

**TOWSON UNIVERSITY  
STAFF SENATE  
BYLAWS**

**Article I - Name**

The Name of this Senate shall be the Towson University Staff Senate (hereafter referred to as TUSS or the Senate).

**Article II - Purpose**

The Purpose of the Towson University Staff Senate shall be to:

1. Advise and make recommendations to the TU Administration regarding issues on behalf of exempt and non-exempt employees classified as staff.
2. Provide a forum for discussion, recommendations, and advocacy on matters involving exempt and non-exempt staff and the welfare of TU.
3. Review academic and administrative policy, as it affects the exempt and non-exempt staff, and make recommendations as needed.
4. Develop committees and act within these committees as a vehicle to serve the interests of the membership.

**Article III - Membership**

1. The Senate shall have three membership levels: general, voting, and non-voting.
  - A. General membership shall consist of all staff members designated as exempt and non-exempt staff by Human Resources. General members have the right to vote during elections for Senators
  - B. Voting membership shall consist of 34 total representatives: two (2) elected from the exempt and non-exempt staff of each University Administrative Division (Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Athletics, Enrollment Management, Executive, General Counsel, Inclusion & Institutional Equity, Operations and Human Resources, Strategic Partnerships and Applied Research, Student Affairs, University Advancement, University Marketing & Communications); one (1) contingent representative; and nine (9) at large representatives (five exempt and four non-exempt) to serve three-year staggered terms. These 34 representatives shall serve as the governing body and have full voting rights and responsibilities at convened meetings.
    - 1) In the event that a vacancy occurs in a Senate position, the Chairperson shall return to the results of the most recent election to fill the vacancy. Of the candidates in that election who did not earn a seat in the Senate, the candidate with the highest number of votes for the vacant category (divisional, contingent or at-large) shall be invited to fill the vacant seat. That person shall be contacted to confirm whether they would still like to be a senator. If they are willing, then that person shall step into the vacancy for the same term as the original seat.

- 2) In the event there is no remaining candidate who is willing to fill the vacant seat, to attain the voting membership of represented Senators, the Senate shall fill the seat as follows:
    - a. The Senate shall identify exempt and non-exempt staff members who are willing to complete the term.
    - b. To complete the term, a staff member must be approved by 2/3 vote of the Senate.
  - 3) The above procedures shall also be followed in the event of a vacancy for CUSS representatives if there are no CUSS alternates who are able to assume the role of representative.
- C. CUSS representatives must be a sitting TUSS senator and will be elected annually by the Senate after the general election of senators.
- D. Nonvoting members of the Senate shall include the following: Senate chair, Senate past chair and TU president (or designee) and Ex-Officio members. The Senate chair has voting rights to break a tie.
- E. Vice President of Administration and Finance, Vice President of Inclusion and Institutional Equity, Vice President of Operations & Chief Human Resources Officer, and Academic Senate Chair (or their designees) shall be ex-officio members of the Senate.
2. Membership on committees can be extended to all staff where not prohibited by the TU policy or procedure.

#### **Article IV - Organization**

1. There shall be six officers of the Senate; chair, past chair, vice chair, treasurer, secretary, and communications officer. The past chair shall be the chair whose term has most recently ended; this role may also be filled by previous chairs if the need arises. These six officers will serve as the Senate Executive Board.
2. The Senators shall be elected at large. For specific election detail see Senate Election Protocol.

#### **Article V – Committees**

1. Senators shall serve on the following University committees and Senators must meet the requirements of the University committees in order to serve.
  - A. Climate Leadership
  - B. Diversity Action Committee
  - C. Institutional Effectiveness

D. Resource Planning Allocation Committee

E. TU Foundation Board of Directors

2. Senators may be asked to serve on additional University committees, task forces, work groups, or other bodies on an as needed basis.
3. There shall be 7 Standing Committees of the Senate. Standing Committees shall have an appointed chair who shall serve as the convener, facilitator and contact person for the committee. The appointed chair for each committee must be serving a current term on the Senate. Only Senators can be voting members; however, all general members are eligible to participate, unless otherwise noted. The Senate chair and past chair are ex-officio members of all standing committees of which they are not members.

A. Awards Committee:

- 1) The committee shall be composed of at least six senators, including the treasurer and communications officer, and other general members.
- 2) The committee shall proactively engage, publicize and support nominations of TU staff for the Board of Regents (BOR) awards, TU Impact awards, and TU Top Tiger award.

