

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. All staff at Towson University are general members of the Staff Senate. 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 for their representatives during elections for Senators.
 - B. Voting membership shall consist of 38 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 thirteen (13) at large representatives (seven exempt and six non-exempt) to serve three-year staggered terms. These 38 representatives shall serve as the governing body and have full voting rights and responsibilities at convened meetings.
 - a. Members of the following groups shall not be eligible to become voting members:
 - i. President's Cabinet
 - ii. Provost's Council
 - b. In the event that the composition of a group listed under Article III.1.B.a changes to include a current staff senator, this would result in a senator vacancy.

- 1) In the event that a vacancy occurs in a Senate position, the Chairperson and election committee chair, 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:
 - c. The Senate shall identify exempt and non-exempt staff members who are willing to complete the term.
 - d. To complete the term, a staff member must be approved by two-thirds vote of the Senate.
- C. Nonvoting members of the Senate shall include the following: Senate chair, Senate past chair, TU president (or designee), and Ex-Officio members. The Senate chair has voting rights to break a tie.
- D. Senior Vice President of Administration and Finance, Vice President of Inclusion and Institutional Equity, Senior Vice President of Operations & Chief Human Resources Officer, and Academic Senate Chair (or their designees) shall be ex-officio members of the Senate.

Article IV - Organization

1. There shall be up to six officers of the Senate; chair, a past chair (if available), 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 officers will serve as the Senate Executive Board.
2. The Senators shall be elected by the staff in accordance with the election protocol. For specific election details see Senate Election Protocol.

Article V – Committees

1. The Staff Senate Chair will select Senators to 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 (TUSS Chair will be seated per TU Foundation protocol)
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 selected by the TUSS Vice 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.
 - A. Awards Committee:
 - 1) The committee shall be composed of at least six senators, including the treasurer and communications officer, and general members.
 - 2) The committee shall proactively support nominations and select the finalists of the TU staff for the Board of Regents (BOR) awards, TU Impact awards, and TU Top Tiger awards.
 - 3) The committee shall engage with the Communications committee to publicize awards, nominees, and recipients.
 - B. Bylaws Committee:
 - 1) The committee shall be composed of at least three Senators: 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 engage with the elections committee to ensure the annual elections protocol aligns with Senate by-laws.
 - 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 TUSS representatives on CUSS. Membership of TU staff is mandatory and shall be composed of six representatives (three voting & three alternates): at least one exempt and one non-exempt Senator as elected by Senators. Three alternates will also be voted on and must meet the same criteria as above.
 - 2) CUSS representatives must be sitting TUSS senators and will be elected annually by the Senate after the general election of senators.
 - 3) At least one CUSS representative will be required to give a report at every regular TUSS meeting on the most recent CUSS meeting.
 - 4) All CUSS representatives are expected to participate in CUSS committee work as designated by CUSS procedures.
 - 5) In the event of a vacancy, the same procedure as Article III.1.B.1 will apply.

E. Election Committee:

- 1) The committee will be chaired by the communications officer, if not up for re-election.
- 2) The committee shall be composed of the communications officer, and two senators who are not up for re-election.
- 3) The committee shall make recommendations regarding procedure and report 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. 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 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.
- 3) 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.
- 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 managed by the Elections Committee according to the Elections Protocol, which is reviewed annually and updated as needed.

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 compile, and post in SharePoint, the roster of the Senate and Executive Board no later than the October Senate meeting.

Article VII - Duties

1. The duties of the chair shall be to:

- Preside over general meetings.
 - Serve as a TUSS representative on RPAC.
 - Serve as an ex-officio member on all standing committees of which they are not members.
 - Prepare agendas for all Senate meetings in coordination with the Executive Board and based on recommendations of Senators.
 - Serve as financial steward of all TUSS cost centers.
 - Determine committee representatives along with the past chair and vice 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.
 - Meet with ex-officio members of the Senate. e.g. University President, Provost, Senior VP of Operations/Human Resources, and Senior VP of Admin & Finance.
 - Perform other duties as necessary.
2. The duties of the vice chair shall be to:
- Substitute for the chair when that officer is absent.
 - Serve as cost center manager on all TUSS cost centers. Preside over all TUSS standing committees to provide feedback and ensure alignment with TU policies and procedures.
 - Meet with Senate chair and Senior VP of Operations/Human Resources.
3. The duties of the treasurer shall be to:
- Prepare annual budget in consultation with chair and vice chair by the September Senate meeting.
 - Reconcile transactions in all TUSS cost centers.
 - Prepare expenditure requests for approval by chair or vice chair.
 - Serve on the Awards Committee and Events and Engagement Committee.
 - Ensure financial steward and cost center manager are updated to current chair and vice chair each July.
 - Provide quarterly finance snapshot reports to be sent out with Senate agenda.
4. The duties of the past chair as ex-officio, non-voting member of the Senate shall be to:
- Advise the incoming chair of carryover topics.
 - Assist in maintaining continuity for the following year.
 - Provide historical reference guidance on procedural questions.
 - Serve as member of Bylaws Committee.
 - Determine committee representatives along with the chair and vice chair.
 - Serve as ex-officio member of all standing committees of which they are not members.
5. The duties of the secretary shall be to:

- Take minutes at the general business meetings.
 - Share minutes from general meetings with the chair and vice chair for review and posting on SharePoint.
 - Maintain and archive all official Senate documents.
 - Reserve meeting spaces and communicate meeting dates, time, and location with all members.
 - Serve on the Communications Committee.
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, and maintain all other technology services for the Senate.
 - Work with Office of Technology Services and other areas as needed to maintain technology needs of the Senate.
 - Manage survey and data gathering software.
 - Serve on committees as described in Article V section 3.
7. The duties of the Senators shall be to:
- Attend Senate meetings.
 - Bring matters concerning their constituents to the attention of the Senate.
 - Serve on committees.
 - Communicate Senate actions to their constituents.
 - Develop and propose motions as needed.
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 Towson University Staff Senate.
 - 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, with at least two being in person.
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 secretary shall take attendance.
7. The vice chair shall serve as the timekeeper for the meeting, indicating as needed how much time is left for action/discussion on each item.
8. 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.
9. If the Senate finishes with an agenda item before the time allotted to it, the next item on the agenda begins.
10. 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.
11. Three absences within a single term year, shall be cause for review by the executive board and may result in removal from the Senate by unanimous decision by the executive board. A petition may be made to the Senate for reinstatement within one week of notification of removal from the Senate.
12. 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 - 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 X - 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 XI - 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. Proposed amendment(s) must be submitted in writing to the bylaws committee chair a minimum of 20 working days prior to the next Senate meeting. The bylaws chair will ensure Senate chair or Vice Chair receives final draft version of any proposed amendment(s) to distribute to the voting senators at least 10 working days prior to the Senate meeting. Proposed amendment(s) will be placed on the agenda for the next Senate meeting.

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

June 12, 2024

August 1, 2024

February 19, 2025