

STAFF SENATE CONSTITUTION

Arkansas State University – Mountain Home

Purpose Statement

The intent of the Arkansas State University-Mountain Home Staff Senate is to foster a spirit of unity and cooperation among all employees of the university. The Staff Senate shall have an active role in overseeing and protecting the welfare of all staff members and shall be recognized as an equal participant with the Faculty Senate within the ASUMH shared governance process. The Staff Senate shall provide, through elected senators, a method of open communication and ongoing dialogue among staff, administration, faculty, and students, and shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Chancellor of the university. The Staff Senate strives foremost to contribute to the overall success of Arkansas State University-Mountain Home.

Organizational Structure

The Staff Senate is the official representative group for ASUMH staff and includes the following categories of staff on the ASUMH Campus:

- Classified
- Non-Classified

Each of these categories shall be represented by four senators.

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

This organization shall be known as the Staff Senate of Arkansas State University-Mountain Home.

ARTICLE 2 – OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Staff Senate is to serve as the official representative voice of all non-faculty employees of Arkansas State University-Mountain Home in an advisory capacity to the Chancellor of the university with respect to all matters pertaining to non-faculty employee relations and to provide a means of communication to disseminate information to non-faculty employees of the university.

ARTICLE 3 – POWERS

Section A. Communication. The Senate shall keep staff advised of issues, policies, procedures, and activities that could affect the welfare of the staff.

Section B. Representation. The staff, acting through the Staff Senate, shall address the quality of the work life of the staff, the efficiency of the university's operations, and the staff's service to the campus community. The Staff Senate shall represent the staff welfare in a spirit of unity and cooperation among all college employees. The Staff Senate may make recommendations to the administration of the university on matters of staff concern by adopting resolutions or submitting proposals through the shared governance process. Such matters shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. System policies
- b. Campus procedures
- c. Budgeting
- d. Fringe benefits
- e. University calendars and schedules
- f. Compensation
- g. Environment, safety, and physical facilities
- h. Health and wellness

ARTICLE 4 – AMENDMENTS

Section A. Governance. This Constitution shall govern the Staff Senate and may be modified with a 2/3-majority vote of staff members participating in the election. The Constitution is to be reviewed every other year by an ad hoc committee.

Section B. University Approval. Any change in the Constitution adopted by the Staff Senate shall be effective only if approved by the Chancellor of the university.

ARTICLE 5 – MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Membership/Criteria. The membership and the rights to participate in elections shall be open to all full-time staff (non-faculty employees) and part-time staff (non-faculty employees).

Section B. Membership in Other Governance Organizations. University employees who are eligible to be represented by the Staff Senate may also serve in other campus governance organizations, including Shared Governance Committees.

Section C. The Human Resources director or designated representative shall be available by request to attend Senate meetings in an ex-officio non-voting capacity.

ARTICLE 6 – REPRESENTATION

Section A. Representative Classifications. Employees of the university are represented in three categories. The categories are organized into two classifications as established on page 1 under Organizational Structure.

Section B. Representative Apportionment. Four senators will represent each employment classification.

ARTICLE 7 – ELECTION AND ATTENDANCE

Section A. Term of Office. A “term year” is defined as May 1 through April 30. Senators are elected to serve three-year staggered terms beginning May 1 and ending April 30. Terms will be staggered by rotating one senator from each category off the Staff Senate during even numbered years, and rotating two senators from each category off the Senate during odd numbered years. The Senate has the authority to effect any changes needed to stagger terms of office. Senators will serve their term in the category from which they were elected regardless of category transfer resulting from job reclassification and/or promotion.

Section B. Election of Senators. The election process for senators shall take place in April of each term year prior to the new term year which begins May 1. Nominations will be taken in March by the Vice-President of the Staff Senate for each of the three (3) classifications that serve on the Senate. After receipt of nominations, all members will elect Senators from the nominees for their classification. In the case of a tie, the first tie-breaker shall be a second general election where all names, except the tie candidates, shall be removed. In case of a second tie, the current Staff Senate shall cast a vote between said candidates to determine election.

