

Bylaws

St. Mary's College of Maryland Staff Senate

as approved by the Board of Trustees on May 16, 2014

I. Mission Statement

St. Mary's College of Maryland is committed to developing and recognizing the contributions of the full range of its professionals as they work toward achieving the college's mission. The St. Mary's College of Maryland staff senate shall be the official representative body of the college staff. The senate offers a voice for all staff, endeavors to enhance the day-to-day work environment, and promotes a sense of community and respect across campus by fostering open communication with the college president, senior administration, faculty, students and the board of trustees.

II. Objectives

- A. Foster a spirit of unity, pride, and cooperation through participation in the advisement of the college president, administration, faculty, and board of trustees on decisions that will impact the staff and the college.
- B. Provide an opportunity for staff to share needs, concerns, and opinions on matters concerning the college community.
- C. Advocate for the needs and concerns of college staff in communications with the president, administration, faculty, and board of trustees.
- D. Review existing college policies, procedures, programs, and benefits and make recommendations for revisions and additions.
- E. Educate the staff about issues affecting them and provide a forum for the exchange of information about policies, practices, and administrative changes.
- F. Advance the professional development and personal welfare of the staff and enhance their role in the college community.
- G. Promote communication, understanding, and mutual support among staff, faculty, and students.
- H. Recognize and celebrate the many achievements of college staff and their contributions to the success of the college.

III. Definitions

- A. **Staff Association:** The organization that includes all members of the full-time staff (exempt, non-exempt, and contingent) other than faculty, administrators with faculty voting status, deans, vice presidents, and assistant and associate vice presidents. The role of the staff association is to promote unity and communication; it is not a labor organization.
- B. **Staff Senate:** The representative governing body of the staff association composed of officers who represent and are elected from among the members of the staff association.
- C. **Executive Committee:** The leadership body of the staff senate composed of a president, vice president, secretary/historian, and treasurer.
- D. **Part-time and Other Staff:** Although part-time staff and student staff are not voting members of the staff association and are not eligible for election to the staff senate, they are nevertheless invited to attend staff association meetings (as are all members of the campus community), to bring matters of concern to the attention of the staff senate, to volunteer by serving on staff senate committees, and to assist in supporting staff events.

IV. Membership and Responsibility of the Staff Senate

- A. All members of the staff association are eligible for election to the staff senate, with the exception of those staff members who have just completed two consecutive two-year terms on the senate.
- B. Senators are expected to attend staff senate meetings and staff association meetings, to serve on at least one staff committee (with the exception of the senate president), to assist with staff senate programs and events, to be familiar with the Staff Senate Bylaws, and—most importantly—to serve as a liaison between the senate and area constituents or the staff at-large. At-large senators may be asked to liaise with specific groups as necessary and relevant.
 - 1. Senators may send a meeting representative to serve on their behalf to no more than two consecutive staff senate meetings. This stipulation may be waived by the Executive Committee in the event of special circumstances.
 - 2. In the event of gross failure to fulfill these responsibilities (including, but not limited to, nonattendance of more than four staff senate meetings per year), a senator may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the staff senate. The said senator shall receive a warning notification in writing by the staff senate president after a third missed meeting and a vote of the staff senate may occur after a fourth missed meeting. If such a vacancy should occur, an election will be conducted for a replacement.
- C. Area representatives will be elected from each of the constituent areas below (areas with more than 20 staff members will be represented by two senators; areas with more than 40 staff members will be represented by three senators). In addition to these area representatives there will be five at-large members elected by staff association as a whole.
 - 1. Academic Affairs
 - a. Academic Support Services
 - b. Sponsored Research
 - c. Boyden Gallery
 - d. Career Development Center
 - e. Institutional Research
 - f. International Education
 - g. Registrar
 - 2. Academic Associates
 - a. Academic Building Associates
 - b. Administrative Associates
 - 3. Academic Support
 - 4. Enrollment Management
 - a. Admissions & Financial Aid
 - b. Media Relations
 - c. Publications & Design Services
 - 5. Advancement
 - a. Alumni Relations
 - b. Community Relations and the Arts Alliance
 - c. Events & Conferences
 - d. Development
 - 6. Athletics & Recreation
 - 7. Business Office
 - a. Campus Store
 - 8. Office of Information Technology
 - 9. Human Resources
 - 10. Library & Media Services
 - 11. Physical Plant (3)
 - a. General Support
 - b. Housekeeping

