As part of the NKU presidential search process, feedback was solicited from campus and external constituents through open forums and an online survey.

Comments were collected from 96 people: 48 faculty, 27 staff, 18 students and three community members. Respondents were asked what skills and qualities they feel are important for the position and were given an opportunity to share any other relevant thoughts about the search.

Their responses, broken up by respondent type (faculty, staff, students, community members) are compiled below. Responses were not edited for content or length, except as noted. Respondents were also given the opportunity to nominate individuals for the position; those responses have been excluded to protect the identity of prospective candidates.

**QUESTION:** We want to hear about the skills and experience, as well as personal qualities, you believe candidates for this position should bring. Try to think beyond the qualities that are universal to good leaders and think about what skills and backgrounds would be especially important to lead NKU at this moment in time.

**Faculty (46 responses)**

1. There are many aspirations that I hold for the next president of NKU. I hope that we can identify a gifted leader who will continue the positive initiatives developed by the previous administration (such as more equitable state funding and an emphasis on inclusive excellence), but handles university administration in a more collegial, thoughtful manner, all of which should serve to amplify the university’s and region’s strengths. NKU owes its students the best president we can find, but also someone who will provide some sense of consistency and dedication to NKU—who views and treats NKU as a home.
2. The candidate should have an academic background, preferably as a faculty member who understands teaching, research, and service. The candidate should also be one who understands the challenges facing higher education at this time and who is prepared to work with all of the NKU community—faculty, staff, and students—to come up with solutions that fit our campus and our region. The person should have the ability to really listen to the campus community and to collaborate to improve morale rather than coming in and trying to impose a completely new agenda without taking the time to understand what would really be best for NKU.
3. I think the candidate should have a PhD. I also think he or she should have been a faculty member at a university.
5. Consensus leadership, with a deep understanding of academic culture and the true mission of NKU.
6. A person that can understand both the faculty and business world. Someone who has connections and a good reputation with businesses in the region. Someone who truly wants to stay here for the long haul.
7. Some one who understands the area/region. Someone who can work in Frankfort. Someone who is student focused.
8. Understanding of the work the faculty do and what this University has already achieved. Sense of how the vitality of the Greater Cincinnati enriches our educational and cultural lives and opens new possibilities for fundraising from a downtown community to whom our graduates and programs are more and more important. Ability to continue the excellent work President Mearns has done dowstate. Be sure that D-I athletics continues our excellent tradition or real student athletes. Continue to recruit and retain a diverse student body; this has been a great success over the last fifteen years and it means everything in the classroom. Develop on-line course as needed but don't give up the small classes and face-to-face instruction that have made us distinct.

9. The president should have a deep understanding of, and long experience in, higher education. They should understand the values of higher education. They shouldn't look at higher education as job training. No business executives, no lawyers, no prosecutors.

10. Ability to persuade and impact legislators in NKU's favor. Degree in Education at some point (at least one of the top two leaders should have one!)

11. It is important to identify someone committed to NKU. We need a leader who understands our culture and mission, and someone who can connect to our students, the university community, and the region.

12. Experience: Academic (i.e., negotiating healthy balance across its diverse yet unique set of stakeholders) and business (i.e., understanding what it takes for a business to succeed in today’s rapidly evolving market place). Character: Innovative and creative thinker who is bold enough to think outside of the box and take our University where it needs to go in this environment that thrives with unprecedented opportunities for growth and success. The candidate must be a true leader who knows that the most precious NKU customer is employees - they are the face of the organization in the eyes of our primary stakeholder, students. They will do anything if they have a good leader. Finally, the candidate must understand that our organization is part of a greater eco-system that has the responsibility not only to its community, but also the Planet. Sustainability has to be close to the heart of any candidate. It is about future of our students and their families, our future customers.

13. Much change is taking place, we need someone that can manage that change such that factions do not become alienated

14. Appreciation for the purpose of public higher education. (Hard to believe I feel compelled to request something as basic as this.) Interest in the engagement and improvement of our region - on both sides of the river. Interest in how technology and science can impact our region, culturally but also economically.

15. Someone who has previously led an organization through a period of great change. Someone forward-thinking who can embrace change and help prepare the colleges to take on the future of higher education.

16. I believe the next President should:
   - Have a comprehensive knowledge of the Commonwealth (demographics, needs, challenges.)
   - Have excellent political skills to navigate the complex KY political climate
   - Have sound prior experience in higher education; ideally at some point was a faculty
   - Be sensitive to not only undergraduate student needs but also graduate
   - Be able to effectively communicate with faculty & staff
   - Never let education suffer because of budget
   - Find creative ways to fund the university
   - Not bow to UK whenever they try to stop one of our initiatives

17. Excellent communication and fund raising skills. Major corporate donations and other substantial resources are needed.
18. Someone who can be both a good internal and external president. You can't be a good external president without a good internal compass for what goes on here.

