

Members present: Tina Altenhofen, Amanda Andrews, Nick Bliven, Amy Clark, Courtney Clark-Rankin, Vicki Cooper, Jennifer Davis, Kyle Dorriere, Liz Futscher, Ali Hannig, Kristi Horine, Mike Irvin, Dan Jones, Beth Lackey, Aaron Luken, Michelle Melish, Catherine Schmeal, Connie Seiter, Steve Slone, Terri Smith, Vanessa Steele, Julianne Stockman, Teresa Walker, Terkerah Washington, Brandon Weinell, Kimberly Wiley, Carolyn Willhoit, and Christopher Witt

Members absent: Kristi Bishop, Chris Bowling, Sara Conwell, Bryan Irby, Christina Knight, Brenda Maldonado, and Kara Olding

- I. Call to Order at 1:01 PM
- II. Voting Item new member: Aaron Luken (to replace Autumn Ruehl)
Approval: Voice Vote
- III. Guests – Valerie Hardcastle, Vice President for Health Innovation (Moved to May Staff Congress Meeting)
At 2:00 PM – Cady Short-Thompson, President and Grant Garber, VP Legal Affairs/General Counsel - [Report](#)
- IV. Approval of February 13, 2025 Minutes
Motion: Connie Seiter
Second: Ali Hannig
Approval: Voice Vote
- V. Liaison Reports
 - Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Office – Lauren Franzen - [Report](#)
 - Faculty Senate – Budget Committee Chair – Dr. Janel Bloch - [Report](#)
 - Board of Regents – Staff Regent – Dr. Cori Henderson - [Report](#)
 - Student Government Association – Collin Jarrell - [Report](#)
 - President's Report – Vicki Cooper - [Report](#)
- VI. Standing Committee Formations:
 - Benefits – Ali Hannig - [Report](#)
 - Constitution & Bylaws – Michelle Melish and Chris Witt
 - Credentials & Elections – Sara Conwell and Vanessa Steele - [Report](#)
 - Outreach – Terri Smith - [Report](#)
 - Policies – Courtney Clark-Rankin and Kyle Dorriere
 - Scholarship – Kristi Bishop and Steve Slone
- VII. University Committees:
 - Benevolent Association – Kimberly Wiley - [Report](#)
 - Food Service Advisory – Michelle Melish and Nick Bliven
 - IT Advisory Committee – Dan Jones
 - Sustainability – Amanda Andrews
 - Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews - [Report](#)
 - Transportation – Chris Bowling
 - Parking and Tuition Waiver Task Force – Mike Irvin and Steve Slone - [Report](#)
- VIII. Ad-Hoc Committee
 - Roundtable- Amanda Andrews - [Report](#)
 - Spirit Wear Storefront – Mike Irvin
 - Advocacy- Vanessa Steele
- IX. Old Business

- Spirit Store and Fish Feeders – Mike Irvin - [Report](#)
- X. New Business
- XI. Non-Member Discussion Period - [Report](#)
- XII. Norse Uppecciation - [Report](#)
- XIII. Announcements
 - Fuel Produce Pop Up April 29th and 30th 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM Student Union Plaza (Weather Permitting) Volunteers requested email blivenn1@nku.edu. - [Report](#)
- XI. Adjournment at 2:59 PM
 - Motion: Amanda Andrews
 - Second: Mike Irvin
 - Approve: Voice Vote

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM.

Cady Short-Thompson, President and Grant Garber, VP Legal Affairs/General Counsel

Cady Short-Thompson shared that she was joining us after racing across the city after giving a speech at the Cincinnati Country Club. If anyone lives on or near 71 there is literally 40,000 pounds of cheese on the highway. A rare day indeed when you can state that there are traffic slow downs because of cheese on the highway. She asked Grant Garber to join her and us to answer any questions that we have about House Bill 4 and other activities that are happening right now in the context in which we find ourselves. Right now, we find ourselves in the gathering phase where our goal is to create a document to guide our next steps as to what is in bounds and what is not surrounding the new law. Leadership is being asked for crisp, clear guidelines or principles moving forward because we can't necessarily expect to answer every single question that may come up. There are certainly a number of things that we feel confident saying it is fine to do. She opened the floor up for any and all questions. Ali Hannig gave a comment thanking Cady for the announcement about summer fun Fridays and how it is a good perk that we all appreciate. Cady encouraged all of us to carve out a little extra time with family and friends during these early Friday closures. Vanessa Steel asked if this new law would have any impact on us being closed for Juneteenth? Cady responded that typically the university builds this academic calendar over what are nationally approved holidays. As of this moment there has been no announcement of any change and since it is on the academic calendar we are sticking to it. Steve Slone shared a question sent to him. With the proposed organizational changes in Academic and Student Affairs when are those slated to go into effect? There will be a message coming from Diana's office which invites all of us to provide feedback. There is a deadline she believes to be 2 weeks from now. Currently they are working on next steps around internal searches for positions so it is in our best interest to move faster to get people into the right seats sooner rather than later. With Jason Vest's impending departure and with Sam Langley already gone we should move quickly. Watch for that message soon. Steve continued how will the May deadline related to the modification of the Center for Student Inclusiveness be affected by these changes? Cady responded that the May deadline is