B. Bylaws Committee:

- 1) The committee shall be composed of at least three members: two Senators, at least one of whom is a returning senator, and the past chair.
- 2) The committee shall monitor all Senate bylaws and see that the Senate is adhering to these documents and suggest revisions as necessary.
- 3) The committee shall manage the elections policy document, review it, and update as necessary.
- 4) The committee shall annually review the bylaws and present recommended revisions to the Senate.

C. Communications Committee:

- 1) The committee shall be composed of at least three members, including the secretary, and chaired by the communications officer.
- 2) The committee shall annually establish a communication plan for the Senate; manage ongoing communication issues, opportunities, and challenges; and propose for Senate review and approval communication policies and protocols as they pertain to Senate business.

D. Council of University System Staff (CUSS)

- 1) The committee shall serve as an extension of the CUSS. Membership of TU staff is mandatory and shall be composed of at least one exempt and one non-exempt Senate member elected by Senators. Three alternates will also be voted on and must meet the same criteria as above.

- 2) At least one CUSS representative will be required to give a report at every regular TUSS meeting on the most recent CUSS meeting.
- 3) All CUSS representatives are expected to participate in CUSS committee work as designated by CUSS procedures.

E. Election Committee:

- 1) The committee will be chaired by a member of the executive board not up for re-election. In the event that all officers are up for re-election, the chair will appoint a senator not running for re-election to chair the committee and will act as co-chair providing logistical support.
- 2) The committee shall be composed of the chair, vice chair, past chair, treasurer, secretary, and communications officer.
- 3) The committee shall make decisions regarding procedure and results pursuant to the current Election Protocol.
- 4) The committee shall annually review the Election Protocol and present any recommended revisions to the Senate.

F. Events and Engagement Committee:

- 1) Committee shall be composed of at least eight members, including the treasurer who will serve as co-chair. Additional co-chair may be a senator or a general member. The committee shall have at least four senators along with general members.
- 2) In collaboration with Executive Board and Communication Committee, this committee shall propose and lead planning and execution of professional staff development events throughout the year. Events may include internal and external facilitators, as well as on and off campus partners and TU approved vendors as appropriate to the event.
- 3) Committee shall work to engage the campus by supporting distribution of Staff Senate awards certificates and collecting photos and other media for use by Communication Committee. Committee may also propose and support other community-building activities.
- 4) Committee shall support promoting campus awareness of TU Staff Senate in coordination with other standing and ad hoc committees.

G. Personnel and Policy Review Committee:

- 1) This committee shall be composed of up to six exempt and non-exempt staff members. The committee shall be co-chaired by one exempt and non-exempt Senator.
- 2) This committee shall review those proposed policies and policy changes given to them by Human Resources and General Counsel. This committee shall request clarification and revision of TU and USM policies concerning conditions of employment for exempt and non-exempt staff when needed.
- 3) This committee is not a grievance committee and does not provide substantive advice on individual exempt or non-exempt grievances; however, it shall serve as a resource on the grievance process. The committee members should remain knowledgeable.

- 4) Review existing and new TU and USM policies concerning conditions of employment and salary for exempt and non-exempt staff. Propose suggestions and present concerns to Human Resources, through the TUSS Chair.
  - 5) Members shall serve on TU committees/sub-committees concerning TU exempt and non-exempt staff working conditions, equity and salary when assigned by TUSS Chair.
4. Ad- Hoc TUSS Committees:
- A. Ad-Hoc Committees may be approved by the Senate to consider special issues that are beyond the scope or the workload of the Standing Committees. Ad-Hoc Committees shall make recommendations to the Senate in these areas.
  - B. A written proposal (one page or less) to create an Ad-Hoc Committee may be submitted by any Senator as an agenda item for a Senate meeting. The proposal must include the following elements:
    - 1) Rationale/need for the Ad-Hoc Committee
    - 2) Purpose/goals of the committee
    - 3) Anticipated work of the committee
    - 4) Anticipated work product of the committee
    - 5) Anticipated lifespan of the committee in months/years
    - 6) Proposed timeline for the informal and formal reports to the Senate by the committee
    - 7) Suggestions for membership of the committee
  - C. Creation of an Ad-Hoc Committee must be approved by a majority vote of the Senate.
  - D. Members of an Ad-Hoc Committee shall be appointed by the chair.
  - E. At or before the anticipated end date of the committee and/or upon receipt by the Senate of the formal written report of the committee, the Senate shall consider, discuss, and vote upon any recommendations from the committee and/or other Senators with regard to:
    - 1) Extending the life of the Ad-Hoc Committee
    - 2) Transitioning the Ad-Hoc Committee into a Standing Committee
    - 3) Assigning continued work on the special project to a Standing Committee
    - 4) Dissolving the Ad-Hoc Committee

