

Strategy Steering Committee Update

Ken Liddle, Chief Compliance and Privacy Officer
Jimmy Broughton, Director of Government Affairs



Strategy Steering Committee



Jimmy Broughton
Director of Government
Affairs



Matt Clifford
Assoc. Vice President for Campus
Life and Dean of Students



Meagan Coughlin
Executive Director, Issues
Management



Brett Eaton
Vice President for University
Marketing & Communication



Amanda Griffith
Professor & Senior Associate Dean
for Academic Planning



Ken Liddle
Chief Compliance &
Privacy Officer



Mary Lucal
Vice President for Human
Resources



Nathaniel Lynch
Director, Center for Immigration
Services and Support



Dina Marty
Interim Vice President & General
Counsel



Marnie M. Matthews
Senior Associate Vice President,
Finance and Investments



Kim McAllister
Vice Provost for Research,
Scholarly Inquiry
& Creative Activity



Matthew Phillips
Teaching Professor WFUSB



Garth Regan
Assoc. Vice President Federal
Affairs, Advocate



Kristina Ward
Compliance and Policy
Specialist & SSC Coordinator

Purpose of the SSC

- WFU's central coordination group for monitoring, assessing, and responding to rapidly evolving federal and state policy developments.
- Bringing together representatives from key administrative and academic areas, the Committee enables the University to evaluate potential impacts, coordinate institutional responses, and provide timely, consistent guidance to campus stakeholders.



Topics Discussed by the SSC in 2026 (so far)

1. Civil Rights, DEI, Title VI

- a. Executive Orders, Enforcement, and the DOJ Guidance

2. Admissions

- a. Race-conscious admissions and “proxies”
- b. Expanding medical and law school scrutiny
- c. Expansion of required IPEDS data

3. Research and Research Security

- a. Proposed political oversight of federal grants
- b. Research security audits
- c. Funding bans, expanding prohibition lists

4. Immigration and Visa

- a. Elimination of Duration of Status (D/S)
- b. Mass visa suspensions & travel bans
- c. Proposed changes for skilled workers, H-1B restrictions and fees

5. Financial aid

- a. New Earnings Accountability Rules (STATS)
- b. Graduate student loan caps
- c. Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) disqualifications

Secretary McMahon's "Call to Action"

A strategic pivot from prescriptive mandates to an institution-led transparency model.

University presidents are challenged to publish a clear, public statement by the end of 2026.

WFU is reviewing the "Call" but has not made any decisions about participation at this time.

Seven Thematic Areas

01

Transparency & Merit

Ensuring clear criteria and merit-based decisions in admissions.

02

Free Speech & Inquiry

Protecting debate and viewpoint exchange on campus.

03

Intellectual Pluralism

Addressing viewpoint gaps in academic fields.

04

Affordability & Value

Reviewing ROI, graduation rates, and full cost of attendance.

05

Academic Rigor & AI

Examining grade inflation and responsible AI instruction.

06

Foreign Influence

Ensuring full disclosure and strengthening research security.

07

American Interests

Aligning programs and research with national security and workforce needs.

International Collaborations & Research Security

Oversight & Scope

A New Regulatory Era

Shift in Oversight: Federal research oversight has transitioned from self-regulation to a framework of strict prohibition and mandatory risk assessment.

Regulatory Scope: Rules now regulate broader research relationships (collaborators, appointments, publications) rather than just the funding itself.

Liability: Both institutions and PIs are liable; undisclosed affiliations can threaten funding and reputation.

Federal Focus

Key Agency Mandates (2026)

NIH: Stricter definitions and mandatory prior approvals are required for foreign co-authorships or collaborations.

DoD/DoW: Expanded Risk Matrix now covers 13+ restricted lists alongside retrospective co-authorship reviews.

NSF/DoW Sec. 1286: Strict prohibition on collaborations with listed foreign entities, often triggering export control licensing.

Iran Sanctions

License Suspensions

Effective August 24, 2026, OFAC suspended the General License academic institutions use to engage in exchanges, recruit students and faculty resident in Iran, or administer certain exams.

Consequently, all current Iranian activities should be identified and discussed with the Office of General Counsel as soon as possible.

No new activities should be undertaken with individuals in Iran without review by OGC.

Key Takeaway

If you have sponsored research or activities involving Iran, please proactively engage the **Research Security Team** (researchsec@wfu.edu) at the earliest stages.

Proposed Changes to OMB Uniform Guidance

The Baseline

Since Late 2014

The OMB Uniform Guidance has established the standard operational rules for federal research funding.

Serves as the core governing framework and regulatory guidance for federal grants across all participating agencies.

Proposed Shifts

Published May 29, 2026

A newly published rule marks a major strategic shift in how federal grants are reviewed:

- Adds **political discretion** to a “pre-review” process prior to any peer review.
- Grants **broad authority** to agencies to terminate grants based on "national interest" changes.
- Limits agency flexibility once OMB rules are adopted.

WFU Response

Advocacy & Comments

WFU actively engaged in the feedback process to address these changes.

Submitted comments through **ACE** and **NAICU**, and was included in joint submissions by **Advocate Health** and the **WFU School of Medicine**. The agency received nearly **500,000 comments**.

Congressional Activity

The House returns from August Recess next week and the Senate returns on September 14

Continuing Resolution

Beyond September 30

Reconciling the CR to fund the federal government.

- House opposes Senate language delaying ban on hemp-derived products.
- House opposes Senate language delaying changes to OMB's Uniform Guidance (Dec 11).

Key Legislation

First Week of Session

Senate vote scheduled on the Protect College Sports Act.

The initial timing remains a priority, but emerging negotiations on a separate cryptocurrency bill could push this schedule back.

Fall Timeline

October & Beyond

Congress will be out of session for the month of October.

Expect an active Lame Duck Session following the midterm election results as pending priorities are rushed through.



Communications

- SSC Contacts
 - Jimmy Broughton, Director of Government Affairs, govaffairs@wfu.edu
 - Ken Liddle, Chief Compliance and Privacy Officer, liddlek@wfu.edu
- Website
 - govaffairs.wfu.edu/updates/