

## SAC CONSTITUTION

### Article I – General

#### A. PURPOSE

1. The Staff Advisory Council (the “council”) of Tulane University (the “university”) is an advisory body of elected and appointed staff employees and is the only staff assembly recognized by the university administration as officially representing the views of staff employees.
2. The council’s responsibilities include:
  - a. Requesting official interpretation or clarification of university policies.
  - b. Discussing and expressing its views on matters of overall staff welfare.
  - c. Recommending modifications of university policy.
  - d. Suggesting staff employee representation on any appropriate university committee.
  - e. Seeking staff employee representation on an appropriate university committee.
  - f. Being a productive voice to further the aims of the university through improved relations among all staff employees and between all staff employees and the university administration.
  - g. Fostering internal partnerships and external relations between staff employees, faculty, students, the greater New Orleans community and other Tulane publics.

In summary, the role of the council is to inform the administration of the views of staff employees on a wide range of topics affecting overall staff welfare or university operations.

#### B. MEETINGS

1. Regularly scheduled meetings of the council shall be held at least seven times a year. A regularly scheduled meeting of the council may be cancelled or postponed at the discretion of the chair. The calendar of regularly scheduled meetings for the fiscal year shall be set by the chair and approved by the council in advance of the year.
2. The chair shall call a special meeting of the council upon the written petition of a majority of the voting members.
3. A simple majority of the voting membership of the council shall be considered a quorum for the purpose of conducting business.
4. Attendance at council meetings is not restricted to members. Any staff employee may attend council meetings.

5. Any person wishing to address the council must contact the chair for approval. The chair will then contact the corresponding secretary to place the person on the agenda for the next meeting.

## Article II – Structure & Composition

### A. MEMBERSHIP

1. General. The membership of the council shall consist of:

- a. Representatives
- b. Officers
- c. Members-at-Large
- d. Ex-Officio Members
- e. Proxy Representatives

2. Districts. The three districts of the council are:

- a. Uptown campus
- b. Downtown campus
- c. National Primate Research Center campus

Representatives shall be elected by district, with the intent of achieving proportional representation on the council based on the relative numbers of staff employees in each district. The duties and manner of election of representatives are set forth in Article III below.

3. Officers. The officers of the council shall consist of:

- a. Chairperson (the “chair”)
- b. Vice-Chairperson (the “vice chair”)
- c. Secretary
- d. Election Coordinator
- e. Parliamentarian

The duties and manner of election of the officers are set forth in Article IV below.

4. Members-at-Large. The officers may appoint a maximum of four members-at-large. Each member-at-large must be approved by a majority of the officers with council confirmation. Members-at-large do not have voting privileges. Members-at-large must have served at least one-year as a representative. Members-at-large are appointed for a one year term (or a portion thereof in the case of an appointment to fill a mid-year vacancy), beginning on July 1 and concluding on the next subsequent June 30.

5. Ex-Officio Members. The following persons shall be ex-officio members of the council:

- a. Representative from Human Resources
- b. Representative from the Office of the President
- c. Other administrative officers and staff members as approved by amendments to this constitution.

Ex-officio members may participate in council meeting discussion. Ex-officio members do not have voting privileges.

6. Proxy Representatives. Staff members who accept nominations to the council but are not elected shall be considered proxy representatives, designated to a proxy pool for their respective districts. Proxy representatives may be called upon to serve in the place of an elected representative for a given meeting, or may be asked to serve as a representative on the council in the case of vacancy within the district in accordance with the council representative election procedure. Proxy representatives are welcome to attend any council meeting, but they shall have speaking privileges only in the context of service as a proxy for a specified meeting. Proxy members are not eligible to serve as officers of the council. Proxy members may, upon the recommendation of the chair and approval of the council, serve on council committees and other external bodies designated for council participation.

## B. REPRESENTATION

1. Representation in the council for each district shall be based on the relative number of staff employees in each district, with the goal of one (1) representative per every one hundred (100) staff employees.
2. The council shall review its composition every year before elections. This review shall evaluate the relative size of the council's constituents to ensure equitable representation.

