

**Members present:** Amanda Andrews, Nick Bliven, Chris Bowling, Amy Clark, Sara Conwell, Vicki Cooper, Jennifer Davis, Kyle Dorriere, Ali Hannig, Kristi Horine, Bryan Irby, Mike Irvin, Claudia Johnson, Beth Lackey, Michelle Melish, Kara Olding, Tina Peebles, Autumn Ruehl, Catherine Schmeal, Connie Seiter, Steve Slone, Terri Smith, Vanessa Steele, Juliane Stockman, Teresa Walker, Terkerah Washington, Brandon Weinel, Kimberly Wiley, Carolyn Willhoit, and Christopher Witt

**Members absent:** Tina Altenhofen, Kristi Bishop, Courtney Clark-Rankin, Dan Jones, and Brenda Maldonado

- I. Call to Order at 1:01 PM
- II. Guests – VP Legal Affairs/General Counsel, Grant Garber; Director, Financial and Operational Auditing, Larry Meyer– Ethics Point Policy Discussion - [Report](#)
- III. Approval of September 12, 2024 Minutes
  - Motion: Carolyn Willhoit
  - Second: Teresa Walker
  - Approve: Voice Vote
- IV. Liaison Reports
  - Board of Regents – Staff Regent – Cori Henderson
  - Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Office - Lori Southwood - [Report](#)
  - Faculty Senate – Budget Committee Chair – Dr. Janel Bloch - [Report](#)
  - Student Government Association – Collin Jarrell - [Report](#)
  - President’s Report – Vicki Cooper - [Report](#)
- V. Standing Committee Formations:
  - Benefits – Ali Hannig - [Report](#)
  - Constitution & Bylaws – Michelle Melish and Chris Witt
  - Credentials & Elections – Sara Conwell and Vanessa Steele - [Report](#)
  - Outreach – Terri Smith - [Report](#)
  - Policies – Courtney Clark-Rankin and Kyle Dorriere
  - Scholarship – Kristi Bishop and Steve Slone
- VI. University Committees:
  - Benevolent Association – Kimberly Wiley and Tina Peebles
  - Food Service Advisory – Michelle Melish and Nick Bliven
  - IT Advisory Committee – Dan Jones - [Report](#)
  - Regent’s Distinguished Service Award – Ali Hannig
  - Sustainability – Amanda Andrews
  - Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews - [Report](#)
  - Transportation – Chris Bowling
- VII. Ad-Hoc Committee
  - Roundtable - [Report](#)
  - Advocacy
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business - [Report](#)
- X. Non-Member Discussion Period - [Report](#)
- XI. Norse Appreciation - [Report](#)
- XII. Announcements - [Report](#)
- XI. Adjournment at 2:22 PM

Motion: Tina Peebles  
Second: Christopher Witt  
Approved

### Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM

### Guests – VP Legal Affairs/General Counsel, Grant Garber; Director, Financial and Operational Auditing, Larry Meyer– Ethics Point Policy Discussion

Grant Garber shared information about a proposed ethics point policy. This is technically a new policy. They have prepared a list of frequently asked questions related to ethic point to describe how it works and address some of the commons questions they receive. If you haven't seen it yet the policy will make its way through the policy listserv very soon. Ethics point is not the only tool that we have to address ethics related concerns and in some ways it is the least good tool for certain kinds of complaints, but it is a very important tool particularly when the reporter wants to remain anonymous. Ethics point is an anonymous reporting system through which we receive a wide variety of reports of ethics issues, and misconduct as well as any other kinds of concerns. It is hosted by an outside vendor not by NKU which is important sometimes to share because that means we do not have access to IP connection logs or metadata, or other kinds of information that would allow an anonymous reporter's identity to somehow be compromised. There are two options for make an ethics point report. The most common that we see is in web form. You can google it or go to [inside.nku.edu/ethics](https://inside.nku.edu/ethics) it will take you through a couple of tabs to make a report. One of the really important questions that will be asked is do you wish to remain anonymous for this report? The default rule for ethics pint is that the reporter will remain anonymous. There will be no way for anyone to identify the person who has submitted the report unless that person either tells us who they are, or they provide some other identifying information in the description of the report. Self-identification is always going to be voluntary. There is a phone number on the site as well if the reporter wishes to convey the same information to a live human being that does not work at NKU. That person takes it as an intake report and then the report gets submitted through to NKU. If you take nothing else from this presentation it is vital that if you wish to make a report through ethics point you must save the report, key, and password. After you submit a report you will see a page that gives you an ID and a password. That information connects to the ethics point platform. With this information a reporter will be able to log back into the system to check on the status of the report, and to send and receive messages with NKU in case we need additional information about the case. In the 2 and a half years that he has been at NKU every single time NKU has responded back to the reporter and he has yet to see a single instance where a reporter responds back to NKU. This leads him to believe that individuals are not retaining this information to re-access the portal and remain anonymous with further interaction or maybe reporters don't know that they can have this interaction and still remain anonymous. It is vital to save that information so you can stay in the loop and so that we can stay in touch with you. Grant turned the presentation over to Larry Meyer to share the kinds of things that can be reported through this portal.

