

7.2 Bylaws

- **7.2.1 Scope**

This policy authorizes the University Staff of UW-River Falls to structure themselves in a manner they determine and to select representatives to participate in institutional governance.

“University Staff” are members of the university workforce who contribute in a broad array of positions in support of the University’s mission and are not exempt (hourly*) from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

[* Note: All FLSA exempt employees holding positions in the State of Wisconsin “classified” service as of July 1, 2015 are given the choice to remain in the University Staff for as long as they retain their existing positions, or to voluntarily be reassigned to a position that the institution has designated as either an Academic Staff or Limited Appointment position]

- **7.2.2 Purpose**

Students, faculty and academic staff have governance rights granted by Wis. Stat. Chapter 36. On December 12, 2012, the Board of Regents adopted Regent Policy Document 20-20, under which, effective July 1, 2013, university staff may participate in institutional governance. This policy enables active participation in the immediate decision-making and policy development of the institution. Active participation in governance for University Staff under this policy is not collective bargaining and will not result in a labor agreement or contract. University Staff may make recommendations, consider proposals, and raise concerns to institutional leadership.

The Board of Regents is vested with the primary responsibility for governance of the University of Wisconsin System [sec. 36.09(1), Wis. Stats.]. In discharging this responsibility, the Board has an interest in providing University Staff the opportunity to participate in institutional decision-making. According to Regent Policy Document 20-20, each UW System institution shall:

1. Provide its University Staff members, subject to the responsibilities and powers of the board, the president, and the chancellor and faculty of the institution, the opportunity to be active participants in the immediate governance of and policy development for the institution;
2. Provide its University Staff members the primary responsibility for the formulation and review, and representation in the development, of all policies and procedures concerning University Staff members, including University Staff personnel matters; and
3. Provide its University Staff members the right to structure themselves in a manner University Staff members determine, and to select their representatives to participate in institutional governance.

- **7.2.3 Mission Statement**

The UW-River Falls University Staff Senate (USS) promotes ongoing education, professional development activities and communication between University Staff and the broader University community. The Senate members will serve as advisors to the Chancellor and other University administrators. The USS will provide a forum for all University Staff employees (represented, non-represented, temporary, and project appointment) and for interactions with members of the University community, including faculty, academic staff, and students.

- **7.2.4 Name**

The name of the organization is the UW-River Falls University Staff Senate (Senate or USS).

- **7.2.5 Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the University Staff Senate to:

- a. Participate in the development of future plans for the University while also promoting and sustaining a positive professional environment for all University Staff employees (represented, non-represented, temporary and project);
- b. Promote programs and services that support professional development activities;
- c. Encourage informed communication among University Staff and with the broader University community, including the recognized governance groups by attending Academic Staff Council, Faculty Senate meetings (liaison) and meetings of joint shared governance leaders;
- d. Participate actively in the immediate decision-making and policy development of the institution, in accordance with Regent's Policy 20-20;
- e. Solicit nominees and make recommendations as requested by the Chancellor for University Search and Screen Committees and other designated committees;
- f. Perform such other duties and functions as befits a voluntary organization committed to creating and sustaining an affirming and supportive operational environment that supports, promotes and encourages excellence in teaching, working, leading, and serving the community.
- g. Senate members are expected to conduct themselves as described in Ch. 7.12.1 of UPS policy "Workplace Conduct Expectations."

- **7.2.6 Membership**

The University Staff Senate serves on behalf of all permanent University Staff, University Staff-Temporary and University Staff-Project employees at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. All members of the University Staff with the exception of temporary staff are eligible for membership on the University Staff Senate.

The Senate shall consist of nine (9) senators who are proportionately representative of all constituency groups at UW-River Falls. Each senator will serve a three-year term. Membership will be allocated as follows: Administrative Support (2), Blue Collar (2), Crafts/Technical/ Law Enforcement (1), Fiscal & Staff Services (1), Supervisory/Human Resources (1), and Member-at-Large (2). Membership allocations will be reviewed and adjusted as needed annually by recommendation of the Bylaws Committee. All senators have equal voting rights.

If no one from a unit is willing to serve, an alternate senator who received the next highest votes from that unit at the last election will be appointed to Senate to fulfill the balance of the term.

- **7.2.7 Non-Voting Appointments**

An Administrative Liaison appointed by the Chancellor shall serve as an ex officio and nonvoting member of USS and the Executive Board.

Liaison members shall be appointed by Faculty Senate and Academic Staff Council to attend USS meetings to facilitate communication among shared governance groups.

