

Staff Senate Bylaws

Contents

Section	Page
1 Name & Authority	2
2 Mission, Values, & Purposes.....	3
3 Senate Structure & Organization	4
4 Senator Responsibilities	8
5 Officers	11
6 Senate Committees.....	14
7 University-wide Committees & Ad Hoc Group Membership.....	16
8 Senate Meetings	17
9 Amendments, Supplements, Addenda, & Codes.....	18

Adopted October 11, 2023

1 Name & Authority

Originally established by the Vice Chancellor for Business & Financial Affairs on September 13, 1978, the Staff Senate's precursor (the Staff Advisory Council) was created to represent staff (defined as non-faculty, non-student employees).

The Staff Advisory Council voted on October 11, 2023 to convert the long-standing advisory group into a Staff Senate body, and on September 22, 2023 the Chancellor approved this change and these bylaws. Accordingly, the Staff Senate joins with other University of Denver shared governance bodies (the Faculty Senate and Student Governments) in representing each constituency of the University.

The Staff Senate's authority and existence is primarily self-governing and partners with other governing bodies and administrative offices to accomplish its purposes as given below. The Staff Senate is not intended to replace, alter, or interfere with the legal relationship between the University and the union that represents certain staff, or the employees represented by the union.

2 Mission, Values, & Purposes

2.1 Mission

As a participant in DU's shared governance, the DU Staff Senate will create connections, support an equitable and vibrant work environment, and amplify staff voices through policy involvement and advocacy action.

2.2 Values

The DU Staff Senate is guided by the following values:

- **Diversity & Inclusion:** representing all staff voices within DU shared governance.
- **Equity:** striving to ensure staff have opportunities for resources and participation while centering the needs of those historically excluded from resources and participation.
- **Transparency:** maintaining open communication between the staff community and DU leadership.

2.3 Purposes

The DU Staff Senate serves staff in the following ways:

- **Advocacy:** amplify staff voices to University leadership and act for staff advancement and equity.
- **Well-Being:** help staff find integration between career goals, life goals (finding meaning), and commitments outside of work.
- **Appreciation & Recognition:** identify and support ways to recognize staff value and accomplishments.
- **Connection:** build interdisciplinary networks and structures for collaboration between staff, create personal development opportunities, and build and maintain connections with faculty, students, alumni, and other groups.

3 Senate Structure & Organization

3.1 Senator & Participant Roles

The Staff Senate has three roles for voting senators (area, at-large, and affinity group senators) and three roles for nonvoting participants (liaisons, special appointments, and senators emeriti). For purposes of Senate-wide voting, each senator shall have one vote and a quorum is defined as a majority of voting members.

3.1.1 Voting Senator Eligibility

3.1.1.1 All University of Denver employees with a primary affiliation of staff that have been employed for 6 months or more are eligible for membership in the Staff Senate. Employees whose current primary affiliation with DU is faculty are not eligible. Similarly, employees whose current primary affiliation with DU is student are also not eligible.

3.1.1.2 Staff who are full-time, part-time, benefitted, or non-benefitted, and considered permanent (not temporary), are eligible to participate.

3.1.1.3 Staff who are under a performance plan or some other form of probationary measure are not eligible to be nominated and will be removed from service as a senator if already in office (see also Dismissals, section 4.4.2).

3.1.2 Area Senators (voting)

3.1.2.1 Each area of the University staff (see the Elections Code for area specifics) shall have three senators, elected in a rotating cycle (see section 3.2.2).

3.1.2.2 Area senators shall serve two-year terms.

3.1.2.3 Area senators may serve no more than two consecutive two-year terms. After abstaining for at least one election cycle, area senators are eligible to run again.

3.1.2.4 In the event of an area falling below three area senators, the Staff Senate may vote by majority to hold a special election to reseal a new senator. In the case of a special election, the new senator serves the rest of the vacated position's term, and the position is then up for election on its normal cycle.

