

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

Members absent: Chris Bowling, Liz Futscher, and Bryan Irby

- I. Call to Order at 1:02 PM
- II. Approval of August 14, 2025 Minutes
 - Motion: Carolyn Wilhoit
 - Second: Kristi Bishop
 - Approval: Voice Vote
- III. Guest - VP Legal Affairs/General Counsel, Grant Garber - [Report](#)
- IV. Liaison Reports
 - President – Dr. Cady Short-Thompson
 - Board of Regents – Staff Regent – Dr. Cori Henderson - [Report](#)
 - Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Officer – Amy Gellen and Lauren Franzen - [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 - [Report](#)
 - 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 - [Report](#)
 - 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 - [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 - [Report](#)
 - Advocacy – Vanessa Steele - [Report](#)
- VIII. Old Business - [Report](#)
- IX. New Business
- X. Non-Member Discussion Period
- XI. Norse Appreciation - [Report](#)
- XII. Announcements- [Report](#)

XI. Adjournment at 2:47 PM

- Motion: Vanessa Steele
- Second: Jenifer Davis
- Approval: Voice Vote

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:02 PM.

Guest - VP Legal Affairs/General Counsel, Grant Garber

Grant Garber shared last Friday an email containing links to 10 administrative policy proposals that are currently out for comment from all employees and students as well should they choose to comment. He joins us today to talk a little bit about the process that the administration follows in adopting new policies or changes to existing policies and then open the floor up to questions or feedback around these proposals. Typically, any change or new policy begins the process with initial vetting in the offices that are responsible for administering the actual implementation of the policy. Eventually the proposal makes its way into the cabinet where, depending on the nature of the item there will be substantive discussion at the cabinet level to try to poke holes in it, ask questions, and refine the product. Once cabinet and the President are at least comfortable with the draft, keeping in mind it's not the final product, it will be shared more broadly. This is when the campus comment period opens up. Typically, the comment period lasts for 30 days. In this case, because of the volume of the policies we were sending out at once, and the nature of some of those policies, some of which we know would be of great interest to a lot of people, we just made it a 45-day comment period. The comment period will expire on October 20th. This will give us some time in advance of the November Board of Regents meeting, which is kind of a line in the sand that we just have internally drawn for ourselves. The feedback that we get, and we've gotten a lot already, which is great, we take seriously. It is not just for show. When we say we want your comments and questions, we really mean it, it makes the end product better. It helps us identify things that, frankly, we didn't think of. That has already happened in a couple of cases with these policies. Some things in these drafts that are unanticipated or unintended consequences that we hadn't fully thought through. There have been some editorial changes that, objectively, we needed to make. Any and all feedback is very welcome, and so we'll just continue to encourage you, however you would like to share that feedback, whether it's in sessions like this, through your staff congress leaders, or through the portal on the website. All feedback is taken seriously, and we will be sharing all of that with cabinet. Initially feedback through the portal arrives in the Legal affairs office but it's not going to stay there. We are going to find a way to share all of that feedback in an appropriate way with cabinet as well; to be taken into consideration as we think about how to adjust these policies in light of the feedback. We are also going to find ways to loop back with those of you who do take the time to make comments. Now, we're going to exercise a little bit of judgement, in how we do that. In some cases, we're getting questions from people who have shared their names, and I think wherever we are able to do that, somebody is going to answer that question back to you directly. Closing the loop and making sure that you know that you have

been heard and maybe offering the clarification or the answer that is appropriate. Sometimes we are unable to do that because the comment has come in anonymously, and that's certainly fine, but where we can, we will close the loop. We are also going to collect and organize the comments we're getting in terms of broader themes. As you can imagine, on dress code or the remote work policy, we're getting the same kind of comment over and over. In that instance it may be more appropriate for us to publish kind of a general response to that general concern. That is the kind of feedback we would share, next month sometime, potentially with staff congress leadership that then could be distributed. It may be a little bit of a mix and match in terms of how we communicate that back out, but we will. It is not just going to be a comment box that goes into the black hole, and nobody ever knows what happens to it. We are going to hold ourselves accountable and reflect back and answer questions or give some response, wherever we can. One other item of note, with 10 policies in the queue right now, we are going to almost certainly be publishing some more additional policy proposals next month as well. This is not the only time you're going to be hearing from administration on policy proposals. He is pretty sure that the proposals for October will include a revised free expression policy which as we have seen with recent events like what occurred yesterday on a college campus, we know that this will be very critical. With challenges around free speech, how we relate to each other, how we communicate around topics of controversy, disagreement, and polarization as a public university, we have to be really good at that. The way in which we have the conversation around the policy itself we are going to need to model the very best of what we can do about relating to each other and having open debate more generally. The policy itself will be an opportunity for us to model some of that civil dialogue as we work through the process. Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen have also joined us and can offer some thoughts on some of these policies as well. Before opening the floor up to questions Grant continued that since we are in this kind of comment space that they will answer whatever background questions they are able to, but they are probably not in a position to adjudicate comments today. We are not in a place to commit, yes, we will do that or no we won't at this time. Vicki Cooper began asking if we are seeing so many policy proposals because we were waiting for the policy on policies to go through first. Grant responded that it is part of it. As many of you recall our prior policy process was very complicated, potentially too complicated, and so we wanted to try to simplify that process before starting to run policies through it. While that is part of it also, we're just now coming into the new semester and with faculty off campus during the summer we wanted to wait until we knew everyone was back on campus. There was a little bit of a lull in the summer, which allowed some of these to back up in the queue. We had someone count and we have 209 administrative policies on the website, and of those he stated a substantial percentage of them, maybe half, maybe more, need some work. It could be a refresh, they need to be consolidated, or in some cases we don't need them at all. Our typical practice over the last couple of years is to work through probably between 5 and 8 policies a year. If we worked at that pace, it would take another 10 to 15 years to get through all of the policies that we need to get to, and as he is sure a lot of us would agree, we probably don't have that time. Amy Gellen shared that there have been a lot of comments already about the HR policies which are in the portal. A great

