

STAFF SENATE BYLAWS

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University STAFF SENATE BYLAWS Revised March 2016

ARTICLE I

Official Name

The name of this body shall be the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University Staff Senate (hereafter referred to as "Senate").

Mission

The Senate is a representative group of permanent employees, subject to the State Human Resources Act (SHRA), and non-teaching employees, exempt from the Human Resources Act (EHRA Representatives are elected by their peers to support the overall mission, goals, and objectives of the university.

The senate shall serve as an advisory body to the chancellor. In fulfilling this role, the Senate shall:

- Constructively address and clearly identify SHRA and EHRA non-teaching employees' ideas, issues, interests, and concerns relative to employment benefits, agencies, policies and procedures;
- Promote and facilitate communication and participation in decisions and activities affecting staff and . . .
- Encourage a sense of community among all university employees.

Vision

The Staff Senate shall pursue opportunities and initiatives that improve the quality of life for SHRA and EHRA non-faculty personnel at NC A&T through involvements and collaborations with internal and external clients to enhance work performance and personal development with regard to workplace ethics, respect, fairness and life-long learning.

ARTICLE II

Participation

Senators and senate alternates, engaged in regularly scheduled senate activities--taking place during the regular work schedule, will report such activity as work time. Supervisors and managers shall support participation, including permitting necessary release time for representatives to participate in senate activities (including committee meetings).

All employees are encouraged to participate in Senate activities with the following provisions:

1. Attendance and participation by employees other than senators and senate alternates in the Senate's monthly meetings are on a voluntary basis, is not reported as work time, and must not conflict with work assignments.
2. Attendance at the Senate's Staff Forums is considered work time for all employees when

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the meeting occurs during an employee's regular work schedule. However, employees are strongly urged to receive approval from the supervisors in advance at attend community forums.

Attendance

Your presence at Senate meetings, as well as special or called meetings is imperative so that discussion can be held, and decisions made that are in keeping with the wellbeing of staff.

ARTICLE III

Membership Eligibility

Senate eligibility shall consist of permanent, full-time SHRA and EHRA non-teaching employees who have completed their probationary requirements

Representation

There shall be one senator for each thirty-five (35), permanent full-time staff members rounded to the nearest tenth. A senator shall be chosen from a district by staff within that district. If a district has fewer than one-tenth staff, that district will have one senator. Representation shall be based on proportional distribution across six (6) electoral units. There shall be one (1) Alternate per two (2) Senators for each division. In the event that a division only has one (1) Senator, there shall be one (1) alternate for that division.

ARTICLE IV

Districts

The representative districts (voting units) of the Senate shall be as follows:

Division of Academic Affairs

Division of Business and Finance

Division of Human Resources/Division of Information Technology Services (ITS)

Division of Chancellor's Office/Division of Research and Economic Development/

Division of Economic Advancement

Division of Student Affairs

EHRA Non-Teaching, District At Large

ARTICLE V

Terms for Senate Representative

Senators and senate alternates are elected for one term (two years). A representative may be elected for unlimited consecutive terms. However, if a senate alternate serves out a partial term vacated by another senator the individual may serve up to twelve months in that capacity and be elected to unlimited consecutive terms thereafter. Senators have the opportunity to be elected by the Senate as an officer.

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ARTICLE VI

Senator Duties

Senators shall make themselves known to their constituents, indicating methods for contact, a willingness to hear concerns, receive information and suggestions, and communicate these effectively to the Senate. Each senator is expected to attend monthly Senate meetings, and staff forums. Senators are responsible for contacting their alternates at least one day prior to the meeting in the event they are unable to attend any meeting.

Each elected senator shall be elected to serve a two-year term, beginning with the August meeting of the election year to the July meeting two years hence. Senators take office and assume voting rights at the August meeting of the year in which they are elected.

