

UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA STAFF SENATE BYLAWS

I. PURPOSE

The Staff Senate is designated by the University President as the official body representing University employees at the University of West Florida, and is the primary forum to which employees may express matters of general concern. The function of the Staff Senate is to serve as a two-way channel of communication for flow of information concerning matters of interest to and from University employees. Specific responsibilities are listed in the Staff Senate Charter.

II. MEMBERSHIP

A. Composition-The Staff Senate is composed of sufficient voting members elected from various university areas so as to ensure proportionate representation across campus, and will be referred to as Senators. The President, or designee, and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources, or designee, serve as non-voting, ex officio members.

B. Eligibility-Eligible individuals include any staff employee who has been employed full time a minimum of one calendar year.

C. Responsibilities of Staff Senators

1. It is the duty of Senators of the Staff Senate to uphold the purpose, charter and bylaws of the Staff Senate.
2. Senators will vote on matters brought before the Staff Senate.
3. Senators are encouraged to volunteer to serve on university committees.
4. Senators will serve on at least one Staff Senate committee each term year.
5. Senators will maintain full-time employee status.
6. Senators will represent employees from their respective areas.
7. Senators will seek opinions from the constituents they serve on pertinent University issues.
8. Senators will be accountable to the Staff Senate, constituents, and others with whom the Staff Senate works.
9. Senators will establish lines of communication with staff in their respective areas in the most suitable manner as decided by the Senators.
10. Senators are expected to attend monthly Staff Senate meetings, standing committee meetings, university committee meetings, and ad hoc committee meetings when assigned.
11. It is the responsibility of the Senator to immediately notify the Secretary regarding absences from Staff Senate meetings and provide the name of a proxy 24 hours in advance.

12. A Senator having three unexcused absences within one term year from scheduled Staff Senate meetings will be required to resign and via Special Election, the Senate will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.
13. Senators who resign may not be nominated or hold a seat for the remainder of their original term. Senators who desire a Staff Senate seat after resignation must wait until their original term has expired.
14. Each Senator shall communicate and discuss with their constituent's information from University administration and upcoming staff events.
15. Senators will bring forth general concerns voiced by constituents to the Staff Senate.
16. Each Senator should advocate for the interest and needs of UWF Staff.

D. Nominations and Elections

1. Staff Senate terms shall be staggered, such that each Senator will serve a two-year term.
2. Term limits of Officers should be staggered so no more than half of the Executive Board will roll off within the same year.
3. Election Procedures
 - a. Staff Senators rolling off will be notified and nominations for new Senators will be solicited during March. Each constituent within an area may nominate themselves or someone else to be a Senator. The nomination must be acknowledged by the nominator and the nominee in order for the nomination to be considered.
 - b. In the event two or more eligible staff members are nominated to fill a particular area's vacancy, an election via secure electronic ballot will take place. The individual with the majority of votes will be elected Senator.
 - c. In the event no nominations are received from a particular area, any eligible staff member interested in becoming a Senator may be considered.
 - d. Nominations will be shared with the Staff Senate during the **May** meeting.
 - e. New Senators will be voted in during the **June** meeting. New Senators will attend the June meeting and begin their official term with the July meeting.
4. In the event a senate member should leave the University, resign from their senate position, or is otherwise unable to fulfill their duties, a special election shall be held within the particular area. Thereafter, the same procedures will be implemented as in an annual election within thirty days. If the vacancy occurs within two months of the original election then the senate will consider the person with the next highest number of votes as the replacement, should an election between two or more eligible candidates have occurred. The Senate may appoint a temporary Senator with full voting privileges to serve until an election can be held.

E. Terms of Appointment

1. A term shall be defined as a two-year period effective July 1 of the elected year.

2. Term limit is defined as two consecutive terms. After a one term absence, an individual may seek election again.
3. Senate members who transition from one area of the college to another will serve the remainder of their term as the representative of their original area.

F. Representation

Representation will be based on demographic numbers for the geographic areas of the University. The Supervisor of Elections will maintain current numbers to ensure equality of representation across campus. Campus representation will be reviewed annually in March, in order to facilitate upcoming elections. The Supervisor of Elections will update representations to the Communications Officer.

III. OFFICERS

A. Composition-The officers of the Senate will be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Supervisor of Elections, Communications Officer, and Senator-at-Large. The term of office will be two years, with the possibility of two consecutive terms. with the exception of the Secretary, Communications Officer, and the Treasurer. The Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Communications officer may continue at the discretion of the Senate.