deal of the comments came in mid to late August before the policies were published. For example, there were a lot of concerns about the dress code, that she hopes have now been alleviated now that everyone can read the language and see that it's going to be more lax. In the absence of seeing the language there were a great many concerns that were expressed. Vanessa Steele shared that much of these policies could be down to manager training. For example, dress code is something that is going to be very specific in some cases to departments. How much of this is also going to be addressed through manager training to make sure that our managers are getting consistent guidelines? Amy responded with dress code for example they tried to make the dress code policy reflect the dress code that everybody is following on a day-to-day basis on campus. There were a lot of references previously to suit and tie and things that, while there are people like President Short-Thompson wear a suit every single day, it is not required for the vast majority of campus. We tried to make the policy reflect how we are all dressing day to day. We did create a manager FAQ for each of these HR policies to give them some guidance. We want to give managers good guardrails so they know where they can and where they cannot have flexibility. For the most part a lot of these boil down to kind of the manager's discretion. Athletic wear in HR is probably inappropriate, whereas if you are in athletics, it is appropriate. Lastly on dress code we are working on a lookbook of what we mean when we say, yes, leggings are okay under a dress or a long blouse, but maybe leggings that you would wear to the gym and gym shoes are probably inappropriate if I'm in an HR based role. Hopefully that will help managers know where they can and cannot have flexibility. Vicki Cooper continued around dress code that this new policy applies to student employees and there are a lot of staff who supervise students. Amy responded that they did try to make the dress code a little bit more lax. NKU gear is always welcome. The hope was that it wouldn't be a hardship for student employees, but the expectation is that student employees would follow the dress code as well. Vicki shifted to the residency requirement. As primarily a commuter college could this maybe cause an issue with students choosing another school that may not have a two-year residency requirement. Brandon Thompson responded that he does not foresee that for a few different reasons. Students who are already commuting will still have the same exemptions. The change is to using a mileage radius as opposed to county radius. In turn some students who were not eligible previously may be eligible now for an exemption. He does not believe that it is going to impact students that are commuters already. One of the main drivers behind this change on any college campus is the success of students, college success, talking about belonging, engagement, retention, and persistence. Persistence is higher for students that live on campus. This is the driving factor behind a policy such as this. At previous institutions he has worked with students did not see it as a detriment. In fact, from a financial standpoint there are benefits to students living on campus. They know what the cost of living on campus is going to be consistently and that is not always the case when you live off campus. One month your electric bill could be 50 dollars and the next it could be 150 dollars. There is a bit more consistency with on campus living. We have heard feedback that meal plans are a detriment to students living on campus. Exceptions and exemptions can be made for meal plans on a case-by-case basis with students. These could be for religious purposes, or even financial purposes. We have

made and will continue to make exceptions for students when applicable. Vicki Cooper continued that she has heard some feedback that the 40 mile radius seems a little bit tight. Is there any discussion made around that mile radius? Brandon shared that is industry standard to use the mile radius instead of designated counties. Vicki continued that she knows of employees that live outside the 40 mile radius and their children could go elsewhere because of this radius. Brandon stressed that within the policy it does read that students can request an exemption. If they have a compelling case outside of the reasons that are spelled out they just need to provide that reasoning to the group making the decision on exemptions. Amanda Andrews brought up that there is a great need for better dining options and hours in our dining operations, so will that get fixed with this new two-year lock for incoming students. Brandon responded he didn't want to speak on behalf of our dining contract but that typically offerings are based on the amount of usage or the amount of meal plans sold. With more students on campus, we have the ability to have more options available. Right now, students that live in our East Village do not have a dining facility. A large part of that is because we have less than 300 students living on that side of campus. Far less than that actually and there is no way to sustain food operation over there based on the number of students. By increasing our on-campus population, we do have opportunities to explore expanding those operations. He truly believes that we have the responsibility to make sure that we are providing the options that our students need for food. Michelle Melish shared that while working with our international students here on campus, for a lot of them they spend a lot of money just to come here in the first place. It is hard for them to even be here for one year and she worries that two years could be detrimental for us in recruiting international students. Could this maybe be part of the exemptions that are offered? Brandon responded that it would be hard for us to throw that fully into the policy, but it is something that has been brought up. We need to have some additional conversations over the language that we provide for our international students in regards to the residency requirement. He continued to encourage students to petition outside of the reasons we have listed for an exemption. The door is not closed on those conversations. Steve Slone asked if there is a dispute between a manager and an employee regarding the flexible work arrangement how does the process of handling that dispute work? Amy Gellen responded that currently we don't have a policy in place on flexible work. We have a procedure that some parts of campus were following, and others were not. This policy is merely documenting that procedure and ensuring some consistency across campus. If an employee is requesting a flexible work arrangement that the supervisor denies for whatever reason, ideally the supervisor and the employee need to have a meeting to discuss it and understand the reasons why on both sides that the employee would like the flexible work arrangement, and why the supervisor needs to be on campus more. HR is happy to facilitate those conversations and be another voice. The employee can reach out to her directly or Natalie Gabbard who handles employee relations questions for HR. They are happy to help any employee work through these conversations with their supervisor and ideally come to an amicable agreement on both sides. Cori Henderson asked for clarity because the policy talks specifically about 4 10-hour days. Are there other schedules that will be allowable or just 4 10-hour days? Amy responded that again it's between the employee and their

