

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS OF THE AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY STAFF SENATE

Article I. Purpose

Section 1.

The Staff Senate is an advisory body to the President of Austin Peay State University. The President may refer matters to the Staff Senate. The Staff Senate is established as the official means by which university staff may be actively involved in and contribute to the governance of Austin Peay State University. It shall explore, consider, and act upon any matter its members think appropriate or relevant to the concerns and interests of the university staff. It shall report fully to the staff and to other elements of the University when appropriate, on all deliberations and actions of the Staff Senate.

Section 2.

The Staff Senate shall consist of regular full-time and permanent part-time employees defined as “staff” according to APSU Policy 5:011 Position Management & Recruitment.

Section 3.

The Staff Senate shall be empowered to organize itself, establish its own bylaws, and discipline its own members.

Article II. Object

The object of the Staff Senate shall be to serve as the official representative body for staff at Austin Peay State University, advocating for staff interests and contributing to the shared governance of the institution. The Staff Senate shall:

- Facilitate effective communication between staff and university administration.
- Represent staff concerns, suggestions, and perspectives on institutional policies and practices.
- Promote professional development, recognition, and engagement of staff employees.
- Provide input on matters affecting the general welfare and working environment of university staff.
- Support initiatives that enhance institutional effectiveness, equity, and a positive campus climate.

- Collaborate with faculty, students, and administration to strengthen the overall mission of Austin Peay State University.

Article III. Composition of Staff Senate

Section 1. Membership Types

There shall be two types of membership in the Staff Senate.

- A. **Division Representative Senators:** Staff members elected to represent specific divisions or units within the university, based on proportional representation.
- B. **At-Large Senators:** Staff members elected by the general staff body without regard to divisional affiliation. These members serve to ensure full representation across the university.

Section 2. Election of Senators

- A. **Eligibility:** Any member of the Austin Peay State University staff, as defined in Article I, Section 2, who has completed their initial six-month probationary period, shall be eligible for election to membership in the Staff Senate.
- B. **Term of Office:** The term of office for an elected member shall be three (3) consecutive years. A former elected member can be nominated for additional terms if vacancies occur.
- C. **Nominations:** Nominations shall be taken prior to the regular elections when able.
- D. **Election:** Regular elections shall be held in April of each year, with the term commencing at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1) and concluding at the end of the fiscal year (June 30).
- E. **Majority Vote:** The nominee(s) on each ballot receiving the majority of votes shall be elected. In case of a tie, a run-off election will be held. Should the run-off election result in a tie, the Executive Committee shall elect the representative by vote.
- F. **Vacancies:** Special elections to fill vacancies shall be held as necessary. When a special election is not conducive to the Staff Senate, the President may appoint a replacement. The appointment will be for the remainder of the year and in no way affects the appointee's eligibility in future nominations.

Section 3. Representation

Representation in the Staff Senate shall be based on a ratio of 1 senator per 10 employees, or a major fraction thereof (6 or more).

- A. **Number of Division Representatives:** Divisions with 25 total staff members or less shall have a minimum of one (1) Division Representative Senator and a maximum of two (2) Division Representative Senators. Divisions with 26 total staff members or more shall have two (2) Division Representative Senators.
- B. **Number of At-Large Senators:** The number of At-Large Senators will be the difference in the total number of senators based on the ratio minus the total number of Division Representative Senators.
- C. **Senator Changes in Division:** Any staff member who is serving in a Division Representative position and changes divisions will change to an At-Large Senator position for the rest of their term.
- D. Reapportionment shall take place in March of each year. No representative shall be required to abandon their seat before the term has expired.
- E. The number of representatives will be recalculated in March of each year. The Secretary shall communicate with APSU Human Resources to confirm accurate numbers for Staff.
- F. The Secretary, with the assistance of the executive board, shall keep an updated record of all current and past senators including their term dates.

Section 4. Responsibilities of Representatives

Staff Senate representatives are expected to:

- A. Attend all regular and special Staff Senate meetings.
- B. Communicate relevant information to and from their represented constituents.
- C. Serve on at least one standing or ad hoc committee each year.
- D. Participate in Staff Senate-sponsored programs and initiatives.
- E. Uphold the values of integrity, service, and shared governance.
- F. Represent the interests and concerns of staff members fairly and without bias.

Section 5. Removal of Staff Senate Members

A senator may be removed for the following reasons:

- A. Failure to attend more than four (4) regular Staff Senate meetings within an academic year without prior notice.
- B. Violation of university policy or ethical standards.
- C. Repeated failure to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in Section 4.

Removal Process:

- A. The Executive Committee will notify the senator in writing of the concern and request a written response.
- B. If no satisfactory resolution is reached, the Executive Committee may recommend removal by presenting the issue at a regular or special meeting.

- C. A two-thirds vote of the present Staff Senate members is required for removal.
- D. An appeal for reinstatement may be made in writing to the Executive Committee, which will consider and vote on the appeal.

