BYLAWS
OF MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF SENATE

ARTICLE I. NAME
The name of this organization shall be Montana State University Staff Senate, hereinafter referred to as Staff Senate.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE
The purpose of Staff Senate is to promote and provide for improved working conditions and the professional welfare of the classified employees of Montana State University (MSU) by:
facilitating communication and cooperation between the classified staff of MSU Bozeman and Associated Students of MSU (ASMSU), MSU administration, Faculty Senate, Professional Council, all appropriate Montana University System (MUS) organizations, including Montana University System Staff Association (MUSSA), and the Board of Regents (BoR); representing the classified employees of Montana State University (MSU) on university committees and other appropriate MSU organizations; promoting the improvement of higher education in the State of Montana; assisting in the development of staff training programs and policies; and carrying out such other goals and activities as the Staff Senate determines to be consistent with the purpose of the Staff Senate, the administration of MSU Bozeman, and the promotion and practice of shared governance.

ARTICLE III. Membership
3.1. Members. Membership shall comprise elected and appointed representatives who meet the following eligibility requirements: classified staff members, union or union-exempt, of .5 FTE or greater who have completed their probationary period by the commencement of the Procedure for the Election of Staff Senate members. Direct employees of Staff Senate (i.e. the Program Coordinator) are not eligible for membership, but may serve on university committees.

3.2. Elected Members. A minimum of two representatives shall be elected from each Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) category: Secretarial/Clerical, Technical/Paraprofessional, Skilled Crafts, Service/Maintenance, and Classified Professional; and one representative shall be elected at large to represent off-campus classified employees, regardless of EEO category. A category having greater than 200 employees may elect one additional representative for each additional 100 employees within the category.

a. Elections. Elections will be held in May of each year.

b. Term of Office. The term will be three years, beginning in August of the year elected. New members may attend Staff Senate meetings following their election, but will not become voting members until the August meeting.

c. Term Limits. Elected members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms, unless no other candidates within the EEO category will accept a nomination and the incumbent is willing to serve.
3.3. **Appointed Members.** Appointed members shall represent the Staff Senate on university committees and will be appointed according to each committee’s bylaws. Selection of committee representatives is performed according to the [Procedure for Selection of Staff Senate Committee Representatives](#). Appointed members have full voting rights.

3.4. **Program Coordinator.** The Program Coordinator is a paid position, appointed via the usual classified recruitment processes, who operates under the direction of the Chair to provide administrative assistance. The Program Coordinator is not a voting member of the Staff Senate, but may serve on committees.

3.5. **Vacancies.**
   
a. **Declared Vacancy.** The Chair may declare an elected member’s seat vacant following three consecutive unexcused absences at monthly Staff Senate meetings. A member whose seat has been declared vacant may petition for reinstatement. Requests for reinstatement will be considered during the next Staff Senate meeting; a member may be reinstated by a majority vote. If the member is not reinstated, the vacancy may be filled by the person who received the next highest number of votes during the election in which the incumbent was elected. Should a replacement not be found, the position shall remain vacant until the next election cycle.
   
b. **Resignation.** If a member wishes to withdraw from the Staff Senate, he or she must submit a letter to the Chair stating the effective date of the resignation. A vacancy caused by an elected member’s resignation may be filled by the person who received the next highest number of votes during the election in which the incumbent was elected. Should a replacement not be found, the position shall remain vacant until the next election cycle.
   
c. **Appointed Member Vacancy.** A vacancy of an appointed committee representative shall be advertised and filled as needed.

**ARTICLE IV. Officers**

4.1. **Officers.** The officers shall be a Chair and a Vice Chair.

4.2. **Nominations and Elections.** At the March meeting, members will elect a nominating committee of three to recommend candidate(s) for each office and report at the April meeting. Nominations from the floor will be allowed at the April meeting. Both elected and appointed members may serve on the nominating committee. Both elected and appointed members are eligible for nomination.

4.3. **Ballot Election and Term of Office.** Officers will be elected at the May meeting of Staff Senate by majority vote by ballot, proxy, or other means for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. The term of office begins on August 1 of each year.

4.4. **Limitations.** Each person elected shall hold only one office at a time. Each person may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same office, but may serve again after a minimum break of one year.

4.5. **Vacancies.** If there is a vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice Chair will become the interim Chair. At the next regularly scheduled meeting, the Vice Chair may be elected to the position of Chair by acclamation, and there will be an election to fill the vacancy of Vice Chair. If the Vice Chair declines the position of Chair, Staff Senate members may elect a Chair from within their number. In the event both officers resign or are otherwise unable to serve, Staff Senate members shall elect replacements during a regularly scheduled meeting facilitated by the Program Coordinator.
4.6. **Removal from Office.** Officers can be removed from office with or without cause by a “positive vote of no confidence” duly processed as an agenda item at a regular meeting with a majority vote.

