

**THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
NORMAN STAFF SENATE
OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Revised April 6, 2023

I. SENATORS

The Norman Staff Senate shall represent all Norman staff employees. Any benefits eligible (0.50 FTE or more) staff employee shall be eligible for election to the Norman Staff Senate.

The Staff Senate shall consist of not less than twenty-one (21) and not more than twenty-seven (27) Senators elected from the staff of the Norman campus. The University President, Vice-Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, Assistant Vice Presidents, faculty members, temporary employees and student employees (including graduate research assistants and graduate teaching assistants) of the University shall not be eligible for election to the Norman Staff Senate.

The Norman Staff Senate Committee on Committees shall review the Staff Senate composition, as necessary, to maintain equitable representation and ensure the continuity of group representation and Norman Staff Senate membership. The Committee should consider the composition of the University at large.

A. Nomination Procedures

Nominations, including self-nominations shall be submitted on the form provided by the Norman Staff Senate to each eligible voting staff employee;

Council members whose terms are expiring and are eligible for re-election shall also submit the form provided by the Norman Staff Senate;

Call for nominations will be sent in May;

The Committee on Committees shall provide a list of eligible nominees for all vacancies to the Executive Committee.

B. Election Process

Elections of Senators shall be held annually by the Norman Staff Senate during the month of June with new members assuming office August 1;

The annual election shall be conducted by the Committee on Committees;

The Executive Committee shall review all nominations submitted and create a ballot for the election process;

The voting period will conclude by the second Wednesday of June;

Candidates for office may campaign. Campaigning shall be outside of work hours; campaign fliers may be distributed although fliers may not be posted in hallways or in elevators; with supervisory approval, fliers may be posted in departmental offices; and campaign buttons, mass e-mail, incentive gifts, and use of University resources shall not be allowed.

Elections shall be completed, and appointments placed on the June Staff Senate agenda.

C. Contesting Election Results

Results of an election may be contested by submitting a written complaint to the Staff Senate Executive Committee within five (5) working days of the posting of the final results.

The Executive Committee shall review the complaint and determine if a recount or further action is necessary.

D. Terms of Office

Senators shall be elected for a two (2) year term serving no more than two (2) consecutive terms as an elected Senator.

E. Senator Orientation

An Orientation for Senators shall be held in August. The Chair of the Staff Senate shall conduct the meeting, assisted by the Staff Senate officers. The Staff Senate Operating Procedures, the Staff Senate Constitution, and other material as deemed necessary by the Staff Senate Chair will be reviewed.

F. Removal and Vacancies

A position on the Norman Staff Senate shall become vacant upon a Senators termination of employment with the University, or resignation/dismissal from the Norman Staff Senate;

Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate upon recommendation of the Committee on Committees and approval of the Norman Staff Senate;

The appointment shall be for the remainder of the term and shall count as a full term served.

G. Responsibilities of Senators

Senators Shall:

Aid in the fulfillment of the purposes of the Norman Staff Senate as delineated in Article III of the Constitution;

Attend all meetings, both regular and special;

Report the actions of the Norman Staff Senate to staff on a regular basis;

Serve on Norman Staff Senate committees when duly appointed;

Notify the Norman Staff Senate Administrative Manager when it is necessary to be absent.

II. OFFICERS

The officers of the Norman Staff Senate shall be: Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, Communication Officer and most recent Past Chair available

A. Eligibility

To be eligible for candidacy as an officer an individual must have served one (1) full year as a Senator and;

Served as a Senator within the preceding four (4) years.

B. Election

The Committee on Committees shall present candidates to the Norman Staff Senate and call for nominations from the floor at the May meeting. The slate of candidates shall be final at the conclusion of the May meeting;

The slate of candidates shall be voted on by secret ballot at the June meeting. The candidate receiving the largest number of votes shall be declared the winner;

If only one person is nominated, then the candidate may be approved by acclamation and no vote is needed;

In the event there are no volunteers to fill an officer position, the Chair may go outside the Staff Senate to appoint an officer from the Norman staff at large. In this event, the appointed officer shall automatically become a Staff Senate member with full rights of membership.

