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Staff Council

Constitution and Bylaws

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# Table of Contents

Constitution .....	3
Article I. Name and Purpose .....	3
Section 1. Name .....	3
Section 2. Purpose and Objectives.....	3
Article II. Composition.....	3
Section 1. Council Membership .....	3
Section 2. Executive Council .....	3
Section 3. Eligibility .....	3
Section 4. Attendance.....	4
Section 5. Vacancies.....	4
Article III. Organization .....	4
Section 1. Annual Meetings .....	4
Section 2. Elections .....	4
Section 3. Committees.....	5
Article IV. Jurisdiction, Duties and Powers .....	5
Section 1. Jurisdiction .....	5
Section 2. Duties .....	5
Section 3. Powers.....	5
Article V. Adoption and Amendment.....	5
Section 1. Adoption.....	5
Section 2. Amendment .....	5
Bylaws .....	6
Article I. Membership .....	6
Section 1. Structure.....	6
Section 2. Elections .....	6
Section 3. Attendance.....	6
Section 4. Vacancies.....	6
Article II. Officers .....	7
Section 1. Composition .....	7

Section 2. Executive Council .....	7
Section 3. Elections .....	7
Section 4. Vacancies.....	8
Section 5. Duties of Officers.....	8
Chair .....	8
Chair-Elect.....	8
Secretary .....	8
Section 6. Appointments.....	9
Chaplain .....	9
Historian.....	9
Parliamentarian.....	9
Treasurer .....	9
Webmaster .....	9
Section 7. Grievances and Vote of No-Confidence .....	9
Grievances.....	9
Vote of No-Confidence .....	9
Article III. Meetings.....	10
Section 1. Annual and Special Meetings.....	10
Section 2. Notice .....	10
Section 3. Voting .....	10
Section 4. Quorum .....	10
Section 5. Minutes .....	10
Article IV. Committees .....	11
Section 1. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees .....	11
Section 2. Nominating Committee.....	11
Section 3. Membership Committee .....	11
Article V. Amendment Policies.....	12
Section 1. Amendment .....	12

# Constitution

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## Article I. Name and Purpose

### Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Baylor University Staff Council.

### Section 2. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this organization is to advance the exchange of information within the staff of the University by providing a forum for the expression and exchange of ideas and concerns of the staff at Baylor University.

## Article II. Composition

### Section 1. Council Membership

The Staff Council shall be composed of 36 voting members, each serving three-year terms beginning in May and rotating twelve members each year, unless otherwise specified. It shall be the responsibility of the Membership Committee to ensure that the membership of the Staff Council is representative of the University Staff.

### Section 2. Executive Council

Regular term of office for Executive Council members commences at the end of the May meeting and terminates at the end of the following May meeting when the new slate of officers takes office.

In the case that the Chair-Elect is serving his/her final year of their first or second term, he/she will be allowed to serve as an exception for one additional year as Chair of Staff Council as an ex-officio, non-voting member except in the case of a tie.

### Section 3. Eligibility

Any University staff member may nominate an eligible staff member, upon securing permission of the nominee, and/or self-nominate. The Membership Committee may also make nominations for Staff Council representatives. Nominees must have been employed with the University a minimum of two years. The Membership Committee will confirm with all nominees their awareness of the duties of being a Council member and their acceptance of that commitment, if elected.

Nominations are due to the Committee three weeks prior to the March meeting. A ballot of confirmed nominations will be presented for review to the Council at the March meeting with election, by University Staff members, being held prior to the April meeting. Newly elected Staff Council members will be introduced to the Council at the May meeting.

Members in the third year of their first term shall be eligible for immediate re-election for a second term during the elections that year. Members seeking re-election for a second term and replacement members seeking election for a regular term shall be listed on the ballot as incumbents. Members rotating off the Council from their second term shall only be eligible for re-election after one year has passed.

#### **Section 4. Attendance**

Excessive absences shall be four missed meetings in a year and shall generate an immediate review by the Membership Committee. In instances where absences cannot be avoided, a representative may be sent by the absent member, and shall not be counted for quorum purposes, shall not vote on issues at hand, and does not fulfill the staff member's obligation.

#### **Section 5. Vacancies**

The Executive Council has oversight for the process of filling vacancies on the Council and to resolve questions of eligibility as defined in the bylaws. The Staff Council membership shall be notified as soon as possible of any vacancy and pending elections. A vacancy should be filled at the first meeting following notification of a vacancy.

A vacancy on the Council occurs whenever a Staff Council member resigns from the Council, terminates employment with the University, or transfers from one position of employment to another not within the same division. Staff Council members transferring within the same division may remain on the Council the remainder of their term but must notify the Membership Committee of their change in department/office.

