

CONSTITUTION OF THE STAFF ASSEMBLY UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Mission: The Staff Assembly is an advisory group that provides input and makes recommendations on behalf of University of South Alabama staff on topics of interest in areas affecting recruitment, retention, staff engagement, and job satisfaction. The Staff Assembly further provides a medium for the exchange and coordination of information between members of the staff and University administration; however, the Staff Assembly is not a replacement for the communications that necessarily take place between University administrators and staff.

The purpose of the Staff Assembly shall include advancing the vision, mission, values, and goals of the University. The Staff Assembly will, always, direct its activities in a positive, constructive manner, provide positive morale, promote a sense of community among University staff, project the University's Community Values and Code of Conduct, and commit itself to the betterment of the University.

I. Preamble

The Staff Assembly shall serve in an advisory role to the University administration and shall make recommendations on issues concerning staff employees. The Staff Assembly may consider matters referred to it by any staff member and make recommendations on policies or procedures relating to the welfare of staff. The Staff Assembly shall respond to issues presented to it by its own members and committees, staff employees, and University administration. Communications regarding recommendations of the staff are submitted by the Staff Assembly to the Chief Administrative Officer or his/her designee for review and consideration for escalation to upper administration. Time spent on Staff Assembly work is voluntary and may never interfere with regular job duties, obligations, and work performance.

II. Representation

A. Eligibility

Nominees for the role of Staff Assembly representative shall be full time, non-faculty/non-administrative employees with an indefinite term of employment and must have at least twelve (12) consecutive months of service at the University at the time of nomination. Staff members who teach courses part-time are eligible for membership. Each nominee must also be actively at work and in good standing, subject to verification by Human Resources and his/her department.

B. Membership

The Staff Assembly will consist of twenty-three (23) members apportioned as follows:

1. The President's Division, Executive Vice President's Division, Office of General Counsel, Office of Governmental Relations, and Office of Diversity & Community Engagement shall collectively have one (1) Staff Assembly member;
2. Finance and Administration shall have three (3) Staff Assembly members;

3. Academic Affairs shall have three (3) Staff Assembly members;
4. The Office of Research & Economic Development, Office of Development & Alumni Relations, and Office of Marketing & Communication shall collectively have one (1) Staff Assembly member;
5. The Division of Student Affairs shall have two (2) Staff Assembly members;
6. The Department of Athletics shall have one (1) Staff Assembly member; and
7. The College of Medicine (under University General) shall have two (2) Staff Assembly members.
8. Ten (10) additional Staff Assembly members shall be appointed or elected, as the case may be, from nominations submitted by their respective divisions to serve as members at-large.

The Chief Administrative Officer or his/her designee will be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Staff Assembly, serving in an advisory and liaison capacity.

III. Election Guidelines

A. Initial Appointment

The initial Staff Assembly shall be appointed by the University President and chosen from nominees submitted by their respective divisions. All subsequent vacancies on the Staff Assembly shall be filled in accordance with the procedures set forth hereinbelow.

B. Nominations

The Executive Committee shall designate or appoint an Elections and Nominations Committee and Chairperson, who will receive and record nominations to the Staff Assembly. The Executive Committee shall set the beginning and ending dates for accepting nominations, which will cover a two-week period.

Any regular, full-time staff employee may nominate an eligible staff employee for Staff Assembly membership. The person nominated may choose to accept or not accept the nomination. No more than 50% of the at-large members may represent one single University division.

C. Elections

The terms of Staff Assembly members will be staggered as follows:

For the inaugural Staff Assembly, the thirteen (13) divisional representatives will be appointed to serve two-year terms, while the ten (10) at-large representatives will be appointed to serve one-year terms. The initial at-large representatives will be replaced by at-large representatives serving two-year terms during the next election and thereafter. The second annual election will serve to replace the thirteen (13) divisional representatives; thus, each year's election will serve to replace either the at-large or the divisional representatives.

All regular full-time staff may vote in the Staff Assembly elections. The vote shall be taken by secret ballot with a voting period of two (2) weeks. Each staff member will vote for no more than the number of Staff Assembly representatives allocated to his/her divisional grouping, plus no more than ten (10) University at-large nominees. Voting for more candidates than permitted hereunder will void the ballot.

The Elections and Nominations Committee shall prepare the ballot, listing the names of nominees. The Committee shall distribute the ballots to regular full-time staff, as determined by Human Resources, on the date specified for the start of the election procedure. Voting shall take place annually during the first two (2) weeks of June each year (June 1-15).