3.1.3 At-large Senators (voting)

3.1.3.1 At least six at-large senators are selected by the entire staff body, elected in a rotating cycle.

3.1.3.2 At-large senators shall serve two-year terms.

3.1.3.3 At-large senators may serve no more than two consecutive two-year terms. After abstaining for at least one election cycle, at-large senators are eligible to run again.

- 3.1.3.4 If the number of at-large senators should fall below six, the next regular election will replace both term-cycling at-large senators as well as any vacant positions.
- 3.1.3.5 *In certain circumstances*, more than six at-large senators may be actively serving, including: when the Staff Senate votes to convert an area senator to an at-large role in the event of a change to an area's composition; when an area senator moves to another division outside their current area; or under other circumstances with the approval of a majority of the Staff Senate. For special at-large appointments, term limits and election cycles still apply and special at-large senators will rotate out of Staff Senate at the end of the cycle.

3.1.4 Affinity Group Senators (voting)

- 3.1.4.1 Each University Affinity Group (as defined by the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) or its successor offices) shall be entitled to one Affinity Group (AG) senate seat for a person of their choice. Deliberations on who represents these groups will be handled internally by each group.
- 3.1.4.2 Staff Senate may decide by a majority vote to incorporate representatives from other Affinity Groups outside of the Division of DEI defined groups.
- 3.1.4.3 There is no limit placed by Staff Senate on the amount of time that an AG senator may serve, nor are AG senators subject to the typical term cycles or limits placed on the senators above. AG senators serve at the pleasure of their Affinity Group and may be recalled by the group.

3.1.5 Liaisons (non-voting)

The following individuals or their representatives (exceptions noted) are liaison roles within Staff Senate. Liaisons may participate in all normal business, but do not have a voting seat. The goal of liaison participation in Staff Senate is to enhance and allow for regular communication and collaboration between the Staff Senate and other shared governance bodies. Except for the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, deliberations on who represents these groups will be handled internally by each group.

- 3.1.5.1 Vice Chancellor for Human Resources (or successor role with similar title(s); may not be permanently delegated to a subordinate representative, although someone else may represent the Office of Human Resources and Inclusive Community on a temporary basis)
- 3.1.5.2 Faculty Senate (president or their representative)
- 3.1.5.3 Undergraduate Student Government (president or their representative)
- 3.1.5.4 Graduate Student Government (president or their representative)

3.1.6 Special Appointments (non-voting)

The Staff Senate may appoint special participants from time to time to serve on individual committees (by a vote of the Executive Committee or the relevant committee) or the Senate as a whole (by vote of Executive Committee). Participants may include, but are not limited to, subject matter experts, consultants, liaisons from temporary task forces centered elsewhere in the University, or individuals identified for other purposes.

3.1.7 Senators Emeriti (non-voting)

The Staff Senate may appoint by majority vote senators emeriti to participate in continued advisory roles to the body or to honor exemplary service. Senators emeriti may be invited to attend meetings, participate on committees, and otherwise join in Senate business as appropriate. Senators emeriti may be removed by majority vote of the Staff Senate.

3.2 Area Representation Summary and Elections Strategies

Though the details of the elections process for area senators are covered in the Elections Code, there are some guidelines to consider relative to apportionment strategy and execution.

3.2.1 When apportioning areas, the following values should be considered (roughly in the order given):

- 3.2.1.1 Consistency (each division/unit being in the same area from year to year as possible).
- 3.2.1.2 Size of unit by headcount being matched to other similarly sized units within each area.
- 3.2.1.3 Constituency size (number of staff) for each area being within 10% of other areas.
- 3.2.1.4 As a tiebreaker: similarity of function within each area.

3.2.2 Rotating Election Cycles

- 3.2.2.1 Each area will have either one or two seats up for vote during each election cycle. Overall, half of the Senate's seats should be voted on during each election. During Cycle A, Area 1 might have 2 seats up for election and Area 2 might have 1 seat open. The following year (a Cycle B election), the reverse would be true with Area 1 having 1 seat open and Area 2 having 2 seats open. See the Elections Code for additional details.

