

EAST CENTRAL UNIVERSITY STAFF COUNCIL CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1: NAME

The name of the organization shall be East Central University Staff Council, hereafter referred to as Staff Council.

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

The Staff Council shall exist to strengthen the vision and goals of the university and to represent the interests of the university staff.

The functions of the Staff Council shall be:

- To serve as a representative body for the East Central University staff providing a forum for the expression of ideas and concerns.
- To refer issues to the President of the university and the university administration in matters that are relevant, or which directly affect the East Central University staff.
- To advance the mission and vision of the university.

ARTICLE 3: AUTHORITY

The Staff Council may act at the request of the University President, who may direct the council to inform and/or provide input to other appropriate university committees. The Staff Council may also consider other matters and make recommendations to the administration on matters of interest to the East Central University staff in accordance with the university's mission statement. The Staff Council shall not act on issues concerning specific employee/employer disputes within the university, nor shall it act on any formal individual grievances or complaints. In addition, the Staff Council shall not assume the role of arbitrator for any university disputes, nor shall it serve as a bargaining entity.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Eligibility

Membership on the Council is limited to regular, non-probationary staff, who are employed half time or more, and shall consist of voting and non-voting members as outlined below.

Section B. Voting Members

Voting members of the Council shall consist of staff elected to serve as members from voting categories as defined in Article 4, Section D.

Section C. Non-Voting Members

Non-voting members of the Council shall consist of: (1) The current Staff Council President (except in the case of a tie vote), (2) Ex-Officio members – Ex-Officio members are non-voting guests of the Council. Their purpose is advisory only at the request of the Council. The members include the Director of Human Resources and the immediate past President unless re-elected.

Section D. Composition

The Council will be composed of one elected member for every twenty-five regular eligible staff members in each of three categories. Any category with a remainder greater than 13 will be allowed to elect one additional Council member. The three categories are composed of the following job families:

Category	Job Family
A	- Administration - Clerical and Office Administration
B	- Fiscal & Accounting - Information Technology - Public Safety
C	- Building and Maintenance Trades - Landscape Maintenance - Custodial

There will be a minimum of one member per category. A review of the number of Council Members for each category shall occur before March 1 by the Nomination and Election Committee. Reapportionment of the number of representatives from each category shall be made by the Nomination and Election Committee to reflect any changes in staffing and organizational structure if needed. No Council member shall be removed from a position on the Council as a result of reapportionment but shall serve until his/her term expires.

Section E. Exclusions to Membership

Individuals in the following positions are excluded from both voting and serving as members of the Staff Council: (1) University President, (2) Provost and Vice-President/Associate Vice-President/Assistant Vice-President, (3) Deans, (4) Graduate Assistants, (5) Individuals in positions classified as student positions, and (6) Individuals who hold faculty rank, professional librarians, or adjunct (special appointment) faculty (unless otherwise considered regular staff members).

Section F. Duties

Members of the Staff Council are expected to attend all Council meetings. Members shall serve on committees of the Council and may be elected as an officer of those committees. Members shall be available to their constituents, and let them know how they may be reached. They shall be willing to hear concerns, to receive information and suggestions, and to communicate these effectively to the Council. Members must keep their constituents informed of the work of the Council and matters that the administration communicates to the Council.

Section G. Terms of Office

1. Council members shall serve for a two-year term. To ensure continuity on the Council, one and two-year terms are required in the initial election. Elections will be held annually to fill expired terms of the membership of the Council. A member can be elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms before taking a minimum one-year absence before being eligible for re-election. The terms of office for members shall begin on June 1st following their election and will end on May 31st at the end of their two-year term. If an individual is named to serve an unexpired term vacated by another member, that individual will serve the unexpired term and be eligible for reelection, for a maximum of two consecutive full terms.
2. If it is in the best interest of the Council, a member can be elected for more than two consecutive terms.

Section H. Vacancies

A vacancy shall be filled within thirty days of the date of the vacancy. The eligible individual with the next highest number of votes from the most recent election, and from the category in which the vacancy occurred, shall fill the vacancy. If a vacancy in a work group occurs with no remaining eligible nominees, a nominee at-large may be chosen by a simple majority of the Staff Council.

If a Council member is promoted to a non-eligible position they can no longer serve on the Staff Council and the vacancy will be filled as outlined above.

