

## **Winthrop University Staff Assembly Bylaws** **Approved April 2022**

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### **PREFACE**

In fall 2013, Winthrop University began taking steps to institute a staff advisory group to provide the staff with a forum for communication, fellowship, community, and to also provide a voice in matters of importance and concern to staff. This group will provide opportunities for staff to support one another, participate as a group in community outreach and engagement, and to make recommendations to the University's President and the Administration in support of staff needs and the University's mission.

The Office of Human Resources, in November 2013, hosted two meetings for staff employees to discuss the development of a Staff Assembly. An estimated total of 200 staff attended the meetings where two models for staff governance were presented. As a result of feedback received from the staff who attended the meetings, a third option for a governance model was introduced that included some of the aspects of each of the two initial models discussed in the meetings. In early December 2013, elections were held to select a governance model for Winthrop's new Staff Assembly. The Divisional Representative Group Governance model was most favored. This governance structure consists of the Staff Assembly membership to include a representative group of permanent full-time or part-time classified and unclassified non-teaching employees, or temporary grant and temporary time-limited employees physically located on the Winthrop campus. A group of representatives from each university division will be elected to serve as the Staff Assembly. A Staff Council will be elected from among the representative group to serve as officers.

In mid-January 2014, two meetings were held to discuss how the divisional representatives would be broken down. From both meetings, the consensus was that the representation should be based on the size of the division. The divisional representation would be as follows:

- Divisions with 1-50 employees
  - 1 representative each
  - Includes, Access and Enrollment Management, Human Resources Employee Diversity and Wellness, University Advancement, Office of the President and University Relations.
- Divisions with 51-100 employees
  - 2 representatives each
  - Includes, Athletics and Student Affairs

- Divisions with 101+ employees
  - 3 representatives each
  - Includes, Academic Affairs and Finance and Business Affairs
    - One of the three representatives from Finance and Business Affairs will be an employee in Facilities Management.
- TOTAL = 15 Staff Assembly Members
  - Number of representatives may be subject to change based on the number of employees in divisions

The official call for the nomination process began in February and by the end of March 2014 voting for the Staff Assembly Representatives was underway.

Winthrop's first elected Staff Assembly representatives were announced in April 2014. This was a very exciting time for our staff members and for the University.

The first meeting of the Staff Assembly was held on Monday, April 28, 2014 at Dina's Place. At this meeting, officers were decided on and the process for creating the bylaws was initiated. A distinction between Staff Assembly and Staff Conference was also made during this time. The Staff Assembly is the elected body of representatives of the staff, and the Staff Conference is where all the staff and Staff Assembly representatives are invited to meet and discuss various topics affecting them. The members of the Staff Assembly have constructed and maintain the following bylaws for the Winthrop University Staff Assembly to include governance, membership guidelines, elections, meeting guidelines, and committee interest groups.

## WINTHROP UNIVERSITY STAFF ASSEMBLY BYLAWS

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### I. MISSION

- A. The mission of the Staff Assembly is to provide a forum for communication that enhances the work environment and values the ideas of all staff. We are committed to representing the interest and concerns of the Staff Conference to the President, Administration, and other members of the University. We are dedicated to promoting staff involvement both on campus and in the community, providing opportunities that enrich staff experiences, and encouraging a positive campus climate of support and respect among peers. The Staff Assembly fosters the mission of the University and serves to continue to make Winthrop University the best place to work.

### II. STRUCTURE

#### A. Staff Conference

- i. Staff Conference is comprised of all full-time or part-time permanent classified or unclassified staff members. Eligible staff also includes grant-funded employees that are physically located on our campus. Members of the Staff Conference will serve on committees, offer a sense of the body on issues, and provide feedback and suggestions on topics of interest to staff.

