

STAFF SENATE BYLAWS

Updated November 2024

ARTICLE I: NAME

- A. The name of the total body shall be The University of Memphis Staff.
- B. The name of this representative body shall be The University of Memphis Staff Senate. (Hereafter in this document, the term "Senate" shall refer to the Staff Senate unless otherwise noted.)

ARTICLE II: AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

- The Senate is authorized by the University President to serve as an advisory body and shall stand ready to act at the discretion of the University President.
- The Senate shall accept and share responsibility with the administration, faculty, and students to attain the stated goals of the University.
- The Senate shall endeavor to foster a spirit of respect, dignity, unity, and cooperation among the Staff and shall act to promote the general welfare of the Staff as it relates to the University.
- The Senate shall act as a vehicle to promote better understanding, cooperation, and communication within the campus community for the benefit and betterment of all.
- The Senate shall appoint or recommend Staff representatives to university committees, as appropriate.
- The Senate shall endeavor to keep constituents advised of issues, policies, and activities affecting them and address philosophical and operational issues affecting the welfare of the staff and the University.
- The Senate shall be a body through which staff members make recommendations to the President of the University on interests, issues, policies, and concerns that affect the welfare of the staff and the University.
- The Senate shall, at the University President's discretion, participate in the selection of university personnel by interviewing candidates, submitting evaluations and recommendations, and having representation on search committees.
- The Senate functions solely in a study and advisory capacity as charged and addresses issues brought before it by the University community. The Senate will not serve as a substitute for the formal grievance procedures of the University.

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ARTICLE III: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. TOTAL SENATE

1. The Senate shall meet with the University President or other appropriate University officials to discuss issues and concerns that affect the welfare of the Staff and the University.
2. The Senate shall vote to make recommendations to the University President on issues and concerns that affect the welfare of the Staff, and the University. Approved recommendations will be presented to the University President by the Senate Executive Committee. Recommendations to the University President will be passed by a simple majority of the quorum. For these Bylaws, a quorum shall be defined as the presence of at least 1/3 (one-third) of the Senators eligible to vote. In the absence of a quorum, the Senate may conduct business and vote on any matters brought before it (except for the election of officers), subject to ratification of quorum at the next regularly scheduled meeting. In the alternative, in the absence of a quorum, the Executive Committee may call a special committee, where the number of Senators in attendance shall constitute a quorum.
3. For quorum purposes, quorum fulfillment will include Senators attending in-person and remotely via teleconferencing tool.
4. The Senate shall make appropriate recommendations and suggestions on development and revision of University policies and procedures.
5. The Senate shall act on behalf of the Staff of The University of Memphis
6. The Senate shall meet monthly, and the business will be conducted according to the rules in the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order in the following cases:
 - a. Making motions and voting on recommendations to the University President.
 - b. Disagreements over procedure.
 - c. When requested by a Staff Senator.These meetings shall be open to all members of the University community as observers. Staff members may participate in Senate meetings by submitting to the Senate Executive Committee a written request to be included on the agenda. The Senate shall enact policies and regulations as deemed necessary to ensure the proper operation of the organization. These shall include Bylaws and a Code of Conduct.

B. INDIVIDUAL SENATORS

1. Senators shall, when requested, participate in the selection of University personnel by serving on search committees, interviewing candidates, and submitting evaluations and recommendations.
2. The Senators, its committee members, and its chairpersons shall uphold the purpose of the Senate by performing all duties as specified in these Bylaws and in the Code of Conduct for Members of The University of Memphis Staff Senate. Senators who fail to fulfill the responsibilities and expectations outlined in these Bylaws and in the Code of Conduct are subject to removal from office.
3. The Senators shall be responsible for attending monthly meetings as well as special or called meetings.
4. Senators shall have the opportunity to serve on committees of the Senate and may be elected as an officer of those committees.
5. Any elected Senator may be removed from office by the constituents for nonperformance of Senate duties or breach of duties, or both, as defined by the bylaws and the Policies and Procedures of The University of Memphis. A petition requesting such removal may be brought to the Executive Committee by a simple majority of the members of the Senator's division/area or cluster or the request for removal can be brought forward by members of the Senate. The Executive Committee will investigate the matter on a case-by-case basis and will recommend action to the Senate. The final decision will be made by the senate by secret ballot. A simple majority of the membership of the total Senate at a regular meeting will carry the vote. Potential causes for removal shall include but not be limited to: misuse of the powers of the Senate, real or implied, to further personal causes; misuse of funds or authority.

C. ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Senators shall be responsible for attending monthly meetings in-person or remotely via a teleconferencing tool as well as special or called meetings except for the following reasons

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which will constitute excused absences:

- a. Annual Leave
 - b. Sick Leave
 - c. Paid Parental Leave (PPL)
 - d. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave of Absence
 - e. Non-FMLA Medical Leave
 - f. Bereavement Leave
 - g. Military Leave
 - h. Jury Duty
 - i. Voting Leave
 - j. Civil Leave (Court Summons)
 - k. Official University business other than normal job duties that requires the Senator's attendance at the time of the regularly scheduled Senate meeting
In the cases of planned leave and official University business, the Senator shall provide advance notice to the Senate Secretary. In case of sick leave, the Senator shall notify the Senate Secretary on the first day of returning to work.
2. After each unexcused absence, the Executive Committee shall contact the Senator for an explanation for the missed meeting. An opportunity to resign from the Senate will be given if the Senator feels he or she will not be able to comply with the attendance policy.
 3. A Senator who has four (4) absences during a twelve (12) month period beginning with the month of July and ending with the following June shall be subject to removal by the Staff Senate upon recommendation by the Executive Committee. Removal shall occur when passed by a simple majority of the quorum.
 - a. The Executive Committee shall contact the Senator in good faith at least three (3) working days prior to the meeting at which a removal vote will be taken. Before the removal vote, the Executive Committee shall inform the Senate of any reasons given by the Senator for lack of attendance.
 4. Each vote for removal shall be taken individually via secret ballot for each Senator recommended for removal, with no more than one Senator being removed by any one vote of the Senate.
 5. Any Senator removed from office for lack of attendance shall not be placed on any election ballot for Staff Senator for two (2) years after being removed.

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CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. Each Senator shall make themselves known to their constituents. They shall be willing to hear concerns, to receive information and suggestions, and to communicate these effectively to the Senate. Senators shall also keep their constituents informed of the work of the Senate.
- B. Senators shall work actively toward the goal of improving the current and future needs and working conditions of the University's Staff members. Senators shall protect and promote the interests of their constituents and the University even when these conflict with the Senator's own interests.
- C. Senators shall keep private, non-University interests separate from their University activities to avoid conflicts of interest. Senators shall keep informed of current University policies, procedures, and expectations affecting the interest of the Staff and function of the University.
- D. Senators shall strive to demonstrate competence, fairness, integrity, and conscientious behavior as they conduct Senate Business within the University community. Senators are free to express personal opinions to constituents and other members of the University community; however, they must clearly state that these opinions are their own and differentiate them from Senate positions and actions when differences exist. Senators shall not misrepresent any Senate action, position, or decision to the University community.