## Article III – Representatives

### A. TERM OF SERVICE

1. A representative's term of service shall be three years (or a portion thereof for an appointment or election to fill a midterm vacancy). The term of service for regularly elected or appointed representatives shall commence on July 1. The term of service for all Representatives shall expire on June 30.
2. If a representative resigns or cannot otherwise continue to serve as a representative for any reason prior to the end of the applicable term of service, the

chair will appoint the next eligible member of the proxy representative pool from the representative's district to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the applicable term.

3. Representatives may serve up to two consecutive terms and may thereafter be re-elected as representatives after a one-term break in service.

4. Resignation by a representative should be made in writing to the chair of the council.

5. If a representative's location of employment is transferred to another district, the representative's position will become vacant and the chair shall appoint a replacement in accordance with Article III, section A, subsection 2. If the transferred representative wishes to continue service with the council, he or she will be added to the proxy representative pool for his or her new district.

6. If a representative is unable to attend meetings during a period of FLMA leave and wishes to remain on the council, the chair may approve an exception to this policy and grant the representative a period of absence without penalty for the duration of the approved leave period upon presentation of the appropriate university documentation.

## B. DUTIES

1. Representatives shall further the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the council.

2. Representatives are encouraged to communicate with constituents on a regular basis to become and remain informed of staff employee issues and concerns.

3. Representatives shall attend all meetings of the council. If a representative cannot attend a meeting, he or she should inform an officer of the expected absence. In the event of an absence, the representative shall appoint a member of the proxy representative pool. If a representative is absent from a meeting and has not obtained a proxy, the chair may appoint a proxy representative member from the absent representative's district to serve as proxy for the absent representative for that meeting. The proxy representative pool member assumes the vote of the absent representative for that meeting.

4. Attendance records are reflected in the minutes of council meetings. If a representative believes an error or omission has been made in the attendance record as reflected in the minutes, the representative has until the conclusion of

the second regularly scheduled meeting following distribution of the draft minutes to correct the attendance record by written request to the recording secretary. After this period has expired, attendance records will be deemed final and will be published in the final minutes.

### C. ELECTION PROCEDURE

1. All exempt and non-exempt staff employees who are full-time or part-time with benefits are eligible for election to the council as representatives of their respective districts.
2. Elections for approximately 1/3 of the membership shall be held each spring semester (with a goal of completion prior to June 15).
3. The election committee shall request nominations for representative positions from all staff employees via e-mail. A full description of representatives' duties and council districts shall be included in the above notifications and a reasonable deadline shall be included for receipt of nominations.
4. A staff employee's district of representation is determined by the staff employee's location of employment, which is defined as the location where the staff employee spends the majority of the staff employee's work time. The election committee is empowered to resolve questions and conflicts related to representation by location of employment.
5. Staff employees may nominate themselves for election to the council. Representatives who are not completing their second consecutive term may nominate themselves for elections.
6. Nominations shall be submitted to the election committee prior to the deadline included in the nomination request notice.
7. The election committee shall collect all nominations and contact each nominee to obtain acceptance of the nomination. Nominees who accept their nominations shall be included in election ballots.
8. Election will be by electronic ballot, except in cases where a district requests otherwise and receives approval from the election coordinator. Ballots will set forth the names of all nominees by district. Staff employees may vote only for candidates from their district. Each staff employee may cast only one vote per candidate and may vote for multiple candidates based on the number of available positions in the applicable district.
9. The election committee shall collect and count the ballots. Candidates receiving the most votes in each district will fill the representative positions.

10. If insufficient proxy representative pool members are available to fill vacant positions, an election will be held (conforming as nearly as practicable to the requirements of this article) to fill the position for the remainder of the applicable term.

11. In the event there are fewer nominees for representative positions than there are available positions, the election committee shall make additional requests for nominations to all staff employees until sufficient nominations are received.

12. In the event of a tie for the last representative position for a district, and assuming all tied candidates agree to serve as representative, a run-off election will be held (conforming as nearly as practicable to the requirements of this Article III Section B) to determine the representative for that district.

