Staff Council
Constitution and By-Laws
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Section I: Name
A. The name of this organization hereby constituted shall be the Georgia Southern University Staff Council (GSUSC).

Section II: Mission
A. The Mission of the Council is to advance the exchange of information, provide a common voice for ideas and concerns, and maintain a communication link between staff members and University administration to promote a positive and collaborative work environment. Staff Council works to ensure that staff employees work in a respectful atmosphere, with opportunities for their own professional and personal growth and development, while supporting the mission of Georgia Southern University.

Section III: Responsibility and Function
A. Staff Council shall participate in the process of University governance by acting in an advisory capacity to the President’s Cabinet and the Associate Vice President for Human Resources by:
   a. Reviewing policies proposed or previously adopted by others that may affect the welfare of the staff and making recommendations regarding these policies.
   b. Promoting the effective exchange of information between Georgia Southern University administration and staff.
   c. Proposing and promoting programs that enhance the personal and professional well-being of the staff, as well as encouraging their vocational and educational development.
   d. Recognizing the staff’s contributions and support for the mission of Georgia Southern University.

Section IV: Membership
A. Members
   a. Any staff employee of Georgia Southern University shall be eligible for membership on Staff Council.
   b. Members of Staff Council should be employed by the University for at least one year, shall serve a two year term, be in good standing with the University, and have supervisor approval.
   c. Staff employees shall be defined as all benefited exempt and non-exempt employees of Georgia Southern University.
   d. Once a staff council member completes his/her one year term, he/she may be eligible for an officer position.
   e. The Associate Vice President for Human Resources or appointee shall be an ex officio member.
   f. The Past-Chair shall be an ex officio member.
   g. Ex officio members may be appointed with approval by the Executive Committee.
   h. The Staff Council shall be comprised of forty divisional representatives.
   i. Each campus and/or division will nominate and elect its own members. As campus staff levels change, membership levels may reflect any discrepancies after being requested by the Executive Committee and voted on by Staff Council. Elections will be conducted by the Elections and Nominations Committee as outlined in these Bylaws.
   j. Membership is from July 1st to June 30th.
   k. The following is a breakdown of representation among the eight divisions and three campuses of the University. There will be one representative for each fifty (50) full-time staff members or portion thereof within each division and, if applicable, each campus. There shall be at least one representative from each division.
      i. Academic Affairs – 12
1. Statesboro – 9
2. Armstrong – 2
3. Liberty – 1

ii. Advancement – 1

iii. Business and Finance – 17
    1. Statesboro – 15
    2. Armstrong – 2

iv. Communications and Marketing – 1

v. Enrollment Management – 3
    1. Statesboro – 2
    2. Armstrong – 1

vi. President – 4
    1. Statesboro – 3
    2. Armstrong – 1

vii. Student Affairs – 2
    1. Statesboro – 1
    2. Armstrong – 1

l. Should any of the above divisions change, the representative will maintain their seat until the end of their term. Any official University restructuring or renaming which affects the divisions will be considered editorial changes to these Bylaws which will be put into effect at the next formal election. Elections will be conducted by the Elections and Nominations Committee as outlined in these Bylaws.

B. Duties of members

a. Enhance the communications network for staff throughout the University community.
b. Attend each regularly scheduled meeting.
c. Solicit feedback from staff regarding University matters and initiatives
d. Staff Council members shall not be authorized to consider or determine individual appeals.
e. Organize, serve on, and attend Staff Council events for the University community.
f. Serve in an advisory capacity to the President as representatives of staff throughout the University.
g. Serve on at least one Staff Council committee.
h. Serve on ad hoc committees at the request of the President and/or Chair in response to issues requiring further study or action.

Section V: Elections and Vacancies

A. Divisional Representatives:

a. Divisional Representatives: Elections will be held annually. Divisional representatives will be elected by a simple majority vote of Georgia Southern University’s benefited employees, excluding current Staff Council members. The divisional representatives shall be distributed based upon requirements found in Section IV.A.i. to ensure representation for each University division and campus.

b. New members will be notified by their Georgia Southern email of their selection and provided with Staff Council guidelines, responsibilities, a list of Staff Council members, and a schedule of the meeting dates.
c. New members are to attend the first official meeting and will have full voting privileges.

d. New members will be invited to attend a meeting in June to meet the current members of the council and to receive an “on-boarding” orientation packet from the Chair. New members who fill in a vacancy during the academic year will be sent the “on-boarding” orientation packet via their Georgia Southern email from the Chair. An invitation for a meeting with the Chair before the member’s first official meeting will be given but it is optional.

e. New members should contribute to and maintain a representative profile of the Georgia Southern University workforce, including organizational units, gender, race, job classification, and geographical location on campus.

B. Officers:

a. Nominations for open officer positions will be solicited by the Executive Committee annually in April.

b. Executive Committee elections will be held annually in April prior to at-Large elections. Officers will be elected by simple majority vote of all current Staff Council members.

c. In the event of a tie, the current Executive Committee will vote to break the tie.

