

Members present: Tina Altenhofen, Amanda Andrews, Kristi Bishop, Nick Bliven, Chris Bowling, Amy Clark, Courtney Clark-Rankin, Sara Conwell, Vicki Cooper, Jennifer Davis, Kyle Dorriere, Ali Hannig, Kristi Horine, Bryan Irby, Mike Irvin, Claudia Johnson, Dan Jones, Beth Lackey, Brenda Maldonado, 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:

- I. Call to Order at 1:01 PM
- II. Guest – President, Dr. Cady Short-Thompson (1:30 Arrival) - [Report](#)
- III. Approval of August 8, 2024 Minutes
 - Motion: Tina Peebles
 - Second: Vanessa Steele
 - Approve: Approved
- IV. Liaison Reports
 - Board of Regents – Staff Regent – Cori Henderson - [Report](#)
 - 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
 - Outreach – Terri Smith - [Report](#)
 - Policies – Courtney Clark-Rankin and Kyle Dorriere - [Report](#)
 - Scholarship – Kristi Bishop and Steve Slone
- VI. University Committees:
 - Benevolent Association – Kimberly Wiley and Tina Peebles - [Report](#)
 - Food Service Advisory – Michelle Melish and Nick Bliven
 - IT Advisory Committee – Dan Jones
 - Regent’s Distinguished Service Award – Ali Hannig
 - Sustainability – Amanda Andrews - [Report](#)
 - Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews - [Report](#)
 - Transportation – Chris Bowling
- VII. Ad-Hoc Committee
 - Roundtable - [Report](#)
 - Advocacy - [Report](#)
- VIII. Old Business
 - Goals Discussion - [Report](#)
- IX. New Business - [Report](#)
- X. Non-Member Discussion Period - [Report](#)
- XI. Norse Appreciation - [Report](#)
- XII. Announcements - [Report](#)
- XI. Adjournment at 2:50 PM

Motion: Vanessa Steele
Second: Kimberly Wiley
Approved: Voice Vote

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM

Board of Regents – Staff Regent Cori Henderson

Cori Henderson shared that the Board of Regents met on September 11th. During that meeting Faculty Regent Sandra Spataro joined with her in a statement in regards to the dissolving of the Office of Inclusive Excellence. She thanked Staff Congress for standing with them in that statement as well as Faculty Senate and Student Government. It is important to lock arms making the statement that collegial governance matters, and that it is important to have all the right voices in the room when decisions are made that impact so many different people on our campus. She stressed the importance for us to ensure that not only our students, but our staff and faculty feel supported and feel that they have a safe space on our campus. She thanked all of us for encouraging that as well. The board heard updates on the finances of the university and enrollment.

Administrative Liaison – Lori Southwood

Lori shared the following...

Training and Development

- As part of the continuous build of the onboarding process for new employees, HR Training & Development introduced an additional resource to assist new employees, who have been at NKU for 6 months or less. As part of their onboarding, they receive the *New Employee Onboard Publication*, which contains:
 - HR related Information, such as benefits
 - Links to tools, resources, and learning options
 - Motivational messaging
 - An opportunity to win NKU swag

New employees who have been at NKU for 6 months or less will receive the third publication next week.

- At the end of this month, HR Training and Development will kick-off its 2024 Fall Development Series specifically for all employees, and supervisors, and leaders. These sessions include topics such as emotional intelligence, relationship building, people management skills, and personal development. For example, one of the sessions is called *Grit, Grind, & Hustle* and is being facilitated by NKU's very own Nycole Brundidge. More to come.

- To deliver on its promise to guide, facilitate, and promote valuable learning experiences to all employees, HR Training and Development wants to hear from you. This is your opportunity to help drive the training and development conversation by answering a few questions via Qualtrics. Link will be available on HR's [Personal & Professional Development](#) site on Monday, September 16.

Any questions, please email Marquita Barron, Training and Development Director

IT

Multi-factor authentication (MFA) sign-up for students continues through this semester. The College of Business and Chase College of Law have the next required sign-up which is October 14. If students have not voluntarily signed up before the required sign-up date, they will be required to sign up on the required date.

Please email Wayde Shanks (shanks@nku.edu) if you are interested in testing the new ListServ process. Soon it will be required for all ListServ administrators.

Benefits Update:

Annual Enrollment for plan year 2025 will be October 23 through November 7, 2024. We will have in person Annual Enrollment Informational sessions on Wednesday, October 23 one session in the morning; One in the afternoon. (University Center Rm375)

Vendors will be present to answer any questions.

A virtual session will be held on October 30 for those who can't make the in person session.

Detailed information will be sent to all benefit eligible employees in the next two weeks.

