

Members present: Amanda Andrews, Nick Bliven, Angela Calhoun, Sara Conwell, Vicki Cooper, Jennifer Davis, Kyle Dorriere, Liz Futscher, Ali Hannig, Mike Irvin, Dan Jones, Beth Lackey, Aaron Luken, Brenda Maldonado, Michelle Melish, Kara Olding, Pete Rinto, Connie Seiter, Felicia Share, Steve Slone, Terri Smith, Vanessa Steele, Jennifer Stephens, Julianne Stockman, Teresa Walker, Terkerah Washington, Carolyn Wilhoit, Christopher Witt, and Christine Yankovsky

Members absent: Tina Altenhofen, Kristi Bishop, Chris Bowling, Amy Ishmael, Christina Knight, and Michelle Melish

- I. Call to Order at 1:01 PM
- II. Approval of September 11, 2025 Minutes
 - Motion: Christopher Witt
 - Second: Ali Hannig
 - Approval: Voice Vote
- III. Guest – Executive Director/Chief Marketing Officer, Peggy Casey - [Report](#)
- IV. Liaison Reports
 - President – Dr. Cady Short-Thompson – [Report](#)
 - Board of Regents – Staff Regent – Dr. Cori Henderson - [Report](#)
 - Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Officer – Amy Gellen - [Report](#)
 - Faculty Senate – Budget Committee Chair – Dr. Janel Bloch - [Report](#)
 - Student Government Association – Kyah Smith - [Report](#)
 - President's Report – Vicki Cooper - [Report](#)
- V. Standing Committees:
 - Benefits – Ali Hannig
 - Constitution & Bylaws – Chris Witt and Christina Yankovsky - [Report](#)
 - Credentials & Elections – Beth Lackey and Teresa Walker
 - Liaison – Steve Slone and Terkerah Washington - [Report](#)
 - Policies – Pete Rinto and Aaron Luken
 - Scholarship – Kristi Bishop and Michelle Melish
- VI. University Committees:
 - Benevolent Association – Ali Hannig and Steve Slone - [Report](#)
 - Food Service Advisory – Michelle Melish
 - IT Advisory Committee – Dan Jones and Vicki Cooper - [Report](#)
 - Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews
 - Transportation – Christopher Bowling
 - Parking and Tuition Waiver Task Force – Mike Irvin and Steve Slone - [Report](#)
- VII. Ad-Hoc Committee
 - Outreach – Terri Smith - [Report](#)
 - Roundtable – Amanda Andrews
 - Advocacy – Jennifer Davis and Christopher Bowling
- VIII. Old Business - [Report](#)
- IX. New Business
- X. Non-Member Discussion Period
- XI. Norse Uppecciation - [Report](#)
- XII. Announcements - [Report](#)
- XI. Adjournment at 2:50 PM

- Motion: Carolyn Wilhoit
- Second: Amanda Andrews
- Approval: Voice Vote

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM.

Guest - Executive Director/Chief Marketing Officer, Peggy Casey

Vicki Cooper shared that we had planned to have Peggy Casey from Marketing and Communications speak to us about the migration of our website. In light of recent events, we are providing the power point presentation that she would have brought to the meeting. You can reach out to Staff Congress Secretary Steve Slone to receive a copy of this presentation.

WEBSITE REDESIGN PROJECT

October 9, 2025



President – Dr. Cady Short-Thompson

Dr. Cady Short-Thompson began by acknowledging that it has been a hard week for the university. A hard week for the cabinet and of course hardest week for those whose positions were eliminated and their families. It has been a hard month for the cabinet as they've studied and deliberated these cuts. She shared that is important for us to know that they've wrestled with these difficult decisions. Over the last month the cabinet has engaged in a comprehensive review of all possible cuts to make, including personnel. Given our previous cuts to operating expenses last spring, in response to the 3 million revenue decreases due to the reduced performance funding, as well as eliminated Department of Revenue delinquent debt collections, which is about another million dollars. We couldn't cut much more from our operating funds without adversely

impacting our primary mission. Each vice president and I scoured the vacant position rosters and removed some positions. As she stated in her email to all of us this week, some vacant positions will be searched and filled because they are critical to our work. Finally, in order to meet the target, we needed to remove some filled staff positions via reduction in force. These are difficult decisions to make. The vice presidents and some of their direct reports reviewed viable personnel reductions, as well as reorganizations to become more efficient and to reduce costs. As you know, 18 filled positions, staff positions, or .6 percent of our entire workforce has been cut. All cuts are recurring, so in other words, effective next year as well, and proportionate with the division's personnel budgets. So, cuts of various sorts were made in each division in order to meet the target. Yet, as you would expect, different divisions and different units had different abilities to contribute due to the size and nature of their operation and personnel budgets. All divisions had personnel cuts except for legal and the President's office who have the fewest staff by far, yet each of those offices as well made their expected, target cuts. In addition to public communication about the budget and revenue challenges that we've had, both in June and in September's board meetings, and of course also in the board subcommittee meetings, which it's important to note that Staff Congress members were present in each of the September subcommittee meetings. Chris Calvert and Dr. Short-Thompson shared more details with this community in our September town hall meeting, as well as, other meetings. Expressing the need to cut, in personnel. Most recently, this was expressed in last week's Faculty Senate meeting and again Staff Congress members were present. We also shared the information with Faculty Senate subcommittee meetings. So, and of course, on Monday Faculty Senate leadership and Staff Congress leadership were called. She stressed to us that the cabinet has been deliberate and thoughtful about these cuts. We've been trying to work to streamline, to centralize, to simplify wherever we can, so there's not more work to do for our staff. The goal being more efficiently completed work. In some cases, some of the positions and their work weren't as needed in order to complete the tasks at hand. She believes that the right positions were eliminated, but we also know and feel how hard it is for the persons whose positions were eliminated. While the cabinet and I worked really hard, together per division to identify the appropriate cuts, she personally, as President, takes responsibility for these decisions. Since these decisions were made and executed over the last week, our focus has been on the persons whose positions have been eliminated. HR has worked really hard with them to provide information, answer questions, assist in their transitions, and return and retrieve their items. Some of you may ask, why mid-year cuts? We delayed making these staff cuts as long as possible. We delayed through the spring state funding cuts. Instead, we removed, as I said, 3 million dollars from operating early to create the balanced budget for this fiscal year. As you know the budget was also presented at the June Board of Regents meeting with a 71,000-dollar surplus which is not a lot of room for error, and not a lot of room with contingency. She and the team worked hard to try to change the enrollment picture, but thanks to a variety of external factors, we came up short in graduate, international, and transfer enrollments. The goal was to give ourselves the chance not to have to make these cuts. We don't like to make cuts. Once our enrollment numbers were set in September, we projected an communicated a 2.5-million-dollar shortfall.