3.3 Budget, Reporting, & Planning

3.3.1 Budgeting

- 3.3.1.1 In coordination with Human Resources and Inclusive Community (which is where the Staff Senate budget resides), the Executive Committee creates a proposed budget total for each fiscal year, which is approved by the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources.
- 3.3.1.2 After a Senate majority vote to approve how the budget is spent, the budget is submitted to HRIC and then implemented by Staff Senate.
- 3.3.1.3 Primary responsibility for the budget's creation, implementation, and tracking falls to the Staff Senate treasurer.
- 3.3.1.4 At the conclusion of each fiscal year (alongside the University's fiscal year-end closing process), the treasurer shall provide a report of the Senate's financial activities.

3.3.2 Reporting & Planning

At the beginning of each Senate cycle and in coordination with the budgeting process above, the Executive Committee shall review or create a strategic document that outlines proposed plans and goals for the year. The document shall be approved by a majority vote of the Senate no later than September 1.

4 Senator Responsibilities

4.1 Conduct

- 4.1.1 Staff senator conduct is expected to follow the guidelines and rules in the Staff Senator Code of Conduct, and each senator shall sign the code when their term starts.
- 4.1.2 Recognition and support of DU's diverse staff body in all its forms is a key value of the Staff Senate (see also section 2). The Staff Senate operates in consistency with University policies on non-discrimination and harassment.

4.2 Attendance & Participation

- 4.2.1.1 Voting senators of all types are expected to regularly attend and participate in monthly Staff Senate meetings. In addition, senators shall attend and participate on at least one committee. Executive Committee members will generally participate in at least one additional committee beyond the Executive group.
- 4.2.1.2 Senators should make every effort to attend all meetings but *must* meet the required attendance guidelines for scheduled monthly and committee meetings to retain their seat (see section 4.4.2, Dismissals).
- 4.2.1.3 Non-voting roles (liaisons, special appointments, emeritus) should consult with their appropriate committees or contacts on best practices for attendance and participation.
- 4.2.1.4 All senators are encouraged to consider additional and optional service on hiring or policy committees as these opportunities arise in the larger University context, particularly when a senator's area of expertise or interest would be solicited (see section 7).

4.3 Senator Responsibilities & Expectations

4.3.1 Area Senators (to be coordinated between each area's three senators)

- 4.3.1.1 Regularly communicate needs, feedback, and concerns of staff constituency to the Senate.
- 4.3.1.2 Establish regular communication with staff constituents to share information and solicit feedback based on the preferences of their area (e.g. town halls, staff meetings, email, Teams, videos).
- 4.3.1.3 Inform existing and new staff constituents of role as a senator and the resources and assistance that are available through Staff Senate.
- 4.3.1.4 Support and participate in Staff Senate events.
- 4.3.1.5 Hold regular office hours for constituents, at least twice per month.

4.3.2 At-large Senators

- 4.3.2.1 Regularly communicate needs, feedback, and concerns arising out of staff interactions to the Senate.
- 4.3.2.2 Hold regular office hours at least twice per month.
- 4.3.2.3 Support and participate in Staff Senate events.
- 4.3.2.4 Temporarily fill in as area senator until seat is filled, if needed (based on request of Executive Committee).
- 4.3.2.5 Conduct new senator orientation and provide mentoring for all senators.
- 4.3.2.6 Participate in DU New Hire Orientation to introduce new employees to Staff Senate. Rotate this responsibility with other at-large senators.
- 4.3.2.7 Meet as a group with other at-large senators as needed to coordinate responsibilities.
- 4.3.2.8 Organize town halls across areas when needed.

4.3.3 Affinity Group Senators

- 4.3.3.1 Note and discuss ways for Staff Senate and Affinity Groups to find common ground and interests to advocate for staff across the University and bring ideas and voices to the broader Staff Senate conversation as appropriate.
- 4.3.3.2 Periodically meet as a group to work through common interests, promote the needs and priorities that Affinity Groups have, and bring recommendations to the Senate to advance those priorities or address concerns.

4.4 Resignations & Dismissals

These guidelines apply only to voting roles.