Article IV. Voting Procedures

Section 1. Voting Types

There shall be two types of votes for the Staff Senate. Voting may be conducted in person, electronically, or by voice, as determined appropriate by the Executive Board.

- A. **Division Senate Vote:** A vote taken by senators representing specific division(s), used for matters uniquely affecting that division or where each division should have equal voting.
- B. **Full Senate Vote:** A vote by all elected senators on issues that affect the entire university or the general staff body.

Section 2: Quorum

A quorum is required for each Staff Senate vote. A quorum consists of fifty percent (50%) of the Senate body. If a quorum is not achieved in a Staff Senate meeting, voting may not occur, and the meeting will be informational only. Approval is based upon 50% + 1 vote. In the event of a tie, the Staff Senate President will vote to break the tie.

Article IV. Officers and Duties

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Austin Peay State University Staff Senate shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Director of Communications.

Section 2. Duties of officers

- A. The President shall:
 - Preside at all Preside over all Staff Senate meetings and Executive Committee meetings.
 - Serve as the official representative of the Staff Senate to university leadership and external groups.
 - Appoint committee chairs and members as needed.
 - Call special meetings as required.
 - Provide leadership and direction for all Staff Senate functions.
- B. The Vice President shall:
 - Assume the duties of the President in their absence.

- Assist with agenda development and policy initiatives.
- Lead efforts related to membership engagement and retention.
- Chair the Bylaws or Governance Committee, if applicable.

C. The Secretary shall:

- Maintain accurate minutes of all Staff Senate and Executive Committee meetings.
- Distribute meeting agendas, minutes, and other official correspondence.
- Maintain attendance records and member rosters.

D. The Treasurer shall:

- Manage the Staff Senate's allocated funds and maintain financial records.
- Present financial reports during regular meetings.
- Oversee fundraising and budget planning for Staff Senate-sponsored activities.

E. The Director of Communication shall:

- Manage internal and external communications, including the Staff Senate email, website, and announcements.
- Promote transparency and engagement through effective communication strategies.
- Support marketing efforts for Staff Senate programs and events.

Section 3. Eligibility

To be eligible for officer election:

- A. The staff member must have served as a senator for at least one year prior to the election cycle.
- B. The member must be in good standing, with no more than three absences per academic year during their term.
- C. The nominee must be a regular full-time or permanent part-time employee of the university with at least one year of service.

Section 4. Election of Officers

- A. The Vice President shall assume the office of President for the succeeding year.
- B. The offices of Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Director of Communications shall be elected by nomination and election.
- C. Interested senators must submit a complete application prior to the set deadline. The current Staff Senate President will review applications to ensure accuracy,

eligibility, and completeness. Election of officers shall be held in April of each academic year. Special elections to fill vacancies shall be held as necessary.

- D. In case of a tie, a run-off election will be held. Should the run-off election result in a tie, the Executive Committee shall elect the representative by vote.

Section 5. Officer Transitions

Incoming members of the Executive Committee may require assistance getting acclimated to their new positions. As such, the outgoing Executive Committee members are expected to assist the new Executive Committee members during this time of transition. This transition will be held during May, June, and July.

Section 6. Term

- A. The officers shall serve for a term of one year.
- B. The term of office will begin at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the academic year.

Section 7. Removal

Any officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the Senate by “no confidence.” To be considered, a petition of “no confidence” must be submitted for inclusion in the next regular meeting agenda. Upon approval, a new officer must immediately be chosen to complete the term of office.

Section 8. Vacancies

- A. In the event of a vacancy in any officer position, the Staff Senate President shall appoint a successor to complete the term under the advice and consent of the remaining members of the Staff Senate Executive Committee.
- B. Should a vacancy occur in the office of the Staff Senate President, the Vice President will assume the duties of the President for the remainder of the year and serve as President the succeeding year.

Section 9. Executive Board and Executive Committee

- A. The Executive Board of the Staff Senate shall be composed of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Director of Communications.
- B. The Executive Committee of the Staff Senate shall be composed of the Executive Board and the Staff Senate Committee Chairs.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings

Regular meetings of the Staff Senate shall be held at a time and place established at the beginning of each academic term. Notice of regular meetings will be sent to the members at least ten (10) days prior to a meeting.

Section 2. Special meetings

Special meetings of the Staff Senate may be called by the Staff Senate President when necessary. Special meetings may be called by the Staff Senate upon the electronic or written request of no fewer than one-fourth of the senates. Electronic or written notice of each special meeting shall be sent to each member at least 2 business days prior to convening the meeting; however, such notice may be waived, and attendance at such a meeting shall constitute waiver of said notice.

Section 3: Means of Communication

The Staff Senate may conduct business at any meeting (regular or special) using any means of communication by which all delegates participating may simultaneously hear one another and participate in the proceedings during the meeting. The Executive Board has the authority to choose the means of communication for meetings.