19. Willingness to participate in an OPEN search process. Interest in the personal at NKU, their work and motivations.

20. Yes, leadership skills are a must. A leader who understands the differences between running a business and running an academic institution of higher learning is essential. The two are not the same and if we confuse them we will select the wrong person for this job. I have heard it said by a sitting University President that if he could he would "outsource the education part of the university". This is so misplaced that it is nearly sinister. Our core competence, the core of our mission is EDUCATION. This does not mean the trappings of higher ed - athletic teams, facilities and conferences, new buildings....it means transforming the MINDS of our students. We are not here to simply provide students a meaningful experience for a few years. We are here to grow their capacity to use their brain, literally. The mind is a terrible thing to waste, indeed! I We need a leader who focuses on quality education while growing our connection to the regional economy. Please be diligent to this need.

21. Someone who has experience as a university president, and someone who is familiar with NKU.

22. Be able to have a plan to increase enrollment and to better market the university, including increased visibility in the local broadcast media. Have extensive experience as a faculty member in higher education and be able to bring the diverse sectors of the campus community together.

23. Hiring an individual who has a solid background in education is critical. I hope the next president will understand all the aspects of a university and its community rather than just the business aspect. Yes, having a background in managing large budgets and leading a large amount of employees is important, too, but having an individual understand the uniqueness of a university and higher education in general, will help the university to thrive and grow rather than live in fear of cuts and worrying about repercussions for speaking out in support of creativity and freedom in learning. I would hope the new president would be a proponent for diversity in teaching and recognizing that impact on students.

24. Morale is low. Someone with academic experience who understands what motivates faculty is really needed. Someone who has good interpersonal skills and is empathetic would be ideal. Also, a really good fundraiser (which is also the same person who has strong interpersonal skills) should be a top priority. We need someone who can build rapport and convince donors that we are a worthwhile investment.

25. He/She should have experience with extended campus programs and should demonstrate support for programs like NKU Grant County and School-Based Scholars.

26. I would like to see somebody who has a background in academia and understands how a college campus works and that it functions differently than a corporate culture. I understand that the budget will continue to be a central issue, but I also hope that our next president is somebody who has the soft skills to be able to look beyond the numbers and makes and effort to understand the lives of the people who work here. NKU is a true community and we need our president to be savvy, visible, and approachable.

27. Demonstrated ability to collaborate and share governance with faculty; Clear fiscal vision and prowess to address current budget-finance debacle; Deep understanding of NKU's mission, purpose, and place; Demonstrated success in enhancing brand recognition within above parameters.

28. I think it will be helpful to have a good communicator to tell our story outside NKU and to be able to talk to legislators in Frankfort. Someone who is good at facilitating the political process would be helpful too as well as someone good at fundraising/development.
29. First and foremost, any candidate being considered MUST have an established track record of excellence in teaching and scholarship. Please, no more professional administrators. The administration here at NKU is already painfully divorced from the actual business of teaching and producing knowledge. This is our chance to start to fix this problem. We need a president who realizes that the administrators work for the faculty, not the other way around. Every candidate should be given a copy of the 2016 faculty survey and asked what they are going to turn this campus around.

30. I would like an administrator who cares about NKU as a institution, not as a stepping stone. The morale on campus is the worst I've ever seen in my 14 years at NKU. I doubt it could get worse than it already is. There is such a disconnect between what is happening at the faculty level and what the eighth floor chooses to notice. It is no wonder that so many faculty have left for new positions. The next NKU president needs to bring back a sense of institutional loyalty, pride, and purpose. Currently, we have none of these. The perennial rejection of cost of living raises, the continual elimination of faculty lines, and years of mismanagement and poor communication has left much damage. These things have cultivated great apathy across campus. Your ideal candidate needs to know this and have a plan for dealing with it. All is not well at NKU.

31. NKU needs a sales/marketer who can promote the University to donors, government officials, C-level execs, the community and prospective students and parents. Someone who is comfortable going from athletic events to cocktail dinners. Someone who engages social media. Someone who can take the momentum from the basketball team and carry this forward to a huge 50th anniversary celebration. It's time we quit talking about being a hidden gem and we start promoting the great programs and success we have as a university. Someone that our faculty and staff will look up to and be proud to have as a leader representing us. And someone who can also make the tough decisions that need to be made regarding investments in growing programs and shutting down ailing ones.

32. I would prefer someone with university experience, a proven leader. Someone who is able to work with all types and abilities. I really liked President Mearns's law experience, as it helped with lobbying for NKU in Frankfort.

33. Student focused and putting people first!

34. Morale is still very low among faculty and staff, we need a leader who will focus on human capital, similar to [name redacted to protect identity of prospective candidates].

35. NKU needs someone who understands undergraduate education, our regional issues, and our low faculty morale. And PLEASE do not hire another white male.

36. Student centered, Instructional leader, research expertise, dedicated to faculty and all staff.

37. NKU needs an academic leader with a Ph.D. and faculty experience for president. While NKU's current president has been successful in some areas outside the university, he has not been an effective in the area of academic leadership and much of this can be attributed to his lack of understanding of the academic workplace.

38. The candidate must have a multi-focus outlook that includes students, faculty and staff as well as finances and the physical campus. If we want a high quality institution we need them all. We lose good faculty and staff because of salary and work expectations.