Vanessa Steele asked about the scheduled rollout of phone replacements across campus? She has heard some mention of Griffin Hall and the College of Informatics but even though her office is in Griffin she's not a part of the College of Informatics. Is it buildings specific or department specific? Courtney Clark-Rankin answered the question because it's her project. Vanessa is an interesting case because her department is housed with another group so she will not be included with Griffin Hall. The rollout and the changeover has been slowly rolling out. It usually takes 6 weeks from the planning to the actual changeover happening. If anyone is interested in jumping ahead and having the changeover happen faster please let Courtney know. One negative part of the new phone system is that individuals on the current system can't dial the new system with 4 digits. The goal is to try to move groups on campus that talk to each other at the same time to cut down on this level of confusion. Hence the reason why we've been going building by building. Vanessa shared that her group is spread across campus with one person in MEP, she is in Griffin, and the rest of her team are located in

Founders Hall. Vanessa also shared that for the most part her whole team uses Microsoft Teams to communicate. Courtney shared that anyone who wants to have phone lines moved in October should let her know by the 30th of September and that she believes the changeover for Founder's is scheduled to happen in the spring semester. Vanessa will share the information with her supervisor Denis Robertson. Vanessa continued by asking if there are any major changes that we should be prepping our teams for when it comes to benefits? Lori Southwood shared that all the specifics will come out in the next couple of weeks and that some of them are just being finalized and those final results aren't available yet. We try to minimize the impact of change on our employees but there are times when change is necessitated. Humana pulling out recently being one of the biggest ones. We have to assess whether changes by certain providers work well for us or not. We are in the final stage of that currently and should have detailed specific information well in advance of that October open enrollment date. Expect more will be coming out in the next couple of weeks.

Faculty Senate Liaison – Janel Bloch

Janel Bloch shared Faculty Senate had its first meeting August 26th. There was a lot of discussion about the University of Kentucky's decision to close its DEI office. There were a lot of questions about that and this discussion was before NKU's decision to close its Office of Inclusive Excellence. She shared that there will probably be more discussion about that at their next meeting. It was just announced that the deans are still working on the faculty hiring plan for next year. There are 3 searches for dean positions going on currently Honors, Arts and Sciences, and Steely Library. There is also the VP of Student Affairs, and Samantha Langley's position which had a lot of things added to it over the years so it might end up being more than one position. The biggest news for the spring semester is that meetings times are going to change from 3 PM to 1 PM starting in the spring.

Student Government – Collin Jarrell

Collin shared that SGA held elections on September 4th and 5th. There were 10 students that applied. 5 of those were elected and they are still recruiting those that were not elected to come back and join them. SGA is presenting to Honors classes and exploring presenting to groups and one on one classes to get more folks interested as well. They held the first installment of Victor talks at the end of August with Dr. Cady Short-Thompson discussing political communication. This topic will continue through the end of October and wrap up with the election in November. This series is designed to get more student involvement around the issues. SGA is partnering with the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement and Dr. Shauna Reilly on these initiatives. They are exploring doing a safety walk to look at indoor accessibility to see if there are any improvements that we can make inside of buildings. They are looking for ways to make improvements for outside of buildings as well but will do that towards the spring semester. They are exploring some things with housing and dining. Some of the value meals have changed in the food court this year and some of the mal swipes are a little delayed in getting in there. SGA is working to resolve those issues for students. Finally Collin shared a thank you to Vicki Cooper for exploring collegial governance with a

meeting scheduled in January. Vicki shared that those meetings should be on a monthly basis.

President - Vicki Cooper

Vick Cooper began by thanking everyone for all that they do. It has been a very busy start to the semester. She appreciates each and every one of you because we wouldn't get any of this done without everyone. Also thank you for responding quickly to her for the vote for the statement that was presented at the Board of Regents meeting. We did reach a majority on the decision and she appreciates everyone getting back to her so quickly. She has received the goals from almost every committee and we will discuss those later in the Old Business section of the meeting. She shared a reminder that 3 of this year's Staff Congress meetings are going to be in person. The December luncheon, the March Roundtable event, and lastly June when we have the scholarship luncheon. Mark your schedules and join us for a different way to all come together instead of through zoom.

Staff Congress Standing Committee Information

Benefits – Ali Hannig

Ali Hannig shared that most of the Benefits information was handled in Lori Southwood's report. She shared that it's important if you have questions to go to meetings in person with HR as open enrollment approaches. She wanted to highlight that it will be an active open enrollment period again calling attention that employees will need to actively engage when the period opens up.

Outreach – Terri Smith

Terri Smith shared that on Monday they will be meeting to start planning the holiday party. The party will be on Thursday, December the 12th immediately after the Staff Congress luncheon and meeting. It will take place in the UC Ballroom from 3 to 5.