- c. Trades
- 12. Planning & Facilities
 - a. Design & Construction
 - b. Environmental Health & Safety
 - c. Grounds
 - d. Sustainability
 - e. Waterfront
- 13. Student Affairs (2)
 - a. Counseling Services
 - b. Health Services
 - c. Public Safety
 - d. Residence Life
 - e. Student Activities
- 14. At-large Members (5)

V. Election Procedures and Terms of Service

- A. Election of Senators from Established Constituent Areas
 - 1. Area representatives must be elected no later than June 15.
 - 2. Area representatives shall serve two-year terms, from July 1 – June 30, and shall be limited to no more than two consecutive terms.
 - a. Those senators elected to a one-year term in the inaugural year of the senate are eligible to serve for two full consecutive terms beyond their first year of service for a total of five consecutive years.
 - 3. Election shall occur via development of a series of electronic ballots that contain the names of all eligible staff association members of each constituent area. Ballots will be distributed to respective area members with a request to make one selection.
 - a. Care should be taken to exclude from the ballot current senators as well as those who have just completed two consecutive two-year terms.
 - b. Nominations for area vacancies will not be solicited.
 - c. Paper ballots shall be provided to staff of Physical Plant as they have limited access to computers needed for submitting electronic ballots.
 - 4. In order to maintain consistency on the senate and manage turnover of representation, approximately one half of the area representative seats will become vacant each year, as follows:
 - a. Even-year elections:
 - i. Academic Affairs
 - ii. Academic Support
 - iii. Advancement
 - iv. Athletics & Recreation
 - v. Physical Plant (2 of 3)
 - vi. Student Affairs (1 of 2)
 - b. Odd-year elections:
 - i. Academic Associates
 - ii. Enrollment Management
 - iii. Business Office
 - iv. Office of Information Technology
 - v. Human Resources
 - vi. Library & Media Services
 - vii. Physical Plant (1 of 3)
 - viii. Planning & Facilities
 - ix. Student Affairs (1 of 2)

- c. Senate members who transition from one area of the college to another will serve the balance of their term as the representative of their original area.
 - d. In the event that a growth in constituency results in the addition of a second representative of a given area, the new vacancy will come open in the year opposite that of the current representative.
 - e. Any new senate seat that results from the restructuring of constituent areas will be assigned to the election year with the fewest vacancies.
 - 5. Selected individuals will be notified privately of the election results as soon as possible after the close of the election. In the event that a chosen individual does not wish to serve on the staff senate, the individual receiving the next highest number of votes from that area will be contacted. After a final roster of area representatives has been developed it will be shared with the staff senate.
- B. Election of At-large Senators
- 1. At large representatives shall be elected after election of constituent area representatives has concluded, and no earlier than June 15.
 - 2. At-large representatives shall serve two-year terms, from July 1 – June 30, and shall be limited to no more than two consecutive terms.
 - a. Those senators elected to a one-year term in the inaugural year of the senate are eligible to serve for two full consecutive terms beyond their first year of service for a total of five consecutive years.
 - 3. Staff association members will be notified of the results of all area elections and will be provided with a single electronic (or paper, if warranted by area) ballot that includes the names of all staff eligible for election.
 - a. Care should be taken to exclude from the ballot newly-elected senators, current senators, and those who have just completed two consecutive two-year terms, and those who declined the opportunity to serve as an area representative.
 - b. Nominations for at-large vacancies will not be solicited.
 - 4. In order to maintain consistency on the senate and manage turnover of representation, about half of the five at-large seats will become vacant each year. As such, staff will be asked to select two (in even-year elections) or three (in odd-year elections) senators from among the eligible staff appearing on the ballot.
 - 5. Selected individuals will be notified privately of the election results as soon as possible after the close of the election. In the event that a chosen individual does not wish to serve on the staff senate, the individual receiving the next highest number of votes will be contacted. After a final roster has been developed, the full list of current and new senators will be shared with the staff association and the college at large.
- C. Fulfillment of Additional Senate Vacancies
- 1. If a vacancy should occur as a result of resignation from the college or resignation or removal from the Senate, election of a replacement will be conducted via procedures that closely reflect those described in the bylaws for standard elections.
 - a. The newly-elected senator will serve the balance of the term established for the vacant seat.
 - i. If the balance of the term is one year or less, the senator will be eligible to serve for two full consecutive terms beyond the replacement year for a total of five consecutive years.
 - ii. If the balance of the term is more than one year, the senator will be eligible to serve only one additional consecutive term beyond the replacement year.
 - b. Senate members who are promoted to a classification that is not included in the staff association will be asked to resign their seat on the staff senate. The vacancy will be filled in the manner just described.

