.
 - Explanation of the fake applicant situation: This is happening at institutions across the country. People are stealing identities and enrolling in online undergrad programs (because grad programs require transcripts). They stay in the class long enough to get funding. There is a team at NKU verifying applicants. If you have suspicions about an enrollee, send that to Logan Pendleton in Undergraduate Admissions. The Provost's Office will share information about what to look for.
- Where does leadership envision athletics fitting into this strategic plan? Athletics has been considered separately. 82% of Athletics budget is from NKU institutional resources – this is the highest in Horizon League. Other teams range from 7% to the 70+%. The problem is being able to afford NKU's academic mission – academics should be funded before putting \$14M into athletics. Money from athletics could be reallocated to academic departments; we don't want to see 250 students in a class.
- Advisors have 250 students. Midterm grades are required so advisors can see a student's progress. But advisors start advising as soon as a schedule is available and not enough work has been graded by midterm to demonstrate a student's progress anyway. The timing may work with some students/advisors in some classes. Why not give faculty \$500 to advise their 20-25 students?
- The plan says we offer a competitive salary and benefits – how is that being supported?
- Not sure if tiered parking will happen. Why not pay enough so employees can afford parking? The tiered parking is not based on a percentage that would increase based on amount earned in which the highest paid person would pay the most.
- Why not have a professor of strategic planning from the college of business to help plan the coordination and alignment of the plan?
 - This is what we pay administrators to do.
- Some large organizations have what they call a "placemat," and the strategic plan must fit within it. It would be focused, and responsibility could be mapped to the plan.
- What happens when the Strategic Planning group reports misalignments in the plan? A: The Director of Institutional Planning will listen. I'm not sure what happens after that. One of the biggest problems in that the University President is no longer attending the meetings.
 - Faculty Senate President will ask the University President to attend Strategic Planning meetings.
- Where is AI in this plan? There is no overriding university AI policy. CETI and COI/IT are trying to come up with an AI policy. Policy should come from faculty.

- There is a legal threat because students are pasting copyrighted materials into Chat GPT to produce essays. The library needs a policy about this.
- In the recent article in the Northerner, students complain that policies differ from class to class. However, most policies differ from class to class (e.g., makeup exams).
- This should be tied back to the NKU Honor Code. This has happened in some departments, but it needs to happen in one place for the whole university. What was put in the university common syllabus does not work for all classes.
- There is a university AI policy plan in the works. There is input from Denise Robinson, IT, and Steely Library.
- Faculty are struggling with AI right now. Faculty from COI have not been brought into the discussion for their expertise. There are policies at other universities we could review, and there is Harvard's AI Pedagogy Project (<https://aipedagogy.org/>).
- There was a discussion about calling out AI in the strategic plan, but the language used was more general "since there is always going to be new technology."
- Vice Provost Danielle McDonald will be the point person to pull together the various groups (e.g., IT, library, COI) regarding AI policy.

7. Old Business

- None at this time.

8. New Business

- Next Meeting: Darrin Wilson, MPA Program Overview of current budgeting process and other models

9. Announcements

- The December 4 meeting will likely be cancelled.

10. Adjournment (4:34pm)

Submitted,
M. Providenti, Secretary