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Larry began by sharing that you can also get to the ethics point web address through the general counsel's website and the internal audit web site as well. They often get the question what should or what may be reported through the hotline. What type of information, or what type of issue should we report? This is not an all-encompassing list but some ideas of what could be reported include the following. Violations of law policies and regulations that are not emergency situations and not time sensitive. If you have an emergency situation you want to call the police or public safety. Something that is considered a conflict of interest. Someone doing something or making a decision that would benefit them personally such as someone doing business with your spouse's company or a company the employee owns. Hiring a spouse or a close relative is another item that should be reported as well. Any type of fraud, theft, waste, and other financial misconduct should be reports as well. Safety concerns that are non-emergency situations. Workplace misconduct, discrimination that happened and if you observed it please report it. Lastly any behavior that is unethical or contrary to NKU values. If you see something that makes you feel uncomfortable with the situations please report it. Grant shifted to items that MUST be reported. Items that aren't just an ethics point issue but a general legal obligation. There is a state law obligation that if someone knows or has reasonable cause to suspect the abuse of or neglect of minor children we have a legal obligation to report it. Ethics point is probably not the first thing you are going to think of as a way to report that. Typically, we would make those reports to law enforcement. Elder abuse is also included here. As Larry pointed out ethics point is good for a lot of things but emergency communications is not one of them. If you have health or safety emergencies you have other ways to bring those to people's attention. Criminal activity is not something that you would want to use ethics point for. Of course you can use crime stoppers or other anonymous tip lines for that kind of activity as well as campus police. With ethics point reports are anonymous by default and as we've stated it's possible to maintain anonymity with back and forth messaging with us as we conduct investigations. In terms of whether reports will be kept confidential we obviously treat them with sensitivity. We do not share them gratuitously but we very much do not just keep them within ourselves in the legal office and internal audit. We always will reach out to other appropriate campus units to follow up on whatever is being reported. Examples could be HR, the Provost's office, the Dean's office, sometimes purchasing or accounts payable depending upon the nature of the issue. We are going to reach out to the appropriate office. Again we are going to handle it with sensitivity. Oftentimes in those communications when contact is being made with other units Grant is not necessarily disclosing that the reason for that contact is because of an ethics point report. Grant shared that in most cases he thinks that reporters would expect this to be the procedure. Could a reporter be punished for reporting? That's an easy answer. The short answer is No. We all feel very strongly about this. The institution will not tolerate retaliation against anybody for making a good faith report of an issue via ethics point. This is a matter not just of federal or state law and NKU policies, all of which prohibit retaliation in different ways, but more importantly it's about the integrity of the reporting process. This is a critical mechanism for people to raise a wide variety of concerns and one of the important controls that we have here. In order for this to be a viable path for people to raise concerns everyone has to have confidence that they can do so without

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fear of retaliation. Any attempts to suss out who may have submitted a report or taking any kind of adverse action in any way against someone who maybe makes a report will absolutely not be tolerated. If anyone believes that this is occurring you know where to find us. He is happy to take that position, and to give that very, very strong direction to anybody on this campus that retaliation will not be tolerated against anyone making that kind of a report. What happens after a report is made? Reports typically are reviewed by someone in the legal affairs office or by Larry in internal audit within 48 hours. Most times a report is reviewed the same day it's submitted. The process moves very quickly to look at the issue and then triage by engaging appropriate units, often escalating them to senior leadership. If someone in senior leadership is the subject of the report then that person will not be a part of the process. We always communicate back with the reporter even if it's just an initial acknowledgement of receipt of the report. We are always sending messages back through the portal to the people who submit these reports. A common challenge we have is that people will send reports with very thin descriptions of the issue. Someone may send in a report that they have been discriminated against and with the report being anonymous we don't know who that person is. Sometimes it will name in a vague sort of general way what the unit may be but there's no surrounding context or detail or information for us to really go on. When we receive those kinds of reports we will always send a message back through the portal. Thank you for the report could you answer a few more questions for us, provide more detail around who and the what, when and the why. The real challenge is that oftentimes we will never get a response back. It is vitally important to stay in touch with us if you are making a report so that we can look into the issue you are raising. The President is very familiar with the process we follow for ethics point and I share with her confidentially the nature of the reports that we receive on a regular basis. The audit and compliance committee of the Board of Regents is very familiar with ethics point and we share the trends and the nature of reports and metrics around ethics point with them. It's not just an issue that Larry and I are just responsible with without any oversight. Oversight goes all the way to the Board of Regents level and we're held accountable by all these levels. Depending on the nature of the issue you have a lot of places you can look to on this campus if you have a concern that you want to report. In many cases the best place is communication with the supervisor, or within your chain of command. You also have Staff Congress and its various committees as another good resource to elevate issues. You can always reach out directly to legal, audit, or HR. You have a lot of different ways in which reports and concerns can be raised. Ethics point is great if you want it to remain anonymous and we understand that in many cases that is helpful. Where there is a power dynamic or someone just doesn't want their name attached ethics point is great for that. For things like discrimination or sexual misconduct there are probably better places to go where it's easier to facilitate a dialogue with the person who may be bringing the report. We wanted to briefly address some common concerns, complaints, or questions that we get about the ethics point process. One is nothing ever happens when a report is submitted. It's just a black hole. You submit a report and then it just sort of evaporates. That is just not true and hopefully over the last ten minutes we've been able to persuade you that that is not true. This is something that the institution and my office Larry's office invest a lot of resources in and people are paying