Policies – Courtney Clark-Rankin and Kyle Dorriere

Kyle Dorriere shared that there are actually quite a lot of policies in the pipeline. Dr. Janel Bloch is incredible and has her ear to the ground and lets us know everything that is coming. There are a couple that are open for public comment. First is the Vacation and Annual Leave policy change that was brought forth by Staff Congress. It sounds like there have maybe been a comment or two maybe a few more on that one. Everyone that supported this policy change should make a comment in support of it. Second is a Minors on Campus Policy which was enacted. This policy only affected certain offices so hopefully you are aware of you are one of the affected groups. Third is an Ethics Point Policy that appears to be fairly straight forward. Lastly is a Legal Settlements Policy that is in the works. Kyle shared to check the policies website to see all policies that are currently in the public comment period. Vicki Cooper shared that Grant Garber and Larry Meyer are coming to our October Staff Congress meeting to discuss the Ethics Point Policy and any questions we may have on it.

Staff Congress University Committee Representation

Benevolent Association – Kimberly Wiley and Tina Peebles

Kimberly Wiley shared that if you haven't heard yet the committee has decided to cancel the fall event. There is construction planned for the main floor of the University Center and by November it's probably not going to be a pleasant area to be around. There will be scaffolding and all kinds of steps so it was recommended to not hold the event there. The traffic of moving people through that space would be awful. The committee looked at every location possible on campus. All available spaces are tied up. They did find out that the rec center was willing to work with them to make it available but all partners had already been reached and informed that the event would be canceled. Funds and hours are available in the account and while that will take a hit with the event being canceled but the account still looks ok. She shared that she has reserved the UC ballroom for April 22nd for the spring event. The committee will see how construction is progressing at that point and move forward. Tina Peebles shared that the committee appreciates all the effort that was put into discussing what the options were. So many folks reached out and responded once the event was canceled with suggestions that have been made note of to use in the Spring because the construction is due to last until around August of 2025. It was a difficult decision to cancel the event but ultimately the right one for the committee to make given the situation they were handed at the time. Steve Slone asked that even though the bank is good right now in lieu of having the event is there a plan for some kind of advertising or movement to get individuals across campus to still donate to the benevolent fund to ensure it stays full? Tina shared that the committee has not come back together to meet yet but that is something that they do plan to discuss. Discussion about an electronic push and a reminder that even though the event isn't happening the need is still out there. Donations are appreciated and still needed.

Sustainability – Amanda Andrews

Amanda Andrews shared that she has been having conversations with Rhonda Davis about how to approach these conversations since there is currently no one in the sustainability position. In these conversations it has been stressed that we need someone in this position. They have received word that there is money in the budget for that line but that the position itself is going to be reworked in some fashion. As more is learned she will share with all of us. The main focus is going to be on the strategic plan that Tiffany Budd put in place before she left the university. Conversations continue with Rhonda, Kathleen Fuegen and others that were involved in those conversations. Watch for more information and updates.

Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews

Amanda Andrews shared that the group hasn't met since that last Friday right after our last Staff Congress meeting. There will be some listening sessions that come out in the next couple of months so be on the lookout for those. These will be to refine some of the items that were brought forth in the listening sessions last spring. Hopefully this will help gain a more refined idea of what the campus wants NKU to be. What we think we

can work on in designing our new strategic plan. The committee is looking at the three pillars of Success by Design and refining who and what we are.

Ad-Hoc Committees

Roundtable

Vicki Cooper shared that the time is reserved for the Roundtable event on the calendar of the President and the President's cabinet. The event will be at our March 13th Staff Congress meeting scheduled from 1 to 3 PM. Amanda Andrews shared to keep using the Staff Congress Ask a Question Portal to get your questions answered quickly. We do look at those and review those as soon as they are submitted. There are conversations of designing the Roundtable event as a higher level of question with the cabinet members. If anyone has any input into what this event should look like please reach out to Amanda.

Guest

President – Cady Short-Thompson

Cady Short-Thompson wanted to share a couple of updates. She began with some of the things related to DEI in the Commonwealth. Mark your calendars on September 17th from 11 AM to 1 PM the interim joint Committee on Education will meet again in Frankfort. UK, U of L, EKU, Murray State, and WKU will testify about the DEI practices on their campus. She brings it up to us it will give us further indication of the legislators questions concerns regarding these issues and it may be very informative. We are heading toward a short legislative session in January a 30 day session. As mentioned in her remarks to the Board of Regents it's not a question of whether we'll have a bill come forward and if it will be passed but what is going to be in that bill. The legislature has made clear that they ran out of time last year and this year they won't. Questions that are brought forth at this upcoming meeting will be an indication of what the continued concerns are related to these practices in higher education. From what she has read to date in the Commonwealth there seems to be a great deal of conversation around chief diversity officers and centralized DEI offices, diversity statements that are expected for faculty or staff hiring or for promotion. There is conversation about oaths and to her knowledge we don't do oaths here at NKU. Also hiring preferences and anything that has the term DEI in it may be subject to change as we go forward. It's hard to predict but these things have been the most commonly mentioned. So where does this leave us given the changes that have been made? We are now in full planning process for identifying for us based upon the last 2 bills that were introduced what are some areas of the legislature's concern. This does not mean that we will act on those concerns at this time it means that we want to identify them. Number one what does she as President need to most strongly advocate for continuing? When she testified in July she focused on the academic content curriculum that is necessary for all of our programs that are accredited, that literally have inclusion and diversity curriculum so that our students are well prepared for a global workforce. For example we have teachers who are prepared to go out and teach diverse populations of students. We have 45 different