C. Terms and Succession

Officers shall serve terms of one (1) year;

If the elected officer is a Senator, they shall vacate their Senator position upon taking office. The vacancy shall be filled as outlined in Section 1.F of the Operating Procedures;

The Past Chair shall serve in an ex-officio capacity for one (1) year;

The Chair-Elect shall become Chair August 1 of the year following the year of their election to Chair-Elect;

The positions of Secretary and Communication Officer may each serve two (2) consecutive full terms in office.

D. Removal and Vacancies

Officers of the Norman Staff Senate may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senators;

In the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair-Elect, Secretary, or Communication Officer the Executive Committee shall present an eligible nominee for the office at the first Norman Staff Senate meeting following the confirmation of the vacancy;

If the office of the Chair is vacated, the Chair-Elect shall complete the term created by the vacancy and then serve a full term;

For the office of Past Chair, the Executive Committee shall appoint a nominee taken from the preceding four (4) years of Past Chairs. If no such candidate is available, the Executive Committee shall present a nominee for the office of Past Chair at the first Norman Staff Senate meeting following the confirmation of the vacancy.

E. Responsibilities of Officers

1. Chair shall:

Be the representative of the Norman Staff Senate to the University Administration, including attending meetings, events and speaking engagements;

Be a non-voting member of the Norman Staff Senate except in the case of a tie vote, in which event the vote must be conducted by secret ballot;

Conduct all meetings of the Norman Staff Senate and the Executive Committee;

Identify speakers and topics for the Staff Senate meeting agenda;

Serve on selection committees as requested by University Administration;

Serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member on all Norman Staff Senate standing committees;

Contribute to Administrative Manager annual performance evaluations;

Attend Faculty Senate meetings;

Require Committee Chairs to submit written reports and make oral reports at each Staff Senate meetings;

Perform such other duties as necessary to fulfill the purposes of the Norman Staff Senate.

2. Chair-Elect shall:

Assist and understudy the Chair;

In the Chair's absence, have all the powers and prerogatives of the Chair;

Be a non-voting member of the Norman Staff Senate except in the case of a tie vote, in which event the vote must be conducted by secret ballot;

Attend Staff Senate and Executive Committee meetings;

Review the Staff Senate agenda for monthly meetings;

Chair the Committee on Committees;

Chair the Merit Award Selection Committee;

Attend Faculty Senate meetings;

Serve on selection committees as requested by University Administration;

Perform such other duties as necessary to fulfill the purposes of the Norman Staff Senate.

3. Past Chair shall:

Support and advise the Chair;

Serve as Parliamentarian and be knowledgeable about the Norman Staff Senate Constitution and Operating Procedures;

In the absence of both the Chair and Chair-Elect, have all the powers and prerogatives of the Chair;

Be a non-voting member of the Norman Staff Senate except in the case of a tie vote, in which event the vote must be conducted by secret ballot;

Attend Staff Senate and Executive Committee meetings;

Perform such other duties as necessary to fulfill the purposes of the Norman Staff Senate.

4. Secretary shall:

Attend and record Staff Senate meetings;

Track attendance of Senators;

Attend and record Staff Senate Executive Committee meetings;

Serve on the Committee on Committees;

Perform such other duties as necessary to fulfill the purposes of the Norman Staff Senate.

5. Communication Officer shall:

Create, implement, and manage Staff Senate communications programs at the direction of the Executive Committee;

Be responsible for creating draft proposals or communications from Staff Senate;

Provide content and support for the Staff Senate website;

Direct the Communications Committee in supporting the Norman Staff Senate communications effort.

III. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. Membership

The Norman Staff Senate Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Chair-Elect, Past Chair, Secretary and Communication Officer, all of whom shall be voting members. The Administrative Manager shall have full rights of membership, except voting privileges.

B. Duties and Responsibilities

Ensure that all Staff Senate functions are conducted in a fair and equitable manner;

Transact business of the Norman Staff Senate between meetings and report any actions taken at the next Norman Staff Senate meeting. Transact business delegated to it by the Norman Staff Senate or University Administration;

Forward to University Administration the recommendations and advice of the Norman Staff Senate on policy matters relating to staff;

Review committee reports and recommend actions on such reports to the Norman Staff Senate;

Provide the Staff Senate with a slate of nominees for new Senator election at the June meeting.

