

# CONSTITUTION

## THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST ALABAMA STAFF SENATE

### PREAMBLE

The University of West Alabama Staff Senate is established with the belief that individuals of the University have a devotion to the education of students and the advancement of truth and knowledge. It is intended that the Senate, with a unity of purpose, improves the understanding and cooperation of the administration, the faculty, and the staff in their endeavors to promote the objectives of the institution. The Senate believes that it should preserve and enhance the positions of the individual members of the University community, while encouraging them to feel a sense of personal responsibility and common involvement.

### ARTICLE I

#### NAME

The name of this organization shall be The University of West Alabama Staff Senate.

### ARTICLE II

The University Staff Senate is advisory to the President and shall be concerned with keeping the University staff informed and involved in the University community, particularly in the following areas:

1. University publications: the catalog, calendar, and faculty/staff handbook
2. Professional growth of the staff
3. Membership on University committees
4. Dissemination of information about University financial affairs and physical facilities
5. Improve student-faculty-administration-staff relations
6. Improve the staff's knowledge of benefits, retirement, leave, and all policies of the University

### ARTICLE III

#### ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The University Staff Senate is an organization representing all full-time non-academic employees of The University of West Alabama established by the consent of the President of the University.

Section 2. Composition. The Staff Senate shall consist of elected Representatives from each non-academic division, as follows, where “O” stand for “odd year elections” and “E” stands for “even year elections”:

Athletics	O
Financial Affairs	E
Student Affairs	O
Secretaries	E
Physical Plant	O
Academic Affairs	E
Division of Economic and Workforce Development	O
Presidential Support Offices	E

Composition: The Staff Senate shall consist of elected Representatives from each non-academic division or unit as well as one member from the Faculty Senate as an ex-officio member. Representatives shall be apportioned among the non-academic divisions or units according to their respective numbers. Each division or unit having 25 or less members at the time of elections will elect one Representative and one alternate. Each division or unit having 26 to 50 members at the time of elections will elect two Representatives and two alternates. Each division or unit having more than 50 to 75 members at the time of elections will elect three Representatives and three alternates. Each division or unit with more than 75 members at the time of elections will elect four Representatives and four alternates.

If a division or unit fails to elect all Representatives for their area, the Staff Senate President shall appoint a staff member from that area to fill the vacant position on the Staff Senate.

If at any time any of the above departments are changed to be under the administration of another department, the Staff Senate shall automatically revise its constitution to adhere to the new department composition.

Section 3. Representatives. The election of each Representative shall be conducted by each unit, as stated above, with results reported to the Secretary of the Senate between April 1 and April 30. One-half of the Representatives will be elected in even-numbered years. The Representatives’ terms of office shall be two years from August 1 through July 31. The Representative must be a full-time non-academic employee of the University and must have been employed for at least one calendar year prior to his/her election. No Representative shall serve more than two consecutive terms unless no one else in his/her department or area can fill this position. If a Representative is absent from three Senate meetings per term, his/her name shall be removed from the Senate roll and his/her unit notified by the Secretary that its Representative position is vacant. An elected Representative may be granted a leave of absence by the Executive Committee, in which case his/her name remains on the Senate roll and he/she shall resume his/her duties at the end of the period of absence. Should a Representative position become vacant for any reason the first alternate becomes the official

Representative for that unit. The second alternate becomes the first alternate. An election will be held within that unit to elect a second alternate, if further alternates are needed.

Section 4. Alternates. Each unit having an elected Representative shall make arrangements for one of its alternates to attend for its Representatives at any Senate meeting the elected Representative is unable to attend. Absences of an elected Representative covered by an alternate still count as an absence as far as the elected Representative's continuation on the Senate roll is concerned. An ex-officio member not able to attend may send an alternate by notifying the President of the Senate. During any meeting, the alternate shall have all rights and privileges of the Representative he/she is replacing. No person can be an alternate for more than one Representative at any meeting and no Representative of the Senate can serve as alternate for another Representative.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **OFFICERS**

Section 1. Senate Officers. The officers of the Senate shall be the President, Vice President, and Secretary.

Section 2. Election of Officers. The officers shall be elected by a special session of the new Senate chaired by the outgoing President during the month of May of odd numbered years.

a) Vice President (President-Elect) and Secretary. The officers may be elected from the Staff Senate Representatives. The unit which he/she represents will replace the Representative according to Article III, Section 3. No officer shall have a vote, except in the case of a tie and then only the presiding officer shall cast a deciding vote.

b) In the event an officer of the Staff Senate is not able to fulfill his/her duties for the duration of his/her term, and resigns from that position, such vacancy will be filled at a special session of the Senate, with nominations being taken from the floor of the Representatives to be voted on by secret ballot. All nominees must be current Staff Senate officers or Representatives.

c) The consent of all candidates must be obtained prior to their nomination.

d) The new Senate members shall cast anonymous ballots for each office, and the names of the new officers shall be communicated to the University community by the outgoing President.

