

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
STAFF COUNCIL
BYLAWS**

DIVISION I. COMPOSITION AND ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

ARTICLE 1. REAPPORTIONMENT

- Section 1. The Election Committee shall request from the Department of Human Resources lists by apportionment categories of permanent full-time Staff of the University who have been employed for at least one year. Faculty members shall not be included in the Division apportionment categories. The request shall be made in February of each year.
- Section 2. The number of elected representatives apportioned to each category shall be based on an approximate ratio of one representative for each forty-four (44) full-time Staff positions in that category.
- Section 3. The Election Committee shall annually review the number of employees within each apportionment category to verify correct representation.
- Section 4. Members who changed Division categories shall complete their terms as a representative of the category from which they were originally elected.

ARTICLE 2. ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. The Election Committee shall prepare an Interest Inquiry Survey to be sent one month prior to elections in order to determine the names to appear on the election ballots. This survey will state the duties of the Staff Council Representative and term they would serve if elected. The survey will be dated in such a manner as to allow sufficient time to receive, respond, and return it in time for ballots to be prepared in accordance with Division I, Article 2, Sections 2 and 3 of the Staff Council Bylaws.
- Section 2. Only positive responses shall be listed on the Interest Inquiry Survey. If a Division category does not receive a sufficient number of positive responses for a complete ballot, then all names shall be listed on that Division category ballot. A notation of explanation shall be made on the official ballot for that category where all names are listed.

- Section 3. The Election Committee shall prepare a separate ballot of eligible employees by apportionment categories according to the responses from the Interest Inquiry Survey. Ballots, in accordance with the appropriate apportionment category, shall be sent the first week of April to each staff member for selection of new Council members. A link will be included that will allow staff members to cast their vote online.
- Section 4. Ballots shall be submitted to the Chair of the Election Committee within ten working days from date of distribution. Persons receiving the largest number of votes within each apportionment category shall serve on the Council.
- Section 5. Staff members elected to serve shall be called by a member of the Election Committee and shall be given five working days to accept membership. If a person declines membership, the person receiving the next largest number of votes shall be called and given five working days to accept.
- Section 6. The Election Committee shall notify the Staff Council President of the election results.
- Section 7. The Length of Term for members of the Council is addressed in Division II, Article 2, Section 1 of the Constitution.

ARTICLE 3. VACANCIES

- Section 1. With approval of the Council, the Staff Council President shall appoint a staff member from the appropriate apportionment category to fill the unexpired vacant term. In the event that the Division category has no more remaining candidates, the Staff Council President may fill the unexpired term with an At-large member who holds the next highest tally of votes from all of the other categories. Appointees who fill an unexpired term of less than eighteen (18) months shall be eligible for membership in the next regular election. Appointees who fill an unexpired term of eighteen (18) months or more shall be eligible for re-election after a period of one year's absence from the Council.

ARTICLE 4. ABSENCES

- Section 1. Within a one-year period beginning with the organizational meeting in July, a Council member who fails to attend two regularly scheduled meetings without supplying a written proxy as outlined in

Division I, Article 5, Section 1 of the Bylaws shall be notified in writing by the Staff Council President that the member's seat will be declared vacant after the third absence. After the member's third absence, the Staff Council President will notify the Council member the seat has been declared vacant and the procedures in Division I, Article 3, Section 1 of the Bylaws shall be followed.

Section 2. Within a one-year period beginning with the organizational meeting in July, a Council member who fails to attend four regularly scheduled meetings with or without supplying a written proxy shall be notified in writing by the Staff Council President that the member's seat will be declared vacant in the event of the fifth absence. After the member's fifth absence, the procedures in Division I, Article 3, Section 1 of the Bylaws shall be followed.

Section 3. The Staff Council President may recommend to the Council that the absence be excluded from the count as described in Division I, Article 4, Sections 1 and 2 of the Bylaws when the absence occurs as the result of an extreme circumstance and is beyond the control of the Council member's ability.

ARTICLE 5. PROXIES

Section 1. Good Faith effort should be exercised in obtaining a proxy from the Staff Council member's Division category or, if none such is available, from other categories. In extreme situations, a current Council member may proxy for ONLY one fellow Council member which would count as two votes.