C. Meetings

The Executive Committee shall meet as often as necessary and, in closed session;

The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the Chair or at the request of any one (1) voting member thereof;

A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of three (3) of its voting members;

The Secretary shall record and transcribe the minutes of all Executive Committee meetings.

IV. MEETINGS

A. Meetings

As a general rule, regular meetings of the Norman Staff Senate shall be held on the third working Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. from September through July.

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or at the written request of one-third (1/3) of the Senators directed to the Administrative Manager.

All meetings shall be open to the public non-Senators may only participate in discussion by invitation or permission of the Chair.

However, the Staff Senate Chair can move meetings into executive session or by a majority vote of the Senators present. Only Officers, Senators and the Administrative Manager may participate in discussions.

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution, these Operating Procedures, and the spirit of Robert's Rules of Order.

B. Quorum and Voting

A simple majority of Senators of the Norman Staff Senate shall constitute a quorum authorized to transact business at any regular or special meeting.

Voting by Senators shall be by voice except when deemed otherwise by the Chair, in which case voting shall be by a show of hands, by ballot or electronically.

All decisions shall be made by a simple majority vote of the Senators unless otherwise specified in the Constitution.

C. Collaboration with Staff Senates at Health Sciences Center and Tulsa Campuses

The officers of the Norman Staff Senate and the Staff Senates for the Health Sciences Center and Tulsa campuses shall meet periodically, but not less than annually, to discuss matters of mutual concern. Hosting of these meetings shall alternate among the campuses.

V. COMMITTEES

Any staff employee with 50% FTE or more employment may serve on Norman Staff Senate committees.

Members of the Norman Staff Senate committees shall be appointed by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate upon recommendation of the Committee on Committees and approval of the Norman Staff Senate. Subsequent vacancies shall be filled in the same manner and shall be for the duration of the remaining term.

Each committee shall have a clearly defined function from the Norman Staff Senate and make frequent reports and recommendations to the Norman Staff Senate.

Any member resigning from a committee must do so in writing to the Chair of the committee.

With the exception of the Norman Staff Senate Chair, holding an office does not preclude serving on any committee either as members or as officers.

Special Committee Chair shall:

Convene meetings and prepare and provide a copy of the agenda/needed materials to committee members. Meetings shall be held as needed to meet the requirements of the committee;

Assure minutes are recorded as well as distributed to the committee and the Norman Staff Senate office following meetings;

Report committee matters to the Staff Senate at monthly meetings;

Seek confirmation on issues requiring Staff Senate approval;

Encourage all members to participate in electronic and/or verbal discussions;

In the event a committee member is inactive, the Chair is given discretion to discuss membership options that best fit the individual member and the committee;

Notify the Chair of the Committee on Committees and the Administrative Manager in the event of any member resignation.

Any and all organizational guidelines used by the committees shall be turned over to the committee Chair at the end of each year. The Chair shall then turn in those documents to the Staff Senate Office. The Administrative Manager shall then re-distribute these guidelines to the incoming Chairs of the committees prior to their meeting.

A quorum of a committee shall consist of one-third (1/3) of the members on record.

A. Special Committees

1. Committee on Committees

The Committee on Committees shall consist of five (5) members, who serve two (2) year staggered terms;

Members and replacement members shall be selected by the Executive Committee. All nominees shall be selected from current Senators;

Nominations to this committee shall be presented for approval by the Norman Staff Senate at the June meeting;

New member appointments shall begin August 1.

The Norman Staff Senate Chair-Elect shall chair this committee and the Administrative Manager shall serve as a non-voting member.

The function of the Committee on Committees is to:

Convene when necessary to nominate staff to serve on Norman Staff Senate, search committees, ad hoc committees, Norman Campus and University Committees, or any other committees;

Convene when necessary to review and advise on recommendations to form special committees;

Review the Staff Senate composition, as necessary, to maintain equitable representation and ensure the continuity of group representation and Norman Staff Senate membership. The Committee should consider the composition of the University at large.