one that we as an organization set. June 30th is the legal deadline, so the May deadline gives us time to have everything in place. Our new Vice President of Student Affairs Brandon Thompson arrives on Monday. He arrives with all sorts of hopes and ambitions and a long list of things to engage in immediately. His presence in these conversations is going to be critical. Job number one is to reorganize that part of the work in terms of how we'll serve our students. It is Cady's hope that we will have a good amount of clarity around this new law but there are a number of moving parts and pieces. If we have to tweak that deadline for them to get it right, we will do that. We are a big ship, and it takes a lot to turn the ship. For us to really sort through all the websites and the processes it takes some time. She mentioned on Tuesday the core value work which several groups are working on. Within the next week watch for a survey out to all of campus that gives choices for us to vote on. A simple majority winner and we can move forward with some of what she is calling more simple substitutions. As people are having questions, please forward those to president@nku.edu and she will share them with the cabinet. There is a small working group with Grant Garber, Diana McGill, Eric Gentry, sometimes Chris Calvert and others sifting through all of this. There is a long list of questions that they are working through. The goal is to have cabinet speak in one voice. The last thing we want to do is confuse anyone. The goal is consistency in the message. The internally set date can tweak the June 30th date cannot. We are trying to get as much accomplished, especially with faculty, before folks leave for the summer months. Steve Slone shared another question that was sent to him. Regarding House bill 30 does NKU have an idea how this will affect staff with the possible removal of pension spiking. Cady differed to Grant Garber. Grant was not in a position to give an informed answer on this one at this point. They will research this law and follow up with us. Cady encouraged us to send a message to president@nku.edu so that they are able to follow up on that one. Lauren Franzen shared that HR reached out to KPPA to try to get some clarification about what this will really look like for us, but we do not have that clarification yet. Vanessa Steele asked while on the subject of other bills one about opening up to other university in Kentucky to create PHD programs. Even though it's really early this is something that we could have on deck that affects us. Cady responded that several months ago she was asked if we wanted to add additional doctoral programs, particularly research doctorates, which are outside our current scope of degree offerings. At that time, she queried the Dean's council and the Provost and really there wasn't a major request from us. To be candid doctoral programs are expensive and unless we have one that makes sense for demand for our region she doesn't see a need at this time. Just because others in the state have moved forward does not mean that these programs will succeed. By taking on these other programs they also have to go back through CPE. They have to demonstrate higher retention rates and there are other hurdles that they will navigate. She can't really predict the future but it is our job to be mindful of what is the workforce need for us. If we find that there is a need for new degrees, we can certainly revisit that at any time. Being completely honest the focus right now is on getting us healthy and being in a more positive state in terms of having the right infrastructure. At this moment we aren't looking to add something that adds complexity and expense. She recently has had conversations with the CPE President and he's really positive about the fact that we are

living into our mission. We are really delivering student success outcomes better than many of our competitors. He seems really impressed that rather than reach for some things that we've never done that may or may not be needed or successful we are really doubling down on what we do well. Cpe will be visiting campus this month and we will be showing off items such as the simulation center and informatics. A question came through the chat if Cady would speak to what she means by getting us healthy. Cady responded it is really that strategic plan that we have in front of us. We all know that we've been financially unhealthy over the last few years and frankly we also have a lot to do as it relates to building and infrastructural health. Continuing with our health around remuneration and the sense of community on campus. We are getting pretty nicked up right now from a lot of things that are contextual. These are some items that we have to heal from and walk through together. She would argue all of us recognize things that we wish were better. That is the focus for the next 3 years. Over that time frame we will re-cement our foundation. When she arrived on campus, we were really wobbly on our base. We had a deficit, and we had all sorts of issues around remuneration and morale and some of those things are still there. We need to get to a position where we are not just sustainable but healthy. There is a lot of work that we need to do about identifying ways to make us healthier. Steve Slone shared a question that came to him directly. How is NKU investing in professional growth of its staff? Are there plans to expand training or advancement opportunities across different departments? Cady expressed an interest in having a big conversation about this with all of us. Obviously, we provide a number of training opportunities in ways that provide professional development. She wants all of us to engage in the conversation of what do we need more of. She has a fledgling idea based on a significant conversation with the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce on the possibility of creating a public private partnership creating a center for future leaders at Northern Kentucky University. This could serve external populations but also hold a certain number of spaces for faculty and staff. The idea being to bring in coaches and leadership mentors. Focusing on all kinds of leadership including civic leadership, school board leadership, planning commission leadership, leadership within their organizations just to name a few. Maybe this could be an interesting opportunity for Vicki and others to ask some questions around what is working well here in professional development and what kinds of investments and programs you would like to see. Amanda Andrews shared that a lot of staff find that faculty are paid when they take these institutes but staff even if they teach are not eligible for it. Vanessa Steele continued that anyone who is not under a 12-month contract which includes all staff and faculty who are chairs, for example they are not eligible for these stipends for completing training through SETI. Marquita Barron added a link for a survey about what we are all looking for in terms of training and development.

