

Staff Council By-Laws

Amended 2/20/24

I. MISSION STATEMENT

We pledge to work in partnership with Doane faculty, students, Leadership Team, and the Board of Trustees to enrich the culture of Doane staff by supporting an inclusive, inviting, and equitable community. Staff Council will serve as a communication conduit between staff and administration. Staff Council commits to provide a voice for staff to formulate and endorse recommendations for action to improve the work environment, opportunities, policies, and procedures for the betterment of the Doane community.

II. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership of the Staff Council/Assembly will be comprised of representation from fulltime and part-time non-faculty staff professionals according to Doane University Human Resources classifications.
 - a. Staff Council membership excludes staff who have faculty voting rights or student wage employees.
 - b. Staff Council membership excludes members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as the Staff Council makes recommendations to this group.
 - c. Staff Council members must have completed the initial onboarding process according to HR policy
- B. Council officers must be full-time employees: scheduled to work on average at least thirty (30) hours per week of 9-12 months of the year.

III. AUTHORITY

Staff Council derives its authority from the President of Doane University. The Staff Council operates independently through the voice and intentions of all full-time and part-time employees of the university, herein referred to as "staff". The Staff Council shall be a self directed, consultative, and deliberative body that consults with University leadership on matters affecting life in the workplace and has the authority to make recommendations and decisions on matters that have a significant bearing on the University. As a constituent organization, the Staff Council operates as a recognized part of the University governance to provide a forum for open communication and ongoing dialogue among staff.

IV. STAFF REPRESENTATION

Two representatives from each group, plus the Chair, for a total of thirteen. Office listings are devised from the [2023 University Organizational Chart](#)

- Group 1: Division of Advancement, Division of Enrollment Services **43**
- Group 2: Division of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Division of Human Resources, Division of Student Affairs **25**
- Group 3: Division of Academic Affairs, Business Office, Division of Institutional Effectiveness **48**
- Group 4: Division of Technology Services, Facilities, Public Safety **46**
- Group 5: Division of Athletics **47**

● At-Large: Non-residential programs in Lincoln, Omaha, Online, and/or graduate programs
Non-Voting Members:

- Executive Assistant to the President
- Other individuals determined to advance the mission of the Council

V. OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. Chair:

1. Schedule all meetings of the Staff Council.
2. Preside over all meetings.
3. Serve as the point of contact for all matters brought in front of the Council for review including, but not limited to, policy and constitutional changes.
4. Ensure responsible fiscal practices.
5. Meet/communicate frequently with other Staff Council Committee members.
6. Cultivate relationships with members of the Leadership team.
7. Represent the Staff Council as requested by the Leadership team and other designated university committees.
8. Create the agenda for the Staff Council meetings.
9. Liaison with the President's Office. Meet twice a year with the President or as needed.

B. Chair Elect:

1. Lead meetings in absence of the Chair and fulfill any unexpired term if vacated by the Chair. Move into the role of the Chair the following year.
2. Build and maintain the files regarding effectiveness of Staff Council.
 - a. Collect Year-End Reports for each Staff Council officer/committee.
3. Serve as a liaison to Faculty Council and Student Congress. Meet at least twice a year with the Faculty Council Chair.
4. Maintain procedure and order at general meetings in conjunction with the Chair.
 - a. Lead yearly reviews of the Constitution and Bylaws with the Executive Committee.
 - b. Compile recommended changes and prepare amendments for presentation to the Staff Council.
 - c. Make changes passed by Staff Council on the official documents.
 - d. Maintain a log of all resolutions including vote type and count.
5. Facilitate Nomination and Election process.
 - a. Maintain results for possible future vacancies.
6. Facilitate resolution of Shared Governance disputes by staff.

C. Secretary/Treasurer

1. Record the minutes of meetings.
 - a. Edit the minutes if supplied by any other recorder.
 - b. Keep the recorded minutes, as well as other Council documents, in an archive to be available in the future.
2. Ensure the distribution of the agenda, minutes, and committee reports 5 days prior to regular meetings.
3. Notify members of special meetings as determined by the Chair.
4. Keep a listing of all Staff Council Members, their committee membership, and contact information.
5. Record meeting attendance.
6. Assist with Staff Council correspondence, notices, and other official business as requested by members of the Executive Committee.
7. Share information with new council members including a meeting schedule of time and place, bylaws, current membership roster, and minutes of the previous meeting.
8. Prepare and maintain the budget.
 - a. Propose annual budget request in conjunction with the Chair.
 - b. Maintain an accurate record of expenditures and commitments.
 - c. Present budget updates to the Staff Council at the general meeting.
 - d. Modify the budget as requested by resolutions of the Staff Council.
 - e. Make authorized disbursements of funds with consent of the Chair.

D. Vice Chair of Communications

1. Manage all Staff Council communication disbursement to University staff including nominations and elections. After elections conclude, notify winners and those not elected.
2. Develop, integrate, and implement a broad range of public relations activities including, but not limited to, website, print media, email, and a regular staff newsletter.
 - a. Newsletter publication schedule: January/February, March, April, May/June, July/August, September, October, November, December
3. Build and maintain files regarding Staff Council communications.
4. Submit Year-End Committee Report.

E. Vice Chair of Staff Development and Recognition

1. Promote and recognize staff contributions in supporting and fulfilling Doane's values and successes in collaboration with Human Resources.
2. Recognize all staff at least once a year.
3. Serve as a resource to the University community in the recognition of staff.
4. Brainstorm any new/existing recognition initiatives.
5. Build and maintain files regarding Staff Recognition.
6. Coordinate at least two staff development events, outreach, and gatherings a year.
7. Coordinate other events that work to promote the mission of the Staff Council.
8. Engage and support the community through service projects.
9. Develop professional development sessions based on the staff feedback in order to provide a diverse set of information from topics that staff want to learn and hear about.
10. Submit Year-End Committee Report.