This is when the cuts were made. With these cuts we will be able to balance fiscal year 26. The cabinet worked hard to determine which cuts could be made, and then it became clear that we just couldn't cut from operating again without adversely impacting our work. She shared at this moment in time, that she is trying as best she can to stabilize the university and its finances. As those of us that have been here for awhile will know over the last decade NKU found itself in a 24-million-dollar deficit position because the administration did not adjust enough and it had to burn cash reserves year after year. Burning through hundreds of millions of dollars is not responsible or sustainable. We do not have that luxury anymore. If we didn't cut expenses by October, we would not reduce our expense enough to balance this fiscal year. The Board of Regents has directed us to keep our budget balanced and generate positive cash flow annually. We've cut 18 filled staff positions out of 2,848 full employees that we paid last month. Many of you are aware of the broader context for employers, right now outside of higher ed and inside higher ed. Many of you are reading the same headlines that she is. Corporations are laying off thousands and thousands of people, and the government has as well. Broadly, in higher education, we are also seeing the same actions that we've taken, but in some cases, at a much larger scale. Schools with larger endowments and enrollments have made major cuts this season. Northwestern has cut 425 staff. Washing University cut 316. Ivy Tech has cut 202 staff positions, and Murray State and U of L have a current hiring freeze. Uk has numerous federal funding-related cuts, and Xavier University made numerous cuts this summer when their fall enrollments came up short. In other words, most schools are freezing hires, cutting vacant positions, reorganizing, and cutting filled positions. In summary, we're living and leading in extremely volatile times. There is a great deal of economic uncertainty at this moment. The reductions of nearly 2,000 employees at the Department of Education federally, nearly half of their employees have had ripple effects, slowing aid processing and support for higher education. The federal government shutdown itself is a significant issue as well. The last shutdown lasted for 35 days, as you know, and at 9 days in, anyone's guess is when it will end and what the impact will be on our federally funded programs and initiatives. And as you know, we've already lost about \$2 million in federal funding in AmeriCorps, NIH, NSF, CCampus, and other initiatives. If we are to be responsible stewards of our resources, as she is required to be, to do nothing was not a choice. Knowing that we take this work and this university's fiscal health and future seriously, and she regrets not having better options. Vick Cooper began questions with one that was sent to her was there any thought to offering early retirements instead of position cuts. Cady replied that we don't tend to do that with staff. She did not feel it had ever been done with our staff. Steve Slone shared that someone had asked if there could be some clarification around where the cuts were made because they seemed to be all over the map. Cady responded that as she mentioned in her remarks, she spoke with each of the vice presidents at cabinet and essentially worked closely with them to identify where it was possible to cut without as much harm or impact to our work. Where we could be more efficient and still continue to deliver upon our mission. Many different conversations were held to ascertain what would be the least impactful cuts. None of these were easy decisions. We hire managers and administrators to understand the work that their people do, and to understand where

there is a capability to reduce force. Vicki continued were all managers consulted, or was this more at the cabinet level? Cady responded it depended upon the area and the depth of the area within each vice president's area. It is safe to say that all had conversations with them, and in some cases, they were more thorough, depending upon how large the portfolio is. Two more questions do we have a list of the unfilled positions that were eliminated and then will there be more cuts, or is everybody who is being cut been notified. Cady responded that HR has a list of the unfilled positions. The positions that we will search for are already on the website. In other words, for those units that had requests or previously had postings that aren't there, those will not be filled. This week we concentrated our cuts this way on purpose. We don't enjoy the process any more than any of you do, and we wanted to have all of these done in a tight time frame to minimize the negative extended impact on the campus. Mike Irvin shared a question sent to him while we don't have a crystal ball if enrollment targets aren't reached is this something to anticipate again. Cady responded that the way that the amounts were determined, as was presented at the town hall forum, is we have many years of patterns of enrollments. Based upon our fall enrollments we can then know projected enrollments for spring and summer. Spring and summer are derivative of fall enrollments. In some ways we were up and in some ways we were down. We can actually chart out the likely impacts are from worst-case scenario to best-case scenario. Every year is a little bit different but we ran not only the enrollment numbers but the budgetary numbers. The goal was to really have a clear sense at this point in September about where that would lead us throughout the year. These cuts will allow us to balance our budget in fiscal year 26. A question came through asking Cady to clarify if there will be more cuts. She responded that at this time the cuts that we have made are the cuts that we will make. Any given year there are different kinds of cuts that are made. We always have people who are moved from their positions, so she didn't want to be coy with her answers and say there will be no other cuts because that would be disingenuous. We have concentrated these 18 cuts for a reason. We know that it is hard on the campus, but yet we also can't say with certainty that no cut will ever be made to any position going forward. Another question came forward about what university programs would be cut. The context being a board subcommittee conversation about reviewing programs that aren't producing as many graduates, or bringing in income. Cady responded that she wished she had that great of a crystal ball. During that board conversation a question was raised instead of only considering personnel cuts, might we consider cutting academic or other programs at the university. The Finance and Budget committee has asked for us to start to begin considering, if we were to do that, how might we do that. We have literally just begun down the path of thinking about that whole assignment. This is something that we have intentionally avoided for a whole host of reasons. Yet, many higher education institutions have not only engaged in this, but made those cuts over the last 5, 7, or 10 years. As it has just come up it is not something that we will be in a position to act upon immediately. Diana McGill continued that we have a process of program review already on campus. All programs undergo periodic reviews. We mark programs as ones that we need to put more of an effort into growing them. We may need to fix something, or sustain it, or sunset it. We do this already. A question that was raised in the Student Success Academic Affairs

subcommittee was around program alignment with regional needs. The conversation is not just about cutting programs but about the program mix so to speak. Mike shared a question that was sent to him around the revenue sharing and loss in revenue from our accelerated online programming is that something that can even be renegotiated or is it something that we are locked into. Cady responded that this agreement goes until 2031. We are locked into that with the programs that are already under that contract. She believes that there are a number of opportunities to think about what other either online or hybrid programs we could offer outside of AOL that could generate more revenue per student than these program students do. We have some flexibility and ability to be creative. Risepoint does a lot to recruit our students, market those programs, and then usher them in, and we'd have to account for how we do that competitively in this sphere. Vicki shared another question sent to her is there a list of filled positions that were cut not the names but the positions that were cut. Continuing some of the positions that were cut tended to be newer employees but other areas seemed to be longer term employees with higher salaries. Cady responded that we are not submitting a list of names or positions. She believes it is inappropriate. The cabinet had to select areas that we could continue to do the work of the university, and different positions, different kinds of roles were selected because we believe that the work could be done in a more streamlined fashion. It's not simple and nuanced. We hire people all year long, different positions. It's not the 1960s version was last hired, first fired. That is not how anyone operates at this point. Smart administrators can look at the details of what's possible. To be clear we would have loved to have not made any cuts which is why we waited as long as possible in this season. Diana McGill asked if we are asking if they were trying to find high salaries to save more dollars. Vicki clarified that she believes the scope of the question was that some positions were long term-employees with higher salaries. Diana clarified that she has the largest division and very bluntly she stated that a person's salary came into play zero percent. It was not considered whatsoever when making the decisions. It only figured into the final number not into the decision that was made. Cori Henderson asked when did the board find out that there were going to be cuts made, as it was not mentioned at the general board meeting. Cady responded that we had conversations in the different subcommittees including the budget and finance one. It was discussed at the executive committee as well. She also wanted to point out that interestingly Staff Congress representatives were present and in attendance and can attest to that. We've had a number of different meetings, where we've shared that cuts would be made, and personnel cuts, in particular, lowering headcount, there are a lot of different ways that it was discussed. Amanda Andrews shared a question sent directly to her at what point will those making the largest decisions, the administrators and the VP-level leadership, be held accountable for outcomes that affect the entire university community. Cady responded every day. That is our job as cabinet. Literally our entire job is to lead the university and administer all sorts of things. She is accountable, and she serves the board, and the board supports and expects this action. Another question brought forward are any offices going to be eliminated, or is there going to be any further reorganization of staff. Cady responded there is no other change no office eliminated and no further steps. Another question has the board been asked to take any pay cuts but there is confusion if the board gets paid at all. Cady responded

