



## Staff Congress

**Draft Minutes for September 16, 2026  
Wells Hall, Room 118, and Zoom**

**Present:** Emily Asher, Ken Ashlock, Duane Dycus, Hannah Garner, Gerry Harris, Orville Herndon, Brandon Johnson, Kelsey Johnson, Robert Koehler, Trish Lofton, Julianne McClain, Jeremy McKeel, Amy Sanders, Jillian Smith, Taylor Snell, Mary Steely, Brandon Story, Kristen Swisher, Justin Thomas, Karami Underwood, Brian Williams, Casey Workman

**Absent:** Johnny Anthony, Meagan Brawner, Dedrick Brooks, Abby Hensley, David Looney, Carlos Lopez, Audrey Neal, Tressa Ross

**Guests:** None

**CALL TO ORDER:** Staff Congress President Jeremy McKeel called the meeting to order. He noted that some Staff Congress members were attending the Strategic Planning Committee meeting or traveling and therefore were unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting.

**REPORTS FROM SPECIAL GUESTS PRESENT:** None present.

**Staff Regent Report:** No report.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Approval of August 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes:** President McKeel asked if there were any changes to the August 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Kelsey Johnson made a motion to approve the August 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded. President McKeel asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT:**

**Approval of August 2026 Treasurer's Report:** Bobby Koehler made a motion to approve the August 2026 Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded. President McKeel asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion carried.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Executive Committee:** No report.

**Credentials and Elections Committee:** Orville Herndon said the Credentials and Elections Committee will discuss a date for the Staff Regent Election. He said the filing period for the Staff Regent Election has traditionally been held beginning the Monday after spring break.

**Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee:** Trish Lofton said she contacted Sharion Meloan, Executive Coordinator in the office of the Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services, to set the date for the December Staff Recognition event. Ms. Lofton has contacted Casey Rowe, Associate Director of the Residential College Association, to partner with the RCA to plan the Children's Christmas Party. The Staff Recognition and Special Events Committee would like to plan some pop-up events for staff such as smoothies in the fall or coffee in the winter months. Ms. Lofton noted that Staff Congress Representative David Looney suggested the committee work with the Pony Express for those events.

**Communications Committee:** Jillian Smith reported that the Communications Committee has developed a template to use to introduce Staff Congress members on social media. The committee is planning to prepare a video discussing the purpose of Staff Congress. The committee would like to begin posting 60-90 second video summaries of Staff Congress meetings a few days after the meetings are held.

**Working Conditions Committee:** No report.

**Staff Survey Committee:** On behalf of Staff Survey Committee Chair Dedrick Brooks who was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting, President McKeel reported that the committee will meet within the next few weeks.

**Textbook Scholarship Committee:** President McKeel read the Textbook Scholarship Committee report from Committee Chair Abby Hensley who was unable to attend today's Staff Congress meeting.

The due date for the Marie Jones Textbook Scholarship applications was changed from September 1 to September 8, due to an error in the application link. The committee will meet to select a recipient for the textbook scholarship. The funds received from the Panera fundraiser were deposited in the textbook scholarship account. Applications for the Kay Hays Professional Development Fund are due on October 1 and April 1. The committee will meet after Fall Break to select a recipient for the Professional Development Fund scholarship. Ms. Hensley plans to contact the original donor for the Professional Development Fund to ask for an annual commitment to sustain the fund.

**Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee:** No report.

**Community Involvement and Access Committee:** No report.

**UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITTEES:**

**Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee:** Trish Lofton reported that the Faculty and Staff Insurance and Benefits Committee met and elected officers. During the fall semester, the committee will meet the first Friday of the month.

Orville Herndon said the committee sent a survey to faculty and staff in June. He will send the survey results to Staff Congress members.

Ms. Lofton said the results from the survey will be given to the Insurance and Benefits Committee subcommittees.

Discussion followed regarding the Wellness Center benefit information that was emailed to employees earlier in September. Staff Congress representatives asked if a similar benefit could be developed at other locations for employees who do not live in Murray.

**Intercollegiate Athletic Council:** No report.

**Naming Campus Facilities Committee:** President McKeel presented the Naming Campus Facilities Committee report on behalf of committee member Dedrick Brooks. The Board of Regents approved the following naming proposals:

Owens Family Field (the softball field); Jerry and Judy Rhoads Plaza in Woods Park; Dr. Elizabeth Johnson Simulation Studios in Jackson Hall; The Herman Eddie Roberts, Jr., Post 6291 Veteran and Military Student Success Lounge.

**Judicial Board:** No report.

**Budget Advisory Committee:** No report.

**Parking Advisory Committee:** Duane Dycus said the fall meeting date for the Parking Advisory Committee has not been set. He said the committee has received a request to move some of the handicapped parking spaces in the parking lot at Alexander Hall from the west side of the building to the north side to accommodate patrons who visit the Center for Communication Disorders located in Alexander Hall. The request has been forwarded to Parking Services.

Discussion followed concerning the need to increase the number of handicapped parking spaces in the parking lot at Alexander Hall due to the increase in the number of persons with limited mobility visiting the Center for Communication Disorders.

Ken Ashlock thanked Congress member Bobby Koehler, Space and Project Planner in Facilities Management, for the re-design of the sidewalks behind Faculty Hall and the new nursing building.

Mr. Koehler added that a request has been received to create a crosswalk and move a parking spot at Winslow Dining Hall.

Trish Lofton requested that an adjustment be made to the Curris Center parking lot spaces. Multiple visitor spots are vacant while staff are unable to find a parking spot in the Curris Center or the I & T Building parking lots. She added that visitors may park in any color zone but staff may not park in visitor spaces.

**Affirmative Action Committee:** No report.

**Strategic Planning Committee:** No report.

**Campus Fee Advisory Group:** No report.

**University Policies Workgroup:** No report.

**AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

**Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee:** Orville Herndon reported that the revised Kentucky Statute concerning Staff Regents has been published. He forwarded the information to the Staff Regent Bylaws Revision Committee members. He will forward the information to Staff Congress representatives. Mr. Herndon will ask Murray State Counsel Rob Miller if any changes to the Staff Congress Bylaws concerning the Staff Regent will require approval by the Board of Regents.

**Extended Campus Committee:** No report.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Staff Congress December 2026 and March 2027 Meeting Dates:** President McKeel said the December 16, 2026 Staff Congress meeting is scheduled on a day when some staff will be out of the office prior to the administrative closure days and holiday break. The March 17, 2027 Staff Congress meeting falls on the Wednesday of spring break.

Mr. McKeel asked if Staff Congress would prefer to move the December meeting date to December 2 or December 9. Discussion followed. Because final exams will be held during the week of December 5-11, Congress members discussed moving the meeting to December 2.

President McKeel asked Staff Congress members if they would rather change the March meeting to March 10 or March 24. Discussion followed. Congress members noted that March 24 is a Racer Day. Some Staff Congress members will be involved in Racer Day and unable to attend the Staff Congress meeting on that day. The group discussed moving the meeting to March 10.

Justin Thomas a made a motion to move the December 16, 2026 meeting to December 2, and to move the March 17, 2027 meeting to March 10. The motion was seconded. President McKeel asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he called for the vote. The motion carried.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Orville Herndon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

DRAFT