#### B. Staff Assembly

- i. Staff Assembly Representatives will attend monthly meetings, present staff concerns to the administration, facilitate communication, and also foster relationships among staff, faculty, students, and administrators.
- ii. Total Staff Assembly Representatives
  1. A total of 14 Staff Representatives will come from the University divisions. The number of representatives for each division will be based on the number of employees within each division.
    - a. 1 representative from Access and Enrollment Management.
    - b. 1 representative from Human Resources, Employee Diversity, and Wellness.
    - c. 1 representative from University Advancement.
    - d. 1 representative from Office of the President.
    - e. ~~1 representative from University Relations.~~ - *This division was absorbed by the Office of the President in August of 2019. Even when that growth was calculated in, the Office of the President numbers were not high enough to justify a 2<sup>nd</sup> representative.*
    - f. 2 representatives from Athletics.
    - g. 2 representatives from Student Affairs.
    - h. 3 representatives from Academic Affairs.

- i. 3 representatives from Finance and Business Affairs.
  - i. 1 of the 3 candidates will be selected from Facilities Management.

2. A 15<sup>th</sup> representative position is reserved in the event a division grows beyond their current representation numbers and/or a new division is created and/or a current division is restructured thereby requiring additional representation.

#### C. Staff Council

- i. The Staff Council will be comprised of the following officers
  1. Chair
  2. Vice Chair
  3. Secretary
  4. Treasurer
  5. Historian
  6. Parliamentarian
- ii. The Council members will be elected by the members of the Staff Assembly. Council members must be voted into office by receiving a simple majority (8/14) of the Assembly vote.
- iii. Only Staff Assembly members in the second year of their first term may be elected to serve as Vice Chair. Staff Assembly members in the first year of a consecutive term may be elected to serve as Vice Chair. Vice Chair will assume the position of Chair the following year. If no member volunteers and/or fits this criteria, this requirement may be lifted, and any Staff Assembly member will be eligible for the vice chair role.
- iv. Council members will serve one-year terms.

#### D. Conduct

- i. During a term year, if a member of the Staff Assembly has excessive absences, totaling 4 or more, he/she will be discharged from the Staff Assembly.
- ii. Absences that result from illness of the representative or their family members, scheduled annual leave, University mandated furloughs, and/or absences that result during high volume times for the representative's employment duties at the University will not be considered excessive.
- iii. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Assembly reserve the right to excuse absences as they deem appropriate.
- iv. All Staff Assembly members and council members must engage in conduct becoming of their position to continue in their role as determined by a majority vote of the Assembly.

#### E. Terms of Office

- i. The Winthrop University Staff Assembly consists of **fourteen (14)** staff members who are elected as representatives for their divisions on a two-year basis. Voting for divisional representatives is open only to members of the particular division.
- ii. Elections for Staff Assembly representatives will be held during the month of April with terms beginning July 1 or the start date in August for nine-month employees. Representatives will serve a two-year term, with the exception of the Vice Chair who will serve a third year as Chair, if that representative becomes vice chair during their first term of service. A maximum of two full consecutive terms may be served. A one-year interval is necessary before being eligible to serve again. In the event that there are no nominees from a specific division, the current representative may continue past the 2 year term without a one year interval until someone else expresses interest or the next election cycle. In the event that a sitting representative can no longer serve and there are no nominees from the division to fill the vacancy, the one-year interval or the one-year employment requirement may be waived. A representative may serve a maximum of four consecutive years without a one-year interval.
- iii. A person must have been employed at Winthrop on a full-time basis for one year (no longer on probation) prior to accepting a nomination to serve as a member of the Staff Assembly.
- iv. In the event that a representative moves to another division, he/she will forfeit his/her position on the Staff Assembly.
- v. A representative that is elected to finish out a term, will not be considered as having filled a full term and thus is not eligible to become vice chair until the second year of their next term.

#### F. Vacancies

- i. In the event a member of the Staff Assembly has to vacate his/her position as a representative, a special election will be held to allow the division to elect a qualified representative to complete the remainder of the term of the vacated representative. The Elections Committee will oversee and manage the election process for all elections that require voting from the body of staff employees.
- ii. In the event the Chair has to vacate his/her position, the Vice Chair will assume the responsibilities of the Chair for the remainder of the term vacated by the Chair.
- iii. In the event a member of the Council, excluding the Chair, has to vacate his/her position, the Staff Assembly will hold a special election to fill the vacant Council position(s).