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attention and we do take seriously all of the reports that we receive that way. Reporters never receive a response or are never informed of outcomes. We always do respond to a reporter even if it's just to acknowledge that we've received it and when a report is closed out. These are always communicated through the portal. Sometimes reporters will not be told about specific outcomes. For example, if it's a personnel issue and a complaint or a concern is being raised about a supervisor, a colleague, someone in another unit there may well be employment consequences, coaching conversation, some sort of discipline that is handled with respect to that employee within that person's chain of command that may occur without us telling the anonymous reporter that it happened and I think that's appropriate. There's a level of confidentiality that I think we all expect in terms of those kinds of relationships and we typically are not going to broadcast coaching conversations or discipline that may resolve as a result of that from an ethics point report. If someone is using ethics point in order primarily to obtain a good outcome for themselves to be vindicated or to have an issue personally fixed, a decision was made about me that I think was wrong or some kind of misconduct with respect to me, in many cases ethics point is not going to be the right tool for that. There are other tools that we looked at and you also have a grievance process. The anonymous nature of ethics point makes it difficult for us to give you the personally satisfactory outcome. A better way to think about ethics point is it's sort of like a virtual comment, complaint, or concern box. An employee sees something that is contrary to our values or our mission and wants to raise the concern without personally getting involved, or without necessarily having their name attached to it. They just feel strongly that the institution should respond to it. That's the kind of thing that I think ethics point can be very effective, for it allows you to raise an issue for us to run with and address it without having your name attached to it. Another issue that is raised is that it takes too long for reports to be handled. Larry is going to share metrics that we track and I think we try to be very responsive. The final complaint is that the people who received the reports just want to protect senior leadership. The people that receive the reports are myself, Larry, and another attorney in the legal office. We have been given direct repeated instruction from the President and the Board of Regents that we are to take these matters very seriously, that we are to keep them informed about the trends and reports that we are seeing without fear or favor. Even when those reports involve members of senior leadership, and I can tell you, just in the time I've been here we've received reports about senior leadership, and those reports have resulted in changed decisions and other personnel outcomes and conversations even for the people who have been in senior levels in the institution. Grant turned the conversation back over to Larry Meyer to talk about some metrics. Larry shared that this year to date we've received 15 reports through the ethics point portal. Last year we received 10 and 13 the year before. There was spike in 2021 with 35 reports which we could contribute to the kind of return to office mode that we are in after covid. In 2020 when we were all remote we had fewer calls. We averaged about 16 calls a year so the 15 calls we have this year is about average in our history over the last several years. The resolution times to resolve these issues is 16 days. As Grant said we do take these very, very seriously, so we will spend as much time as necessary to gather all the information we need to investigate and to work with people that we need to work with to make sure that we do a

thorough investigation. If you look at calls per head count we have point 8 reports per 100 employees. That seems to be average around the higher education industry. We've talked to colleagues and we may be just a little bit lower than they are. We are in the ballpark. We have contacted ethics point and they have all kinds of industries such as healthcare, education and manufacturing and they have a little bit higher average of 1 point 7 calls per employee. We've talked a little bit about the anonymous nature of ethics point and I think we've had maybe 2 or so calls that the caller left their name and contact information. Typically reports are anonymous and almost all of our calls are online I believe we've had only one call where someone actually dialed the number and an ethics point employee walked them through filling out the form. This concludes the presentations and opened the floor for questions. Vanessa Steele asked if there is a way to indicate that action has been taken in a general way that doesn't disclose what the action was. Grant responded that yes, and we do that. In the case of a personnel concern that has been raised even if we feel like that's a case where we can't share the specifics we will always communicate through the portal. We looked into the matter. We've had communication with the appropriate unit and have addressed it through the supervisory chain. That's about the level of detail that we'll get into. Sara Conwell asked when someone reports something anonymously you've indicated to make sure you write down the information and save it somewhere are they being prompted to do that. Is there a box that's popping up telling them to save that information if they want to come back and check on it or is it just something that we should automatically know we should do? Grant responded that he believes that they are being prompted but that he can check to make sure. He believes that the reminder appears at the same time that the information appears. Larry added that he thinks that as you get closer to the end it will pop up and it tells you to record the information or write it down. Vicki Cooper asked if there is a prompt to give more specific details as you're answering the question. Maybe a prompt explaining that a generic statement is going to be very difficult to investigate and giving more details would maybe help with the investigation. Grant invited Larry to jump in and responded that there are several different fields that a reporter can fill out within that web form and that there are multiple ways where the reporters is going to be prompted to share as much information as they are able. The form is not so long that it is intimidating but it does take a little time to work through. Larry shared that there is a description in the box to provide such information to let us investigate but that is one of the advantages of using the phone number because the operator will walk you through the form. He feels it's a little bit easier to provide additional information over the phone than on a computer.

### **Administrative Liaison – Lori Southwood**

Lori shared the following...

#### **Wellness**

- CPR/AED training and certification classes October 29, 1pm-3pm and October 31, 9am-11am, both in UC 135. Certification lasts 2 years.