D. Terms of Office

Each representative elected to the Staff Assembly shall serve a two-year term, running from the first day of July through the last day of June two (2) years later, regardless of divisional or at-large designation. No representative shall serve more than two (2) total terms as a member of the Staff Assembly, regardless of divisional or at-large designation. A representative in his/her second year of the first term shall be eligible to serve as president-elect, and, if selected, shall be eligible to serve as president in a third year. A representative in the second year of the second term would not be eligible.

E. Unexpired Term

In the event a divisional or at-large vacancy occurs on the Staff Assembly by the resignation, termination, or retirement of a representative, by transfer from one divisional grouping to another for divisional representatives, or by request from the representative with six (6) months or more remaining in his/her unexpired term, a representative(s) shall be replaced by an unsuccessful candidate(s) from the most recent election based upon votes received and willingness to serve. In the absence of such a person(s), the Executive Committee shall nominate a replacement, and the nominee shall be confirmed by a majority of the full Staff Assembly. The confirmed individual will serve until the next general election. If the vacancy occurs less than six (6) months before the next general election, it shall be up to the discretion of the Executive Committee whether to nominate a candidate and have the nominee confirmed by a majority of the full Staff Assembly as described above or leave the position vacant for the remainder of the term. Replacement members whose initial term constitutes less than half of a full term will not be considered as having served a term for purposes of term limits.

IV. General Organization

A. Executive Committee

Within the Staff Assembly, leadership shall be provided by the Executive Committee, which consists of a President, Vice President/President-Elect, Secretary, Parliamentarian/Historian, and the immediate Past President of the Staff Assembly, who shall be a non-voting ex-officio member. In the event the immediate Past President is unavailable, the President may recommend an officer to the CAO for approval from the previous Executive Committee to

fill this seat. Other than the immediate Past President, the Executive Committee will be selected annually by the Staff Assembly members at the July quarterly meeting. Executive Committee members will serve on the Executive Committee for a one-year term and may not be elected to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in any capacity on the Executive Committee.

B. Meetings

1. Regular meetings: Staff Assembly meetings will be held quarterly in January, April, July, and October, at a time of the day that is sensitive to staff work schedules. The Executive Committee will be responsible for the scheduling and the agenda for Staff Assembly meetings. Floor discussions are open at Staff Assembly meetings.

C. Resolutions

Resolutions or proposals shall be introduced to the Staff Assembly at one meeting and become an action item no later than the Staff Assembly meeting of the following quarter. Voting shall be by the polling of each representative present, the results of which will be recorded in the minutes.

D. Amendment of Constitution

The Constitution may be reviewed and/or amended. Any member of the Staff Assembly may make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for a revision or amendment to the current Constitution. A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be distributed in writing to all members at least one (1) week prior to the meeting where the proposed change is to be first introduced and read. There shall be one (1) official reading of the proposed change during the meeting preceding the meeting in which there is to be a vote to amend the Constitution. To pass the amendment for consideration by University administration, a majority of the Staff Assembly's voting membership shall approve the amendment. The Staff Assembly Constitution, and suggested amendments thereto, must be submitted to and receive final approval from the University administration before they become effective and are distributed to all staff members. The President of the University has the authority to amend the Constitution in his/her sole discretion at any time.

E. Bylaws

In accordance with the Constitution of the Staff Assembly, the Executive Committee shall establish and maintain a set of simple but effective bylaws to establish acceptable rules of conduct and behavior for the Staff Assembly. Any member of the Staff Assembly may make a recommendation for revision of the Bylaws to the Executive Committee. To pass a revision to the Bylaws, a majority of the Staff Assembly's voting membership shall approve the revision, with final review and approval from University administration before the bylaw becomes effective. The President of the University has the authority to amend the Bylaws in his/her sole discretion at any time.

F. Committees

The Staff Assembly may create such committees as are deemed necessary to facilitate its work. Committee membership is solicited from the Staff Assembly by the president. Chairs of each committee shall be expected to submit committee reports to the Staff Assembly.

V. Ratification

The Constitution and any amendments thereto shall be considered ratified upon approval by the President of the University.

In the event of inconsistency between the Constitution and the Bylaws, the terms of the Constitution supersede those of the Bylaws.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Constitution is hereby approved and adopted on this the 30 day of April, 2024.



Jo Bonner

President
University of South Alabama