

BYLAWS
Texas A&M University
University Staff Council

Article I – MISSION

The University Staff Council's (USC) stated mission is to represent the interests of and address the issues impacting both classified and non-classified staff employees under the leadership of the Texas A&M University President.

Article II – PURPOSE

The council will provide a voice and integrate staff perspective by:

1. Acting as a conduit for two-way communication between staff and administration.
2. Engaging staff and bringing their interests before the administration.
3. Identifying university issues and their impact on staff.
4. Exploring and researching possible solutions to issues.
5. Providing options and recommendations to the President.
6. Interacting with other councils.

The Council will not be involved in any specific employee/employer matters or disputes.

Article III – COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The Council will consist of full voting members and non-voting ex-officio members. There will be no fewer than twenty-five (25) voting council member positions. There will be no more than ten (10) ex-officio member positions, to include at least one ex-officio agency member from Agriculture and at least one ex-officio agency member from Engineering. Ex-officio representation will be nominated by the Executive Committee and voted on by the council.

- A) **Eligibility.** Council members will be classified or non-classified staff employees. Representatives must have an overall performance evaluation of "Meets Expectations" or higher on their most current Texas A&M University evaluation and have a least 12 months of service in their college, division or unit at the time of the election. All voting council representatives shall be selected through an election process of their peers.
- B) **Terms.** Council Members will serve three-year terms with approximately one-third of the Council membership rotating every year. Council members may be elected to successive terms. In the event that a representative has completed at least two years of a term (either a standard three year term or the completion of an uncompleted term) and will be seeking an elected officer's position, that representative may petition their home area to allow a one-year extension to their current term. Areas may choose to grant the one-year extension with or without an election by their area. Only one extension will be allowed for any representative. After a granted extension, the term immediately to follow would for the three years or other normal term as dictated by USC Bylaws.

- C) **Duties.** Council members are required to represent the interests of the employees they serve and the employees of Texas A&M University. Council members are expected to attend and participate in regularly - scheduled Council meetings and additional committee meetings when needed. The Chairperson should be informed in advance of any anticipated absences. An absence without prior notification will be considered an un-excused absence and will be recorded in meeting minutes. The Executive Committee shall address issues of non-participation or lack of attendance by a council member after three absences in a twelve month period. Council members will be responsible for disseminating information to the employees they represent. Council members will be expected to serve on at least one standing committee and no more than three.
- D) **Vacancies.** Where a vacancy in a Council position occurs before the member's term expires, the vacancy shall remain until the area that seat represents submits another representative. The new representative shall serve the remainder of the vacated term.

Article IV – OFFICERS - TERMS

The USC Executive Officers shall include a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer and two at-large members. These officers shall constitute the Executive Committee. Terms of office for all positions shall be one year. Each officer may serve more than one term, but must be nominated and elected each year by members of the USC. A council member may not hold more than one of the aforementioned executive offices at one time. Annual elections shall be held by May 31st and newly-elected officers shall begin training with outgoing officers and participate in transitioning within their respective new council assignments until assuming office on September 1. Members whose terms are expiring in August are not eligible for the next year's Executive Committee unless that member has already been re-elected to serve another term on the Council.

Should an executive officer transfer employment to another unit or division within Texas A&M University that is eligible for voting membership on the council, he or she may continue their role on the council and the Executive Committee throughout the remainder of the fiscal year. The original unit or division the Executive Officer represented will fill the vacancy created by the transfer of employment of their representative per Section III D in the bylaws. If the executive officer transfers employment to an agency not eligible for representation as a voting member on the council, his or her membership on the council and the Executive Committee will cease upon their transfer of their employment.

- A) **Chairperson.** The Chairperson shall: (1) provide leadership and vision for the USC; (2) facilitate meetings and open forums; (3) serve as Chairperson of the Executive Committee; (4) serve as official spokesperson for the USC and approve official communications; (5) represent the USC in the larger university and higher education community.

- B) **Vice Chairperson.** The Vice Chairperson shall: (1) perform Chairperson duties as needed in his\her absence; (2) coordinate meeting and forum logistics including distribution of the agenda prior to the meeting.
- C) **Secretary.** The Secretary shall: (1) compile and maintain records of USC membership, activities, and programs; (2) ensure minutes of meetings and forums are recorded and facilitate their distribution and approval in a timely manner.
- D) **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall: (1) oversee all fiscal activities in coordination with the USC; (2) maintain financial records, and process financial transactions; (3) provide a quarterly financial report to the USC.
- E) **At-Large.** The At-large members shall; (1) offer additional USC representation to the Executive Committee; (2) provide additional support to the accomplishment of Executive Committee responsibilities.

In the event any elected Executive Office becomes vacant, the USC will elect an officer by majority vote from the current membership to fill such vacancy until the next election of officers.

Article V - COMMITTEES

A) **Committees.** Committees are established by the Executive Committee for a specified purpose, with size and composition to be determined under the guidance of the Executive Committee. The Chairpersons of said committees shall be chosen by the members and report to the Executive Committee. If the members are unable or unwilling to select a Committee Chairperson, the Chairperson of the Staff Council may appoint one. With the exception of the Executive Committee, an executive officer cannot serve as the chair or co-chair of a committee. The term of service shall be one year but may serve consecutive terms.

Committees shall meet at the discretion of the Committee Chairperson and submit minutes from each meeting to the Secretary of the Staff Council at least one week prior to the monthly Council meeting. Final drafts of committee proposals require Council approval. Each committee will, upon request, act as a resource to the other committees or Council.