C. Vacancies

a. No more than half of the Staff Council, excluding the executive committee members, will rotate off every year after having served their two year appointment. Recommended eligible staff will be reviewed and selections for new appointees will be made with the joint approval of the Associate Vice President for Human Resources and the Staff Council.

b. When vacancies occur in the Executive Committee, the Chair, with majority approval of the Executive Committee, will have authority to fill such vacancies. Priority will be given to those who have served at least a year with vacancies in Parliamentarian, Secretary and Treasurer but can be filled by any current Staff Council member regardless of service time. Vacancies in Chair-Elect must be filled by a current Staff Council member who has served at least a year.

c. The Chair-Elect will succeed the Chair should the Chair vacate the office before the term expires.

d. Replacing a terminated, an ineligible, or resigned member will be subject to the following restrictions:

i. No replacement will be made if the Staff Council member has less than three months left of his or her term.

ii. Staff Council has the right to go back to the previous divisional representative election ballot and select a replacement from the respective division. If no appropriate representation is available from the previous election, Staff Council has the authority to identify and approve procedures to select a replacement as quickly as possible. The new divisional representative will serve out the remainder of the term that he or she is replacing.

Section VI: Structure

A. Officers shall be Chair, Chair-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, and Parliamentarian.

B. Officers may serve up to two terms on the Executive Committee. The only exception to this would be an individual serving as Chair-Elect in his or her second term.

C. Ex Officio members shall be the Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Past Chair.

D. The fiscal year for the Staff Council will run July 1st – June 30th.

E. Meetings will be held at least once a month.

F. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the Executive Committee by vote of simple majority members.
Section VII: Officers

A. **Chair.** The Chair will preside at all meetings and is responsible for upholding procedures and appointing special committees. The Chair will serve as the voting delegate to the University System of Georgia State Staff Council. The term of the Chair is a one year term.

B. **Chair-Elect.** The Chair-Elect shall succeed the Chair at the beginning of the next academic year. The Chair-Elect’s appointment to the council shall be extended by one year in order to serve a one-year term as Chair. The Chair-Elect will assist the Chair and perform duties of Chair in the Chair’s absence. Staff Council members seeking the position of Chair-Elect must have served on the Council as an elected or appointed member for one year.

C. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining records and communicating financial information with the Staff Council, disbursing funds as approved by the Chair or his or her designee and providing end-of-year account status to Staff Council members. The Treasurer will serve as a member of the Staff Council’s Executive Committee. The Treasurer will be elected by and from the Staff Council to a one year term of office after having served on the Staff Council one year. The person serving in this position is eligible for re-election for one additional term after having served one year in an officer position.

D. **Secretary.** The Secretary will be responsible for taking minutes at each Staff Council meeting, distributing minutes of the previous meeting to committee members at least three working days before the next scheduled meeting, maintain roster of Staff Council members and their attendance at meetings, and maintain other Staff Council records as needed. The Secretary will be elected by and from the Staff Council to a one year term of office after having served on the Staff Council one year. The person serving in this position is eligible for reelection for one additional term after having served one year in an officer position.

E. **Parliamentarian.** The Parliamentarian shall assure that proper meeting procedures are maintained and follow Robert’s Rules of Order. The Parliamentarian shall chair the By-Laws Committee. The Parliamentarian will be elected by and from the Staff Council to a one year term of office after having served on the Staff Council one year. The person serving in this position is eligible for re-election for one additional term after having served one year in an officer position.

F. **Past-Chair.** The Past-Chair shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Staff Council for one year after having served as Chair and has no voting privileges.

Section VIII: Committees and Structure

A. **Description**
   
a. Each committee will select or have appointed by the Executive Committee a chair to convene meetings.
   
b. Each committee shall return a record of its activities (e.g. meetings, letters, survey, phone, calls, etc.). Such records are to be open to all Staff employees and kept on record with Staff council meeting minutes archive.
   
c. Written records should be submitted to be included with the agenda before regularly scheduled meetings.
   
d. Upon termination of the committee’s responsibilities, a summary shall be kept as resource material.

B. **Types of Committees**
   
a. **Standing Committees** – address specific ongoing issues affecting the staff.
      
i. **Executive Committee**
         
1) Membership: Comprised of elected officers and Ex Officio members. Committee chairs may be invited to attend executive committee meetings.
2) The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a month prior to the regularly scheduled Staff Council meetings. The Chair or any member of the Executive Committee may call special meetings as necessary.

3) The Executive Committee shall hear reports from committees, discuss and make recommendations for Staff Council consideration and action and set agendas for Staff Council meetings.

4) The Executive Committee, along with the assistance of the Parliamentarian, will review and update the Staff Council Constitution and By-Laws when necessary and present to the Staff Council for approval. Once approved by the Staff Council, the Chair will present the changes to the President of the University for final approval.

5) Newly elected Executive Committee members shall meet and train with the current officer prior to transferring the responsibilities of that position. The training must be attended by the Chair and/or Chair-Elect.

ii. By-Laws Committee

1) The By-Laws Committee, chaired by the Parliamentarian, will write and submit any amendments and/or revisions of the by-laws to the Executive Committee.