13. All ballots shall be delivered to the chair for recount and validation in the event of a contested election. The chair's determination shall be final.

14. The chair will send a welcome letter to each newly elected or appointed representative. Copies of the constitution, standing rules, and a listing of council committees shall be provided to each newly elected or appointed representative by the election committee.

15. A letter will be sent to the supervisor of each representative to inform and thank the supervisor for the participation of the staff employee on the council.

16. All nominations and election ballots shall be retained by the election coordinator until completion of the next subsequent election. The official election record shall consist of count lists, copies of actual ballots and the results report. The election coordinator shall retain the official election record for the previous two elections, and all older records may be destroyed at the coordinator's discretion.

#### D. REMOVAL

If a representative fails to attend two meetings unexcused or three meetings total within a given calendar year, a majority of the officers may agree to consider that representative's position vacant and shall notify that representative of this determination in writing, with a copy sent to all officers. Representatives who have been so notified may petition the chair in writing for reinstatement within two weeks of such notice. If no petition for reinstatement is received or the chair denies such petition, the chair will appoint a replacement in accordance with Article III, section A, subsection 2.

## Article IV – Officers

### A. TERM OF SERVICE

1. An officer's term of service shall be one year (or a portion thereof for an election to fill a midterm vacancy). The term of service for regularly elected officers shall commence on July 1. The term of service for all outgoing officers shall expire on the date of the first meeting following July 1 at which officer positions are assumed by incoming officers
2. Officers may serve up to three (3) consecutive terms and may thereafter be re-elected as officers after a one-term break in service.
3. If an officer other than the chair resigns or cannot otherwise continue to serve as an officer for any reason prior to the end of the applicable term of service, an election will be held (conforming as nearly as practicable to the requirements of this article) to fill the position for the remainder of the applicable term.
4. If the office of chair becomes vacant, the vice chair shall assume the position and duties of chair and the council shall elect a new vice chair as soon as reasonably practicable. If the offices of chair and vice chair concurrently become vacant, the council shall elect a new chair and vice chair as soon as reasonably practicable. In the event that this occurs, the election coordinator shall call a meeting of the council for the express purpose of electing new officers.

### B. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. Chair. The duties of the chair include but are not limited to:
  - a. Presiding at all meetings and implementing the constitution and standing rules of the council
  - b. Referring questions of interpretation of the constitution and standing rules of the council to the constitution committee.
  - c. Calling regularly scheduled meetings or special meetings of the council; calling special meetings of the council upon the petition of a majority of the voting members of the council.
  - d. Distributing the agenda and minutes of the meetings of the council.
  - e. Creating and appointing members of ad hoc committees.
  - f. Appointing or nominating representatives to the university boards, committees and councils.
  - g. Calling meetings of the officers to establish temporary or interim policies regarding matters not covered by the constitution and standing rules.

- h. Requesting the cooperation of department heads in allowing representatives to attend meetings and perform duties as members of the council.
- i. Serving as a voting member of the university senate benefits committee and the university senate committee on committees.
- j. Participating for one year as an ex-officio member of the council with full voting privileges following conclusion of term as chair.
- k. Casting tie-breaking vote as necessary; otherwise the chair does not vote.
- l. Representing the council to external university constituencies.

2. Vice Chair. The duties of the vice chair include, but are not limited to:

- a. Assuming all of the duties and powers of the chair at any meeting in the absence of the chair.
- b. Assuming the duties as assigned by the chair.
- c. Representing (or designation another council officer to represent) the council at meetings of the university's board of administrators.
- d. Voting as a representative, as applicable, unless such person has assumed the office of chair.

3. Secretary. The duties of the recording secretary include, but are not limited to:

- a. Recording and retaining minutes of all meetings of the council, including attendance by name and district.
- b. Ensuring transmittal of minutes of council meetings to members of the council prior to the next meeting.
- c. Obtaining an accounting of the council's funds.
- d. Maintaining all correspondence internal to the council, including but not limited to:
  - i. Maintaining a current list of council committees and committee members.
  - ii. Maintaining a current list of council representatives appointed to the university boards, committees and councils.
- e. Preparing the agenda for each meeting.
- f. Voting as a representative, as applicable.

