

Staff Senate Bylaws

UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND STAFF SENATE

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of the organization shall be the University of Puget Sound Staff Senate, hereafter referred to as Staff Senate.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to conduct activities on behalf of the University of Puget Sound staff, to enhance the campus environment, and to recognize the staff as an integral part of the university. To fulfill this purpose, the Staff Senate shall:

- A. Provide a medium for communication between and among staff members;
- B. Serve as a means of communication and liaison between staff, faculty, students and administration;
- C. Provide information and recommendations to the decision-making bodies of the university; and
- D. Serve as a vehicle for implementation and communication of university policies and procedures.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

Section 1. Membership

The staff shall be defined as all regular full-time and part-time employees of the university who are not faculty members or executive officers. The Staff Senate shall consist of staff members who have completed their initial evaluation period with the university and have been elected by constituents or appointed in accordance with these bylaws. The university's chief human resources officer or his/her designee shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Staff Senate.

Section 2. Representation and Reapportionment

The Staff Senate may reapportion senate representation to reflect the distribution of staff members within the university community. Reapportion shall reflect the adequate representation of staff population. This reapportionment should be done before elections each year.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities of Staff Senators

Staff Senators shall uphold the mission of the senate, attend and actively participate in senate meetings, serve on one or two committees, and serve as liaisons between staff and the senate.

- A. All elected senators shall be permitted to attend the senate meetings during work hours. If the meetings take place during the staff member's regularly scheduled work hours, the staff member shall be given release time to participate in the

meetings. If the meetings occur at times other than the staff member's regularly scheduled work hours, the staff member shall be given release time equivalent to the time the senator spends in the senate meetings, in accordance with university compensation policy.

- B. Area senators shall serve as liaisons between their constituents and the Staff Senate. Area senators shall make themselves known to their constituents and provide contact information. Senators are responsible for keeping their constituents well informed about the work of the senate and matters that other segments of the university (e.g., the president or members of the president's cabinet, Human Resources, the Faculty Senate, Associated Students of the University of Puget Sound) wish to communicate to the senate and the staff. Area senators shall (a) seek opinions of their constituents on matters concerning the senate, (b) be willing to hear concerns and suggestions, and (c) communicate these effectively to the senate. Failure to carry out such communications may result in the senator's replacement by the Executive Committee.
- C. All senators shall serve on at least one committee of the Staff Senate and may be elected as an officer of a committee.
- D. All senators are expected to attend all regularly scheduled Staff Senate meetings. The secretary of the senate shall provide a listing of all meeting dates, locations and times in advance of all meetings. If a senator cannot attend a scheduled meeting, the senator is expected to notify the senate Secretary prior to the meeting. If a senator misses three meetings in a fiscal year, the senate Chair shall notify the member that his or her membership will be reviewed at the next regular meeting of the Executive Committee.

Section 4.

Resignation and Removal

- A. A Staff Senator's failure to perform the duties listed in Article III, Section 3, shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee for action.
- B. Any officer or senator may be removed by two-thirds vote of the Staff Senate at any regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose.
- C. If, for any reason, a senator cannot fulfill his or her expected duties, the senator shall give written notice to the senate Chair. Resignations shall take effect upon receipt of such notice.
- D. The Executive Committee shall review the contribution of senators who do not fulfill their expected duties based on the following criteria: (a) participation in Staff Senate meetings, (b) participation in the work of senate committees, (c) communication with constituents, and (d) notification of absence to the senate Secretary. After such review, the Executive Committee may recommend to the senate that the senator be replaced. A vote of the senate is required to replace a senator.

**ARTICLE IV
STAFF SENATE ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE**

**Section 1.
Elections and Terms of Office**

- A. Area senators shall be elected annually, by ballot, according to an apportionment plan adopted by the Staff Senate. Area senators shall be elected by their constituents for a three-year period. One-third of the area senators elected according to the apportionment plan will rotate each year. Area senators shall represent approximately 25 staff members. The number of area senators shall be contingent upon the total number of staff members at the University of Puget Sound as of February 1st of each year.
- B. At-large senators shall serve a one-year term of office and shall be elected annually by ballot by all staff members. At-large representation shall align with staff population at a ratio of 25:1.
- C. In the event of a tie, the Elections and Governance Committee will determine the winner through a random selection process.
- D. In the case of a senate vacancy, the Executive Committee shall, with the approval of the senate, appoint a member from the constituent group in which the vacancy occurred, to fill the unexpired term of office. For at-large senators, an appointment may be made from any area without regard to previous representation. For the purpose of determining eligibility for re-election, members appointed to fill an unexpired term of office shall be considered as having served a full term of office if they serve more than one-half of the unexpired term to which they were appointed.
- E. Area senators will fulfill their term to which they were elected regardless of current role or area on campus.
- F. Officers shall be elected by the senate at the last regular meeting of the fiscal year.
- G. Senators will serve no more than six (6) consecutive years.

