

# Salisbury University Staff Senate Bylaws

## Mission

Basic to the effective operation of any institution of higher education is the acceptance of the concept of shared governance. Shared governance should include participation by students, faculty and staff. The University staff, which includes all non-faculty employees, provides a wide range of services and expertise that is critical to the fulfillment of the University's overall mission. In recognition of the role which all staff employees fulfill in achieving the mission of the University and our participation in its planning and structure, the Salisbury University Staff Senate (SUSS) will be committed to reviewing and making recommendations on all issues affecting the entire welfare of the University community and its employees (except those employees covered by collective bargaining), particularly in the area of human resource matters and its ultimate effect on staff.

## Article I – Purpose

In recognition of this essential role, all eligible staff are afforded the opportunity to make recommendations relative to basic decisions affecting their welfare and the welfare of the University. These decisions should involve the assumption of having an informed participatory advisory role on administrative issues and in the functional support aspects of academic matters. Furthermore, all eligible University staff, except for the president and his/her senior vice presidents (officer group), will be considered as voting Salisbury University Staff Senate members.

## Article II - Membership, Officers & Committees

### Section I. Membership:

The Staff Senate membership will consist of all exempt, non-exempt and contingent employees not covered under collective bargaining.

Each category of staff will elect its own Senators.

The voting membership of the Executive Committee of the Staff Senate will consist of 12 elected Senators of whom there will be 6 regular exempts, 2 regular non-exempts, 3 contingents (exempt and/or non-exempt) and 1 CUSS representative. The non-voting membership of the Executive committee will consist of 2 non-exempt employees covered under collective bargaining and the remaining CUSS representative and alternates.

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#### **II.I.a Election of Regular (PIN) Exempt Senators**

There will be 6 elected exempt Senators from all regular exempt employees. All of these positions will be elected at-large with 2 Senate positions elected every year.

#### **II.I.b Election of Regular Non-exempt Senators**

There will be 2 elected non-exempt Senators from all regular non-exempt employees not covered by collective bargaining. One Senate position will be elected at-large in each of the first year two years of implementation. Every third year, there will not be a regular election of a non-exempt Senator.

#### **II.I.c Election of Contingent Senators**

There will be 3 elected non-exempt Senators from all contingent (including Grants) employees. All of these positions will be elected at-large with 1 Senate position elected every year.

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#### **II.I.d Election of CUSS (Council of University System Staff)**

There will be two elected at large CUSS representatives and two elected at large CUSS alternates from all regular exempt and all regular non-exempt employees not covered by collective bargaining. Preferably these representative will be 1 exempt and 1 non-exempt not covered by collective bargaining respectively. The

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alternates would follow the same representation when possible. After two years – the alternates will become the representatives. Every two years the alternates will be elected.

The voting CUSS Senator will be determined between the two representatives.

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### **II.I.e Election of Non-voting Non-exempt Representatives**

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Contingent upon not violating any MOUs between the University and the union representing non-exempt employees covered under collective bargaining, the Staff Senate will accept non-voting but active participation by 2 non-exempt staff members covered under collective bargaining. In the first year of the amended by-laws (FY 2004), those members will be the two existing non-exempt senators covered by collective bargaining. From July 2004 and thereafter, the union may annually forward no less than 3 and no more than 5 names for consideration by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee by majority vote may accept no more than 2 nominees, but does not have to accept any. These representatives would serve one-year terms.

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## **Section II. Term of Office:**

**II.II.a** Senator's term of office will be for 3 years with the exception of the CUSS representative(s) and alternate(s), who will serve a 4 year term.

**II.II.a.1** If a vacancy is created by a status change, conversion or resignation of a Senator, then an appointment will be made by the Executive Committee until the next regular election. The remaining term of the departed Senate position will be filled from this election.