supervisor. 4 10's is what we see most commonly, and it is her understanding that it is typically in facilities and operations working those different schedules. Any arrangement and schedule is allowable, assuming the supervisor and the employee both agree that it's suitable. The focus is to meet the needs of the employee and to meet the needs of the department and the division. Cori asked that for different areas that may have programming going on do they need to obtain a document and a form for any small change? Amy responded that with programming, if it's a one-off type of situation it is totally ok. The aim here is to document a permanent schedule change when it comes to flexible work arrangement. A question came through earlier around ADA accommodations and how those would work with the flexible work arrangement policy. Amy shared that if someone is unable to work on campus due to an ADA accommodation all those accommodations are documented every year, and they will continue to follow the normal process. HR will receive the documentation form from your doctor and continue to analyze them on a case-by-case basis. If anyone already has and ADA accommodation this new policy doesn't wipe that way. Amanda Andrews asked of Brandon Thompson how long does the exemption process take. Brandon did not have an answer on that but that we need to turn them around as fast as possible once they come through. University Housing is going to work on the timeline for turning around these requests. The goal is to have them done on a rolling basis. Amanda continued by asking if we are going to require students to live in dorm rooms many of our dorm rooms need renovations, so is the plan to take some dorms offline during the summer. Brandon responded that he will be the first to say that a lot of our residence halls need some work and a hug. It is something that we are committed to doing. On a rolling basis there is ongoing work being done on individual rooms. As for whole building renovations, those are capital projects that we have to plan further in advance. At the moment we don't have a premier destination for returning students. The nicest facilities are University Suites, and the New Residence Hall and those buildings are primarily first year students. We have some shifting and adjusting work that we need to do with our housing stock over the course of the next two years when this policy is in effect. The goal being to have a premier destination for our returning students. We have put some work into Northern Terrace, adding some kitchens to some of the units to entice returning students with apartment style living. There are some updates we want to do in Norse Hall over the next few years. The goal being for the first-year experience to be comparable to the second-year experience. Vanessa Steele asked in regards to flexible work arrangement with all of the construction on campus there are people who don't even know where their office is going to be going in the next few months so would exceptions be made while we are moving people around while we go through this transition. Ali Hannig shared that Mary Paula Schuh does have a master plan of the work that is being done. Amy Gellen shared that if someone needed to work remotely if it's a pardon the dust situation that would not need to be documented. The goal of the policy is to document long-term working arrangements and to ensure consistency across campus. Michelle Melish asked about the lack of a food option in Callahan Hall. Brandon responded that he couldn't make any commitments at this time but more people on campus will hopefully mean that we can open up that food option again. Cori Henderson asked with renovations on campus and with people returning to campus will

he be enough space for people returning to campus. Amy responded that it is her understanding that the vast majority of folks do have office space and what we are doing with this policy is just documenting what everyone is already doing. She doesn't foresee a huge influx of people needing extra space. There are a couple of pockets of space and departments that are pretty cramped. IT for example which Tim Ferguson and Chris Calvert are working to make sure we have adequate space for all of our IT folks. For everyone else it is her understanding that we do have the space and the vast majority of our departments have been on campus at least in her short tenure. Vicki Cooper brought forward that someone had reached out to her to make a comment on the proposed policies and the button on the website wasn't working. Grant responded that within maybe an hour or two after his email went out someone reached out to let us know that with a particular web browser they were using, they were not able to scroll down far enough to hit the submit button. Withing probably 5 to 15 minutes from getting that message we made some adjustments so that you could actually scroll down and hit the button. Obviously if anyone else is encountering trouble submitting comments let us know right away. Vicki continued that someone had asked about joining the policy list serv. Grant shared that over the summer the old version of the listserv that we were relying on was no longer functioning as intended. We have attempted remove references for the list serv on the website. Going forward we will be communicating about these policies just as we did last week. Watch for messages from Grant as these windows open up. If you have concerns or you find another reference to the listserv please reach out to Grant. A question came through to Brandon is there an appeals process if a student is denied an exemption for living on campus. Brandon responded that the way it is currently written the housing exemption and appeals committee is made up of various individuals from across campus. Their decision is the final decision. Another question came through about the nuts and bolts of flexible work arrangements around picking up a child so there is flexibility in how these schedules are designed. Amy shared that there are a lot of one-offs that we would have to talk through depending upon the work that person or department is doing. She stress working with your supervisor and HR to navigate through any potential conflict with the implementation of this policy in January.

Board of Regents – Dr. Cori Henderson

Dr. Cori Henderson shared the following updates...

- Budget and Finance Meeting, Monday, September 15 at 1:30pm, SU 106
 - We will discuss FY25 financial statements, fall 2025 net tuition revenue and enrollments, FY 27 budget priorities and our committee self-evaluation
- Student Success and Academic Affairs Meeting, September 16 at 4pm, SU 106
- BOR Meeting, Wednesday, September 17, at 9am, SU 107A
 - We will discuss FY25 financials, Net Tuition Revenue, Fall 25 enrollment, FYSSH, policy updates, and fundraising report

**Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Officer – Amy Gellen and
Lauren Franzen**

Chief Human Resources Officer Amy Gellen shared the following...

- Updates
 - IT - nothing at this time
 - Training & Development - registration is now open for the "Decisioning with Analytical Thinking" workshop - participants can attend either October 23 or November 12 and engage in the process and steps of problem-solving and decision-making using real work scenarios.
 - Wellness -
 - Registration now open for St. Elizabeth Mobile Cardiovascular Health Unit on campus in October and Mobile Mammography Van on campus in November.
 - Airrosti Rehab Center is conducting a free webinar focusing on sciatica September 11 and 14.
 - Details and registration for upcoming classes and events on the wellness page

University Wellness SC updates for 9/10/2025

Announcements:

- Registration now open for St. Elizabeth Mobile Cardiovascular Health Unit on campus in October and Mobile Mammography Van on campus in November.
- Free Airrosti Rehab Center September webinar focusing on sciatica September 11 and 14.
- [Details and registration information on the Upcoming Classes and Events page.](#)

Details to add to minutes:

- More [Details and registration information on all supports on the Upcoming Classes and Events page.](#)
- The St. Elizabeth Cardiovascular Mobile Health Unit will be on the NKU campus to provide preventative screenings for stroke, aneurysms and cardiovascular disease.
Four non-invasive screenings will be offered for \$25 for each. All 4 screenings can be completed in 30 minutes.

When:

October 22: 8am-2pm

October 23: 10am-4pm

Where:

Parked in Lot C next to Griffin Hall

Registration required. Please contact (859)-301-9355 to schedule your appointment and to speak with a St. Elizabeth expert about screenings and payment options.

- The St. E's Mobile Mammography van will at NKU to provide screenings for breast cancer. Screening takes about 15 minutes and results will be sent to your

Primary Care Provider. Results will be mailed to your home. You will be contacted if additional testing needs to be done.

When: November 4: 8:30am - 4pm

Where: Parked in LOT C next to Griffin Hall.

Registration required: Call (859) 655-7400 to speak with a St. E's expert and schedule your appointment.

Or

Visit mychart.stelizabeth.com or use the MyChart mobile app. Create an account if you do not already have one and log in. Select "visits/appointments", schedule an appointment with "screening mammogram" as the reason for your visit, answer series of questions, select site preferred as "Mobile Van", select Northern KY University Mammogram Van as the location. Choose the date and time that works best for you and click "schedule it".

- Register for all Airrosti webinars at the [Airrosti Registration Site](#).