4. Election Coordinator. The duties of the election coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- a. Maintaining a current list of council members, including a list of council members by district.
- b. Serving as chair of the election committee
- c. Calling for a review of the council's structure and composition annually.
- d. Voting as a representative, as applicable.



5. Parliamentarian. A parliamentarian may be appointed by the chair with council confirmation. The duties of the parliamentarian include, but are not limited to:
- a. Maintain order at council meetings as per *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (tenth edition).
  - b. Serve as a reference in parliamentary law to the council.
  - c. Chair the Constitution Committee.

#### C. ELECTION PROCEDURE

1. All representatives who have served at least one year are eligible to become officers.
2. In the spring academic semester of each year, the chair shall convene an officer search committee consisting of three then-current voting members of the council for the purpose of identifying nominees for officer positions. The officer search committee shall solicit the eligible members of the council for nominations.
3. The officer search committee shall collect all nominations and contact each nominee to obtain acceptance of the nomination. Nominees who accept their nomination shall be included in election ballots.
4. Election of officers shall be conducted by secret ballot at the last regularly scheduled meeting prior to July 1 of each year.
5. Each representative may cast only one vote per candidate and may vote for one candidate for each officer position.
6. Ballots shall be collected and counted. The candidate receiving the most votes in each officer election shall assume the applicable officer position.
7. When a representative is elected chair, such person will have only the limited voting privileges of the chair. A representative elected as chair will appoint the next eligible member of the proxy representative pool from the chair's district to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the applicable term.
8. If an officer is eligible and willing but is not re-elected, such a person shall complete their unexpired term as representative or member-at-large, as applicable.

#### D. REMOVAL

Any officer may be removed from office upon a three-fourths vote of the voting members of the council in attendance at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

#### Article V – University Senate & Council Committee Participation

## A. UNIVERSITY SENATE

1. The council has three voting seats as senators-at-large on the university senate. The chair and two representatives nominated by the chair and confirmed by the council shall occupy these positions. Senators-at-large from the council shall serve for the duration of their term on the council, up to a maximum of three years. The chair shall appoint a representative as a replacement senator-at-large if a senator-at-large from the council resigns or cannot otherwise continue to serve as a senator-at-large for any reason prior to the end of the applicable term of service.
2. The council has voting seats on the following university senate committees:
  - a. Benefits: The council has seven (7) voting seats on the university benefits committee: the chair, three (3) exempt staff employees, and three (3) non-exempt staff employees occupy the university benefits committee positions.
  - b. Budget Review: The council has two (2) voting seats on the university budget review committee: one (1) staff employee from the uptown campus and one (1) staff employee from the downtown campus occupy the university budget review committee positions.
  - c. Committee on Committees: The council has one (1) voting seat on the university committee on committees, occupied by the chair.
  - d. Computing: The council has two (2) voting seats on the university computing committee: one (1) staff employee from the uptown campus and one (1) staff employee from the downtown campus occupy the university computing committee positions.
  - e. Equal Opportunity and University Equity: The council has four (4) voting seats on the university equal opportunity and university Equity committee: two (2) exempt staff employees and two (2) non-exempt staff employees occupy the university equal opportunity and university equity committee positions.
  - f. Physical Facilities: The council has one (1) voting seat on the university physical facilities committee.
  - g. Social Issues: The council has one (1) voting seat on the university social issues committee.

## B. COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The chair of the council may establish such committees and subcommittees necessary in order to aid in the performance of the duties of the council and may invite non-council members to serve on these committees.

Committees shall meet upon the call of the committee chair at a time and place best suited to conduct business. All committees shall meet as needed. The chair of the council shall be notified of the time and place of such committee meetings.

All representatives and members-at-large must serve on at least one (1) committee. proxy representative pool members may serve on council committees at their discretion but may not serve as chair of such committees. council committees shall include:

1. Community Service Committee
  - a. Standing committee.
  - b. Organizes annual community outreach project after consultation with council representatives.
  - c. Communicates with SAC representatives as other opportunities surface that may be worthy of consideration.
  - d. Communicates with all staff pre- and post-project via the SAC chair and ALLSAC-L listserv.
  