### **Article III. Organization**

#### **Section 1. Annual Meetings**

The Staff Council shall meet at least monthly during the year. A majority of the voting members of the Staff Council shall constitute a quorum. Unless objected to by a majority of the members of the Staff Council, the Chair may from time to time, with advance notice to the Staff Council, invite other members of the University community or the general public to designated meetings.

#### **Section 2. Elections**

Annually at the April meeting, the Staff Council shall elect from its members a Chair-Elect and Secretary. These offices shall be elected by secret ballot with the order of election being Chair-Elect and Secretary. The Chair-Elect will take on the role of Chair the following year after a vote of confidence by Staff Council members.

### **Section 3. Committees**

The Staff Council may establish such Staff Council Committees as it deems appropriate and may determine the procedures for appointing chairpersons and committee members.

## **Article IV. Jurisdiction, Duties and Powers**

### **Section 1. Jurisdiction**

The Staff Council shall study, consider, and exchange ideas concerning any matter affecting the University staff.

### **Section 2. Duties**

The Staff Council shall identify research and propose to appropriate members of the University Administration new programs and/or modifications of existing programs as needed. The Staff Council shall provide a research group on proposed policies and/or programs referred by the University Administration. The Staff Council shall provide a communication channel to the University Administration regarding proposals and recommendations. The Staff Council shall provide a communication channel that would disseminate information to the University Staff.

### **Section 3. Powers**

The Staff Council shall create a procedure and establish a body to consider the grievance of any staff member. The Staff Council shall provide a forum for matters of concern brought before it by any staff member.

## **Article V. Adoption and Amendment**

### **Section 1. Adoption**

The Constitution will come into effect when adopted by two-thirds of the membership of the Staff Council then present and voting at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Staff Council.

### **Section 2. Amendment**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the membership of the Staff Council present and voting at a regular or called meeting of the Staff Council provided that advance notice of the proposed amendment was given at least two weeks prior to the regular or called meeting when the voting is to take place.

# Bylaws

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## Article I. Membership

### Section 1. Structure

Representation of members will be reviewed every three years, unless the University re-organizes/re-aligns any of the divisions at the University. In this case, the distribution of members will be reviewed as the changes to the University structure are made with recommendations for needed changes in the composition of the Staff Council presented to Staff Council. The committee may use the office of Human Resources as a resource for the review. The Constitution shall be officially revised to reflect any change in the total membership.

### Section 2. Elections

The Membership Committee will oversee the election process. The elections will follow the election guidelines as defined by the Membership Committee. Staff shall be allowed to vote on those nominated to fill positions in their division only. Completed ballots must contain no more than the correct number of votes or the ballot will be void. The Committee will tally the ballots and notify the Staff Council Chair of the results which will be kept on record with the Secretary.

### Section 3. Attendance

The Secretary shall inform the Membership Committee if any member of the Staff Council is excessively absent from Staff Council meetings. After review by the Membership Committee, a vacancy may exist.

### Section 4. Vacancies

In the event that a vacancy occurs before the next election, the Secretary of the Staff Council must be notified and in turn the Secretary must inform the Staff Council Chair so that a replacement can be named from the most recent election of members or appointed by the Executive Council. The first runner-up will replace an appropriate vacancy and will serve for the remainder of the term. When a vacancy cannot be filled from the most recent election, the Executive Council may appoint a replacement member to serve the rest of the term. A replacement member shall be eligible for election for a regular, three-year term at the completion of the fulfilled term.

## Article II. Officers

### Section 1. Composition

The elected officers of the Staff Council shall be the Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary.

Since the Chair-Elect is expected to fulfill the role of Chair at the end of his/her service as Chair-Elect, he/she must receive a vote of confidence from a majority of members present at the time designated for officer elections. The positions of Chair-Elect and Secretary shall receive nominations annually. Each position must have at least one name on the ballot.

### Section 2. Executive Council

The Executive Council of the Staff Council shall consist of the Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary. Other Staff Council members may be appointed to the Executive Council by the Chair as deemed necessary. The Chair of the Staff Council shall serve as chair of the Executive Council. The Executive Council shall oversee the Membership Committee's implementation of the staggered terms for Council membership.

The Executive Council shall assist and advise the Staff Council Chair and shall exercise those powers delegated to it by the Staff Council. In case of an emergency, it shall have the power to act for the Staff Council or call an emergency meeting of the Staff Council. Except as otherwise provided, it shall be responsible for appointing chairs to such Staff Council committees as they are established.

All actions taken by the Executive Council shall be reported to the Staff Council at its next meeting and all such actions may be rescinded at that time by a majority vote of the Staff Council.