**ARTICLE V. Duties of Officers**

5.1. **The Chair.** The Chair shall be the presiding officer of the Staff Senate. The duties of the Chair shall be to preside over all meetings of the Staff Senate; to respond to and initiate communications with the Office of the President; to oversee and monitor the Staff Senate development activities; and to perform all functions usually associated with the office of Chair.

5.2. **Vice Chair.** The Vice Chair shall assume the duties of Chair when that officer is absent and shall perform the duties appropriate to that office.

5.3. **Other Duties.** These officers shall perform the duties assigned to them in the bylaws or other acts of the Staff Senate, and other such duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Staff Senate.

**ARTICLE VI. Meetings**

6.1. **Scheduled Meetings.** Regular meetings of the Staff Senate shall be held monthly on the third Wednesday from 9-11 a.m. Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees shall meet as needed.

6.2. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be convened by the Chair or by the request of at least three members. Notice of the meeting shall be sent to the members at least three days prior to the meeting. The notice can be by e-mail, postal mail, telephone, or fax.

6.3. **Quorum and Majority Vote.** The quorum shall be 50% of the elected and duly appointed members. A majority vote shall be a majority of all members present at a meeting.

6.4. **Non-Member Attendance.** Meetings of the Staff Senate are open unless matters of a confidential nature are being discussed. Non-members of the Staff Senate may request to speak on any item of business before the Staff Senate provided sufficient time is given to include the item in the agenda.

6.5. **Minutes & Agendas.** The Staff Senate shall publish meeting agendas and minutes on the MSU Staff Senate webpage in a timely manner.

6.6. **Decisions.** A majority votes settles an issue under consideration. Voting may take place electronically, by paper ballot, by voice vote or show of hands during scheduled meetings.

**ARTICLE VII. Internal Committees**

7.1. **General.** The Staff Senate committees serve as advisory bodies to the Staff Senate. Committee Chairs are responsible for reporting the status of their committees’ programs and initiatives to the Staff Senate. They are not authorized to make decisions without Staff Senate approval unless they receive specific, issue-related authority from the Staff Senate. The Chair of each committee will schedule regular meetings of the committee, prepare meeting agendas, and take and distribute meeting minutes, as appropriate.

7.2. **Standing Committees.** The Staff Senate internal governance includes Standing Committees.
7.3. **Officer Nominating Committee.** The Chair shall appoint an Officer Nominating Committee consisting of at least three members at the March meeting to solicit nominations for officers and report to the April meeting.

7.4. **Bylaws Review Committee.** Every even-year the Chair shall appoint a Bylaws Review Committee, consisting of at least two Staff Senate members, at a regularly scheduled meeting to review the bylaws and recommend changes or updates according to the guidelines in Article X. Revision and Amendment of Bylaws.

7.5. **Staff Scholarship Review Committee.** The Chair shall appoint a Staff Scholarship Review Committee consisting of at least three classified members. And the Chair of Professional Council shall be invited to appoint at least three professional members to review scholarship applications. The review process includes reviewing and ranking applications submitted by staff members and their dependent relatives, awarding scholarship funds, submitting an application review sheet for each application and a Scholarship Authorization Form (SAF) with the award amounts listed to be forwarded to the Office of Financial Aid Services using the MSU Alumni Foundation submission date deadline.

7.6. **Ad-Hoc Committees.** Ad-Hoc Committees are appointed by the Staff Senate as needed. All policies and procedures that apply to standing committees also apply to ad hoc committees.

**ARTICLE VIII. Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in Robert’s Rules of Order shall guide meetings where they are not in conflict with the bylaws, rules of order, or other rules of the Staff Senate.

**ARTICLE IX. Dissolution**

Previous notice and a two-thirds vote can dissolve Staff Senate for the purpose of reforming as a new representative body.

**ARTICLE X. Revision and Amendment of Bylaws**

10.1. **Amendments.** Amendments to the bylaws may be adopted by two-thirds majority vote from the membership. Amendments must be presented at two full Staff Senate meetings before being voted on. Each proposed amendment to the Bylaws shall be voted on separately. If a proposed amendment fails to be adopted, it may not be brought before the Staff Senate again for a period of three months.

10.2. **Revision.** A complete revision of the bylaws may be adopted by two-thirds majority vote from the membership. A proposed revision must be presented at two full Staff Senate meetings before being voted on. The revision shall be discussed article by article, modified as appropriate, and adopted as a whole.