### **II.II.b Attendance**

Senators should make every effort to attend every meeting, but attendance is required at 2/3's of all scheduled meetings; failure to meet this requirement could result in the Senator being subject to recall by the voting members of the Executive Committee. Since participation in shared governance mainly occurs during the normal course of business, there should be reasonable expectation that excused absences will be incurred. As long as a Senator does not miss three consecutive meetings (excused or otherwise) and attends at least 50% of the regularly scheduled meetings, no recall will be commenced. Multiple consecutive absences constitute a Senator's inability to meet the expectation of participation and representation of his/her constituency.

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### **II.II.c. Recall of Senators**

Senators may be recalled at any time by a majority vote. A recall is effected by either of the following procedures and a vacancy exists immediately upon completion of either procedure:

- a) A petition of recall is signed by a majority of the entire constituency which elected the individual, effecting the immediate recall of the individual; or b) a petition of recall is signed by at least 10% of the constituency which elected the individual, a special meeting of the constituency is called and a majority of the entire constituency votes to recall the individual; or c) a vote of no confidence by 2/3 of the executive committee would call for a special meeting of the constituency and a majority of the entire constituency votes to recall the individual
- b) The vacancy created by a recall shall be filled by an appointment by the Executive Committee. (see II.II.a./a.1).

## **Section III. Officers:**

The officers of the Executive Committee shall be designated as Chair, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair, 3<sup>rd</sup> Chair, and Secretary. In the absence of the Chair, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair shall serve as Chair and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chair shall serve as 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair. These officers will be elected by and from the Senators. The Chair and officers shall be voting members of the Staff Senate and the Executive Committee. The term of office for each officer is one year.

## **Section IV. Duties of Officers:**

**II.IV.a.** The Chair's duties shall include but not be limited to presiding at all meetings of the Staff Senate and the Executive Committee; will enforce the obligations imposed by the constitution and by-laws of the Staff Senate; may serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of all ad hoc and standing committees; shall direct and set meetings times, agendas, dates and places; shall confer with the University administration as needed; shall initiate appointments as needed; shall be formally responsible to the administration for responding, notifying and/or submitting all official recommendations, in a timely manner; can provide leadership to Senators and committees; shall act as liaison between standing committees when necessary; shall perform other duties as the Executive Committee shall direct, and serves as the staff representative on the Presidents Advisory Team.

**II.IV.b.** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair's duties shall be the Chair Elect unless otherwise designated by the Executive Committee; shall act as assistant to the Chair; in the absence of the chair shall have all power and prerogatives of the Chair; and shall perform other duties as directed from the Executive Committee.

**II.IV.c.** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Chair shall, in the absence of the Chair and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair, assume all of the power and prerogatives of the Chair; shall assist the Chair and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair; shall be the Chair of the Membership and Elections Committee; and shall perform other duties as directed from the Executive Committee. In addition, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chair is responsible for maintaining the Staff Senate web page.

**II.IV.d.** The Secretary shall prepare and distribute to the Executive Committee, for approval, minutes of all meetings of the Staff Senate and the Executive Committee; shall officially update all approved by-law changes; shall distribute approved minutes and the meeting agendas to the Executive Committee and shall perform other duties as directed from the Executive Committee.

**II.IV.e.** The Chair of any standing committee and/or any ad hoc committee shall be a Senator and a member of the Executive Committee. Senators, with the exception of the Chair, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair, 3<sup>rd</sup> Chair, Secretary and the CUSS representative shall serve as voting members of at least one standing committee as well as any ad hoc committee created; shall with the advice and consent of the Staff Senate and the Executive Committee appoint ad hoc committees and its members as necessary; and shall receive requests, information, and questions for action from his/her constituency.

## **Section V. Recognized Standing Committees:**

The following committees will be considered Standing Committees of the Staff Senate.

