



# VCU Staff Senate

## Bylaws of the VCU Staff Senate

### Article I - Duties of Officers and Senators

A. The following Executive Committee positions are elected:

1. The President shall:
  - a. Preside over the Executive Committee
  - b. Call special meetings as necessary;
  - c. Appoint officers in the event no one runs for a particular office;
  - d. Appoint chairs of the standing committees in the event one has not been designated;
  - e. Appoint a member of the Executive Committee to complete the term of an officer who is unable to complete his/her term of office;
  - f. Make appointment recommendations to the University President for the Board of Visitors' representative, University Council members, and University Committees, as appropriate;
  - g. Establish ad hoc committees as approved by the Executive Committee;
  - h. Authorize disbursement of funds in conjunction with the Operations Manager and Administrative Liaison;
  - i. Serve as an advisor to and as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee for one year following the completion of his/her term as President; and perform other such duties associated with this office.
  
2. The Vice-President/President-Elect shall:
  - a. Preside at all regular and special meetings of the VCU Staff Senate;
  - b. Serve as the principal assistant to the President;
  - c. Complete any term vacated by the President, to include assuming the office of the President for the following term and appointing a member of the Executive Committee to fulfill the Vice President/President-Elect role until the end of the office year or opting to assign a dual role of Vice President/President-Elect and current Executive Committee position to an Executive Committee member;
  - d. Coordinate any proposed contacts with the State Legislature through the Office of the Vice President for Government Relations;
  - e. Review minutes from various University Committees for issues of interest prior to forwarding them to the Recording Secretary and, as appropriate, for dissemination to VCU Staff Senate;
  - f. Scheduling meeting space for Staff Senate and Executive Committee meetings; and

g. Perform other such duties associated with this office.

3. The Senate Chair Shall:

- a. Prepare agenda for the distribution to the Staff Senators and invited guests/speakers;
- b. Prepare, maintain and distribute minutes of all VCU Staff Senate meetings (general session and Executive Committee) as permanent records, as well as maintain copies of standing committee minutes and annual reports as permanent records;
- c. Maintain records of the VCU Staff Senate, including:
  - Mailing lists (electronic and campus addresses);
  - Lists of Senators with terms of office and committee membership; and Lists of individuals who have expressed an interest in serving on the Senate.
- d. Conduct a roll call of members and record attendance in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures;
- e. Advise the Staff Senate President of attendance records and if a quorum is present at the beginning of each meeting;
- f. Coordinate VCU Staff Senate elections and nominations processes, to include composing a list of nominations for VCU Staff Senate officers;
- g. Ensure that VCU Staff Senate Constitution and Bylaws are followed for the nomination and election of Staff Senators, Officers, and representatives to the University Council and University Committees; and
- h. Perform other such duties associated with this office.

4. The Operations Manager shall:

- a. Maintain all fiscal records of the VCU Staff Senate;
- b. Prepare an annual budget for approval by the Executive Committee;
- c. Submit *quarterly* financial reports to the Executive Committee and the Staff Senate and an *annual* financial report to the Staff Senate at the regular meeting in May;
- d. Approve, in conjunction with the President and Administrative Liaison, all disbursements after fund allocation has been appropriated by the Executive Committee
- e. Evaluate proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the VCU Staff Senate.
- f. Revise, update, interpret, make and submit recommendations as needed to the VCU Staff Senate Constitution and Bylaws.
- g. Submit recommendations in accordance with Article 1.10 (Amendments) of the Constitution.

B. The following Executive Committee Positions are appointed:

1. The Communications Officer shall:

- a. Draft official Staff Senate messaging.
- b. Use communications tools to keep Staff Senators up-to-date on university events, initiatives and career development

- opportunities.
  - c. Contribute to Executive Committee meetings.
  - d. Assist with the management of the Staff Senate email account.
2. The Technology Officer shall:
- a. Maintain Staff Senate webpage(s) and content updates upon request.
  - b. Provide troubleshooting and technical support for the Staff Senate Meetings (in-person and virtually).
  - c. Provide general IT guidance or technical assistance to Staff Senate, Staff Senate Committees, etc.
  - d. Manage permissions and access to Staff Senate online collaboration resources (email account, shared drives, groups, etc.).
- C. The following Senate positions are elected:
1. Staff Senators shall:
- a. Vote on matters brought before the VCU Staff Senate;
  - b. Serve on at least one standing or ad hoc committee;
  - c. Serve on University Council and University Committees as appointed;
  - d. Serve at the direction of the VCU Staff Senate.
  - e. Report to the constituents of their respective areas on issues brought before the VCU Staff Senate;
  - f. Seek opinions from the constituents of their respective areas on pertinent matters concerning the University and/or VCU Staff Senate;
  - g. Work actively toward the goal of improving the University and the working conditions for its staff members; and
  - h. Be free to express personal opinions to constituents and other members of the University community; however, members must clearly state that these opinions are their own and differentiate these views from Senate positions and actions when differences exist.
  - i. Senate members shall not misrepresent any Senate action, position, or decision to the University community.