externally accredited programs and she does think it's vitally important for us to make sure that those are protected. She has already made it clear to the legislature that should those be prohibited they are going to find that our whole state is in a position that we won't be able to offer critically needed programs, and as a result, won't be able to have nurses, social workers, educators there is a long list of professionals that need this curriculum and need accreditation for licensure. Another item that she has advocated strongly for because she believes in their effectiveness is our student organizations, programs, supports, and initiatives. Things like Rocks, Q Plus and other CSI programs. There is a long list of these. These are important for our students to find their place. They foster a sense of belonging, help them feel welcome, and then find a stickiness of their experience here and want to stay and then graduate. Of course there are other items like tutoring and mentoring and other important elements to these different programs. There is a whole host of things that she believes the state and the different presidents and CPE will lobby for. These are certainly themes of real significance and importance. Without them the work that we do would be significantly compromised. The planning process has begun. We have already created a sense of what are some of the hot topics or flash point issues. We have identified some planning needs especially immediate needs. Among them are the need to update our faculty search training and ensuring that it is line with the state's expectations. We will still be able to of course provide trainings around anti-bias and ensure that we are equipping our faculty to recruit and hire the best excellent candidates. In addition to that there are a number of other areas that we will need to pay close attention to. For example diversity statements. This has been an imprecise process over the last few years. Some departments and some searches require diversity statements, others have not. Right now the question is will those be not allowed? It remains to be seen but she would predict and recommend for us to consider as a university what is it we want to know from these statements and what are ways in which we can get at the things that we are concerned to know from these candidates? Maybe the question is do the diversity statements or are these statements so important that we need to continue them, or are they not? Diana McGill, Lori Southwood, Grant Garber and then some folks who will be invited from both faculty and staff leadership, as well as some folks from the inclusive excellence committee will be invited to really weigh in on those things and start to craft next steps. There are a handful of immediate needs and other things that we are trying to wrestle with. For example there some concerns around anything that discriminates or excludes folks has also been highlighted. If there is a group membership that is based on a demographic with a handful of exceptions for Greek organizations. We really want to be thinking about and in different parts of campus about the future of X or whatever X is. We are in the gathering information stage. CPE for example have already elected to change from DEI to access belonging and engagement. That's another question on the table is it worth removing sort of the lightning rod of the type of term? Whether you agree with it or not do we make an immediate change or do we wait and see what's coming. There is no right answer. Candidly we weren't sure if legislation was going to pass and waiting paid off but we know this time something will pass. It has been said explicitly at all levels it will not fail to be voted in this cycle. That's where we are right now. Meetings are planned on an every other week basis with leadership from the different shared

governance groups. We will focus on keeping people in the loop and getting people to volunteer to sign up in different sort of subcommittees or groups to keep different people involved in the process. The challenge of shared governance bodies can be that they can be too slow for the task at hand. In terms of what she needs to be advocating for she needs to know that now and to have a sense of it. She welcomes us to either write to her or speak through Vicki Cooper or find some way to convey what your concerns are so that they can quickly get to her because meetings once or twice a month can make it sometimes difficult to move quickly as we need to prepare. You may funnel concerns through Vicki Cooper or you can certainly write to president@nku.edu just keep in mind that her email is subject to open records requests. She then asked how she can be helpful to Staff Congress. Vicki Cooper shared that if anyone is more comfortable speaking to her in person you can find her in Stealy Library 106. She is available for conversations strolling around the lake anybody on campus can go to any of the Staff Congress members to funnel things up to the cabinet. Vicki also thanked Cady for how she represented all of us with her testimony before the joint committee in July. Vanessa Steele asked if there will be students in the planning group having these DEI conversations. Cady shared that she meets regularly with Lucy Burns and Colling Jarrell from SGA. It feels like they meet every week and they are involved in the process. We are going to be working with a broader circle of students going forward as well. We are building this plane while we are flying it. We are trying as best we can to identify folks who can contribute, who can feel helpful, and something what be representative of the student body. Yes is the quick answer to the question. Janel Bloch noticed at the board meeting that new tuition rates were mentioned. Is that a proposal or is that a done deal already? Cady shared that some of you may know we had the Edge program which is a mou with CPE. We are the only school in the state that didn't have a modern mou that is inclusive of other states and we were finding that we weren't competitive as it related to what state residency students could be included in. You may have heard that anything other than Kentucky had to be 130% of in state tuition rates and that is not true anymore and we are at a competitive disadvantage by not having a broader number of states that were in the in state model. What we have done is analyze where are students are coming from and not surprisingly they are predominately Kentucky, secondly Ohio, and then thirdly Indiana. This is really about simplifying our tuition structure so that 3 states Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana will have one rate. They will all be in state rates. Our rate structure was dizzying with edge. There were a lot of different combinations of possibilities including what degree you have, what county you're in, what GPA you have all sorts of things. Frankly it represented 12 states and 12 countries and we weren't drawing from 12 states and 12 countries so arguably it did not meet its proposal of drawing enrollments from different places based on the different rates. She added as a new president and as a parent of 3 who has looked at tuition rates trying to determine the actual cost of college we make it difficult at NKU right now. With this plan if we didn't change at all from last year's enrollments which are 434 higher if we didn't change our tuition rate from this year which will probably be at least 2 percent higher we would be net neutral. We have proposed this mou to CPE and it has passed by their finance committee. Next Monday it will finalized by their board and then once that happens we can go live with it for the fall in new students, new transfers, new