2. Constitution Committee
  - a. Ad hoc committee.
  - b. Parliamentarian is chair.
  - c. Interprets constitution and standing rules.
  - d. Submits proposed revisions and amendments to the council constitution and standing rules to the council.
  
3. Election Committee
  - a. Standing committee.
  - b. Initiates elections of representatives.
  - c. Tracks attendance of representatives and informs the chair when a representative should be notified of removal for lack of attendance.
  - d. Initiates a review of the council's structure and composition each fiscal year.
  
4. Electronic Technologies and Information Committee
  - a. Standing committee.
  - b. Maintains the council's website.
  - c. Produces other forms of media, including brochures and newsletters.
  - d. Acts as public relations agent concerning the action of the council by writing press releases and news articles.
  - e. Collaborates with other council committees for events and key communications.
  - f. Corresponds with staff advisory organizations of other colleges and universities as needed.
  
5. Governance Committee
  - a. Ad hoc committee.
  - b. Members are council officers and chairs of council committees.
  - c. Prepares or updates council goals and mission statement prior to presentation to the council for vote.
  - d. Discusses and implements methods for improved function of the council.

6. Health and Wellness Committee
  - a. Standing committee.
  - b. Focuses on health promotion opportunities for employees.
  - c. Monitors and communicates with SAC representatives changes to staff health benefits.
  
7. Officer Search Committee
  - a. Ad hoc Committee.
  - b. Solicits nominations for candidates for officer position for the coming year.
  - c. Appointed by the chair during the spring semester.
  - d. Committee function ends when the election of new officers is completed.
  
8. Staff Appreciation Committee
  - a. Standing Committee.
  - b. Organizes events and activities, including award ceremonies and the annual staff event with the senior administration.
  - c. Participates in commencement, convocation and other activities as designated by the chair.
  - d. Collaborates with the electronic technology and information committee to ensure dissemination of information its activities.
  
9. Staff Issues Committee
  - a. Standing committee.
  - b. Appointed by the chair.
  - c. Serves as an advisory group to the council on global staff employee issues or concerns that fall outside the scope of other committees.
  - d. Reviews global staff employee issues, weighs the validity of these issues, and brings the issues forward for discussion at council meeting.
  - e. Provides input to Human Resources on the university's staff handbook and other policies affecting staff welfare generally.
  - f. Nominates staff employees for training as potential members of grievance review panels as necessary.
  - g. Refers individual staff employee issues to Human Resources with the employee's consent.

## Article VI – Standing Rules

Standing rules relate to the orderly transaction of business in the meetings of the council and can be changed or suspended immediately upon approval of a majority rule of the voting members of the council in attendance at a meeting where a quorum is present. A change to the standing rules cannot be adopted and later altered or suspended in the same fiscal year. Procedural decisions of the council shall be incorporated into the standing rules annually. In the event of any conflict between the standing rules and the constitution, the constitution shall control. The minimum standing rules shall be:

1. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (tenth edition) will prevail in conducting business.
2. The order of business to be followed at the meetings of the council will be as follows:
  - a. Reading and Approval of Minutes.
  - b. Officer Reports.
    - i. University Senate.
    - ii. Board of Tulane University.
  - c. University Senate Committee Reports.
  - d. Council Committee Reports.
  - e. Announcements from Human Resources.
  - f. Unfinished Business.
  - g. New Business.
  - h. Next Meeting Date Announcement.
  - i. Adjournment.
3. The senior administrator in the Workforce Management Organization or a designee shall attend each meeting of the council.

#### Article VII – Amendments

Amendments to this constitution or the standing rules may be proposed and presented for discussion by the constitution committee at a regularly scheduled meeting of the council and voted on at the next regularly scheduled meeting. A council member who wishes to suggest or recommend an amendment should communicate it to the constitution committee in writing. Amendments shall become effective when approved by two-thirds of the voting members of the council in attendance at a regularly scheduled meeting at which a quorum is present.