2016-2017
Staff Senate
By-Laws
Proposed
Revisions

Revised by Staff Senate July 2016
Reviewed by Tuskegee University Staff August 15, 2016

3/16/2020
Nikki
BS Bylaws
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approved, by the BOT.
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I. PURPOSE

A. The staff is primarily responsible for support of the academic programs of instruction, research, public service, and units at Tuskegee University. The staff is defined as permanent non-faculty employees of Tuskegee University including all classified, administrative unit and administrative non-unit job categories with the exception of the Board of Trustees.

B. The staff delegates its policy-making responsibilities to its duly elected representatives who serve as its Executive Body and who shall constitute the Staff Senate. The Staff Senate is the representative voice of the University staff for purposes of college governance.

II. POWERS AND JURISDICTION

A. Legislative Function

Serve as the legislative body to develop and recommend policies to the University staff not covered by labor union contracts. During intervals between meetings of the staff as a whole, it shall have jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to staff affairs and policies of the University that fall within the province of the staff; has a major role in formulation of legislation that falls within the following areas:

1. Administer a fair process for recommending or appointing staff representatives to serve on University-wide committees, planning councils, and program councils within the University's governance structure other than those appointed by the University President;

2. Maintain and promote effective channels of communication among staff, faculty, students, the Administration, the Board of Trustees, and other stakeholders;

3. Periodically review the effectiveness of the total staff personnel program.

B. Advisory Function

To act as an advisory body, through its corporate whole and any of its constituent parts, to the President or other administrative officers on any matters that may affect the attainment of the staff objectives of the University such as:

1. Provide a forum for examination of common concerns and issues related to quality of life and employment for all non-faculty staff (excluding terms and conditions of employment subject to union negotiation);

2. Develop and implement other goals and activities as determined by the Staff
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Senate to be consistent with its overall purpose and the mission of Tuskegee University;

3. Consider and recommend action on existing and proposed policies and procedures, as well as any other matters related to the interests of the University, the campus community, and other stakeholders; and

4. Uphold and advance the University's commitment to equal opportunity and appreciation of diversity in all its policies, procedures, decisions, appointments, and other actions.

C. Other Functions

1. Call at least one meeting per semester of the University staff.

2. Determine voting rights of staff.

3. Consult with the Board of Trustees or its committees on matters related to the staff upon request by a majority of voting members of the staff, or of the Staff Senate, at a regular or duly called meeting, provided that the Board or the President deems that matters to be discussed are appropriate for Board consideration.

4. Appoint special committees to recommend policy; direct authorized inquiries, and/or recommend action in areas of concern, which its standing committees are unable to oversee directly.

D. Limitations

1. By a simple majority of members at a regular or duly called meeting of the University staff, the staff can veto any action of the Senate. When a staff veto occurs, the Senate may request the staff to reconsider the action at the next staff meeting.

2. The President of the institution may, before the next regular meeting of the Senate, disapprove any action of the Senate. When a presidential veto occurs, the staff must consider the action. The staff's affirmation of the Senate's original position by a two-thirds vote of quorum constitutes referral to the Board of Trustees. The Board's decision is final.

III. MEMBERSHIP

A. Ex Officio Members

The President, Provost, Chief Financial Officer, and Vice President of Human
Resources, in addition to the Immediate Past Staff Senate Chair (if term on Staff Senate has expired). Ex Officio members shall not have the right to vote in meetings of the Staff Senate.

B. Elected Members

1. The Staff Senate shall consist of a minimum of 11 members to be elected by staff members in the respective departments.

2. Any voting staff member shall be eligible for election to the Staff Senate.

3. The basis for recall of any elected member of the Senate shall be based on non-attendance at meetings as follow:
   a. Elected members who fail to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without a legitimate excuse shall be dropped from membership in the Senate.
   b. Elected members who fail to attend at least one-half of the meetings during the year without a legitimate excuse shall be dropped from membership in the Senate. (Attendance record taken by Secretary or acting representative and shared amongst all Senators)
   c. The Executive Committee of the Senate shall make recommendations to the Senate regarding the legitimacy of absences for Senators. In the event a Senator fails to attend meetings as outlined in items a and b, and the Senate accepts a recommendation from its Executive Committee that the absences were not illegitimate, the offending Senator shall be notified of termination of membership.
   d. A special election will be held University-wide in the event of membership falling below the minimum of 11 members to elect a replacement within sixty (60) days.

4. Elected members have the power to vote.

5. Senate membership automatically expires upon termination of employment (voluntary and involuntary) from the University.