Section I. Attendance

Members are expected to attend all Council meetings. If any member misses three consecutive, regularly scheduled meetings without extenuating circumstances, that member's active status on the Staff Council will be reviewed to determine whether or not that member should be removed from office. Vacant positions will be filled following the guidelines in Section H. Each member is responsible for contacting the Council President to justify an absence.

Although still considered absent, a Staff Council member may choose someone from his/her category to attend meetings, functions, etc. in his/her absence. The visiting substitute will not have voting privileges.

Section J. Removal from Office

During an elected term, a member relinquishes Council membership upon leaving the employment of the University, moving to an ineligible position, or being removed from the Council.

Any elected member can be removed from office for nonperformance of Council duties. Removal will be effective upon the vote of 2/3 of those present and eligible to vote at a meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present. Possible causes of removal shall include, but not be limited to: failure to meet eligibility requirements or failure to adequately perform Council duties. Non-attendance, failure to consistently report activities of the Council to the constituents, or unavailability of the member to constituents are examples of failure to perform Council duties.

ARTICLE 5: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section A. Membership

The membership of the Nomination and Election Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Election Committee, shall coordinate and validate all elections to the Council. No Council member who is a candidate for a Council position may be involved in the counting of ballots.

Section B. Election of Council Members

The criteria for Council membership are contained in Article 4. Each staff member shall have the right to cast a vote to fill each Council vacancy.

Section C. Nominations

The nominations and elections process shall be handled by the Election Committee, and shall begin the first week in March of each year with elections to be completed by April 15. Any staff member eligible to be a member of the Council is also eligible to make nominations and vote.

The Election Committee will distribute nomination forms to all staff members. The form shall identify the category, the number of nominations allowed, and instructions for the return of the form (manner, date, time, place). Nominations shall be in writing. Each staff member may nominate any staff member from any category.

After the closing date for nominations, the Election Committee shall meet to count the nominations. The minimum number of nominations required to have the nominee's name placed on the primary ballot shall be three. The Election Committee will notify the nominees that their names will be placed on the primary ballot unless they withdraw.

If sufficient nominations are not received from the selected category to place a nominee on the ballot, the Staff Council will nominate an employee from that category.

Section D. Elections

Elections shall be by secret ballot. The nominees will be listed as candidates on the primary ballot prepared by the Election Committee. An official primary ballot containing names and information of all approved candidates will be distributed to all staff members for voting, including instructions for voting.

Ballots will be counted under the supervision of the Election Committee and the results of the election will be announced. Ballots will be retained until the next regular annual election is conducted. Election results can be contested only during the 30-day period following announcement of the results.

In the case of a tie for a specific seat, a coin toss by the chair of the Election Committee will be used to determine the winner.

The Election Committee shall place the candidates in descending order of votes received. If there is 1 open seat in a given category, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes will be considered elected to the Council. If there are 2 open seats in a given category, the candidates receiving the highest and next highest number of votes will be considered elected to the Council, etc.

ARTICLE 6: RULES OF ORDER

Section A. Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Council shall be held every month, September through May. Special meetings may be called if needed. In no case shall there be fewer than five (5) meetings per year. Meetings shall be publicized in advance of the scheduled meeting. If the President has no new agenda items or proposals, he/she reserves the right not to hold a meeting but must give ample notification to Council members.
2. Where there is an urgent need to meet more than the regular meeting schedule, special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or upon petition of 20 percent of the membership of the Council. The request for a special meeting shall be made in writing to the Staff Council President. Five working days' notice should be given of any special meeting except in the case of an emergency situation. Only business specified in the call of the special meeting may be conducted at such a meeting.
3. The Council may request to go into executive or closed session by a majority vote of those Council members in attendance.
4. The first meeting of the academic year (September) shall be an open staff forum. The University President and/or other executive officials shall be invited to be the guest speaker(s). The purpose of the forum shall be to share common interests and concerns, to pose questions, and to provide the University President an opportunity to share information with staff.

Section B. Agenda

Meetings of the Council shall have an agenda that includes the time and place of the meeting, the order of business, and copies of any substantive proposals. The Council President shall receive proposals for Council action and set the agenda; however, items may be added to the agenda at the meeting if approved by a majority of the members present. The agenda should be published in a form widely available to all staff members two working days in advance of the meeting.