## **Article VI - Elections**

1. Senator elections shall be governed by the Executive Board according to the Elections Protocol, which is reviewed annually and updated as needed by the Senate.
2. Executive Board members shall be elected by the Senate. Nominees for chair shall be a current senator with a minimum of one full year of senate service prior to election. Once

elected, the chair shall serve for two years. All other officers will serve for one year. All officers may be reelected.”

- A. The chair, vice chair, treasurer, communications officer, and secretary shall be elected from among the Senate membership no later than the July meeting.
  - B. If the chair cannot complete their term, the vice chair shall fill the remaining term. If the vice chair is unable to fill the chair vacancy, or is unable to complete their term, the Senate shall elect a new vice chair from the current Senate membership. Resulting senator vacancies shall be filled by the nominee with the next highest number of votes. If no additional nominees exist, a special election shall be held. Vacancies in the positions of secretary, treasurer, or communications officer shall be filled by election from the Senate membership.
  - C. The Chair has the option of appointing an additional secretary when needed.
3. The Chair shall distribute the roster of the Senate and Executive Board, with biographical information and photographs, (as developed by the Secretary), no later than the October Senate meeting. The following shall receive an electronic copy of this roster:
- Members of the President’s Council
  - All Senators
  - All exempt and non-exempt-staff members via TUSS website

## **Article VII - Duties**

1. The duties of the chairperson shall be to:
  - Preside over general meetings
  - Serve as a TUSS representative on RPAC
  - Serve on the Election Committee
  - Prepare agendas for all Senate meetings in coordination with the Executive Board and based on recommendations of Senators
  - Perform other duties as necessary
  - Have signature authority on all TUSS accounts
  - Determine committee representatives along with the past chair
  - Responsible for scheduling and organization of one quarterly meeting with leaders of the four shared governance bodies to encourage communication and collaboration across the university. Meetings shall be scheduled annually by appropriate leaders in the following order: Academic Senate before Oct 15, SGA before Dec 15, Staff Senate before March 15, and GSA before May 15. The Chair shall be responsible for organizing and soliciting agenda items from the other shared governance leaders. The University President and/or Vice Presidents and Division Heads may be invited when necessary. Additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary.

2. The duties of the vice chairperson shall be to:
  - Substitute for the chair when that officer is absent
  - Serve on the Election Committee
  - Have signature authority on all TUSS accounts
  - Reside over all TUSS committees to provide feedback and alignment with TU policies and procedures
3. The duties of the treasurer shall be to:
  - Prepare annual budget by September meeting
  - Reconcile budgets and accounts
  - Prepare of all expenditure requests for approval by chair or vice chair
  - Serve on the Awards Committee, Election Committee, and Events and Engagement Committee
  - Ensure that Signature Authority documents are updated by August
  - Include quarterly finance reports electronically with Senate agenda
4. The duties of the past chair as ex-officio member of the Senate shall be to:
  - Advise the incoming chair of carryover issues for the new Senate
  - Assist with procedural questions
  - Assist in maintaining continuity for the following year
  - Serve on both the Election and Bylaws Committees
  - Determine committee representatives along with the chair
5. The duties of the secretary shall be to:
  - Take minutes at the general meetings
  - Share minutes from general meetings with the chair for distribution to the Senate
  - Maintain and archive all official Senate documents
  - Develop the roster of the Senate and Executive Board, with biographical information and photographs, following the annual election of officers
  - Reserve meeting spaces and communicate meeting dates, time and location with all members
  - Serve on both the Election and Communications Committees
6. The duties of the communications officer shall be to:
  - Support the Executive Board in fulfilling the public relations and communications effort of the Senate
  - Serve as the editor of the TUSS web page, list serve, and to maintain all other technology services for the Senate
  - Work with OTS to maintain technology needs
  - Serve on both the Election and Communications Committees