September Topic: Sciatica

This session will dive into the common causes of sciatic pain, how to recognize symptoms, and the most effective strategies for relief. We'll also share practical tips to help prevent flare-ups—whether you're spending long hours at a desk, in the carpool line, or on the sidelines cheering for your kids.





September 11th – 4:00pm

September 23rd – 1:00pm

Dr. Marquita Barron shared the following...



2025-26 Professional Development Opportunities
 Questions? Contact [Dr. Marquita Barron](#) or access the [Personal & Professional Development site](#)

 <p style="text-align: center;">Decisioning with Analytical Thinking</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2-Hour Workshop & Recognition Oct 23, Nov 12</p> <p>Open to all employees, this workshop will provide participants with an opportunity to engage in the process and steps of problem-solving and decision-making using real work that aligns with NKU's new strategic plan.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Facilitated By: Dr. Cori Henderson Ms. Amy Ishmael</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Percipio Demo Brief Video</p> <p>A recording to demonstrate how an employee can better own and create their learning path and take advantage of a vast library of topics and AI resources to help enhance and/or advance an employee's knowledge, skills, aptitude for the job of today and tomorrow.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">HR Topics for Supervisors/Managers On-demand, Online</p> <p>An on-demand online course that offers a range of HR topics for greater awareness of and guidance on how supervisors/managers are to manage people from a legal, regulatory, and policy perspective.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Facilitated By: Ms. Natalie Gabbard</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Building Your Credibility As A Great Leader The Series 1-hour webinars</p> <p>A series of webinars for supervisors/managers to gain and share ideas and perspectives on improving team morale and engagement.</p>
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Faculty Senate – Dr. Janel Bloch

Dr. Janel Bloch that Faculty Senate had their first meeting on August 25th. Not a lot to report yet as things are just getting started. They are going to work this year on gathering data to revise or evaluate the workload policy. They have a draft for that. There is a committee that is looking at the faculty handbook and getting it updated with university policy as well as organization and content. There were a couple of other presentations including one on curriculum modalities basically looking at whether classes should be offered in an online format. Also a presentation on First Day Connect which is looking to get a pilot group to look at ways for students to have their textbooks basically ready online and you would pay for them in advance of the first day of classes.

Student Government Association – Kyah Smith

Kyah Smith shared that they are currently working on getting ice machines in the campus recreation center. There is currently no ice and the water is room temperature. They are looking to work with the recreation center to hopefully put that in place. They are also working with Fuel NKU to hopefully do some kind of collaboration with student volunteers to extend fuel hours till 7 PM. They are looking at doing it once a week or once a month, whatever is feasible. They are working through what could work so that students taking night classes or students who have classes during the day can still have

access to the resources Fuel provides. They are also conducting research on student employment. How are students feeling about it? Are they fulfilled by it? Are they being paid on time? Just general overall questions about how student employment is going. They are hosting their Advocacy Town Hall event on October 16th. They have a collaboration event with NVP, Title IX, and the Student Conduct office called sharing the red zone which will be on September 23rd from 4:30 to 5:30. Vicki Cooper asked if they were still recruiting members. Kyah shared that elections are over but yes it's an interview process if you know a student who is interested in joining SGA.

President - Vicki Cooper

Vicki Cooper shared the following...

Staff Congress President's Report, 9/11/2025

It has been a busy month! My work on the Administration Evaluations continues and should be completed and sent out to each individual, supervisor and Cady shortly.

Portal question/comments submissions were up this past month. We received 13 submissions since our last meeting, 10 concerned the new or revised Human Resources policies. There was in-depth discussion on these policies already during this meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

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.

Vicki Cooper did share that we got an update from Zaidi on the UC elevator. They were waiting on a motherboard to get it up and operational again. Mike Irvin shared that there is a note on the elevator that it will be down until September 16th. Amanda Andrews and Mike Irvin shared that the UC building is going to be going offline from December 16th through the 30th. Notification just went out to the building. They are replacing the electrical switchgear in UC so they will shift to remote operations as we approach the holiday break. Vicki shared that there was a question that came through about the water fountains in Griffin Hall that were not operational. They were waiting on a part that just arrive so they should be fixed this morning. A final question that came through the portal around is there a formal protocol for assessing environmental health with all the construction and changes to our infrastructure. We received a quick response on that

one. There is a process by which problems are identified. Faculty and staff may request environmental testing. Questions should be directed to the office of safety and emergency management on a case-by-case basis. These questions and responses will be included at the end of these minutes.

Just a reminder - we do have some in person meetings this year. December, June, and Roundtable, probably in February are in-person. Also, this year, November will be in-person. More information to come on that later in the meeting. Steve Slone asked a question not related to Vicki's report. Someone sent him a question asking about closing for the holidays. Amy Gellen responded that the intention is to give everyone off the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. There will also be some additional days around Christmas. She just found out that the message comes from her office about these extra days off. Official notification will be in the next week.

Staff Congress Standing Committee Information

Benefits – Ali Hannig

Ali Hannig shared that open enrollment is coming soon. Time flies summer is over. Open enrollment is going to be October 23rd through November 10th. There are going to be information sessions like they did last year. A virtual session on Friday, October 24th from 10:30 to Noon. Watch for an email from Patricia Burke and this virtual session will be recorded if you are not able to attend. There will be an in-person session on Thursday, October 30th from 10:30 to 12:30 in the UC Ballroom. There will be a few vendors there as well. It is not a full-scale benefits fair like we've had in the past but there will be people there to answer any questions you may have. There are no vendor changes for 2026. Conversations are still taking place for pricing for premiums, and all of that information will be included in the benefits bulletin. A reminder that Express Scripts is back at Kroger.

Constitution and Bylaws – Christopher Witt and Christine Yankovsky

Christopher Witt shared that the team is going over language for changes to the constitution and bylaws. With the committee's help and Congress's help they will have them to full Congress the next month or two. Probably by the next in person meeting the information will be available. Vanessa Steele asked if this had any bearing on Credentials and Elections discussions about determining Staff Congress membership. Vicki Cooper responded that it should not have any bearing on those conversations. It's mostly just language updates. Vicki reminded that in order to make a bylaws change it takes two readings of Congress. Tina Altenhofen added that if it's a constitution change we would then need Board of Regents approval.