A Senate alternate can serve as a chair of a Staff Senate committee but cannot hold an elected office

Senate Alternate Duties

Elected senate alternates shall be the area representative with the second highest number of votes from their respective district and shall be able to vote in the absence of the senator from that district. This provision will occur if the senator has informed the secretary of the senate, that the senator is unable to attend the meeting. In the event a senator is able to attend the meeting after the session has been called to order, the senator will have voice but no vote during that session. A Senate alternate can serve as a chair of a Staff Senate committee but cannot hold an elected office.

Ex-Officio

An ex-officio member is one who is an official representative of the university, who offers assistance and may not take part in voting.

The director for human resources shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting representative of the Senate. He/she shall function as a liaison between the university administration and the Senate. The immediate past chair of the Senate shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Senate for one year in an advisor/mentor capacity.

ARTICLE VII

Vacancies

If a vacancy in a Senate position should occur through termination of employment; change of voting district; resignation from the Senate; or removal from the Senate; the position will be filled by the senate alternate with the next highest votes from the respective district.

If a vacancy in a senate position should occur through termination of employment, change of voting district, resignation from the Senate, or removal from office, and there is no alternate, it shall be filled by appointment of the Executive Committee for the remainder of the term.

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ARTICLE VIII

Removal from Office

Any elected senator may be removed from office by the constituents in the representative district for non-performance of Senate duties. A petition requesting such removal may be brought to the Executive Committee by a simple majority of the members of the district. The Executive Committee shall investigate the matter on a case-by-case basis and will recommend action to the Senate. The Senate shall make the final decision by secret ballot, determined by a simple majority at a regular meeting.

Possible causes of expulsion shall include, but not be limited to:

- Use of the powers of the Senate, real or implied, to further personal causes;
- Excessive absenteeism
- Failure to consistently report on activities of the Senate to the district; (revise)
- And unavailability of the Senator to constituents

Once a person is removed from office he/she is not eligible for re-election.

If a senator is absent from three consecutive regularly schedule monthly senate meetings, or is absent from five regularly scheduled monthly senate meetings--within a nine-month period, she/he will be dismissed. The senate alternate from the same district will be appointed to complete the partial term of the replaced senator. Such action does not require a motion of the Executive Committee or a Senate vote.

ARTICLE IX

Election Process

Elections Committee

The nomination and election process shall be handled by the Nomination and Elections Committee; the nomination and election processes shall be from May through July. Senators begin their terms with the August opening session. It is the responsibility of the Committee to make any adjustments necessary to maintain the proportional representation of the Senate.

Nomination Procedure

The Elections Committee will request from the Department of Human Resources the appropriate information to determine staff members eligible for nomination and the appropriate printouts and labels needed to contact all staff members.

The Elections Committee will email a nomination form to each staff member employed in a permanent position as of May 1 as described in Article III. The form shall identify the district, the number of nominations allowed and instruction for the return of the form (date, time, place). Each staff member within a voting district may nominate the number of staff members eligible to be elected that year. Nomination of candidates for election to the Senate shall be sent by email to Elections Committee and shall be kept confidential.

After the closing date for nominations, the Elections Committee shall verify the eligibility of the

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nominees and shall notify the nominees that their names will be placed on the e-ballots unless they withdraw by a specified date. Any employee nominated must agree to serve on the Senate before his/her name can be considered for the e-ballot.

Election Procedure

1. The Election Committee shall handle the nomination and election process each year from May through July via electronic balloting (electronic ballots). Staff Senators begin their terms with the August meeting.
2. The Election Committee will prepare the initial e-election ballots. The ballots will indicate the:
 - (a) Name of the Division
 - (b) Names of the nominated staff members in alphabetical order
 - (c) Number of Staff Senators and Alternates to be elected, and
 - (d) Instructions for voting.
3. Constituents will be given five (5) days from the time ballots are sent out to cast their vote for an election candidate via e-election ballots.
4. At the end of the voting process, the Election Committee will count the ballots and notify the newly elected Senators and Alternates. The results will be made known to the University community.
 - (a) Senators will be selected based on the highest number of votes received. In the case of a tie, a run-off election will be held. Senate seats within each division will be filled first by the highest number of votes. Once Senate seats are filled, Alternate seats will be filled from the remaining nominees by voting rank.
 - (b) If the number of nominees is equal to or less than the number of vacant seats, the nominee(s) shall have won by default.
 - (c) If the number of nominees is less than the number of vacant seats, the Vice Chancellor or designee of the respective Division (at their discretion) shall appoint a Senator to serve in the vacant seat for that term.