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ARTICLE IV: REPRESENTATION

- A. The voting membership to elect the Senate shall consist of all regular full-time or regular part-time staff members who have completed their initial probationary period(s). Included in this group are all employees covered under the hourly Pay Plan. Not included in this group are student and work-study employees; faculty, including non-tenured categories, graduate teaching, service, or research assistants; temporary instruction employees; contract coaches; or regular employees at the monthly Pay Band of ADO9 or above as indicated by Human Resources. Any employee not given representation by means of the faculty senate or the administrative council or without a direct line of communication with higher administrators and who wishes to be a member of The University of Memphis Staff as defined in Article I, Section A, can request membership through the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will work with the Membership Committee to determine the eligibility of such an employee.
- B. Voting members of the Senate shall consist of staff elected to serve as representatives from within the university and college units, cluster areas or divisions as determined by the elections.
- C. The total number of Senators is fifty (50) except as described in Article IV, Section D. Senate seats will be apportioned according to the number of employees within each University cluster. This composition will be reviewed annually through the election process to provide equal representation throughout the University clusters. Annually, the Executive Committee shall ask the office of Human Resources to provide printouts to determine staff eligibility for nominations and the number of representatives to be elected from within the University clusters. It is recognized that the number of Senators within each cluster may fluctuate due to the number of employees in the area.
- D. Five (5) at-large positions shall exist specifically to accommodate special circumstances as determined by the Executive Committee and voted on by the full Senate. These seats will not automatically be seated but shall be held for special circumstances. A Senator who is displaced from their original seated cluster, either by job movement, University reorganization, or other manner, other than those that specifically disqualify a member from being a seated Senator, will be seated into one (1) of the five (5) at-large positions for the remainder of their term, and shall retain any elected position or committee membership(s) for the remainder of said term without Senate vote. The total number of Senate seats may vary from 50 up to 55.

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ARTICLE V: TERMS OF OFFICE AND ELECTIONS

- A. Terms of Office:
1. The term of office for Senators shall begin with the July meeting of the Staff Senate to coincide with the University calendar and provide time for appointments to committee meeting early in the fall term. A term shall be two (2) consecutive years and a member can be elected for two consecutive terms. After serving four (4) consecutive years, an individual may not be re-elected as a Senator until a minimum of one (1) year has passed.
 2. A representative loses Senate membership upon leaving the University's employ, by removal from office or transfer from one division/cluster to another. At the discretion of the Executive Committee or by request from the Senate membership, a Senator may keep their seat when placed in a temporary or interim position. If a Senator loses Senate membership the Executive Committee, with approval of a majority of the Senate, may appoint the person from the cluster with the next highest number of votes in the previous elections as a replacement.
 3. If a member is elected to the Senate to serve out an un-expired term vacated by another representative, the individual may complete that term and be elected to one additional term.
 4. Elections shall be held each year, with approximately one half of the Senate being replaced yearly.
- B. Voting Rights:
1. Senators shall be elected by the staff membership as defined under Article IV: Representation.
 2. The Senate officers shall be elected each year at the June meeting by nomination and a majority vote of the total Senate membership.
 3. A simple majority of the quorum as defined in Article III, Section A, is required for regular Senate meetings. Votes shall pass and carry by a simple majority of the quorum. No proxy voting is allowed.
- C. Nominations and Election Procedures:
- The nominations and elections process shall be handled each year by the Election Committee, which shall be accountable to the Executive Committee. The nominations and election process shall begin early in the spring semester. New Senators will attend the June meeting and begin their official term with the July meeting.
1. Nomination Procedures
 - a. In a timely manner, the Election Committee will request from the Office of Human Resources the list of names from which to determine Staff members eligible for nomination and the appropriate contact information for those staff members.
 - b. If a cluster should lose or add a member due to population shifts in the University, the Executive Committee shall notify said cluster as soon as the Election Committee informs the Executive Committee of the change in cluster population received from Human Resources.
 - c. All Staff members meeting eligibility requirements (as defined in Article IV, Section A) by the date of elections shall be eligible to vote.
 - d. A nomination form shall be sent to each Staff member's university email address. The form shall identify the cluster, list the names of eligible staff members, state the number of nominations allowed, and provide instructions for the return of the form (manner, date, time).
 - e. After the closing date of nominations, the Election Committee shall tally the nominations.
 - f. The Election Committee shall notify the nominees that their names will be placed on the election ballots unless they withdraw by a specified date.
 - g. The number of nominees to appear on the election ballot in each cluster shall not exceed three times the number of vacancies in that unit, except in the case of ties.
 2. Elections Procedures
 - a. A ballot shall be sent to each staff member's university email address. The form shall identify the cluster, list the nominees by name, state how many seats are to be filled in the cluster, and provide instructions and a deadline for returning the ballot.
 - b. After the closing date of the election, the Election Committee shall tally the votes with the

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person(s) receiving the highest number of votes established as the elected Senator or Senators from the cluster. In the case of a tie, there shall be a runoff election within ten (10) days, and the winner shall be the candidate with the highest number of votes.