<https://inside.nku.edu/hr/traininganddevelopment/personalprofdevelopment.html>

Lauren Franzen asked for clarification in that it was her understanding that stipends were given for faculty that didn't normally work over the summer if the institutes were in the summer. Vanessa Steele continued that the stipends are given for the fall and

spring as well. A possibility to examine and look at ways to incentivize employees for undergoing training. Leadership in the College of Business are in these conversations about the leadership institute. Once we've got the funding secured, we can flesh out what the path could look like. Steve Slone highlighted the work that Marquita does in Training and Development and all the great work that she does. He continued that a great deal of the conversation centers around this idea of promotional pathways. Faculty have a tenure track and there is a set promotional pathway while on the staff side even if you complete an advanced degree there is no real incentive that is tied to this accomplishment. Steve concluded by taking the opportunity to thank both Cady and Grant for their wording on the message that went to campus about House Bill 4. He truly does feel that we are in good hands while we are in these choppy waters. Thank you both for your candor and your words. Cady reiterated that if you have questions keep sending them her way. You can also send questions to Vicki and Cori Henderson. There are regular leadership meetings, and these folks are involved in these conversations. We are going to keep building the plane as we are flying it. There are upcoming forums that are happening that are earmarked for faculty, but staff are encouraged to attend those as well. They were created with faculty in mind because a great deal of questions about the plan going forward were coming from the faculty asking what is safe to say and teach and what's not. The ultimate goal is to create a document for members of the campus community to reference going forward. Cori Henderson asked since there is a lot of conversation about being intentional with our training for faculty and staff, are we planning to create similar documents in training for the students? For example, she knows that we are going to ask student groups to take on a larger role in some of these activities. Cady responded for sure. They in many ways need to be last in part because we have to train ourselves first and some of this work will be taking place over the summer. We will do that work and then there is no question that we will need to move to students. We will have to train the faculty and staff advisors of student organizations. Not only will we need to train student leaders but anyone who needs to learn from us about our sort of new norms. We hope to have it be simple regardless of the organization so that anyone can make heads or tails of what we are conveying to them. That will of course be in August. We may involve leadership of student organizations a little earlier to ramp up for fall. Cori specifically highlighted the Rocks program that does a lot of work during the summer. Cady concluded that there could be a series of things like acts of a play. We will lean on the Center for Community Connections as they will be in the position of training the trainer. Vicki Cooper highlighted any training that would be needed to go to student workers as they are often the front-line workers in many of our areas. Cady turned to Grant if anything comes to mind as he hears that question. Grant stated that we will certainly consider that as we move forward. His first reaction is that so many of the types of things in the legislation are frankly higher-level decisions that must be made or must be avoided. He is unsure if most student employees probably exercise enough discretion in their university employment that they would be touching any of those areas. Certainly, though we will double back and think through that and make sure that we've got our arms around it. Cori Henderson followed up about the Center for Community Connections and if we are bringing student voices into those conversations as well. Cady shared that there are

some meetings forthcoming with Diana and Brandon with that group to answer questions and hear concerns going forward. No question there will be student voices in those forums and that process. Yes, is the quick answer but it's complicated and it's going to take a lot of listening and then trying to figure out how to create our new reality in a way that is compliant with the law. Cady encouraged all of us to give each other some grace and patience as we navigate all the new ways of doing things.

Administrative Liaison – Lauren Franzen

Lauren shared the following...

Notes

If there is anyone affected by the flooding and needs assistance, please contact Lauren

Training

- For all employees who have yet to complete the 2025 Annual Compliance Refresher Training, the course is still available to access and complete within [Vector Solutions](#), which is our third-party compliance partner. The ask is for supervisors to ensure that their direct reports complete the course at their earliest convenience. Completion of this course will also be important for the 2025-2026 Staff Performance Evaluations.

For employees new to NKU on or after November 1, 2024, they are to complete the assigned new employee compliance courses and not the 2025 annual refresher.

- For staff members and supervisors of staff, please be sure to note the deadline to have the 2024-2025 performance evaluation completed and submitted to HR via Qualtrics, which is by May 30.

For employees new to their role (whether new to NKU or seasoned employee transitioned to a new role) on or after November 1, 2024, the 90-day performance evaluation must be completed instead of the annual performance evaluation.

- For information and resources on either the compliance courses or performance evaluations, go to the [HR Training and Development](#) website. Contact Marquita Barron for any questions.

Benefits

Patty spoke to the Staff Congress Benefits committee about the Retirement Super Catch-Up provision for those employees age 60-63. (only voluntary plans)

What is it?