Section 4. Vote Requirements

All votes, unless specified in these bylaws, shall require a majority vote for adoption.

Section 5. Meeting Agendas and Minutes

- A. Agenda items may be submitted through the Staff Senate Agenda Form or emailed to any member of the Executive Committee for consideration. Agenda items must be submitted at least three (3) business days prior to a Staff Senate general meeting.
- B. Agendas and Minutes will be made publicly available.

Section 6. Open Meetings

- A. Regular meetings of the Staff Senate are open. The Staff Senate reserves the right to go into executive session by a majority vote of members present or to be called into executive session by the Senate Executive Committee.

Section 7. Attendance

- A. Every senator is expected to attend all regular meetings of the Staff Senate. Attendance is expected to be in person unless accommodations is needed. To

request accommodations, a member must submit the request for accommodations a minimum of 48 hours in advance.

- B. Any representative must notify the Staff Senate Vice President and/or the Staff Senate President if the representative is unable to attend a regular meeting.
- C. A member may be removed from membership of the Staff Senate if more than four (4) meetings are missed in an academic year. An appeal for reinstatement as a member in good standing may be made in writing to the Executive Committee, at which time the representatives will vote for or against reinstatement.

Article VI. Committees

Section 1. Standing committees

- A. The standing committees of the Austin Peay State University Staff Senate are the Recognition and Appreciation Committee, University Policy Committee, Parking Citation Appeals Committee, Leadership Academy Committee, and the Student Success Committee.
 - a. **Recognition and Appreciation Committee:** The Recognition and Appreciation Committee is responsible for developing and coordinating initiatives that celebrate the contributions of staff. This includes organizing staff appreciation events, award nominations, and recognition campaigns to promote morale and institutional pride. The committee may also assist in highlighting outstanding achievements and milestones of APSU staff members.
 - b. **University Policy Committee:** The University Policy Committee reviews and provides staff input on proposed or existing university policies and procedures. This committee ensures that staff perspectives are considered in institutional governance and policy development. Members of this committee may serve as liaisons to university governance groups or task forces as needed.
 - c. **Parking Citation Appeals Committee:** The Parking Citation Appeals Committee serves as the staff representative body for reviewing student-submitted appeals of campus parking citations. Committee members evaluate each appeal fairly and consistently according to established university parking regulations and make recommendations for approval or denial.
 - d. **Leadership Academy Committee:** The Leadership Academy Committee supports the planning, implementation, and assessment of professional development and leadership programs for APSU

staff. This committee collaborates with university partners to provide meaningful learning opportunities that enhance leadership capacity, institutional knowledge, and career development for staff.

- e. **Student Success Committee:** The Student Success Committee identifies and supports staff-led initiatives that contribute to student retention, engagement, and success. This committee promotes collaboration between staff and student-facing units and recommends strategies to enhance the staff role in fostering a positive student experience at APSU.
- f. **Events and Programs Committee:** The Events and Programs Committee plans, promotes, and executes Staff Senate-sponsored events and outreach activities throughout the year. These may include staff socials, professional development workshops, service projects, and campus-wide engagement programs. The committee aims to build a sense of community and foster cross-divisional connections among staff.

B. **Term.** The standing committee chairs shall serve for a term of one year, which shall coincide with the term of the officers.

C. **Annual Reports:** The Committee Chairs are responsible for compiling and submitting an annual report to the Executive Board.

Section 2. Appointment of committee membership

The Executive Board shall appoint members and chairs of all standing and special committees, except as provided otherwise in these bylaws, and in making these appointments, recognize fair representation from all members and divisions as much as possible. The president shall be an ex officio member of all committees.

Section 3. Other committees

Other such committees, standing or special, shall be appointed as deemed necessary by the Staff Senate.

Article VII. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Austin Peay State University Staff Senate when applicable and when they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Austin Peay State University or the Staff Senate may adopt.

Article VIII. Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1. Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Austin Peay State University Staff Senate by a two-thirds vote, provided the proposed amendment has been announced and submitted in writing with a minimum of two weeks' notice. Amendments may be voted on electronically as needed without the need for a formal meeting.

Section 2. Adoption

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws shall become effective immediately following a vote of the Staff Senate.

Bylaws History	Constitution History
<i>Proposed Bylaws: April 1988</i>	<i>Amended: April 2020</i>
<i>Amended: June 1991</i>	<i>Amended: April 2022</i>
<i>Amended: June 2001</i>	<i>Amended: November 2023</i>
<i>Amended: September 2002</i>	
<i>Amended: June 2004</i>	
<i>Amended: November 2010</i>	
<i>Amended March 2016</i>	
<i>Amended: April 2019</i>	
<i>Amended: April 2020</i>	
<i>Amended: December 2022</i>	
<i>Amended: November 2023</i>	
<i>Amended January 2024</i>	

The Constitution and Bylaws were separate documents. These documents were combined into one governing document in 2025.
Amended: July 30, 2025