

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL BYLAWS

Article I – Purpose

The University Staff Advisory Council acts in an advisory and consultative body to the University President, through the Vice President for Human Resources, on any matter that may affect the issues, policies, and practices that impact or are impacted by staff employees. We serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas among the members of the University staff, suggest revisions or new initiatives to improve staff policies, and serve as an advocate for staff welfare and development.

Article II – Membership and Affiliates

Section 1 – Definitions

Affiliate: Staff person who is recruited on an as needed basis for USAC endeavors which require expertise outside of USAC membership. The affiliate is not a member and does not vote. Affiliates are chosen as needed by each Committee Chair and approved by the Executive Board. The length of affiliation is determined by the Executive Board based on the need.

Committee Chair: Chair of an active standing or ad hoc committee.

Ex-officio member: An Ex-officio is a council member who represents another University organization or unit such as Commission Liaisons or the Vice President for Human Resources or designee. Ex-officio members are not eligible to hold elected positions or vote.

Executive Board: Consists of the chairs of standing committees and the following elected officers: Past-Chair, Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, and Secretary-Elect.

Member: Full members are eligible Exempt or Non-exempt Staff employees appointed as outlined in Section 2 below and are eligible to vote and hold elected positions. Each member participates on at least one committee within the University Staff Advisory Council.

Ineligible Staff Employees: Office of Human Resources Strategic Partners, Hershey Medical Center employees (except the College of Medicine), and University Administrators with Associate Vice-President, Assistant Vice-President, Chief, Chancellor, Deputy, Director, President, Special Assistant, General Counsel, or University contained within their title.

Section 2 – Appointments

The University Staff Advisory Council shall be composed of a minimum of twenty (20) and a maximum of thirty (30) members. The Membership and Election Committee will make every effort to include a diverse representation of staff from a variety of University units and locations.

Each member is appointed by the Vice President for Human Resources to serve a three-year term commencing August 1. There is no limit to the number of three-year terms an individual can serve; however, a member cannot serve *consecutive* three-year terms except for elected officers who may serve up to six years.

Section 3 – Orientation and Retreat

A retreat for all members will be held in August, which will include an orientation for new members and summaries from sub-committee chairs to include the committee's purpose and mission. Sub-committee membership may be determined at this meeting. USAC goals and priorities for the year will be determined at this meeting.

Section 4 – Attendance

Members are expected to attend the monthly USAC meeting, committee meetings as required, and special meetings as needed. Members unable to attend the monthly meeting are required to notify the Secretary in advance (excused absence). Members with four or more unexcused absences during an academic year may be declared inactive and asked to resign, subject to review by the Executive Board.

The USAC Secretary will monitor member attendance. To address four or more unexcused absences:

1. The Secretary will notify Chair of any member(s) who are not meeting the attendance requirement.
2. The Secretary will notify the member of their status via email twice, three days apart.
3. The member has two weeks to respond to the second email.
4. Based on the nature of response or non-response from member, the Executive Board will make a recommendation to the USAC general membership for vote.

Members with repetitive excused absences totaling four or more of the regular meetings during an academic year may be subject to removal from USAC depending on circumstances. The Executive Board will determine this on a case-by-case basis.

Requests for a temporary leave of absence from USAC will be submitted to the Chair. Such requests shall be granted whenever possible. Since such leaves are temporary, the resulting vacancy shall not typically be filled by a new member.

Section 5 – Resignations & Vacancies

Resignations from USAC will be submitted to the Chair. The Executive Board shall then make a recommendation to the Vice President for Human Resources regarding appointments of new members for the remainder of the current year. Vacancies may be filled with qualified applicants who remain in the applicant pool. In the event no qualified applicants are available, the Membership and Election Committee can re-open the nomination process.

If the general membership falls below the minimum of 20, the Executive Board will reach out to past USAC members to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the current year.

Section 6 – Confidentiality

Conversations at all Council meetings are encouraged to be shared University-wide unless explicitly stated. If confidentiality is requested, disclosure outside USAC is prohibited. Violations may result in termination from the Council.

Article III – Committees

Section 1 – Executive Board Officers

Executive Board members represent and act on behalf of USAC at University meetings. The Board sets the agenda for each USAC monthly meeting.