39. I hope the new president has extensive background in academia. He or she should not be someone new to this field.

40. A quality of openness that leads the faculty in a participatory and not authoritative manner. There needs to be someone whose leadership includes a strong background in education beyond working with undergraduate degrees. We have undergraduate faculty and undergraduate committees placing demands on graduate faculty and students who have never taught in a graduate program.

41. I am a Caucasian male, but it would nice to see an array of candidates who are neither Caucasian, or male. We want the best candidates, but if all other dimensions are similar, I
would appreciate a diverse candidate pool. I would recommend preference be given to candidates who can articulate a holistic vision of the public comprehensive university within the context of the prevailing neo-liberalism economic idealism. For nearly a century, higher education has been "tri-furcated," but with some reasonable degree of balance between community colleges, the comprehensives, the elite institutions. Under the current political climate, the chasm between the elites and everyone else is growing wider; and the differences between community colleges and comprehensives is shrinking. While economic of the region is critical, if NKU is to be the driver of that development, we cannot just limit our mission to job preparedness; the world economy is too volatile to train students for specific jobs.

42. If you could please clone President Mearns, that would work. Ideally, a university president, though sensitive to political issues, should have a strong sense of the liberal arts foundation of education of an informed citizen in a free society. This means resisting the tendency in todays politics to reduce education to job training. The most successful graduates will be able to think, reason, and adapt. Otherwise, they are destined to lead unfulfilled lives stuck in jobs that become obsolete. Training for existing jobs is pointless for graduates who will be in the workforce for 50 years. Producing graduates who can think, transform, and anticipate the future should be the primary goal of a university education. This means not dumbing down the university and will take intelligence and vigilance by a gifted president. President Mearns was such a president.

43. Proven problem solver & fund raiser.//Ability to relate to a variety of constituencies.//Willingness to lead some restructuring, e.g., colleges (e.g., A&S is huge.)//Success in negotiating political environments - Mearns laid the groundwork at the state, but a leader who can continue that effort is needed.//Ability/desire to move forward with NKU's incentive-based budget model in a positive, productive way, creating more buy-in that currently exists.//Proven success in instigating and managing change.//NKU tries to be all things to everyone. The new pres. needs to be able to ask questions no one has liked to ask, e.g., Do we really need x? - in a way that generates buy-in.//NKU needs to pay faculty/staff appropriately - going years without raises except to those who can negotiate retention offers sends the wrong message.//Poorly supporting some areas (e.g., A&S) while well-funding others (e.g., CoB) is part of what has led to the poor morale that currently exists at NKU.

44. A strong commitment to the institution's academic mission and the necessity of a broad liberal arts foundation to preparing students to be flexible thinkers and engaged citizens in their communities; Excellent negotiation abilities that allow the president both to make a good case for us in Frankfort and to negotiate the disparate constituencies on campus who vie for resources; frequent and transparent communication to faculty, staff, and students; good listener

45. An academic - not a business person. They need to have the background and experience to understand what a university is like - it is not a business. They need a PhD not some other terminal degree.

46. In this era of fiscal constraint and trans-disciplinary focus, there are few areas of academia that understand university need like that of a University Library. Very little mind has been paid to this area of intellectual endeavor for placing a University President, however, information science as a whole bears influence and impact across all areas of learning. Thus, nominating a University Librarian with political skill is not only innovative, but also displays respect for legacy and future areas of advancement within education. Library leadership today demands an innovative mind, but also provides a non-polarizing support minded influence to all university constituents.

Staff (28 responses)
47. A President with a global perspective would be beneficial to the university. NKU needs someone who understands the diverse and multicultural world we live in and who strongly supports study abroad, international education, globalizing the campus and increasing the number of international students and faculty and the countries they represent. We need to prepare our students to be a part of the larger, global community, and having a President who supports and understands those initiatives would be a step in that direction.

48. I am interested in a candidate that can think 50 years ahead. An individual who can embrace the history of the university but also position it well for the future. A decisive individual who can challenge the status quo. A person with a proven record of embracing inclusiveness and measured results. An individual who understand the value of or our region and the students we attract. Also someone who is positioned to utilize staff in unique ways to build skills and build the organizations capacity.

49. An individual that can lead and inspires confidence in both the external community, Frankfort/political arena and the internal community - students, faculty and staff. Someone who is open and wants feedback from all levels of the internal community. Morale is at an all time low and needs to be addressed from the highest levels. A large portion of low morale is from lack of any substantive raises/increased benefit costs in in the last 10 years, but that is not the only way to improve morale. Needs to be able to think outside the box and encourage executive leadership to do the same versus telling employees if they don't like it here - leave. The atmosphere of a university affects its effectiveness in attracting and retaining students. The next president needs to be able to change the negative atmosphere to a positive one for all members of the community.

50. I know that we talk a lot about transparency, but I don't think we really practice this. I would like to see someone who is truly honest and tells it like it is; truly transparent and doesn't seem to hide anything. We need someone with integrity, and who has the highest standards for ethical and moral behavior. A lot of people will preach these qualities, but then don't live up to them in the real world. We need someone who is going to walk to talk.