- **7.2.8 Elections**

The procedure for electing senators shall be initiated annually by April 1 under the direction of the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair (or designee, if the Vice Chair's term is ending) will notify eligible staff of

upcoming elections and provide nomination ballots. All eligible employees may be nominated by their colleagues or may self-nominate to serve on USS. If nominated by another, the Vice Chair or designee will verify the nominee's willingness to participate. If there are no nominees for a specific unit, and in order to maintain enough members to have a quorum, members of that unit will be represented by an alternate appointee from any unit who received the highest number of votes at the most recent election.

When a vacancy occurs in the Member-At-Large category, all University Staff are eligible to be nominated.

Elections are to be completed annually by the end of May. Candidates receiving the most votes will be elected. Ties in the division elections shall be broken by lot, supervised by the Chair. Upon request, the vote totals shall be made available through the Vice Chair or designee. New members will be required to attend the June meeting.

If no one from a unit is willing to serve, an alternate member who received the next highest votes from any unit at the last election will be appointed to Senate to fulfill the balance of the term.

- **7.2.9 Terms of Service**

The term of service for each senator will be three years. Members are elected by vote of all participating, interested, and eligible members of the University Staff at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. For purposes of continuity, terms of service are staggered, leaving three seats open for election each year. The term for new appointees will begin in the first week of June overlapping with outgoing members whose term ends the last week of June.

- **7.2.9.1 Vacancies**

If an elected senator leaves before the term is completed, the Vice Chair, in consultation with the Elections Committee, will ask the next highest vote getter in the same unit from the most recent election to complete the term. If no one from the same unit is willing to complete the term, the next-highest vote getter in any unit in the most recent election will be asked to fill the position until the next election, at which time the vacancy will be listed for the number of years remaining in the term and for the same unit.

A "resignation" form listing the senator's name, represented unit, term remaining, and reason for resignation, is required before a senator may resign. This form must be submitted to the Vice Chair as soon as possible.

The Vice Chair, in consultation with the Elections Committee, will ask the University Staff member who received the next highest votes from the most recent election in any unit to complete the remainder of the term.

If there are no nominees for a specific unit, and in order to maintain enough members to have a quorum, members of that unit will be represented by an alternate appointee from any unit who received the highest number of votes at the most recent election to complete the remainder of the term. If none of these conditions is met, the Senate may fill the vacancy by recruiting and appointing any university staff member.

- **7.2.10 Executive Board**

The Executive Board of the Senate will consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Chancellor's Administrative Liaison and Ex-officio Chair will be a non-voting member of the Executive Board.

- **7.2.10.1 Election of Executive Board Members**

The nine USS senators who have been elected or appointed to serve shall elect officers at the June meeting from among the nine USS senators who have been elected or appointed to serve in the upcoming term. Secret ballots may be used if needed. Outgoing senators cannot nominate candidates for the position and will not vote in this process. A newly elected senator must be present during this process, in order to be nominated for an office. In the event of a Board vacancy, the USS will elect a new representative from current Senate members.

○ **7.2.10.2.1 Responsibilities and Duties of Executive Board**

The Executive Board will meet at least once per month, no less than 5 working days prior to regularly scheduled Senate monthly meetings.

○ **7.2.10.2.2 Responsibilities of the Executive Board:**

- Attend meetings with campus Administration;
- Set meeting times and approve agenda items;
- Discuss pertinent matters and establish direction for Senate activities;
- Review committee reports, provide direction as necessary;
- Take necessary action between general meetings;
- Review member nominations and attendance;
- Fill membership vacancies as appropriate;
- Perform other business as appropriate.

○ **7.2.10.2.3 Duties of the Executive Board:**

Chair:

- Calls meetings of University Staff Senate and Executive Board and presides over the meetings;
- Coordinates Senate activities;
- Attends meetings with campus Administration;
- Prepares agenda for meetings;
- Represents UW-River Falls at campus and/or System events;
- Liaison between University Senate and Chancellor;
- Assists with resolution of scheduling problems for meetings for USS members.

Vice Chair:

- Serves as acting Chair (and performs all requisite duties) when the Chair is absent or unable to perform the duties of the position;
- Attends meetings with campus Administration;
- Chairs the committee on committees;
- Maintains an archival list of all Senate members;
- Maintains a roster of all sub-committees, which is posted on the USS web page;
- Acts in an advisory capacity to Senate subcommittees;
- Chairs the election committee and is responsible for notifying elected Senators of their appointments to University Staff Senate.

Secretary:

- Records minutes at Senate and Executive Board meetings and provides draft minutes to Senate within two weeks of the meeting;
- Upon approval ensures the posting of minutes to the Senate webpage no less than five (5) days following any meeting;
- Retains a copy of the minutes within the University Staff Senate files on the shared directory;

- Attends meetings with campus Administration;
- Submits meeting notices to shared governance calendar a minimum of 24 hours before meetings per Wisconsin [Open Meetings Law](#).