### Section 3. Elections

The officers shall be elected as follows: The Staff Council Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee before the March meeting. The Staff Council Chair shall serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee and members shall be comprised of members of the Council. The Committee shall solicit nominations and recommendations from members of the Council, shall determine whether nominees consent to serve if elected, and shall prepare a slate of candidates with at least one nominee for each position. Members of the Council shall be advised by the Staff Council Chair of such slate of candidates at least two weeks prior to the April meeting.

The annual election shall be held at the April meeting with the voting order being Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary. Any member of the Staff Council may submit independent nominations, provided such nominations are filed with a member of the Nominating Committee at least one week before the meeting of elections. Individuals making the nomination must have determined that the nominee consents to serve if elected. Each member may vote for one candidate only for each office. Candidates receiving a majority vote from those members present and voting shall be elected to the office. If no candidate receives a majority vote, the top two candidates shall be placed in a run-off. When a tie exists for the run-off positions, the tie shall be promptly determined by lot. Newly elected officers shall take office at the end of the May meeting and serve until the following May meeting when the new slate of officers takes office.



## **Section 4. Vacancies**

In the event that a vacancy occurs for an elected office before the next regular officer election, a special election should be held at the next Council meeting to fill the vacancy. When a vacancy occurs, the Executive Council must be notified and they in turn should appoint a Nominating Committee before the next Council meeting. Newly elected officers shall take office immediately upon election and serve the remainder of the specified term.

If the vacant position is that of Chair, the Chair-Elect shall immediately begin service as acting Chair and the vacancy to be filled shall be the position of Chair-Elect. The acting Chair is eligible to continue serving as Chair the following year unless there is a failed vote of confidence.

Vacancies in appointed positions may be replaced at the discretion of the Chair.

## **Section 5. Duties of Officers**

The duties of the offices shall be as follows:

### **Chair**

The Chair sets the Staff Council meeting agendas and presides over the meetings. He/she chairs the Executive Council and the Nominating committee, appoints non-elected officers and committee members, and performs other duties as described in the Bylaws. The Chair does not vote unless there is a tie; and in that situation, his/her vote serves as the tiebreaker.

### **Chair-Elect**

The Chair-Elect shall preside at the meetings of the Staff Council in the absence of the Chair, and serve as Staff Council liaison to Faculty Senate as allowed by the Senate. He/she shall serve as Chair for the year following his/her term as Chair-Elect, unless there is a failed vote of confidence. He/she shall serve as Chair in the event of the Chair's death, resignation, or removal from office. Such duties as deemed necessary and in accordance with the Bylaws may be delegated by the Chair to the Chair-Elect.

### **Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep minutes and records of all the proceedings of the Staff Council and shall receive and keep all reports and correspondence from committees of the Staff Council, University committees, University officials, and others having business with the Staff Council. The Secretary shall regularly prepare minutes of each meeting of the Staff Council and shall distribute such minutes to the members of the Staff Council. He/she shall prepare a debrief statement regarding each meeting for dissemination to all staff in the university following each meeting. The Secretary may record the meetings for the purpose of drafting the minutes and debrief statement. If a recording device is used, the secretary will advise the Chair, who will announce this during the call to order. Each recording will be deleted immediately following approval of those minutes.

## **Section 6. Appointments**

The Chair may appoint the following or additional positions as he/she deems necessary:

### **Chaplain**

The Chaplain shall offer a time for prayer requests and prayer at each meeting.

### **Historian**

The Historian shall maintain in a binder, copies of the Staff Council approved minutes and any news articles pertaining to the Staff Council. The Historian shall also keep in the binder, a photographic record of Staff Council special events. The Historian shall maintain any other records requested by the Chair and will submit all bound records to the Texas Collection at the end of each annual term.

### **Parliamentarian**

The Parliamentarian shall advise the Chair on all matters of procedure at the meetings of the Staff Council, according to the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order.

### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer will be responsible for accepting donations from Staff Council members and maintaining any Staff Council funds. The Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining all receipts and paying all expenditures. The Treasurer must receive approval from the Staff Council Chair or Chair-Elect prior to making any expenditure. The Treasurer will also oversee the Baylor University Staff Endowed Scholarship Fund and any other financial activities related to Staff Council.

### **Webmaster**

The Webmaster shall maintain the Staff Council website by posting updated news and events as needed. The Webmaster shall also post updated versions of the membership roster, committee assignments, meeting minutes, and other public information.

## **Section 7. Grievances and Vote of No-Confidence**

### **Grievances**

If a Staff Council member wishes to address grievances regarding an elected officer, they may first bring concerns to the Chair. If addressing the grievance to the Chair is inappropriate or does not lead to a suitable resolution, any Executive Council member may hear the grievance and choose to discuss in an Executive Council meeting or Staff Council meeting, as deemed appropriate.