B. Election Procedures for Officers

1. Senators are eligible to hold officer positions once they have served a year or more on Staff Senate. Previous service as an Officer or Senator on the Staff Senate qualifies an individual for service as an Executive Officer. If no eligible Senators will accept an Executive Officer position, then a current Senator with other qualifying experience will be considered.
2. A slate of officers will be submitted at the **April** meeting by the Supervisor of Elections; additional names may be submitted by Senators. The election for the new officers will be conducted during the **May** meeting.
3. Before a nominee's name can be submitted for nomination, prior approval from the nominee must be obtained. If only one person is nominated for an office, the nominee will be chosen for that position by acclamation, and no election will be held.

C. Responsibilities of Officers

1. President
 - a. Presides over all meetings of the Senate and Executive Committee.
 - b. Appoints the Chair of all standing and ad hoc committees of the Senate and submits nominations for recommendation for University committees to the UNIVERSITY President.
 - c. Serves as spokesperson for the Senate, serves as the liaison to the Faculty Senate, and represents the Senate at University, administrative, and other meetings.
 - d. Signs all contracts on the Staff Senate's behalf.
 - e. Casts final vote in the grievance process for Emergency or Scholarship funds.

- f. Request written resignation from Senators with three unexcused absences within one term year.
 - g. Attends all Faculty Senate meetings and represents the Staff Senate in a professional manner.
 - h. Provides monthly reports to the Staff Senate regarding information obtained at Faculty Senate meetings.
 - i. Attends monthly meetings with the University President.
 - j. Assures that Staff Senate meetings are conducted according to the Bylaws or Robert's Rules of Order in cases where procedures are not specified.
2. Vice President
- a. Assumes the duties of the Staff Senate President with full authority in the President's absence.
 - b. Serves as principal assistant to the President and performs other such duties as associated with this office.
 - c. Attends University meetings as a representative of the Staff Senate.
 - d. Serves on University committees at the University President's or Staff Senate's request.
 - e. Fulfills any term vacated by the Staff Senate President.
 - f. Assures that Staff Senate meetings are conducted according to the Bylaws or Robert's Rules of Order in cases where procedures are not specified.
3. Treasurer
- a. Responsible for all monies received and disbursed in relation to Staff Senate accounts with approval of the Senate or President.
 - b. Presents quarterly reports of the Staff Senate's accounts at the monthly meetings.
 - c. Maintains records and reports of the Staff Senate's budget.
4. Secretary
- a. Serves as recording secretary for all regular and special meetings of the Staff Senate.
 - b. Publishes and distributes meeting agenda and minutes to Staff Senate members, the Faculty Senate office, and Special Collections at the John C. Pace Library five business days prior to monthly meetings.
 - c. Maintains an original file of all meeting agenda, minutes and handouts.
 - d. Keeps official attendance records of all meetings and informs Staff Senate President of unexcused absences.
 - e. Reserves a room for all established Senate meetings. Proposes meetings with pertinent information as a reminder to senators and to help track attendance/proxies.
 - f. Sends talking points to University President five days prior to the monthly Staff Senate meetings.
 - g. Schedules and confirms monthly Staff Senate, Executive Board, and University President meetings.
5. Supervisor of Elections
- a. Initiates, supervises, and tabulates the results of all Staff Senate elections using the guidelines established in Section IID (Nominations and Elections) & Section IIIB

(Election Procedures for Officers) including University standing committee vacancies using guidelines established in Section IV.

b. Maintains records of all election results.

c. Prepares and maintains the official membership roster of the Staff Senate.

6. Communications Officer

a. Responsible for matters of public relations, including dissemination of information items as may be directed by vote of the Staff Senate.

b. Manages and maintains Staff Senate website content.

c. Serves as liaison of Staff Senate events to UWF Institutional Communications and External Relations.

7. Senator-at-Large

a. Represent and communicate the general interest and concerns of Staff Senate members to the Executive Board.

b. Assume responsibilities of other officers as needed.

IV. COMMITTEES

The appointment of all Senators on internal Staff Senate committees will be subject to vote of the Senate. Each standing and ad hoc committee will include at least one current Senator, with the Staff Senate President or designee serving as a non-voting ex-officio member. The Staff Senate Executive Committee will nominate individuals (with their approval) or Senators may nominate themselves for appointment at the **July** meeting of the Senate, with the approvals taking place at the **August** meeting.

