

The University of Texas at San Antonio

# UTSA Staff Senate

## Bylaws

### ARTICLE I

#### Name

The name of this organization shall be the Staff Senate of The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) hereinafter referred to as Staff Senate. The people represented are classified staff and administrative and professional staff as defined in Article III - Section 2-Eligibility, hereinafter referred to as Staff.

### ARTICLE II

#### Mission

##### Section 1

The mission statement shall be updated to: The UTSA Staff Senate is committed to fostering a culture of excellence, well-being, and professional growth by advocating for and empowering our staff community through shared governance.

##### Section 2

The Staff Senate, in keeping with the mission of UTSA, is an advisory body and can convey information and make recommendations to the President regarding interests and concerns of Staff. The Staff Senate is constituted by the President and by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System, with the goal of continually improving university operations and the well-being of UTSA's Staff. The Staff Senate is not intended to supplant existing procedures for addressing issues. Staff Senate is an official Staff organization.

### ARTICLE III

#### Membership

##### Section 1 - Membership

1. Staff Senate representation shall be proportional based on the number of employees from areas designated by the President.
2. Representation will be reviewed every odd-numbered year after the Staff Senate is established to consider reallocation of the member seats.
3. Changes in the designated areas, the total membership, or the distribution of representatives can be accomplished without amendment of the Bylaws.

## Section 2 - Eligibility

1. Eligible Staff, represented by Staff Senate, shall consist of UTSA's benefits-eligible Classified Staff plus UTSA's Administrative and Professional Staff excluding executive leadership through executive directors, coaches, and post-doctoral fellows. A more comprehensive list is available under Elections Committee documentation.
2. Representatives are elected solely from the eligible Staff.
3. Upon termination or retirement, membership in Staff Senate will cease.

## Section 3 - Terms of Staff Senate Service

1. The term of a member of Staff Senate shall be two years unless:
  - a. A member in the second year of a two-year term is elected to the Vice Chair position by a 50% plus 1 majority of Staff Senate voting members. For this one exception, a third-year extension will be allowed to the newly appointed Vice Chair so that the Vice Chair to Chair succession can be maintained as stated on page 3, Article IV: Executive Committee, Section 3: Duties of the Officers, Point 2: The Vice Chair. No other two-year term extensions will be allowed for any other Executive Committee member or Staff Senate member.
2. The terms will be linked to even and odd years so that half of Staff Senate will be reelected each year.
3. There is no limit to the number of terms a member of Staff Senate may serve.
4. If a member of Staff Senate changes jobs to another area, that member may tender their resignation or continue to serve on Staff Senate for the completion of the term.
5. An elected representative whose job classification changes during his or her term may serve until the next election.

## Section 4 – Attendance

1. If an elected representative has two unexcused absences from regular monthly Staff Senate meetings, meaning they did not notify the Secretary of their need to be absent, the Executive Committee shall be notified and the representative will be contacted to confirm knowledge of the attendance policy.
2. If an elected representative has three unexcused absences from regular monthly Staff Senate meetings, the Executive Committee shall be notified and the representative shall be contacted and removed from Staff Senate. The vacated position will then be filled using procedures set forth in Article VII, Section 2, of the by-laws.
3. An elected representative who has been removed from Staff Senate due to the above policy shall be ineligible to accept a nomination in the next election cycle unless reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee.

## Section 5 - Compensation

None of the members or agents of Staff Senate shall receive or solicit salary, reimbursement, compensatory time, or compensation for serving on Staff Senate.

## Section 6 - Constituent Relations

Staff Senate members shall be expected to communicate regularly with their constituents.

## ARTICLE IV

### Executive Committee

#### Section 1

The Executive Committee of Staff Senate shall be elected by Staff Senate. Officers and committee chairs will make up the Executive Committee.

#### Section 2

Officers include: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Historian, and Parliamentarian

#### Section 3

Duties of the Officers:

1. **The Chair** or his/her executive designee shall
  - a. be present at all meetings of Staff Senate;
  - b. conduct Staff Senate meetings;
  - c. only vote on an issue in the case of a tie;
  - d. ensure that projects undertaken by Staff Senate are developed, organized, and implemented in an orderly and timely manner;
  - e. involve the Vice Chair in all decisions;
  - f. sit on all Staff Senate committees as a non-voting ex officio member;
  - g. hold no other Staff Senate office; and
  - h. may be asked to serve on UT System Employee Advisory Council (EAC) and fulfill other responsibilities and duties as required. A UTSA EAC representative will hold an ad-hoc non-voting position on UTSA Staff Senate.
2. **The Vice Chair** shall
  - a. assume the position and duties of chair at the end of the chair's term or at such time as the chair's seat is vacated;
  - b. become thoroughly knowledgeable of all chair decisions to provide a smooth transition and continuity of duties;
  - c. conduct Staff Senate meetings in the absence of the Chair;
  - d. be authorized to sign all documents for Staff Senate in the absence of the Chair;
  - e. assume other duties as directed by Staff Senate;
  - f. serve as the Acting-Chair during extended, but not permanent, absences of the Chair (i.e. vacation, illness, etc.);
  - g. assist the Chair with duties as needed;
  - h. hold no other Staff Senate office;
  - i. may serve as a voting committee member unless serving as Acting Chair;
  - j. sits on all Staff Senate committees as a non-voting ex officio member;
  - k. may be asked to serve on UT System Employee Advisory Board and fulfill other responsibilities and duties as required.