VI. Executive Committee

A. Executive Committee Roles and Duties

- 1. President
 - a. Schedules staff senate and staff association meetings and provides timely notice, as defined in these bylaws, to both senators and staff.
 - b. Sets the agenda and presides over senate meetings, staff association meetings, and executive committee meetings.
 - c. Serves as a liaison between the staff and the president of the college.

- d. Represents the staff in deliberations with college administration.
- e. Makes a report to the board of trustees at regular general session meetings (or designates an executive committee member to do so in their place).
- f. Refers matters of concern to appropriate committees and develops ad hoc committees as necessary.
- g. Approves assignment of senators and staff to standing committees and makes additional appointments if necessary.
- h. Should be familiar with all committee activities but shall not serve on any committee.
- i. Designates a senator to serve as a staff representative on the strategic planning committee.
- j. Coordinates standard election of executive officers around the beginning of May during their second term of office.
- k. Coordinates a special election for a new vice president within ten business days of the vacancy, if one should occur.
- l. Provides consultation as necessary to the subsequently-elected president.

2. Vice President

- a. Assumes the duties of the senate president in their intermittent absence.
- b. Assumes the presidency for the balance of the term (as well as the subsequent term, as originally intended) in the event that the president can no longer serve.
- c. Coordinates a special election for a new senate secretary/historian or treasurer within ten business days of the vacancy, if one should occur.
- d. Serves as chair of the elections committee and coordinates the election of new senators in the spring and as vacancies arise.
- e. Works closely with senate president.
- f. Provides consultation as necessary to the subsequently-elected vice president.

3. Secretary/Historian

- a. Records and distributes agendas, minutes, and other documents to senators and staff as relevant.
- b. Maintains organized archival records of senate membership and all senate-related meetings and activities, including committee meeting minutes.
- c. Keeps records of attendance for all senate meetings.
- d. Provides consultation as necessary to the subsequently-elected secretary/historian.

4. Treasurer

- a. Develops an annual budget (in consultation with standing committee chairs) and forwards it to the appropriate point of contact after obtaining senate approval.
- b. Coordinates financial transactions related to senate and committee activities and maintains accurate account balances.
- c. Provides consultation as necessary to the subsequently-elected treasurer.

B. Executive Committee Terms of Service and Election Procedures

1. Terms of Service

- a. Executive officers shall be elected from the membership of the staff senate biennially, at a senate meeting around the beginning of May.
- b. The officers shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary/historian, and a treasurer.
- c. Officers shall serve a term of two years and be ineligible for election to more than two consecutive terms in the same office.
- d. Once a senator is elected to the president or vice president role, their respective senate seat shall be considered vacant and thus in need of replacement during the most upcoming standard election of senators.
- e. Once their respective terms have ended, and regardless of their currently being on senate or not, officers will serve ex-officio in that that they will provide consultation as necessary to subsequently-elected officers.

2. Election of the executive committee shall be coordinated by the senate president at a senate meeting around the beginning of May during the second year of their term.