undergraduate first time full time students and part time students. New students in the fall will be those who it applies to. There are a lot of moving parts to this with all sorts of enrollment management, finance, legal and admissions folks around the table trying to determine how to best simplify things. We have 2 rates in state for 3 states and everyone else is out of state including international students. It's pretty darn simple. Janel asked if graduate students are include as well. Cady responded that graduate students all have different rates based upon their programs and they are all based on market demand and the competition. We did a program by program analysis last year both in AOL and in person and we looked at our competition and tried to determine where we had room to grow. In fact in some cases we reduced our tuition for graduate students based upon the fact that we were too high for our market for example our EDD was way too high so we reduced that. In contrast our MBA program was so low that our vendor said we could increase by she believes around 28% which seems like a big jump so we made a more modest increase of she believes 9%. All of these things have little levers for graduate tuition. Every year we need to be mindful of the competition and this ever changing dynamic pricing environment. It's calling all of us to rethink some of our assumptions. Direct Admit is targeted towards Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana we believe if this mou is approved that it will have a positive impact for recruitment. There is a bit of a sticker dance like buying a car with a sticker price and then it's always discounted. She believes that this is just exactly what people would prefer the facts. If I live in Ohio this is exactly my tuition price without other factors needing to be factored in. Amanda Andrews brought forth that there have been some issues with student accounts concerning housing students being charged for multiple rooms and sometimes when these rooms are refunded they are done so incorrectly. The amounts being refunded are less than they should be. Also some students are reporting that they are being charged for multiple meal plans for example getting a meal plan plus a commuter meal plan. We have students that live in local counties in our 21 plus population and they are having to opt out of housing and they didn't know about the portal or to fill out a proper form. Is there a way that we could get these processes fixed? We are losing students because the process is cumbersome. Cady thanked Amanda for raising these concerns and that some of these details have come to the cabinet already. She asked for Amanda to write these specifics out and send them to president@nku.edu just to ensure that we've caught them all. Not aimed at a person or a unit but we as a university are clunky. We have a few different processes that by no one's intention have just really tripped us and students up. She imagines it's because we've build systems and processes in that are already just challenging. We all work too hard to recruit students to lose them over clunky processes. With all of the information people across offices can start to think together about how and what we need to do to improve these things. She asked that when we hear of student frustrations help to connect those students with the individuals across campus that can help them through it. That's a short term fix and the long term fix is to really look at the processes and make improvements. Vanessa Steele asked that in her convocation Cady mentioned looking at raises for 2026. Are you thinking academic year or fiscal year? Cady shared that her goal is next academic year. About this time next year her goal is to have people be given a raise. There are a number of different financial conversations that we have

ahead of us. Do we have the right fee structure in place? How do we fare this spring and summer? We are up almost 3% currently which is fantastic in light of what we've been dealing with. If we are able to bring in students midyear like we did last year then that will leave this year having resolved our full deficit. I said it on the mic at convocation so that you would hold me accountable. It's time to have these conversations.