## **Article II- Attendance Policy**

- A. Staff Senators are expected to attend all Senate meetings.
- B. If a Staff Senator finds it necessary to be absent from a Senate meeting, or from any significant portion thereof, he/she should make the executive committee aware.
- C. If a Staff Senator is absent from four scheduled meetings in a twelve month period, the Executive Committee may consider dismissal from the Senate.
  - 1. An appeal to retain the seat may be filed in writing with the Executive Committee. Situations such as illness involving the Senator or his/her immediate family, including vacations, and unforeseen work requirements will be given due consideration.
- D. Standing and ad hoc committees may establish their own attendance standards.

### **Article III - Meta-Units**

- A. Meta-Units will serve as the districts from which Staff Senators shall be elected.
- B. Meta-Units are defined in Appendix A of these Bylaws.
- C. Meta-Units and their makeup shall be reviewed by the Elections Committee for viability and accurate representation no fewer than six months prior to each election cycle.
- D. The number of seats in each Meta-Unit will be the number of Classified Staff per meta-unit plus the number of University Academic Professionals per meta-unit, divided by 50, with no meta-unit sending fewer than 1 senator, regardless of size.
- E. The total number of seats in the Senate will be determined by the formula above in Article III item D before each election. This number is in addition to any seats added as per Article IV item G.
- F. VCU Health System Senators are not elected, do not have Meta-Units, and will be admitted as senators at the discretion of the executive committee. The number of VCU Health System Senators shall not exceed 50% of the total number of seats.
- G. Meta-Units may nominate as many candidates for Staff Senate as they choose.
- H. Should a Meta-unit nominate fewer candidates than they are allocated, those remaining seats will be given to eligible VCU employees at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

### **Article IV - Elections**

- A. Elections of Senators from the meta-units will utilize ranked-choice voting and will occur every three years.
- B. Senators at the end of their first three year term will have the option to renew their seat for one additional three-year term without engaging in the election process.
- C. Voters shall be composed of all full-time UAP & Classified staff, organized by meta-unit.
- D. Election and nomination periods and the length of those periods are set each election cycle by the executive committee with recommendations from the elections committee. However nominations and elections shall occur between Memorial Day and Labor Day of each election year.
- E. Seats unfilled during the elections process shall be filled by appointment from the executive committee.
- F. When a Senate seat becomes vacant mid-term, the executive committee shall appoint a Senator to fill the seat. The new Senator shall serve out the existing term. If a Senator transfers between meta-units, they shall continue to serve the remainder of their term.
- G. In reference to Article V item C, meta-units that have seats automatically renewed due to the election of executive leaders will be granted one additional seat in the next election.

### **Article V- Appointments & Nominations of Officers**

- A. The Senate Chair shall begin taking nominations for elected offices beginning in February. Only Senators with at least one year of service in the Senate are eligible for nomination to an Executive Committee Position. Permission must be

obtained from candidates before names are placed on the nomination ballot. Election of officers shall be held by secret ballot at the regular April meeting.

- B. A simple majority vote of membership, either in meeting or remotely (i.e. electronic ballot) shall be necessary to elect officers. In the event no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be removed from each successive ballot until one candidate receives a majority vote.
- C. All elected officers and newly appointed Staff Senators shall assume responsibilities at the end of the regular August meeting. In an election year, the elected officers' seats will be automatically renewed for an additional three year term and exempted from the elections process.
- D. Appointments to the University Council and University Committees shall be made in time to meet appropriate deadlines.

## **Article VI- Meetings**

- A. Regular meetings of the VCU Staff Senate shall be held during normal business hours on one of two set schedules: monthly, or bi-monthly with the option of emergency meetings in the 'off months. The schedule for each year will be established in the first meeting by vote of the new assembly. The Executive Committee shall address occasional conflicts, such as University holidays or inclement weather.
- B. The VCU Staff Senate shall invite the University President to meet with the VCU Staff Senate at least once each year.
- C. A quorum at all VCU Staff Senate or Staff Senate committee meetings shall be a simple majority of the membership present at the meeting.
- D. Votes conducted by the Senate and by Senate committees can only be conducted in the presence of a quorum.
- E. Meetings shall be open to University staff. However, anyone who is not a VCU Staff Senate member may not participate in discussions, unless recognized by the Staff Senate Vice- President, and he/she does not have any voting privileges.