51. The ability to relate to staff and faculty on a personal level and not act like an executive.

52. We need someone with compassion and personal charisma, who can speak to anyone, whether it's a VP, the custodian, or a student. At this cultural moment, this may be a tall order, but it would be great to have someone who puts NKU and its future first, the way Dr. Boothe and Dr. Votruba did, rather than thinking primarily about her/his career. It seems to me that when NKU is the first priority, then staff and faculty positions don't seem to be cut so indiscriminantly. 'Id also like to see someone who can work with what is there and improve it, rather than coming in with some 'vision,' that he/she won't be be around to see; and to metaphorically hold hands with a lot more people at plaza level, rather than surrounding herself/himself with acolytes on the 8th floor. It's also imperative that the Board connects more with the institution it represents and asks more direct questions about the low level of morale.

53. Experiencing with student affairs, fundraising experience, ability to connect with all constituents of the university (not just faculty)

54. I think the next president of NKU needs to leave their ego at the door and be open to what works for NKU, not what works for them. Too often decisions were based on what made the previous president look good or what would feed his ego, not what would benefit the campus community. They need to be accountable for their decisions, not blame shift to outside consultant firms. Our next president needs to recognize the efforts of the entire campus community, not just the academic side of the operation, in student success and retention. Studies and numbers show that extracurricular involvement contributes to student engagement, learning outcomes, retention, and success. A president of the university should recognize and embrace that.
55. I believe it is crucial to find someone that is able to breathe life back into the staff of the university. There seems to be so many staff members that feel like they don’t matter and that they are not valued. This atmosphere is not restricted to one department but seems to be in many departments. I recognize that this task is not something that can be solely placed on the shoulders of the president, but the president can, and should set the atmosphere for how he or she expects employees to be treated. I understand that this is a business, and that budgets and money are key components to the success of the university, but the staff are the foundation that keeps this university safe and secure, clean, and in the facilities in working order yet it is the people in these positions that receive the least.

56. I feel that the University needs a president who has experiences in higher education and finance. I feel that the incoming president should be an advocate not only for the students but also for those who are employed by the University, regardless if they are a custodian or vice president of student affairs. The University needs a president who does not “meet a stranger” and enjoys doing things with both staff and students such as lunch in the student union, attending events that celebrate students, and involving him/herself in activities away from the eighth floor.

57. a president that understands the history of NKU; shares the feeling of community; and is employee/people focused.

58. NKU needs someone who is willing to fight for NKU and the propel the university forward. Higher education, in my opinion, is struggling right now. We need an innovator who is able to pull us out of this “slump”.

59. Own academic innovation history or of leading an innovative academic institution--finding more niches set NKU apart; Visionary leader who can channel and manage those individuals, groups, colleges, programs, etc -- who can innovate for them; Marketer who knows how to utilize the media for positive press and to keep our name at the forefront of the region/state; Financial manager who prioritizes well and when to say yes/no and stick to a decision yet knows when to admit mistakes; Excellent communicator with both internal and external constituents; Background of pushing/leading others beyond the status quo; A leader who is visible among the students, faculty and staff and is open to listening to those groups ideas.

60. We need someone who has experience working with lawmakers regarding legislation and funding. We also need someone with the proven ability to fund-raise/friend-raise.

61. Personal Qualities: Friendly, Outgoing, Approachable

62. We need a President who will treat the University Police Department as a real Police Department, which they are, and not as a necessary evil. We need someone who will be open and honest with the Police Department and not someone who will hire outside agencies to investigate alleged criminal activity. We need someone who will be willing to actually visit the Police Department every now and then and get to know the people who work there. President Votruba did these things. President Mearns did not. We need someone like President Votruba.

63. Someone who has skills to deal with morale issues, someone prepared to LISTEN & ANALYZE FIRST, and then make some widespread changes to increase consistency/quality around campus, someone who wants to listen to folks in "boots on the ground" roles about their day to day challenges and can easily connect these to a wider university mission/strategy. I'm hoping this person will understand how to best serve a commuter and adult student population and will advocate for positions such as academic advisors who can be a source of support for students outside of the classroom for both their academic but also social/professional life.

64. Someone who understands what makes our University unique. The private school class sizes at a public school cost philosophy has always described us. More with less is what we’ve been dealing with because of the financial situation of Frankfort but someone who
views the University as a family and appreciates the unique quality our University possess. Someone who can provide strong but caring leadership all the way down the chain of command. Someone that brings together outside new ideas while also respecting the knowledge that is contained within current faculty and staff at the University. Someone who also shows a strong commitment to professional development.

65. I think its very important for a President to be family oriented so that can understand the obstacles and stress that comes along with being a parent. A strong sense of empathy, unbiased and is able to listen to both sides of the story. To have a president that is present and visible in events and gatherings. To exude a presence of approachableness is important to employees so that they can feel at ease and not intimidated in their presence. Charismatic and kind but also be a decision maker that takes their employee’s opinions in consideration. I think its also important for a president to not be cliquish with certain groups, not everyone is in a sorority or fraternity, not everyone is cut out to be an administrator. People in the least paid job to the highest paid job should be treated with the same respect.