ARTICLE 6. AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. In addition to regular Staff Council membership, the Staff Council President shall also extend an auxiliary membership to each non--University (i.e., outsourced) company operating on the University campus. Each outsourced company may, if they so desire, appoint one (1) employee to serve as an auxiliary member of Staff Council.

Section 2. The Staff Council President may also extend a non-voting membership to the following entities: Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, Graduate Student Senate, and Association of Office Professionals.

Section 3. Auxiliary representatives may participate in Council discussions and bring issues before the Council, but may not vote, serve on Standing Committees, or serve as an Officer of the Council. The

Staff Council President may - if in the best interest of the Staff Council and University - invite auxiliary members to serve on Ad Hoc Committees as deemed appropriate.

Section 4. The length of term for auxiliary members shall be left to the discretion of the appointing outsourced unit.

DIVISION II. OFFICERS

ARTICLE 1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The Officers Nomination Committee shall receive the membership list for the new year from the Staff Council President. The Committee shall follow procedures as outlined in Division V, Article 2 of the Bylaws.

Section 2. The ballot shall be presented to the membership, including Executive Committee which is comprised of the Staff Council President, Staff Council President-Elect, Secretary and Secretary-Elect, at the June organizational meeting and shall include a space for write-in candidates for each office.

Section 3. The Election Committee shall collect and tabulate ballots and report results to the Staff Council President who will then announce the results to the Council membership.

Section 4. In the event of a vacancy of an elected office, other than the Staff Council President, the Officers Nomination Committee shall conduct a special election.

Section 5.

ARTICLE 2. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The Staff Council President shall:

1. Provide general leadership over all business of the Council and enforce the Constitution and Bylaws;
2. Serve as the presiding officer at all meetings of the Council;
3. Appoint necessary Ad Hoc or Special Committees and designate chairs;

4. Serve as an ex-officio (non-voting) member of all committees of the Council;
5. Appoint a Parliamentarian;
6. Appoint a Council member to serve in the absence of the Secretary and Secretary-Elect;
7. Compile and submit an annual report to the Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPFA);
8. Serve as a non-voting member of the Staff Council except in the case of a tie at which time he/she may vote;
9. Contact non-University (i.e., outsourced) companies operating on the USM campus and invite them to appoint an Auxiliary member to Staff Council as defined in Division I, Article 6 of the Bylaws; make other appointments as business may require; and
10. Perform other duties as required.

Section 2. The Staff Council President-Elect shall:

1. Serve as the presiding officer in the absence of the Staff Council President;
2. Assist the Staff Council President in the execution of his/her duties;
3. Serve as financial officer and signature authority for the Council budget and maintain all financial records;
4. Coordinate the Council's reapportionment as designated in Division II, Article 1, of the Constitution;
5. Serve as liaison to the University Faculty Senate;
6. Succeed the Staff Council President in office; and
7. Perform other duties as required.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

1. Record the minutes of Council meetings;

2. Present the minutes of previous meetings, as requested, and record any changes as approved by the Council;
3. Take roll call of members and proxies, and record members present and absent at all meetings of the Council;
4. Inform the Council when a quorum is present;
5. Preserve and maintain all official documents of the Council;
6. Preside in the absence of the Staff Council President and Staff Council President-Elect;
7. Maintain an inventory of materials belonging to the Council;
8. Archive materials pertaining to committee activity for the current year in electronic format for historical reference; and
9. Perform other duties as required.

Section 4. The Secretary-Elect shall:

1. Notify Council members of meetings;
2. Distribute the meeting agenda, proposals, and the minutes of each meeting to all Council members and other individuals as directed by the Staff Council President;
3. Serve in the absence of the Secretary;
4. Succeed the Secretary in office;
5. Serve as Chair of the Election Committee;
6. Assist Secretary in maintaining an inventory of materials belonging to the Council; and
7. Perform other duties as required.

Section 5. The Parliamentarian shall:

1. Maintain a copy of the most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, by which the Council shall conduct meetings;

2. Interpret *Robert's Rules of Order* as requested by the Staff Council President; and
3. Serve as an ex-officio member of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee.

Section 6. The Immediate Past-Staff Council President shall:

1. Serve in an advisory capacity to the Staff Council President and the Council;
2. Serve as the Council representative to the Executive Cabinet;
 - a. If the office of Immediate-Past President becomes vacant before the December meeting of the Staff Council, the Staff Council President should, after consulting with the University President, inquire with past presidents of Staff Council, beginning with the most recent and moving backward, a willingness to serve out the term and be appointed to serve the duties of Immediate-Past President. If there is no available past president to serve in that role, the President would fulfill the duties of serving on the University President's Cabinet.
 - b. If the office of Immediate-Past President becomes vacant after the December meeting of the Staff Council, it shall remain vacant until the end of the term. Duties of the Immediate-Past President will then be divided among remaining elected officers of Staff Council for the remainder of the term with the President of the Council serving as the representative on the University President's Cabinet.
3. Perform other duties as required.

DIVISION III. STANDING COMMITTEES

ARTICLE 1. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the Council.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Review and approve the annual budget;
2. Review the Council website at least annually;
3. Review Council agenda items as submitted by Council members;
4. Formulate the agenda for meetings;
5. Set the calendar of activities for the year;
6. Guide the work of the Council;
7. Determine and implement appropriate responses/actions on other situations as needed or as directed by the Council;
8. Compile materials in electronic format which document committee activity for the current year to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference;
9. Meet monthly with VPFA and Associate Vice President for Human Resources; and
10. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 2. SALARIES AND BENEFITS COMMITTEE

Section 1. Members of the Salaries and Benefits Committee shall be appointed by the Staff Council President.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Study and review, as needed, the salary and benefits package of the University as related to Staff and make recommendations to Council for further study;
2. Study and make recommendations on agenda items as assigned by the Executive Committee;
3. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
4. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 3. UNIVERSITY RELATIONS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Section 1. Members of the University Relations and Cultural Diversity Committee shall be appointed by the Staff Council President.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Strive to increase the morale of the University Staff;
2. Study and make recommendations on agenda items as assigned by the Executive Committee;
3. Promote networking events and Staff development workshops offered by campus entities to encourage professional development of Staff.
4. Investigate avenues to enhance communication and relationships with all areas of the University and its activities;
5. Review nominations and select recipients of the Staff Council Service Award. The deadline for nomination of this award shall be April 1st, with the award being presented at the June meeting. One award shall be presented from the Hattiesburg Campus and one award from the Gulf Coast Campuses;
6. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
7. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 4: CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

Section 1. Members of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall be appointed by the Staff Council President.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Review and update the Council Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules annually;
2. Study and make recommendations on agenda items as assigned by the Executive Committee;

3. Receive written recommendations from the Staff for revisions to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules;
4. Draft recommended amendments, bylaws, and standing rules;
5. Present recommendations to the Council for approval as prescribed in Division VII of the Constitution
6. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
7. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 5: LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Members of the Legislative Committee shall be appointed by the Staff Council President.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Serve as liaison with the University's registered Lobbyist;
2. Study and review legislative items;
3. Coordinate annual meetings with Legislators;
4. Keep Council informed on Legislative matters;
5. Investigate avenues to enhance communications and relationships with Legislators;
6. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
7. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 6. TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Section 1. Members of the Technology Committee will be appointed by the Staff Council President.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Be responsible for the Staff Council web page;
2. Represent Council issues on the University Technology/Security Committees;
3. Study and make recommendations on action items as assigned by the Executive Committee;
4. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
5. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 7. SCHOLARSHIP/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Scholarship/Professional Development Committee shall consist of a minimum of three members (maintaining an odd number) who shall be appointed by the Staff Council President.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Review and revise the scholarship application as needed, and determine the number of scholarships to be awarded based on the available funds. The due date for the applications will be determined by the USM Foundation (or applicable scholarship office);
2. Call for applications for the fall and spring scholarships for the next academic year at the October meeting;
3. Present the recipients of the current academic year's fall scholarships at a fall meeting. The recipients of the current academic year's spring scholarships shall be presented at a spring meeting;
4. Review submitted applications; select the recipients from the pool of eligible applicants; and notify the Executive Committee of its selections. Present members of the Staff Council are not eligible to receive a Staff Council Scholarship; and
5. Notify the selected recipients of the Committee's decision and ensure Staff Council President makes the award for disbursement of funds to each recipient within the USM Foundation's GO scholarship system;

6. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
7. Provide professional development opportunities for University staff.
8. Provide funding support for staff to travel in order to participate in professional development activities.
9. Review and revise the travel stipend application as needed and determine the number of stipends to be awarded based on the available funds.
10. Review submitted proposals and applications; select the recipients from the pool of eligible applicants; and notify the Executive Committee of its selections. Staff Council members are eligible to participate; however, staff council officers and scholarship/professional development committee members are NOT eligible to participate.
11. Notify the selected recipients of the Committee's decision.
12. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 8. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

- Section 1. Members of the Communications Committee shall be appointed by the Staff Council President.
- Section 2. The Committee shall:
1. Keep Staff members in respective Division categories apprised of issues and concerns presented at Staff Council meetings;
 2. Report issues and concerns of Staff members in respective Division categories to Staff Council;
 3. Distribute the Staff Council Survey;
 4. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
 5. Perform other duties as required.

ARTICLE 9. FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

- Section 1. Members of the Fundraising Committee shall be appointed by the Staff Council President, and shall include representation from

Hattiesburg and at least one other campus.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Explore options to raise funds for Staff scholarships;
2. Coordinate campaigns to raise funds for Staff scholarships;
3. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
4. Perform other duties as required.

DIVISION IV. AD HOC COMMITTEES

ARTICLE 1. Ad Hoc Committee(s) shall be formed on an as-needed basis by vote of the Council.

Section 1. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee(s) shall be appointed by the Staff Council President.

Section 2. The Committee(s) shall:

1. Consist of representatives from the Hattiesburg and at least one other campus, when possible;
2. Keep Council Members abreast of all programs and initiatives available to Staff members;
3. Compile materials in electronic format, which document committee activity for the current year, to be archived by the Secretary for historical reference; and
4. Perform other duties as required.

DIVISION V. OTHER COMMITTEES

ARTICLE 1. ELECTION COMMITTEE

Section 1. Members of the Election Committee shall be appointed by the Staff Council President, with the Secretary-Elect serving as Chair as stated in Division 11, Article 2, Section 4, Item 5.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Conduct all elections in accordance with the Staff Council Bylaws and Constitution; and
2. Consist of representatives from the Hattiesburg and at least one other campus, when possible.

ARTICLE 2. OFFICERS NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Officers Nomination Committee shall consist of three members elected by the Council from the floor at the March meeting. The Staff Council President shall appoint the Chair of the Officers

Nomination Committee from those elected.

Section 2. The Committee shall:

1. Provide a list of candidates for the offices of Staff Council President-Elect and Secretary-Elect.
2. Make provisions for write-in candidates in accordance with the Staff Council Bylaws and Constitution.
3. Include in the agenda material for the organizational meeting in June.

Section 3. Special Elections

The Officers Nomination Committee shall consist of three members elected by the Council from the floor at the next monthly meeting following the vacancy of an elected officer. The newly elected officer's length of term should be determined by a vote of the council prior to the election. The Staff Council President shall appoint the Chair of the Officers Nomination Committee from those elected.

Section 4. The Officers Nomination Committee regarding Special Elections shall:

1. Provide a list of candidates for the office(s) to be filled by the special election.
2. Make provisions for write-in candidates in accordance with the Staff Council Bylaws and Constitution.
3. Include in the agenda material for the next monthly meeting.

DIVISION VI. MEETINGS OF THE STAFF COUNCIL

ARTICLE 1. MEETINGS

- Section 1. The Council shall meet on the first working Thursday of each month at 9:30 AM at the place designated by the Staff Council President. When it is necessary to change the meeting date or time, it shall be brought before the Council for voting. Once a Council meeting is called to order, any Council member more than 20 minutes late will be considered absent for that meeting.
- Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Staff Council President or at the request of at least one-third of the Council members.
- Section 3. A quorum shall exist when a majority of the members present have voting privileges.
- Section 4. The meetings of the Council shall be open.
- Section 5. The meetings shall be conducted according to the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* as interpreted by the Parliamentarian.

Approval Page

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Staff Council

Submitted: Allyson Easterwood Date: 7-9-2021
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