C. Associate Members

Any interested staff member of The University may serve as an Associate Member of the Staff Senate. Associate Members may participate in Staff Senate functions and attend general meetings. Associate Members may serve on internal Senate Councils and external governance committees and councils, with the exception of the five standing committees. Associate Members have No voting privileges within the Senate.
IV. ELECTIONS

A. Nominations

1. A call for nominations will be disseminated annually to all staff by the third Thursday in February.

2. The nominations apply to all eligible staff (regular, full time employees in accordance with staff handbook, section 4.4). The instructions will inform staff that they may nominate one person, including himself or herself. Only nominations that follow this guideline will be accepted. Nominations are to be complete by the second Thursday in March.

3. Nominees will be sent an electronic message confirming their nomination and asking them to reply if they are willing to serve, if elected.

4. Responses from nominees must be received before the third Thursday in March.

B. Ballots

1. Ballots reflecting the nominations will be disseminated electronically by the First Thursday in April.

2. Completed ballots must be returned to the Staff Senate two weeks after nominations are disseminated.

3. The counting and tallying of ballots by the Senate should take place on the Friday immediately after the close of ballots.

4. The Senate Chair will notify the President of the election results.

C. Post-Election

1. The Senate will notify the newly elected members of their election and their first meeting date.

2. The Senate is to provide the names of new Senate members to the Office of Marketing and Communications in the week following the final tallying of ballots.

3. Election results are to be maintained by the Staff Senate.

D. Vacancies

1. Should an elected seat be permanently vacated, the Chair will consult with the
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Senate to determine if a special election will be held within sixty (60) days of notice of vacancy.

V. TERMS

The elected members of the Senate shall serve for three (3) year terms. Members who have served a full term shall be ineligible for election to the Senate for a period of one year. The nominations and elections shall occur annually in the month of April. Duly elected Senators shall take office effective June 1 of the year elected.

VI. ORGANIZATION

A. Officers

1. Officer positions include the following: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Communications Officer, and Parliamentarian; should be elected after the first meeting.

2. All elected shall be eligible for re-election for one additional term in that same position. If elected, an officer is able to serve in a new officer position.

3. The Secretary shall provide each member with a copy of the minutes of the previous meeting at least one week before the next regular meeting. The minutes, reports, and proceedings of the Senate shall be available to University staff on the Staff Senate webpage (or current medium utilized).

4. The Communications Officer for the Senate shall notify members of all meetings.

5. Parliamentarian of the Senate will be appointed and should become familiar with Roberts Rule of Order; and is responsible for ensuring that all business conducted at Staff Senate meetings complies with the Governance of the Staff Senate.

B. Committees

1. The standing committees of the Senate shall be:

a. Executive Committee

   i. The committee shall consist of elected officers of Staff Senate (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Communications Officer, Parliamentarian and should be elected after the first meeting). The presiding officer shall be the Chairperson of the Senate.

   ii. It shall prepare the agenda for the Senate meetings; assign or refer the business of the Senate to appropriate committees for consideration and report; recommend abolition, alteration or creation of Senate committees and generally expedite all work of the Senate. It shall prepare an operating budget for the Senate, which shall be forwarded to the administration.
b. Communication and Public Relations Committee
This committee will foster and enhance communication between the Staff Senate, the staff and campus community; be responsible for coordination of publication through newsletters, webpage (ensuring changes are made in a timely manner - within a month of the change), brochures and presentations; keep official attendance records and record minutes of Senate meetings; welcome new 'staff' employees to the campus; develop a campaign that promotes/markets the Staff Senate to the campus community and, in particular, to the university staff.

c. Staff Development and Recognition Committee
This committee shall provide a formal orientation and training program for all new Senators to prepare them to fulfill their assigned responsibilities, provide in-service staff professional development workshops/seminars/training opportunities that enhance job performance and wellness to all staff; coordinate and develop an annual staff recognition program; explore opportunities for staff to build strong and productive relationships within the campus community.

d. Special Events and Community Building Committee
This committee shall organize events that will build a sense of community among the Tuskegee University's staff; create opportunities for staff volunteers to engage in community service; host the All Staff Conference once a semester to provide staff an opportunity to discuss issues of concerns with the Staff Senate.

e. Election and Constitution Committee
This committee shall develop election and nomination procedures for approval by the Senate; manage election and appointment process for the positions of elected positions of the Staff Senate (Chairman, Chairman- Elect (Vice Chair), Secretary, and Treasurer) and Senators; monitor all staff senate vacancies; review the Staff Senate Governance document on an annual basis and recommend revisions and/or amendments

2. The chair of each standing committee shall be elected from and by the membership of the Senate. These persons shall serve as members of the executive committee of the Senate.