66. Someone who understands the culture and history of NKU is important, whether that is someone who has worked here before or has worked at a similar type of university I think it is something that should be a high priority. That leads into the second most important aspect which is that they should come from a university setting. NKU needs someone who knows how a university operates, and comes from the perspective of working at one in order to address the needs of the faculty, staff and students. Now is not the right time to be trying to teach someone from the corporate world to do this job.

67. Empathetic, kind, caring, intelligent, energetic and universally dynamic/charismatic with both academic and administrative experiences (many years of it). Someone who is highly creative and can expand thoughts and ideas outside of NKU's norm. Preferably someone who is about serving others (not narcissistic by nature). NKU has struggled for five years with low morale but we are on the cusp of recovery. We will need someone who can bring the people together and to energize our campus. We need to bring back the team concept model and lose the model of micro-management. We need a President who wants to hear from the experts in each area, not be maneuvered by the goals of only a few people.

68. Someone with actual higher education experience (faculty), rather than a corporate lawyer. We already have legal counsel to guide any potential President. We need someone who understands academic scheduling, tenure and program needs. Perhaps someone who has already been a Provost, Vice Provost or Departmental Chairperson.

69. Strong advocate in Frankfort, PROGRESSIVE thinker and challenges the status quo, supportive and INVOLVED with academics, athletics, and campus groups. President Mearns was always seen at different events around campus and engaging our students. We need to find ways to help NKU continue to carve its own path in the region and help recruit top talent in students, faculty, and staff. This will continue to help strengthen our academic profile and develop new to programs to fill the employment gap in our region. A leader who is able to MOTIVATE and encourage employees and also able to make the TOUGH choices. Lastly, an effective COMMUNICATOR and can clearly define the goal and aspirations of the university and inspire employees to EXECUTE them.

70. Because of the fast pace at which we are expanding our internationalization efforts, the new president should have some familiarization with global educational markets, as well as experience and knowledge regarding creating articulation and partnership agreements with universities abroad. Most importantly, the new president should be someone who is an advocate for our students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, as well as the efforts to recruit and sustain those populations on our campus.

71. Ability to work and connect with a variety of constituents within the campus community and outside of the campus community. Ability to genuinely value, understand, and actively address the needs of all employees at NKU. To be candid, morale on campus, particularly
with staff, is very low. Someone who can increase morale by not just saying they value staff, but by backing their words up with meaningful action, is needed to ensure the success of NKU.

72. I want someone who honestly understands what they are up against in Kentucky. Education on any level is not a high priority in this state and NKU is no exception. He or she needs to understand that no matter how hard they fight and how much they advocate, they will most likely fail in regard to securing the necessary funding to properly service our students, staff, and faculty. I want someone who will come in here and DEMAND that faculty members fall in line with new and innovative strategies to help our students. And those who don't, will be asked to leave. There are no checks and balances when it comes to faculty/staff expectations at NKU. NONE! You can do good or bad work and it really doesn't matter. You are not rewarded or reprimanded. I want someone with no allegiances to this university. Someone with a fresh perspective that won't be afraid to shake things up. Leadership skills, traits... have their place, but leave that generic jargon where it belongs; in Washington!

73. I believe that our new president should have an understand of the compliance environment in which we live, specifically related to student behavior. I hope that we will be able to have a President who is able to balance both the need for compliance with Federal, state and other regulations and the need to maintain student conduct processes as educational, non-legal proceedings.

74. Financial background, desire for transparency

Students (17 responses)

75. Ability to relate to student issues, and especially new incoming Freshman.
76. Tuition is expensive. Especially out of state. So I don't think it's asking too much for next president to require all faculty to prove they can tspeak and write plain English before they're hired. If you knew how many profs on campus can't do either you'd flip. It's so bad some Dept's don't list prof name on schedule until after registration so students can't avoid these profs. So Dept's know it's a problem and don't care. It's all over campus from business to aarts sciences college. Current faculty who can't speak English well should be required to take English speaking classes or something.

77. I believe the best candidate for NKU's president will continue President's Mearn's efforts towards equal funding and progressing NKU as a reputable institution in the region but also nationally.

78. For this class of anthropology I believed I learned more about culture and other people. The teacher was a great teacher she teaches the way I can learn and understand. The course as a whole was great I learned a lot about culture and the ways of culture. the course was great and the teacher was great.

79. good communication with students, proud of the progress NKU has made and hopeful for the future, desire to create more of an on-campus environment for NKU rather than being a commuter campus

80. I think that they should have previous experience similar to that of a university president. I would also want them to be somehow previously affiliated to NKU.

81. They need to visible on campus and approachable. This helps the students know that the president is there for them.

82. Someone who...
   - values diversity and individuality
   - wants to be involved in campus activities
   - is open to constructive criticism and is willing to change things that need improvement
• knows what's important to college students, as well as the challenges we face
takes college students seriously and doesn't treat us like children

83. Since we talked about diversity a lot this past year, someone who is all inclusive or maybe even a president of minority status. Someone who is interactive with students and who is personable

84. Beyond the usual academic qualities, BACKBONE in expectations for critical thinking on the part of faculty and students. Universities are getting a bad name for their failure to do this and NKU has an opportunity to stand apart. We don't need more safe spaces. We need students who have the strength of mind to present their point of view and listen to differing points of view.

