

INTRODUCTION

The North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (hereafter referred to as NCA&TSU), Staff Senate was established in May 1999. It's membership consists of SPA and Non-Teaching EPA employees elected by their peers to constructively address issues and concerns and to be a greater voice in the governance and policy making of the University. The Staff Senate currently represents approximately 900 employees.

ARTICLE I

Official Name

The name of this body shall be the NCA&TSU Staff Senate. (Hereafter in this document, the term "Senate" shall refer to the NCA&TSU Staff Senate).

Mission

The NCA&TSU Staff Senate is a representative group of permanent employees, subject to the State Personnel Act (SPA), and non-teaching employees, exempt from the Personnel Act (EPA). Representatives are elected by their peers to support the overall mission, goals, and objectives of the University.

The Senate shall serve as an advisory body to the Chancellor. In fulfilling this role, the Senate shall:

- constructively address and clearly identify SPA and non- teaching EPA employees' interests, ideas, and concerns relative to employment issues, policies and procedures;
- promote and facilitate communication and participation in decisions and activities affecting staff; and ...
- encourage a sense of community among all University employees.

Vision

The Senate will continually seek mutual understanding and new opportunities to improve the quality of life at NCA&TSU for its students, faculty, and staff through community meetings, recognition of employee contributions, and respect for individuals.

ARTICLE II

Participation

Senators and Senate Alternates engaged in regularly scheduled Senate activities taking place during the regular work schedule will report such activity as work time. Supervisors and managers shall support participation, including permitting necessary release time for representatives to participate in Senate activities (including committee meetings).

All employees are encouraged to participate in Senate activities with the following provisions:

1. Attendance and participation by employees other than Senators and Senate Alternates in the Senate's Monthly Meetings are on a voluntary basis, is not reported as work time, and must not conflict with work assignments.
2. Attendance at the Senate's bi-annual Community Meetings is considered work time for all employees when the meeting occurs during an employee's regular work schedule. However, employees are strongly urged to receive approval from their supervisors in advance to attend Community Meetings.

Attendance

Attendance at Senate meetings as well as special or called meetings is imperative so that discussions can be held and decisions made that are in keeping with the well being of staff.

ARTICLE III

Membership Eligibility

Senate eligibility shall consist of permanent, full-time SPA and non-teaching EPA employees who have completed their probationary requirements.

Representation

There shall be one senator for each fifty (50) permanent full-time staff members rounded to the nearest tenth. A senator shall be chosen from a district by staff within that district. If a district has fewer than one tenth staff, that district will have one senator. Representation shall be based on proportional distribution across fourteen (14) electoral units. The Senate shall be comprised of thirty-one (31) senators. The Senate shall have the same representation and proportion as Senate Alternates.

ARTICLE IV

Districts

The representative districts (voting units) of the Senate shall be as follows:

District # College/School/ Division

1. College of Arts & Science - Four Senators (4)
2. College of Engineering - Three Senators (3)

3. School of Business and Economics - Two Senators (2)
4. School of Nursing - One Senator (1)
5. School of Education - One Senator (1)
6. School of Agriculture - Four Senators (4)
7. School of Technology - One Senator (1)
8. Division of Administrative Affairs - Two Senators (2)
9. Chancellor's Office (Alumni Affairs, Development & University Relations, Legal Affairs, Division of Research Administration) - One Senator (1)
10. Division of Student Affairs - Two Senators (2)
11. Bluford Library - One Senator (1)
12. Division of Academic Affairs (Graduate School, Military Science, Aerospace Studies, Waste Management, GAMSEC) One Senator (1)
13. Division of Business & Finance
 - A) Business Services (Purchasing, Mail Center, University Police, Property Management, Auxiliary Services) - Two Senators (2)
 - B) Physical Plant - Two Senators (2)
 - C) Office of the Comptroller (Accounting, Contracts & Grants, Treasurer), Financial Aid, Human Resources, Budget, ARISA/OSHA - Two Senators (2)
14. Non-teaching EPA District-at-Large - Two Senators (2)

ARTICLE V

Terms for Senate Representatives

Senators and Senate Alternates are elected for one term (two years). A representative may be elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms. However, if a Senate Alternate serves out an unexpired term vacated by another Senator, the individual may serve up to twelve months in that capacity and be elected to two additional terms (a combined maximum of five years). If a Senate Alternate serves out an unexpired term of 12 or more months, the individual may be elected only one (1) additional term (a combined maximum of four (4) years). Senators have the opportunity to be elected by the Senate as an officer.

