

3344-61-21 Staff Senate.

(A) Purpose.

The purpose of this rule is to establish a staff senate as the representative body for professional staff members of Cleveland state university as defined in rule 3344-61-01 of the Administrative Code, and non-bargaining classified employees of Cleveland state university as described in rule 3344-63-01 of the Administrative Code (such professional staff members, and non-bargaining classified employees, are collectively referred to herein as “staff”).

(B) Policy.

- (1) The Cleveland state university staff senate is an advisory body created to advocate for matters of interest to staff, and to make recommendations to the president and senior university leadership regarding such matters. The staff senate shall act in an advisory capacity only, except when specifically authorized in writing by the university administration or by university policy to perform other functions.
- (2) The staff senate shall:
 - (a) Solicit feedback and input from staff regarding specific policies, proposals, or initiatives and report that information to the university administration;
 - (b) Assist the university administration in communicating with staff regarding specific information about proposals, policies, or initiatives of particular interest to the staff;
 - (c) Plan, assist in the planning, and conduct morale building and professional development activities for staff; and
 - (d) Research and recommend to the university administration proposals, policies, and initiatives that are of specific interest to the staff.
- (3) The bylaws of the staff senate govern the conduct of its affairs. The bylaws are intended to address matters of staff senate governance that are not otherwise addressed by a university policy. In the event of a conflict between the staff senate bylaws and a university policy, the university policy shall prevail. Any bylaw may be amended or repealed by the staff senate as set forth herein and must be approved by the board

of trustees.

(C) Bylaws

(1) Name and purpose

- (a) Name: The name of this organization is the Cleveland state university staff senate.
- (b) Purpose: The staff senate is a representative body of the University's staff, and shall serve the following functions:
 - (i) To be recognized with faculty and student bodies in advising university administration;
 - (ii) To provide feedback, recommendations, and advice to the university President and senior leadership team on issues relevant to the staff senate and its members;
 - (iii) To update and advise university administration on the working conditions and practices relative to staff compensation, benefits, grievances, and more; and
 - (iv) To support leadership, networking, and professional opportunities for staff senate general members.

(2) Members

- (a) Eligible staff senate members include all benefits-eligible staff of Cleveland State University as defined in Section (A) above.
- (b) Staff senate strives for a representative and diverse membership reflecting all constituent groups with equitable representation among the university's various colleges, units, and departments.

(3) Senators

- (a) Staff senate will consist of 21 elected senators, including officers, and each senator shall serve a two (2) year term, beginning at the August staff senate meeting. Senators may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. Notwithstanding the preceding, a member may be

nominated for an open senator seat following a one (1) year hiatus from serving as a senator.

- (b) Senators will be elected to staff senate per stated qualifications through a regular election process or, in case of a vacancy, through appointment by the senate president in consultation with the staff senate executive board.
- (c) Senators missing more than three (3) regularly scheduled meetings of the staff senate in any rolling twelve (12) month period shall be automatically removed from office, without further action by the staff senate.
- (d) Senators may resign voluntarily by delivering written notice of resignation to the senate president. A senator will be deemed to have resigned automatically upon: (1) the ending of their employment with the university for any reason; (2) if the senator's primary role is no longer staff (e.g. promotion, transfer); (3) placement on indefinite leave, or definite leave for more than four (4) months; (4) becoming covered by a collective bargaining agreement; or, (5) entering into a written employment contract with the university inconsistent with service as a senator. In the case of a resignation under this provision, the senate president shall appoint an eligible member to fill the remainder of the unexpired term. In the case of a resignation in the president role, an appointment shall be made by the senate vice president in consultation with the staff senate executive board.
- (e) Nomination and term of senators
 - (i) Nominees for senator must have prior approval from their direct supervisor or manager.
 - (ii) Initial senator nominees shall be elected by a vote of the members at the first meeting of the staff senate. Eleven (11) of the initial senators shall be classified as class A senators and shall serve an initial term of three (3) years. Ten (10) of the initial senators shall be classified as class B senators and shall serve an initial term of two (2) years.
 - (iii) At the monthly staff senate meeting occurring prior to the expiration of the initial term of class B senators, and occurring

annually thereafter, the staff senate will accept nominations for eligible members to serve as senators/officers for vacant senator/officer seats. The membership & elections committee will notify those voting, call for nominations, prepare ballots, and facilitate the election.

- (iv) A Member appointed to fill a vacated senator seat shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

(4) Officers

- (a) Officers of staff senate shall include president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer (collectively, the “executive board”).
 - (b) The president shall:
 - (i) Be responsible for setting the strategic direction of the staff senate consistent with the strategic direction of the university in partnership with the staff senate executive board and in accordance with these bylaws, the university policies and procedures, and committee policy;
 - (ii) Serve as the official staff senate representative to university administration, the board of trustees, and other university entities, and refer matters submitted for the staff senate’s attention to the appropriate governance committee(s);
 - (iii) Preside at staff senate and executive board meetings;
 - (iv) Appoint members to fill the unexpired term of senators or officers; and
 - (v) Authorize the use of budgeted funds with the consent of the staff senate executive board.
 - (c) The vice president shall:
 - (i) Assist the president and perform duties of president in their absence; and
 - (ii) Chair the membership & elections committee.
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(d) The secretary shall:

- (i) Record and publish official and accurate minutes of the general staff senate meetings;
- (ii) Maintain records of all staff senate minutes and other staff senate documents and records;
- (iii) Conduct the correspondence of staff senate;
- (iv) Ensure the staff senate website is maintained and up to date; and
- (v) Schedule and announce meetings of the staff senate.