Section 109 Super Catch-up provision for retirement plans. This is part of the Secure Act 2.0 passed by Congress in 2022.

SECURE 2.0 introduced a new provision, effective for 2025, allowing participants in 401(k), 403(b), and governmental 457(b) plans to make higher catch-up contributions if they are ages 60, 61, 62, or 63 during the year.

It's a special retirement savings boost for people aged 60 to 63, allowing them to contribute even more money to their retirement than usual.

💰 How much more can you contribute? (As an FYI: This is for the voluntary retirement plans.) Normally, if you're 50 or older, you can make "catch-up contributions" of \$7,500 on top of the standard limit.

From age 60 to 63, starting in 2025, you can contribute up to \$11,250 in 2025. So instead of a \$7,500 catch-up, you'd get \$11,250 during those 4 years. (May be adjusted in future years based on IRS guidelines.)

📅 When does it start?

This rule comes from the SECURE Act 2.0, and it kicks in starting in 2025.

HR will be sending out targeted communications to eligible employees in the next few weeks.

Wellness Updates:

1. Cat is back! Cat Schmeal will start teaching Faculty/Staff Yoga again this summer, May 14 - August 16, 12 - 1pm in HE 125. Details and registration at nku.edu/wellness on Upcoming Classes and Events page. Stay tuned for an update about fall yoga classes.

2. Check out the new Quality Healthcare with UMR web page highlighting programs for ongoing condition care, NurseLine and chat service, maternity care, digital resources, mobile apps, and quick care that provides guidance on when and where to seek care for a variety of issues, so you don't waste your time and money. Under employee services on the University wellness page.

Faculty Senate Liaison – Dr. Janel Bloch

Janel Bloch shared that Faculty Senate met on March 31st and approved some changes to the foundation of knowledge. The biggest change was slightly increasing the number of courses that were being counted. This change will allow maybe one or two more courses, but we already were over the limit that existed anyway. They also approved a revision to the research misconduct policy. This was a small revision about text recycling. If you are writing a paper, you might want to repeat your method section from

previous papers. This was an edit to reflect this change. They also discussed the alcohol, hazing, and drug policy that was up for review. They will have to vote on those in Faculty Senate because they are in the faculty handbook. They've always been in the faculty handbook and for changes to be reflected there they have to be approved. She has also been working on the budget survey. The main question that is relevant right now is how the salary increase should be handled. Just as a quick preview their results show that 36 percent favored the flat percentage and 64 percent favored something else. There is also a section ranking priorities and the top three responses all had to do with compensation. She believes that 80 percent of those who responded ranked cost of living increase as the top choice.

Board of Regents – Dr. Cori Henderson

Dr. Cori Henderson began by thanking everyone who was able to make it to today's staff appreciation breakfast. We acknowledged she believes over 20 nominees for the Regents Distinguished Service Awards. It is always fantastic to be able to acknowledge folks hard work here on campus. We awarded these awards to 3 worthy recipients. We also honored individuals who have reached milestones within service to the university as well. Kudos and congratulations to everyone! The next Board of Regents meeting is June 11th. At this meeting we will approve the overall budget for NKU. We will be approving and voting on the 3 percent raise that is proposed. The board doesn't really get a say into how we decide to distribute that raise but she welcomes all our discussion around the surveys which are being completed. Undertaking these conversations makes for informed decision making from all parties. Also, at the June board meeting they will approve the final Academic Affairs reorganization. She also gave a special shout out to Human Resources for all the hard and amazing work putting on the breakfast. Thank you all for the hard work you did to make it happen.

SGA – Collin Jarrell

Collin Jarrell shared that SGA did have elections in March. He is happy to report that he was elected as SGA President for next year and will be joining Cori on the Board of Regents. Kyah Smith was elected Vice President of SGA. She attended the Roundtable event, and she will be taking Collin's place as liaison for Staff Congress. We are all encouraged to give her a hard time when she first attends one of our meetings. He went on to share that they have several senate positions still open. They can have up to 30 senators and can elect 25 a semester. This go round they elected 7. They still have lots of room to fill so if you know of any students who would possibly want to get involved with us reach out to them. The student body has voted on updates to the SGA constitution. This will enable them to have college representation for senators much like Faculty Senate does. They will have 3 senators from each college, 10 at large senators, and then 5 first year students. The hope is that they will get a little more representation and build more relationships with the academic side of the house. The aquatic life feeders were installed. Thank you so much to Mike Irvin and Amanda Andrews. There was a grand opening event recently. There are so many fish in the lake. Currently they have been removed for caulking work to ensure that water does not get in to make the food soggy. Mike Irvin shared that with all the crazy rain we've been having caulking

them will be necessary. We are coming into a couple of days where more rain is expected so now is a good time to get them and do the necessary work. He reached out to Collin and Lucy just to let them know that they weren't stolen, we have them and will get them squared away. Collin concluded with one more huge shoutout to Mike Irvin and Amanda Andrews for all their hard work in getting things rolling. Vicki Cooper thanked Collin for all his hard work being our liaison to SGA and that we will miss him in our meetings. Collin stated that maybe he would be lucky, and Kyah couldn't make it to a meeting, and he will fill in.