Liaison – Steve Slone and Terkerah Washington

Steve Slone shared that since the outreach portion of this committee to an ad hoc committee of which Terri Smith and Michelle Melish are doing a wonderful job this year liaison is focusing on what new avenues and new places do we need to liaison with. If

you can think of different university committees that we need to be represented on reach out to Steve and Terkerah and let them know. We are continuing to liaison with faculty senate and SGA. This year we've added in an official committee the Professional Concerns Committee and the Budget Committee of Faculty Senate. We are also with the tireless work of the liaison committee adding the committee meetings from the Board of Regents as well. The collegial governance meetings with all the leadership of the governance bodies are also continuing. Watch for future updates from all of these various committees.

Policies – Pete Rinto and Aaron Luken

Pete Rinto shared a reminder for folks to make sure you do read through the policies that are under review. Also encourage your colleagues as well to read them and comment on them. Take note especially that there are different exceptions that are listed for many of those policies to cut down on wild rumors spreading with the accuracy of the policies. If you are having problems with the process for submitting comments or anything reach out to Aaron Luken or Pete Rinto or any member of Staff Congress Executive Team.

University Committees

Benevolent – Ali Hannig and Steve Slone

Ali Hannig shared that the date for the chili cook off is November 5th from 11 to 1 in the UC Ballroom. Please put that on your calendars. We are bringing back the holiday market from years past so if you have an Etsy shop and are interested in selling at the holiday market, please reach out to us and let us know. We will be sending out information soon for the sign ups to help volunteer and those that want to make chili or desserts for the event so watch for marketing soon.

ITAC – Dan Jones and Vicki Cooper

Vicki Cooper shared the following...

Date: 8/29/25 Time: 10:30-12:00 Location: Remote-Zoom	IT Advisory Council Minutes (ITAC)
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Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
I. Welcome new members		Attendees introduced themselves to the group. Welcome to new members Jason White and Ted Bilott.

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
II. Adobe Contract Update	Staci Green	Staci explained that the final agreement with Adobe is still pending, but negotiations are working to reduce costs for a new three-year contract. The plan is to adjust licensing to offer Adobe Acrobat Pro & Adobe Express for FTE employees, reduce full Adobe CC Suite to “thought” workers (299), maintain the same number of full CC Suite licenses for students (1000), Adobe Express for all students, Substance 3D Assets site license, Adobe Sign Enterprise, full Adobe CC Suite for lab computers. She also mentioned the Adobe Creative Campus program, which could provide training and promotion opportunities for faculty and staff to encourage student use of Adobe products. See additional documentation about Creative Campus and let ITAC know if you are interested in being an Adobe Champion for the program.
III. Card Swipe Reader Update	Staci Green	Staci provided updates on campus card changes, noting that new tap-enabled cards and readers will be implemented starting in 2026, with card distribution beginning in January 2026 and reader replacements likely concluding in mid-2027.
IV. Feedback: Start of Semester, Topics for Future Meetings		ITAC members shared positive feedback from about the responsiveness of IT support during the semester's start, particularly regarding technical issues in Griffin and the Science Center. Concerns were raised regarding upcoming building renovations and their impact on technology planning, also the lack of stable funding and predictable models for hardware and software updates, particularly for computer labs. Peggy announced that Marketing & Communications will present to ITAC about the website migration in the future. Staci indicated that Campus Planning will likely present next month about construction projects. A few specific tech issues were presented to Staci and Tim to bring back to IT for troubleshooting (VPN, HE 205 HDMI connection, OneDrive slowness).
V. Subcommittee Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hardware - Software 	Various	Each of the subcommittees still exists and will meet when they have topics necessary to discuss. Dawn Parks will

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
- Emerging Technologies		be added to the Emerging Tech committee.

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

Mike Irvin shared a pretty notable update. We've been working closely with Danielle McDonald and while we still have a lot of work to do, we are making progress on a sliding scale parking proposal. We are calling it tier-based parking basically paying for a parking pass based on your salary. The charge of the committee was a net neutral parking proposal. So what is below is just a draft of what we are looking at. We stress that this is just a draft. These numbers are likely to change before we get a proposal put forward. At this point we are in the information gathering phase. Feel free to submit comments to us. This will be presented at PCC for Faculty Senate next week. Mike Irvin shared the following. Again this is just an initial draft.

Sliding Scale Parking Permit

Parking Taskforce Members:

Mike Irvin, Co-chair
Jennifer McLeod, Co-chair
Nathan De Lee
Kathleen Spada
Steve Slone
Jay Avenido
Erika Austin
Lisa McElfresh
Danielle McDonald

Rationale for proposed change:

Currently, NKU charges all full-time employees the same amount to park on campus. The 2025-2026 parking permit rate is \$429/year or \$35.75/month. Most employees choose to have this cost deducted monthly from their paycheck. In addition, there are 57 NKU employees who elect to purchase reserved parking spaces on campus at \$903/year. The purpose of this proposal is to create a more equitable cost for parking that is based on annual salary.

Annually, parking at NKU brings in \$463,000 in revenue. This money is utilized for maintenance of the lots and garages as well as to pay off an existing loan on a current garage. Changes in parking fees must remain cost neutral.

Notes on data used in table:

The data for number of employees per salary band was reported to the taskforce by Dionna Scholler from HR and includes the recent 3% pay increase. It also should be noted that NKU part-time faculty were not included because they pay a reduced rate per

semester for a parking permit and not monthly. The data regarding the number of reserved parking spaces was provided by the Director of Parking Services, Curtis Keller.

The number of employees reported per salary band is accurate, but there is not a way to cross check salary with who or who does not pay for parking on campus. For instance, there may be two NKU employees who live in the same household, carpool, and only purchase one pass or a faculty member who is fully remote and does not need a parking permit. Therefore, the data presented in the chart is an estimate to get the conversation started.