## **Article VII- Committees**

- A. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee will be composed of elected officers, committee chairs, and any appointed senators, as required by the Executive Committee.
  - 1. Meets at least once a month. The Executive Committee meeting planned for any month that includes a regular VCU Staff Senate meeting must be scheduled for the week prior to the general meeting;
  - 2. Revises the regular meeting schedule of the VCU Staff Senate;

3. Acts on behalf of the VCU Staff Senate between regular meetings, with all such actions reported at the next VCU Staff Senate meeting;
4. Designs and implements the Standard Operating Procedures of the VCU Staff Senate;
5. Evaluates issues brought forth within the Senate and from other sources within the University and, according to Standard Operating Procedures, makes recommendations for VCU Staff Senate consideration;
6. Approves, by majority vote, initial composition and changes to the membership of standing committees made by the President;
7. Assists in interpreting the intent of the VCU Staff Senate Constitution and Bylaws;
8. Assists the Operations Manager in preparing the budget;
9. Coordinates, plans and executes the annual Career Development Conference.
10. Addresses Senators' attendance in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures;
11. Submits an annual report to the VCU Staff Senate at the regular June meeting;
12. Sets a definition of and determines when a Staff Senator is in good standing, and;
13. Performs other such duties as associated with this committee,

B. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees - These Committees perform a continuing function and remain in existence permanently or for a specified duration.

1. General Guidelines:
  - a. Members of standing committees or ad hoc committees must designate a chair or co-chairs by a simple majority vote. Ties will be broken by the Staff Senate President.
  - b. Membership on a standing committee shall not change during a fiscal year unless requested in writing by the Senator to the Senate Chair.
  - c. Each member of the VCU Staff Senate shall serve on at least one standing committee and/or ad hoc committee.
  - d. Minutes shall be kept for each standing committee meeting. Each standing committee shall complete the minute form detailing its activities and any pending matters each month.
  - e. Committee chairs shall submit an annual report to the Executive Committee at its June meeting.
  - f. The scope of the responsibilities of the standing committees shall be established by the VCU Staff Senate in accordance with the Bylaws.
  - g. Standing committees shall establish goals, objectives, and priorities. Members have authority to research, carry out activities necessary to perform their charges, prepare reports, and offer recommendations. Standing committee members may make motions at the regular monthly Senate meetings.
  - h. Standing committees may establish subcommittees to address specific issues as needed. Membership of subcommittees shall consist of

members of the respective standing committee. The chair of the respective standing committee shall appoint chairs of subcommittees.

- i. Standing committee chairs shall convene their committees at the beginning of each academic year and on an as-needed basis thereafter as determined by committee leadership.
- j. Each outgoing committee chair shall provide to the respective incoming committee chair appropriate information to facilitate continuity (e.g., charges, goals, unfinished business, research materials, and past and pending parliamentary motions).
- k. Each standing committee shall be established with a minimum of four members.

### C. Standing Committees

1. Awards and Recognition Committee shall
  - a. Works to promote the accomplishments of staff members across the university holding annual Staff Senate Awards for Excellence
  - b. Works with Staff Senate committees and VCU organizations to advertise and host Employee Appreciation Week.
2. Accessibility and Inclusion Working Group shall
  - a. Work with VCU ADA Office to recognize and address accessibility issues at the university
  - b. Work to clarify VCU ADA Office policy to the greater VCU community
  - a. Work to advance accessibility by partnering with decision and policy-makers, identify and address community-identified barriers, and broadly champion inclusivity with a focus on people with disabilities.
3. VCU Health System Committee shall
  - a. Work to strengthen the relationship between the staff, University, and VCU Health System
  - b. Work to increase transparency by collaborating with key stakeholders on decision making that impact VCU Health System team members
4. Shared Governance shall
  - a. update and maintain documents for Staff Senate governance, including bylaws and Constitution
  - b. Shall strengthen the relationship between the Senate and university leadership for the purposes of improved information flow and transparent decision-making
  - c. Shall hold the Elections Committee, which shall:

- Assist the executive committee with the execution of the Staff Senate Elections
- Evaluate, define, and update if necessary, the Meta-Units no sooner than six months before each election cycle.
- During the nomination period, contact meta-units to assist the nominations process if necessary.
- Work with meta-units to ensure awareness and participation in elections.
- Vote to reject or advance suggested resolutions submitted to the Senate for consideration.
- Vote to reject or advance constitutional amendments submitted to the Senate for consideration
- Vote to reject or advance Bylaw amendments submitted to the Senate for consideration