President - Vicki Cooper

Vicki Cooper shared extensive discussion on our recent Budget Survey. This includes recommendations from Chat GPT and Claude AI systems interpreting the data.

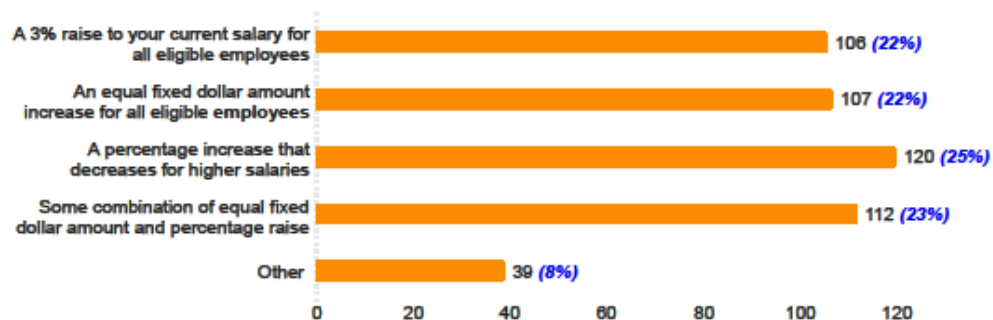
(The survey is available on the Staff Congress Website on our Roundtable and Surveys page. <https://inside.nku.edu/staffcongress.html> The survey is saved in our files and can also be obtained by reaching out to Staff Congress secretary Steve Slone.)

2025 Budget Survey - Staff Congress Report Respondents: 484

Priority Ranking for Funding

Field	Median	Mean	Variance
Provide cost-of-living raises for staff and faculty	1.00	1.62	0.92
Address salary equity/compression issues for staff and faculty	2.00	2.70	2.30
Provide merit raises for staff and faculty	3.00	3.12	2.26
Add additional staff and faculty positions in areas that are understaffed	4.00	4.30	2.38
Promotional paths and opportunities	5.00	5.18	2.94
Increase funding for technology replacement and improvement	6.00	6.30	1.55
Increase employee tuition waiver benefit	7.00	6.18	2.72
Increase the amount of department/school professional development/travel funds for staff and faculty.	8.00	6.60	2.50

Salary Raise Option



Steve Slone thanked Vicki Cooper and Amanda Andrews for their hard work putting the survey together. Vanessa Steele echoed this thank you. Vicki Cooper thanked all of Staff Congress for using our channels to drive such an incredible response rate to the survey.

Staff Congress Standing Committee Information

Benefits – Ali Hannig

Ali Hannig shared that some individuals might get emails about being able to contribute more to their retirement plans. It was discussed in the Council of Chairs the status of the vacation and accrual policy that was put forth by Staff Congress and benefits last year. Cady has signed the policy so it's now officially up on the policy website. The crux of the policy change was that if someone leaves the university and returns to work here your vacation accruals won't start back at the beginning, and you are able to maintain the accruals you've earned for your entire time of service. Ali thanked all of Staff Congress for their hard work getting that policy change implemented. All other benefits updates are in Lauren Franzen's report.

Credentials and Elections – Sara Conwell and Vanessa Steele

Credentials & Elections Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 03/20/2025 / 1:30pm / Zoom
Present: Tina Altenhofen, Sara Conwell, Beth Lackey, Vanessa Steele, Teresa Walker
Absent:
Guests: Grace Hiles

Highlights to be shared:

- Reviewed the current nominations – currently 26 nominations (25 vacancies)
 - Nominations close tomorrow
- Next step is to confirm eligibility with the nominees, confirm division representation (can use HR report to help), and connect with nominees
- Once the new reorganization has been completed, the C&E Committee may need to review division structure for future election cycles (during the fall semester)
 - Some staff (19) do not have divisions assigned to them
- Nomination and Election timeline finalized
 - Nominations: March 7-March 21, 2025
 - Election/Voting: April 11-April 25, 2025

Other Discussion:

- May schedule an additional committee meeting before elections begin to finalize

Next Meeting: 04/17/2025 / 1:30pm / Zoom

Outreach – Terri Smith

Terri smith shared that the annual picnic will be on Thursday, August 7th at the Campus Recreation Center. We will be able to use all the equipment contained therein including the pool, pool tables, ping pong tables. Any gym and the auxiliary gym as well as the outdoor areas will be reserved for us. So far, we will have Knoa Ice and the inflatables including the bounce houses booked. The food will be Chartwells food. Check your email later this month for a save the date. Right now, we are seeking internal and external donations from various businesses for

raffle prizes. More updates are forthcoming as the planning continues. Vicki Cooper thanked Terri and her entire team for the hard work that is being done on planning the picnic.

