

To Northern Kentucky University Board of Regents and Chair Boehne, and members of the NKU community.

As Northern Kentucky University continues to address the current structural budget challenges while searching for our next President, the Staff Congress stands in solidarity with Faculty Senate, in that we continue to focus on our shared mission, values, and identity. Within our core values, a “climate of collegiality built on respect and characterized by open communication and shared responsibility” will allow us to “promote a culture that fosters and celebrates excellence,” while “engag[ing] in honest, fair, and ethical behavior with integrity at the heart of every decision and action.” Within the NKU statement on [collegial governance](#), “If good faith consultation among colleagues exists, if decision-making authority is delegated appropriately, and if all participants are committed to the decisions made through the collegial system, non-productive adversarial relationships among groups are minimized, and university goals and objectives are more easily achieved.”

Furthermore, following the [Staff Congress Constitution](#), “[t]he Staff Congress shall continually review all University policies and documents affecting staff affairs and welfare and... shall seek representation in all aspects of Northern Kentucky University governance.”

Accordingly, the Staff Congress expresses the following recommendations for any proposed reductions:

1. Involve staff from multiple levels in the decision process. Student success is a high priority for staff and faculty across the university. Student support—both in and out of the classroom—are integral in reaching persistence, retention, and graduation goals.
 - a. Many staff have been employed by NKU for decades because of the mission and vision with which we serve. These staff are devoted to ensuring the success of our students, from inquiry to beyond graduation.
 - b. Newer staff likewise bring innovative ideas, fresh perspectives, and valuable input that should be welcomed. These voices need to be included to ensure that we have the human resources available to provide for our students’ needs.
2. Minimize the impact on staff positions to the greatest extent possible. Eliminating or merging units while reducing administrative positions will only worsen the ‘do more with less’ mentality the staff have experienced for nearly a decade.
 - a. To keep and attract dedicated and talented staff, compensation and job security must be a priority.
 - i. Flexible Work Arrangement
 1. To maintain current staffing levels—as well as to attract new employees—the Flexible Work Arrangement must remain an option.
 - ii. NKU must continue to implement the 5X5 Compensation Plan that was approved by the Board of Regents in June 2022.
 - b. For too long, staff have been reduced and staff positions have been eliminated to offset any budget challenges, thus resulting in current staff doing the work of multiple positions.
 - c. Implications for the staff may result in added turnover and reduce the necessary support all NKU students deserve.
 - d. Like faculty, the long-term health of the university is connected to NKU’s largest employee population: staff.
3. Engage staff in collegial governance as any budget reductions are implemented.
 - a. Staff are generally not involved in discussions or decisions being made about the collegial system.

- b. Increased participation by staff—beyond the Staff Congress President— is integral to discussions and decisions that may affect staff.
- 4. Report a full accounting and examination into the cause(s) of the current budget challenge, in addition to any decisions that led to those causes, to the entire campus community.
- 5. Include staff as active participants in the hiring of all administrators, including the next university president, and any acting or interim presidents. We believe the hiring process should be open to the campus community, and final candidates should interact publicly with the campus community prior to a hiring decision.