Ad-Hoc Committees

Advocacy

Kimberly Wiley shared that the Advocacy committee met last Tuesday. After over 5 years of being chair of the Pension/Advocacy committee she is stepping down as chair. With health concerns and a new boss coming on board so Vanessa Steele has graciously agreed to serve as chair of this committee. Kimberly shared that she has been very honored to serve as chair of this committee for all these years. Standing strong through the pension fight with everyone's help and support. It has been an adventure. A heartfelt thank you to everyone. She is not stepping away from Staff Congress just turning the ropes over to someone with more energy than she does right now. Vanessa Steele thanked Kimberly for all of her hard work and stated that she is going to be much missed on their committee. What she has energy Kimberly has in knowledge and experience. Vanessa shared that her last question and answer with Dr. Short-Thompson will give you an idea of where they are headed. 2 items that the group are making a priority are benefits for staff specifically raises for staff. The advocacy group is planning on pushing for more transparency and more accountability and that staff need to be recognized for being integral to this entire process of the university running. The situation that Amanda just referenced in terms of the students getting multiple bills and things like that is a prime example of a problem. It's a byproduct of so much turnover over the years. The group would like to follow up on the 5 by 5 plan. Is there a plan to revive it or modify it in the future? We believe it's been 5 years since there was a survey on benefits and when the pension conversation was settled. 5 years is a good time to check in and see what the environment is like across campus. Would it be useful to get stories from across campus and morale? Thinking about it all in terms of the inclusive excellence office being dissolved it becomes even more important that advocacy is ready to step up for staff. Advocating for staff is also advocating for students because we cannot function as a university without our staff being at the top of their game. We believe there are a lot of things coming down the pike. What should advocacy be handling versus what Staff Congress as a whole should be addressing? Nanette Freadreacea asked if advocacy would be taking up the conversation around reestablishment of the benefit of being able to use the campus rec center without being charged an additional fee. It amounted to a 120 dollar pay cut that we all received. Vanessa responded that yes it is on the list as is the tuition waiver because they do not feel like we are on par with other universities. Parking is also on the list as an ongoing fight. Nanette shared that the campus rec center is something that is important to the staff and if they are looking for a short term win it's something that could easily get over the goal line. Cori Henderson shared that it is something that Cady is considering and she has said the same thing in conversations. What are some smaller low cost things

that could be done? Removing that fee could be one of those things. Claudia Johnson shared that clarity around the tuition waiver program would be appreciated. We need it to be clear as day instead of clear as mud specifically around graduate work and taxation. Vicki Cooper added that it's IRS regulations that determine taxation. Cori Henderson added you do get taxed over like 5,000 something dollars but that work can be done to make it clearer. Lori Southwood shared that its often times on a case by case bases and that payroll can work with individuals to work through individual situations when it comes to tax liability. The feedback is always welcomed and appreciated always. Nanette Freadreacea mentioned that the folks in payroll are awesome. They helped to model things and helped her make sense of what the impact was going to be. Anyone that reaches out to them they really are super in that way.

Old Business

Vicki Cooper began our goals discussion. One of the first most prominent suggestions was that Staff Congress should be the voice or advocate for staff. We represent all the voices across campus and it's a responsibility of all members to encourage colleagues to bring forth issues and concerns either through the portal or to individuals so that we know what the issues are. The second item was included in the conversation earlier with Vanessa Steele. We should focus on compensation and benefits. Pay with merit and cost of living raises, promotional paths with training and development, flexible work arrangement and flexibility in our work. The campus rec center fee can also be included here advocating for benefits for staff. Full tuition waiver for dependents. Parking is also included here in a conversation about benefits and advocacy for staff. Vicki used the word intangibles but the next goal focuses around morale and ethical issues. Belonging and engagement across campus. Thing like Norse Uppreciation belong here. Items that the policy committee and outreach engage in. Strengthening our community across campus. Increased communication across campus. Having Cady come to our meetings. Asking them to be timely and consistent and as transparent as possible. Of course there are some things that can't be shared but as much as can be shared as quick and consistent as possible. Also with our outreach events focus some just on Staff Congress, some for Staff as a whole, and also campus community wide. A high level look at our overarching Staff Congress goals. We discussed tabling at different events including the benefits fair to advertise Staff Congress who we are and what we are about. Sara Conwell brought up that we did this prior to Covid over in the student union. It's relatively easy to staff a table and just give outreach to all of our staff across campus. Elections is planning on doing this closer to our election season. Vicki Cooper brought up the possibility of joining with Faculty and make it a collegial governance tabling event. Greg Moore brought forth a conversation for advocacy to consider. Greg works in DEI and because of everything that has been going on and the unfortunate negative impact it has had on the center for student inclusiveness. The new director of Latino Student Initiatives last day is tomorrow. He may not have shared it but Tiburcio Lince is leaving because of a lot of what has been going on. Upon seeing our list of things to look out like morale obviously morale has been challenging. It's been tough for the student groups that the team provides support for. Staff members there have been able to put on a face and still support students and do what we have to do. Greg urged