- a. The president will take nominations (including self-nominations) from the floor and coordinate voting for executive offices in the following order:
 1. President
 2. Vice President
 3. Secretary/Historian
 4. Treasurer
- b. Voting will occur by secret ballot for each office in sequence and will require a simple majority vote of those present. If a majority is not immediately obtained a second ballot will be conducted between the two candidates with the greatest number of votes.

VII. Staff Committee Structure

- A. The staff committee structure includes the six standing committees below as well as ad hoc committees that may be established (by the senate president) on a temporary basis to consider specific issues that fall outside the jurisdiction of existing standing committees. Any change to the standing committee structure must follow the standard bylaw amendment procedure. All committees shall receive charges from the staff senate.
- B. Standing Committees of the Staff
 1. Awards & Recognition Committee
 - a. Coordinates nomination and selection process for college-wide staff awards.
 - b. Makes resources, models, and opportunities for idea exchange available to campus staff on topics related to employee recognition and motivation.
 - c. Supports efforts of communications committee to promote awareness of staff accomplishments.
 - d. Maintains contact with the Office of Human Resources regarding ongoing recognition efforts.
 2. Bylaws Committee
 - a. Membership shall be limited to current or past staff senators.
 - b. Develops bylaws in consultation with other senate members.
 - c. Conducts an annual review of the bylaws for possible amendment and coordinates the amendment process for any suggested changes.
 - d. Makes editorial changes necessary for purposes of clarity and to ensure that bylaws conform to changes in organizational structure of the college.
 3. Communications Committee
 - a. Informs the staff of the mission, membership, and major actions of the senate through maintenance of the staff senate web page.
 - b. Promotes a sense of community and appreciation among staff through publication and distribution of a periodic newsletter.
 - c. Considers, develops and promotes new channels of communication among staff as warranted.
 4. Elections Committee
 - a. Chaired by the vice president of the staff senate.
 - b. Develops, conducts (via electronic or paper ballot), and monitors election procedures for senators (as warranted by terms of service ending or to fill senate vacancies).
 - c. Considers changes to such procedures and to constituent areas and proposes election-related amendments to the bylaws.
 - d. Maintains and updates constituent list used for election of area representatives each spring and for general senator reference thereafter.
 - e. Serves as a point of contact for staff interested in serving on the senate or staff committees and assists with coordination of committee membership.
 5. Professional Development Committee
 - a. Works with relevant groups on campus to plan and implement staff development opportunities on campus.
 - b. Considers ways in which staff interest and participation in professional development opportunities might be increased.

- c. Assesses professional development needs and desires of staff and make recommendations for meeting them.
- 6. Social Connections Committee
 - a. Coordinates mechanisms for supporting new employees as they transition to the St. Mary's community.
 - b. Considers and implements means of enhancing relationships, communication, and mutual understanding between SMCM faculty, staff and students.
 - c. Plans and coordinates social, volunteer, community outreach, and other activities that increase employee morale and provide members of the campus community with an opportunity to interact outside of their roles on campus.
 - d. Supports the efforts of other staff committees to enhance the work environment and sense of community on campus.
- C. Standing Committee Membership
 1. All senators, with the exception of the senate president, must serve on at least one standing committee.
 - a. Committee assignments will generally be for one year (renewable with no limit) based on self-nomination at the July meeting of the senate. Care should be taken to ensure some degree of continuity as well as fresh perspective on each committee from year to year.
 - b. Senators will be notified of committee vacancies by the elections committee at least two weeks prior to the July meeting, after consultation with committee chairs.
 - c. All committee assignments are subject to the approval of the senate president, who has the authority to make additional appointments as necessary.
 2. Each standing committee shall have a minimum of three members, including two or more senators and may include additional staff association members who are not on the senate. Though a maximum of seven members is recommended, total number members of each committee (beyond three) is left to the discretion of the committee chair.
 - a. Staff association members will be notified of committee vacancies early in the fall semester. The elections committee will coordinate with committee chairs to fill vacancies with interested staff. Those staff association members who are not placed on a committee will be invited to participate in other ways and contacted in the event of a future vacancy.
 - b. If at any time committee membership falls below these minimum requirements the committee chair must solicit a replacement from the senate or the staff as appropriate.
 3. Each standing committee must be chaired by a senator who does the following:
 - a. Coordinates staff representation on the committee and reports new members to the senate secretary.
 - b. Schedules committee meetings as necessary, with a minimum of four per year.
 - c. Sets the agenda and presides over committee meetings.
 - d. Reports on the status of committee activities at monthly senate meetings and provides formal recommendations and supporting information when appropriate.
 - e. Provides meeting minutes to the secretary within two weeks of each meeting.
 - f. Provides the elections committee with timely information about committee vacancies for the subsequent year.
 4. In the event of gross failure to fulfill the above responsibilities, a senator may be notified of removal from the chair position by the staff senate president (following discussion among the executive committee). The staff senate president will appoint a new chair and take steps to ensure a smooth transition.
 5. No senator may chair more than one standing committee.
 6. One senator will be designated by the senate president to serve as a staff representative on the college's strategic planning committee.
 7. Senators may volunteer themselves to sit in on (but have no vote or agenda items in) the general session of meetings of the standing board of trustee committees.