- c. The Election Committee shall notify the nominees they have been elected and confirm they are willing to serve. A final list of Senators will be presented at the close of the election and confirmation shall be made public through widely circulated University publications within one (1) week of the final tally.
- d. All records pertaining to the election process shall be maintained by the Secretary of the Executive Committee until the next election is over.

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ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Each elected and appointed officer or committee chair will submit an annual report of activities to the Staff Senate President at the end of each year of service.

A. President

1. The office term shall be for two (2) years. A senator is eligible to be President again after completing their term as Immediate Past President.
2. Duties shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Serving as an advocate for the welfare of all Staff members,
 - b. Presiding at all Senate and Executive Committee meetings,
 - c. Serving as the official spokesperson for the Senate,
 - d. Serving as the liaison to the University President, to keep the University President informed regarding concerns of the Senate, and to seek the University President's support and advice on behalf of all Staff as defined in Article IV, Section A,
 - e. Submitting an annual report of activities to the University President at the end of each year of service and posting the report on the Staff Senate website,
 - f. Coordinating the operation of the Senate with the standing committee chairs and other officers as needed in accordance with these Bylaws, and
 - g. Appointing Senators to serve as Senate representatives on University wide committees, with the ratification of the Senate.
3. If the President's second year of their term of office exceeds their four (4) consecutive years on the Senate as stated in Article V, Section A, Number 1, this one year of office shall be considered as a year out of the Senate for eligibility to be on the list of nominations in their cluster.

B. Vice President

1. The term of office will be one (1) year with re-election possible each year for the Senator's term of office.
2. Duties shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Presiding in the absence of, or at the request of, the Senate President and assuming the President's duties in their absence,
 - b. Acting as Financial Officer with signature authority for financial transactions,
 - c. Presenting an annual budget and relevant financial information to the Executive Committee, and
 - d. Assuming the Office of Interim President for the remainder of the term, if the President vacates the office for any reason.

C. Coordinator of Membership Information

1. Term of office is one (1) year with re-election possible each year for the Senator's term.
2. Duties shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Assist the Secretary with disseminating the minutes, information, and agendas to the membership,
 - b. Accept agenda items from the Senate representatives and/or Staff membership,
 - c. Maintaining a roster of eligible members as stated in Article IV, and
 - d. Providing membership information to the Election Committee.

D. Secretary

1. The term of office will be one (1) year with re-election possible each year for the Senator's term in office.
2. Duties shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Serving as Secretary of each Senate meeting, taking in-person and remote attendance, recording, and distributing minutes to the representatives at least five business days before the next scheduled general meeting of the Senate,
 - b. Send a reminder email and meeting agenda to the representatives two business days prior to the next scheduled general meeting,
 - c. Serving as Secretary of the Executive Committee, recording and distributing minutes to

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the committee members within three business days of the meeting and notifying the members of the meeting dates and location, and