ARTICLE VI

A. Senator Duties.

Senators shall make themselves known to their constituents, indicating methods for contact, a willingness to hear concerns, receive information and suggestions, and communicate these effectively to the Senate. Each Senator is expected to attend monthly Senate meetings, Community meetings and committee meetings. Senators are responsible for contacting their Alternates at least one day prior to the meeting in the event they are unable to attend any meeting.

Each elected Senator shall be elected to serve a two year term, beginning with the August meeting of the election year to the July meeting two years hence. Senators take office and assume voting rights at the August meeting of the year in which they are elected.

B. Senate Alternate Duties

Elected Senate Alternates shall be the area representatives with the second highest number of votes from their respective district and shall be able to vote in the absence of the Senator from

that district; providing the Senator has informed the Secretary of the Senate that the Senator is unable to attend the meeting. In the event a Senator is able to attend the meeting after the session has been called to order, the Senator will have voice but no vote during that session.

C. Ex-Officio

An ex-officio member is one who is an official representative of the University, who offers assistance and may not take part in voting.

The Director of Human Resources shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting representative of the Senate. He or she shall function as a liaison between the University administration and the Senate.

The immediate past Chair of the Senate shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Senate for one year in an advisor/mentor capacity.

ARTICLE VII

Vacancies

If a vacancy in a Senate position should occur through termination of employment, change of voting district, resignation from the Senate, or removal from the Senate, the position will be filled by the Senate Alternate from the respective District.

If a vacancy in a Senate Alternate position should occur through termination of employment, change of voting district, resignation from the Senate, or removal from office, a special election will be held to fill the vacant position.

ARTICLE VIII

Removal from Office

Any elected Senator may be removed from office by the constituents in the representative district for non-performance of Senate duties. A petition requesting such removal may be brought to the Executive Committee by a simple majority of the members of the district. The Executive Committee shall investigate the matter on a case-by-case basis and will recommend action to the Senate. The final decision shall be made by the Senate by secret ballot, determined by a simple majority at a regular meeting.

Possible causes of expulsion shall include, but not be limited to:

- 1) use of the powers of the Senate, real or implied, to further personal causes;
- 2) excessive absenteeism;
- 3) failure to consistently report on activities of the Senate to the district;
- 4) and unavailability of the Senator to constituents.

Once a person is removed from office he/ she is not eligible for re-election.

If a Senator is absent from three consecutive regularly scheduled monthly Senate meetings, or is absent from five regularly scheduled monthly Senate meetings within a nine month period, he/she will be dismissed and the Senate Alternate from the same district will be appointed to complete

the unexpired term of the replaced Senator. Such action does not require a motion of the Executive committee or a Senate vote.

ARTICLE IX

Election Process

Elections Committee

The nomination and election process shall be handled by the Nomination/Elections Committee. The nomination and election process shall be from May through July. Senators begin their terms with the August opening session. It is the responsibility of the Committee to make any adjustments necessary to maintain the proportional representation of the Senate.

Nomination Procedure

The Elections Committee will request from the Department of Human Resources the appropriate information to determine staff members eligible for nomination and the appropriate printouts and labels needed to contact all staff members.

The Elections Committee will mail a nomination form to each staff member employed in a permanent position as of May 1st as described in Article III. The form shall identify the district, the number of nominations allowed and instructions for the return of the form (date, time, place).

Each staff member within a voting district may nominate the number of staff members eligible to be elected that year. Nomination of candidates for election to the Senate shall be in writing and shall be kept confidential.

After the closing date for nominations, the Election Committee shall verify the eligibility of the nominees and shall notify the nominees that their names will be placed on the election ballots unless they withdraw by a specified date. Any employee nominated must agree to serve on the Senate before his/her name can be considered for the ballot.

Election Procedure

The Elections Committee shall prepare the election ballots indicating the name of the district, the names of the nominees in alphabetical order, the number to be elected, and instructions for voting. The Elections Committee will mail the ballots to each staff member eligible to vote. Eligibility shall be determined by a printout of personnel provided by the Department of Human Resources.

Elections shall be held by secret ballot and shall be kept confidential. At the close of the elections, the Election Committee will count the ballots.

Senators will be selected based on the highest number of votes received. In case of a tie, there will be a run off.

The Election Committee shall notify the newly elected senators and shall make the results of the election known to the University community.

All records pertaining to the nomination/ election process shall be retained by the Senate secretary for one year.

ARTICLE X

Quorum

Fifty percent (50%) of the Senators (including Senate Alternates representing absent Senators) shall constitute a quorum, excluding ex-officio representatives. A simple majority (anything more than 50%) of Senators present is required to rule on measures except amendments to the NCA&TSU Staff Senate by-laws, which requires a two-thirds vote. The Chair will not vote except when necessary to break a tie. Other measures requiring a two-thirds vote include the installation of Honorary Senators, motions to suspend the rules, and other parliamentary motions which stipulate a two-thirds vote as defined by the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order. When voting, and upon request of any voting member of the Senate, and with the approval of one-fifth of the voting members present, a roll call vote shall be held.