Section C. Order of Business

The order of business for meetings shall be (1) call to order; (2) executive address (3) approval of previous meeting's minutes; (4) unfinished business; (5) new business; (6) committee reports; (7) miscellaneous comments, announcements, tributes, etc.; and (8) adjournment.

Minutes shall be made available to the Council within five working days after each meeting. After approval, minutes shall be modified as needed and maintained for permanent record. A summary of the minutes shall be made available to all staff members.

Section D. Voting Privileges

1. All matters brought before the Council that require a vote, with the exception of the election of officers, shall be decided by open vote, i.e., voice vote, show of hands, or roll call, as determined by the presiding officer.
2. A roll call vote may be ordered upon the vote of at least 1/2 of the Council members present.
3. A simple majority vote of those present shall be used for motions which require only a majority for their adoption.
4. The Constitution and Bylaws becomes effective after being presented to the entire staff for approval by a majority of those staff members voting.

Section E: Quorum

The Council shall not transact official business without the presence of a quorum. A quorum shall exist when a simple majority of the voting members is present. When the absence of a quorum is challenged by a member of the Council, the Secretary of the Council shall call the roll and announce to the Chair the presence or absence of a quorum.

In the absence of a quorum, no business requiring a vote will be conducted.

Section F. Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order shall serve as the parliamentary procedure. The Council will operate under Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised. All proceedings and deliberations of the Council and its respective committees will function under these guidelines.

ARTICLE 7: OFFICERS

Section A. Composition

The officers of the Council shall be: **President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer.**

Section B. Duties

1. The President shall have the following duties: approve agendas and preside at all Council meetings; represent the Council at all functions which require representation of the Council, or appoint a current Council member in his or her place; call special meetings when deemed necessary; have Staff Council signature authority and approval of all Council expenditures; prepare written annual reports and distribute to all staff; communicate actions of the Council to the University President or the appropriate administrator of the University and be responsible for all official correspondence with the University.
2. The Vice President shall have the following duties: preside over meetings in the absence of the President; assist the President in performing leadership responsibilities; other duties as deemed appropriate by the President.
3. The Secretary/Treasurer shall have the following duties: record minutes from each Council meeting and submit the final copy of the minutes to the President and Council members; keep a complete roster of Council members, including, but not limited to, name, e-mail, phone number, committee membership, term of office, and category represented; arrange for rooms for all Council related meetings; verify number of members authorized for each voting category at the University; maintain list of all Council members who are in attendance at the regularly scheduled meetings and advise the Council of any members who have missed three consecutive, regularly scheduled meetings; keep an accurate record of all money disbursed and received, while also maintaining the financial reports; make disbursements as authorized by the Council President; prepare written reports to the Council with the updated budget.

Section C. Election

The Chair of the Nomination and Election Committee shall conduct the nominations and elections of officers at the June meeting of the Council. The President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer shall be nominated from the floor, elected, and begin terms at the beginning of the June meeting. A simple majority of those present and voting at a meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present is required for election.

Section D. Terms of Office

Officers shall be elected for one-year terms, beginning on the day of the first regular Council meeting of the academic year and ending on the day before the first regular Council meeting of the following year. A member shall not hold more than one office at a time.

Section E. Vacancies

In the event that the President is unable to complete the elected term of office, the Vice President shall assume the vacant office for the length of the unexpired term. In the event that the office of Vice President or Secretary/Treasurer becomes vacant, a special election shall be called by the President in order to fill the vacant office for the remainder of the term by a simple majority of those present and voting at a meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present. Such elections may be held at any meeting of the Council.

ARTICLE 8: COMMITTEES

Section A. Standing Committees

Nomination and Election Committee: This committee shall conduct and supervise the election of Council members and any other election assigned to it by the Council. The committee shall also make recommendations concerning the process for nominations and elections to the Staff Council.

Section B. Ad Hoc Committees

At any regular meeting of the Council, upon a simple majority vote of the members present, a call for an Ad Hoc committee may be made to review a specific issue. Each Ad Hoc Committee shall terminate at the beginning of the following September meeting of the Council unless another termination date is specified. The Staff Council officers will staff the Ad Hoc Committee with sufficient persons to complete the task assigned. There should be at least one Council member on any Ad Hoc Committee who will serve as Chair, present the issue to the committee and bring the committee's findings to the Council.

ARTICLE 9: The Staff Council Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the staff, provided a copy of the proposed changes to the constitution has been presented to the staff to review prior to a vote.

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