that the board is a voluntary board so they are paid nothing. Steve Slone shared a question sent to him if someone feels that a cut is in a role that is pivotal or that it was an unjust cut what recourse is there and who should they communicate with. Amy Gellen responded that if you have concerns about how the work is going to be done in your own specific department, start with our supervisor. Begin there and have the conversation. To the best of her knowledge every cabinet member has had departmental meetings to let them know the path forward for each of those individual departments. Anyone is welcome to contact HR, herself included, at any point. If you have that conversation with your supervisor and you would still like to give me some data points to take back to cabinet, she is happy to have any of those conversations with anyone. Steve shared another question brought to him will there be any consideration given to returning any eliminated positions and what would it take to return those positions to affected areas. After some clarification around the nature of the question and spreading of workloads Amy Gellen responded. She shared that positions that have been eliminated would be for the remainder of the fiscal year. Every cabinet member is looking at these positions critically. Do I need those in the coming fiscal year? How can I reallocate resources? As of this moment she knows that they have been eliminated for fiscal year 26. Could they come back for fiscal year 27? Yes, that is possible. Diana continued that there were positions that were vacant that didn't get posted so they didn't get eliminated visibly. There are also some positions that did not get eliminated and will be posted. We are very, very, very carefully evaluating every position. Before considering what, we post every position goes to the President for review both faculty searches and staff as well. We can not anticipate what staff vacancies may be coming and there were some vacancies not yet posted when we were doing all of this work. A question was brought forth that while respecting people's privacy a lot of work across the university is liaising with other offices is there any kind of plan to facilitate rebuilding of relationships when we don't know if they need to be rebuilt or not. Amy Gellen responded that you will continue to work across departments as you always have. Someone on her team was impacted and there is now an out-of-office up that says please reach out to HR at nku.edu we will get right back to you in terms of your inquiry. If you are trying to reach out to someone and not getting a response, feel free to reach out to the next natural progression which would be that person's supervisor. Clarification was asked for that it would be a reactive and not a proactive approach. Amy responded that was correct because out of respect for the folks that were impacted, they are not comfortable posting a list of names that were impacted. Cori Henderson shared a question sent to her asking why there were no upper management positions that were cut or asked to get a reduced salary if these cuts were driven by enrollment. Cady responded that she can't imagine how this question makes sense to her. Frankly, everyone who is working on enrollments our first year full time enrollments are up over last year over 17 percent up. If you look at the cabinet that she is leading now compared to the cabinet that she joined the university with there are different people on the cabinet who have been hired to do the work that they are doing well now. Amanda Andrews asked for clarity around the recent structural updates, that it has been indicated we are finished doing, there are happenings in certain areas where departments are being broken up and restructured in different

locations. Are structural changes still happening or is that done? Cady responded that as of this week there were some reorganizations and those who were affected have been informed, and those who work with them will be informed if they haven't already. The goal is to be more streamlined and effective. We've had maybe 5 different applications processes into undergraduate admissions and we are working to streamline that entire process. Steve Slone asked for administration to speak towards their philosophy about rebuilding trust because it seems so many of our questions revolve around a lack of trust. Cady responded that the only way to rebuild trust is actually to have a balanced budget where we can get some stability and something that is sustainable that we can actually expect to work. We've been pulling ourselves out of a deficit for the last few years. It's been choppy at best, and challenging for everyone involved. You could argue if these cuts were not made and we went under again it would add to distrust. She stated that she is a president that is going to handle the business that needs to be handled so that we all can have jobs as we go forward or we could continue to go under and have to fire more people. The more responsible route is to actually take care of our business, and do the hard things now, and get our house in order, rather than continue to flail and flounder and not be able to do our work. The notion of continuing to do things the way we've always done them which have also led us to be in deficit positions 10 years out of 12 and the board will not allow that. Quite frankly, she doesn't think it's responsible, and it's not fair to all of us, because she thinks it would be really great if we could go into a timeframe ahead where our enrollments are strong, where our operations are fluid, where we are good stewards of our funds, using systems that make sense, operating in a modern fashion, and actually stabilizing in a sustainable way. She knows that trust can be a quick, easy go-to, and she knows that people are hurting and are upset. Frankly, she is upset. She doesn't like this one bit. She would have loved to be able to solve this another way, but frankly, to look the other way and to allow us to go off the cliff again is irresponsible. Vicki Cooper asked a specific question about our custodians, floor care, or labor crew should they be worried about being outsourced. Cady responded simply no. Amy Ishmael asked if there are efforts to relocate separated individuals. Cady responded it's a fair question and that at the moment frankly, there aren't a lot of positions open and she is not in favor of just moving people into other positions and other disciplines or areas that they are ill-equipped to perform. If there is an open position and they vie for it and land it fantastic. She is not going to just move people without managers and terms weighing in on whether the move makes sense. It is her hope since this was a reduction in force and these people were let go through fault of their own that they land at a neighboring university or institution. She will do what she can to spread the word and support them should there be opportunities elsewhere. Amy Gellen agreed wholeheartedly. She shared that they did look at everyone that was impacted versus open positions that would be a natural fit. They are actively doing that. It has been clear in all of the messaging that has been given to them that this is through no fault of their own. Her team is looking at the names and the skill set of everyone impacted. Certainly it is going to be the employees decision if they choose to come back but HR is actively reaching out to folks and they know they are welcome to apply back at any point. Vanessa Steele gave a shout out to Staff Congress folks. Naming Steve, Vicki, Mike, Amanda and Cori

for being willing to field and relay questions. She continued that there is a lot of fear and mistrust and it doesn't stem from Cady but from experiences we've all had in the past. She called out the Staff Congress executive team because it's been a very hard week for them as well. Amanda Andrews asked what impact assessments have been conducted to understand how these changes will affect student support and operational continuity. Cady responded that it's a very specific question and of course there were cuts across all divisions. She continued that it was considered and that a focus has been to try to minimize any impact on students or on student-facing positions as best we can with other people. When you cut some positions or people, there will be some impact there is not other way to state it. Diana McGill spoke about her division. Decisions aren't made without measuring impact ahead of time. If the question is about a mathematical equation, then no, we aren't doing that. We are looking at workload, where we can do backfills, working with the deans and the vice provosts. That assessment is done before the decisions were made or else we wouldn't make those decisions. Many hours are spent and there is a deep analysis of all of the positions that were cut. Amanda continued is there a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of these changes post-implementation and will staff and faculty be involved in that process. Cady responded that everyone is always involved in everything and certainly the changes can be measured very simply through things like enrollments and other patterns and behaviors. As is our tradition we report on all sorts of things whether at board meetings, or in town halls, or in other sorts of reports related to our operations. We will be continuing to monitor everything from our student success rates to our enrollments and finances everything will be monitored. Everything that we do has some sort of measurement or some sort of outcome that we analyze. Vicki Cooper asked if Cady envisions this conversation continuing at the next town hall or will the focus be on something different there. Cady shared that the next town hall is on October 21st at 9 AM and that there is an agenda for it. We will also take questions and comments there as well. We have a number of items to cover but we will cover some of this as needed. Vick continued how do these cuts interact with the strategic plan where we have a focus on our people and this has a great effect on our people. Cady responded that we've obviously had to make cuts as she's said in about six different ways. We didn't have a good option or choice. She thinks that we tried to cut in places that it would not have as negative of an impact on our work and our mission. There is no question that cuts are painful for you, for her, for the cabinet, for everyone. No one likes them. She thinks we also like less financial instability, a lack of raises, a lack of a sense of sustainability, a sense of our future budget success. We can't continue to kick this can down the road. We have to take care of our business and at some point, as we have many balanced budgets year after year, and predictability in that regard we can have a collective sort of exhale and more confidence in our processes and in our decisions. Amanda Andrews shared a question sent to her that the Northerner was told about the layoffs with an actual number whereas faculty and staff found this out due to the Northerner's article. Is this going to be something that continues to happen? Cady responded that the Northerner asked a specific question. We did not include the number in the original message. She doesn't know that you can expect it to happen it is just how it happened. One of the reasons why the specific number was shared was to create a greater sense