ARTICLE X

Quorum

Thirty-five percent (35%) of the Senators (including Senate Alternates representing absent Senators) shall constitute a quorum, excluding ex-officio representation. A simple majority (anything more than 50%) of Senators present is required to rule on measures except amendments to the NCA&TSU Staff Senate by-laws, which requires a two-thirds vote. The chair will not vote except when necessary to break a tie. Other measures requiring a two-thirds vote include the installation of Honorary Senators, motions to suspend the rules, and other parliamentary motions which stipulates a two-thirds vote as defined by the most recent edition of Robert Rules of Order. When voting, and upon request of any voting member of the Senate, and with the approval of one-fifth of the voting members present, a roll call vote shall be held.

There shall be no voting by proxy. Only senators or the authorized alternate present at the meeting may vote.

ARTICLE XI

Election of Officers

Election of officers and committee chairs for the year shall take place at the July meeting of the

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Senate. Officers and committee chairs shall be elected by secret ballot in the following manner: The order of election of officers shall be chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, parliamentarian, and Staff Assembly Representatives.

Elections shall be by a majority vote of those members present and voting. If an additional ballot is required, the number of votes cast per candidate shall be announced prior to succeeding ballots. The chair of the Elections Committee shall conduct the election of officers.

ARTICLE XII

Officers

Officers shall consist of chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, parliamentarian, and Staff Assembly Representatives.

Chair

The chair is responsible for conducting the senate meeting and meetings of the Executive Committee. The chair will serve an ex-officio member of each committee except the Nomination/Election Committee. The chair shall serve as a liaison between the senate, chancellor, Faculty Senate organization and the Student Government Association. Informal duties of the chair include meeting periodically with the chancellor, the director for Human Resources and other appropriate university officials. The chair will also:

- Reschedule all canceled meetings;
- Abide by the stated rules of order when conducting meetings
- Refer all matters submitted for the Senate's attention to the appropriate committee(s) and/or to the University Chancellor or designee; and prepare a written annual report of the past year's progress and make it available to all members of the senate prior to the opening session.

Chair-Elect

A Chair-Elect will be elected in the second year of the term of the Chair and shall have duties as designated by the Chair. The Chair-Elect shall serve as the liaison to all standing committees.

Vice Chair

The duties of the vice-chair shall be to preside at all meeting of the Senate in the absence of the chair or in the event the chair requests the vice chair to serve during the course of a meeting; to assist the chair in performing leadership responsibilities; to serve by appointment on committees; to accept names of persons interested in serving on Senate standing committees and to make appointments on the basis of the person's preference where possible or, in the absence of volunteers, make the necessary appointments to committees in consultation with the chair; to make appointments to fill vacancies on committees; and to call a meeting of any committee that is not fulfilling its responsibilities and establishing organization by dictum. It shall be the responsibility of the vice chair to secure the standard plaque for the outgoing chair.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for the accuracy of the minutes for all meetings and recording and distributing the official minutes of each meeting. The Secretary shall maintain a roster of all

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Senators and Senate Alternates, with a Senator and Senate Alternate list maintained for each district in order of vote count. The Secretary shall serve as chair of the Nomination and Election Committee and shall issue all warnings and terminations resulting from noncompliance with attendance policies. Assumes the duties of the vice chair when the vice chair is absent and notifies the chair when a member has missed more than three regularly scheduled meetings within one year (August-July and depending on how long the office is held). The Secretary shall conduct all correspondences, agenda requirements and other clerical requests of the Staff Senate and its Executive Committee.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep records of all monies received and disburse all funds at the request of the Executive Committee. All accounts should be deposited in a financial institution in the name of the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University Staff Senate. A year-to-date Financial Report shall be made by the Treasurer at each meeting an annual report given at the end of the year. The treasurer shall be bonded by the Senate organization as deems necessary. The signatures of two officers shall be required on all funding documents. The officers authorized to sign funding documents for the senate will be the treasurer and the chair.

Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian maintains the current edition of Robert Rules of Order. He/shall advise the presiding officer on points of parliamentary procedure when requested, and will call for point of order if proper procedures are not being followed. He/she shall serve as a resource to Senate officers and membership regarding the rules and usage of the stated rules of order. He/she shall preside at meetings in the absence of both the chair and vice-chair. He or she shall serve by appointment on committees.

Staff Assembly Representatives

Three (3) Staff Assembly Representatives represent NC A&T Staff Senate at the Staff Assembly meetings. The Chair of the Staff Senate is automatically appointed to serve. Therefore, two (2) additional representatives (1 representative and 1 Alternate) shall be elected. The term of Staff Assembly Representation is 3 years.

ARTICLE XIII

Succession

In the event that the Chair cannot continue with the duties of office, the Vice-chair shall succeed to serve in that office. The succeeding Chair then shall have the authority to designate a new vice-chair to serve in his or her place subject to ratification by the entire Senate. Should the vice-chair be unable to assume this new post, the Senate shall hold a special election for the position of chair at the next monthly meeting following resignation, in accordance with the established procedures for electing Senate officers. Until a successor is found, the Executive Committee shall work in coordination with the parliamentarian to fulfill this position's duties.

ARTICLE XIV

The Senate operations will begin August 1 and end July 31.

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ARTICLE XV

Monthly Meetings

The Senate shall meet the fourth Thursday of each month at a time and place set by the group. The monthly meetings are subject to the open meeting laws of the State of North Carolina. All meetings are open to employees on a non-participating basis. Visitors to the meetings are required to request a time slot to address the body. The chair has the right to limit the speaking privileges.

The Chancellor or his designee will have an open invitation to attend all Senate meetings. The Executive Committee shall meet prior to the established meeting date to prepare the agenda for the monthly meeting. The Senate chair will conduct such meetings. Notice of all meetings and cancellations shall be circulated by print or electronic means. Additional meetings: called by the chair, Chancellor, and/or majority of the Senate staff.

ARTICLE XVI

Staff Forums

University Staff Forums shall be held by the Senate at least twice a year (fall and spring semesters) to allow for feedback and input from employees at large. Attendance at these meetings by employees is voluntary and shall be considered work time when it falls within their regularly scheduled work hours.

ARTICLE XVII

Senate Publications

A semi-annual newsletter/publication will be established to keep staff informed to issues that are being addressed.

ARTICLE XVIII

Committees

The committees of the Staff Senate are created by and comprised of staff senate members and are under the advisement of the Vice Chair. Committee chairpersons are elected by the membership of the respective committees. These committees, together with their memberships and responsibilities are as follows:

Nominations and Elections Committee

A Nomination and Elections Committee (NEC) will be comprised of a minimum of seven (7) persons, will be elected by the Staff Senate at the first meeting in August. The Nomination and Election Committee will consist of individuals not currently eligible for re-election. The duties of the NEC will be to poll all eligible employees. They should submit names of individual who are willing to serve one term to the University SHRA/EHRA non-teach staff, prepare ballots which will include names of all interested and eligible employees, mail and tabulate the results then announce to the Senate the results of the voting.

The NEC will also present a slate of officers to the Senate at the first meeting following the annual election. Annual elections and appointments must be

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completed by July 1.

Executive Committee

The membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the Senate and the chairs of the standing committees. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly. Additional meetings may be called by the chair, by the chancellor or upon request of two representative of the Executive committee. A majority of the committee membership shall constitute a quorum.

The duties of the Executive committee shall be:

- (a) to consider all matters presented to it by the chair, the senate, standing committee chairs, or others making recommendations;
- (b) to assist the chair in setting the agenda for Senate meetings;
- (c) to recommend to the Senate the establishment and termination of standing committees;
- (d) to review periodically the purpose and membership of each standing committee to assure it is functioning as intended by the Senate and;
- (e) to make recommendations to the Senate regarding the removal from position of Senate members.