Section C. Re-election of Senators. Senators may not hold two consecutive three-year terms. Re-election may take place one year after the expiration of a two-year term. The Senate may approve an exception if there are no interested eligible staff members willing to serve.

Section D. Senate Vacancies. When a vacancy occurs on the Staff Senate for a reason other than the expiration of a term, the unsuccessful candidate receiving the highest number of votes in the category in which the vacancy resides during the last election shall fill the vacancy. The

replacement member will serve until the expiration of the term. The position will be permanently filled in the next regular election. The appointed representative may run for election.

When a vacancy occurs due to the declination of nominations from any staff classification category, the Staff Senate should seek a suitable representative on a voluntary basis to fill the vacant seat. The temporary replacement member will be asked to serve until the expiration of the vacant term. The position will be permanently filled in the next regular election. The appointed temporary representative may run for election.

Section E. Attendance Requirements

If in a term year a Senator has three unexcused meeting absences, the Senator will be removed from office and the seat declared vacant. The President determines whether meeting absences are unexcused. When the President has been notified by a Senator prior to the meeting of his/her inability to attend, this will be considered an excused absence. Any Staff Senator who is unexcused for three consecutive meetings shall be replaced with the alternate from their category who received the next highest number of votes in the most recent election.

ARTICLE 8 – OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Section A. Elections

At the May meeting following April elections, a President, Vice President, and Secretary shall be elected by majority vote of the Senators. Officers shall serve two-year terms. The nomination and election of officers will be determined at the first meeting by paper ballot officiated by the Past President.

Section B. Officer Duties

a. The President shall:

- i. act as official spokesperson for the Staff Senate
- ii. preside over all meetings of the Staff Senate
- iii. organize the agenda for each meeting
- v. provide each Staff Senator with a current copy of the Staff Senate Constitution and information about the duties of a Staff Senator
- v. represent the Staff Senate at Shared Governance Oversight Committee meetings
- vi. appoint committees as deemed necessary as the standing Staff Senate President

vii. attend Chancellor's Council meetings

b. The Vice President shall:

i. execute the duties of the President in the President's absence

ii. supervise the nomination and election process, including: 1) adjust representative apportionment, if necessary, and 2) supervise the counting of ballots and notification to elected representatives

iii. represent the Staff Senate at Shared Governance Oversight Committee meetings

iv. serve as Chair of the Planning & Budgeting Committee

v. accomplish other duties as assigned by the President

c. The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

i. prepare minutes of each Staff Senate meeting

ii. distribute approved minutes to appropriate parties

iii. maintain a record of senator absences

iv. maintain Staff Senate records

v. represent the Staff Senate at Shared Governance Oversight Committee meetings

vi. accomplish other duties as assigned by the President

d. The Immediate Past President shall:

i. serve in an advisory capacity as a non-voting, ex-officio member, except in the event of a tie, in which case the Immediate Past President shall cast the deciding vote

ii. assist with transition of new officers and archival information

iii. represent the Staff Senate at Shared Governance Oversight Committee meetings

iv. if necessary, serve an additional year beyond the standard two-year term in an advisory capacity

v. receive and record any monies donated or granted to the Staff Senate, maintain accounts, and disburse funds appropriated by the Staff Senate for designated purposes.

vi. accomplish other duties as assigned by the President

e. The Human Resource Representative shall:

- i. be available by request to attend critical meetings and for consulting and advising when needed
- ii. verify staff employee numbers by classifications
- iii. accomplish other duties as assigned by the President

ARTICLE 9 – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section A. Executive Committee.

The three (3) member Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Past President. Additionally, the Human Resources director serves in an advisory capacity.

The Executive Committee shall be chaired by the President of the ASUMH Staff Senate and shall operate as representatives of the organization at-large. Its function shall be to aid in oversight of the operations of the organization and serve as a conduit to facilitate communication between the ASUMH Staff Senate, Shared Governance, and the Chancellor of the university.