Treasurer:

- Manages and reconciles Senate budget including verifying payment of bills and obligations;
- Attends meetings with campus Administration;
- Provide summary of account activity to Senators prior to and at monthly meetings.

Chancellor's Administrative Liaison (non-voting):

Duties as assigned by Chancellor:

- Attends meetings with campus Administration;
- If necessary, assists Chair with resolution of scheduling problems for senator's attendance at meetings.

Duties assigned by Senate:

- Provides guidance for HR related matters.

Ex-Officio Chair (non-voting):

- Acts as a consultant to the executive board.

• 7.2.11 Other Appointments

Web Master: An appointed webmaster will receive training to maintain the content of the website.

• 7.2.12 Meetings

Scheduling: University Staff Senate will hold meetings monthly. In June of each year, the initial meeting time for the new Senate will be established. After the initial fall meeting, the Senate will determine the schedule for the rest of the year. The July and/or January meeting(s) will not be held unless there is some pressing business that requires a change in the meeting schedule.

Senate meetings are open to all and are held during normal business hours; typically, between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Members of Senate shall attend meetings in paid status. Any employee serving as an elected senator or serving as an approved representative will be allowed to use flex work hours to attend meetings.

The Chair shall actively help to resolve any issues or problems that may arise relating to scheduling and workload conditions. If a special unscheduled meeting is needed, the secretary or designee will send an email notification to all University Staff.

Quorum: A quorum for any meeting of Senate shall be six (6) senators.

Attendance: A Senator must attend at least eight of the regularly scheduled meetings in a given year (June-June) to retain his/her seat. If a senator is unable to fulfill the monthly meeting attendance obligation, the Vice Chair, in consultation with Senate, will ask him or her to submit a resignation.

If a senator is unable to attend a meeting, the senator may ask a substitute to attend in his/her place. The senator must send email notification of the substitute's name to the Chair prior to the meeting the substitute attends. The Senate, by majority vote, must approve seating the substitute at the beginning of the meeting. Because the substitute is authorized to vote on issues before the Senate, the Senate member should inform the replacement of his/her views/thoughts and ensure they have all necessary materials.

- **7.2.12.1 Meeting Absences**

If a senator misses two (2) consecutive meetings, the Chair will send a letter to the senator inquiring whether the senator intends to resign, and if so, to submit a resignation form that will be attached to the letter. The “resignation” form will include; senator’s name, represented unit, term of service remaining, and reason for resignation. This form must be submitted to the Senate to complete the resignation process.

After a senator misses three (3) meetings, the Chair will submit to the Senate a recommendation to remove a senator; the Senate must vote to approve, by a two-thirds margin, by secret ballot.

If an elected senator **is removed** from office before the term is completed, a “resignation” form listing member name, represented unit, years of service remaining, and reason for removal is required. This form must be submitted by the Vice Chair to the full Senate at the time of removal. If an elected member **resigns** before the term is completed, a completed “resignation” form is required at the time of resignation. Upon acceptance of the removal or resignation, the completed form will be kept in the permanent Senate records by the Secretary.

If a senator (or authorized representative) chooses to leave university employment through retirement or resignation during the senator’s current term, that senator must resign his/her seat effective his/her last work day with the university.

The Vice Chair, in consultation with the Elections Committee, will ask the University Staff member who received the next highest votes from the most recent election in the unit to complete the remainder of the term.

If there are no nominees for a specific unit, and in order to maintain enough members to have a quorum, members of that unit will be represented by a member-at-large appointee from any other unit who received the highest number of votes at the most recent election. The new senator will complete the remainder of the term.

See 7.2.9.1 Vacancies for the complete process on filling a vacancy.

If any of these apply to an officer, the Senate will elect a replacement from the current membership to fulfill the balance of the officer’s term.

- **7.2.13 Committees**

Committees may be established by a majority vote of the Senate membership, and each will include at least one (1) senator who will serve as liaison to Senate. At least one (1) member from the past year’s committee will serve the following year unless specified below. All committees select their own chair (or co-chairs) from among themselves unless noted below. Each Chair is responsible to submit meeting notices to shared governance calendar a minimum of 24 hours before meetings per [Wisconsin Open Meetings Law](#). Committee membership will be reviewed annually in May for potential changes in membership. The sitting committee is responsible for reviewing its membership to determine if changes need to be made. Committee meetings shall be held during paid work hours. Any employee serving as an elected senator or serving as an approved representative shall be allowed to use flex work hours to attend these meetings.

Committees are reviewed annually by the Senate at the June meeting and those that are no longer necessary will be eliminated by majority vote of USS.

The liaison for each committee will provide the Executive Board updates on activities as warranted.

- **7.2.13.1 University Staff Senate Standing Committees**

Each committee is responsible to execute the charge as listed below and maintain current member listing for posting on University Staff Senate (with the exception of the Impartial Hearing Officer Panel) website:

Bylaws Committee Membership: (3+ members)

Duties: Annually reviews USS bylaws and proposes changes to USS as necessary. At least one member from the past year's committee will serve the following year. The Bylaws Committee will meet as often as necessary to review the bylaws. Recommendations for changes will be presented annually during the February meeting, and voted on in the March meeting.

Committee on Committees Membership: University Staff Senate

Duties: The Senate acts as the Committee on Committees to make recommendations for university staff membership on standing committees and Faculty/Administrative Committees.

Elections Committee Membership: (3+members)

Duties: This committee is charged by the Senate Chair each February. It is composed of three University Staff members: Senate Vice Chair (1), one (1) past Elections Committee member and one (1) current Senate member not seeking re-election. The Vice Chair will lead the committee. They will report directly to Senate Chair. The Vice Chair will submit election results at the May meeting. The Senate will approve the election results at their May meeting.

Employee Development Committee Membership: (3+ members)

Duties: To organize various activities, opportunities for development, lunch & learns, campus employee perks directory and any other events for University Staff.

Impartial Hearing Officer Pool

Membership: (minimum of 10 members)

Duties: The IHO Pool is made up of University Staff called upon to review grievances. The University Staff Senate shall be responsible for forming required hearing bodies. Senate will annually compile/recruit a pool of individuals willing to serve on the Impartial Hearing Officer Panel. Terms start with the beginning of the new senate each year. The pool size shall not exceed the accumulative number of University Staff at UW-River Falls. In the event of a grievance, the Senate Chair will charge the panel as instructed in the applicable policy, to make up the IHO Panel for that grievance. Any individual in the pool may never serve, or could serve several times, as the selection process is random. The chair of the Senate shall not serve as a member of any IHO Panel. A member shall be disqualified from serving on a specific hearing if there is a conflict of interest.

Sally Margis University Staff Development Award Committee Membership: (3+ members)*

Duties: This committee is charged by the Senate Chair each August. Committee is responsible for posting announcements for award applications, reviewing the applications, selecting the recipient(s), making recommendations to the Chancellor, and confidentially notifying each applicant in writing of the outcome. The Sally Margis University Staff Development Award winners will be publically announced by the Chancellor. The award must be used within the fiscal year that it is awarded (by June 30).

** Individuals interested in applying for the current award are ineligible to volunteer for the committee.*

Title Change, Career Progression & Major Change in Duties Committee

Membership: Chair of the University Staff Senate (or designee), Human Resources Manager or designee (non-voting), Assistant Chancellor for Business and Finance, and Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Duties: This committee will review university staff title change, career progression, & major change in duties requests, and determine whether a revised new position description substantiates a change in the classification.

University Staff Events Committee Membership: Open to all University Staff

○ **7.2.13.2 Other Committees**

University Staff Senate must appoint all university staff members to committees. Membership listed for all other committees indicates Senate responsibility only and is not a comprehensive membership. The committee has provided any additional information included.

Affirmative Action Advisory Committee

Membership: (1) University Staff representative

Disability Advisory

Committee Request:

Faculty Senate

Membership: (1) University Staff representative

University Safety Committee

Membership: (1), University Staff Representative

Chancellor's Award for University Staff

Membership: Chair, University Staff Senate (or designee).

Mission: The University of Wisconsin-River Falls each year recognizes two outstanding University Staff members.

Advisory Committee on Veterans Affairs

Membership: (1), University Staff Senate

Co-Curricular Assessment Committee

Membership: (1), University Staff Senate, Chair or designee

Competition Review Committee

Membership: (1), University Staff Senate, Chair or designee

● **7.2.14 Amending Bylaws**

Bylaws may be changed by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of Senate. This vote will occur annually at the May regular meeting. Senate members will be provided with proposed changes prior to the April meeting.

- Proposed changes must be presented for public review and discussion at least one meeting prior to the vote.
- Proposed changes will be posted on the University Staff Senate web page. UW-River Falls University Staff will be notified via the list-serve and Falcon Daily of the open meeting where review of the bylaws changes will take place.
- The notice of any vote to change the bylaws will be posted not less than seven days prior to the meeting.