Human Resources and Research Committee

Duties include responding to Staff Senate and Assembly initiatives: employee ideas and concerns; Univ. Grievance & Disciplinary P&Ps (Policies & Procedures); and 2 sub-committee operations -EHRA non-teaching and AWoWW (Aggies Working our Way to Wellness) Committee.

Communications Committee

Duties include the public relations and marketing arms of the Senate; generate senate newsletters, and bulletins/announcements, forward cards, and a representative will serve on the University Communications Committee.

Technology Committee

Review and oversee all technology acquisitions, initiate website upgrades and changes, arrange for phone services, and etc.

Budget Committee

The Budget Committee; (hereafter referred to as BC), is charged with the responsibility for the acquisition of funds to support the NCA&TSU Staff Senate goals and objectives, employee incentive/recognition activities, professional development, speakers' bureau, travel and other related SHRA/EHRA activities.

The BC will develop funding proposals to acquire funds to support the Staff Senate Activities. Activities include serving as a liaison by networking with other UNC campus employee organizations.

The BC will work in collaboration with the Senate treasurer to properly document incoming funds and to insure expenditures are accurately reported. A quarterly report will be made to the Senate body.

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By-Laws Committee

This involves identifying the activities and functions of the staff senate. Define roles and responsibilities of all officers; draft processes, procedures and functions of the Senate; determine nomination and election standards and protocols; establish senate composition, terms, and organizational structure. This committee shall update by-laws when State of NC legislative or OSP actions impact support personnel and as needed.

Special Events Committee

This committee is responsible for carrying out plans and ideas relative to the fall and spring forums. Arrange SEANC (State Employee Association of North Carolina) visits for occasions; menu development; assists with document production, copy projects; speaker selections; and facilities/logistics. The Special Events Committee collaborates and reports to the Executive, Budget & Finance and Communications and Technology Committees as well as the full body.

Community Service Committee

This committee was originally under the Special Events Committee but is now a committee in its own standing. This committee is responsible for disseminating information to the Staff Senate about upcoming Community Services events and organizing Staff Senate Community Service events. The Community Garden will be a sub-committee under this committee.

Other committees

When necessary to examine an issue or implement a task, the Senate chair will appoint representatives of the Staff Senate to meet and make recommendations to the Senate.

Chairs of standing committees shall prepare the agenda and preside at meetings of their respective committee(s). The committee(s) reports to the Senate, provide to the secretary of the Senate an annual report of the committee prior to June 1, and maintain the records of the committee for transmittal to their successors.

ARTICLE XVIII

Budget

NC A&T Staff Senate budget will be administered through account/(s) established in the Senate's name. Funding documents will require the signature of the chair and treasurer.

ARTICLE XX

Amending the Guidelines

Recommendations for changes to the Senate By-laws must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Senators present (quorum required) provided that the measure be given to Senators in writing at least 28 days before the vote is taken. In keeping with the spirit of cooperation and communication, recommendations for changes to the Senate by-laws shall be communicated to the Chancellor. © 7/1999.

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APPENDIX 1

Staff Senate Courtesy Guidelines

Courtesies (card acknowledgements) shall be extended to staff senate members when notified of the following events affecting senators/alternates.

- **Death:** Sympathy card sent to senator/alternate in the event of the death in the immediate family. Immediate family is defined as: mother/mother in-law, father/father in-law, spouse, child, sister, brother, grandparents or family member living in the household.
- **Hospitalization:** Get well card sent to senator/alternate during an extended hospital stay.
- **Extended Illness:** Get well card sent to senator/alternate during an extended leave (>30 days)
- **Maternity/Paternity:** Appropriate card sent to senator/alternate during an extended leave (>30 days) maternity/paternity leave.
- **Outgoing Officers:** Letter of thanks and recognition of service to staff senate.