Section B. The Executive Committee shall:

- a. Resolve questions of membership and representation of the ASUMH Staff Senate and its represented membership should such questions arise and shall be responsible for reporting such findings to the Staff Senate.
- b. Facilitate communication between all members of university staff on matters and issues pertinent to university staff welfare.
- c. Provide and maintain the ways and means of assisting the ASUMH Staff Senate in the dissemination of information on said activities and actions.
- d. Appoint members to Staff Senate committee positions, unless otherwise specified, and approve appointments of selected staff members to committees by the respective committee chair.
- e. Resolve questions of jurisdiction of standing and ad hoc committees should such questions arise.

- f. Suggest items to other standing and ad hoc committees that are of concern to the ASUMH Staff Senate for consideration.
- g. Review, at request of any represented member, proposed university policy or procedural changes, and, if necessary, recommend changes to the ASUMH Staff Senate.
- h. Study and prepare proposals in matters concerning employee benefits, such as retirement, leave, insurance, and working conditions to be submitted to the Staff Senate.

ARTICLE 10 – MEETINGS

- Section A.** The Senate will meet once a month and may be rescheduled by the President if needed. During the first meeting following elections, Senators will establish a set monthly meeting time.
- Section B.** All meetings are open.
- Section C.** All meetings shall follow Robert’s Rules of Order.
- Section D.** At all meetings the President shall preside; in the President’s absence the Vice President shall preside. In the absence of both the President and the Vice President, the President shall designate a sitting Senator to preside.
- Section E.** A quorum shall exist when fifty percent of the Senate is present.
- Section F.** Any Staff Senate member who is unexcused for three consecutive Staff Senate meetings shall be replaced with the alternate from their category who received the next highest number of votes in the most recent election.
- Section G.** The Executive Committee of the Staff Senate shall compile the agenda for each meeting.
- Section H.** Items may be placed on the agenda of the Staff Senate by any person employed by the university half-time or more by submitting a written statement to the Staff Senate seven (7) days prior to the President publishing the Staff Senate meeting agenda.
- Section I.** The agenda must be distributed to all staff within five (5) working days before the meeting.
- Section J.** Items of business not listed on the Staff Senate agenda cannot be considered without a quorum being present. The President will have the authority to call for

a vote for an item to be placed on the agenda; a two-thirds vote of those in attendance is required in order to add an item to the agenda.

Section K. The President, or presiding officer in the absence of the President, may extend speaking privileges to persons who are not members.

Section L. Special Meetings may be called by the President of the Senate with a minimum of 48 (forty-eight) hours' notice to the membership.

ARTICLE 11 – SENATE FINANCE

Section A. Allocation for Travel and Professional Development. Annual funding is to be provided by ASUMH through the office of the Chancellor to support the professional activities of the Staff Senate including, but not being limited to, travel expenses of the President or a designee to the System Board of Trustee meetings or other events related to ASUMH and of staff interest and concern.

Section B. Requisitions and Documentation Retention. The Secretary/Treasurer shall maintain records pertaining to travel requests, requisitions, and reimbursements for any Staff Senate activity. All financial records of the Staff Senate shall be open to inspection by the appropriate member of the administration to ensure compliance.

ARTICLE 12 – COMMITTEES

Section A. Standing Committees. The standing committees of the Arkansas State University-Mountain Home Staff Senate (ASUMH Staff Senate) shall be:

1. Election
2. Staff Development
3. Staff Recognition

Any Staff Senate member may attend standing committee meetings and is encouraged to participate in committee discussion.

Standing committees may be created or dissolved by a majority vote by the entirety of the ASUMH Staff Senate and are responsible to said Senate. Unless otherwise stipulated, chairpersons of standing committees shall be elected by majority vote of the committee with ties to be determined by the ASUMH Staff Senate President.

1. Election Committee

The three (3) member Election Committee shall consist of the following: The Vice-President of the ASUMH Staff Senate and one staff member from each represented member group (other than the group the Vice-President represents) as appointed by the President.

The Election Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President of the ASUMH Staff Senate and shall be responsible for the annual election of ASUMH Staff Senators and Senate Officers. The committee is also responsible for maintaining records concerning term limits for each Senator and Officer.

The Election Committee shall:

- i. Hold and administer election procedures in accordance with the ASUMH Staff Senate Constitution.
- ii. Maintain records in accordance with established guidelines concerning ASUMH Staff Senate elections including but not limited to election procedures, results, and term limits of each Senator and Officer.
- iii. Study and review election procedures periodically or at the request of a represented staff member, and recommend changes, if necessary, to the ASUMH Staff Senate.