**Section 2.
Officers**

- A. The officers of the Staff Senate shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- B. Officers shall serve for two consecutive years. Their terms of office shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected. In the event an elected officer has less than two years remaining in his/her senate term, the senate term shall be extended two years or to complete the term of office, whichever is shorter.
- C. No officer shall hold more than one office concurrently or serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

- D. The Chair of the senate shall be the chief executive officer of the senate, convene and preside at all senate and Executive Committee meetings and shall exercise and perform such powers or duties as may be assigned by the senate. The Chair of the senate shall represent staff as requested by campus leadership.
- E. The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair. The Vice-Chair will be an *ex-officio* member of all senate committees. In this capacity, the Vice-Chair will attend at least one meeting of each standing committee and will assist standing committees with realizing goals and achieving objectives.
- F. The Secretary is responsible for minutes and official correspondence, the preparation of meeting agendas, announcements of meetings, and the maintenance of the senate membership roster. The Secretary shall edit senate publications, administer staff senate communication channels, and maintain the staff senate website.
- G. The Treasurer shall maintain all financial records, produce reports, complete forms, and balance all senate accounts with the Office of Finance.

Section 3. Meetings

- A. The Staff Senate shall meet at least six times a year and at the call of the Chair.
- B. Special meetings of the Staff Senate shall be called by the Chair upon request of the Executive Committee, upon the request of no fewer than two-thirds of the senate, or upon written petition signed by at least 30 members of the staff. No business other than the subject for which the special meeting was called shall be considered at a special meeting. Notice of such meeting must be published at least one week in advance.
- C. Staff Senate meetings are open to all staff members. Members of the university community, other than staff, may attend senate meetings at the invitation of the Chair. However, nothing shall prohibit the closing of a meeting to all but elected Staff Senators upon the adoption of a properly entered motion.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum for the transaction of business, other than amendments to the bylaws, shall consist of a simple majority (half plus one vote) of the voting membership.

Section 5. Voting

Once a quorum has been established for the transaction of business, voting proceeds under the following guidelines:

- A. The majority of Staff Senators present and voting shall determine decisions on questions coming before the senate, except as otherwise specified in these bylaws.

- B. Voting shall be by acclamation, except when a majority of members present requests a secret ballot at any senate meeting.
- C. Only senators, Faculty Senate representative, and ASUPS representative may vote and each shall have one vote.

Section 6.
Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current issue of Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the organization.

ARTICLE V
COMMITTEES

Section 1.
Standing Committees

The duties of senate standing committees shall be to (a) accept tasks assigned to the committees by the senate and/or the Executive Committee, (b) address the tasks in a responsible and timely manner by establishing goals, objectives, and priorities, (c) report on the committee's progress to the senate and/or the Executive Committee and (d) submit an annual report to the Executive Committee by the end of each fiscal year. Standing committees will be structured as follows:

- A. The senate shall annually establish the scope of the charges of the standing committees.
- B. There shall be seven (7) standing committees: the Executive Committee, the Staff Compensation Committee, the Staff Recognition Committee, the Elections and Governance Committee, the Special Events Committee, the Human Resources Policies and Practices Committee, and the Public Relations Committee.
- C. Each standing committee shall be composed of not less than three persons, including the chair of the committee, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws.
- D. By the first meeting following senate elections, senators will select their first, second, and third committee choices, from which the Executive Committee will develop the membership of senate standing committees. Committee members shall serve for one year.
- E. Committee members are expected to attend all committee meetings and will advise the committee chair in advance if they are unable to attend.
- F. Additional committee members may be appointed from staff members at large. Committee members appointed from the staff at large have voting rights within their assigned committees but not on the senate.
- G. A simple majority (one-half of the voting membership plus one) of the committee membership in attendance shall constitute a quorum.
- H. A committee member missing three (3) consecutive committee meetings may be replaced at the discretion of the committee. In the case of a senator, the committee chair will notify the senate chair of the vacancy and the Executive Committee will fill the vacancy. In the case of a staff member not currently serving as a senator, the committee chair will determine a replacement, as needed.

- I. The chairs of standing committees shall be members of the senate and will be chosen by majority vote of committee members at the first meeting of the committee. If the members of a committee do not elect a chair at the first committee meeting, the senate chair may appoint one. Chairs may be reappointed for successive terms if they continue to serve on the senate.
- J. The duties of committee chairs will be:
 - 1. To preside over all meetings, deliberations and activities of the committees.
 - 2. To prepare an annual report on committee activities and any pending matters. The report will be authorized by a majority vote of the committee and submitted to the Executive Committee by the end of the fiscal year.
 - 3. To provide their successors with documentation and consultation needed for a successful transition.
 - 4. To ensure that committee meeting minutes are kept and distributed to committee members and the senate secretary.
 - 5. To schedule committee meetings and inform members of meeting dates, times, locations, and agendas.
- K. If the committee chair does not fulfill the responsibilities of the position, a majority of the members of the committee can request that the Executive Committee review the performance of the chair. After the review, the Executive Committee can remove the chair.
- L. If a committee chair vacancy should occur, the committee chair position shall be filled by another senator from the committee elected by the members of the committee.