VIII. Meetings

A. Rules of Procedure

1. Meetings of the staff senate, staff association, and all other groups formed under these bylaws, shall generally be open to all members of the college community, though any group may convene a closed executive session when necessary, subject to the State of Maryland open meeting law.
2. A schedule of staff senate and staff association meetings should be provided to all staff at the start of each semester and the beginning of summer.
3. Senators or other staff association members wishing to formally submit an item for consideration on the agenda of a senate or staff association meeting should contact a member of the executive committee at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting. Inclusion of such items on the agenda will be at the discretion of the executive committee.
4. A draft agenda for each staff senate and staff association meeting should be sent via email to all staff at least three working days before the meeting.
5. All meetings will be conducted in an informal manner. Modified Roberts Rules of Order will be used to guide parliamentary procedures and civil debate as necessary.

B. Meetings of the staff senate

1. The senate shall meet a minimum of ten times per year (approximately once per month).
2. Meetings will generally be called by the president of the senate but may also be called by order of five members of the senate.
3. A quorum for the purpose of doing business is defined as a simple majority of the current members of the staff senate. No vote can be taken unless a quorum (13) is present (including via teleconference). In the event of an electronic ballot, a quorum of members must participate in the vote in order for the motion to pass. Except where otherwise specified in the bylaws, a simple majority vote (among those senators present) will be required.
4. With the exception of executive committee elections, voting will generally be conducted through a voice vote unless a secret ballot is requested. If an electronic vote is necessary, this process will be coordinated by the vice president of the senate.

C. Meetings of the Staff Association

1. There will be a minimum of three staff association meetings which all members of the campus community will be encouraged to attend. These meetings shall take place at the beginning of each semester and during the summer with at least three weeks' notice provided.
2. Each staff association meeting will include open discussion as an agenda item so that staff members have the opportunity to pose ideas, questions, or concerns without prior arrangement.
3. No quorum is required for business to proceed at a staff association meeting. Except where otherwise specified in the bylaws, a simple majority vote (among the present voting members of the staff association) will be required.
4. Voting will generally be conducted through a voice vote unless a secret ballot is requested. If an electronic vote is necessary, this process will be coordinated by the vice president of the senate.

IX. Amendment Process

- A. The bylaws committee will conduct a review of the bylaws for possible amendment each spring.
- B. Any member of the senate may suggest an amendment to the bylaws at any time by submitting the recommendation, in writing, to the chair of the bylaws committee.
- C. The bylaws committee will prepare the specific wording of any potential amendments and will coordinate with the senate president to distribute the potential amendments to the members of the staff association at least two weeks in advance of the meeting when the vote is scheduled. Ratified amendments will then be forwarded to the college president and president's cabinet for approval before they are forwarded on to the board of trustees.

- D. Unless otherwise specified, all amendments shall take effect immediately upon approval by the board of trustees.
- E. A two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at the staff association meeting is required to pass an amendment.
- F. The bylaws committee may make any editorial changes necessary for purposes of clarity and to ensure that bylaws conform to changes in organizational structure of the college.