the importance of advocating in the midst of this wait and see period. It is important for us to whatever we can to be as proactive as possible with the little bit of knowledge that we have. It would be helpful to have a listing of various options for what change looks like and whatever we are going to be required to change. It can help to inform us and help us with what moving forward looks like. It's been a scary time. If the center is unable to do the work students could be negatively impacted in their experience with feeling connected to the institution as well as folks like you because the team tries their best to ensure that students are civically engaged, and also understand what the responsibility looks like in terms of being a students as well as a young adult. Conversations are happening about value or feeling valued or just understanding what our very existence looks like. Greg invited all of us to come over and visit the space in the student union. There seems to be a narrative that this kind of work is divisive or that we're trying to indoctrinate and he can guarantee that's not what this is. Having folks to help champion the program means the world to the staff and the students involved. Greg has had some days where he questions his why and that shouldn't be the case because he knows what he does is valuable. Vicki Cooper extended an open invitation to Greg and to other folks in the center to come to Staff Congress at any time as an official guest or just attending a meeting. Speaking for herself but also hopefully a lot of people across campus Vicki wanted Greg to know that we are here to support staff. We don't want anyone to feel isolated or unsupported. The whole idea is that the university should be welcoming to all its really that simple. We may not agree but we at least have to be willing to listen to everybody else's point of view. Vicki asked that Greg let everyone know in the Center for Student Inclusiveness know that they are welcome at any of our events and meetings. Vicki Cooper then called for all committees to share committee goals. Ali Hannig shared for Benefits. Act as a direct liaison for employee benefits in conjunction with NKU's benefits department. Assist in communicating NKU benefits that are often overlooked. Also working to ensure that the website is up to date. Michelle Melish shared for Constitution and Bylaws. They plan to split up the constitution and bylaws among our group and review them. Check to make sure that the language makes sense and that they are easy to understand. Also does it flow and the grammar and formatting. Terri Smith shared for Outreach. Attend SGA and Faculty Senate meetings and report any information, events or concerns. Plan the holiday party, annual picnic, and any other Staff Congress event that might arise. Communicate with faculty and staff using email and flyers advertising the events. Finally is to work with HR to allow all employees to attend the holiday party and annual events. Courtney Clark-Rankin shared for Policies. First is to raise awareness that we have a committee on policies and that staff can bring their issues directly to this committee. Second is to partner with other committees to continuously review current policies to ensure that they meet the current needs of staff and campus. Some of these include the dress code policy, shift differentials, and equitable application of benefits. Steve Slone shared for Scholarship. The biggest goal is to reshape the rubric. It was discovered last year that the scoring rubric we use does not exactly line up with the questions being asked on the application. Also running a successful scholarship luncheon where Steve Slone has no hand in picking the food for said event. Marquita Barron asked about connecting on the training and development piece. Amanda Andrews shared that she guesses that would

have been employee engagement and well-being. That group was technically told to dismantle because Kim Baker said that you guys had already accomplished employee engagement. Steve Slone shared that Terri Smith is our representative on this university committee and that she is willing to meet any time. Items can be sent to Terri or to Steve as well as being shared in Lori Southwood's reports. Marquita shared that there may have been some miscommunication and there definitely needs to be some discussion.

New Business

Vicki Cooper shared that we did have a question that came through the question portal. As a staff member taking graduate classes at NKU I wanted to address an issue regarding the staff and faculty waiver and the campus recreation policy. This waiver covers tuition for 6 credit hours as well as online and mandatory campus recreation fees. However, I was informed by a campus rec representative that if a staff or faculty takes 6 credit hours or less they are still required to purchase a full price membership to access the campus rec. I believe that all students regardless of how their tuition and mandatory fees are paid should receive the same benefits. It seems unfair that those who are using the staff and faculty waiver are being treated differently when it comes to accessing campus recreation facilities. The submitter asked if we could address this during the Staff Congress meeting. Lori does have some information but she may need to look at it a little bit more closely given that she has just received some of this information. She was able to share what she had but reserves the right to come back with more detail and it doesn't have to wait to the next meeting if she gets more information she will send it directly to Vicki Cooper. The campus rec fee that other students pay is actually waived for those using the tuition waiver of 6 credits or less. If someone is taking over 6 credit hours then they do have to pay the student campus rec fee and they wouldn't have to pay anything else to use the rec center. The campus rec fee that other students pay is waived for those using the tuition waiver for 6 credit hours or less. If someone is taking over 6 credit hours they do have to pay the student campus rec fee and they would not have to pay anything else to use the rec center. Sara Conwell asked for clarification if it's the campus rec center fee that is on the tuition statement or is the person talking about paying to use the campus rec center? Ali Hannig shared that she believes that the person is saying because they are taking classes do they then not have to pay the staff membership fee. Tina Pebbles shared that if you are a faculty or staff member that trumps you being a student. This is similar with pretty much every benefit on campus. If you are staff member you are a staff member first and a student second. She could see why they would have to pay to be a member because that's not a benefit that staff have anymore. Lori shared that is the rule of thumb that is generally followed and your identity is staff first. When someone is taking over 6 credit hours they do have to pay the campus rec fee but there wouldn't be any other charge to use the rec center. Over the waiver of the 6 credit hours would give them more of the student identity. Brenda Maldonado asked for one more clarification. Either it's free or it's not right? Lori clarified that there are two different fees for the rec center. One is charged to students on their bill which is waived for anyone using the waiver for 6 or less credit hours. The second is the fee faculty/staff pay to use the

center. Those using the waiver have the student fee waived if they stay under 6 credit hours. If they go above 6 credit hours then they are subject to this fee and are therefore not charged the faculty/staff fee to use the center. Watch for further updates on this conversation.