of clarity about the actual number. Steve Slone circled back to the very beginning of this conversation numerous people had asked him is there a reason why we don't consider buyout packages that are often given to faculty for staff and is this something we could look into in the future if we fac this again. Cady responded that it is a good question she doesn't believe we've ever considered it before. She is not sure of the reason other than there are different ways that we manage the different processes and personnel groups. Certainly, something she can think about although she doesn't think it will be something that we do. Amanda Andrews shared another question has there been any consideration given to prorating or adjusting benefits for NKU employees who previously qualified for discounted rates through a spouse but are now impacted by layoffs, resulting in loss eligibility. Amy Gellen responded that this is a qualifying event for the other spouse to become primary on the plan. It is something that we can look at for future plan years but not something that can be adjusted mid-plan year because we have to administer the plans consistently. It is our hope and wish that we don't see ourselves in this position again in the future but certainly something we can consider as we're looking at benefit changes for future years. Vicki Cooper asked if raises are still planning to be built into the budget for next fiscal year or is this now off the table. Cady responded that raises are important in order to keep, a good workforce, and at this time, we have them built into our fiscal year 27 budget assumptions. Realizing those will be another thing. What you will see as we begin to plan that budget is the assumption will be 3 percent which would be combined, not just across the board, but it would have some merit added in as well. That is the plan. Going forward any raise or increased would be directly related to the actual fall enrollment numbers. As we go forward retroactive to the beginning of the fiscal year. Amanda Andrews asked given the current climate and recent changes, what strategies are being considered to support staff retention and reinforce the sense of stability and purpose across all teams, including faculty. Cady responded that nothing has change in that regard. Frankly, this is a financial decision, and all the other investments we've made, all the different development opportunities, all of the different ways that we support this community, and all of the benefits that we provide, they are the same. The difference is we had to cut 18 people from our roster, and it's a difficult thing, there's no question. But otherwise, there are no changes, to the environment or the culture or climate, or provided benefits.

Board of Regents – Dr. Cori Henderson

Dr. Cori Henderson began by stating that she knows that a lot of us are hurting. We've lost some really good colleagues over the past week. If anyone needs anything from her please feel free to reach out. The Budget and Finance subcommittee of the board will be meeting on October 21st at 11 AM in the Student Union 106. This is a change so she wanted to make sure to share that out. The upcoming Board of Regents meeting will be on November 19th and then the Student Success and Academic Affairs meeting will be on November 11th at 4:30 in room 106. The executive committee of the board will be meeting November 11th at 11:00 in AC 800.

Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Officer – Amy Gellen

Chief Human Resources Officer Amy Gellen shared from IT that they are still working through Workday implementation. A good meeting was held today with our workday change champions. You will start to see messaging going out across campus in terms of Workday, and what that means for all of us to gain efficiencies in our day-to-day work. The project teams starting at the end of October and through Thanksgiving, will be very focused and very busy on unit testing, which will require large chunks of everyone's day. Just a heads up to everyone, please give us some time, give us some grace if you're not getting immediate answers back from us, as schedules are being blocked for kind of big blocks of time to get through that. The benefits team and Marcomm are working together to get some communication out to everyone, and our IT teams are feverishly updating SAP for open enrollment. Open enrollment dates are going to be later in October. We are hoping by the end of next week that you will have communications in your hands on the new benefits updates for 2026. As she has shared before at previous meetings we are keeping the same vendors. We will continue with UMR and Humana dental. No changes to vision and no changes to our ancillary plans. We have been discussing that a benefits increase is coming this year. There will be a premium increase of 12 percent to employee premium at all levels across all plans. In addition to that we have to make some changes to the spousal surcharge. Right now, the spousal surcharge is 35 dollars a month. Please keep in mind on the spousal surcharge you are only charged the surcharge if you have a spouse that is not eligible for group coverage. This only applies if you have a spouse eligible for group coverage. The spousal surcharge starting January 1st of 2026 will be 70 dollars a month. Which is a substantial increase but still substantially below market averages. The market research tells us it should be closer to 150, and we certainly didn't want to make that change this year. You will see some other very minor changes, on the high deductible health plan. We incrementally increased the high deductible on the employee only, as well as the family, just to continue to stay in line with what we see out there in the market and make sure that high deductible health plan qualifies for HSA. Coinsurance was slightly changed from 15 percent to 20 percent. She wanted to proactively tell everyone the numbers and what is coming as they are working on the communications now. The hope is that we will have something in our hands that we can review in writing by the end of next week. Patricia Burke shared that open enrollment will be from October 23rd through November 10th. There will be two information sessions one that will be virtual on October 24th. Watch for a link for that one. An in-person information session will be on October 30th in the UC Ballroom. Amy Gellen continued with an update about Tri-Health. All providers, in our case UMR, have a negotiated rate with health care providers. Tri-Health sent a letter out to patients letting them know that they are going to be dropping UMR effective 1-1 of 2026. We did reach out to UMR to understand what is going on. Tri-Health is asking to increase the rates that they charge UMR by 190 million dollars. UMR cannot afford to increase rates by 190 million dollars. They are still actively in negotiations with Tri-Health. They are still hopeful and optimistic that they will come an agreement before this drop date. We cannot guarantee that they will as it is between UMR and Tri-Health. There is not a lot we can do other than express our interest that Tri-Health remains in network, because we do know that a lot

of our employees will be impacted by this change. What we can do is make sure in some of these communications that everyone's going to see, that we make sure it's very clear, evident, and top of mind where you can find the list of in-network providers, should you choose to switch providers. The other communication we are beginning to work on is how to use your out-of-network benefits. So, if you choose not to change providers, you would be using out-of-network, and what does that look like, and what does that mean for you financially. If they do not come to an agreement everyone will understand their choices. We don't know where things are going to land at this point. Vicki Cooper shared that she has hear from Grant Garber that there have been over 300 submissions through the Qualtrics form about the policies that are under review. 40 percent of those were on the flexible work arrangement, 15 percent on housing, 13 percent on dress code, and 12 percent on emergency closing. All the others it was 5 percent or below. Amy Gellen stressed that they are continuing to review the comments as they come in and using them to inform any changes to language or what we are going to do with the policy. At the next town hall there will be summary of the edits that have come about because of comments. The comment period for these ten policies is open until October 31st. It was also noted by Vicki Cooper that a 12 percent increase for health premiums takes away the raise that was recently received by our lowest paid employees.

Faculty Senate – Dr. Janel Bloch

Dr. Janel Bloch shared that at the last Faculty Senate meeting there was a lot of discussion about the policies that are currently out there for review. Probably the biggest one that took up most of the discussion was the housing policy. There is some talk of a possible resolution from Faculty Senate of Faculty's position on that particular policy. More to come on this.

Student Government Association – Kyah Smith

Kyah Smith shared that their Victor Talks About Advocacy is next Thursday at 12:15 in the governance room of the Student Union. SGA hosted their fall retreat last week with Hannah Edelin and Kara Williams from the board of regents attended to discuss the benefits of SGA. They have also held meetings with the President and Brandon Thompson. They are continuing discussions about the housing policy and they joined the recent Residence Hall Association town hall and got the perspective of the people that live on campus to expand on other student opinions around this policy. They have also appointed 8 senators since our last Staff Congress meeting. They are continuing to work on resolutions around fuel and other campus interests.

President - Vicki Cooper

Vicki Cooper shared the following...

Staff Congress President's Report, 10/9/2025

We received 14 submissions this past month. The policies under review related submissions were sent to Grant Garber and Amy Gellen. In addition, I submitted them, as Staff Congress President, in the Policies Under Review comment portion of the of the policies website.

