

**BYLAWS OF
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA
STAFF SENATE**

**ARTICLE I
NAME & AUTHORITY**

I. Name

The organization herein defined shall be known officially as the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Staff Senate, hereafter referred to in this document as the Staff Senate. The Staff Senate shall function per these Bylaws as approved by the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga ("UTC"). The Staff Senate is empowered to organize itself and establish its bylaws.

The Staff Senate shall be advisory to university administration and channel recommendations to the Chancellor or their appointed liaison, hereafter referred to as the Staff Senate Advisor.

II. Authority

Section 1: Powers

The Staff Senate has the authority to advise and make recommendations to the University administration regarding matters generally affecting UTC staff.

Section 2 Governance

These Bylaws shall govern the Staff Senate.

Section 3: University-Wide Actions

University-wide actions determined and adopted by the Staff Senate shall be approved by the Chancellor (or designee) before enactment.

**ARTICLE II
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Staff Senate is a group of all regular benefits-eligible university employees not represented by the Faculty Senate or the Chancellor's Strategy Team (formerly known as the Executive Leadership Team) and includes both non-exempt and exempt staff.

The purpose of the Staff Senate shall be to foster a spirit of unity and cooperation among all employees of UTC, to consider methods and means by which employment conditions may be improved at UTC, to receive and consider matters concerning

working conditions of membership, to make such recommendations it deems appropriate to promote and support the strategic goals and vision of UTC, and to provide a means of communicating problems of mutual concern between the Staff Senate and the Chancellor's Strategy Team.

The Staff Senate shall fulfill the following purposes:

- I. Serve as a voice for the collective body it represents on matters that affect the welfare of the University and the Membership,
- II. Foster and enhance communication between the Membership it represents and others in the campus community,
- III. Serve as a resource through which representatives from the Membership shall be nominated to serve on university committees and confirmed by the members of the Staff Senate,
- IV. Be a forum for discussion of issues and concerns involving University rules and procedures, (Does not replace formal university grievance processes or replace services provided through the Ombuds office),
- V. Serve as a source of constructive advice and recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of university operations, policies, procedures, and programs, involving staff,
- VI. Promote recognition of membership contributions to the mission of the University as well as excellence in service,
- VII. Actively participate in developing and promoting processes and activities that maximize positive progress and
- VIII. Serve as a developmental tool, building loyalty and commitment through new employee orientation, creating motivational projects to instill a sense of community in the UTC community, and team building with others in the University.

ARTICLE III STAFF SENATE MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: General Membership

The membership of this organization shall be open to all regular full-time and part-time, benefits-eligible staff, both exempt and non-exempt, of UTC, not represented by the Faculty Senate or serving on the Chancellor's Strategy Team. All members shall have full voting rights for Executive Officer elections in the Staff Senate.

University employees who serve as members of the Staff Senate may not, in their capacities as members of the Staff Senate, advocate for or serve as representatives of a group or organization that is not recognized by the university.

Section 2: Eligibility

To be eligible to serve on the Executive Committee, prospective Executive Officers must have completed one year of continuous regular, benefits-eligible employment at UTC before January 1 of the year of the general election.

The following shall not be eligible for membership in the Staff Senate:

- Chancellor
- Vice Chancellors
- System employees
- Librarians/Library faculty
- Employees in 100% grant-funded non-faculty positions
- Employees who hold full-time regular tenured, tenure-track, or non-tenure-track faculty appointments

Section 3: Terms of Office

- A. A "term year" is defined as July 1 – June 30.
- B. Executive Officers will be elected to serve a three (3) year term beginning July 1 and ending June 30.
- C. Terms shall be staggered so that half of the Executive Officers' terms expire in odd years and one-half expire in even years, with elections conducted annually. Executive Officers can serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms. Following a year off the Executive Committee, a former Executive Officer is again eligible to serve on the Executive Committee.
- D. Position changes to a new group or within the same group shall not affect membership or an Executive Officer's term in the Staff Senate.

ARTICLE IV ELECTIONS

Section 1: Nominations

The nomination process for expiring and vacant Executive Officer positions will open in Spring and remain open for two weeks. All staff shall have the right to nominate an eligible member to run for election. Self-nominations are welcome. The Nominations and Election Committee shall have the authority to nominate candidates for groups with no running candidates.