- The St. E's Mobile Mammography van will be on the NKU campus to provide screenings for breast cancer November 4: 8am - 2pm and November 7: 2pm-4:30pm. The van will be parked in LOT C next to Griffin Hall. Screening takes about 15 minutes.
- More details and registration information on the University Wellness Upcoming Classes and Events Page

### Compensation

FLSA Rule Changes: Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Labor announced revisions to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime rule, which updates the salary thresholds for exempt status. As of **July 1, 2024**, the minimum salary threshold for overtime exemption was increased (from \$36,585) to **\$43,888**, and it is set to rise again to **\$58,656** on **January 1, 2025**.

Unless exempt, must receive at least time and one-half their regular pay rate for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek if their salaries are below these thresholds. On the other hand, exempt employees, due to their salary level and the nature of their work, are not eligible for overtime compensation.

The upcoming January increase is likely to affect a portion of NKU's staff. However, it is worth noting there are legal challenges pending and we do not yet know how or when the courts will rule on this matter. In 2016, a similar rule was halted just days before its implementation.

At this time, the effective dates for compliance remain unchanged. NKU, like other employers, is proactively preparing for the possibility of these changes, as they require careful planning, budgeting, and clear communication. We will continue to monitor developments from the courts and updates from the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division. As we get closer to the effective date, over the next few weeks, we will be sending communications concerning this change.

### IT

- On September 19th, IT completed the first major migration of phone numbers to the new Webex Calling system. 350 lines were migrated, which included The IT Help Desk, Chase College of Law, Griffin Hall, First Year Programs, and Graduate Education Research and Outreach.

The next Webex migration will be approximately 320 lines focused on moving the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Graduate Education, the College of

Business, the School of the Arts, CETI, CINSAM, and the Science Center on October 24th.

- The final dates that Students are required to sign up for Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) are:
  - October 14 for Chase College of Law and Haile College of Business students.
  - November 4 for students in the College of Education and the College of Health and Human Services
  - November 11 is the final required sign-up date for all remaining students.

### **Benefits**

Due to the Delta Dental BMT site shutdown, providers have been notified that for members with a term date showing of 9/18/2024, we are considering active and will verify as such through our customer service department.

The bullet points below highlight this. According to Delta Dental several letters were sent to providers explaining the shutdown.

- **Delta Dental of Kentucky** is moving to a new system, effective 9/27/24
- As they move to the new system, there will be a transition period of downtime from 9/13 through 9/27
- During this downtime, ALL Delta Dental of Kentucky subscribers & members will show with term dates of 9/18/24
- Dental providers have been informed of this change and are to assume a member is active when seeing a 9/18/24 term date
- If you have a provider say you are inactive as of that date, please relay this message to them.
- If they call the customer service number they can get insurance coverage verified. **1-800-955-2030**. Callers will be routed to our live reps who will explain the situation.

### **Benefits Open Enrollment**

- Open Enrollment October 23-November 7. Information about all 2025 benefits will be sent this week. Check your NKU email addresses.
- **Active** enrollment-you must actively elect medical, dental, vision, HSA and FSA for coverage in 2025.
- The enrollment process will be the same as previous years online via myNKU.

We will have two (2) in-person information sessions and one virtual session:

**In person:**

**Wednesday, Oct. 23 in UC 375 (ballroom)**

**10:30-Noon and**

**1:30-3:00pm**

(Medical, dental, pharmacy and TIAA representatives will be present to answer questions.)



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**Virtual information session:**

**Wednesday October 30**

**1:30pm-3:00pm.** Zoom link will be sent prior to the meeting.

There are a couple benefit changes in 2025:

- Results of the dental RFP will be announced this week along with our 2025 Benefits Bulletin.
  - We wanted to wait until we had all information available. Document finalized, etc. before announcing.
- HMO plan being replaced with PPO plan as a result of St. Elizabeth Healthcare eliminating the HMO.
  - We wanted to keep three plan offerings for employees, so worked with UMR to design a replacement plan for the HMO.
  - This new PPO has the same basic plan design as the HMO but with the much broader United Health Care Choice Plus network.
  - There is a slight increase to the PPO premium and office copays. (\$25 to 35) Same deductible and out of pocket limits as the HMO.
  - POS and HDHP remain the same plan design and same premiums.
- Slight increase to Vision premiums; plans remain the same.
- Slight increase to supplemental/voluntary life insurance premiums if you are enrolled in those.

Details will be coming in the 2025 benefits bulletin.

**Training**

- Know that your voice matters when it comes to your personal and professional growth and development. That is why HR Training and Development has a Qualtrics survey open for employees to share their ideas of what topics to make available and how best to make it available. You can find the link on the [HR Personal and Professional Development](#) website or by clicking [HERE](#). There is no limit to the number of submissions allowed.
- Reminder for all new staff employees and their supervisors to be sure to complete the 90-day performance evaluation, when the time comes or if you haven't done so already. Also remember that the process begins with the new employee in receipt of the evaluation within TalentED, which is then submitted for their supervisor's handling. If you have any questions about the 90-day evaluation process, or the annual process, please access HR's Staff Performance Evaluation Process website or you can contact Marquita Barron via email – [barronm1@nku.edu](mailto:barronm1@nku.edu).