Section 3. Duties of Officers

a) President. The President shall preside over all meetings of the Senate. He/she shall be responsible for the agenda for each meeting, in accordance with the by-laws. He/she shall send the agenda to each member of the University Staff Senate at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. He/she shall serve as chairperson of the Executive Committee and as an ex-officio member of all Senate committees.

b) Vice President. The Vice President shall act for the President in his/her absence. The Vice President shall also have the title, President-Elect of the Staff Senate. The President-elect shall succeed the President at the end of his/her term.

c) Secretary. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of each Senate meeting. He/she shall maintain the official roll of the Staff Senate and distribute Senate notices and materials, as directed by the President. He/she shall maintain the permanent files of the Senate, which he/she shall turn over to his/her successor.

**ARTICLE V**

**COMMITTEES**

Section 1. Standing Committees. The standing committees established by the Staff Senate shall be the Executive Committee; the Policy and Procedure Committee; and the Faculty/Staff Liaison Committee.

Section 2. Other Committees. The Senate may form any other committees necessary, either standing or ad-hoc. Membership of any special committees created by the Senate shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Committee Procedures. All Senate committees shall keep minutes and make quarterly reports to the Senate. Committees may be called before the Senate for review purposes.

Section 4. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President of the Senate who will serve as chairperson, the Vice President, the immediate past President, and the Secretary. This Committee shall serve as the Committee on Committees. All questions concerning Senate procedures shall be referred to this Committee, and it shall recommend to the Senate the disposition to be made of any disputes concerning the operation of the Senate. The Executive Committee shall ensure that unit Representatives are duly elected, and that no unit of the University is denied representation, to which it is entitled under these Articles. It shall conduct the election of committee members; and vacancies on any Senate committee will be filled by the Executive Committee. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to maintain all records of the Senate (i.e. minutes, correspondence, resolutions, recommendations, etc.), and to pass these documents to the next Executive Committee following elections, as required by these Articles.

Section 5. Policy and Procedure Committee. This committee shall consist of the Vice President of the Senate, as chairperson, and four members from the Senate membership appointed by the Executive Committee. The committee shall make recommendations concerning policies and all related procedures.

Section 6. Faculty/Staff Liaison Committee. This committee shall be University-wide in nature, with its membership composed of four members from the Faculty Senate and four members from the Staff Senate appointed by the Staff Senate Executive Committee. The committee shall be chaired by the President of each Senate, serving in alternating years. The committee shall be a means of communication and coordination between the two Senate bodies. It shall regularly review the minutes of both bodies and coordinate visits, upon invitation, of Representatives from one body to the other to deal with issues pertaining to the University as a whole. This committee will be in charge of activities and policy recommendations that will help to raise morale and promote unity between the two bodies.

## **ARTICLE VI**

Section 1. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the Senate. Alternates shall be counted toward filling a quorum.

Section 2. Title of Positions. When a title of a University unit or position referred to in these Articles is changed, the corresponding changes in these articles shall be performed unless an objection is made by the Executive Committee or by the President of the University.

Section 3. Amendments. These Articles may be amended by two-thirds of those staff voting upon instruction of the Senate and approval of the President of the University.

Section 4. Ratification. This constitution shall become effective, after the passage of these Articles, by a majority of the full-time staff voting and the approval of the President. The University of West Alabama Staff Senate herein created, together with the corresponding University of West Alabama Faculty Senate, shall supersede the former Livingston University Senate.

Section 5. Referendum. The staff of The University of West Alabama may review decisions made by the University Staff Senate. A petition signed by twenty percent of the staff may be presented to the President of the University, with notice to the President of the Staff Senate. The vote of the Senate shall be submitted to the staff at a meeting called for that purpose within twenty academic days after the time of the Senate vote.

Section 6. First Senate. The first University Staff Senate of The University of West Alabama may be established by elections held on the unit level and coordinated by the staff Representatives of the former University Senate. Notice shall be sent to the President of the University of the newly elected Representatives. A caucus of the new Representatives shall be held two weeks from the President's announcement where officers shall be chosen by the first University Staff Senate. Hereafter, elections will conform to these Articles.

10/11/97

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