1. Payroll/Human Resources Committee
2. Communications and Public Relations Committee
3. Membership and Elections Committee

### **II.V.a. Committee's Purpose**

#### **a) *Payroll/Human Resources Committee:***

This committee will review and make recommendations relative to proposals and changes from the campus, USM (BOR) and the State Personnel Office for all exempt, non-exempt and contingent employees not covered by collective bargaining. Items would include, but not be limited to: classification structure, pay ranges, COLA, merit, tuition remission, annual leave, sick leave, personal leave, compensatory leave. This committee will also be responsible for monitoring and making recommendations in helping to develop, sponsor and implement staff development opportunities for the campus. This committee should also be alert to other staff development training opportunities made available system wide.

b) *Communications Committee:*

This committee will develop the means of conveying information to the various constituents of the Staff Senate (exempt, non-exempt and contingent employees). This committee would also develop features for the SU Newsletter, CUSS Words, SU WEB and any other media necessary.

c) *Membership and Elections Committee:*

This committee will be responsible for organizing and administering elections for Senators to the Staff Senate Executive Committee. This committee will also be responsible for maintaining complete, accurate and current listings of staff members by employee type (regular exempt, regular non-exempt, contingent exempt and non-exempt).

**Section VI. Adding, Canceling or Changing Committee Structure:**

Any change to the original chartered Standing Committees will be by by-law amendment only. [See Article IV.]

**Section VII. Committee Representation:**

**II.VII.a** Each Standing Committee will be comprised of three Senators (at least one exempt and one contingent) and up to five regular staff members not covered by collective bargaining.

**II.VII.b.** Any Standing Committee may also recruit any “expert” necessary for consulting purposes on an ongoing basis (such as a Human Resource professional) who shall be a non-voting member.

**II.VII.c.** Standing Committee members will be elected by a ballot vote of plurality by the Staff Senate with the exception of the Senator(s) assigned by the Executive Committee to Chair the committee.

**Section VIII. Committee Term:**

**II.VIII.a.** Each Standing Committee member’s term of office shall be for 3 years with the exception of the initial startup year. The initial startup year term will be staggered with 1 exempt and 1 non-exempt employee serving a one-year term and a two-year term respectively in order to avoid the entire committee rotating off each year. Contingent members will also be elected to serve for a 2-year term [based on institutional requirement of an employment contract being in effect each fiscal year or project year]. Elected committee members may only be elected to serve for two consecutive terms on any committee.

**II.VIII.b.** Elections for Committees will be held in May of each year.

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**II.VIII.c.** Committee positions vacated by elected members before the end of term shall be appointed by the Committee Chair after conferring with its membership. Any unfilled committee vacancies due to lack of interest may be appointed by the Staff Senate Executive Committee.

**Section IX. Committee Member Recall:**

Committee members may be recalled by a majority vote of the established committee and its membership.

**Article III: Rules and Meetings**

**Section I. Rules:**

**III.I.a.** Robert’s Rules of Order will be used unless otherwise specified. The latest edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order* shall provide parliamentary procedures for conducting the business of the Staff Senate and its committees.

**III.I.b.** The By-laws of the Staff Senate shall be amended only after a posted specified period and a ballot vote by the Staff Senate. Amendments may be proposed by any staff member. A proposed amendment must be presented to the Executive Committee through the predetermined process (see Article IV.II.d).

## **Section II. Staff Senate Meetings:**

**III.II.a.** The Staff Senate shall meet in open plenary session at least bi-monthly during any calendar year. The notice, agenda and supporting documents shall be made available to the membership no later than two days prior to each regular meeting unless otherwise approved by the Executive Committee.

**III.II.b.** All meetings of the Staff Senate shall be open to all staff members of the University community.

**III.II.c.** The agenda for the scheduled Staff Senate meetings will be prepared by the Executive Committee prior to the regular meeting.

**III.II.d.** Special meetings of the Staff Senate may be called in any of the following ways with the manner to be specified in the call:

- upon request of the presiding officer of the Staff Senate;
- upon request of the President of the University;
- by a majority vote of the Executive Committee of the Staff Senate or;
- upon receipt, by the Chair of the Staff Senate, of a written petition signed by the majority of the elected members of the Staff Senate.

**III.II.e.** The scheduling of a special meeting shall reflect the urgency of the matters specified in the call, the requirement of reasonable notice and the availability of the membership.