University Committees

Benevolent Association – Kimberly Wiley

Kimberly Wiley shared that the soup and dessert cook off is scheduled for Tuesday, April 20th. We now have 10 judges. As of yesterday, we have 15 soups and 8 desserts, so we still need some crock pots of goodies. Watch for an email and if you feel inclined sign up to bring something in. The UC building is a little crazy with plastic draped everywhere for construction but there will be signs directing individuals to the event in the ballroom. Just a reminder for those that are going to drop off your soup or dessert you can drop it off at the University Center at the entrance down by Student Account Services. You can drive down and drop off between 7:30 and 8:30 that morning. Ali Hannig shared that there is a crane in that area now, but it will be moved in time for the event. Kimberly Wiley continued with a reminder that someone last time brought a soup directly out of the freezer. If you make a soup, please ensure that it is thawed out. We do not want a soup popsicle for the dessert contest. Chartwells will be providing salad and some cookies. Any questions reach out to Kimberly and please share the information about the event with your colleagues. Vicki Cooper asked when was the latest someone could sign up to bring something? Ali Hannig responded most likely the day before but that we would not deny any food that someone was willing to bring. Even in the morning you could bring something we just need time to plug crockpots in and get everything labeled before judging. Kimberly Wiley encouraged everyone to let faculty know that this is not just a staff event. It is open to everyone so drag your boss and coworkers over.

Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews

Amanda Andrews shared that the group met last Friday. Most of the meeting was focused on changes that are spelled out in House Bill 4 around DEI at the university. They have been tasked with looking at one of our core values and making changes. The group is meeting again this Friday to continue the conversation. A big update is adding some form of piece about AI into our strategic plan. It is not going to be a goal or a focus but a metric we use to see how successful it is going. While this team will not be designing an AI policy there will be some kind of statement about how we can use AI through success. It could simply be that NKU will be stewards by using AI in the future. They are taking all the recommendations from the forums and sessions and the focus is on fleshing out the different aspects of the plan. The group is focused on looking at what are the drivers of the strategic plan. What metrics can we use to ensure that the strategic plan is successful going forward? If anyone has any questions about the strategic plan or the process, reach out to Amanda or Julie Stockman, who is also our staff advocate on this committee.

Parking and Tuition Waiver Task Force – Mike Irvin and Steve Slone

Mike Irvin shared that Provost Diana McGill pulled together 5 faculty and 5 staff members to really take a look at the parking structure and the status of the tuition waiver here on campus. Many individuals in this meeting have done a great deal of research but there has been nothing formal in the past. This group has had its initial meeting just to understand the charge. They will meet next week to prioritize the work of the committee. It is too late in the budget cycle to make a recommendation this year and the work would be very rushed. The group next week will meet to divide and conquer because these are two very different issues and concerns. Currently information is being gathered around the parking concerns from HR. Outside of a flat rate for parking a tiered model is being discussed. For example if you make 30,000 or less you would pay a certain rate. If you make 30 to 50 thousand you would maybe pay a different rate. Essentially it is looking at leveling the playing field. We are working on getting the data points to then do analysis. Special thanks to Lauren Franzen, Andy Meeks, and Curtis Keller for helping us with that initial research. We are very much in the beginning stage of this work. All of us are thankful to have the opportunity to weigh in on these conversations. On the tuition waiver side Mike had an impromptu meeting with Janel. This conversation is a lot more complicated than simply allowing dependents to do a graduate program or allow more hours for the waiver because there are tax implications depending upon where you live. We fortunately do have some data on what other universities in Kentucky and across the river offer for this benefit. We are going to look at all avenues and angles. We are in the fact-finding mode at the moment. Mike continued that he has spoken to a few other universities that have a tier-based model to get an idea of how implementation worked for them. No matter what recommendations we come up with they must remain net neutral as far as the budget is concerned. Steve Slone shared that while he and Mike have been more involved in the parking conversation, he is really impressed with how everyone on the task force is willing to work together. We are all taking this opportunity seriously in both conversations. Special kudos to Mike Irvin who probably didn't have talking to Harvard University and Indiana University on his skill set list. Mike has really taken the bull by the horns to dive into this conversation. Any questions or comments feel free to reach out to either Mike or Steve. Mike concluded that no matter what the outcome we would engage in the conversation and have recommendations.