(e) The treasurer shall:

- (i) Create the annual budget and submit it to the staff senate executive board for approval; provide regular budget updates to staff senate; and
- (ii) Preserve all financial records of staff senate.

(f) The staff senate president, in consultation with the staff senate officers, may appoint other officers and/or assistant officers as may be deemed necessary and/or appropriate by the staff senate.

(g) Election of officers:

- (i) The inaugural group of senate officers will be classified as Class B senators and shall serve an initial term of two (2) years and except for the staff senate's first year of existence, a senator must serve on the staff senate for one (1) full year to be eligible to hold an officer position.
 - (ii) The election of officers will take place at the final staff senate meeting of the fiscal year. The term of office for all newly elected officers will begin at the start of the next fiscal year.
 - (iii) Except when serving to complete an unexpired term, officers shall serve a term of two (2) years. Officers shall assume their
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duties immediately following the June meeting.

- (iv) The president shall appoint members to fill the unexpired term of officers.
- (v) An elected and/or appointed officer may be removed by a majority vote at a regular meeting.

(5) Staff senate committees:

- (a) There shall be four standing committees in order to conduct staff senate business more efficiently during the interim between full staff senate meetings.
 - (i) Committee meetings are open to all staff, but only official committee members may vote on committee matters.
 - (ii) A quorum, being a requirement to conduct committee business, is defined as a majority of the members of the committee.
 - (iii) Following the confirmation of senators to standing committees, a committee chair will be elected by a majority vote of the committee members.
 - (b) Below are the standing committees established by the staff senate:
 - (i) Membership & elections committee: will facilitate the staff senate election process as outlined by the governance committee, provide staff senate with nominees for open positions on standing committees, and develop the new member orientation and training program.
 - (ii) Communication & recognition committee: will provide important and transparent information to staff senate membership, send out staff senate announcements and news, and update and maintain the staff senate website in collaboration with the secretary. This committee will also plan and market staff senate events, including those to recognize contributions of staff senate members as well as those designed to provide service or volunteer opportunities.
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(iii) Finance & human resource committee: will support the strategic direction of the university with emphasis on the staff experience. The committee will consider all financial, planning, human resource, and budget decisions to ensure a supportive environment for staff. Finally, the committee will manage the staff senate budget and pursue funding opportunities.

(iv) Governance committee: will provide structure, policies, and procedures to ensure effective functioning of staff senate. The committee will review bylaws annually and propose amendments as needed, monitor governance policies and practices to ensure effective staff involvement in university decision making, determine membership, nomination, and election procedures, and address all governance matters brought to its attention.

(c) Ad hoc committees may be developed for specific, time-limited purposes as needed and determined by the staff senate executive board.

(6) Meetings; Voting

(a) Staff senate will hold monthly meetings during the fiscal year.

(b) Special meetings may be called by the president or by a one-third vote of the senators, provided that at least two (2) officers are included in that vote.

(c) Voting shall occur as follows:

(i) A quorum of Senators is required to conduct staff senate business and quorum is defined as a majority of Senators.

(ii) For the purposes of voting, a majority is defined as more than half of all Senators in attendance at a staff senate meeting.

(iii) Voting during each staff senate meeting will be by the method prescribed by the President or Committee Chair at the time of the vote.

(iv) At the request of the President, a vote may be taken by mail, text

message, email, or poll. Votes taken via these methods require a majority vote.

- (v) No Senator shall have more than one (1) vote, and proxy voting is not allowed.

(7) Budget

- (a) Control of the staff senate budget and operating expenses will be the responsibility of the finance & human resource committee and approved by the staff senate executive board.
- (b) The treasurer will present an annual operating budget at the first executive board meeting of the fiscal year that outlines the expected budget and expenditures as well as special projects or other areas of financial concern.
- (c) The staff senate budget may be determined annually as a line-item allocation in the university's budget.

(8) Bylaws, amendments, & approval

- (a) Bylaws will be reviewed annually by the governance committee to determine if amendments or revisions are needed.
 - (b) Technical changes are understood to include renumbering articles and sections, updating administrative titles, and making other non-substantive revisions to improve accuracy and clarity. The staff senate executive board will approve technical changes by a majority vote.
 - (c) Any amendment, repeal or alteration of these bylaws can be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at any regular or special meetings of staff senate, provided written notice of the meeting and the proposed amendment(s) are given to the members at least one (1) month prior to the meeting. Any amendment, repeal, or alteration shall become effective immediately upon approval by the university's board of trustees.
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