85. Creative solution provider

86. The university needs someone who is personable, yet responsible. While I believe that it is important for a president to have a good relationship with students, we really need someone who can handle difficult situations and make decisions that would be difficult for others to make.

87. Overall I think the type of person I want in this position needs to be open-minded to all types of students. NKU is so diverse, if we have a president who is in any form racist, homophobic, transphobic, or anything of the type they should not be considered. Other obvious qualities would be someone who is kind but enforces the rules, someone who is fair, someone who has the best interests of the students and their future's in mind. Another good quality is someone who is involved, I know I definitely wouldn’t want a president who just sat in their office and held meetings rather than being at student events and participating while getting to know the students. Someone who is creative and could provide new ideas and bring new initiatives to the school would be a good choice.

88. Someone young, give a millenial an opportunity to prove themselves. Someone who graduated or at least attended NKU for 2 years. Someone who will address the not-so-nice things about NKU like sexual assault

89. Someone who takes campus sexual assault seriously

90. I think the candidate's first priority should be the students. The faculty and staff are all incredibly important, and should be treated as such. But, the students are the foundation of the University. I think President Mearns did a great job at this, so we will need someone who is just as good if not better. I think I would prefer to possibly have an alum of the university, or somebody who has personal ties to the institution. We are at such a critical time for our University to grow, and I think that we need someone with an insane amount of passion for Norse Nation. Whether they are committed to our athletics program, work to invest money into better wifi and computers in the library, build new programs and build into the faculty and staff, or working to get our spirit wear in more stores, we need someone who understands growth and expansion on all sides. We also need a champion for sexual assault awareness and prevention, and someone who has a ZERO tolerance policy for it.

91. Open-minded and appreciate and respect diversity.

Community Members (3 responses)

92. someone tough but fair, kind, understanding, open and friendly. accessible, and not so cold and distant.

93. STEM leader. Someone that can bring a strong bond related to the science, engineering and technology community. The Greater Cincinnati area is untapped for partnerships related to technology but most candidates won't understand how to make these partnerships a reality. The Universities that can create interdisciplinary partnerships will be those most successful in the future. The private sector wants these types of relationships but many times does not know how to approach University leaders.
94. Integrity. President who supports campus Ministries as intrinsic part of college experience rather than push them to houses off campus with no parking like CSF, Wesley Foundation and Catholic Newman Center or try to quietly buy out Baptist Center and push them off campus as current president has done. Innovative. For instance UC and UL have 14 week semesters rather than 15. Helps decrease carbon foot print, gives students more Summer weeks to work to earn tuition and faculty two more weeks to research. Two more Summer weeks to host conferences in campus to generate income for campus. This is earth week. Eliminating two weeks of classes at nku would be a major step in reducing carbon emissions.

QUESTION: Is there anything else that you think we should know with regard to this search?

Faculty (30 responses)

1. While I understand the need for confidentiality for parts of the search process, I am afraid of waking up one day to an announcement that a new president has been hired that we know nothing about. In order for the candidate to be able to start off on the right foot, I think it is important that we have an opportunity to learn about the different candidates before someone is hired. I am also very concerned about the trend of bringing in leaders from the corporate world who don’t understand academic culture and I think such a candidate would not fit at NKU.

2. Why are we rushing this process? This creates suspicion. Why not wait until Fall term? That way everyone is back on campus.

3. Be as open as you possibly can, especially if you plan to go outside the norms of this kind of search.

4. Just hoping that the entire campus has involvement when it comes to the top 3 or so candidates - much like we do with other large candidate searches.

5. Please don't go to a closed search. Let the faculty be involved.

6. Transparency and making NKU employees believe they are included. In addition, it is important to communicate why, in the first place, we are looking for a new president. What are the causes of President Mearns taking a position else where? Though it is normal in our industry, not all people in our organization understand that and would appreciate a clear statement. Understanding those causes is important for understanding what we need from our next president.

7. I strongly believe that the final candidates must be hosted in open forums. A closed search, in today's political climate with the recent history of our governor and other institutions of higher education - most significantly, with Louisville - will not engender trust between the administration and the students/faculty. We are a university for whom the students are a priority (and I can't believe that is a distinguishing feature - but I believe is has become one) and selecting our president in an open and public process (for the finalists brought to campus) is very important.


9. I think it is vitally important that the finalist candidates have public visits to campus. For a public institution to do a secret search reeks of contempt for all those involved. If someone can't put their name out there as a candidate at NKU, maybe we don't want
them - no matter how good they are. What else are they going to want to hide? Let's show the world that a public search can have a good result.

10. We want an open search,

11. Don't hide the candidates from the public servants they will lead. If you do, they will have great difficulty succeeding. Remember that if the candidate needs or wants secrecy or “privacy” in this search, they are the wrong person for the job. This should be a public search for a public position.

12. I would like to see someone who is sensitive to the unique challenges and opportunities involved in Humanities higher education. It would be nice to have someone who has successful experience dealing with these challenges.