**Section 2.
Executive Committee**

The purpose of the Executive Committee will be to provide senate leadership and to plan the work of the senate so that it is timely and effective. The committee shall consist of the chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, *ex-officio* advisor (the chief human resources officer or their designee) and the chairs of other standing committees.

**Section 3.
Staff Compensation Committee**

The purpose of the Staff Compensation Committee will be to present a proposal for staff compensation for approval to the senate, which will then be presented to the Budget Task Force. The duties of the Staff Compensation Committee will be:

- A. To meet as soon as possible after its formation to begin work on a staff compensation proposal. The committee will meet as needed to ensure that the proposal can be presented to the senate and then to the Budget Task Force in the fall.

- B. To prepare the annual Staff Senate compensation proposal. With the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, the committee may survey staff to determine staff compensation priorities. The proposal to the Budget Task Force will address not only salary, but also other forms of compensation and benefits that have budgetary implications.
- C. After the budget has been approved by the Board of Trustees, to submit a proposal recommending the distribution of funds available for staff salary increases first to the senate for approval and then to Human Resources (HR).

Section 4. Staff Recognition Committee

The purpose of the Staff Recognition Committee will be to work with HR to ensure that staff members are recognized individually and collectively for their contributions to the university. In collaboration with HR and the Office of the President, the committee will determine the type of recognition. The duties of the committee will be:

- A. To organize a staff recognition event to be held annually on a date determined to be optimal for all parties.
- B. To recognize exemplary service to the university with appropriate awards presented at the annual recognition event based on nominations from the entire campus community.
- C. To recommend other individual or collective awards to the Executive Committee at any time.

Section 5. Elections and Governance Committee

The purpose of the Elections and Governance Committee will be to conduct annual staff senate elections and bylaws review. The duties of the committee will be:

- A. To provide information sessions about the Staff Senate in coordination with the Public Relations Committee prior to elections.
- B. To identify, in consultation with HR, changes to number of staff members in a designated area and to identify area senator vacancies.
- C. To solicit nominations for all vacancies by March 1.
- D. To create slates of potential senators based on vacancies and with the approval of the candidates.
- E. To prepare, distribute, and tally ballots by March 30.
- F. To notify nominees, incoming senators, and the senate of election results.
- G. To notify the Public Relations Committee of election results for campus-wide announcement in appropriate university media.
- H. To prepare incoming information packets for new senators to be distributed at the May meeting.

- I. To review senate bylaws annually and report findings or recommendations to the Executive Committee.

**Section 6.
Special Events Committee**

The purpose of the Special Events Committee will be to plan and coordinate projects and events to raise funds for scholarships, campus enhancements, and other projects as determined by the senate. The duties of the committee will be:

- A. To conduct fundraising efforts that have been approved by the senate.
- B. To administer the Rosa Beth Gibson Staff Senate book scholarships for staff and their dependents, spouse, or domestic partner.
- C. To recommend to the senate the allocation of funds for approved scholarships.
- D. To make recommendations to the senate for the best use of other available funds.
- E. To make recommendations to the Executive Committee for campus enhancements and other project ideas.

**Section 7.
Human Resources Policies and Practices Committee**

The purpose of the Human Resources Policies and Practices Committee will be to serve as a link between the senate and HR, the President, the Faculty Senate, and ASUPS on matters related to university policies and procedures. The duties of the committee will be:

- A. To bring to the senate's attention changes in university policies and procedures that affect the staff and to advise the senate on these issues.
- B. To monitor the deliberations of other university committees that address university policies and procedures.
- C. To bring to the senate recommendations for changes in university policies and procedures.
- D. To support senators in serving as resources to staff in obtaining information on university policies and procedures.
- E. To represent Staff Senate to ASUPS and Faculty Senate in accordance with their respective bylaws and to invite representatives of those senates to attend committee meetings for input and collaboration.

**Section 8.
Public Relations Committee**

The purpose of the Public Relations Committee will be to serve as the public information office of the senate. The duties of the committee shall be:

- A. To plan and coordinate events at which staff can meet their senators and learn about senate activities.

- B. To work with the Office of Communications to publicize the senate and its activities.
- C. To assist other standing committees with communications matters as directed by the Executive Committee.
- D. To generate public notices concerning the senate or its activities, seeking advice from the Executive Committee or other senate members as appropriate to ensure consistency and accuracy of information.
- E. To communicate with supervisors in regard to roles and responsibility of senators and university service of staff senate.
- F. To engage with campus by welcoming new staff members and building community through recognition and awareness.

Section 9.
Special Committees

Special committees may be created and dissolved as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee. Special committees are conceived as having temporary, finite, or exploratory functions as determined by the chair of the Staff Senate. A special committee's charge includes the purpose, composition, size, and terms of appointments to the committee as well as an indication of the date or completed task that determines the dissolution of the committee. Membership of such committees shall not be limited to senate members but may be drawn from the staff at large.

ARTICLE VI
AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended at an annual or special meeting of the staff senate provided that written notice containing the terms of the proposed amendment(s) have been made at least 30 days prior to the meeting. A minimum of three quarters of the senate must be present and a two-thirds vote of those present and voting is required.