Under direction of the Supervisor of Elections, the Staff Senate will nominate individuals (with their approval) for appointment by the University President to University Standing Committees at the **June** meeting. The President will forward the names of the nominees to the University President, or their designee, for approval of appointment. All employees representing Staff on University Standing Committees will report to the Staff Senate, as appropriate, relating to the activities of the committees. The Staff Senate may provide input to UWF Standing Committees through the employee representatives. Nominations will not be limited to Staff Senate members but open to all university employees.

A. Executive Committee

1. Comprised of the Staff Senate Officers and one at-large member. The at-large member will be nominated from the floor and will be elected from Senate. The election will be conducted during the Staff Senate's May meeting.

2. Chaired by the Staff Senate President.

3. Meets prior to monthly Staff Senate meetings, or as needed, to establish the agenda and to discuss recommendations to the Staff Senate on matters of specific natures.

4. Makes decisions regarding Staff Senate issues or activities in the event an emergency meeting of the Staff Senate is not feasible.

B. Standing Committees

1. Each committee will be empowered to carry out a distinct mission of the Staff Senate's business.
2. Each committee will be formally chartered by majority vote of the Staff Senate's membership. The Charter shall take the general form of other University committee charters and will be reviewed by the Staff Senate as needed.
3. The Chair or a representative from each standing committee will report on the conduct of the committee's activities at the monthly meetings of the Staff Senate.

C. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees will be established by the Staff Senate by majority vote or appointed by the Staff Senate President for a specific purpose, with a limited working duration.

V. MEETINGS

A. Scheduling

1. The Staff Senate will hold one regularly scheduled meeting each month during the calendar year. Special meetings may be called by the President or by the Vice President at the request of the majority of the Staff Senate. Notification of special meetings shall be sent to all members of the Senate at least three (3) workdays prior to such meetings. The President may cancel regularly scheduled meetings if no agenda items are submitted.
2. An agenda will be distributed to the members of the Senate at least three working days prior to a meeting or at least one (1) week in the event of an election.

B. Attendance

1. All meetings of the Staff Senate shall be open to any member of the University community, the public, and visitors who may be invited by the Staff Senate. A person who is not a Staff Senate member may speak by invitation, or by recognition of the Staff Senate President.
2. All Senators are expected to attend each scheduled meeting and all special meetings called by the President of the Staff Senate. In the event it becomes impossible for a Senator to attend a meeting, it will be the Senator's responsibility to schedule a proxy to attend and to inform the Staff Senate Secretary of the pending change 24 hours in advance unless an emergency occurs.
3. Proxies may not be current members of the Staff Senate.

C. Order of Business

The general order of business shall proceed as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Administrative Reports
3. Approval of Minutes and Treasury Report
4. Committee Reports
5. Old Business

6. New Business
7. Open Forum
8. Adjournment

VI. OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. A majority (half of the membership plus one) of the Senate members (or their proxies) shall constitute a quorum. The Staff Senate may make or amend by a majority vote such operating policies and procedures as it deems necessary for the effective discharge of its responsibilities.
2. Voting shall be by voice or by show of hands, though any Senator present may demand a roll call or a written vote on any motion on the floor.
3. A proxy shall be allowed only if and when the Secretary receives a written statement from the absent Senator before the meeting is started. Notification by e-mail shall constitute a written statement.
4. The presiding officer may exercise the right to vote in case of a tie. If the officer decides not to exercise the right to vote, the motion is not approved.
5. Any decisions concerned with and resulting from items not listed on the agenda must be approved by the majority.
6. Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) will apply in cases not specified in the Staff Senate's operating policies and procedures.

VII. BUDGET

The budget for the Senate primarily consists of operating expenses and other special funds as designated. Budgetary needs of the Senate not covered in these categories will be addressed by the University President or designee.

VIII. BYLAWS

A. Adoption

Adoption of the bylaws shall be made at any Staff Senate meeting by affirmative vote of a majority of the membership, provided that members are given a minimum of ten business days' notice prior to the meeting.

B. Amendments

Amendments to the bylaws may be proposed for consideration at a subsequent meeting by a member of the Staff Senate and adopted by majority vote of the membership.

Approved by the Staff Senate on June 8, 2010.

Approved by the Staff Senate on November 13, 2012.

Approved by the Staff Senate on May 10, 2016.

Approved by the Staff Senate on April 9, 2019.

Approved by the Staff Senate on January 9, 2024.

Approved by the Governance Committee:
February 1, 2024

Approved by the Faculty Senate:
February 9, 2024

Approved by the Administration

DocuSigned by:

Martha Saunders

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University President

02/12/2024

Date