

Staff Senate Constitution Henderson State University

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ARTICLE I. NAME

Henderson State University Staff Senate

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The Staff Senate shall provide for the orderly representation of non-faculty personnel in communication between Staff and Policy-makers in areas affecting their general welfare, and provide a medium for the exchange and coordination of information between members of the Staff, Administration, Faculty, and Students. It will at all times direct its activities in a positive, constructive manner and commit itself to the betterment of the University.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. All non-faculty personnel of Henderson State University who are below the level of Vice President and employed on a half-time or more basis shall be eligible for membership in the Staff Senate. (Eligible members shall be referred to as the Staff in this document.)

Section 2. The Staff Senate shall include one ex-officio representative of the HSU Student Government Association.

Section 3. Staff Senate members shall be elected from the following University areas based on departments under the jurisdiction of the President and/or a Vice President of the University. The Staff shall elect representatives from within their own University area only.

AREA I: Academic Affairs

AREA II: Finance and Administration

AREA III: Custodial

AREA IV: Physical Plant

AREA V: Student Services

AREA VI: University and Community Relations

AREA VII: President's Area

Section 4. The following scale shall determine Staff Senate representation from each University area. Populations shall be based on the most current listing available from the Personnel Office for the month preceding the nomination call.

Number of staff employed within an area	Number of designated senators	*Alternates
15 or less	1	1
16-29	2	1
30-39	3	1
40-49	4	2
50-59	5	2
60+	6	3

*** 1 alternate for each 2 Senate seats (Ratio 1:2) If there is an odd number of seats then it is rounded to the lowest number.**

Section 5. The official term for a Senator elected during an annual election shall be two official years. An official year begins with the January meeting of the Staff Senate and ends with the call to order of the January meeting of the following year.

Section 6. Senators are expected to attend all regularly scheduled Staff Senate meetings, though Senators may miss a total of three meetings without providing a proxy. Senators who must be absent from a Staff Senate meeting are expected to send a proxy selected by the Senator from his/her own area of representation. The proxy may not be someone who is already serving as a Senator. The proxy will have all the rights and privileges of the Senator that is absent. Absent Senators shall notify the Secretary by submitting the designated proxy form listing his/her name and for whom he/she is substituting; the proxy form must be provided to the Secretary no later than three weeks after the meeting in question, though it is suggested that the proxy form accompany the proxy at the meeting.

Any elected Senator may miss three meetings within a calendar year. Upon the fourth absence said position shall be declared vacant and filled according to Article 4, Section 13. The President will notify the former Senator of action taken.

Section 7. A Senator shall have served a full term if his/her membership is held for twelve full months or more.

Section 8. Senators shall not serve consecutive full terms.

Section 9. Senators who transfer from one University area to another shall relinquish membership in the Senate and any Senate committee.

Section 10. Approximately half of the Senate membership shall be elected each year.

Section 11. Senators shall not use job status, rank, position, or salary as advantages over other members. Senators shall conduct business in a manner respectful of the trust exhibited by those who elected them and shall work toward the fulfillment of University and Senate goals in a positive manner.

ARTICLE IV. ANNUAL AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Section 1. Annual nominations for and election of Staff Senators shall be held prior to the December meeting. The Election Committee of the Staff Senate shall be responsible for all annual and special elections.

Section 2. For each University area, the Election Committee shall devise and distribute a list of all eligible Senate candidates to each Staff member at least five working days prior to the nomination deadline set by the Committee.

Section 3. Each Staff member shall be allowed to make a nomination for each position to be filled from his/her University area only. Staff must have twelve months of continuous service with the University prior to being nominated to serve on the Senate.

Section 4. Eligible nominated Staff have seven working days to accept or decline the nomination. They are to be notified by campus mail and by e-mail.

Section 5. For each available position, the three persons who receive the highest number of nomination votes shall be contacted by the Election Committee to confirm their acceptance of the nomination. If a nomination is not accepted, the Committee shall contact the person(s) with the next highest number of votes.

Section 6. If more than three persons share the highest number of votes, all shall be considered official nominees.

Section 7. Election date, time, and place shall be accessible and reasonable and shall be set by the Election Committee.

Section 8. Staff members must be notified in writing of the nominees; election date, time, and place no fewer than five working days prior to Election Day.

Section 9. Ballots shall be available to each Staff member at the place of polling. Each Staff member shall vote for representative(s) from his/her University area only.

Section 10. Absentee ballots shall be available at the Cashier's window in the University Business Office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Absentee ballots shall be available no fewer than five working days before the scheduled Election Day and shall be deposited in a locked ballot box in the Cashier's office. Only members of the Election Committee may remove the ballot box and the ballots within.

Section 11. A minimum of two Election Committee members shall be present during an election.

Section 12. The Secretary of the Senate shall be given the names of the appropriate number of individuals in each University area who have received the highest number of votes and shall announce their names and positions accordingly within two working days after an election.

Section 13. The candidate receiving the next highest number of votes shall become an alternate, and serve in the event a seat is vacated in that respective area. If an election results in a tie, the candidate(s) who receive the tie votes shall be placed on a second ballot. A run-off election shall be held within two working days at a time and place designated by the Election Committee. In case of another tie, the Election Committee shall notify the individuals concerned and the winner shall be determined according to a method devised by the Committee.