Vicki Cooper asked on the FSLA changes the last time we adjusted some of those ranges that people were close to the breakpoint what happens if that cut off that 57, the 58 falls in the middle of one of our ranges. Are we moving the entire range to non-exempt instead of remaining exempt? Or if someone is above that amount they stay

exempt and the rest of them below go to non-exempt. Lori responded that we aren't planning to move the whole ranges. There were some rare instances where someone was close to the cutoff and we shifted them but that isn't an automatic. There's not a process or a plan to do that to make those adjustments but there can be. We look at each individual circumstance, and so there can be times when that may make sense to do. Realize that this goes into effect this January, but then it will be something that will be required to adjust on a three year cycle so that threshold will be scheduled to be changed every three years. We are going to be in a mode of doing this periodically as that schedule or that level comes out. Vicki continued that really kind of relies on are we going to start having steady raises so we don't have to keep shifting people just her personal comments. Lori shared that it also depends on how much it moves. Some of these are huge jumps, because it hasn't moved for years and so even if we had been in a situation of regular increases, we would still have a large number of employees that are going through this transition. Tina Peebles asked if there was an update on the annual leave policy that Staff Congress brought forward since that comment period had expired. Lori shared that they have received the feedback on this policy change and that it will be on the agenda for the cabinet to discuss at their next cabinet meeting. Michelle Melish shared a comment of thank you for the extra holiday days this year. Many in her unit were very thrilled about the extra days. Lori responded you're welcome. That was fun announcement to send out and that she appreciates it when she has the opportunity to communicate good news. Please don't be shy to pass on your thanks to our President, and she was able to be generous this year the way the calendar fell. This is one of the longest breaks we've been able to have here so much appreciation to her. Vicki Cooper added that you can send thank you emails to [cady@nku.edu](mailto:cady@nku.edu).

#### **Faculty Senate Liaison – Janel Bloch**

Janel Bloch shared that at the last Faculty Senate meeting there were a few voting items. PCC had a change in its bylaws which state now that meetings cannot be recorded by members or guests without permission of the chair. This was basically to account for some of the AI recording that's beginning to happen. This is just to make sure people get permission before they do that. There was also a change to the grievance policy in the faculty handbook, which was really just clarifications about a few things. It wasn't actually a change in policy, just a few wording clarifications. Finally we approved a change to the research misconduct policy and these changes were required by for federal compliance as a result of an audit that the research grants and contracts office had to implement. This policy should be moving into the policy listserv very soon.

#### **Student Government – Collin Jarrell**

Collin Jarrell shared the following updates which Vicki Cooper read at the meeting...

1. Our Victor Talks & Issues election series continues on October 28 with Dr. Abdullah Al-Bahrani talking about economics and the election.
2. We are hosting a student accessibility safety walk on October 21.
3. We are hosting a Presidential Roundtable with several student organization presidents on October 17.

4. Our Instagram giveaway ends tomorrow, Friday, October 11. Thanks to admissions, athletics, the Center for Student Engagement, and the Haile Center for Student Excellence for their donations!
5. We passed our first resolution: Adding Aquatic Life Feeders to Loch Norse. In partnership with First Year Programs, Counseling Services, and Student Technology and Support.

Ali Hannig asked for Collin's contact information so she could touch base if Zaidi would be involved with the safety walk. Bob Alston shared that as an advisor of SGA it was his understanding that the plan was for this to be an internal to the buildings informal safety walk. The spring safety walk will be the big tour of external campus but they are adding this internal one he believes specifically as it relates to possible accessibility concerns. Bob shared that Collin would happily to respond to any outreach for more information. Ali closed with a thank you and that she would let Zaidi know and that they would reach out if someone from their team needs to be involved.

#### President - Vicki Cooper

Vick Cooper shared thank you to Cady and Lori for the gift of the extra holiday time. Also special thank you for announcing it so far ahead of time so that we can make travel plans with family. Please take the opportunity to reach out to Cady and say thank you. Send thank you messages to [cady@nku.edu](mailto:cady@nku.edu). Meetings continue with Cady, Diana, Lori, and the Faculty and Staff regents for updates on organizational changes. Right now the focus has been on working through a statement that they are wanting completed for faculty hires so that we can resume faculty hiring. The focus is on going back to our vision. We are nationally recognized for being a student ready regionally engaged university that empowers diverse learns for economic and social mobility. She also encouraged everyone to be active on campus. We've got 2 more Faculty/Staff Fridays coming up. The first is October 25<sup>th</sup> recognizing faculty publications and then also one on November 15<sup>th</sup>. There are also the strategic planning forums 2 of which recently focused on faculty/staff success and organizational culture. There is another one of these coming up so come out if you are able but also you can provide feedback through the strategic planning website. There are also the Board of Regents meetings so attend those if you are able. If you're in Academic Affairs Diana has sent out information on lunch events/conversations. A group of Staff Congress members did one of those yesterday. It gives you a very nice informal time to talk to people that you wouldn't normally see and also to meet each other and know each other in an informal setting. There are more of these lunches coming up. In general we're all about positive vibes. How can we find ways to make campus feel more positive and encourage engagement with each other? Norse Appreciation is a wonderful way to do that. There is a plan in the works to have Norse Appreciation's placed on the digital signage across campus to increase the visibility of that program. A good way to say thank you to each other. Another thought is to send some of your photos in. We had a group of Staff Congress members that participated in Big Pink Volleyball. There are all kinds of groups across campus that are doing good work. Send photos of you and colleagues to [staffcongress@nku.edu](mailto:staffcongress@nku.edu) and maybe we will share those at our get togethers. We can do

a power point for our holiday party that type of thing. Show us having a good time with our colleagues and to keep us on a positive vibe.