#### G. Meetings

- i. The Chair of Staff Assembly shall propose an appropriate schedule of meetings for the Staff Conference. At least two meetings of the Staff Conference will be held during the fall and spring terms, as well as during the summer. All University Staff members are invited to attend. Special meetings may be called by the Staff

Assembly. The Staff Conference shall conduct its meetings based on the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. Staff will be notified of a meeting and agenda at least forty-eight business hours ahead of the Conference.

- ii. The Staff Assembly shall meet at least twice a semester, including during the summer. Eight members will constitute a quorum to conduct business. Special meetings may be called by the Council.
- iii. For official voting purposes, a simple majority will approve all motions vocally. If there is dissent that is determined to be at least 50% of the assembled, the body will move to a written vote. The Chair will vote but their vote will not be included in the count unless a tie is determined. In the event of a tie, the Chair's vote will be counted as the tie breaker.

### **III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES & STAFF COUNCIL**

#### **A. Staff Assembly Representative Responsibilities**

- a. Communicate with University staff both formally and informally.
- b. Present staff concerns to the administration.
- c. Serve on or chair standing committees.
- d. Attend Staff Assembly and Staff Conference meetings.

#### **B. Staff Council**

##### **i. Chair**

1. Represent staff to the Board of Trustees and the President
2. Attend all public meetings of the Board of Trustees and meetings requested by or scheduled with the President.
  - a. Should neither the Chair nor Vice Chair be able to meet with the President at the scheduled time, the meeting will be rescheduled. If the President deems appropriate, the secretary will represent the Assembly at the meeting.
3. Plan the agenda for Staff Assembly meetings.
4. Plan the agenda for Staff Conference meetings in consultation with the Staff Assembly.
5. Oversee the annual review of the bylaws with the Staff Assembly.
6. Prepare an Annual Report for the end of the fiscal year outlining events and issues that have been addressed during the year and those still pending. The Annual Report will be presented at the August Staff Conference.
7. Consult with Assembly Representatives who have three unexcused absences from Assembly or Conference meetings.
8. Notify in writing Representatives who have four unexcused absences that they will be removed from the Assembly.

##### **ii. Vice Chair**

1. Serve as the Chair of the Staff Assembly and/or Staff Conference meeting in the absence of the Chair.

2. Assist the Chair in planning the agenda for the Staff Conference meetings.
  3. Attend all public meetings of the Board of Trustees and meetings requested by or scheduled with the President.
    - a. Should neither the Chair nor Vice Chair be able to meet with the President at the scheduled time, the meeting will be rescheduled. If the President deems appropriate, the secretary will represent the Assembly at the meeting.
  4. Assist the Chair with writing the annual report.
  5. Shall succeed to position of Chair.
- iii. Secretary
1. Take minutes at all formal meetings.
  2. Distribute the minutes to all Staff Assembly Representatives at least one week before the next meeting.
  3. Once minutes are approved, send a copy to the Historian for posting on the Staff Assembly website.
  4. Take attendance for the minutes.
- iv. Treasurer
1. Shall monitor the staff conference budget and serve as the financial liaison for the Staff Assembly.
  2. Maintain all financial records as authorized by the Staff assembly regarding use of Staff Conference funds.
  3. Provide report of the finances at monthly Staff Assembly meetings.
  4. Collect and review all funding requests by the Standing Committee Chairs and submit requests at the Staff Assembly meeting for review and approval by the Staff Assembly.
  5. Following approval of funding requests by the Staff Assembly, will forward copies to Chair and Vice Chair to be shared with the President.
  6. Prepare approved disbursement documents and submit to Chair.
- v. Parliamentarian
1. Assist the Chair, as needed, with any vote brought before the Staff Assembly and Staff Conference.
  2. Provide direction and assistance during meetings by informing all members of appropriate parliamentary procedures according to Robert's Rules of Order.
  3. Ensure that Robert's Rules of Order are followed in all meetings.
  4. Monitor Staff Assembly members' attendance and report excessive absences to Chair.
  5. Annually educate staff assembly members about each standing committee and ensure all members are serving on at least one standing committee.

6. Collect all event/activities request submissions by the standing committees and submit to Staff Assembly meetings for review and approval by the Staff Assembly.

vi. Historian

1. Collect, organize, and update information that pertains to Staff Assembly and Staff Conference business, including but not limited to Staff Assembly and Staff Conference minutes, and bylaw updates.
2. Serve as the web author to upload information and maintain the Staff Assembly website.

**IV. SPECIAL COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Members of the Staff Assembly may be appointed to serve on special committees by the Chair including but not limited to, Board of Trustees Committees: Committee on Finance, Committee on Academic Quality, Committee on Advancement & Development, Committee on Student Life & Athletics, Committee on Enrollment & Retention, and Committee on Compensation.
- B. The Chair will review special committee appointments annually.
- C. If the Special Committee representatives cannot attend a meeting they must inform the Chair so that a replacement may be found.

**V. STANDING COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. All members of Staff Conference are eligible to serve on committees. Committee members will select the chair during their first meeting.
- B. In the event that a Standing Committee Chairperson fails to fulfill his/her responsibilities, the Standing Committee's Staff Assembly Representative has the authority to remove the Standing Committee Chairperson from office after the following procedures have been followed.
- C. The Staff Assembly Representative and the Staff Assembly Chairperson must meet with the Standing Committee Chairperson to discuss concerns.
- D. The Standing Committee Chairperson is then on notice and has 4 weeks to show signs of improvement.
- E. If the Standing Committee Chairperson fails to perform his/her duties in a professional manner or is not meeting reasonable expectations, the Staff Assembly Representative will be authorized to remove the Standing Committee Chairperson from office.
  1. Elections & Nominations Committee
    - a. The Elections and Nominations Committee will be responsible for presenting the slate of staff members nominated to serve on the Staff Assembly in April of each year.

- b. The committee members will be responsible for conducting elections of representatives electronically in April of each year.
      - c. Committee members will review the votes and notify Staff Conference who is elected to serve on the Assembly.
  2. Media & Communication Committee
    - a. Committee members will assist with all forms of communication, including helping the Historian with the newsletter.
  3. Professional Development Committee
    - a. Committee members will initiate staff development opportunities with appropriate offices and people. The group will be sensitive to the wide variety of interests among staff members.
  4. Campus & Community Involvement Committee
    - a. Committee members will coordinate social, volunteer, and other activities to provide staff with opportunities to interact outside of their normal job roles.
  5. Recognition Committee
    - a. Committee members will increase awareness of the contributions of staff to Winthrop and promote the recognition of outstanding staff.
  6. Staff Feedback Committee
    - a. Committee members will collect questions received from Staff Conference that require monitoring and additional research.

## **VI. AD HOC TASK FORCES**

- A. Ad Hoc Task Forces may be created by the Council as issues arise.

## **VII. DISCLAIMER**

- A. The Staff Assembly does not function as a collective bargaining unit. The Assembly may not represent any interested party, including either the University or its employees, in matters concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, and may not investigate the merits of individual grievances or administrative reviews, present demands at meet-and-confer session or endorse legislation not supported by the University.

## **VIII. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

- A. Proposed amendments may be recommended by any member of the Assembly. Proposed amendments must be made in writing and submitted to each Assembly member at least thirty days before a vote may be taken. Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly.
  - i. Amended June 2, 2014
    1. Approved June 5, 2014

2. Approved revised version per legal review July 15, 2014
3. Approved revised version October 7, 2014
4. Approved revised version December 2, 2014
- ii. Amended August 2, 2016
  1. Approved August 2, 2016
- iii. Amended April 17, 2017
  1. Approved May 2, 2017
- iv. Amended March 6, 2018
  1. Approved April 12, 2018
- v. Amended August 7, 2018
  1. Approved September 4, 2018
- vi. Amended October 1, 2019
  1. Approved November 5, 2019
- vii. Amended October 2, 2020
  1. Approved November 6, 2020
- viii. Amended May 4, 2021
  1. Approved June 1, 2021
- ix. Amended March 1, 2022
  1. Approved April 5, 2022