Conduct the Election for Norman Staff Senate Senators;

In accordance with the Eligibility Requirement stated in Section II.A, present a slate of nominees for Chair Elect, Secretary and Communication Officer at the May meeting for action at the June meeting.

The Committee on Committees shall submit all recommendations to the Norman Staff Senate for approval.

2. Merit Award Selection Committee

The Merit Award Selection Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members who shall serve from January to April within a one-year period. The Norman Staff Senate Chair-Elect shall chair this committee as a non-voting member and the Administrative Manager shall serve as a non-voting member.

The function of the Merit Award Selection Committee is to:

Determine the ranking and selection procedures for determining the awards using the criteria established by the Norman Staff Senate.

Select staff from eligible nominees to receive the Superior and Distinguished Merit Awards each year.

Any committee member nominated to receive an award shall, upon receipt by the Norman Staff Senate Office of that nomination, immediately become ineligible to serve on the committee.

3. Policy Review Committee

The Policy Review Committee shall consist of five (5) members who serve two (2) year staggered terms, beginning August 1. The Norman

Staff Senate Chair-Elect shall chair this committee and the Administrative Manager shall serve as a non-voting member.

The functions of the Policy Review Committee are to:

Annually review the Constitution and Operating Procedures and recommend changes, as appropriate, to the Norman Staff Senate;

Review all proposed amendments to the Constitution and Operating Procedures and make recommendations concerning those proposed changes to the Norman Staff Senate;

Every three years review Standing Committees and make recommended changes to the committees' respective charges;

Review and make recommendations for changes to the Norman Staff Senate policies or procedures, as directed by the Norman Staff Senate.

4. Community Outreach Committee

The Community Outreach Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members who serve two (2) year staggered terms, beginning August 1. The Chair of the committee shall be appointed annually by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate. The Past Chair of the committee may serve in an advisory capacity.

The functions of the Community Outreach Committee are to:

Assist Norman staff in their growth as individuals, leaders and members of the community;

Provide opportunities to serve the broader community with time and effort using the criteria established by the Norman Staff Senate.

5. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees of the Norman Staff Senate are limited in scope and duration and may be established at the discretion of the Norman Staff Senate Chair.

Each Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members. The Chair of the Norman Staff Senate shall appoint the respective committee Chair.

Each Ad Hoc Committee shall be dissolved upon completion of its charge and a presentation of a final written report to the Executive Committee, or upon a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee.

If an ad hoc committee should become a standing committee, the recommendation and final written report is to be submitted to the Committee on Committees for action.

Employees of affiliated entities specific to the Ad Hoc Committee scope, may serve on the committee with a special appointment by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate.

B. Standing Committees

1. Awards Committee

The Awards Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members who serve a one (1) year term beginning August 1. The Chair of the committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate. The Administrative Manager shall serve as a non-voting member.

Each committee member must volunteer annually.

Members may be added to the committee outside the regular annual call for volunteers with the approval of the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate.

The charge of the Awards Committee is:

Planning, organizing, and executing the annual Staff Senate Awards Ceremony, luncheon, and reception at which staff are recognized for achievement, length of service and retirement.

The functions of the Awards Committee are to:

Attend the yearly Awards Ceremony;

Assemble and Breakdown Awards and Certificates;

Make decisions on the Ceremony's food menu and retiree gift.

2. Communications Committee

The Communications Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members who serve a one (1) year term beginning August 1. The Chair of the committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate. The Administrative Manager shall serve as a non-voting member.

Each committee member must volunteer annually.

Members may be added to the committee outside the regular annual call for volunteers with the approval of the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate.

The charge of the Communications Committee is:

Improving and promoting the communication of relevant issues concerning staff. Methods may include a monthly newsletter, updating the Staff Senate brochure for new employees, and other communication events as directed by Staff Senate.

The functions of the Communications Committee are to:

Create a Welcome Newsletter to be sent out in August;

Create Newsletter to highlight Staff Senate Senators in January;

Create a Newsletter to be sent out in April highlighting Staff Week;

Create a Standing Committee Newsletter outlining the functions of the committees and promote participation in June.