Salary Band	NKU Employees in Each Salary Band	Total Parking Annually per Salary Band	Annual Parking Pass Cost	Monthly Deduction	Change from Current Rate
21,000-41,999	212 (15.35%)	0	0	0	-100%
42,000-62,999	478 (34.61%)	\$131,450	\$275.00	\$22.92	-36%
63,000-83,999	352 (25.49%)	\$123,200	\$350.00	\$29.17	-18%
84,000-104,999	145 (10.50%)	\$68,730	\$474.00	\$39.50	+10.50%
105,000 and up	137 (9.92%)	\$74,070	\$540.72	\$45.06	+26%
Reserved parking	57 (4.13%)	65,550	\$1,150.00	\$95.84	+27%
TOTAL	1,381 (100%)	\$463,000			

Ad-Hoc Committees

Outreach – Terri Smith

Terri Smith shared that due to scheduling issues the holiday party this year is going to be on November 13th. We are going to try to have it in the Student Union Ballroom. There will be food, games, and prizes. The party will be from 3 until 5. We will continue our donation drive for Fuel NKU, the Care Closet, and Parents Attending College. We want the party to be fun, festive, and memorable. If you work in a department that has any kind of swag or items that could be donated, please reach out to us and let us know. Also, a call out for anyone that wants to join the outreach committee. We would be happy to have you in these conversations. You don't have to be a Staff Congress member or even Staff to join the outreach committee. Even faculty can join. Michelle Melish has created a flier, and it will be sent out soon.

Roundtable – Amanda Andrews

Amanda Andrews shared that she is going to set up a meeting at the end of this month for anyone who sends an email to her volunteering to serve on the roundtable committee. We had a very successful event last year. Thank you to all of Congress for the success of the event. If you are interested in serving on the roundtable committee, please email Amanda directly. The plan is to meet once a month and meet more often as the event gets closer.

Advocacy – Vanessa Steele

Vanessa Steele shared that there is some conversation in their group around doing a campus climate survey again. They are always advocating and continuing to advocate for increase in pay and ensuring we all have living wages. Vanessa announced that she is taking a step back from leading this group and that Jennifer Davis has stepped up to assume the chair of this group with Chris Bowling supporting her along with the rest of the team.

Old Business

Mike Irvin shared that the spirit store was open from the 25th through this Monday. The official numbers were 152 total orders for roughly 10,400 dollars in merchandise ordered. At the end of this month, we will work through the process for pickup. This go round the plan is to use some of the space in the Archives in Steely as a holding location for the items. Thank you to everyone who contributes to make this initiative such a huge success. Watch for information about pickup times coming soon.



Staff

Angel Munoz

I recently had to move offices. Angel went "above and beyond" to get my printer renamed, set up, and running properly in my new space. He's "amazing"! Thanks so much for your wonderful customer service! :-)

Blake Tharp

Blake is always super helpful and quick with an answer whenever I'm trying to figure out how to navigate in AEM and want to do something "fancy." He's definitely an asset to the NKU staff and MarComm in particular.

Casey Werrmann and Benjamin Hehman

I needed a small bulletin board and a blind put up in my new office. Casey and Ben got the jobs done in a very timely manner and with excellent customer service! They are an asset to the carpenter shop and NKU! Such great guys to work with...pleasant, knowledgeable, and so respectful! Manners and courtesy never go out of style! Thanks guys! You are so appreciated!!!

Center for Student Engagement

I want to extend my deepest appreciation to the Center for Student Engagement staff—Sam, Tyler, Meg, and Hanson—for their unwavering dedication to making VictorFest a success. Their hard work, creativity, and commitment to our students set the tone for an incredible start to the year. Thank you for leading with passion and for always putting our students first.

Denise Martin

Denise has been so wonderful! It's refreshing to see a kind, smiling face and someone who truly loves their job! Thank you, Denise for all that you do to keep our offices, restrooms and halls clean!

Lesley Webster

I'd like to recognize Lesley Webster for her outstanding support of the College of Education and our graduate students. Lesley consistently goes the extra mile—whether it's offering thoughtful advice, helping students navigate their coursework, or guiding them through certification processes. She's always ready to lend a hand and does so

with kindness and patience. Her depth of knowledge and genuine care make a real difference. Students know they can count on her, and colleagues appreciate her steady presence and collaborative spirit. Lesley brings heart and dedication to everything she does, and it shows in the way she uplifts those around her. Thank you, Lesley, for being such a valuable part of the COE and NKU.

Sheila Rubin

I am proud to nominate Sheila Rubin for Norse Appreciation. Sheila exemplifies the very best of the College of Education—dedicated, compassionate, and always student-centered. She consistently goes above and beyond to support both students and colleagues, offering her time, wisdom, and encouragement with genuine care. Sheila's professionalism is matched only by her kindness. Whether she is helping a colleague navigate challenges, collaborating with staff, or contributing to the success of our programs, Sheila brings a spirit of excellence and integrity to everything she does. Her commitment strengthens our community and reflects the core values of NKU. Sheila is not only a valued colleague but also an inspiring role model whose positivity and dedication lift others up. She truly makes the College of Education a better place.

Tinley Daniel

Was patient and helped me. I feel she went above and beyond to get me registered for class.

Announcements

Michelle Melish shared that Education Abroad has a couple of events coming up. On Monday they are having a Get the Scoop event from 11:30 to 1:30 scooping out free ice cream. So, stop by and say hello as they will be sharing information about the programs coming up this year. They have some professional ice cream scoopers who worked at Baskin-Robbins in Japan. Also, that Monday and the following Monday the 22nd is the study abroad fair from 10 to 2 in the Student Union Ballroom. This event showcases all the programs coming up this year from their office.

Vicki Cooper reminded everyone about the FUEL NKU produce pop up that is happening on the 23rd and 24th of this month from 10 to 3 up on the plaza outside the student union. She continued sharing for Athletics a free basketball tip off event on October 7th with ice cream and the opportunity to meet the basketball teams. No pre-registration or tickets required for the event and doors open at 6. Aaron Luken shared that the event is called Hoops and Scoops and that everyone is welcome out to Truist arena for this kickoff event. Also watch for information from his office around partial season ticket plans to support our Norse.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 2:47 PM.

Staff Congress Portal Questions

Staff Congress Portal Questions

Date Received: 8/11/2025

So, the elevator in the University Center has been down and not operational MULTIPLE times, almost daily, over the past few weeks. With forced office moves and people who have a hard time with and/or can't use the stairs, it's been very inconvenient and troubling to come into work and find you can't get to your office OR that stuff can't be moved via the elevators because they simply are not working consistently! It's very old and has had issues multiple times over the years. Why can't it be fixed or even replaced?!?!? You can spend thousands of dollars on new "decorations" for the building but can't fix a disfunctional piece of equipment that is necessary for the safe operation of the building? PLEASE fix the elevator!!!!