Non Member Discussion Period

Mike Irvin brought forth something that is a little lighter to discuss and bring up to everyone. This update is not about daycare. He has been working with Amanda Andrews and Chris Lawrence who is a faculty over in counseling. We've been getting SGA involved Reina Taylor who is one of their senators. Long story short we are partnering on a placemaking project through first year programs to kind of reimagine Loch Norse. It's kind of sad that it doesn't get much attention especially post covid. They are meeting with Bill Moulton next week but the goal is to install fish food dispensers around Loch Norse. There are hundreds of fish and turtles it is wild. We've received a donation of the dispensers and we are working with operations and maintenance as to who would maintain them. The plan is to bring them inside during bad weather. This would be a self-sustaining project because we would just the money we get from it to support the project. If it's more than we expect they will look into donating it elsewhere. More to come as the plan is put together. Mike also asked if anyone can come up with a catchy name for it to let him or us know.



Staff

Claudia Johnson

Claudia Johnson is the unwavering foundation of the College of Education. As an academic specialist, she dedicates herself to the success and well-being of students, staff, and faculty alike. Claudia's relentless commitment is evident in her daily efforts to uplift those around her, offering both unwavering support and a consistently positive, thoughtful perspective.

A true collaborator at heart, Claudia goes beyond her role, seamlessly working with faculty within the college and establishing strong partnerships with schools across the region. She is instrumental in coordinating and securing field and clinical placements for

students across early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school settings, ensuring that these future educators receive invaluable hands-on experience.

Claudia embodies the spirit of NKU. Her dedication, collaboration, and positive influence not only contribute to the College of Education's success but also inspire those who have the privilege of working alongside her.

Joseph Terino

Jo Terino is a technical genius and a real treat to work with.

Recently HR and the SAP Security team have been working with Payroll to figure out why a newly hired student worker could not enter their time and it was a technological tangle caused by human error. We found documentation and proof that a crucial date on the HR record was entered incorrectly and were told in the past that this date could not be edited and were given a 'work around' that was used in 2023 for another user. This work around was not ideal and would have meant more manual entries from payroll until the erroneously entered date had passed.

Jo looked at the issue and the answer we were given last year and basically said, not on my watch. Jo did a little development work and provided HR with a tool to correct that bad date. Can't thank Jo enough for the assist on this issue and so many more in the past.

Kimberly Zink

Kimberly never fails to create a welcoming environment for potential and current graduate students. Her dedication to NKU and graduate education is showcased through every interaction she has.

She also never hesitates to share her knowledge and wisdom with her fellow graduate education employees and with those across departments. She has spent the last 9 years building connections and a network so that she can effectively aid students to the best of her ability. Kimberly's top three strengths are her dependability, kindness, and resourcefulness. She is such a great asset to NKU!

Announcements

Kimberly Wiley shared that the Faculty/Staff Friday events are scheduled. September 27th, October 25th, and then November 15th. We will be holding these in HE 105 or the forum over in the HIC building. There will be announcements coming out and they will be in This Week. Watch for Grace Hiles to send it to the listservs as well.

Sara Conwell shared that it's the month of September which is impact campaign month through the foundation. The adult and transfer center is happy to partner up with the age friendly university coalition and we have an impact campaign for an age friendly university scholarship. Finances are hard especially when you're an adult who is trying to finish school and there are not a whole lot adult learner scholarships out there. This is a way we are trying to combat that. Shameless plug for anyone that would be willing to make a donation or a contribution to help support our adult learners trying to complete their degree. <https://impact.nku.edu/project/42974>

Bob Alston shared the following. Help A Norse Champions launches now! Designed to help employees and student leaders connect with resources that support student well-being, NKU faculty, staff, or student leaders can take part in workshops and connections sessions designed to help participants make informed recommendations to NKU students in need. This program is similar to other successful training efforts in our campus community, like Ally and Bystander Training (LGBTQA+ Student Initiatives) or Green Zone Brigade training (Veterans Resource Station). You can find a full list of these workshops and connection sessions on the Help A Norse Champions website! Once you earn Help A Norse Advocate or Champion status, you'll receive a sticker (or magnet) honoring your commitment to this initiative. These badges show those around you that you are part of our informed care community. Collaborative offices include Counseling Services, the Norse Violence Prevention Center, Student Wellness Education, Student Accessibility, and other offices offer workshops to support this initiative. You can find a full list of these workshops on the Help A Norse Champions website, and there will be additional sessions available (and a convening to recognize those who achieve Advocate and Champion status) in Spring 2025 to help you continue learning how to Help A Norse.

Michelle Melish shared that the study abroad fair is next Wednesday from 10 to 2 in the student union ballroom. You can stop by any time stay as long or as little as you like. It's a showcase of all the programs coming up this year and study abroad scholarships too.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 PM.