For voting purposes, a simple majority of the committee membership shall constitute a quorum with a majority consisting of one-half of the voting membership plus one. Committees will submit a final report including recommendations regarding the issue(s) at the time of the established deadline.

Committees will meet at the beginning of the year to set goals and related metrics to fulfill their charters. Committees will monitor and report on a monthly basis to the Executive Committee and to the general membership.

- 1) The **Executive Committee** shall ensure overall USC group cohesiveness and the validity and attainment of collective group goals. The membership shall consist of the elected officers. This committee shall ensure active member participation. The committee shall provide information and recommendations to the President of the University. Executive Committee meetings shall be held at least once a month and/or as necessary to conduct Council business.
- 2) The **Bylaws Committee** shall review and maintain the USC Constitution and Bylaws to ensure the accuracy and validity of the articles under which the Council operates. Upon request through amendment proposals, the committee will provide recommendations to the Council for any changes to the Constitution or Bylaws.
- 3) The **Communications & Outreach Committee** shall oversee and coordinate all internal and external USC communication protocols to include but not limited to listserv, USC website, press release and marketing materials, and other materials, both electronic and print in collaboration with the Executive Committee. It shall also seek to increase the visibility and accessibility of the USC to, and by, all staff. The committee shall assess general awareness of the USC by staff and providing USC representatives with, and encouraging them to use, tools to improve this awareness across campuses. In addition, the committee shall seek to impart the value of our membership.
- 4) The **Elections Committee** will review eligibility and ensure representation across classification levels and executive reporting levels. They shall announce the call for officer nominations and conduct the election of officers. The committee will create and recommend election procedures to the representative units as well as assist in election processes if needed. The elections committee shall present proposed representation changes to the USC body as a whole preceding each election cycle in order to reflect a council that is representative of the university.
- 5) The **Inclusion Equality and Respect in the Workplace Committee** was established to engage staff to foster a culture of respect for ALL people who work and visit Texas A&M University. We want everyone who comes to campus to feel a sense of welcoming and belonging. This committee shall fulfill the need for a united campus-wide staff effort to promote a culture of respect to ensure alignment with Texas A&M's mission and core values and to support Vision 2020 goals. This committee shall promote University initiatives on inclusion, equality and respect of all peoples and collaborate with appropriate committees on campus to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.
- 6) The **Professional Development Committee** shall review and promote professional development opportunities for the University Staff Council representatives for each year of representation. The committee shall work with the general membership and the Executive Officers to create and schedule learning opportunities through the year that enhance the mission of the council.

- 7) The **Staff Emergency Fund Committee** shall receive and process applications for limited financial assistance from both classified and non-classified staff, under the leadership of the Texas A&M University President, who are experiencing a temporary hardship due to a significant life event.
 - 8) The **Work Life and Benefits Committee** shall work to enhance the quality of work life for university employees. The committee shall address work life issues to include but not limited to: safety and wellness, benefits, employee incentive programs, alternative work models, and dependent care. The committee shall collaborate with units across campus to identify and to share information about exemplary work life improvement efforts.
- B) **Ad Hoc Committees.** Ad Hoc Committees are established and charged by the Executive Committee or the Chairperson of the Staff Council, and are conceived as having temporary, finite, or exploratory functions. Charges include the purpose, composition, size and the terms of the appointments to the committee as well as an indication of the date or completed task that determines the dissolution of the committee.

Article VI – MEETINGS

The USC shall meet monthly on the third Tuesday of each month. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson as deemed necessary. Meetings shall be open, and only those items on the agenda shall be considered. Agenda items may be submitted to the executive committee for consideration by any Texas A&M University staff member at least one week before a scheduled monthly council meeting. New business may be discussed but no action may be taken without appropriate deliberation. The parliamentary authority of the USC shall be the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. If needed the Chairperson may appoint a Parliamentarian to advise the Chairperson on parliamentary procedures. A quorum of 2/3 of voting USC members is required for a vote to take place. Passage of Business items require majority approval of voting members present.

At least one university-wide open forum shall be held each year.

Article VII - PROCEDURES ON ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

In the furtherance of its mission, the University Staff Council supports open communications and encourages employees to communicate issues and/or suggestions to any Council member. Communications with the University Staff Council, either to the Council as a whole or to any individual representative, can be done by: electronic mail, written communications, or verbally as indicated at the Council website.

All issues submitted will be evaluated using the adopted method for processing issues as described in the USC General Procedures. All issues that are submitted by any Texas A&M University employee for consideration by the USC shall receive an acknowledgment that the issue has been received. The USC website will provide guidance on how issues may be tracked.

Article VIII – AMENDMENTS

An Amendment to the Bylaws can be proposed in writing by any USC representative to the Executive Committee. Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws shall be delivered to each USC member at least three (3) business days prior to a regular USC meeting. The Proposed Amendment will be discussed and edits incorporated. The Proposed Amendment will then be presented for a vote at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Amendment shall be adopted if it receives a 2/3 vote of those eligible to vote. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

Article IX – STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard Operating Procedures have been adopted by a majority of the voting and made publicly available. Standard Operating Procedures can be changed as needed through the Executive Committee.

Approved October 7, 2008
Amended August 26, 2010
Amended April 19, 2011
Amended June 21, 2011
Amended January 17, 2012
Amended September 17, 2013
Amended December 17, 2013
Amended October 21, 2014
Amended November 18, 2014
Amended February 17, 2015
Amended May 17, 2016
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