The Policies Under Review feedback/comment period ends on 10/31/2025.

You can use this link to submit any comments on these policies.

<https://inside.nku.edu/policy/policies-under-review.html>

Amy Gellen responded to submitted questions or comments that fall under her area of responsibility.

There is one submission about the Staff Congress' website:

Date Received: 9/11/2025

Could we update the website to some current Staff Congress member photos? A lot of those pictured no longer work here, let alone serve on Staff Congress.

Action Taken: Staff Congress President responding

Response: The current banner consists of photos of past Staff Congress presidents. Should we plan on a group photo of current Staff Congress members at our next in-person meeting?

Do members want to have individual photos or just a group photo on the web site?

I encourage employees to use the [question portal](#),

https://nku.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5pVsfIT8jhCOSqN

for those questions that you do not know how or are unable to find out the answer and also for those who want to submit an anonymous question or comment.

The Staff Congress Executive Teams will forward those to the correct individual or individuals to get a response and then address those questions at our next Staff Congress meeting.

Finally, I just want to say that this has been an incredibly difficult—and for many of us, heartbreaking—week at NKU. Eighteen staff members, seventeen of them full-time, had their positions terminated. These individuals weren't just numbers on a spreadsheet. They were our co-workers, our friends, and part of our NKU family.

Unfortunately, since I started working at NKU, this not the first, second or even third time NKU has made significant cuts of filled staff positions. In 2015 we had 942 full-time staff, falling to 806 in 2024. And with the cuts this week, it appears that we have dropped well below 800. Part-time staff employees also dropped significantly during this time, 107 to 39.

Most of us understand that these decisions were made from a business standpoint. But behind every position eliminated is a person who gave their time, energy, and heart to this university. Many of those affected had been with NKU for 10, 15, 20—even 30 years. In an era when job-hopping is common, they stayed. They stayed through years of minimal raises and increasing workloads, driven by their commitment to NKU's students and to us—their colleagues, their work family.

Many of us worked with these individuals, some of us on a daily basis. These cuts represent over 2% of the full-time staff employees. Staff Congress was not untouched. We lost two of our representatives through these cuts. Their service and dedication will not be forgotten.

In closing, and I think I can speak for all of Staff Congress, we offer our support and empathy to those affected and to their work family they have had to leave behind. They, and the work they did, was important. They will be missed.

Constitution and Bylaws – Christopher Witt and Christine Yankovsky

Christopher Witt shared that we would be having a first reading of bylaw changes. The changes were read aloud by Christopher Witt, Steve Slone, and Mike Irvin. The text of 11 documents are contained herein.

(Article IV, Section 2 – Eligibility for Office – Who May Vote)

ORIGINAL:

All elected members of the Staff Congress are eligible for the *offices* of Secretary *and Treasurer* stated in Section 1 of this Article. The offices of President and President-elect shall require a minimum of 2 years and 1 year of Staff Congress service respectively. Only elected members of the Staff Congress may nominate or cast ballots in the election of any officer of the Staff Congress.

PROPOSED:

All elected members of the Staff Congress are eligible for the **office** of Secretary stated in Section 1 of this Article. The offices of President and President-elect shall require a minimum of 2 years and 1 year of Staff Congress service respectively. Only elected members of the Staff Congress may nominate or cast ballots in the election of any officer of the Staff Congress.

(Article 1 - Representatives, Section 3, Elections Process, item e)

ORIGINAL:

e) The Staff Congress Office Personnel and/or one member of the Credentials and Elections Committee shall be responsible for reviewing all nominations *in his or her office*.

PROPOSED:

e) The Staff Congress Office Personnel and/or one member of the Credentials and Elections Committee shall be responsible for reviewing all nominations **in person or in a virtual meeting**.

(Article II -Director of Personnel Services)

ORIGINAL:

The *Director of Human Resources*, by virtue of position, is the administrative liaison of Staff Congress.

PROPOSED:

The **Chief Human Resources Officer**, by virtue of position, is the administrative liaison of Staff Congress.

(Article IV – Officers, Section 3, Nominating Committee)

ORIGINAL:

1. After the results of the general Staff Congress elections in May are posted, the nominating Committee will prepare a slate of nominees for each office (President-Elect and Secretary/*Treasurer*). Exception - See Article III, Section 1. This slate of nominees will be presented at the June meeting.

PROPOSED:

1. After the results of the general Staff Congress elections in May are posted, the nominating Committee will prepare a slate of nominees for each office (**President-Elect and Secretary**). Exception - See Article III, Section 1. This slate of nominees will be presented at the June meeting.

(Article IV, Section 1, Officers)

ORIGINAL:

The Staff Congress shall annually elect a President-Elect and Secretary/*Treasurer*.

PROPOSED:

The Staff Congress shall annually elect a President-Elect and **Secretary**.

(Article IV – Officers, Section 4 - Elections of Officers, item c)

ORIGINAL:

c) An election to fill a vacancy in the office of either President Elect or Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress shall be conducted at the next regular meeting after such vacancy occurs.

PROPOSED:

c) An election to fill a vacancy in the office of either President Elect or **Secretary** of the Staff Congress shall be conducted at the next regular meeting after such vacancy occurs.

(Article IV – Officers, Section 5 – Duties of the President, items b & c)

ORIGINAL:

b) To determine, in consultation with the Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress, the agenda for all meetings of the Staff Congress.

c) To issue calls for both regular and special meetings of the Staff Congress through the Secretary/*Treasurer* and in accordance with Sections 3 and 5 of Article IV of these Bylaws.

PROPOSED:

b) To determine, in consultation with the Secretary of the Staff Congress, the agenda for all meetings of the Staff Congress.

c) To issue calls for both regular and special meetings of the Staff Congress through the Secretary and in accordance with Sections 3 and 5 of Article IV of these Bylaws.

(Article IV -Officers, Section 7 -Duties of the Secretary/Treasurer)

ORIGINAL:

Section 7 - Duties of the Secretary/*Treasurer*

The duties of the Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress shall be:

PROPOSED:

Section 7 - Duties of the Secretary

The duties of the Secretary of the Staff Congress shall be:

(Article V – Meetings, Section 5 -Agenda, items a & b)

ORIGINAL:

The President of the Staff Congress, in consultation with the Secretary/*Treasurer*, shall determine the agenda for each meeting.

- a. All committees of the Staff Congress and individual members of the Staff Congress may submit agenda items to the Secretary/*Treasurer* not less than ten working days before a regular meeting.
- b. The Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress shall deliver a copy of the agenda to each member not less than five working days before a regular meeting and not less than three working days before a special meeting

PROPOSED:

The President of the Staff Congress, in consultation with the Secretary, shall determine the agenda for each meeting.

- a. All committees of the Staff Congress and individual members of the Staff Congress may submit agenda items to the Secretary not less than ten working days before a regular meeting.
- b. The Secretary of the Staff Congress shall deliver a copy of the agenda to each member not less than five working days before a regular meeting and not less than three working days before a special meeting

(Article VII -Standing Committees of the Staff Congress, Section 3 – Appointment, item d)

ORIGINAL:

d) Standing committees shall be composed of a minimum of five members including a chairperson and a *vice-chairperson*. One member should have served on that committee the previous year.

PROPOSED:

d) Standing committees shall be composed of a minimum of five members including a chairperson and a **co-chairperson**. One member should have served on that committee the previous year.

(Article VII – Standing Committees of the Staff Congress, Section 5, Chairpersons of Standing Committees, items a & 4)

ORIGINAL:

- a. Following the Executive Council appointments, each committee shall elect, by a majority vote, a chairperson and *vice-chairperson*.