Ad-Hoc Committees

Roundtable – Amanda Andrews

Amanda Andrews began by thanking everyone on the roundtable committee. Mike Irvin, Kristi Bishop, Grace Hiles (As our eye in the sky), Steve Slone, Nick Bliven, Julie Stockman, Sara Conwell (Thrown in by Steve), and Connie Seiter. There is no way that this event would have been as successful or as perfect as it was without all of you. All the questions that were submitted and went into the roundtable we were able to get answers from administration. They may not be the best answers, but we at least got starting point answers. The questions and the report of the answers we've gathered all

together and it is currently with the roundtable committee. They will have a week or so to review it and we will be meeting to review anything in a couple of weeks. It will probably be out on the Staff Congress website before we meet but everyone has a chance to review it before we put it up on the website. When we meet about roundtable we will also be discussing when we want to have it. We typically have it in February but that's a big legislative time in Kentucky. We moved it to spring break this year in March, but a lot of people won't be on campus during spring break since it's a more relaxed time. We will bring that conversation up to this bigger group. If you have any input as far as the timeline of the event, please reach out to any roundtable committee member. We are really looking to gather feedback about what worked at the event. We've heard from the administration about what they liked about the event, but we want to hear from everyone. Michelle Melish asked what feedback we had already received about the event. Amanda responded that she had committee members send a thank you message to the administrators they were working with. She received a response from her assigned administrator that she liked the intimate setting of the roundtables. Provost McGill stated that she enjoyed the event even though she had to attend virtually. We are still working on the speed dating piece of the event. Overall while there may have been some apprehension going into the event everyone did such a wonderful job of asking the questions and engaging in the conversations. Michelle responded that with it being her first-in-person roundtable event she was a little nervous. She commended the table moderators for doing a great job with the questions and keeping the conversations moving. She really appreciated getting to talk to so many different people that she normally wouldn't have the opportunity to speak with. Her only wish was that we had a bit more time because she wasn't able to get to each person that she wanted to spend time with but overall, it was a wonderful event. Vicki Cooper shared that the addition of Faculty Senate and SGA was a wonderful addition and added some dimension to the event. Amanda thanked Janel Bloch and Jaqueline Emerine who were both able to come. Thanks also to Kyah Smith from SGA who was able to attend as well. Lastly Amanda thanked the Administrators who attended and spent time with us. Cady extended her time with us even though she had a flight to catch.

Old Business

Spirit Wear Storefront and Fish Feeders – Mike Irvin

Mike Irvin shared that the spirit wear store is officially closed and completed. We had a total of 173 orders. Some of these orders were from the same folks so it's around 170 different people for a total of 418 items with over 10 grand that was spent. Mike joked with Steve Slone that we should sneak around the bookstore and check prices and do the math on the difference. We wish we could give you an amount of money that was saved but it obviously was substantial. We will be running it back and doing another storefront in August as a back-to-school type of theme. Brandon Reis from Reis promotions emailed Mike asking to do it again in August so obviously they were pleased with the response. A shout out to the executive board of Staff Congress for all the help coordinating pickup and drop offs of the items. Also special thank you to everyone on Staff Congress for really getting the word out all across campus about the storefront. A

survey went out to everyone that placed an order asking for feedback from did everything fit, whether you were pleased with the variety of options, and just an open response to what you would like to see in the future. Overall, the general feedback has been positive. We went into this process with zero expectations, and it is safe to say we exceeded all expectations. One of the best ways to advertise this is word of mouth so continue to get the word out and watch for it to come back in August. If you didn't make a purchase and you still want to provide feedback, feel free to reach out to Mike. Over the summer he has plans to work with Reis to build the new storefront. Special thanks to Courtney Clark-Rankin and Terri Smith who helped build this storefront. If you want to join and be a part of the process going forward Mike welcomes all voices in these conversations. On the fish feeder front as Collin shared, they were installed a couple of weeks ago. Last week was the official opening and we found out heavy rain equals soggy food. Mike will be removing the feeders as he leaves today so we can work through making rain a non-issue. The good news is that the feeders are free spin. There is a QR code on the side so if it is empty we get pinged that they are empty. We aren't going to run out right when they are empty, but we've already talked with Lucy Burns and Collin from SGA so that it doesn't just fall on one of our groups to fill them. It will be a learning process to see how quickly we go through the food. There are 3 feeders, and one is shorter, so it is accessible to children and anyone else who needs lower access. Again, Mike welcomes any feedback or questions with this project going forward.

Non-Member Discussion Period

Amanda Andrews shared this information from Dr. Bob Alston...

In relation to The Help A Norse Champions initiative that was addressed to Staff Congress back in Fall 2024 and he wanted to provide an update on their first year's progress. For those who may not be aware, the initiative is *designed to help employees and student leaders connect with resources that support student well-being, NKU faculty, staff, or student leaders can take part in workshops and connection sessions designed to help participants make informed recommendations to NKU students in need.* Since August, 105 staff participated in sessions with our collaborative offices, with 50 people earning Help A Norse Advocate status and 26 people earning Champion status. Our staff already provide informed service and support to our campus, and this was evident in our participant (by role) split with staff the leading group! continued: While I get the be the spokesperson about the initiative, I want to thank the collaborative offices include Counseling Services, the Norse Violence Prevention Center, Student Wellness Education, Student Accessibility, Community Standards and Care, Student Conduct, the office of the Assistant Vice President/Dean of Students, and our NKU campus community experts. THANK YOU for your support each day, and for this initiative!