### **Staff Congress Standing Committee Information**

#### **Benefits – Ali Hannig**

Ali Hannig shared that open enrollment will take place from October 23<sup>rd</sup> through November 7<sup>th</sup>. A benefits info session will take place on October 23<sup>rd</sup> in the UC ballroom from 10:30 to noon and then another session after lunch from 1:30 to 3. UMR will be in attendance along with other providers to answer questions. There will be a virtual info session on October 30<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 to 3 on zoom. This enrollment period is going to be an active enrollment meaning that you need to actually login and make changes to your medical, dental, HAS and FSA. Patty from Human Resources does not want to have to track you down to make sure that you didn't mean to choose a certain coverage. Marketing is finalizing the benefits bulletin so that will hopefully be out soon. There is a change to our dental provider and while it can't be announced now that information should be included in the bulletin. In regards to other changes it was not an NKU or a UMR decision but Saint Elizabeth will no longer going to do the HMO plan so it is being replaced by a PPO plan. NKU still wanted to offer 3 different plan options. Lori Southwood added that the information and the bulletin is going out this week she believes it will be tomorrow. The vendors will be in place for the sessions and it is going to be more of a meet and greet instead of a traditional fair feeling. The HMO being replaced by a PPO that's a preferred provider network which will be a much larger network than what we have with the HMO so hopefully that will be a positive change for some. Vanessa Steele asked if it would be possible for Staff Congress to have a table at the info sessions. Lori responded that Patty was reaching out to Staff Congress and that there is a plan for a Benevolent/Staff Congress table at the event but she encouraged Vanessa to reach out as well. We are welcome to join and have a table at the event.

#### **Credential and Elections – Vanessa Steel and Sara Conwell**

Sara and Vanessa shared the following report...

### **Credentials & Elections Committee Meeting Minutes**

Date: 09/19/2024 / 1:30pm / Zoom  
Present: Tina Altenhofen, Sara Conwell, Beth Lackey, Teresa Walker, Vanessa Wieland  
Absent:  
Guests: Grace Hiles

#### **Highlights to be shared:**

- Finalized goals for 2024-25

- Increase awareness on campus to encourage participation in election nominations and voting
- Increase election participation by 1%

**Other Discussion:**

- Would be good to determine how many current staff there are at NKU
  - As of February 2024 – 794
  - Grace will request updated list to help with yearly comparisons
- Larger Staff Congress Goals
  - Continuous inequity between Faculty and Staff representation on campus
- Timeline of Duties will be reviewed and updated, if needed

**Next Meeting: 10/17/2024 / 1:30pm / Zoom**

**Outreach – Terri Smith**

Terri Smith shared that they are planning the holiday party and donation drive for December 12<sup>th</sup>. Grace Hiles sent out the flyer yesterday and there will be more information that comes out in a week or two. The flyer was more of a save the date message. We are now in the process of seeking donations for a raffle at the party. Vicki Cooper asked everyone to share with their colleagues that the party will be after our Staff Congress meeting in December in the same room. Terri added that if anyone wants to make a copy of the flyer and put it on a bulletin board or a refrigerator in your departments that would be great.

**Staff Congress University Committee Representation**

**Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews**

Amanda Andrews shared that if you have the opportunity we have been having listening sessions for the strategic planning process. She encourages everybody to go to these. One of the things you will notice is that there are people in these listening sessions that are taking notes. The committee is going to take all those notes and compile them along with all the comments that are submitted. The committee will then meet to begin to formulate how we can really tackle these things when looking at our strategic plan for the next 3 year period. She encourages us to attend but also to encourage others to attend as well. It is important that everybody comes together whether you're faculty, staff, or student. There is a link on the strategic planning website as well where you can comment if you are unable to attend or are uncomfortable speaking up.

<https://www.nku.edu/successbydesign/future-strategic-plan.html> Cady has sent out information about all of these and more are coming so watch for further information.

ITAC – Dan Jones

Dan Jones shared the following and Vick Cooper shared the information out loud at the meeting.

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
I. Budget Update	Tim Ferguson	IT submitted some budget enhancement requests for FY25. The overall IT budget remained the same in FY25. They don't anticipate any additional cuts. They are working with the Provost and VP of A&F for some potential one-time funding enhancements. A particular struggle for IT is that fixed cost was moved to operating budgets a few years ago. IT has a lot of university software in our budget that sees a cost increase of around 7% each renewal period, but IT does not receive any budget increase, so these increases are eating at the IT operating budget. At some point the IT budget will go away due to all the increases for the renewals. They are trying to educate the university on this situation to try to find a solution for the future. They have some classroom tech funding this year, so please work with your leadership and provide feedback on any classrooms in your area that would be high priority for upgrade. Tim initiated the topic of a subcommittee for prioritizing the work/spend within IT. IT could use help prioritizing software choices that impact the classroom. This subcommittee could look at the items in IT budget that impact the classroom and help in prioritizing/organizing items that could be evaluated for change. Staci Green will head this group.