4. Duties of the *vice-chairperson* shall be to assume the duties of the chairperson in his/her absence.

PROPOSED:

- a. Following the Executive Council appointments, each committee shall elect, by a majority vote, a chairperson and **co-chairperson**.

There was some conversation brought forth of changing any versions of he, or she to they and his, or her to them. There was also some conversation about clarifying the language around co-chair for committees. The intent being to share duties of chairing a committee among members as opposed to a vice chair role of having someone step in and acting as a second in command of the committee. We will make any changes and then have a re-reading of these changes at our next meeting.

Liaison – Steve Slone and Terkerah Washington

Steve Slone began by thanking the members of the liaison committee. He did not name names but he thanked them for all that they do for us. One of the goals this year of this committee is to liaison with as many different groups as possible. We are continuing to liaison with SGA. We are continuing to work alongside Faculty Senate. He thanked these groups for their tireless work alongside us and for giving us virtual options to attend their meetings. Specifically, he did call out Jacqueline Emerine, Holly Riffe, Cris Curran and everyone that is involved in Faculty Senate leadership. Our members that sat in on the board subcommittee meetings took copious notes. If you are interested in these notes and what occurred therein reach out to Steve. The goal with attending

those committee meetings is twofold. Yes, it is eyes and ears on the conversations, be it with our faculty colleagues, our SGA colleagues, or our Board of Regents colleagues. It is also good for our people to have exposure to these conversations. We gain experience by being in these conversations. He took the opportunity while he had the microphone to simply state that there is a person on this campus who he loves and respects and values so very much who said it better than he ever could by simply stating...Please reach out to your NKU friends, we are not okay.

University Committees

Benevolent – Ali Hannig and Steve Slone

Ali Hannig shared that the date for the event is Wednesday, November 5th. The flyer and the invite for the event will be coming out soon. If you want to help volunteer or anything please reach out to her or to Steve. Steve Slone shared as well that he is for certain that we probably need more food donations so brush up on those chili and desert recipes for the event.

ITAC – Dan Jones and Vicki Cooper

Vicki Cooper shared the following...

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
I. Construction Projects	Mary Paula Schuh	Mary Paula detailed several construction projects on campus including the \$12 million renovation of Steely Library's mechanical system, which necessitates vacating the building and relocating its operations to the fifth floor of Landrum. The project is set to begin in June 2026 and is expected to be completed by mid-spring 2027. Additionally, renovations for Landrum are planned to start in summer 2027, following the completion of a Science Center renovation project. Various concerns were raised about Griffin Hall and Fine Arts issues. Mary Paula acknowledged the issue and mentioned that they would need to coordinate with project management or prioritize among a list of issues with limited available funding for solution.

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
II. Account Cleanup & Password Length Increase	Jason Allen	Jason provided an overview of the student account cleanup process, which involved removing 20,000 inactive accounts to enhance security. He noted that this cleanup did not result in any operational issues for current students and emphasized the importance of addressing the risks posed by dormant accounts. Jason outlined a plan for cleaning up inactive student accounts, proposing a timeline for account deletion that includes notifying students in advance. He highlighted the importance of communication to ensure students understand the need to back up their data.
III. Regular Business		What trainings would your dept like to see offered by IT?
IV. Subcommittee Updates - Hardware - Software - Emerging Technologies	Various	

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

Mike Irvin shared that we have been continuing to make rounds with different faculty and staff groups for feedback. Currently we are working on a very brief survey because whichever group we go to it is tough to get a pulse on the room because some people may feel comfortable speaking and others not. We are working on refining the numbers for the sliding scale parking proposal. We want as much feedback as we can before presenting the proposal. We want as much evidence and testimonials and data to back up our proposal. We are working on getting updated numbers for our parking tiers. We want everything to be as accurate as possible. On the tuition waiver front Danielle has been meeting regularly with Diana with some questions we have come up with as we work on preliminary recommendations around potential changes to the waiver. Watch for the survey in the future and please respond as we are refining those numbers. Jacqueline Emerine shared that the parking numbers were discussed in PCC or Faculty Senate and one of the biggest feedback options was adding another tier at the higher

end of the scale to offset the burden on the lower paid tiers. Mike shared that Danielle had a whole listing of feedback but please keep the feedback coming as we work on refining the proposal.

Ad-Hoc Committees

Outreach – Terri Smith

Terri Smith shared that the holiday party will be on Thursday, November the 13th. It will be Winter Wonderland themed. It will take place in the Student Union Ballroom. Flyers will be sent out on Monday October 13th. We are in need of swag bag items. So, if anyone has anything they would like to donate let Staff Congress executive team know, or Grace Hiles, or Michelle Mellish, or Terri herself. No item is too small. Pencils, pens, stickers, squeeze balls, whatever we can put in bags to have a nice selection of items. If you know someone or if your department has something just let us know we don't mind asking. We are trying to get as many prizes as possible for the event. Also, if anyone would like to join the outreach committee, we are always looking for members. You don't have to be on Staff Congress to join our outreach committee. We have 5 people currently who are going to be working on decorations and activities for the party. Anyone is welcome to join Faculty or Staff. There is going to be an RSVP on the flyer. Please let us know that you are planning to attend and encourage your colleagues to attend the event and just have a fun time with everyone. The party will be immediately after our next Staff Congress meeting so the plan is for a shorter meeting on that day.

Old Business

Mike Irvin shared that the spirit shop has wrapped up. We did have a total of 160 orders. In terms of dollar amount we exceeded last semester's participation. There were a wider variety of options this time. He is going to reach out to Reis promotions about a possible donation to prizes for the holiday party. There will be another survey just like last time of what you liked and didn't like that will come out from Staff Congress. Also Mike noted that we saw a lot of the same names as last time so thank you to everyone that participated and to repeat customers.



Staff

Center for Student Engagement

Megan Croch, Samantha Mason, and Hanson Ngyuen visited Scott High School to connect with 38 students and share insights about NKU and CSE. They led a vision and goal board activity that was a huge success—students were engaged, inspired, and excited about their futures. Thanks for inspiring future Norsemen!

ERP Implementation Team

As we continue our journey toward a more agile and integrated administrative future, we want to take a moment to recognize the incredible efforts of our ERP implementation team. From navigating complex integrations and configuring Workday modules to leading cross-functional discussions and refining our financial and HR processes, this team has demonstrated unwavering dedication, collaboration, and innovation. Their work is laying the foundation for a more efficient, transparent, and user-friendly system that will benefit the entire NKU community. Special thanks to our workstream leads and support staff who have contributed countless hours to ensure a smooth transition. Your expertise and commitment are truly appreciated. Let's continue to support one another as we move into the next phase of this transformative project. If you see a member of the ERP team, please take a moment to thank them for their hard work!

Roger McCulley and Jodi Bauer

We extend our deepest gratitude to our incredible team of Roger McCulley & Jodi Bauer department for their outstanding work in transforming our campus into a vibrant, welcoming, and truly beautiful space! Thank you for making our campus a place we're proud to call home!

Sarah Hellmann

Sarah Hellman is truly the glue that holds the College of Education together. Her dedication, tireless work ethic, and genuine care for others make her an indispensable part of our community. Sarah is always available to help — whether it's answering a quick question, solving a complicated problem, or just offering a word of encouragement when it's needed most. She goes above and beyond every single day, working behind the scenes to ensure that the department and the entire college run smoothly. Her efforts often make the difference between a good day and a great one for faculty, staff, and students alike. Sarah doesn't just do her job — she makes everyone else's job

easier and more joyful, quietly supporting others so they can succeed. Simply put, Sarah embodies what it means to be a Norse: committed, collaborative, and caring. She deserves to be recognized for the countless ways she lifts others up and makes our college a better place to work and learn.