Also: Dr. Brandon Thompson, NKU's new Vice President for Student Affairs, starts on Monday, 4/14/25. Please welcome him to the NKU family as he begins that tough task of starting in a leadership role in April. Dr. Thompson joins NKU from UK, where he

served as the associate dean of student engagement in the Office of the Dean of Students. Prior to working in Lexington, Dr. Thompson served as director of residence life and as assistant director for training and development at Eastern Kentucky University in its Office of Housing & Residence Life. In all, he has nearly 20 years' experience working in student affairs at UK, EKU, Kansas State University, East Carolina University and Eastern Illinois University. Dr. Thompson earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in communication and his Master of Arts in college student affairs at Eastern Illinois University, and he earned his Doctor of Education in educational leadership and policy studies at Eastern Kentucky University. Thank you! And please reach out to Dr. Bob Alston for additional information, questions or concerns.



Staff

Amy Wylie

I would like to recognize Amy for organizing an incredible Alumni event at Fifth Third Bank! This event brought together NKU faculty & staff and alumni in a meaningful and impactful way allowing attendees to reignite their love for NKU. The energy was infectious, the connections were meaningful, and everyone walked away with a renewed sense of pride for our university. Amy, you and your team's dedication to fostering these relationships and creating an unforgettable experience is truly appreciated. You've made a lasting impact on the NKU community, and we are grateful for everything you've done!

David Bond

David is so helpful figuring out all things in the Registrar's Office. He always takes time to answer my questions and ensure I fully understand the next steps I need to take. For many years he has supported CEP 300 and helped ensure the administrative side of this process is smooth. David, we are grateful for you!

Jennifer Richmond

Jennifer exemplifies unwavering commitment to Northern Kentucky University and her passion for helping students succeed in their future careers. This spring, she has gone above and beyond, reviewing countless resumes, conducting numerous mock interviews, and supporting students at every turn. At the same time, she skillfully manages the marketing for Career Services, oversees student staff, updates the website, and takes on countless other responsibilities. Jennifer, your tireless dedication

and exceptional work do not go unnoticed. You are a true asset to NKU, and because of you, our campus is a better place!

Lauren Franzen and Ophelia Marks HR

While experiencing an incredibly hectic, full on freak out, Friday, I needed assistance with an NKU employee dependent student situation. It was close to the 'so called' end of business day and a deadline was in it's 11th hour. By chance of business correspondence and briefly describing the situation - the divine Ophelia Marks advised I speak with Lauren..I took the chance to reach out - by this time it was way past 4:30pm.. while rocking my panic self in my surplus office chair the phone rang and it was the savior sound of Lauren Franzen's voice helping me weed through an assortment of terminologies a Philadelphia lawyer would have charged a Bora Bora vacation on.. (umbrella drinks included). Thanks to her clarity and guidance, I followed up with the student that same evening, and we were able to move forward with a qualifying scholarship application. What would have been a potentially missed opportunity turned into a success story. I owe these ladies a frou-frou drink! Thank you & cheers!

NKU Custodians

I really appreciate Bev, Bruce and Sheila, who have been keeping the 1st floor of Landrum very clean--and do so with care and smiles. Rhonda and Stephen do the same, always taking care of us when we have events in the HIC or GH. We are lucky to have people keeping our spaces looking good even with so much salt and mud being tracked in these days from the snow and construction. Shout outs to Joy, Jenny, Beth, and all the others who have also helped us out before and/or sub in when needed. Thank you very much!

Norse Violence Prevention

I am incredibly grateful to Kendra and her NVP team for supporting our students and hosting Take Back the Night on April 1. Being present and listening to stories of sexual assault and violence was deeply meaningful to me. I felt empowered not only to support our students but also to explore ways to contribute to NVP's efforts in the future.

Tom Ramstetter, Sara Trauth and Chartwells, Leah Koch

All of them play a major role with helping me coordinate the campus communications, catering and logistics for all the Academic Affairs leadership on-campus interviews that I coordinate. In January and February I had to schedule things with fast turnaround times and they never missed a beat. They maintained patience and kindness and I sincerely appreciate their support.

Announcements

Nick Bliven shared that on Aril 29th and 30th if weather permits FUEL NKU will host it's monthly pop-up party right outside the NKU bookstore as you are walking into the student union. These run from 10 to 3 PM both days. All members of the NKU campus community are invited to join us.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 2:59 PM.

Staff Congress Portal Questions

Date Received: 4/1/2025

Question:

The April Fools Joke posted on the NKU Facebook page is really concerning. The joke is there will be a new female mascot. Is this really funny considering the current DEI elimination? What's funny about having a female mascot? I would have expected more from the marketing team who should be more aware of current state of affairs.

Action Taken:

The post was taken down quickly after this question was submitted. We believe that other individuals had contacted administration as well.