3. **The Secretary/Historian** shall

- a. give notice of all meetings;
- b. prepare and maintain an electronic archive of official minutes for all meetings of Staff Senate. The minutes will be drafted after each meeting with corrections made as needed;
- c. help with all correspondence as directed by Staff Senate within the time frame specified;
- d. keep and archive the history of the formation and all members and actions of Staff Senate;
- e. hold no other Staff Senate office.

**The Parliamentarian** shall

- a. be ready to answer points of order in accordance with Roberts' Rules of Order- the newly revised;
- b. advise Staff Senate and the Chair on points of order;
- c. hold no other Staff Senate office.

#### Section 4 – Officer Positions: Terms of Office

1. The term of office for all officer positions will be one year, except the Vice Chair/Chair-Elect position as stated in Article IV-Section 3.2.a.
2. No member may hold more than one Staff Senate office at a time and no member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same Staff Senate office.
3. Any member may be reelected to an officer position, which they held for two consecutive terms after being vacant from that position for one full term.
4. Staff Senate may vote to recall an officer position with a two-thirds vote.

#### Section 5 - Executive Committee Vacancies

1. Any vacancy occurring in the Executive Committee, excluding the Chair (see Article IV Section 3.2.a.), shall be filled only from the remaining Staff Senate members.
2. The process will be by nomination and vote of the remaining members of Staff Senate.
3. A member of Staff Senate elected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the remaining term of the vacancy.
4. A recalled Executive Committee member may continue to serve as a Staff Senate member. The member will be eligible for any future election to an Executive Committee position with a two-thirds vote by Staff Senate.

## ARTICLE V

### Committees

#### Section 1 - Standing Committees

Staff Senate forms semi-permanent standing committees through discussion and majority vote. The Chair of each standing committee will be selected by majority vote of Staff Senate.

#### Section 2 - Ad Hoc Committees

May be appointed as needed by the Chair of Staff Senate to fulfill specific short-term goals. Ad hoc committee functions may be changed when needed by the Chair.

### Section 3

A member of any committee may be replaced or removed by a majority vote of the Staff Senate.

### Section 4 - University Service Appointments

An executive officer or member of Staff Senate is required to serve on one of the following University-level committees:

1. University Leadership Council (ULC): The Chair of Staff Senate is the Staff Senate representative on the ULC. If the Chair is unable to attend a scheduled ULC meeting, the Vice Chair or other Staff Senate designee will attend in place of the Chair.
2. Faculty Senate Liaison: A member of Staff Senate will be selected by the Executive Committee to be the Staff Senate representative (non-voting) on Faculty Senate. If the selected member is unable to attend a scheduled Faculty Senate meeting, a Staff Senate designee will attend in their place.
  - a. Staff Senate Liaison: A member of Faculty Senate will be selected each year to be the liaison to Staff Senate (non-voting). The Faculty Senate Chair will notify the Staff Senate Chair of their representative to this role.
3. University Parking & Traffic Committee (UPTC): A member of Staff Senate will be selected by the Executive Committee to be the Staff Senate representative on the UPTC. If the selected member is unable to attend a scheduled UPTC meeting, a Staff Senate designee will attend in their place.
4. HOP Committee: A member of Staff Senate will be selected by the Executive Committee to be the Staff Senate representative on the HOP Committee. If the selected member is unable to attend a scheduled HOP Committee meeting, a Staff Senate designee will attend in their place.
5. Food Service Committee (FSC): A member of Staff Senate will be selected by the Executive Committee to be the Staff Senate representative on the FSC. If the selected member is unable to attend a scheduled FSC meeting, a Staff Senate designee will attend in their place.
6. Technology Planning & Prioritization Committee (TPPC): A member of Staff Senate will be selected by the Executive Committee to be the Staff Senate representative on the TPPC. If the selected member is unable to attend a scheduled TPPC meeting, a Staff Senate designee will attend in their place.
7. Other University Committee Appointments: All other ad-hoc committee requests for Staff Senate representation will be made at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE VI

### Meetings of Staff Senate

#### Section 1

Roberts' Rules of Order shall govern the procedures of Staff Senate. It is understood that these rules shall be used for the practical and orderly governance of Staff Senate but may be waived by a majority vote if shown to be a hindrance.

## Section 2 - Scheduled Meetings

1. All meetings, whether regular or special, can only be conducted if the Chair, Vice Chair, or their designee is presiding.
2. All meetings, whether regular or special, should be held during normal working hours Monday through Friday, to avoid undue hardship on the members.
3. Monthly meetings should be held with exact dates to be determined by the Staff Senate Chair.
4. The date, time and location of meetings shall be announced and entered into the minutes at each meeting.