Announcements

Jennifer Stephens shared that the UCAP office textbook lending library is currently during its campaign. They serve hundreds of students every semester. Funds are a little low at the moment so any amount that you could donate, no matter how small would be appreciated. An email went out about this earlier. Thank you for considering donating.

Vicki Cooper specifically thanked Jacqueline Emerine for joining us for the whole meeting today. Thank you for your continued advocacy.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 PM.

Staff Congress Portal Questions

Staff Congress Portal Questions – 10/9/2025

Date Received: 9/11/2025

Is the policy review process taking into account Workday implementation and specifically the capabilities of Workday?

Action Taken: Sent to Amy Gellen

Response:

Date Received: 9/11/2025

Certain offices on campus have been told they have to be open during all regular business hours, and their staff is not allowed to attend events like: employee appreciation breakfasts, employee appreciation holiday/dessert receptions, the Presidents convocation, or the faculty/staff final Friday and first Friday events. Most offices close for those events, or their employees leave their offices to attend. Does the university have a policy that would allow all employees to close their offices to attend these functions - even if just for an hour? It seems wrong to say, "Hey, we are celebrating you! But unfortunately, you are not allowed to leave your office to attend."

Action Taken: Sent to Amy Gellen

Response:

Date Received: 9/11/2025

Could we update the website to some current Staff Congress member photos? A lot of those pictured no longer work here, let alone serve on Staff Congress.

Action Taken: Staff Congress President responding

Response: The current banner consists of photos of past Staff Congress presidents. Should we plan on a group photo of current Staff Congress members at our next in-person meeting?
Do members want to have individual photos or just a group photo on the web site?

Date Received: 9/18/2025

Plan A of the Emergency Closing Policy places an additional burden on caregivers. If the weather is sufficiently unsafe for the university to move to remote operations, it is sufficient for schools to close or outside caregiving operations to close - and all roughly around the same time with pretty much no warning. This policy allows caregivers little choice but to allow the university to commandeer our non-working hours or our vacation time.

Additionally, this feels very counter to the "Guiding Principles" named in the FWA policy that is being used as a foundation to bring everyone back to work on campus, which is disheartening.

- *Campus Vibrancy - during a weather emergency, this is not relevant.*
- *Student Access - students will not be need access most roles*
- *Department Discretion - departments/managers should not have to make this call between policies that are not in-line with each other*
- *Equity and Consistency - there is obvious inequality here, but I can't argue the consistency*
- *Performance and Accountability - this is the assumed argument used within the FWA policy for not allowing caregiving while wfh, which reinforces the expectation of use of vacation time.*
- *Remote Capability - yes, this is consistent.*

Last, this is particularly poor form as it really only happens a few times per year, if that, but any caregiver knows how quickly our vacation/sick time gets utilized with doctor visits, kid sick days, random daycare closings, school events, etc.

My recommendation would be to remove the remote operations from this policy - if we close, we close. If this is not an option, allowing caregivers a non-punitive "emergency closing" time that could be entered when these situations arise would be needed.

Action Taken: Sent to Grant Garber/Amy Gellen.

Response: Also submitted as a comment on the Policies Under Review website.

Date Received: 9/19/2025

I have a few comments regarding the Flexible Work Hours and Flexible Work Arrangements categories of policies under review.

I currently work as Full-Time Staff with SOTA in Fine Arts building. For dress code, my position (Greaves Concert Hall Coordinator) will often involve lots of walking and labor throughout building. Examples include moving stands, chairs, instruments/equipment (often large/heavy) and furniture to various parts of building or surplus. For dress code it is appreciated to have the option of tshirts without logos or only NKU apparel since I have had jackets and button down shirts get damaged from the labor of moving many things with edges that can tear clothing. My position is very hands on, and the ability to have comfortable clothing (especially since our building often has high temperatures) is important. Whenever I am running concerts or involved with events/recruitment I will have a dress code with button down shirt and dress pants/shoes, but for many days where I am functioning as a on call hands for building assistance it would be appreciated to have options that are better suited for labor.

For Flexible Work Arrangements my position includes running over 75 events a year in Greaves that will often be weekday evening or weekend hours. The ability to have flexibility in my schedule and hours is crucial, as muktike weeks in Oct/Nov/March/April I am working 7 days/week. I also get emails and scheduling request at late hours and last minute by students/faculty that require me to almost 24/7 respond regardless of if I am home outside of normal business hours.

I appreciate being given this form to submit comments, and thank you for time/consideration.

Action Taken: Sent to Grant Garber/Amy Gellen.

Response: Also submitted as a comment on the Policies Under Review website.

Date Received: 9/25/2025

Honestly, the tone toward university employees, especially staff, at this week's town hall meeting was disheartening and left me concerned. There wasn't a single word of appreciation or any mention of how important employee morale, retention, and satisfaction are. I had high hopes for the current administration, trusting they would help restore staff morale, but I now feel saddened and disappointed.

The president's message, despite her skill as a communicator, came across as: "You are going to do what we want, and we don't care what you think about it. And if you don't like it, you can leave." I was deeply disheartened to hear this.

When asked why employee flexibility was being taken away, the only response was, "I just want people on campus." Removing flexibility without considering how it impacts employees and campus morale, and using a broad, one-size-fits-all approach instead of a more balanced strategy, feels like a serious misstep. I believe that this stance will ultimately backfire, especially with the Workday implementation. The first lesson in any management class is that happy employees are productive employees - they will go above and beyond for you. At Ohio State, the workday student implementation was dropped due to a mass exodus of the project team. I worry that our administration is not taking these lessons to heart. When leadership overlooks the importance of employee satisfaction, the consequences are inevitable. Unfortunately, we are already seeing early signs of this exodus in HR, the Registrar's Office, and IT.

It was also concerning to hear that the president expects staff to be NKU cheerleaders and speak positively about the university anywhere we go, even to recruit students. When employees are not rewarded for their work, valued, or respected, they will not do that. For so many years, NKU did not have funds for raises – we went years without market adjustments or merit increases, benefits have been cut and continue to decline, and advancement opportunities for most are nonexistent. We have already lost many colleagues and are doing more with fewer resources. Flexible work has been one of the few meaningful benefits that helps sustain employee commitment. If that is taken away as well, it will be unrealistic to expect staff to continue going above and beyond.

I understand that decisions must ultimately be made with the institution's best interests in mind. However, employee satisfaction is a critical part of that equation. Simply requiring people to be physically on campus does not create genuine vibrancy; it creates the appearance of it. True vibrancy is organic. It comes from fostering a culture where people genuinely want to be here because the environment is supportive, the facilities are welcoming, and employees feel valued and respected. Believing that vibrancy can be manufactured through mandates rather than cultivated through engagement is a misunderstanding of leadership. This expectation is unrealistic and will lead to the opposite – it will only result in frustration, burnout, and disengagement.

Action Taken: Sent to Grant Garber/Amy Gellen.

Response: Also submitted as a comment on the Policies Under Review website.

Date Received: 9/29/2025

Northern Kentucky University's Flexible Work policy states that "no employee is entitled to or guaranteed the opportunity to utilize a Flexible Work Arrangement," and that some positions cannot accommodate such arrangements. Yet the Emergency Closing policy expects those same employees to work remotely during inclement weather. This contradiction is legally and ethically problematic. If remote work is deemed infeasible for certain roles, then those employees should not be required to work from home during closures. Otherwise, the University is selectively applying flexibility only when it serves institutional interests, while denying it when employees need it most. This undermines trust, exposes Northern Kentucky University to potential scrutiny under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and fails to uphold equitable workplace standards. Remote work must be treated as a consistent, reciprocal arrangement, not a one-sided contingency.