Chair: The Chair shall be the presiding officer of USAC. The duties of the Chair are to preside over all meetings, to actively manage the business of the Council, to see that all orders and resolutions of the membership are acted upon, and to respond to and initiate communications with the Office of the Vice President for Human Resources and with any external constituencies on behalf of the Council. The Chair shall report to the membership at each monthly meeting the status of all new and pending Council business and perform all duties and exercise all authority associated with the office of the Chair or prescribed by the membership.

In the event that the Chair resigns or is unable to serve at a time when there is no designated Chair-Elect, the Executive Board shall initiate a nomination and election process to fill the Chair position until the next regular election.

Chair-Elect: Election of the Chair-Elect shall be held by secret ballot and shall be conducted by the Membership and Elections Committee. The election process and casting of ballots will be carried out regardless of the number of nominees.

The Chair-Elect shall, in the absence of the Chair, assume the role and duties appropriate to that office. The Chair-Elect serves as USAC Parliamentarian. (A Parliamentarian is an expert in rules of order and the proper procedures for the conduct of meetings of deliberative assemblies. Parliamentarians assist organizations in the drafting and interpretation of bylaws and rules of order, and the planning and conduct of meetings.)

In the event the Chair resigns or is unable to serve, the Chair-Elect shall move into that position immediately. The Chair-Elect position will be refilled during the next scheduled election for the position, or sooner at the request of the Executive Board.

In the event that the Chair-Elect resigns or is unable to serve, the Executive Board shall initiate a nomination and election process to fill the Chair-Elect position until the next regular election.

Past-Chair: The Past-Chair will work to transition in the new Chair and will serve as a resource for USAC. The Past-Chair will also maintain membership in outside committees as required (ex: The Board of Trustees) and other committees as invited. The Past-Chair shall also chair the Membership and Election Committee.

In the event that that Past-Chair resigns or is unable to serve, the Executive Board shall initiate a nomination/election process to fill the Past-Chair position until the next regular election.

Secretary: The duties of the Secretary are to schedule meetings, record and monitor attendance at meetings, follow established procedure for attendance issues, assist the Chair with preparing the agenda, distribute the agenda, arrange audio-video needs for meetings, take meeting minutes, distribute minutes to USAC members within two weeks of meetings, and perform all duties associated with the office of the Secretary or prescribed by the membership.

In the event that the Secretary resigns or is unable to serve at a time when there is no designated Secretary-Elect, the Executive Board shall initiate a nomination/election process to fill the Secretary position until the next regular election.

Secretary-Elect: Election of the Secretary-Elect shall be held by secret ballot and shall be conducted by the Membership and Election Committee. The election process and casting of ballots will be carried out regardless of the number of nominees. The Secretary-Elect shall, in the absence of the Secretary, assume the role and duties appropriate to that office.

In the event that the Secretary resigns or is unable to serve, the Secretary-Elect shall move into that position immediately. The Secretary-Elect position will be refilled during the next scheduled election for the position, or sooner at the request of the Executive Board.

In the event that the Secretary-Elect resigns or is unable to serve, the Executive Board shall initiate a nomination/election process to fill the Secretary-Elect position until the next regular election.

Section 2 – Standing Committees

The Chair and/or Co-Chair of each standing committee is selected in June by its members and submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

Membership and Election Committee: The Committee is chaired by the USAC Past-Chair. The Committee roles: *Membership*, which is the selection of new staff to join the University Staff Advisory Council, *Elections*, which oversees the nomination and voting process for the selection of USAC' s elected officers

Membership: Annually, the Committee will review the application form and propose changes as necessary. The Membership and Elections Chair will work with the Communications Committee to publicize recruitment details. At the close of the application period, the Committee will review applications, select a slate, conduct interviews as necessary and send recommendations to the Vice-President for Human Resources for vetting and approval. Letters of appointment are generated and sent by the Vice-President for Human Resources to all approved candidates.

Elections: Annually in April, the Membership and Elections Committee will review the current membership and create a list of members eligible for elected positions. The committee chair will distribute the list and nomination forms to the membership. Upon acceptance of nomination, each nominee will complete a nomination packet (brief biography and statement of purpose) that will be shared with all voting USAC members. Each nominee will be scheduled to give a brief speech in May and ballot materials will be distributed to voting members. Results will be announced at the regular June meeting. In the event no nominations are received, the process will be repeated.

Every effort will be made for the Membership and Elections Committee to have at least two members with two years USAC experience.