### **Vote of No-Confidence**

In the event that grievances are not suitably resolved, a vote of no-confidence to remove an elected officer may proceed. A vote of no-confidence may be added to the agenda according to Bylaws, Article III, Section 2 or may take place in a special meeting called according to Bylaws, Article III, Section 1. An elected officer will be removed from office with a majority vote of the membership of the Staff Council present and voting at a regular or called meeting of the Staff Council.

## Article III. Meetings

### Section 1. Annual and Special Meetings

The Staff Council shall meet according to the schedule and requirements as stated in the Constitution of the Staff Council.

No business shall be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum is present and continues to be present at the meeting. A majority of the duly elected and qualified members constitutes a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, the Chair may only make announcements of an informative nature, rule on the existence of a quorum, and recess once for a short period to attempt to secure a quorum.

The Chair may call a special meeting of the Staff Council whenever the Chair deems it necessary, and a special meeting of the Staff Council may also be called upon the receipt of a petition of the Chair signed by at least nine members of the Staff Council.

### Section 2. Notice

The Chair shall prepare an agenda for each meeting in conjunction with the Executive Council and shall distribute it to each member on or before the Friday preceding the meeting. The Chair may allot a time period for agenda items and if so, the duration of discussion of such items at the meeting shall be restricted unless altered by a majority vote of the Staff Council. Any staff member of the University may bring a matter of University concern to the attention of or through a member of the Staff Council. The Chair shall make an appropriate announcement of the matter either in writing attached to the agenda or by placing the matter on the agenda. Substantive propositions calling for formal action, such as recommendations or reports on the part of the Staff Council, must be included in the agenda for the meeting if final action is to be taken at the meeting. If an item that was not placed on the agenda prior to the meeting is introduced, it may be placed upon the agenda for final action at the meeting only if a three-fourths majority vote of the members is in favor of adding it to the agenda.

### Section 3. Voting

Voting on matters before the Staff Council shall normally be by yeas or nays (voice vote or show of hands). A secret ballot will be held if requested by any five voting members either in advance of the meeting or at the time of the vote. Electronic voting or vote by mail may be authorized by the Chair on urgent or important matters as long as the method of voting is consistent for all members.

### Section 4. Quorum

Meetings of the Staff Council shall not be open to the general public unless the Chair directs otherwise and a majority of the Staff Council does not object. Meetings of the Staff Council shall not exceed 90 minutes in duration. The time of meeting may be extended by majority vote of the members present and voting.

### Section 5. Minutes

Minutes will be recorded at all meetings of Staff Council which shall consist of a record or brief summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions and other matter formally voted upon. Additionally, the minutes

shall include the date, type of meeting, name of the assembly, name of the presiding officer, a roll call, and a brief summary of business discussed. A member who introduces a motion will be named in the minutes, but neither the seconder nor those participating in the discussion will be named. The primary purpose of the minutes is to provide a record of what the assembly did and not what the members said.

The minutes for all meetings shall be presented to the council at the next regular meeting where they will be discussed, corrected, and approved by council members. Once approved, minutes of all meetings shall be made publicly available to all staff at Baylor University.

## **Article IV. Committees**

### **Section 1. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees**

The Staff Council may establish such standing and ad hoc committees as it deems appropriate. Except as may otherwise be provided, the Chair in consultation with the Executive Council may appoint the members and the Chair shall designate the chair of any such committee. Such members and chairs shall serve during the Staff Council Chair's term of office unless the committee is earlier dissolved or the Chair acts to remove a member or a committee chair. The Chair will also appoint members to serve on University Committees as such requests are made known.

### **Section 2. Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee shall be a representative body comprised of the Staff Council members. The current Staff Council Chair shall select the membership of the Nominating Committee with the assistance and advice of the Executive Council. The current Staff Council Chair shall serve as its Chair. The Nominating Committee will solicit nominations for the positions of Chair-Elect and secretary. The Staff Council membership shall be notified of the nominations at least two weeks prior to the April meeting. The Nominating Committee shall have the duties and exercise the functions as provided in the Constitution.

### **Section 3. Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee shall be a representative body comprised of the Staff Council members appointed by the Executive Council and shall consist of four members plus the Staff Council Secretary serving as an ex-officio member.

The Membership Committee will coordinate with Human Resources to verify eligibility of nominees and seek the recommendation of each supervisor for the ability of the nominee to serve if elected to the Council. The Membership Committee shall have the duties and exercise the functions as provided in the Constitution.

## **Article V. Amendment Policies**

### **Section 1. Amendment**

These bylaws will come into effect when adopted by a majority of the membership of the Staff Council present and voting at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Staff Council.

These bylaws may be amended by majority of the membership of the Staff Council present and voting at a regular or called meeting of the Staff Council provided that advance notice of the proposed amendment was given at least two weeks prior to the regular or called meeting when the voting is to take place.