13. I know this is fairly unlikely, but keeping politics out of the decision making process would be greatly welcomed and appreciated. Do what's best for the university, faculty, staff, and students rather than hire someone who is in favor in Frankfort. Please no more lawyers or corporate leaders who have little to no experience in higher education. We need someone who understands education and all its many unique challenges.

14. Make it open. There is no data that suggests that a closed search provides better candidates.

15. Please keep the employees and students of this university in mind while carrying out this search. Seek feedback from as many groups as possible.

16. In case it escaped notice, Geoff, for all of his great qualities, destroyed the morale of the NKU community through hiring, policy, and communication decisions. We need a leader who can try to rebuild some trust and sense of shared mission across campus, while at the same time managing the dismal budgetary situation she or he will inherit.

17. The “Secret Search” where faculty will not ever be able to interact with the candidates directly is a disgrace. The search committee is painfully admin-heavy and faculty light.

18. The fact that the presidential search is happening over the summer behind closed doors only exacerbates our current morale problem which is severe.

19. I hope that the search is as transparent as it is able. I would be very opposed to a president who is from the business sector.

20. Have the search be as transparent as possible. Focus on the human dimension, talk with faculty and staff of the institution where candidates are coming from. Look from within. http://www.chronicle.com/article/You-Dont-Need-a-Search-Firm/148525

21. Faculty need to have access to potential candidates. You have prevented participation from the humanities -- was this on purpose? Secret searches are a sham-- we wonder what SACS will think of the search.

22. The faculty voice is essential! The timeline should be amended so that faculty have authentic input. Since we are transitioning from a top-down administration that seemed more concerned with squeezing additional work from an already overworked faculty (as opposed to seeking to increase the quality of the faculty life), it is essential that THIS search strongly consider the needs and voice of the faculty - even if the timeline must be adjusted.

23. It is absolutely imperative to bring three candidates openly to campus. If we hire someone who insists upon secrecy until the moment of announcement: a) the faculty and staff will never feel that the candidate is a part of the NKU team; and b) the new president will be just as likely to leave us without notice as he or she was to leave the earlier job. We have had terrific presidents in Pres. Mearns and Pres. Vortruba, and both came as a result of searches with three known candidates at the end. The search firm's
request to divert from our past practice (and still the most common way this is done at other universities, especially those using other search firms) should not be accepted.

24. Departments who only have a vested interest in student numbers to boost their revenue are inducing educational demands on other departments via the Provost office. These outside influences are not interested in the educational needs of the students but only the dollar. This needs to stop as it affects faculty and ultimately student moral.

25. I would think most faculty would understand the need for a partially closed/hybrid search, but some of the Regent's grief could have easily been avoided if the composition of the search committee had a higher percentage of faculty representation.

26. I would like to see a candidate who could work toward making NKU a forward looking, inclusive community that works together. The tendency at NKU has always been to foster a kind of cannibalism—in which faculty, departments, and colleges are pitted against each other rather than encouraged to be creative and do good work. The money grubbing and de-emphasis of the liberal arts, while pretending that they are central, only produce feeding frenzies by bottom feeders in the race to the bottom. It is not fair to the students at NKU, and it does not elicit the best from any of the university's employees. Collective discussion and thought might take longer, but drawing on all our strengths would be much more productive than the fiasco of individual interests and top heavy management that now marks NKU.

27. You already know this, but the "hybrid" search process is concerning to a lot of people, particularly faculty. They don't like to feel like they're being left out of the process. I believe the board has NKU's best interests in mind, but it does seem like faculty are rather under-represented on the search committee, particularly when there is a chance that there will be no faculty involvement other than the open forums with the search firm (which were very lightly attended by faculty). The absence of "anyone" from the arts and humanities on the search committee is mentioned frequently. A&S is a huge college—larger than the other colleges "combined"—yet there is only one A&S faculty member (from science—and he is really representing Faculty Senate, not A&S) on the search committee. This exclusion was likely not intentional, but it can be interpreted as sending the message that arts and humanities are not important to the Board or the University. I hope this is helpful.

28. I thing the university has fallen away from an earlier emphasis on community engagement, and I believe that community partnerships keep NKU relevant and necessary to the broader populace. Compete with other academic institutions by strengthening our existing and successful programs that are already engaged in the community and liked by the community. One example is the graduate program in public history...partnering with dozens of area museums and historic sites, getting in the news with fun, human-interest stories, and engaging with the community as a living-learning laboratory, to the benefit of both the community AND the university. That is what NKU is all about and what a new president should fully understand.

29. It is VERY important that candidates get broad access to the various constituencies on campus that they will, if hired, represent during the interview process. If the final phase of the search will not be open, the process for conducting a hybrid search must be clearly articulated to faculty, staff, and members of the university community. I do not believe that a closed search is in the best interest of the president that we will hire, as it will assure that they begin the position with almost no buy-in from faculty.

30. [Comment redacted to protect identity of a prospective candidate].

Staff (14 responses)
31. NKU needs to continue to reflect this diverse world in our administration. The university does not need another old, white, male to lead us. Please consider a candidate with a more multicultural and international background.