**III.II.f.** The notice of a special meeting shall include the agenda and shall be sent to the members of the Staff Senate as far in advance of the meeting as possible. The agenda of a special meeting may specify a scheduled time of adjustment.

## **Section III. Executive Committee Meetings:**

**III.III.a.** All Executive Committee meetings will be in open session unless otherwise requested and announced for matters regarding confidentiality.

**III.III.b.** The Executive Committee shall meet at least 10 calendar days prior to the regularly scheduled Staff Senate meeting. In addition, the Executive Committee (via the Executive Committee Chair) shall prepare the agenda. Staff Senate members may submit requested agenda items in writing to the Executive Committee for action.

## **Section IV. Quorums:**

A quorum for the Staff Senate meetings shall require a minimum representation of 10% of the staff. If a quorum is not met, a non vote will be referred to the Staff Senate Executive Committee for resolution.

## **Section V. Voting:**

**III.V.a.** Unless otherwise specified in *Robert's Rules of Order*, motions in meetings of all Staff Senate groups described in these By-laws shall be passed by majority vote of those in attendance provided a quorum is present when the vote is taken.

**III.V.b.** Written ballots will be provided to all staff and must be submitted for any By-law change and election process. The Executive Committee will determine all other issues requiring a ballot vote. The Executive Committee will determine the method and/or procedure for balloting which will be forwarded to the Elections Committee for administration.

**III.V.c.** Elections will be held in April/May of each year and any new term for a Senator will commence July 1.

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## **Article IV: By-laws**

### **Section I. Adoption:**

**IV.I.a.** The initially prepared Constitution and By-laws will be published for a minimum of 15 calendar days before the first reading and can be allowed a longer period of time as determined by the founding Senate (a/k/a Staff Advisory Council) in advance of ratification.

**IV.I.b.** The newly-created Constitution and By-laws shall be presented to the entire Staff Membership for consideration and comment, discussed openly at the first reading and second reading, voted and ratified by a majority of the Staff Senate members voting (by ballot) within each constituency group.

**IV.I.c.** The Constitution and By-laws shall be adopted by an absolute majority of those members voting for the Staff Senate (based on constituent representation of regular exempt, regular non-exempt and contingent staff members voting by regular ballot). Results of the ballot voting (within each constituency) will determine the vote (2 of the 3 groups' majority representation must approve).

**IV.I.d.** The newly-ratified Constitution and By-laws will be submitted by the Founding Senate (a/k/a Staff Advisory Council) to the President of the University for review and approval. Should the President not concur with this ratified document, then the Founding Senate may meet with the President to negotiate a satisfactory resolution. After review and approval by the President, approval and ratification by the Staff Senate, the aforementioned Constitution and By-laws shall become effective on the designated date.

### **Section II. Approving or Amendment of By-laws:**

**IV.II.a.** Any Staff Senate member may submit By-law Amendments, in writing, to the Executive Committee at any time. A petition endorsement of at least 10% of the staff will be required before the Executive Committee will review and prepare an agenda item for a future Staff Senate meeting. In addition, any elected Senator can propose/sponsor a by-law change at an Executive Committee meeting in lieu of the 10% petition.

a) The appropriate petition form can be obtained from the Executive Committee.

b) A recommendation may be made by the Executive Committee for further study and/or referred to an appropriate committee.

**IV.II.b.** The Executive Committee will be responsible for adding any endorsed By-law Amendment to the agenda of a Staff Senate meeting within 60 days of receipt along with any studies or information received in relation to the original request.

**IV.II.c.** Voting on aforementioned By-law Amendment will occur after the complete By-law Amendment has been communicated to the campus community for at least 20 calendar days after the initial introduction to the entire Senate.

**IV.II.d.** Any By-law Amendment must have the approval of at least two thirds (2/3) of those voting; Voting will be by written ballot only. (see Article III.V.b)

**IV.II.e.** Results of the By-law voting representation within each constituency will determine the vote (2 of the 3 groups' majority representation must approve).

**IV.II.f.** Unless specified otherwise by the By-law Amendment, these amendments shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Staff Senate.