There shall be no voting by proxy. Only Senators or their authorized Alternates present at the meeting may vote.

ARTICLE XI

Election of Officers

Election of officers and committee chairs for the year shall take place at the July meeting of the Senate. Officers and committee chairs shall be elected by secret ballot in the following manner:

1. The order of election of officers shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Parliamentarian.
2. Election shall be by a majority vote of those members present and voting.
3. If an additional ballot is required, the number of votes cast for each candidate shall be announced prior to succeeding ballots.
4. The Chair of the Election Committee shall conduct the election of officers.

ARTICLE XII

Officers

Officers shall consist of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian.

Chair

The Chair is responsible for conducting the Senate meetings and meetings of the Executive Committee. The Chair will serve as an ex-officio member of each committee except the Nominating/Election Committee. The Chair shall serve as a liaison between the Senate and the Chancellor, Faculty Senate and Student Government Association. Informal duties of the Chair include meeting periodically with the Chancellor, the Director of Human Resources and other appropriate University officials. The Chair will also:

- 1) reschedule all canceled meetings;
- 2) abide by the stated rules of order when conducting meetings;
- 3) refer all matters submitted for the Senate's attention to the appropriate committee(s) and/or to the University Chancellor or designee; and

4) prepare a written annual report of the past year's progress and make it available to all members of the Senate prior to the opening session.

Vice Chair

The duties of the Vice Chair shall be to preside at all meetings of the Senate in the absence of the Chair or in the event the Chair requests the Vice Chair to serve during the course of a meeting; to assist the Chair in performing leadership responsibilities; to serve by appointment on committees; to accept names of persons interested in serving on Senate standing committees and to make appointments on the basis of the person's preference where possible or, in the absence of volunteers, make the necessary appointments to committees in consultation with the chair; to make appointments to fill vacancies on committees; and to call a meeting of any committee that is not fulfilling its responsibilities and establishing organization by dictum. It shall be the responsibility of the Vice Chair to secure the standard plaque for the outgoing Chair.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for the accuracy of the minutes for all meetings and recording and distributing the official minutes of each meeting. The Secretary shall maintain a roster of all Senators and Senate Alternates, with a Senator and Senate Alternate list maintained for each district in order of vote count. The Secretary shall serve as chair of the Nominating/ Election Committee and shall issue all warnings and terminations resulting from noncompliance with attendance policies. Assumes the duties of the Vice Chair when the Vice Chair is absent and notifying the Chair when a member has missed more than three regularly scheduled meetings within one year (July-June and depending on how long the office is held). The Secretary shall conduct all correspondences, agenda requirements and other clerical requests of the Staff Senate and Executive Committee of the Staff Senate.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep records of all monies received and disburse all funds at the request of the Executive Committee. All accounts should be deposited in a financial institution in the name of the North Carolina A&T State University Staff Senate. A year-to-date Financial Report shall be made by the Treasurer at each meeting and an annual report given at the end of the year. The Treasurer shall be bonded by the Senate in such sum as the organization shall deem necessary. The signatures of two officers shall be required on all funding documents. The officers authorized to sign funding documents for the Senate will be the Treasurer and the Chair.

Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian maintains the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. He/She shall advise the presiding officer on points of parliamentary procedure when requested, and will call for point of order if proper procedures are not being followed. He/ She shall serve as a resource to Senate officers and membership regarding the rules and usage of the stated rules of order. He/ She shall preside at meetings in the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair. He or she shall serve by appointment on committees.

ARTICLE XIII

Succession

In the event that the Chair cannot continue with the duties of office, the Vice-Chair shall succeed to serve in that office. The succeeding Chair then shall have the authority to designate a new Vice-Chair to serve in his or her place subject to ratification by the entire Senate. Should the Vice-Chair be unable to assume this new post, the Senate shall hold a special election for the position of Chair at the next monthly meeting following resignation, in accordance with the established procedures for electing Senate Officers. Until a successor is found, the Executive Committee shall work in coordination with the Parliamentarian to fulfill this position's duties.

ARTICLE XIV

Operating Year

The Senate operating year shall begin August 1 and end July 31.

ARTICLE XV

Monthly Meetings

The Senate shall meet the third Thursday of each month at a time and place set by the group. The monthly meetings are subject to the open meeting laws of the State of North Carolina. All meetings are open to employees on a non-participating basis. Visitors to the meetings are required to request a time slot to address the body. The Chair has the right to limit the speaking privileges.