- d. Maintaining all Senate and Executive Committee files and records.
- E. Coordinator of Public Relations
1. The term of office will be one (1) year with re-election possible each year for the Senator's term in office.
 2. Duties shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Promoting awareness of the Staff Senate's mission, activities, and accomplishments among the university community,
 - b. Manage communications through newsletters and social media and collaborate with the Coordinator of Web Site Information to ensure accurate and consistent messaging, and
 - c. Present or organize events that raise awareness of staff service and staff appreciation on campus.
- F. Coordinator of Web Site Information
1. The term of office will be one (1) year with re-election possible each year for the Senator's term in office.
 2. Duties shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Supervising maintenance and regularly updating of the Senate web site,
 - b. Ensuring that only correct information authorized by the Senate is placed on the Senate website, and
 - c. Serving as the Historian.
- G. President-Elect
1. Election will take place in the January of the year in which the President's term ends. The President-Elect will begin their term as President with the July meeting.
 2. To be eligible for President-Elect, a Senator must not be in their fourth consecutive year serving on Staff Senate.
 3. Before beginning term of President, the President-Elect will attend Executive Committee meetings and meet individually with officers and committee chairs.
- H. Immediate Past President
1. The outgoing President shall become Immediate Past President for one year, acting in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee.
 2. The Immediate Past President shall be an unofficial member of the Executive Committee and shall be notified in advance when they are requested to attend Executive Committee meetings.
 3. If the Immediate Past President has already served a four (4) year term on the Senate, for eligibility to be on the list of nominations in their cluster, this one year of advisory duty shall be considered as a year out of the Senate.

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ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

The standing committees of the Senate shall be: Executive, Bylaws, Election, Issues Review, Legislative Advisory, Public Relations and Information, and Total Compensation Committees. With the approval of the Senate, other committees may be formed by the President or Executive Committee as ad hoc committees. Each elected and appointed officer or committee chair will submit an annual report of activities to the Staff Senate President at the end of each year of service.

- A. Membership on standing and ad hoc committees will be open to all Senators. The chair of a committee may appoint one or more subcommittees and subcommittee chairs for specific terms to deal with assigned issues. The subcommittee chair shall report to the appointing committee. Each standing committee should consist of a chair, a minimum of two (2) members, and maximum of eight (8) members. Committee membership shall be made up of volunteers from the Staff Senate main body. The President of the Staff Senate can appoint members if needed. Committees shall meet regularly as needed. Each committee shall appoint a secretary if needed. Both standard and ad hoc committees shall have the authority to invite individuals to the committee meeting in an advisory capacity.
- B. Standing Committees
 1. Executive Committee
 - a. The membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the Senate: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Coordinator of Membership, Coordinator of Public Relations, and Coordinator of Web Site Information. The committee will be chaired by the President of the Senate. The Vice President shall act as the Financial Officer of the Senate.
 - b. Duties of the Executive committee shall be: to consider all matters presented to it by the Senate President, the University President or designee, the Senator, standing committee chairs, or staff membership; to report and make recommendations to the Senators; to assist the Senate President in setting the agenda for Senate meetings; to review periodically the purpose and membership of each standing committee to assure it is functioning as intended by the Senate; to assist in appointments to standing committees and ad hoc committees as necessary; to resolve questions related to the Senate election process; and to make recommendations to the Senate regarding the removal of a senator when deemed to be in the best interest of the Senate. All expenditures of the Executive Committee shall be voted upon in a general Senate meeting. The Executive Committee will be responsible for budgetary and financial matters, as well as reporting budget status at the monthly Senate meeting and preparing a budget for the Executive Committee and the University President. In situations of emergency or immediate need, the President or Vice President may approve expenditures up to and not to exceed \$100.00.
 - c. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly in advance of the regular meeting with all Senators. Other special meetings may be called by the Senate President, by the University President, by the representative Senators, or by request of two or more members of the Executive Committee.
 2. Bylaws Committee

Duties of the committee shall be: to make senators aware of the Staff Senate bylaws and where to find this information on the University web site; to review annually the bylaws; to receive recommendations from a member of the Senate for review; and to propose any amendments to the Staff Senate.
 3. Election Committee

The member Senators cannot be eligible to be a candidate for re-election while serving on the Committee. The Executive Committee Secretary and the Coordinator of Membership Information will help the Committee with information about Staff membership and duties.