2. Staff Development Committee

The four (4) member Staff Development Committee shall consist of: one (1) duly elected Staff Senator from each of the three (3) member groups appointed by the President and a Human Resource representative, upon request

The chair of the Staff Development Committee shall be elected by majority vote of the committee.

The Staff Development Committee shall identify programs and activities that will provide both personal and professional growth opportunities for university staff in ways including, but not being limited to, staff questionnaires and surveys. It shall disseminate information on said programs and activities to the entirety of university staff and make recommendations in providing development opportunities for staff to the Staff Senate.

The Staff Development Committee shall:

- Collect information on and identify the staff development needs on a regular basis.
- Disburse information on programs and activities specific to staff development through the Senators.

- Make recommendations to the Staff Senate as it relates to providing staff development opportunities.

3. Staff Recognition Committee.

The three (3) member Staff Recognition Committee shall consist of one (1) duly elected Staff Senator from each of the three (3) member groups appointed by the President.

The Staff Recognition Committee shall identify non-monetary ways to help recognize staff for excellent service to the university.

The Staff Recognition Committee shall:

- Make recommendations to the Staff Senate as it relates to providing staff recognition opportunities.
- Collect different ways to recognize staff members and try to implement them with assistance from Human Resources.
- Maintain contact with staff to see what ways (non-monetary) they would like to be recognized for excellent service to the university.

Section B. Shared Governance Committees. The Staff Senate shall encourage staff members to serve on shared governance committees as set forth in the shared governance procedures.

Section C. Ad Hoc Committees. From time to time, the ASUMH Staff Senate shall form ad hoc committees to address special circumstances or events of a limited scope and nature such as, but not being limited to, the revision of Senate procedures or the dissemination of material as it pertains to university staff as made available at the state or national level.

Said ad hoc committees shall be of a temporary nature and of limited scope. Its chair and members should be appointed by the President of the ASUMH Staff Senate with the following provisions:

- i. The chair of the ad hoc committee must be a sitting member of the ASUMH Staff Senate.
- ii. Members of the committee must be drawn in equal numbers from each of the represented member groups.
- iii. The total number of members must not exceed one and a half (1.5) times the number of members in the largest standing committee currently installed.
- iv. All appointments are contingent on appointee's consent to serve.

- v. Ad hoc committees shall be dissolved upon completion of their charge as determined by the committee chair and Staff Senate President.

Section D. Committee Membership and Election Procedures. Any eligible staff member may serve on committees and is encouraged to participate. Committee members appointed from university staff at-large have voting rights *within their appointed committee(s) only*.

Committees whose membership requires a duly elected Staff Senator shall be filled by appointment from the President. ASUMH Staff Senators may submit their name for consideration to serve on a committee prior to the President's appointments.

Committee members, who may be selected from eligible staff at-large, may be appointed by the respective committee's chair. Appointments are contingent on appointee's consent to serve.

Unless otherwise stipulated, terms of office concerning membership and office in standing committees are to coincide with the established terms of office as laid forth by the ASUMH Staff Senate Constitution.

Section E. Committee Chair Responsibilities. Committee chairs shall be responsible for:

- i. The scheduling of regular committee meetings including date, location, and time.
- ii. Notification of meetings to all committee members and distribution of agenda.
- iii. The preparation and distribution of the committee's agenda to the entirety of the membership.
- iv. Keeping meeting notes for use in preparation and submission of monthly reports and updates to the ASUMH Staff Senate.
- v. Maintaining records of any and all changes to official material related to their respective committees and their responsibilities.

ARTICLE 13 – RATIFICATION

Section A. Ratification. Before this constitution shall become effective, it must be approved by a majority of staff members casting ballots.

This Constitution was approved and ratified May 21, 2013.

This Constitution was amended and approved May 12, 2015.

This Constitution was amended and approved December 1, 2017.

This Constitution was amended and approved January 4, 2021.

This Constitution was amended and approved March 10, 2023.