Awards and Recognition Committee: The Awards and Recognition Committee oversees the Staff Recognition Award program, where the Council honors the many staff members who regularly see potential in others, go the extra mile in a specific situation, and simply make life better for those around them. Specific award criteria shall be made public prior to the nomination period.

Annually, the Committee will review the award criteria, nomination form and propose changes as necessary. The Awards and Recognition Chair will work with the Communications Committee to publicize nomination details. At the close of the nomination period, the Committee will review nominations and send recommendations to the Vice-President for Human Resources for vetting and approval. The Awards are presented annually in May.

Members of the Awards and Recognition Committee are not eligible to be nominated for an award during their period of service on the committee. Every effort should be made to ensure at least one committee member has a minimum of two years of USAC experience.

Communications Committee: The Communications Committee is charged with maintaining the USAC website, writing and distributing official USAC information, distributing press releases, liaising with Strategic Communications, and working with USAC Executive Board and standing committees. Communication, education, and the exchange of ideas are priorities of this Committee. The Committee also serves to publicize the Council's mission and accomplishments and works to increase its visibility within the Penn State community.

Every effort should be made to ensure at least one Communications Committee member has a minimum of two years of USAC experience.

Campus/Outreach/Alumni Committee: This committee has three charges.

Campus: charged with forging connections and fostering interaction with Staff Advisory Councils or similar staff organizations at locations beyond University Park. They provide resources for establishing SACs and support for staff across the Commonwealth.

Outreach: identify opportunities to promote USAC and engage with broader Penn State community. Actively promote conversations and connections with units and campuses not currently represented at USAC.

Alumni: Create and maintain connections with former USAC members to provide historical and institutional knowledge, and promote continued connection with past USAC members

Every effort should be made to ensure at least one Campuses Committee member has a minimum of two years of USAC experience.

Section 3 – Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees to research and review specific topics will be created as necessary and will be disbanded at the completion of their work. Findings and recommendations will be reported to USAC as necessary and at the conclusion of the ad hoc committee's work.

Every effort should be made to ensure at least one ad hoc committee member has a minimum of two years of USAC experience.

Article IV – Meetings

Regular meetings of the University Staff Advisory Council shall be held monthly. The August retreat will replace the August USAC monthly meeting. Activities usually take place during normal University hours and are considered University business.

Special meetings of the membership for any purpose or purposes may be called at any time by the Chair or by a majority of USAC voting membership. A majority of the voting membership must be present at all meetings in which votes are taken in the name of the Council.

Each committee shall decide on meeting frequency and report at USAC's monthly meeting.

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* governs the University Staff Advisory Council in all procedural matters for which its bylaws do not otherwise provide.

Article V – Resolutions

Resolutions will be considered non-binding advisory and consultative business; to be produced, discussed, and voted on as the official position of USAC. The purpose is to provide the clear and tangible position of the Council on relevant staff issues. Council members will have the authority to draft and sponsor resolutions for consideration by the full Council.

To introduce a Resolution, a Council member will draft the document, acquire at least one sponsor, and email the Resolution to the USAC Chair. The Chair will distribute the Resolution no later than one week before the monthly meeting. The meeting will then include agenda time to discuss and vote on the Resolution. Resolutions require a majority to be approved.

Article VI – Amendments

These bylaws may be altered or amended at any time. Amendments must be presented to all members of the Council in writing or via email a minimum of one week prior to the regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

Amendments to these bylaws will be adopted by a two-thirds affirmative vote of all eligible voting USAC members. Any individual who will not be present for the meeting may submit their vote and/or comments to the Secretary at least two days prior to the meeting. The Chair will share any absentee votes and/or comments with USAC. The Secretary will record votes during the meeting.

The bylaws are to be reviewed by an ad hoc committee at least every two years.

Bylaws initially adopted September 20, 1999

REVISIONS

- February 7, 2007
- November 24, 2008
- July 25, 2011
- January 16, 2012
- April 16, 2012
- September 17, 2012
- October 15, 2013
 - Various Articles: All references to Associate VP Human Resources replaced with Vice President Human Resources
 - Article 3: Chair Elect duties- Parliamentary responsibility clarified and defined.
- December 11, 2013
 - Article 3, Section 2 – (Committee Consolidation) Election and Membership combined, Recognition added to Awards, Outreach and Publicity combined and renamed “Staff Relations.”
- September 21, 2017