Section 2: Annual Election

- A. Eligibility to Run for Election: All eligible exempt and non-exempt UTC staff who have completed one year of regular benefits-eligible employment shall have the right to run in the current year's annual election as of January.
- B. Voting Privileges: All UTC regular benefits-eligible staff, as outlined in General Membership shall have the right to vote for Executive Officers.
- C. Voting Procedure: Voting shall occur by confidential ballot. The Nominations and Election Committee shall be responsible for providing the results to the Executive Committee.
- D. Election Results: Those elected will be determined by the plurality of votes acquired in their division based on the number of vacant seats.
- E. Certification of Results: The Executive Committee shall certify the results of elections.
- F. Announcement of Results
 - a) The Nominations and Election Committee Chair shall announce the results and conduct runoff elections when no candidate has won a plurality. The Nominations and Election Committee Chair shall notify each winner no later than May 15 and will ensure election results are posted on the Staff Senate website.
 - b) The Staff Senate President will notify the winners' supervisors and the Staff Senate advisor immediately following the election.
- G. Election Results Retention: The election results and all related documents shall be kept on file following the applicable University of Tennessee Records Retention policy.
- H. Transfer of Leadership: The closing of business at the June general meeting shall mark the:
 - a. End of outbound representative term
 - b. Beginning of terms for:

- i. Newly elected Executive Officers
 - ii. Incumbent Executive Officers who have been re-elected
- c. Any change of dates affecting election cycles will extend all Staff Senate Executive Officers' terms to correspond with the new cycle.

Section 3: Attendance

If in a term year, an Executive Officer accumulates four Staff Senate meeting absences, the Executive Committee will be notified of the absences and determine if they are excused or declare the position vacant. The Staff Senate will be notified if the position is declared vacant at the upcoming monthly meeting. Vacancies will be filled according to Staff Senate Bylaws Article 4, Section 7 - Vacancies. If absences are determined excused, the Executive Officer may remain on the Staff Senate.

Section 4: Assignment of Proxies

Executive Officers or members who are absent from a Staff Senate meeting should assign their proxy to another member. A proxy is allowed to vote only on issues that are listed on the agenda. Anyone who is absent must provide their vote to the proxy in writing prior to the meeting. Proxy voting is not allowed on items that arise during a meeting or were not previously listed on the agenda. The proper use of a proxy will constitute attendance. It is the Executive Officer's sole responsibility to ensure that any absences and related proxies are communicated to the Secretary.

Section 5: Vacancies

- A. Any Executive Officer wishing to resign from the Executive Committee shall submit their resignation in writing to the Staff Senate President. If the unexpired term of the resigning Executive Officer is less than six months, the President can decide to leave the position vacant or appoint an interim Executive Officer to serve the remainder of the term.
- B. If an Executive Officer resigns or is unable to serve, a new election will be held for any unexpired term over six months. The Secretary will notify all members to contact the Staff Senate if they are willing to serve. Respondents will participate in the election, and the winner will fill the vacancy. Other respondents will be placed on an alternate list for future vacancies.
 - i. The new Executive Officer will serve the remainder of the term. The remainder of the portion served shall not be counted towards the two-term limit.
 - ii. If the replacement is appointed within the last year of the vacant term, the appointed Executive Officer may not serve on the Executive Committee for the

remainder of that vacant term but will be eligible for election in the next annual election.

ARTICLE V EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1: Executive Officer Responsibilities

All Executive Officers are responsible for the following:

- participate in Staff Senate and/or Shared Governance Committees
- communicate through e-mail all Staff Senate notifications, including agendas and meeting minutes
- assist with Staff Senate events

Section 2: Executive Officers

The Executive Officers of the Staff Senate are the:

- President,
- Vice President,
- Secretary,
- Employee Relations Committee Chair,
- Immediate Past President (ex-officio),
- Parliamentarian, and
- A representative from the Office of Human Resources (ex-officio).

Section 3: Officer Elections

- A. The officers to be elected each term year are the President, Vice President, Secretary, Parliamentarian, and Employee Relations Committee Chair. The Employee Relations Committee Chair shall be voted on by only non-exempt staff. All other officer positions shall be voted on by the overall membership.
- B. There can only be six nominations for each Executive Officer position on the ballot. The Executive Officers are elected by secret ballot at the April Staff Senate meeting. Since officer nominations and elections take place during the April meeting, proxy nominations and votes will only be allowed with written documentation from members. Those receiving the greatest number of votes for each position are declared the officers.
- C. A member must be present at the April meeting to be nominated and accept their nomination for an officer position.
- D. All officers, except the Immediate Past President who has completed two (2) consecutive terms, will retain full voting privileges. President, Vice President,

Employee Relations Chair, and Immediate Past President are three-year consecutive commitments.