32. Keep us informed each step of the way.

33. If the process is closed, which it sounded like it will be, the search committee needs to be aware of all of the concerns of faculty and staff. The selective transparency of the last few years has contributed to the extremely low employee morale. The administration needs to make all employees feel valued and as though we are a team versus inspiring an every man for himself environment (faculty vs staff, division vs division). Our end goal should be the same - educating students for their future. The search committee needs to find a candidate that can help to inspire employees and create the cross divisional teamwork that is needed to make this university a great place for students to succeed.

34. The majority of students, faculty, and staff is female. The Board is not. None of the Presidents has been. Please strongly consider a female candidate as well as a candidate of color. I hope the over-weaning obsession with married candidates or those with children has passed. THANK YOU FOR ASKING FOR INPUT. I NEVER EXPECTED IT.

35. Please continue to maintain the transparency of the search. We have appreciated being heard.

36. The university needs a president that has the ability to recognize what is important, to parents and students alike, when it comes to what makes Northern Kentucky University a choice for them.

37. There needs to be involvement from students, staff, and faculty throughout the presidential search process. This involvement is needed throughout the entire process.....from writing the profile, to reviewing applications, interviewing and making an offer. Keep the campus community involved.

38. Perhaps give a monthly update on progress via email.

39. So far the way that the search has been wonderful. Transparency is very vital and key as it can happen throughout the process. I feel that it's vital that the entire committee have a clear idea of what our university is. Who we want to be and what our mission is. Focus on our core mission and our needs. Streamline our operations.

40. This should be done as a public search! The Faculty, Staff and Students have a right to be involved in the search process. I understand that may hinder some of the candidates from participating but we should want a candidate who is willing to do whatever it takes to get this job, not some corporate person who is hedging their bets on other jobs. As a public university the only ethical and fair way to handle this search is to make it open!

41. The staff need to be included in this process. They need to hear from the candidates. This should not be a top secret hiring mission by only a few people. If you get buy in from the people from the beginning, you have support for the new person from the beginning. Our new President hopefully will deserve that support.

42. Someone who can motivate and engender morale for staff and faculty. We're bleeding personnel and good faculty due to less than equitable pay and increasing benefits costs. This is having an impact on student retention as students crave stability. I'm not sure the university will support another corporate number cruncer for President. We need someone who will commit for at least six or seven years and not use NKU as a stepping stone to a bigger university. Right now, NKU feels like a sinking ship and all the smart individuals have already jumped overboard! Academic experience is a must.

43. I strongly urge the committee to interview an equal number of male and female candidates for the position, and to include those who represent diverse backgrounds. Most of the finalists for higher positions at this university over the last few years have been white and male.
44. Thank you for your consideration.

**Students (8 responses)**

45. Hope they will be involved with student activities, be present at various events, and able to interact with all students.
46. Next president should eat in cafeteria at table with other students at least once a week and Talk to them.
47. They should be passionate about wanting NKU to grow in academics, arts, athletics, and reputation. #ontherise
48. Someone who will be there for the students, fight for more funding, and will also not raise tuition
49. Try to avoid the "politically correct" person. Look for someone who is not afraid to look outside of the box; look for someone who believes in hard work—for both himself and the students.
50. Preferably someone who is familiar with NKU to continue to help us grow rapidly so we do not retract in progress from an outsider. But as long as the person is easy to adapt to new situations we’ll be fine as a community
51. Yes, please fire the searching agency. If you use a research/search agency they will recommend a president, if this president gets hired who do you think this president is going to use when he needs additional research to complete a project. He will use the agency that helped him get the position. Please dump the agency.
52. I would love to see more students on the official search committee. I noticed that there is only one, and I believe she is a freshman. I think that it is absolutely ABSURD that there is not more student representation on this committee. There is absolutely NO WAY one single students can represent an entire University of students. We need to involve a group of student leaders, if not at least one or two people from each grade, in these decisions. This choice is just as important for the students and their future as it is for the faculty, staff, and Board of Regents. I think that a change to have more people on this committee is a non-negotiable. I think you would find that more students are excited and participatory in this process if this happens. I would LOVE nothing more than to see more students on the search committee!! PLEASE make this happen.

**Community Members (3 responses)**

53. The next administration has to do something about income disparity within the university. The top 1% of administration cannot continue to gain wealth while the bottom echelons barely make enough to not qualify for food stamps and welfare. Each level of administration should be tied within a certain percentage of the level above and below it. That way everyone receives a fair equitable share of the pie. Moral on campus is at an all time low. Everyone is in fear for losing their job or being outsourced. Faculty and staff need to feel safe and secure, not fearful. This is not an environment conducive to productivity and creativity.
54. The best candidate would be a local person. Someone that has 100% NKU interest and success at heart and will not be moving on to advance his/her career. We need a President to stay for 5-10+ years if possible.
55. Next president should be aware of political climate in Frankfort and be able to successfully negotiate it. Should also be aware and respectful of conservative values of the communities we serve in order to fund raise and friend raise for nku. Should attend and stay to the end of as many home athletic events as possible.