The Chancellor or his designee will have an open invitation to attend all Senate meetings.

The Executive Committee shall meet prior to the established meeting date to prepare the agenda for the monthly meeting. The meeting shall be conducted by the Senate Chair. Notice of all meetings and cancellations shall be circulated by print or electronic means.

Additional meetings can be called by the Chair, Chancellor, and/ or majority of the Senate Staff.

ARTICLE XVI

Community Meetings.

University Community Meetings shall be held by the Senate at least twice a year (Fall & Spring Semester) to allow for feedback and input from employees at large. Attendance at these meetings by employees is voluntary and shall be considered work time when it falls within their regularly scheduled work hours.

ARTICLE XVII

Senate Publications

A semi-annual newsletter/publication will be established to keep staff informed as to issues that are being addressed.

ARTICLE XVIII

Committees

The committees of the Staff Senate are appointed by the Chair of the Senate, with the advice and consent of the members of the Senate. The chairpersons of these committees are elected by the membership of the respective committees. These committees, together with their memberships and responsibilities are as follows:

Nominating/ Election Committee

A Nominating/Election Committee of at least seven (7) persons will be elected by the Staff Senate at the first meeting in August. The Nominating/ Election Committee will consist of individuals not currently eligible for re-election. The duties of the Nominating/ Election Committee will be to poll all eligible employees, submit names of individuals who are willing to serve one term to the University SPA/EPA non-teaching staff, prepare ballots which will include names of all interested eligible employees, mail and tabulate the results, and announce to the Senate the results of the voting.

The Nominating/ Election Committee will also present a slate of officers to the Senate at the first meeting following the annual election. Annual elections and appointments must be completed by July 1.

Executive Committee

The membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the Senate and the chairs of the standing committees. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair, by the Chancellor, or upon request of two representatives of the Executive Committee. A majority of the Committee membership shall constitute a quorum.

The duties of the Executive Committee shall be:

- 1) to consider all matters presented to it by the Chair, the Senate, standing committee chairs, or others making recommendations;
- 2) to assist the chair in setting the agenda for Senate meetings;
- 3) to recommend to the Senate the establishment and termination of standing committees;
- 4) to review periodically the purpose and membership of each standing committee to assure it is functioning as intended by the Senate and;
- 5) to make recommendations to the Senate regarding the removal from position of Senate members.

Employee Appreciation Committee

Two (2) Staff Senate representatives to serve on the Staff Appreciation Week Activities, Employee of the Year, Service Awards and Amenities in conjunction with Human Resources.

Employee Welfare Committee

A Committee on Employee Welfare, whose responsibility shall be to review and make recommendations on those factors which contribute to the professional satisfaction of employees. Included among these factors are salaries, fringe benefits, retirement programs, and working conditions.

Communication Committee

The duties of the Committee shall be to plan and coordinate activities at which University employees can meet their senators and learn about Senate activities; to serve as the public relations agent of the Senate and work with the Public Relations Office and the Department of Human Resources to publicize the Senate and its activities. The chair of the Committee shall serve as the public information officer of the Senate. As such, the chair shall approve public notices concerning the Senate or its activities, seeking advice from officers or other Senate members as appropriate to insure consistency and accuracy of information.

Budget Committee

The Budget committee is charged with the responsibility for the acquisition of funds to support the NCA&TSU Staff Senate goals and objectives, employee incentive/recognition activities, professional development, speakers bureau, travel, and other related SPA/EPA activities.

The Budget Committee will develop funding proposals to acquire funds to support the Staff Senate activities. Activities include serving as a liaison by networking with other UNC campus employee organizations

The Budget Committee will work in collaboration with the Senate treasurer to properly document incoming funds and to insure expenditures are accurately reported. A quarterly report will be made to the Senate body.

Other Committees

As the need for a committee to examine an issue or implement a task becomes necessary, the Senate Chair will appoint representatives of the Staff Senate to meet and make recommendations to the Senate.

Chairs of standing committees shall prepare the agenda and preside at meetings of their respective committee(s), make committee reports to the Senate, provide to the Secretary of the Senate an annual report of the committee prior to June 1, and maintain the records of the committee for transmittal to their successors.

ARTICLE XVIII

Budget

NCA&TSU Staff senate budget will be administered through account(s) established in the Senate's name. Funding documents will require the signature of the Chair and Treasurer.

ARTICLE XX

Amending the Guidelines

Recommendations for changes to the Senate by-laws must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Senators present (quorum required) provided that the measure be given to Senators in writing at least 28 days before the vote is taken. In keeping with the spirit of cooperation and communication, recommendations for changes to the Senate by-laws shall be communicated to the Chancellor.