Elected officers serve the entire Staff Senate, and therefore shall:

- i. Fulfill directives adopted by the Staff Senate.
- ii. Ensure adherence to Staff Senate Bylaws.
- iii. Perform all responsibilities subject to the oversight of the Staff Senate.
- iv. Prepare proposals and position papers on membership concerns, as determined by the majority of the Staff Senate, and submit them to the University Chancellor or their designee.
- v. Prepare annual and future Staff Senate activity reports and submit them to the VP for Finance & Administration and the University Chancellor.
- vi. Select representatives from the general membership to serve on a university-wide panel, search committees, advisory boards, and such.

Section 4: Terms of Office

- A. Executive Officers shall be elected by the voting members annually for a two-year term to begin July 1 of the current year. No officer may hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms but may be eligible to serve after a one-year interval.
- B. President-Elect shall serve a three (3) year term from the time elected and shall represent the Staff Senate on the Faculty Senate as an ex-officio member.
- C. Officers will continue serving the term for which they were elected if they change positions within the university.
- D. All officers, except the Immediate Past President who has completed two consecutive terms, shall retain full voting privileges.

Section 5: Officer Vacancy

Any Executive Officer vacancy shall be filled according to the provisions in Article IV, Section 5 - Vacancies.

Section 6: Titles and Duties

- A. President:
 - Act as the official spokesperson for the Staff Senate and be the main liaison to the Staff Senate Advisor and the Chancellor.

- Appoint Chairs to Staff Senate committees.
- Preside over all regular meetings of the Staff Senate.
- Organize the agenda for each meeting.
- Serve on campus committees as called upon as President of the Staff Senate.
- Share the responsibility of serving as an ex-officio member of all Staff Senate committees with the Vice-President.
- Serve as liaison or appoint staff to major university-wide committees as deemed necessary.
- Appoint representatives to serve on search committees for hiring executive positions at the University.
- Provide training for new officers elected at the July meeting.
- Carry out other duties as specified in the Bylaws.
- This role will be for a one-year term. Then will move to the role of Immediate Past President.

B. Vice President (President-Elect):

- Execute the duties of the President in the President's absence or at the President's request.
- Act as the co-liaison to the Staff Senate Advisor and the Chancellor.
- Work closely with the President to assist in leading the Staff Senate.
- Present an overview of the Staff Senate Bylaws at the June meeting
- Chair the Nominations and Elections Committee, including updating the election calendar to fill open seats by early April and overseeing the counting of ballots and notification to elected representatives.
- Maintain election records.
- Maintain and keep current the roster of members with name, Group, and term expiration, noting members filling vacancies.
- Implement the Executive Officer replacement process if there is a vacancy.
- Notify the Executive Committee of member absences according to Staff Senate Bylaws Article IV, Section 5 - Attendance.
- Share the responsibility of serving as an ex-officio member of all Staff Senate committees with the President.
- Other duties as deemed necessary.
- This role is that of the President-Elect. The individual will move into the President position at the end of the year term.

C. Secretary:

- Record and prepare minutes of general Staff Senate and Executive Committee meetings.
- Submit written minutes to the President and Vice President no later than five (5) business days before the next scheduled meeting.
- Distribute the agenda and approved minutes to appropriate parties.
- Maintain a record of member absences.
- Maintain Staff Senate minutes and records.
- Maintain staff listserv and email distribution list of all benefitted staff.
- Make all Staff Senate postings on a webpage.
- Relay information to non-faculty employees as directed by the Staff Senate President.
- Be a designated recipient of emails sent via the “contact Staff Senate” link on the Staff Senate website unless otherwise determined by the President.
- Be designated “reply to” person for all input requested from employees unless otherwise determined by the President.
- Maintain archived copies of the approved minutes of at least three (3) years’ meetings on the Staff Senate website.
- Other duties as deemed necessary.

D. Employee Relations Committee Chair:

- Attending scheduled meetings of the Staff Senate.
- Serve in an advisory capacity and represent the interests of regular non-exempt employees.
- Have voting privileges.
- Other duties as deemed necessary.

E. Immediate Past President:

- Serve in an advisory capacity as a non-voting, ex-officio member of both the Senate and Executive Committee.
- Assist with the transition of the new President and archival information.
- Have no voting privilege.
- The position shall not be filled when vacant until the next election cycle.
- Other duties as deemed necessary.

F. Parliamentarian duties:

- Be proficient in *Robert’s Rules of Order* and ensure that they are adhered to during all meetings of the Staff Senate Executive Board and Standing Committees.