Section 14. Using the above guidelines, Senate seats that become vacant between annual elections shall be filled by an alternate, if available, within twenty working days after the vacancy is noted by the Senate.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS, THEIR ELECTION AND DUTIES

Section 1. Senate officers shall be elected from and by the Staff Senate. Term of office shall be one official year or until successors are elected. Officers shall not serve consecutive terms. An officer shall have served a full term if his/her office is held for six full months or more.

Section 2. Officers shall be elected during the first Staff Senate meeting of the official year. Officers shall be nominated from the floor.

Section 3. Officers shall consist of President, President-Elect, and Secretary.

Section 4. The President shall:

- a. designate the time and place for each Senate meeting;
- b. preside over each Senate meeting;
- c. plan and mail an agenda to each Senator and the President of the University within five working days prior to a scheduled meeting;
- d. be the official Senate representative to the University Board of Trustees and shall report on each meeting to the Senate;
- e. the President shall have the authority to transfer powers of the Presidency to the President-Elect during his/her absence(s), and to notify the President-Elect of said transfer;
- f. appoint Senators to Senate committees or to perform other duties as deemed necessary;
- g. assist the President of the University in selecting Senators or other members of the Staff to serve on University committees;
- h. protect the Senate from obviously frivolous or dilatory motions by objecting to consideration of the questions;
- i. have a monthly conference with the President of the University to discuss the upcoming agenda items or other Senate business and report on the meeting to the Senate;
- j. present proposed constitutional amendments to the Senate;
- k. be allowed to vote on motions only when his/her vote shall affect the outcome of the results;
- l. be granted "Senate Time" as approved by the President of the University and coordinated with his/her supervisor. The "Senate Time," is not to exceed five hours per week, is to be used for Staff Senate business only and must not interfere with assigned job duties or the mission of the University;
- m. notify former Senator(s) of the lost seat upon Senate action immediately following the third absence according to absenteeism policy Article 3, Section 6, and;
- n. shall approve/oversee the posting of all information on the Staff Senate website.

Section 5. The President-Elect shall:

- a. be elected from First Year Senators;
- b. assist the President;
- c. preside over Senate meetings in the President's absence;

- d. succeed the President at the end of his/her term;
- e. succeed the President if he/she cannot complete his/her term (this shall not deprive the President-Elect from serving a full term as President the following year);
- f. attend Senate committee meetings if requested by the President and;
- g. serve as Senate Parliamentarian

Section 6. The Secretary shall:

- a. certify that a quorum is present at the beginning of each Senate meeting;
- b. keep an accurate and complete record of all proceedings of each Senate meeting;
- c. keep an accurate and complete record of Senator attendance at each Senate meeting;
- d. serve as Budget officer;
- e. distribute minutes of each Senate meeting to the Staff and the President of the University within seven working days after a meeting's adjournment;
- f. officially announce election results, and;
- g. keep an accumulative account of minutes and all pertinent Senate dates and pass them to the successor.

Section 7. If the Secretary becomes vacant during the year, nominations for a replacement shall be in order.

Section 8. Any Senator may resign an office upon a letter of resignation to the President or Secretary.

ARTICLE VI. SENATE COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Election Committee shall:

- a. be appointed by the Senate President;
- b. consist of one Senator from each University area; and
- c. shall be bound by the guidelines provided in Articles IV and IX of this Constitution.

Section 2. Other Committees shall be appointed by the Senate President as deemed necessary.

Section 3. Committees shall report on their meetings to the Senate if requested by the President.

ARTICLE VII. SENATE MEETINGS

Section 1. The Senate shall meet monthly.

Section 2. The Senate may be called into special session by the President of the Senate, the President of the University, or a majority of Senate members and must be scheduled at a time subject to the approval of the President of the University.

Section 3. Any Staff member may attend regular or special sessions of the Senate and may participate in deliberations with the consent of the presiding officer; however, only Senators have voting privileges.

Section 4. A quorum for any meeting for the transaction of business of the Senate shall consist of a simple majority of the entire Staff Senate.

Section 5. The current edition of "***Robert's Rule of Order***" shall be the authority for conducting business of the Staff Senate, provided that if any of its provisions are in conflict with this Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail.

ARTICLE VIII. RESIGNATIONS

Section 1. A Senator may resign from the Senate upon a personal letter of resignation to the Senate President and in doing so shall terminate his/her membership in any Senate committee.

Section 2. A Senator may relinquish membership in a Senate committee without affecting his/her Senate membership.

Section 3. If a vacancy in the Senate should occur through termination of employment, change of area, resignation from the Senate, or through automatic termination due to lack of attendance, the position shall be filled by an appropriate alternate.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Twenty or more Staff members may petition the Senate to amend the constitution by signing the petition and delivering copies to each Senator no fewer than ten working days prior to the next Senate meeting.

Section 2. Upon the favorable vote of the majority of the total Senate membership, a petition for amending this constitution shall be submitted to the Staff by the Election Committee who shall determine the method and place of voting.

Section 3. A proposed amendment to this constitution shall be adopted when a majority of the Staff approves the amendment by a two-thirds vote, and when approved by the President, and the Board of Trustees of the University.

ARTICLE X. ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1. The Staff Senate Constitution shall be adopted when approved by a majority vote of the Staff, the President of the University, and the University Board of Trustees.

The Staff Senate was established with the endorsement and approval of President Charles D. Dunn in spring 1988.

Amended dates: August 26, 1999; December 1, 2006; December 8, 2010.