## Section 3 - Special Meetings

1. Special meetings of Staff Senate may be called by the Chair or Acting-Chair.
2. Any Senate member may request a special meeting be held to present a specific point of order.
3. At least five working days' notice should be given to all members prior to a called special meeting.
4. The specific purpose of the special meeting must be stated in the notification.

## Section 4 - Quorum

1. A quorum consists of at least the Chair, Vice Chair, or their designee, and a minimum of 50% plus one of the members.

## Section 5 - Voting

1. A quorum is required for a Staff Senate vote to be taken.
2. Only members have the right to vote.
3. No proxy votes are permitted.
4. Except as otherwise specified by these Bylaws, all votes shall be decided by a majority.
5. The Chair or Vice Chair of Staff Senate may initiate an asynchronous vote through email if a meeting is currently open.

# ARTICLE VII

## Elections

### Section 1

1. Each Staff Senate member position will be elected by open ballot with a two -year term. An extended term of three years will be allowed if and only when a Staff Senate member in their second year of a two -year term is elected to the Vice Chair position by a 50% plus 1 majority of Staff Senate voting members.
2. Once elected, Staff Senate members will represent the area from which they were elected.
3. The terms will be linked to even and odd years so that half of Staff Senate will be reelected each year.
4. The Elections Committee will conduct an annual review of the proportionality of staff to senate ratios to determine if an adjustment to membership is needed. A full Staff Senate vote would be required to implement changes.
5. Elections of Staff Senate members shall be held every summer to become effective September 1
6. Elections of Executive Committee members shall be held no later than September and become

effective immediately.

## Section 2

If a Staff Senate position becomes vacant before the completion of the elected term, a replacement representative may be identified to fulfill the remainder of the vacant position's term. The process to fill a vacant position will be as follows:

1. The position will be offered to the person with the next highest vote total from that year's election cycle. For instance, if someone elected in 2019 to represent Academic Affairs resigns, the position will be offered to the person with the next highest vote total from the 2019 Academic Affairs election pool.
  - a. If the person with the next highest vote total does not accept the position, the process will continue with the next person on the list until the vacancy is filled.
2. A vacant position from the prior election cycle may be offered to someone from the most recent election cycle if there are no additional candidates from the prior year's election pool. For instance, if someone elected in 2019 to represent Business Affairs resigns, the position would first be offered to
3. other nominees from the 2019 Business Affairs election pool. If the 2019 Business Affairs election pool
4. is exhausted without someone accepting the position, the position could then be offered to someone from the 2020 Business Affairs election pool.
5. If a vacant position is not filled through one of the two methods listed above, Staff Senate will ask that the leadership of the respective area(s) nominate a replacement member.

## Section 3

Nominations of Classified Staff candidates for Staff Senate may be made by any of UTSA's eligible Classified Staff, as defined in Section 2-Eligibility, who works within the Vice-Presidential area of the nominee. Administrative and Professional (A&P) Staff are nominated at large from the pool of eligible A&P employees. The Elections Committee is responsible for verifying eligibility of nominees and for assuring that a minimum number of candidates are nominated for each category. The minimum number is one more than the number of vacancies to be filled per category. If the minimum number is not reached through the nomination process, the Elections Committee will solicit nominees from the relevant VP area to meet the minimum number.

## Section 4 - Procedures for Elections

### **a. Nominations:**

1. Nominations will be identified by area and eligibility will be verified by the Election Committee. The Election Committee will establish a schedule so that the nomination process will be available to all eligible Staff.
2. The Election Committee shall verify eligibility, willingness of nominees to run and to serve, in writing, and shall inform the nominees of meeting times, attendance requirements, the time commitment required, and the fact that this is a voluntary position with no additional compensation.

### **b. Voting:**

1. The Election Committee shall prepare and distribute ballots in the same manner as the nomination process. The maximum number of nominees per area to appear on the ballot shall not be limited.
2. The Election Committee will establish a schedule so that the election process is available to all eligible Staff.

### **c. Counting Ballots:**

1. The selection will be determined by the order of the highest number of votes in that area.
2. The Elections Committee shall verify the ballots and present the results to Staff Senate.
3. In the event of a tie vote, the Election Committee will prepare a run-off ballot, repeat the election process, and present the results to Staff Senate.

### **d. Announcement of Election Winners:**

1. The Chair of the Election Committee will notify winners and invite them to attend the next meeting of Staff Senate.
2. Election results will be given to the Secretary for publication.

**e. Election Records:**

1. Lists of the votes received will be secured and maintained by the Staff Senate Election Committee Chair for the term of those elected by the results, then digitally archived.

**Section 5 - Election of Executive Committee Members**

1. At the transition meeting after member elections, Staff Senate shall elect, from among its membership, a Vice Chair, a Secretary/Historian, a Parliamentarian, and committee chairs to comprise the Executive Committee.
2. All nominees must be present and state their willingness to serve in the nominated position to be considered.
3. Elections will be by majority vote.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**Bylaws Amendments and Revisions**

**Section 1**

Any changes to these Bylaws may be proposed by any member of Staff Senate in writing. Proposed changes will be made available to all members in writing for consideration prior to voting. Changes shall require approval by two-thirds vote and can never be retroactive in application or design.