3. Staff Initiatives Committee

The Staff Initiatives Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members who serve a one (1) year term beginning August 1. The Chair of the committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate. The Administrative Manager shall serve as a non-voting member.

Each committee member must volunteer annually.

Members may be added to the committee outside the regular annual call for volunteers with the approval of the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate.

The charge of the Staff Initiatives Committee is:

To facilitate networking, exchange ideas and suggest ways to enhance staff engagement and work effectiveness.

The functions of the Staff Initiatives Committee are:

Researching, discussing, reporting, and making recommendations on current and proposed policy, as directed by Staff Senate or as identified by the committee, to define and promote policies that are in the best interest of OU Staff.

4. Staff Week Committee

The Staff Week Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members who serve a one (1) year term beginning August 1. The Chair of the committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate. The Administrative Manager shall serve as a non-voting member.

Each committee member must volunteer annually.

Members may be added to the committee outside the regular annual call for volunteers with the approval of the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate.

OU Staff Week is intended to recognize, entertain and inform all staff.

The charge of the Staff Week Committee is:

Develop, plan, and coordinate events, activities, and outings for Staff.

The functions of the Staff Week Committee are:

Coordinating, promoting, and assisting with the activities of the annual OU Staff Week, which are sponsored by the Norman Staff Senate. Activities should be submitted to the Executive Committee by the end of September for approval.

VI. NORMAN AND UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

A. General Considerations

In addition to the Staff Senate committees, the Norman Staff Senate shall have staff representation on other Norman campus and University committees.

The Staff Senate Office is responsible for keeping a current list of Staff Senate, Norman Campus and University committees, committee members, and their terms of service.

Members of these committees are expected to represent the interests of staff. They are responsible for participating in all meetings of the body and for reporting to the Norman Staff Senate or its officers any matter under consideration of significance to staff.

Members of these committees shall be appointed by the Chair of the Norman Staff Senate upon recommendation of the Committee on Committees and approval of the Staff Senate. Subsequent vacancies shall be filled in the same manner and shall be for the duration of the unexpired term.

VII. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Operating Procedures of the Norman Staff Senate shall be made only at a regular or special meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senators present and voting, provided a quorum is present.

A proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Administrative Manager who shall direct the proposal to the Policy Review Committee for review and presentation to the Norman Staff Senate. The proposed amendments shall be distributed to the members of the Norman Staff Senate at least ten (10) calendar days before the meeting at which it shall be considered.

A formal vote may not be taken until the first regular or special meeting at which a quorum is present after the meeting when the amendment was first considered.

VIII. RULES OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

As representatives of the Norman Staff Senate, Officers, Senators, and appointees shall, at all times conduct themselves in a professional, cooperative, and collegial manner. Norman Staff Senate membership expressly implies a representation of the Staff Senate and Norman staff as a whole, and members shall present themselves as such. A member shall at all times strive to maintain the integrity of the Staff Senate by exhibiting behavior conducive to the Senate's mission.

Any Norman Staff Senate Officer, Senator, or appointee who engages in conduct that could injure the good name of the Norman Staff Senate, disturb its well-being, or hamper it in its work may face sanction or expulsion. The appropriate consequence shall be decided by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Three (3) absences from scheduled Norman Staff Senate meetings during any operating year may be cause for dismissal. Dismissal shall not occur until the circumstances of the absences are reviewed by the Executive Committee.

After three (3) such absences, the Senator shall be notified in writing about possibly facing dismissal. The Senator should reply in writing within ten (10) days either assuring the Norman Staff Senate that interest and participation shall continue or offering to resign, the Executive Committee shall be obliged to recommend to the Norman Staff Senate that the Senator be replaced. In any event, replacement may automatically be recommended with the occurrence of the fourth (4th) absence.

IX. SUSPENSION OF RULES

Any provision of the Operating Procedures, with the exception of the provisions concerning amendments, may be suspended for the duration of any one (1) meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senators of the Norman Staff Senate present and voting, provided a quorum is present.

X. RULES OF ORDER

All meetings of the Norman Staff Senate and its standing and special committees shall be governed by the spirit of Robert's Rules of Order.