7. The duties of the Senators shall be to:
  - Bring matters concerning their constituents to the attention of the Senate
  - Attend Senate meetings
  - Serve on committees
  - Communicate Senate actions to their constituents
8. The duties of the Council of University System Staff (CUSS) Representatives shall be to:
  - Attend monthly CUSS meetings representing staff of TU
  - Attend Senate meetings
  - Consider and make recommendations to the chair of CUSS who then can forward these recommendations to the Chancellor, the Board of Regents, and the Chancellor's Council on issues affecting staff employees. These recommendations should be in alignment with and approved by the TU president and TUSS.
  - Keep the Senate and TU exempt and non-exempt staff informed on CUSS activities and System-related actions
9. The duties of the Senators on the University Committees shall include monthly reports to the Senate and representation of both exempt and non-exempt staff concerns to those committees and report back to the Senate.
10. The duties of the Senate Committee Chairpersons shall include performing the duties designated by their respective committee charters and sharing monthly reports to the Senate.

### **Article VIII - Meetings**

1. General meetings shall be held at least once a month throughout the calendar year.
2. With assistance from the Executive Board, the chair shall develop a draft agenda for each monthly meeting, including a time schedule for all agenda items.
3. Prior to each monthly meeting, the chair shall share the draft agenda for the upcoming meeting.
4. The secretary shall send a draft of the minutes from the prior meeting to the senate within one week after the meeting date to which they pertain.
5. The Senate shall approve or amend the proposed agenda and time schedule as the first item of business after approval of the minutes.
6. The vice chair shall take attendance and serve as the timekeeper for the meeting, indicating as needed how much time is left for action/discussion on each item.



7. The Senate shall either stop discussion of an item when time is completed or entertain and vote on a motion (if one is made) to extend the time for that item by five (5) minutes. If no motion is made, the Senate shall move to the next agenda item. If a motion is made and passed by the majority vote, the time is extended. If the motion fails, the Senate moves on to the next item on the agenda. A maximum of two (2) time extensions may be added for any item on the agenda.
8. If the Senate finishes with an agenda item before the time allotted to it, the next item on the agenda begins.
9. A quorum shall consist of 50% of the total number of voting Senators plus one (1) senator. If a quorum has not been reached or has been lost during a meeting, and the need for a decision on a matter is urgent (with the exception of the bylaws), the chair may, at their discretion, send a summary of the issue/question and any discussion of it by email to all Senators, requesting that each senator vote by email or other electronic means (yea or nay) by a specified deadline. Such a vote shall be a valid vote of the Senate.
10. Three unexcused absences shall be cause for removal from the Senate by the chair. A petition may be made to the Senate for reinstatement within one week of notification of removal from the Senate.
11. Meetings are open to the TU community, unless the Senate votes for a closed session. This requires a two-thirds vote of present Senators.

#### **Article IX - Annual Action Plan**

1. At a summer meeting each year the Senate Executive Board shall solicit from all Senators a list and description of projects they would like the Senate to work on and/or accomplish during the upcoming fiscal year.
2. The Executive Board shall develop from this input and present at the following meeting a proposed Action Plan for that fiscal year. The Senate shall deliberate, amend if necessary and approve the Action Plan.
3. The Action Plan shall be used as a framework by the officers, committees and Senators to guide major TUSS activities and efforts during the fiscal year.
4. If new major projects or initiatives are proposed by the Senate members during the year, they shall be approved by a majority of the Senate and incorporated into the Action Plan. Further, the Action Plan shall be reviewed periodically during the year and amended as needed in the best interests of the Senate and the exempt and non-exempt employees it represents.

## **Article X - Information**

All Senate documentation including but not limited to, bylaws, member data, minutes, agendas and resolutions shall be posted in a publicly available manner unless otherwise noted.

## **Article XI - Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases in which they are applicable. These bylaws or special rules of order the Senate may adopt supersede Robert's Rules of Order in the event of a conflict.

## **Article XII - Amendment of Bylaws**

The Bylaws Committee may update the accuracy of technical aspects of the Bylaws (e.g., title changes, grammar, and spelling). These bylaws can be amended at any regular meeting of the Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the elected Senators. The amendments must be submitted in writing to the chair 15 working days prior to the Senate meeting at which time the vote will be cast. The chair must distribute proposed amendments to the Senate at least 10 working days prior to the Senate meeting at which time the vote will take place.

Revised Amendment Dates:

October 16, 2019

July 23, 2021

January 19, 2022

March 15, 2022

April 20, 2022

May 31, 2022

July 20, 2022

November 16, 2022

February 7, 2023

May 10, 2023

April 9, 2024