3. Membership and participation on Committees is encouraged and open to all university staff.

4. All committees shall report in writing at the regular meetings of the Senate. They have no autonomous jurisdiction in specific areas but must refer specific matters to the Senate.

5. Elected members of the Senate shall constitute no more than one-third of any standing committee. No more than two persons from any major area shall be elected
to any standing committee. Non-Senate standing committee members shall be elected by the Senate to serve a 1 year term. The Chairperson of any standing committee shall be an elected senator. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees of the Senate.

6. Each committee, except the Executive Committee, shall have seven (7) staff members, including the Chairman.
7. The Senate may alter the composition, jurisdiction, and design of its committee structure by motion and two-thirds vote of the elected Senators.

8. The Senate may request the services of the staff, administration or student body for special periods of time or for special tasks on its standing, ad hoc, or special committees.

C. Removal from office

1. Any Executive Officer or Senator can be removed from office by the Staff Senate for dereliction of duties. A petition requesting such removal can be brought to the Executive Committee by a simple majority of the quorum of the Senate. The Executive Committee will investigate the matter on a case-by-case basis and will recommend action to the Senate.

2. The Senate will make the final decision by secret ballot. A two-thirds vote of the quorum will carry the vote. Possible causes of expulsion constituting grounds for removal from office shall include, but not be limited to:
   a. use of the powers of the Senate, real or implied, to further personal causes
   b. excessive absenteeism (more than three unexcused absences)
   c. failure to consistently fulfill the responsibility of the Senate positions

3. Resignation in good standing from the Senate shall require a formal, written letter of resignation to be submitted to the Executive Committee.

D. Governance Representation

The Chairman of the staff Senate shall serve on the Executive Council under the University system of governance.

1. Conflict of interest

   a. Any University staff members who serve on the President's Executive Council may not serve as an executive officer of the Staff Senate, but is permitted to serve as a Senator.

VII. MEETINGS OF THE SENATE

A. Regular Meetings of the Staff Senate will be held monthly on the third Thursday of
each month. Meetings can be called as deemed necessary.

B. The Chairperson of the Senate shall preside over the meetings. In his or her absence, then the Vice Chairperson or Chair-elect will preside.

C. Special meetings may be called by the following:

1. President of the University
2. Chairperson of the Staff Senate
3. Twenty percent (20%) of the Staff Senate
4. Majority vote of Senators present a regular meeting

D. Members of the Senate must receive official notification of the meeting at least three working days prior to the meeting.

E. Members of the University staff may attend any meetings of the Staff Senate. In addition, upon invitation of the chair, or with the consent of the body, a staff member may participate in the deliberations, but shall not render a vote.

F. A Quorum consists of the majority of elected members of the Staff Senate.

G. Items that are brought to the Staff Senate between regularly scheduled meetings which require immediate attention, or which do not require an assembly may be conducted via email exchange (or whatever mechanism that proves conducive to the order of business). Any action requires a response from the majority of the Senate, and will allow forty-eight (48) hours for a response before the item is considered to be closed.

H. Each elected Senator has the opportunity to bring forth items for deliberation.

I. Robert’s Rule of Order, latest edition, shall be considered as binding.

VIII. ADOPTION

These bylaws shall become effective when adopted by the Staff Senate and Approved by the President of the University. These bylaws and the Staff Senate established thereby are subject to the official governance and control of the Board of Trustees of Tuskegee University as amended.

IX. AMENDMENTS

The following procedures must be followed in order to amend the Governance Document of the Staff Senate. The approval process for amendments shall be as follows:
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A. A proposal for an amendment must be reviewed by Staff Senate.

B. A notice of amendment must be presented by the Executive Council to all members of the Staff Senate prior to the next meeting where the proposal will be discussed. The notice shall explain the proposed amendment in detail.

C. Amendments shall be presented to the University Staff (made available).

D. Amendments to the Governance Document shall be ratified by two-thirds vote of the quorum of the Staff Senate.

E. Once the amendment has been voted on, then it will be submitted to the President of Tuskegee University for the final approval.

X. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

All business conducted by the Staff Senate that is not specifically addressed by the Staff Senate Governance Document and Bylaws shall be conducted according to the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order. This is considered a binding document.