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Syed Zaidi and Amy Gellen.

Response: Zaidi responded on 8/11/2025 that he will provide a response after conferring with the divisional VP.

Final Response on 8/21/2025:

Happy to report that the University Center is back online and all known issues have been fixed. The recent service interruptions seem to have been caused by a bad control board that has now been replaced.

Routine annual maintenance of campus elevators previously done by OTIS was recently shifted to TKE, after they won the bid. Their repair technicians will probably take a while before becoming fully familiar with the nuances of our elevators, that are almost more than 30 years old. Under our planned maintenance schedule all elevators are evaluated by age, condition and critical need to determine when they should be replaced or refurbished in order of priority. While the University Center elevator has had numerous issues in recent months, no significant mechanical or electrical issue has been identified. However, I do understand that there being just one elevator in the building, it becomes quite challenging whenever the elevator goes offline.

Most of the buildings on campus are old enough to qualify for life cycle renovations. The replacing or refurbishing of elevators is expensive and only possible with state funding. With safety and continuity of operations being our focus, we ensure that all elevators are regularly inspected and serviced. I assure you that calls related to elevators are always responded to expeditiously and service technicians are dispatched as soon as Work Control is notified. Unfortunately, repair and or replacement of elevators is not simply dependent on availability of funds because it is a specialized piece of equipment that takes time to repair/replace and certify for safe use.

Date Received: 8/14/2025

Recently many staff members have expressed their concerns and frustrations to me regarding rumors about the university's remote work policy being changed. We've heard that upper management is considering eliminating remote work options entirely or severely limiting it to 1 day a week, except for what were once known as snow days. This raises a pressing question: is remote work only valuable to the university when it's inconvenient for them to have us on campus?

Many staff are deeply concerned about these rumors. The possibility of such a change is causing significant anxiety and is widely seen as a demoralizing step. Remote work arrangements have proven to be highly effective and beneficial for both personal well-being and productivity for many staff members.

A particularly critical concern is the impact this would have on staff members who have been granted ADA accommodations for full-time remote work. Eliminating this option would be a significant hardship for these individuals and could jeopardize their employment.

We believe that any decision regarding remote work should be made with full transparency and in consultation with Staff Congress representatives. We ask that the Staff Congress look into this matter with upper management and provide us a clear response to these concerns.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/15/2025

Medical professionals and our Wellness director and coaches advise that being sedentary for too long is bad for our health. The top tip from our NKU site <https://inside.nku.edu/hr/current-employees/wellness/services1/activity.html> is to follow the 60:3 Rule: After sitting for 60 minutes, get up and move around for 3 minutes. Set a reminder on your phone or in your work calendar. But the NKU policy <https://inside.nku.edu/content/dam/policy/docs/Policies/EmployeeWorkingHours.pdf> states that we get 2 10 min breaks, one before a 45 min lunch and one after. Recently managers have been sending emails reminding us of these restrictions to one 10 minute break in the morning and one in the afternoon and that we should be at our desks working for the rest of the day. Which is it? Does NKU care about our health and well being or does it care more about us being in our chairs? It's demoralizing to be treated as children and micro managed - perhaps HR needs to do more training for managers? Messaging from above needs to be more clear that the health and welfare of our employees are important and perhaps our "official policy" needs to be updated.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/20/2025

I have heard there is a possibility of it being required that all staff come back to work in person 5 days a week. With having flexible, hybrid schedules for over 5 years now, I am very concerned of the impact this would have on our university. Staff are facing many challenges, stresses, and ever-growing workloads. Moral is a continuing concern. If the benefit of a hybrid work schedule is taken away, I believe this will only increase the stress and moral issues on campus, and would have a detrimental impact on staff retention as I could see many leaving to go to jobs that still offer hybrid schedules. I would suggest having a survey seeking staff input prior to making such a decision.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/20/2025

There have been (or are rumored to be) many changes to certain staff policies lately that are making the workplace more like a dictatorial corporation rather than the open and trusting university that many of us Staff chose to work for. Small benefits like flexible working hours, working from home, relaxed dress code, and snow days off were used to attract and keep talented workers but are now being called into question or removed completely. Why do we allow these small freedoms (which cost the University little to no money) to be taken away from us?

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/22/2025

I am becoming increasingly concerned about changes that have been made and those rumored to be in planning/policy-making that are negatively impacting staff morale and our quality of life.

1. Blanket mandatory return to office four to five times a week with no discretion for supervisors to manage their teams.
2. Eliminating or severely limiting the use of flex time (again taking the discretion from the staff and supervisors managing their teams) mandating everyone on to the standard schedule.
3. While enforcing points one and two, planning to leverage the ability to work from home only during times of inclement weather to reduce time off due to snow or other weather-related closures.
4. Reversing the dress code across the board, mandating a more formal dressing standard.

Many of these benefits existed for decades, providing quality of life enhancements in lieu of the salaries and other more tangible benefits found in corporate environments. Many of the changes being made and proposed will cost the university in time, money and morale. We've proven productiveness and reliability during the epidemic. Having come through that successfully, these measures feel like deep mistrust, and a need to reign in and monitor the staff.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/22/2025

I would like to express my feedback/concerns about the recent or rumored staff policy changes:

Returning to the office 4-5 days a week
Removing Flex time (including specified lunch break times)
Policy changes regarding leaving for appointments
Policy changes regarding dress code
Elimination of snow days

As a person who elected to work at NKU because of its non-corporation environment, after working for several corporations for many years; these added perks were a bonus in lieu of loss wages and non-raises for many years at NKU. It is very disheartening that some decision makers at NKU have the power to alter what is being indicated in the new strategic plan claiming to "Enhance employee morale, well-being, and professional growth" by pushing to make NKU more like a corporation. I feel that NKU is only as successful as its staff/employees in how they feel about where they work (in Higher Ed) and what they do for the good of new, current, or future students and the community.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/22/2025

I am writing out of deep concern for the proposed policy changes that threaten the very reasons I have stayed at NKU for more than a decade. Flexibility, supportive policies, and trust are what have made this university worth dedicating my career to. Taking them away — especially when they cost the university nothing — is demoralizing and risks driving away the very people who have kept NKU strong through countless challenges. If employee morale is truly part of the new strategic plan, how does removing the few benefits that keep staff here make sense?