2) Amendments to the by-laws may be adopted by a simple majority vote of voting members present at any scheduled meeting with prior notice via email of the proposed by-law changes.

3) The Elections Committee is to preside over the annual elections process for divisional representatives.
   a. The By-Laws Committee is responsible for establishing the Elections Committee consisting of the Chair of the By-Laws Committee, four other members of the By-Laws Committee, and the Staff Council Secretary.
   b. The Elections Committee shall establish and communicate procedures and deadlines for receipt of nominations for divisional representatives, shall investigate each of the nominees to determine whether he or she is willing and eligible to serve, and shall present the qualified nominees to the University for the purpose of election.

iii. Communications Committee

1) The Communications Committee is responsible for the Staff Council website and communications as needed to Staff Council representatives and employees across campus on behalf of Staff Council.

2) The Communications Committee communications are under final approval of the Staff Council Executive Committee.

iv. Fundraising and Scholarship Committee

1) This committee shall formulate, plan, and implement fundraising activities that provide financing for the Staff Council Scholarship Fund, as well as Council-approved initiatives.

2) The Committee will keep the Council updated regarding joint participation opportunities with the University and the community.

3) This committee supports staff employees by allocating financial support raised for use toward higher education.

4) The Committee publicizes the Shelley Merrick Textbook Scholarship, receives and evaluates applications, and make awards based upon advertised criteria.

v. Staff Outreach and Special Events Committee

1) The duties of the Staff Outreach and Special Events Committee will work to enhance staff interactions with the campus community by hosting campus events for the enrichment of the staff.

2) The Committee will also be responsible for developing collaborative projects for the Council that further campus outreach to the greater Georgia Southern community.
iii. **Staff Development Committee**
   1) The duties of the Staff Development Committee will be to promote training and advancement programs and other opportunities for professional and personal development.
   2) The Committee will address such issues as orientation/mentoring and basic skills development.
   3) The Committee will also create and foster events and programs to improve the morale of the staff members of Georgia Southern University.
   4) If needed, this committee should also conduct staff surveys, organize town hall meetings and submit recommendations to upper administration to increase awareness of staff concerns, needs, and attitudes. The Committee may implement plans to improve and provide opportunity for the enhancement of staff work environments and quality of life on campus (reference Section IIIV.A.b-c and IIIV.B.1.A.c.).

b. **Ad Hoc Committees** are appointed as needed to complete council business by the Chair with the approval of the Executive Committee.

i. **Nominating Committee**
   1) The Nominating Committee will be staffed by all members of the Executive Committee.
   2) The Nominating Committee shall establish and communicate procedures and deadlines for receipt of nominations for At-Large members, shall investigate each of the nominees to determine whether he or she is willing and qualified to serve, and shall present the qualified nominees to the University for the purpose of election.

ii. **Special Committees** – are constituted and terminated by Staff Council in order to consider matters of a current and temporary nature. This may include committees formed on campus by other governance groups requesting staff input and membership.

**Section IX: Meetings**

A. **Regular Meetings** - shall be held each month unless otherwise ordered by Staff Council.
   a. The order of business at regular meetings of Staff Council will be as follows:
      i. Welcome
      ii. Adoption of Agenda
      iii. Adoption of Minutes from previous meeting
      iv. Treasurer Report
      v. Committee Reports
      vi. Old Business
      vii. New Business
      viii. Updates from the President
      ix. Updates from Human Resources
      x. Announcements
      xi. Adjournment
   b. Any member of the university community is welcome to attend Staff Council meetings as an observer.
   c. Special meetings will be called by the Chair as necessary.
   d. The Executive Committee will prepare the agenda for each meeting.
   e. Only members of the Staff Council have voting privileges.
f. In the event of a long term leave of absence, an interim appointment of a Staff Council member will be selected. This interim appointment will have full voting privileges.

g. For those members not present at meetings to vote, voting via Georgia Southern email to the Chair will be allowed.

B. Attendance

a. All members are expected to attend the meetings held each month in the President’s Conference Room in the Marvin Pittman Administration Building, unless otherwise noted.

b. Members who are unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting shall notify the Chair and Secretary in writing in advance of the meeting.

c. Members who are absent without notice from two consecutive meetings will be reminded of their responsibilities to the Staff Council by the Chair.

d. Should a member not respond to their reminder notice, the Staff Council shall consider the non-attendance as a resignation and have the authority to appoint a replacement to serve out the remainder of the nonattending member’s appointment.

e. Any member needing to resign from the Staff Council must send his/her resignation to the Chair.

Section X: Voting

A. Voting will be conducted during meetings when a quorum is present. However, votes may be cast electronically in some cases as stipulated by the Staff Council. In such a case, a simple majority of representatives must post a vote electronically to constitute a quorum. Results of the vote will be according to majority of posts/responses. Voting results will be recorded in the meeting minutes and disclosed upon request.

Section XI: Parliamentary Authority

A. The parliamentary authority shall be Robert’s Rules of Order – Newly Revised.

Approved by President Marrero 6/17/20