- Assist the President with any questions about the Rules of Order during meetings and provide explanations or advice but not rulings, which are always made by the presiding officer.
- Maintain an accurate and current copy of the Staff Senate Bylaws.
- In the event the Bylaws require review, the Parliamentarian shall convene the ad-hoc Bylaws Revision Committee.
- Be a secondary designated recipient of emails sent via the “contact Staff Senate” link on the Staff Senate website unless otherwise determined by the President.
- Be a secondary designated “reply to” person for all input requested from employees unless otherwise determined by the President.
- Other duties as deemed necessary.

G. Human Resource Representative:

- Maintain permanent copies of Staff Senate approved minutes and records in a campus document imaging system that is securely backed up.
- Serve in an advisory capacity as a non-voting, ex-officio member.
- Verify staff employee eligibility according to Staff Senate Bylaws Article III, Section 2 – Eligibility.
- Represent employee feedback to the Staff Senate committee.
- Other duties as deemed necessary.

H. Staff Senate Advisor:

The advisory role shall be to direct, advise, counsel, and act as a liaison between the Staff Senate, the University Chancellor, and the Chancellor’s Strategy Team. The Advisor shall have no voting privilege. This position will assist with scheduling a quarterly meeting between the Chair and Executive Leadership Committee as well as a quarterly meeting between Faculty Senate President and Staff Senate President.

Section 7: Executive Committee

A. Members

The following individuals constitute the Executive Committee of the Staff Senate: President, Vice President, Secretary, Employee Relations Committee Chair and Co-Chair, Immediate Past President (ex-officio), Parliamentarian (ex-officio), and a representative from the Office of Human Resources (ex-officio).

B. Responsibilities

The Executive Committee meets regularly to develop agendas for the Staff Senate, to respond to requests for information and advice, and to develop goals and policies that the Staff Senate seeks to implement.

C. Powers

The Executive Committee has the power to:

- call special meetings,
- approve expenditures of the Staff Senate,
- perform duties as specified in Article V, Section 6 – Titles & Duties, and
- set the location, hour, and date of meetings.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1: Frequency

The Senate meets monthly, upon the request of the executive committee, or by a two-thirds (2/3) majority request of the members. All regular monthly meetings of the Staff Senate are open meetings.

- i. The first meeting of the session shall be the June meeting of each year.
- ii. The Secretary shall notify all Staff Senate representatives of the time and location of all Staff Senate meetings. Such notification shall be by written correspondence at least seven days in advance of the meeting and shall include a tentative agenda.
- iii. All regularly scheduled Senate meetings are open to all regular, benefits-eligible staff.
- iv. A special meeting may be called with 48-hour notice by the Executive Committee or by petition of one-third (1/3) of the Senate. The President or Vice President may cancel a regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 2: Agenda

The President shall prepare the agenda with the Executive Committee's approval. Agenda items may be submitted in writing by any campus member to the Staff Senate Secretary no later than seven business days before the next meeting. The agenda for all scheduled meetings shall be available no later than two business days before.

Section 3: Order of Business

The order of business shall include, but not be limited to, the following items, which shall be covered in sequence as far as circumstances permit the call to order, determination of members present, approval of minutes of the previous membership meeting, President's report, Vice Presidents Report, reports of standing committees, reports of special interest committees, old business, new business, and adjournment.

Section 4: General Assembly

A campus-wide open meeting may be held each year with an assembly of members representative of all work shifts while maintaining adequate coverage in appropriate duty areas.

Section 5: Time Provision

Members are allowed reasonable time away from regular duties to attend Staff Senate meetings and functions, University meetings, and to conduct Staff Senate business.

Section 6: Quorum

A majority of the total voting membership shall constitute a quorum. Written authorization of proxy shall count toward a quorum if provided following these Bylaws. A voting member may serve as a proxy for only one other voting member per meeting. A voting member serving as a proxy shall have the power to vote on behalf of the other voting member following these Bylaws. No vote shall be taken at the Staff Senate meeting without a quorum, although it could be decided to go forward with electronic voting.

Section 7: Voting

Each voting member in good standing shall have one vote at any meeting of the Staff Senate. Voting on motions and issues brought before the Staff Senate shall be by voice or show of hands unless a roll call or vote by secret ballot is requested by a voting member (roll-call votes shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting).

A simple majority vote cast at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall constitute the action of the Staff Senate. An electronic vote may be taken in cases of a lack of quorum or emergency voting needs. This vote will be recorded and included as an addendum to the minutes of the previous meeting.