We are not a corporation, and we are not compensated like one. Yet these policies — stricter return-to-office rules, rigid schedules, dress codes, and unfair weather-closure practices — move us in that direction. Requiring staff to use vacation time during closures signals that employees are disposable. Preventing staff on the WorkDay project from taking vacation, while also threatening that leave if they don't work when the university is closed, is unfair and absurd. Asking employees to return to overcrowded temporary workspaces only adds to the frustration. And when staff raise concerns, being told "go work somewhere else" is not only dismissive, it is dangerous to NKU's future.

I urge you to stop and reconsider. NKU's strength has always been its people. If these policies move forward, the university risks losing the loyalty, dedication, and experience that cannot be replaced. Or is that actually the goal of the new policies? When we say, "This is NKU," let it mean a community — not a corporation, and certainly not a place where staff feel unheard. Let's keep NKU a place we are proud to call home.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/22/2025

I chose to work at NKU as a new mother because I heard countless stories about how supportive management was. About how flexible and understanding they were when children were sick or needed to be taken to appointments, and even more, how they encouraged parents to be present for their children's sports and extracurricular activities. That support was what set NKU apart and made it a place where employees could balance their work and family lives.

The new policies being proposed, do not reflect the supportive environment that drew

me to NKU. Instead, they take away the very flexibility and trust that once made this university such a desirable and family-friendly place to work.

How disheartening it is to work for a university...a place dedicated to education and growth...yet feel that it does not value a healthy work-life balance for its own employees. NKU should be a place that supports families, not one that forces parents to choose between their careers and being present for their children. I urge you to reconsider adopting these policies and to continue being a place that values a work-life balance.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 8/25/2025

I would like to raise my concern regarding the recent (or rumored) changes to staff policies, such as:

1. A potential requirement to be in the office four to five days each week
2. The elimination of flexible scheduling, with set hours of 8:15 AM to 4:30 PM.
3. Tighter rules for personal appointments.
4. The removal of snow days as an option

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 9/2/2025

Given the ongoing construction, renovations, and reported infrastructure challenges at Northern Kentucky University, is there a formal protocol in place for assessing the environmental health of campus buildings? Specifically, does the university conduct routine or situational testing for indoor air quality, mold, or asbestos? What criteria or decision-making processes determine when such assessments are initiated, and are faculty or staff able to formally request environmental testing?

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Syed Zaidi and Amy Gellen.

Response:

Audra Points, Director of Safety and Emergency Management responded on 9/8/2025

Thank you for raising this important question. Northern Kentucky University (NKU) has established protocols to address environmental health concerns in our campus buildings. The University follows recognized standards and industry practices to ensure a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Indoor Air Quality & Mold

NKU investigates air quality or mold concerns when conditions warrant—such as after water intrusion events, renovations, or when reports of odors, health symptoms, or visible growth are received. In these cases, Facilities Management and Safety & Emergency Management coordinate inspections, and if needed, collect air or surface samples that are sent to an independent laboratory for analysis. If remediation is needed, a professional contractor is brought in to perform the work safely. Decisions are guided by OSHA and EPA recommendations.

Asbestos

Some older buildings contain some asbestos-containing materials (ACM). These materials are considered safe as long as they aren't disturbed. Prior to renovation or demolition, NKU arranges for asbestos surveys, and if ACM is found, licensed contractors complete abatement in compliance with all state and federal requirements.

Response to Requests

Faculty and staff may request environmental testing. Such concerns should be directed to the Office of Safety & Emergency Management. Each request is evaluated on a case by case basis for potential testing and/or mitigation.

NKU remains committed to ensuring a safe and healthy environment, and we encourage the community to bring concerns promptly so that they can be addressed promptly.

Date Received: 9/10/2025

Subject: Equitable Implementation of Work-from-Home Policies

I have significant concerns regarding the equitable implementation of work-from-home policies across departments. While it is understood that not all roles are conducive to remote work due to the nature of their responsibilities, it is essential that job descriptions and JAQs clearly outline expectations and eligibility criteria. This transparency ensures fairness and consistency in how remote work is offered and managed.

The primary goal of remote work is to enhance productivity. If an employee is consistently meeting expectations—being available during scheduled hours, attending remote or in-person meetings as required, and maintaining appropriate privacy for interactions with students and colleagues—then their home environment should not be a factor in evaluating their performance. Personal circumstances such as childcare or elder care should not be scrutinized, provided they do not interfere with the employee's ability to fulfill their duties.

If an employee is not meeting expectations, it becomes a performance issue that should be addressed by their manager. In such cases, a return to on-campus work may be necessary, potentially accompanied by a performance improvement plan (PIP). The focus should remain on outcomes and accountability, not assumptions about individual circumstances.

Ultimately, applying restrictive policies based on the potential challenges of a few individuals results in unnecessary oversight for everyone. We should prioritize trust, clarity, and fairness—ensuring that all staff are empowered to bring their best selves to work, wherever that may be.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Amy Gellen.

Response:

The policy proposals were made available to campus on 9/5/2025, Grant Garber, Brandon Thompson and Amy Gellen answered questions during 9/11/2025 Staff Congress meeting. Questions not answered, during this meeting or through the policy FAQs, can be submitted for each policy as feedback during the open comment period. The feedback comment link can be found on the [Policies Under Review website](#).

Date Received: 9/10/2025

I just got this question from a student in the halls of Griffin Hall, and paraphrased to add politeness:

“Who do we need to contact to get the #@#%#@# water fountains working? Is there actually any working facilities?”

For context: The first and third floor water fountains by the bathroom have been out of order for quite some time now, at least for the last 4 weeks. I advised the student that the second floor water fountain is currently working and that I would pass their message along to management, but I am not sure where to pass that message along to.

Action Taken: Submission forwarded to Syed Zaidi and Amy Gellen.

Responses:

Emails received from Jordan McIntyre/Bill Moulton on:

9/10/2025

The water fountains were down while we were waiting on solenoids for the fountains, that have since arrived, and will be fixed first thing in the morning. my deep apologies for the inconvenience and the head ache this may have caused, but it will be repaired in the morning.

9/11/2025

9 out of the 10 water fountains in Griffin Hall are working. Unfortunately, one of the water fountains on the third is still broke. Jordan needs to order another part to fix it, I'll keep you posted on the repair efforts.