F. Vice Chair of Technology

1. Collect agenda and regular meeting minutes and post, once approved, to Staff Council website in a timely manner.
2. Coordinate focus groups and electronic assessment instruments as needed for Staff Council.
3. Maintain Staff Council email group.
4. Assist Chair Elect with nominations and elections process
5. Assist Vice Chair of Communications with any duties as needed.

Ad Hoc committees can be developed by the chair as needed.

All actions taken by these officers that are reasonably required by their official positions within the Council will be reported to the Council. Officers may not take a public stand or voice an opinion on an issue in the name of the Council without prior approval by a majority vote of the Council.

VI. ELECTION/NOMINATION PROCESS

A. Council Member

- Call for Council members will occur in February.
- Determine list of candidates in March. Verify with Human Resources that employees are in good standing.
- Elections will be held in April. Elections will be open for one week.
- Staff will vote for new members only within their representative groups.
- The candidate with the highest number of votes will win.
- In the event of a tie, the winner will be determined by a run-off election.
- The Chair-Elect, or a designee if they are up for election, will count ballots. Ballot counts will be verified by the Council Secretary/Treasurer.
- Votes may take place by unanimous consent if only one candidate is running for a particular office.
- In the instance there are no other volunteers within the representative group to fill the position, a staff member within that group will be appointed by the officers, with their consent..

B. At-Large Member

- Non-residential staff running for a Council position are eligible for their designated representative group in addition to the At-Large seat.
- Non-residential staff will vote for two positions- their representative group, as well as the At-Large seat.
- If the candidate wins the seat representing their group, the next candidate will be chosen for the At-Large seat.

C. Council Officers

- Council members are eligible to run for an officer position (excluding Chair) after completing six months in office.
- During the March general meeting, Council members will be asked to submit nominations and selections will be made for Chair elect, Secretary/Treasurer, and Vice Chairs.

VII. TERMS OF OFFICE

1. Terms of Office: August 1 to July 31.
2. Terms of office for staff council members will be two years, commencing at the first general membership meeting of the academic year.
3. Staff Council chair will serve for 3 years - 1 year as member, Chair elect, Chair.
4. Members will commit to a two-year term. At the conclusion of the initial two year term, members may re-apply as volunteers and will be subject to the selection process. There will be no term limits for members.
5. Vacant positions on Staff Council may be filled by appointment beginning with the runners-up from the last election, and then other eligible staff employees may be considered. The employee filling the vacancy will complete the term of the member being replaced. In the instance there are no other volunteers within the representative group to fill the position, a staff member within that group will be appointed by the officers.
6. The Executive Committee will consider nominees to fill any vacant positions outside of the normal election period.
7. If more than one half of the Staff Council seats become vacant midway through the term year, the remaining Council members may determine a midterm election is necessary.

8. In cases of long-term leave of absences, a substitute may be appointed with voting privileges with the approval of Staff Council.

Terms may vary for inaugural council depending on position held and time served on the council.

VIII. MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

- Represent staff and the Staff Council with honor and integrity at all times.
- Uphold and promote the mission of the Staff Council.
- Represent the area you were elected to serve, not just your office, department, or yourself.
 - After elections, new members will send an email to their constituents introducing themselves.
 - Perform regular outreach to constituents to solicit ideas and concerns.
- Disseminate information to colleagues and co-workers.
- Bring concerns and questions from colleagues and co-workers.
- Commit to open, honest, inclusive, and respectful dialogue while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
- Request time to perform Staff Council functions with their immediate supervisor.
- Staff Council members are expected to attend all meetings and vote on action items. If absent, notify the Staff Council Secretary in advance of missing a meeting.

A member is expected to attend at least 75% of the regularly scheduled meetings (beginning the month the member was elected/appointed, through the end of the current service year).

- More than 25% of absences in a service year from the regularly scheduled Staff Council meetings is cause for dismissal unless an exception is considered by the Council.
- Following the 3rd consecutive absence, the member will be contacted by the Chair of Staff Council asking them to confirm their commitment to Staff Council.
- The member must respond to the Chair prior to the next scheduled Staff Council meeting. Failure to do so will result in immediate dismissal from the Staff Council.

IX. MEETING GUIDELINES

- A. Staff Council will create an annual meeting calendar shared with all staff.
 - All meetings, except executive sessions, shall be open to all staff of the University.
 - Only members of the Staff Council have voting privileges. Proxy votes are not allowed.
 - A quorum shall consist of one-half plus one of the current voting members. In the absence of a quorum, any item needing approval is null and void and tabled to the next meeting or shall be sent out for vote to all Staff Council members via email.
 - Executive sessions may be called by the Chair and held as needed; these meetings are closed to the public.
 - Special meetings may be called at any time.
- B. Staff Assembly will meet annually and as needed
 - Staff Assemblies shall be announced at least two weeks in advance.
 - The proposed agenda shall be provided at least one week in advance.
 - If feasible, technology will be used to allow those who do not have the ability to attend in person to participate.

X. AMENDMENT CHANGES

- Bylaws may be amended or created from time to time by the voting members of the full Staff Council. Approved changes to the Bylaws will be shared with the Leadership Team Liaison to Staff Council and the President before disseminating such changes to the Doane University Staff.