

CONSTITUTION OF THE STAFF SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

Responsibility and authority for personnel administration matters have been delegated by the Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama, the body given general governance powers by Alabama Law, to the president of this campus and by him/her to other institutional officials. These officials recognize the contribution that a consultative staff employee organization can make in dealing with personnel issues. Such a body can provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, a resource for evaluating proposals, and a mechanism for expressing suggestions and concerns.

Therefore, a Staff Senate has been recognized by the university administration as a representative body of eligible non-faculty staff.

I. Purpose

The Staff Senate's purpose and charge shall be to serve an ancillary, advisory function with respect to the University of Alabama in Huntsville administration in the area of staff personnel matters, and to do so in a positive and constructive way. In carrying out this role it shall work to promote better understanding, cooperation, and communication within the campus community for the benefit and betterment of all.

The Staff Senate shall respond to issues presented to it by its own members and committees, the university administration, the student government, or UAH staff employees. Communications about the needs of the staff are submitted through the vice president for finance and administration or his/her designee by the Staff Senate.

II. Representation

Eligibility

For the purpose of this Constitution, as well as representation by and membership in the Staff Senate, eligible staff shall be defined as half time or greater non-faculty employees with an indefinite term of employment and with at least six months of continuous credited service at the university.

Membership

The Staff Senate will consist of 24 members, elected prior to the annual picnic by university staff. The election of Staff Senate members will be apportioned as follows:

- A. Two Senate members will be elected from each of the six (6) university divisions and departments by the university staff within their divisions or departments, as follows:
 - a. Academic Affairs
 - b. Advancement/President's Office/Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- c. Finance and Administration
 - d. Facilities and Operations
 - e. Research
 - f. Student Affairs
- B. An additional 12 Senate members shall be elected at large by the university staff.

The vice president for finance and administration or his/her designee will be ex officio, a non-voting member of the Staff Senate.

III. Election Guidelines

Nominations

The Bylaws Committee shall designate or appoint a nominations chairperson, who will receive and record nominations to the Staff Senate. The Bylaws Committee shall set the beginning and ending dates for accepting nominations.

Any staff employee may nominate an eligible staff employee for Staff Senate membership. The person nominated must accept the nomination. If the employee accepts the nomination, he/she shall choose to run as either a divisional/departmental candidate, as an at-large candidate, or both.

Elections

The election of Senate members will be staggered as follows:

One representative for each of the six divisions and departments and six at-large representatives will be elected annually for a two-year term. The term of service will be from the first day of June following their election until the last day of May two years later. In order to initiate staggered elections there will be a one-time special election for 1992. At that time the six at-large representatives receiving the largest number of votes will serve a two-year term. The remaining six divisional/departmental representatives and six at-large representatives will serve one-year terms. No person shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

All eligible staff may vote in the Staff Senate elections. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot with absentee balloting available to eligible voters who cannot be present at the time of election. Each staff member will vote for no more than one candidate for Staff Senate representative of their division or department, and for no more than six university at-large nominees. Voting for more than one divisional or departmental candidate or for more than six at-large candidates will void the ballot.

The Bylaws Committee shall prepare the ballot, listing the names of nominees for the divisional/departmental seats and At Large seats. The Committee shall distribute the ballot to the staff body, as determined by Human Resources, on the date specified for the start of the election procedure.

Voting shall take place annually during the spring academic term over a one week period. Newly elected and returning representatives will be introduced at the annual picnic.

Terms of Office

Each representative elected to the Staff Senate shall serve a two-year term to run from the first day of June through the last day of May two years later. No representative shall serve more than two consecutive terms as a member of the Staff Senate. A Senator in his/her 2nd year of the first term shall be eligible to serve as president elect, and if selected shall be eligible to serve as president in a 3rd year. A Senator in the 2nd year of the second term would not be eligible.

Unexpired Term

In the event a divisional or at-large vacancy occurs on the Staff Senate by the termination of employment, by transfer from one division to another, or by request from the representative with six months or more remaining in their unexpired term, a representative(s) shall be replaced by an unsuccessful candidate(s) from the most recent election based upon votes received and willingness to serve. In the absence of such a person(s), the Executive Committee shall nominate a replacement and the nominee shall be confirmed by two-thirds of the full staff senate. The confirmed individual will serve until the next general election. If the vacancy occurs less than six months before the next general election, it shall be up to the discretion of the Executive Committee whether to nominate a candidate and have the nominee confirmed by two-thirds of the full staff senate or leave the position vacant for the remainder of the term.

IV. General Organization

Executive Committee

Within the Staff Senate, leadership shall be provided by the Executive Committee, which consists of a president, vice president/president-elect, secretary, treasurer, staff relations officer and the immediate past president of the Staff Senate, who shall be a non-voting ex-officio member. In the event the immediate past president is unavailable, the president may select an officer from the previous Executive Committee to fill this seat. The Executive Committee will be selected annually by the Senate members at the start of the new term in June. Executive Committee members will serve for a one-year term and may not be elected to serve more than two consecutive terms in any capacity on the Executive Committee.

Meetings

Staff Senate meetings will be held once each month, including summer semester, at a time of the day which is sensitive to work schedules. The Executive Committee will be responsible for scheduling and the agenda for Senate meetings; however, floor discussions are always open at Senate meetings.

Special meetings: Special meetings of the Staff Senate shall be called by the Executive Committee in cases where urgent university issues must be addressed before the next regularly scheduled meeting is to occur.

Resolutions

Resolutions or proposals shall be introduced to the Staff Senate at one meeting, and become an action item no later than the Senate meeting of the following month. Voting shall be by the polling of each representative, the results of which will be recorded in the minutes.

Amendment of Constitution

The constitution may be reviewed and/or amended as needed by the Staff Senate. Any member of the Staff Senate may make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for a revision or amendment to the current constitution. A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be distributed in writing to all members at least one week prior to the meeting where the proposed change is to be introduced. There shall be two official readings of the proposed change, during two consecutive meetings, preceding a vote to amend the Constitution. To pass the amendment, at least two-thirds of the Staff Senate's voting membership shall approve the amendment after the second reading. The Staff Senate Constitution, and suggested amendments thereto, must be submitted to and receive final approval from the university administration before they become effective and are distributed to all staff members.

Bylaws

In accordance with the Constitution of the Staff Senate, the Bylaws Committee shall establish and maintain a set of simple but effective bylaws to establish acceptable rules of conduct and behavior for the Staff Senate. Any member of the Staff Senate may make a recommendation to the Bylaws Committee or Executive Committee for a revision or amendment to the current constitution. To pass the amendment into the constitution, a majority of the Staff Senate's voting membership shall approve the amendment.

Committees

The Staff Senate is self regulating with respect to its organization and purpose, and, as such, may create such committees as are deemed necessary to facilitate its work. Committee membership is solicited from the Staff Senate by the president. Chairs of each committee shall be expected to submit committee reports to the Staff Senate. Standing committees shall serve as advisory bodies for specific matters falling within their province.

V. Ratification

Ratification of this constitution shall be by majority of those voting of eligible UAH staff prior to the 1992 general election at a date to be specified by the Staff Senate. As amended Fall 2013.