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
II. ERP Updated	Tim Ferguson	<p>They have a deadline of December 2027 to be off our current SAP platform. We will be releasing a RFP next week for our future ERP platform to be chosen. A steering committee has been learning about the marketplace and available vendors. Responses to RFP are expected by November 1<sup>st</sup>. They hope to make a decision by January and start a project by February. ERP projects are big across campus. Product demos will be available soon (Workday demo in mid-October, look out for emails about it). We are asking for SaaS (Software as a Service) options only, so no longer on-premises but cloud-based. Tim mentioned \$20M funding from state for online improvement. There is a large website improvement project that would use that funding, but leftover would be used to kickstart the ERP project. Project expected to kick-off in Spring 2025 and not finish until Fall 2028. We will have to pay extra maintenance to SAP because of the out of EOL for about 6-8 months, currently negotiating that with SAP. The HANA migration for SAP was necessary to get us to that December 2027 date. The ERP includes “data topics”, such as data lake and how to get data out to campus in a more self-sufficient way (less reliant on IT to get access to data).</p> <p>Content Management System (CMS) was briefly discussed. A vendor has been chosen, but they are still in product discovery. This is another large project that will involve redesign and renavigation of the NKU website.</p>

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
III. Norse Tech Bar	Staci Green	<p>Norse Tech Bar loaning laptop stock increased in 2020 from about 200 to about 800 devices. Our loaning process has returned to pre-covid standards, but we will have this large stock and no funding to refresh all devices. They are looking for feedback and help in how to right size this and any process changes Tech Bar may implement to make the service more useful for those students with a true need.</p> <p>ITAC members agreed that the stock should be scaled back and asked for some statistics High-end Windows and Apple are appreciated by COI and SOTA. Faculty also appreciate the option to get a loaner if there is a hardware issue with their assigned laptop. Computer labs in buildings are still available and they continue to work with departments to keep them updated. IT knows they need to right-size the stock of these loans and need to find that sweet spot of what's truly needed and will be used appropriately. A lot of good ideas and suggestions for how to determine needs now and after the right-size were shared among the group.</p>
IV. Miscellaneous	Staci Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The accessibility tool used in Canvas transitioned to Yuja over summer. Please send any feedback to CETI.</li> <li>-A new print system for faculty and staff was implemented in late summer. This was an initiative of the Business Operations and Auxiliary Office and Prosource.</li> <li>--They replaced the old copiers with the same type of copier they had previous (color or B/W). Originally the choice of a B/W copier would be to keep the cost of printing/copying down at \$0.05/print. There is a color copier</li> </ul>



Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
		<p>within each building where a print job can be sent.</p> <p>--The user must choose B/W at the printer to ensure it is not printing in "color" and charged for color it seems. To set the compute to print default to B/W, users can call the Help Desk. Settings are different for each version of MacOS.</p> <p>--There was an issue before classes began in which B/W copies were being charged at the color rate of \$0.15. Bus Aux corrected the issue and did not bill anyone until after classes began. The issue was discovered the week of August 12<sup>th</sup> and it was resolved by the end of that week. Billing began on August 18<sup>th</sup>, so no one was charged.</p> <p>--Color Printers -  <a href="https://servicedesk.nku.edu/TDClient/2436/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=164111">https://servicedesk.nku.edu/TDClient/2436/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=164111</a></p>

**Ad-Hoc Committees**

**Roundtable – Amanda Andrews**

Amanda Andrews shared that the Roundtable committee met last Friday and the plan is to meet monthly up until the time when the event gets close and in February we will begin meeting weekly to really dig in and make sure that we've got everything covered. One of the items we are definitely going to be focusing on in our meetings is while it is an important networking piece for all of us as Staff Congress members, we really want to delve into what people want to get from the roundtable? Is it questions? Is it networking? Is it a mix of those two things? She looks forward to working with the committee to answer those questions and bring back the Roundtable event. The Roundtable is March 13<sup>th</sup> during our regular Staff Congress meeting.

**New Business**

Vicki Cooper shared that Eric Gentry did come to the executive team meeting to discuss the Norse Network Hub. The executive team meeting best fit into his schedule. Eric expressed his openness to coming back to speak to us or if anyone wants to meet with him individually or if we have questions we can send them directly to him. Vicki shared a document about what is going to be contained in the hub with all of Staff Congress. The

Norse Network Hub is basically going to be one of the ways for us to have a single contact point for outside entities to contact the university. From what she understands from Eric's presentation to us it's focusing on kind of the talent funnel. How do companies contact us and create this talent funnel for our students. Eric used the example of air traffic control. We as an executive team expressed some of our concerns paramount being there is no budget money right now for this. We also emphasized open communication and to make sure that we are included in these discussions. We are not opposed to change but change without input makes us uncomfortable. We also expressed that we might need to reprioritize what we are doing if we don't have extras funds or extras staff. When we are shifting talent and resources it brings unease because often it's more responsibility without any more resources. One thing that could make this more successful is unlike Enterprise NKU which was a larger scope project we are trying to break it down into smaller pieces that are easier to implement. Vicki asked if Staff Congress wanted Eric to come talk to the full group. Michelle Melish shared that she thinks it would be good idea, especially because it sounds like there's going to be a combination of offices that could really affect staff on campus differently. The document was pretty large so breaking it all down would be very helpful. Vicki is going to reach out to Eric to get on his calendar. In the meantime if you have any other questions about the Norse Network Hub or the document that was shared please send them to her or members of executive council and we can get those to Eric.