Action Taken: Sent to Grant Garber/Amy Gellen.

Response: Also submitted as a comment on the Policies Under Review website.

Date Received: 9/30/2025

I am extremely concerned about the proposed changes to the flexible work schedule policy. NKU claims the goal is to ensure “vibrancy,” yet there is no evidence that the university has analyzed why offices are closing or whether staffing levels are adequate. Over the years, many positions have gone unfilled, leaving the remaining staff to cover multiple roles.

According to the Staff and Faculty Report on the NKU dashboard, full-time staff have dropped 13% (from 931 in 2009 to 806 in 2024) and part-time staff 61% (from 99 to 39), while student enrollment has grown—meaning fewer staff are available per student. Despite this, the university blames staff and their flexible schedules for office closures without acknowledging its responsibility as an employer to provide adequate resources.

Federal and Kentucky law require employers to provide a safe and healthful work environment. Chronic understaffing that causes overwork, stress, or unsafe conditions could be considered a violation. Before penalizing staff, the administration must take accountability and analyze staffing needs and workload distribution to ensure employees can serve students effectively without being overextended. Employees must also be allowed the flexibility necessary to balance their workload and maintain their well-being while serving students.

If NKU wants true vibrancy on campus, it must provide adequate staffing, compensate employees fairly, and treat them with respect.

Action Taken: Sent to Grant Garber/Amy Gellen.

Response: Also submitted as a comment on the Policies Under Review website.

Date Received: 9/30/2025

I would like to submit a question regarding retirement benefits. The NKU HR retirement process currently states that retirees exchange their staff parking permit for a retiree permit. Could HR please clarify how this applies to employees who do not hold a staff parking permit at the time of retirement?

NKU retirement benefits include free parking, without any stipulation that a staff parking permit must have been purchased. I assume the current instructions simply assume everyone has a staff permit. However, there are scenarios in which an employee may not have a permit at the time of retirement—for example, staff who carpool or those on short-term disability that prevents driving. There may be other situations as well.

HR does have a website describing eligibility requirements and the retirement process (<https://inside.nku.edu/hr/benefits/types/retirement-process.html>), but it does not list the benefits available upon retirement. It would be helpful to have all retirement benefits clearly outlined in one place and accessible to all employees. Additionally, it would be valuable to include information on how to obtain each benefit, any terms and conditions, and a Q&A section to address common questions.

For example, IT-related retirement benefits are clearly stated on IT's website (<https://inside.nku.edu/it/retirement.html>). Similarly, staff should have a comprehensive, centralized resource for all retirement benefits available on the HR website, including the link to IT services available upon retirement.

Action Taken: Sent to Amy Gellen.

Response:

Date Received: 10/1/2025

I received a letter from my healthcare provider letting me know that they will no longer accept UnitedHealthcare insurance after the new year. My provider, TriHealth, is one of the largest in the region. All of my doctors are through TriHealth - as many of us know, it is tough to find a doctor we can like and trust, let alone more than one. Having to find new providers, many of whom are specialists with long waitlists for new patients, will be time-consuming and a strain on both our physical and mental well-being. What is our HR team doing to address this? Thank you.

Action Taken: Sent to Amy Gellen.

Response:

Date Received: 10/8/2025

With the Workday implementation underway and additional systems anticipated to address functionality gaps, staff across campus will be required to maintain daily operations in SAP while simultaneously supporting a large-scale, multi-year, campus-wide system transition. Staffing levels have already declined significantly over the years, and with Monday's layoffs, NKU is left with fewer employees to manage increasing workloads and maintain critical services.

It is one thing to occasionally require employees to take on additional work during short-term peak periods; it is entirely different to expect staff to sustain excessive workloads on a regular basis for years. Under both federal and state labor standards, it is the employer's responsibility to provide adequate staffing and reasonable working conditions. When an institution knowingly understaffs major initiatives and places the burden on existing employees to compensate through continuous overtime, weekend work, or holiday assignments, it risks creating an unsafe and potentially abusive work environment.

What concrete steps is the university taking to ensure compliance with its legal and ethical obligations as an employer, specifically to prevent prolonged overwork, burnout, and coercive expectations on staff during this multi-year project? And how will NKU ensure that employees are not made to absorb the consequences of administrative understaffing and planning deficiencies?

Action Taken: Sent to Amy Gellen.

Response:

Date Received: 10/9/2025

In the President's email about workforce reductions, it was stated that less than one percent of the total workforce was affected. While technically accurate, this seems misleading since the cuts reportedly impact only staff positions, not all employees. Could you clarify what percentage of staff were let go?

Workforce reductions inherently create uncertainty across campus, as employees are often unaware of which positions have been eliminated or how these changes may affect interdepartmental communication and workflow. It is not ideal to learn of a position's elimination only when attempting to contact that office.

Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Amy Gellen.

Response:

Date Received: 10/9/2025

Workforce reductions inherently create uncertainty across campus, as employees are often unaware of which positions have been eliminated or how these changes may affect interdepartmental communication and workflow. It is not ideal to learn of a position's elimination only when attempting to contact that office.

While I fully understand and respect the need to protect individual privacy, I would like to request additional clarity in the following areas:

- 1) A list of positions (not names) that have been eliminated.*
- 2) Identification of vacant positions that will remain unfilled as part of the cost-saving measures.*

Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Amy Gellen.

Response:

Date Received: 10/9/2025

Providing this information would promote transparency, support effective collaboration, and help faculty and staff adjust to changes in university operations. I believe sharing this information more transparently would help the campus community better understand the true scope and impact of the reductions.

Layoffs are always difficult, but can Cady share how the layoff decisions were made? There were several that seemed to go against our stated priorities, such as housing, who are already dealing with vacancies, career services, this is their third layoff, and cutting the director of ATC when last year they had record enrollments for transfer students. The same can be said for IT when we are implementing Work Day and cutting advisors when we say our focus is on student success. Again, I know these decisions are challenging to make, but knowing the reasoning behind them would be helpful.

Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Amy Gellen.

Response:

Date Received: 10/9/2025

In light of the recent announcement about midyear budget cuts and staffing reductions, many staff are struggling to understand how these decisions are made and who is held accountable for them.

While staff positions are being eliminated and budgets reduced, no one in the administration appears to be held responsible for the financial shortfalls that created this situation. Why are no Vice Presidents or other senior administrators being let go, while staff at the lower levels — the people who keep this university running day to day — are the ones losing their jobs?

In fact, some administrators whose roles directly involve preventing financial or enrollment problems have not only remained in place but have been promoted. Why do the same standards of performance and accountability that apply to staff not seem to apply to the administration?

The email sent to the campus community stated that layoffs affect “less than one percent” of the total workforce, but the numbers tell a different story. According to NKU’s official snapshot reports, in 2024 we had 806 full-time staff. Cutting 20 positions equals about 2.4% of full-time staff — not 1%. Since 2009, full-time staff have decreased by 13% (from 931 to 806), and part-time staff have dropped by 61% (from 99 to 39), while student enrollment has actually increased. That means fewer staff are now supporting more students, yet we continue to hire and expand upper-level administrative positions.

At what point will those making the largest decisions — the administration and VP-level leadership — be held accountable for outcomes that affect the entire university community?

Finally, we are asking for transparency regarding these actions:

How many VP-level and other administrative positions have been created or filled in since President Short-Thompson started?

What is the total annual cost of these administrative positions, including bonuses and other

compensation that are not reported to the state?

What is the total number of staff positions that have been eliminated due to budget cuts?

What is the total annual salary amount for the staff positions that have been eliminated due to budget cuts?

Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Amy Gellen.

Response: