

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

DIVISION I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 1. NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be The University of Southern Mississippi Staff Council, and hereafter shall be referred to in this document as the Council.

ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE

Section 1. The Council shall function as an advisory group; shall provide an operational framework for discussion of issues, policies, and activities relating to the staff of the University; and shall make recommendations as appropriate.

Section 2. The Council shall promote interaction among the staff, faculty, and administration in the enhancement of the goals, purposes, and functions of the University.

ARTICLE 3. PREAMBLE/MISSION STATEMENT

Section 1. The Council shall promote excellence in service. We believe that with this unified voice, faculty, staff, and administrators can together become a leading force for growth and excellence, as we serve the Southern Miss community, our local community, and the state of Mississippi.

DIVISION II. COMPOSITION AND ELECTION OF MEMBERSHIP

ARTICLE 1. COMPOSITION OF MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The membership of the Council shall be composed of elected representatives from the permanent, full-time staff of the University who have been employed at the University for at least one year at the time the election cycle begins.

Section 2. Membership composition is subject to University reapportionments and should reflect any necessary changes to category representation.

Section 3. Representatives shall be elected from mutually exclusive apportionment categories. The apportionment categories are:

1. **Intercollegiate Athletics**
2. **Research Division**
No less than 1 representative from Gulf Coast Research Laboratory
All remaining representatives to come from the Hattiesburg campus
3. **Academic Affairs Division**
No less than 1 representative from Stennis Space Center
No less than 1 representative from Gulf Coast Research Laboratory
No less than 1 representative from Gulf Park
All remaining representatives to come from the Hattiesburg campus
4. **Student Affairs Division**
5. **External Affairs Division**
6. **Finance and Administration Division, including University Communications**
7. **Gulf Park Campus Administration**

Section 4. The addition of a new apportionment category may temporarily increase the total number of representatives on the Council until the membership is consistent with the representation for the University community and the Bylaws for Staff Council.

Section 5. The Council is apportioned to the official University statistics of February 1989, and shall be reapportioned at three-year intervals thereafter according to the Bylaws and the Constitution.

Section 6. If major reorganization of University Division categories occurs, Staff Council can issue a reapportionment in accordance with general voting rules. In the best interest of the Council, it is prudent that consideration be given to staggering appointment cycles in order to maintain consistency on the Council.

Section 7. If the number of representatives allocated to an apportionment category is reduced, all representatives on the Council from that apportionment category shall serve out the remainder of their terms in office.

Section 8. 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. These outsourced 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.

Section 9. In addition to regular Staff Council membership, 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.

ARTICLE 2. LENGTH OF TERM

Section 1. Council members shall serve staggered three-year terms. A Council member shall be eligible for re-election after a period of one year's absence from the Council.

Section 2. A Council member elected Staff Council President-elect in the third year of their term will have their term extended two years and will serve as Staff Council President that fourth year and as Immediate Past-Staff Council President the following year.

Section 3. Terms of Council members shall begin with the organizational meeting in July and end June 30.

Section 4. The length of term for Auxiliary members (as defined in Division II, Article I, Sections 8 and 9) shall be left to the discretion of the appointing outsourced unit.

ARTICLE 3. ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Council members shall be elected by their peers within their own apportionment category according to the Bylaws and Constitution.

Section 2. Elections shall proceed annually according to the Bylaws.

ARTICLE 4. VACANCIES

Section 1. Vacancies shall be filled in accordance to the Bylaws and the Constitution as soon as a position is vacated. The replacement will fill the unexpired term of the former Council member.

Section 2. The Staff Council President should make a good faith effort in making a recommendation and/or appointment to fill the unexpired term from the same Division category as the vacancy, in accordance with Division I, Article 3, Section 1 of the Bylaws. In the event that the Division category has no more remaining candidates, the 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.

ARTICLE 5. ABSENCES

Section 1. Absences shall be handled in accordance to the Bylaws. Exceptions to the absence policy must be voted on by the Council and will be approved when passed by two-thirds of the membership as outlined in the Bylaws.

DIVISION III. OFFICERS

ARTICLE 1. OFFICERS AND TERM OF OFFICE

Section 1. The officers of the Council shall be the Staff Council President, Staff Council President-Elect, Secretary, and Secretary-Elect and Immediate Past-Staff Council President. Officers shall perform duties as stated in the Bylaws.

Section 2. The length of term for each elected office shall be one year and shall begin with the adjournment of the organizational meeting in June.

Section 3. The Staff Council President, at the expiration of the term of office, shall become the Immediate Past-Staff Council President. The Immediate Past-Staff Council President will serve in an advisory capacity to the Staff Council President and Council. The Immediate Past-Staff Council President will retain voting rights on the Council.

ARTICLE 2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The Staff Council President-Elect and Secretary-Elect shall be elected by secret ballot, which includes space for write-in candidates, from the Council membership by a majority of those present and voting at the organizational meeting in June according to the Bylaws and the Constitution.

Section 2. No one may hold two offices simultaneously.

DIVISION IV. COMMITTEES

ARTICLE 1. STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees of the Council are:

1. Executive Committee;
2. Salaries and Benefits Committee;
3. University Relations and Cultural Diversity Committee;
4. Constitution and Bylaws Committee;
5. Legislative Committee;
6. Technology Committee;
7. Scholarship/Professional Development Committee;
8. Communications Committee; and
9. Fundraising Committee

Section 2. The Standing Committees will perform duties as stated in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE 2. OTHER COMMITTEES

Section 1. Other Committees of the Council are, but not limited to:

1. Election Committee; and
2. Officer Nomination Committee

Section 2. Other Committees will perform duties as stated in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE 3. AD HOC COMMITTEES

Section 1. Ad Hoc Committees shall be formed on an as-needed basis by vote of the Council.

Section 2. Ad Hoc committees will perform duties as stated in the Bylaws.

DIVISION V. MEETINGS OF THE STAFF COUNCIL

ARTICLE 1. MEETINGS

Section 1. The Council shall meet monthly according to the Bylaws.

DIVISION VI. FINANCES

ARTICLE 1. BUDGET

Section 1. The Council shall request from the Vice President for Finance and Administration an annual budget to conduct its business. Expenditures may be authorized by either the Council or the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The financial reports, as maintained by the Staff Council President-Elect, shall be made available to the Council members for examination.

DIVISION VII. AMENDMENTS AND BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution shall become effective when passed by two-thirds of the membership and approved by the Vice President for Finance and Administration. A proposed amendment must be submitted in writing to the membership for study at least three weeks before a vote is taken.

ARTICLE 2. BYLAWS

Section 1. Amendments to the Bylaws shall become effective when passed by two-thirds of the membership provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing to the membership for study at least three weeks before a vote is taken.

Section 2. The Bylaws of the Council, or any part thereof, may be suspended at any meeting by the approval of two-thirds of the membership.

Submitted: Mary Alexander Date: 7/1/2021
Mary Alexander, Staff Council President, 2021-2022
Staff Council

Submitted: Allyson Easterwood Date: 7-9-2021
Allyson Easterwood, Vice President for Finance and Administration
The University of Southern Mississippi