 - a. Duties of the Election Committee are to assist with the initiating, publicizing, conduction, and tabulation of the election and the results. The chair of the Election Committee shall announce the results. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates, another vote shall be conducted as a run-off.
 - b. The Election Committee shall meet as necessary prior to the election process.

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- c. Term of office of the Election Committee members shall be determined by the appointments and term of office of the member.
4. Issues Review Committee
 - a. Any university staff member may submit an issue to a Senator. The Senator will then submit the issue to the Issues Review Committee. The Issues Review Committee shall be responsible for discussing and evaluating the issues presented by the Senators. The Issues Review committee shall study, develop, and make recommendations to the Executive Committee to be presented to the Senate for action or information.
 - b. The Issues Review Committee shall meet monthly to discuss the issues presented before it. The committee shall have the power to call a meeting when deemed necessary.
 - c. The term of office for the Issues Review Committee members will be consistent with each Senator's term.
5. Legislative Advisory Committee
 - a. Duties of the Legislative Advisory committee shall be: to confer with the President of the Staff Senate and the President of The University of Memphis through the appropriate legislative offices of the University about issues important to the mission of the staff senate and The University of Memphis as a whole; to encourage the participation of the members of the Staff Senate in the political process; to serve in an advocacy role for the betterment of the Staff of The University of Memphis as a whole; and to communicate to the Staff Senate and University employees regarding issues impacting higher education employees.
 - b. Meetings: The Legislative Advisory Committee shall meet as called when needed by the chair of the committee. It shall meet at least once between January 1st and April 30th of each calendar year.
6. Public Relations and Information Committee
 - a. The Public Relations and Information Committee shall consist of the Coordinator of Public Relations, Coordinator of Web Site Information, and senators solicited in a general Senate meeting.
 - b. Duties of the Public Relations and Information Committee shall be: to promote awareness of the Staff Senate's mission, activities, and accomplishments among the university community; manage communications through newsletters and social media; collaborate with the Coordinator of Web Site Information to ensure accurate and consistent messaging; and present or organize events that raise awareness of staff service on campus.
 - c. The Public Relations and Information Committee shall meet monthly to discuss the issues presented before it. The committee shall have the power to call a meeting when deemed necessary.
 - d. The term of office for the Public Relations and Information Committee members will be a one-year term coinciding with their regular term as a senator.
7. Total Compensation Committee
 - a. The membership of the Total Compensation Committee should include at least one Senator with financial and human resources expertise. The chair of the Total Compensation Committee must be a Staff Senator.
 - b. Duties of the Total Compensation Committee shall be: to address any University of Memphis compensation related matters brought to the Staff Senate, seek outside expertise when needed, and collaborate with the Issues Review Committee. This could include but is not limited to wages, insurance, and other benefits.
 - c. The Total Compensation Committee shall meet monthly to discuss the issues presented before it. The committee shall have the power to call a meeting when deemed necessary.
 - d. The term of office for the Total Compensation Committee members will be consistent with each Senator's term.
8. Ad Hoc Committee(s)
 - a. The ad hoc committee(s) shall be formed by the Executive Committee or the President when the need arises.
 - b. The duties shall be assigned by the Executive Committee or the President. The duties

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assigned must be dealt with responsibly and a report given to the Executive Committee. The ad hoc committee shall schedule meetings according to its need to meet the charge.

- c. The term of office for the members will terminate when the purpose has been served.

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ARTICLE VIII: BYLAWS

- A. These Bylaws may be amended, repealed, or replaced in the following manner.
 - 1. A member of the Senate may make a verbal or written recommendation for an amendment to the Bylaws Committee for its review.
 - 2. The Bylaws Committee must be set up for review of any written proposal(s) and submit it to the Executive Committee to be placed on the agenda of the next meeting. The amendment will be proposed to the Senate and shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the Senators in attendance at the time of the vote to pass.

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