4.4.1 Resignations

- 4.4.1.1 Staff Senators are asked to provide at least two, but preferably four weeks' notice prior to resignation when practicable.
- 4.4.1.2 Resignation notices should be directed to the Executive Committee, with copies to the chair(s) of any other committee(s) on which the senator is serving. Area senators should also notify the other senators in their area as soon as practicable.
- 4.4.1.3 Resigning area senators are advised to work with the Executive Committee on a message to their constituents as appropriate.

4.4.2 Dismissals

- 4.4.2.1 **Dismissal through absence:** Senators who have more than two unexcused absences from regularly scheduled meetings, either consecutively or over the course of the annual service year, may be dismissed by default through a majority vote by the Executive Committee.

Absences will be communicated by the senator to the Executive Committee in advance (when practicable) of the meeting. Exceptions may be made in situations where health, protected leave, or other emergency causes are considered (see Remediation below, section 4.4.2.4).

4.4.2.2 **Dismissal for cause:** Senators may be unseated through a two-thirds vote of a meeting of the Staff Senate if there is sufficient cause (see Remediation below, section 4.4.2.4). In addition, an Area's staff constituency may recall a senator through a local vote. The recall effort must gather signatures equal to one-fourth of the staff headcount in the area, after which a vote will be organized by the Staff Senate. A majority vote shall recall the senator. Senators dismissed for cause are ineligible to serve as a senator in subsequent terms.

4.4.2.3 **Dismissal for job performance:** Current senators placed on a performance plan or probationary measure for their position at the University will be dismissed from Staff Senate after consultation with Human Resources and Inclusive Community. Upon successful resolution of the probation or performance plan, they may seek to be elected again.

4.4.2.4 **Remediation:** If a concern is raised that may initiate the process of dismissal for cause or dismissal through absence above, an attempt may be made by the President and Executive Committee to remediate the senator to ensure that the code of conduct and responsibilities in this document are understood and a reasonable chance is given for the senator to meet the expectations. A probationary period may be assigned to meet attendance requirements, or follow-up with constituents may be sought to ensure that other responsibilities are fulfilled. The exact form of remediation depends on the individual situation and the Executive Committee is empowered to work flexibly with the senator to find resolution where practicable.

4.4.2.5 **Exceptions:** Exceptions to the rules for dismissal above may be approved by a majority vote of the Senate on a case-by-case basis.

5 Officers

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Officers of the Staff Senate shall be a president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary. Officers will serve one-year terms, re-elected each year. This group constitutes the Executive Committee.
- 5.1.2 Each Senate committee shall have at least one ex officio Executive Committee member.
- 5.1.3 For topics that the Executive Committee is voting on, in the event of a tie, the vote shall proceed to the full Senate.
- 5.1.4 Any officer may be removed from their executive office through a two-thirds vote at a meeting of the Staff Senate. Removal from their executive office does not remove them from their senate seat (see 4.4.2).
- 5.1.5 The Executive Committee maintains and supports the DEI mission of Staff Senate, ensuring that this mindset is woven throughout the Senate's activities.

5.2 Officer Elections

- 5.2.1 The officers shall be elected by majority vote of the Senate annually or as vacancies occur. If the presidency is vacated, the vice president shall serve the remainder of the term.
- 5.2.2 Only voting senators are eligible to serve as officers.
- 5.2.3 Voting will be by written or electronic ballot and occur at the first business meeting after a general Staff Senate election or in the case of vacancies, at the next regular Senate meeting.

5.3 Officer Responsibilities

5.3.1 President Responsibilities

- 5.3.1.1 Prepare an agenda for and preside at each meeting.
- 5.3.1.2 Approve all communications regarding the Senate or its activities.
- 5.3.1.3 Designate a senator to represent the Senate in University-wide settings.
- 5.3.1.4 Have primary responsibility for all fiscal matters of the Senate in partnership with the Executive Committee.
- 5.3.1.5 Serve on University-wide groups as defined in Section 7, University-wide Committees, in coordination with the Executive Committee, to whom some of these responsibilities may be delegated.
- 5.3.1.6 Delegate duties to Senate members as appropriate.
- 5.3.1.7 Call special meetings after notifying members at least 48 hours in advance.

5.3.1.8 Serve as a supporting advisor to the incoming president to ensure a smooth transition between administrations for up to two months during the election transition.

5.3.2 Vice President Responsibilities

5.3.2.1 In the absence of the President, preside at Senate meetings with the powers and prerogatives of the President.

5.3.2.2 Have primary responsibility for production of an annual report of the Senate activity per (section 3.3, Budget, Reporting, and Planning), in partnership with the Executive Committee, for the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources.

5.3.2.3 In partnership with the Executive Committee, annually review Senate Bylaws for currency and accuracy, and propose amendments to the Bylaws arising from this review.

5.3.2.4 Serve on University-wide groups as outlined in section 7, University-wide Committees, in coordination with Executive Committee.

5.3.2.5 Serve as a supporting advisor to the incoming vice president to ensure a smooth transition between administrations for up to two months during the election transition.

5.3.2.6 Periodically, and at least once per quarter, check-in with chairs regarding leadership and administration of committee work.

5.3.2.7 Assist the President with other duties as required.

5.3.3 Treasurer Responsibilities

5.3.3.1 Keep accurate records of all expenditures, including p-card expenses.

5.3.3.2 Present quarterly expense reports to the Executive Committee and Senate.

5.3.3.3 Serve on University-wide groups as outlined in section 7, University-wide Committees, in coordination with Executive Committee.

5.3.3.4 Work with the Executive Committee and HRIC Business Officer to create the annual Senate budget per section 3.3, Budget, Reporting, and Planning.

5.3.3.5 Serve as a supporting advisor to the incoming treasurer to ensure a smooth transition between administrations for up to two months during the election transition.

5.3.4 Secretary

5.3.4.1 Record the minutes of all regular and special Senate meetings. Secure an alternate person to record minutes for any official Senate meeting in the event of the inability to attend a meeting.

5.3.4.2 Maintain accessible archive of minutes.

5.3.4.3 Distribute copies of the minutes within one week following meetings.

5.3.4.4 Keep a record of attendance of Senators, and keep the President informed of repeated absences.

- 5.3.4.5 Schedule and coordinate setup for each Senate meeting, including meal arrangements, space reservations, and virtual and/or hybrid arrangements.
- 5.3.4.6 Serve on University-wide groups as outlined in section 7, University-wide Committees, in coordination with Executive Committee.
- 5.3.4.7 Maintain a roster of senators, the divisions/departments they represent, their Senate area, term start and end dates, and their committee membership(s).
- 5.3.4.8 Serve as a supporting advisor to the incoming secretary to ensure a smooth transition between administrations for up to two months during the election transition.

6 Senate Committees

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The formation of a committee shall be approved by a majority vote of the Staff Senate, and the standing committee list below is not intended to be exhaustive. Committees shall act as forums for study and consideration of issues and activities and shall make recommendations to the Staff Senate. All proposals and recommendations of committees must be made to the Staff Senate at the monthly meeting and approved by majority vote.

6.1.2 Members of a committee may consist of senate roles, liaisons, and special appointees. Every voting senator is required to serve on at least one committee per year. Meetings of the standing committees shall be called upon the request of the chair(s) of the committee, the President of Staff Senate, or a majority of the members of the committee. Committees should have a regularly scheduled meeting at least once per month.

6.1.3 Each committee shall have up to two (co-)chairs who will be responsible for the budgetary, administrative, and project coordination of all committee functions. The chair(s) maintain(s) and supports the DEI mission of Staff Senate, ensuring that this mindset is woven throughout their committee's activities. The chair(s) will also preside over all committee meetings and be responsible for the general reporting of committee activities to the Staff Senate at the monthly Senate meeting. The chair(s) shall be elected by the committee members or appointed by the Executive Committee. The chair(s) may also be required to attend Executive Committee meetings as requested by the Executive Committee.

6.1.4 All committees may submit a yearly budget of planned expenses to the Executive Committee for approval. Once approved, they are then bound by that budget unless granted approval by vote of the Executive Committee. Expenditures under \$500 that are included in a committee's Senate-approved budget may be made following approval by a majority vote of the committee and approval by the Senate President. Expenditures over \$500 shall require a majority vote of the Staff Senate before being made.

6.2 Standing Committees

In addition to the Executive Committee, Staff Senate shall have the following standing committees:

6.2.1 Communications Committee

The Communications committee maintains the Staff Senate website, prepares and sends out the quarterly Staff Senate newsletter, works with committees to create marketing and communication materials, and maintains social media. Materials being sent to all University staff must be reviewed and approved by the Senate president.

6.2.2 Events and Engagement Committee

The Events and Engagement Committee plans, organizes, and promotes community events, building a sense of community amongst all employees at the University. The committee may organize subcommittees for specific events like Staff Awards, Employee Picnic, etc.

6.2.3 Elections Committee

The Elections Committee is responsible for conducting Staff Senate elections (both regular and special elections), including soliciting self-nominations and holding a University-wide election for nominated staff to become senators. The committee shall follow the guidelines established in the Elections Code and shall submit recommendations for changes to the code to the Senate for consideration.

6.2.4 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has authority to hold special meetings and to act on behalf of the Staff Senate when the majority of the Executive Committee determines that time does not permit a full meeting of the Senate. The Executive Committee also approves appointments to subcommittees made by the President, and maintains and updates policies, procedures, and any other necessary information to operate the Staff Senate. See also section 5, Officers.

6.2.5 University Budget, Advocacy, & Policy Committee

The Budget, Advocacy, and Policy Committee addresses policy issues and advocacy initiatives within the University. This committee coordinates solutions, drafts proposals, and presents recommendations on staff well-being and other topics as appropriate.

6.2.6 Ad Hoc Committees & Subcommittees

Ad hoc committees and subcommittees of standing committees may be formed as deemed appropriate by majority vote of the Staff Senate.

7 University-wide Committees & Ad Hoc Group Membership

7.1 Temporary Assignments

From time to time, senators are invited to serve on various University-wide groups, including administrative hiring committees, policy committees, or other bodies. As these opportunities arise, the Executive Committee will present them to senators or may, in the alternative, suggest a specific senator.

7.2 Permanent Assignments

The Staff Senate holds permanent seats on the following groups, as approved by those bodies where appropriate:

- 7.2.1 University Council (Staff Senate President only)
- 7.2.2 University Budget Advisory Committee
- 7.2.3 Policy Advisory Committee
- 7.2.4 Benefits Committee (pending formation)

7.3 Staff Senate President's Meetings

The Senate president has standing meetings with the Chancellor (quarterly) and the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources (monthly). Regular contact or meetings with other shared governance partners (presidents of Faculty Senate and Student Governments) are strongly encouraged. Other standing meetings may be added as appropriate.

8 Senate Meetings

8.1 Frequency

Meetings shall be held on a monthly basis with notice given to the DU community at least 5 business days in advance. If the President or Vice President determines that a scheduled meeting is not required or may not be conveniently held when scheduled, it may be canceled or rescheduled with input from the Executive Committee.

8.2 Special Sessions

Special meetings may be called with 48 hours' notice by the President, by majority of the Executive Committee, a majority of Senators, or at the request of the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, the Provost, or the Chancellor.

8.3 Open Meetings

Senate meetings are open to all DU staff, faculty, students, and alumni. Exceptions may be made for Executive Committee closed sessions when sensitive topics warrant.

8.4 Agendas

Senate meetings shall proceed from an agenda, and staff (senators or non-senators) wishing to add additional items for consideration on the agenda must inform the President in advance (not less than 48 hours' notice) of the meeting.

9 Amendments, Supplements, Addenda, & Codes

Amendments and revisions to the Senate Bylaws and any attached amendments, supplements, addenda, or codes must be approved by a majority vote of senators. Senators will have a minimum of two weeks to review the proposed revisions before voting.

After approval by a majority vote of the Senate, changes to these Bylaws are reviewed and approved by the Chancellor or their designee.