## **Article VIII- Amendments**

### **A. Constitutional Amendments**

1. Any Senator in good standing may propose an amendment to the Staff Senate constitution to the Shared Governance committee. The Shared Governance Committee shall review, edit, and approve or reject by simple majority vote, with ties broken by the chair. Prior to any vote on a constitutional amendment, the Shared Governance committee must allow for the Senator who proposed the amendment to attend a meeting and discuss with the committee the proposed amendment and its justification. After committee approval and within 90 calendar days, the proposed amendment must be put before the Senate at large by the Executive Committee, which is responsible for scheduling of the vote.
2. A written notice that a Constitutional amendment is to be proposed must be given by the Executive Committee to all members of the VCU Staff Senate at least thirty calendar days before the meeting when the amendment shall be formally proposed. The notice shall contain at a minimum the language of the proposed amendment.
3. The Executive Committee must allow time for Senators to express support or opposition to the proposed amendment at the meeting when the amendment is formally proposed, prior to any vote.
4. Constitutional amendments shall be approved by the Senate by two-thirds majority vote in accordance with the Senate Constitution.

### **B. Bylaw Amendments**

1. Any Senator in good standing may propose a Bylaw amendment to the Shared Governance committee. The Shared Governance Committee shall review, edit, and approve or reject by simple majority vote, with ties broken



by the chair. Prior to any vote on a bylaws amendment, the Shared Governance committee must allow for the Senator who proposed the amendment to attend a meeting and discuss with the committee the proposed amendment and its justification. After committee approval and within 90 calendar days, the proposed amendment must be put before the Senate at large by the Executive Committee, which is responsible for scheduling of the vote.

2. A written notice that a Bylaw amendment is to be proposed must be given by the Executive Committee to all members of the VCU Staff Senate at least five working days before the meeting when the amendment shall be formally proposed. The notice shall contain at a minimum the language of the proposed amendment.
3. The Executive Committee must allow time for Senators to express support or opposition to the proposed amendment at the meeting when the amendment is formally proposed, prior to any vote.
4. Bylaw amendments shall be approved by the Senate by simple majority vote.

APPENDIX A \*Updated 1/2019. Must be updated by Shared Governance before each election.

President	Athletics, Audit, Equity and Access Services, Government Relations, Office of the President, University Council
Provost and Academic Affairs	ALT Lab, Academic Support, Admissions, Community Engagement, Enrollment Services, Global Education, Graduate School, Honors College Institute for Contemporary Art, Office of Continuing and Professional Education, Strategic Enrollment Management, Office of the Provost, VCU Online, Student Success, VCU Libraries
Student Affairs	Deans Offices Student Affairs, Multicultural Student Affairs, Recreational Sports, Student Accessibility & Edu Opportunities, Student Commons, Student Health, Student Media Services, The Wellness Resource Center, University Counseling, University Housing, VCU Career Services, VP Student Affairs
Administration	Office of the VP of Administration,

	Engineering and Utilities, Facilities Management Administration, Facilities Management Construction, Facilities Management Planning and Design, Facilities Management Real Estate Services, Human Resources, PDP Operations, Parking and Transportation Services, Public Safety and Security, Safety and Risk Management, Technology Services
Development and Alumni Relations	Advancement Services, Development and Alumni Relations, Office of the VP of Development and Alumni Relations, Operations
Finance and Budget	Budget and Resource Analysis, Business Services, Office of the VP of Finance and Budget, Procurement Operations, Treasury Services, University Controller
Health Sciences	Massey Cancer Center, Office of Health Sciences
University Relations	UR Operations, University Marketing, University Public Affairs, University Relations
Inclusive Excellence	Inclusive Excellence
Research	Animal Care Facility, Center for Translational Science, Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies, Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry, Office of the VP of Research, Office of Research - Massey Core Labs, VCU Supply Center
Academic Units	Arts, Arts - Qatar, Business, College of Engineering, College of Health Professions, Dentistry, Education, Humanities and Sciences, LD Wilder Government & Public Affairs, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Social Work, University College, VCU Life Sciences, da Vinci Center

<u>Meta-Unit</u>	<u># UAP + # Classified Employees</u>	<u>One senator per 50 employees (rounded to the nearest 50) with a minimum of one senator from each meta-unit</u>
Administration	755	15
Medicine	584	12
Provost and Academic Affairs	408	8
Student Affairs	254	5
Research	186	4
Health Sciences	182	4
Education	164	3
President	162	3
Humanities and Sciences	153	3
Finance and Budget	139	3
Development and Alumni Relations	109	2
Business	91	2
Dentistry	85	2
College of Engineer	81	2
University Relations	77	2
Arts	68	1
College of Health Professions	48	1
Pharmacy	47	1
L.D. Wilder Govt & Pub. Affairs	41	1
Nursing	39	1
Social Work	20	1
VCU Life Sciences	16	1
Arts - Qatar	15	1
da Vinci Center	7	1
University College	5	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3736</b>	<b>80</b>