#### **Non Member Discussion Period**

Marquita Barron asked everyone to mark their calendars. Any supervisors, managers, or people leaders on the meeting. We are having what we're calling a lunch chat and learn. Some really good conversation is taking place. It's a free space for individuals to share any of their ideas, challenges or just to release stress. These are always the second Thursday of the month in Student Union 104 from 12 till 1. Bring your lunch, bring your drink, bring your fun, and bring your participation. We all need and deserve time to release that stress. She is happy to offer up that space and time. Next one in November and then one in December.



Mike Irvin shared the Norse Appreciation for the month...

#### **Staff**

**Jason Davenport and Steve Flora**

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*Thanks to Jason Davenport and Steve Flora, NKU carpenters for their expertise and professionalism in completing many time-sensitive jobs in Landrum. Their assistance and positive attitudes are admirable. They make a difference at NKU and we appreciate them! Thank you!*

**Cady Short-Thompson**

*I want to give a thank you to Dr. Short-Thompson for recognizing the hard work staff and faculty are doing with the holiday schedule that they have provided us. We know you are working hard to make NKU a great place for students to gain an education - and part of that is recognizing the work that staff and faculty do as well. Thanks for being a tireless advocate for everyone at NKU!*

**Vicki Cooper**

*Vicki responded quickly to my request for records from the archives, and she works tirelessly for staff. This year, she has taken on the mantle of president of Staff Congress, and I have so much appreciation for the way she advocates for everyone - regardless of what department they are in or their job title. She sets a great example for building community - recognizing our strengths and abilities, but also in the ways that we can unify and work to support each other and our students even more.*

**Announcements**

Claudia Johnson shared that she is hoping that one everyone is voting but also that when you arrive at the voting polls you know what you are voting on. There is a Kentucky constitutional amendment so just make sure to read up on it and know which way you are going to vote. She did not want to say anyone either way but just make sure to read up on it and see your belief in it and pick whichever way you want to pick. Vicki Cooper echoed that same sentiment for any Ohio residents.

Michelle Melish shared a couple of items from their food service meeting. Some of these aren't new but just because we are at the start of the semester. Sush is back. There is a new grab and go area of like salads and sandwiches every day. It's comparable to the farmer's fridge that is over in HIC but it's in the student union now and it's really good for students because they can use their meal plan for that as well. The hours in the Norse Commons cafeteria have changed. Dinner starts at 4:30 now which is really great. We had some issues with food allergies before so now the stations should have QR codes with a link to website listing all of the ingredients and they've provided allergen expert training with all the food service staff. If anyone has any issues or questions feel free to bring them Michelle's attention.

Sara Conwell asked us all to mark our calendars for October 21<sup>st</sup> through the 25<sup>th</sup> for Adult Learner and Transfer week. <https://www.nku.edu/atc/atc-student-week.html> Our transfer numbers have increased wonderfully which is great. Typically in the past we have celebrated two separate weeks but this time we decided we're going to do one week instead of 2 full weeks of events to save our sanity. October 21<sup>st</sup> we are doing a swag swap which was a huge hit last year over in the student union. If you were ever a

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transfer student yourself and you attended another university give us something from that other institution and we will happily provide you with some NKU swag. Hence the swap. Please send your students over to us in the student union. We are also partnering with fuel and career services doing a cooking class and having an open house and browsing fair. It's the very first time the ATC has hosted on of these and we are hoping to garner a lot of traction. We are also hosing an event specifically for our Donovan scholar students. These are the individuals who are 65 years of age or older who live in Kentucky. They have the opportunity to come and take classes for free, whether or not they are degree seeking or non-degree seeking. We've actually been getting a lot of inquiry from them asking for more community building opportunities. Any questions concerns let her know and thanks for sharing information about the events.

Onyinye Uwolloh shared that the past three weeks she hasn't been able to log in delta dental and she called and they are in the process of switching over their website. It was an issue for the whole website and not just individual users. Lori Southwood shared that it is not just Onyinye who is having problems. She wasn't hearing trouble about the whole website but that they are making a switch in their big erp process with their whole system and it has caused some problems. She believes that the problems began on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Some of our employees were being told they weren't covered and communication went out to all providers informing them that if they had a patient come in with an expiration date of that date that it was a systems issue and that they were really covered. It's taken longer than they anticipated to resolve their issues. She will pass the information along to them about the website not working. If any other employees are experiencing issues please reach out to Human Resources.

Vicki Cooper shared that she already has another photo of another big pink volleyball team that was submitted. Keep those photo submissions coming to share the positive vibes.

### Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 2:22 PM.