Section 8: Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised In Brief, the most recent edition, shall govern the conduct of Staff Senate meetings and all committee meetings except where these rules conflict with the Bylaws of the Staff Senate.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1: Standing Committees

There shall be at least five (5) standing committees, including the Executive Committee, Nominations and Election Committee, Benefits and Employee Development Committee, University Relations Committee, and Communications Committee. Each committee, including a chair and/or a co-chair, shall have and exercise authority in the governance of the Staff Senate. Each committee shall be responsible for submitting an annual report to the Executive Committee no later than the end of each year's term.

Section 2: Duties

- A. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected Senate Officers. The Executive Committee is responsible for setting meeting agendas, with input from the Senate representatives and the Membership, making decisions on behalf of the Senate between General Senate meetings, and reporting such actions to the Senate at the next scheduled meeting. The Executive Committee shall facilitate decision-making between board meetings or in urgent and crisis circumstances and prepare the agenda for each Staff Senate meeting.
- B. Nominations and Election Committee: The Nominations and Election Committee shall conduct an annual, campus-wide election for the Staff Senate and all other elections and referendums concerning the membership.
- C. Benefits and Employee Development Committee: The Benefits and Employee Development Committee may make recommendations to appropriate university officials on employee classification, salaries, benefits packages, training and development opportunities, in-service training, performance evaluations, and university hiring, and advancement as related to membership.
- D. University Relations Committee: The University Relations Committee shall develop and implement programs to build staff morale and improve relationships between staff and administration.
- E. Communication Committee: The Communications Committee shall develop, update, and monitor the Staff Senate communications and communication guidelines and prepare and distribute information to promote the Staff Senate visibility via all available media, including but not limited to social media, website, newsletter, and others.
- F. Employee Relations Committee: The Employee Relations Committee shall be comprised of non-exempt staff elected from each of the university's

representational groups. The Co-Chair shall act as a proxy and have full voting rights in the Chair's absence.

Section 3: Other Committees and Task Forces

Additional special interest committees deemed necessary by the Staff Senate may be appointed. Appointment to special interest committees is open to any eligible staff member of the University as defined in Article III, Section 2 - Eligibility.

Section 4: Committee Chairs

The Staff Senate President shall appoint all Committee Chairs (except the Employee Relations Committee Chair), who are subject to approval by the Executive Committee. Committee Chairs must be Senate members. Committee chairs shall be responsible for achieving the committee's mission and preparing and presenting committee reports to the Senate.

Section 5: Committee Membership

All Staff Senate members shall serve on at least one (1) committee. Individuals can submit their names for consideration on a committee.

Section 6: Term of Office

Vice President 3-year term. 1 year as VP, 1 as President, 1 as President ex Officio/Advisor. Each committee member shall serve at least one year until the next election cycle.

Section 7: Vacancies

The President of the Staff Senate may suggest candidates to fill committee vacancies, but the final decision is made by a Senate vote.

Section 8: Rules

Each committee and task force may adopt rules for its meetings consistent with these Bylaws or any rules adopted by the Executive Board Committee. The Executive Committee will review the Rules before adoption.

Section 9: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Each committee shall have standard operating procedures updated annually. Standard Operating Procedures may be revised as necessary. Copies of all the Committee's SOPs shall be kept on file at the Staff Senate's Office.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENT TO BYLAWS

Section 1: Adoption

These Bylaws shall be adopted based on an affirmative vote by two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Staff Senate body and affirmative approval of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration. The Staff Senate vote may be done as an online vote.

Section 2: Amendments

A proposal to amend these Bylaws can be made at any regular meeting of the Staff Senate by any member of the Staff Senate, with the endorsement of three (3) other representatives.

Proposed amendments and revisions must be presented in writing to the Parliamentarian, who will convene an ad-hoc Bylaws Revision Committee to review the proposal.

Editorial changes in grammar or spelling necessary to clarify the text only and that do not alter the intention of the text can be made after a review by the Executive Committee without requiring a vote by the Staff Senate; however, all editorial changes must be announced to the Staff Senate at its next regular meeting.

Amendments must be approved by the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration before they become effective.

Section 3: Review

Amendments and revisions, approved by the Bylaws Revision Committee, must be presented in writing to the Staff Senate Secretary, who shall distribute them to representatives at the Staff Senate's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Proposed amendments and revisions shall not be acted upon until two (2) weeks after distribution to Staff Senate representatives.

Notice of the meeting to consider Bylaws amendments must be given in writing to Staff Council representatives at least five working days prior and include a copy of the proposed amendment. The notice of the meeting must state that the purpose or one of the purposes of the meeting is to consider a proposed amendment to the Bylaws. This may occur during the normally scheduled general meeting.

Section 4: Effective Date

These Bylaws shall be in operation immediately upon adoption by the Staff Senate and approval by the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration.