

# **North Dakota University System Staff Senate Constitution**

The Staff Senates of the campuses in the North Dakota University System (NDUS), in order to organize a representative body of college and university staff employees with a foundation of a spirit of cooperation; issues of mutual interest; and a desire to partner with the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE), the North Dakota University System Chancellor, administrators, faculty and students for the betterment of the System, do establish this Constitution of the North Dakota University System Staff Senate.

## **I. NAME**

1. The name of this organization shall be North Dakota University System Staff Senate, referred to hereafter as the NDUS Staff Senate.

## **II. PURPOSE**

1. The NDUS Staff Senate shall serve the staff employees of the NDUS colleges and universities. The NDUS Staff Senate shall identify interests and issues shared among the staff of the System's institutions, and shall be a forum to consider matters, concepts and developing trends related to staff.
2. The NDUS Staff Senate shall strive to promote communication among the SBHE, the NDUS Chancellor and staff employees of the System's institutions.
3. The NDUS Staff Senate desires staff representation to the SBHE. With SBHE staff representation approval, the NDUS Staff Senate President or designee shall advise and counsel the SBHE and the Chancellor with respect and clarity in purpose of issues concerning System staff. The communication shall reflect discussion and approved motions by the Senate.

## **III. MEMBERSHIP**

### Section 1. Composition

1. The NDUS Staff Senate membership shall consist of staff representatives from each of the North Dakota University System campus staff senates as selected by procedures defined by and for each campus in the System.
2. One representative member and two alternates from each NDUS campus staff senate shall have full rights to discussion and deliberation. An alternate may vote only in the absence of the representative member from that campus.
3. Each representative and alternate shall serve a three-year term. Terms shall be staggered to allow one third of the members from each NDUS campus to be retired at the end of each academic year.

### Section 2. Liaison to Other Governance Organizations

1. Representatives shall act as a liaison between the NDUS Staff Senate and their respective campus staff-governance organizations.

## **IV. MEETINGS**

### Section 1. Academic Year

1. A NDUS Staff Senate academic year shall span from July 1 to June 30.

### Section 2. Meeting times

1. The NDUS Staff Senate shall meet at least four times throughout the academic year, including a meeting to be held on the third Wednesday of June. Additional meetings may be called as deemed necessary by the President of the NDUS Staff Senate or by two-thirds of the membership.

### Section 3. Quorum

1. Two-thirds of the representative membership shall constitute a quorum.

## **V. OFFICERS**

### Section 1. Officer Composition

1. The elected officers shall consist of a president, a vice president, a secretary/treasurer, communication officer and an immediate past president.

### Section 2. Terms and Vacancies

1. Election of officers for the next academic year will occur at the June meeting.
2. The terms of office shall be for one year commencing July 1.
3. At which time the NDUS Staff Senate is invited to have a representative to the State Board of Higher Education, election will be held for the position with the term being for one year, term to be decided dependent on when the invitation is received from the SBHE.
4. Vacancies occurring during a term of office shall be filled by a vote at the next scheduled meeting after the vacancy occurs.

## **VI. QUALIFICATIONS, NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

### Section 1. Qualifications

1. Any representative or alternate member of the NDUS Staff Senate shall be eligible to hold any office.

### Section 2. Nominations

1. Nominations shall be made from the floor or in writing at any meeting prior to the June meeting of the academic year. All nominations shall be received by the Secretary/Treasurer no later than May 15.

### Section 3. Election

The election of officers shall be by majority vote of the representative members voting at the June meeting. If more than two candidates are vying for an office, and no one receives a majority, a runoff between the top two shall be held at the same meeting.

## **VII. RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENTS**

### Section 1. Ratification

1. This constitution must be approved by at least two-thirds of the members of the NDUS Staff Senate.
2. After approval by the NDUS Staff Senate, this constitution must be submitted to the staff governing bodies of the North Dakota University System campuses and ratified by two-thirds of those bodies.
3. After consideration and approval by the State Board of Higher Education, this constitution shall become effective immediately.

### Section 2. Amendments

1. Amendments to the constitution may be introduced by the Senate Bylaws Committee or any member of the NDUS Staff Senate at any regularly scheduled meeting for consideration. Amendments presented from the floor shall be forwarded to the Senate Bylaws Committee for its input and expeditiously returned to the Senate for its consideration. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to all members of the NDUS Staff Senate at least 10 days before the meeting at which they are to be considered.
2. Amendments must be approved by at least two-thirds of the members of the NDUS Staff Senate. After approval by the NDUS Staff Senate, amendments must be submitted to the staff governing bodies in the North Dakota University System and approved by two-thirds of them.
3. After consideration and approval by the State Board of Higher Education, amendments shall become effective immediately.

## **VIII. BYLAWS**

### Section 1. Establishment of Bylaws

1. The NDUS Staff Senate may establish bylaws consistent with this constitution.

# **North Dakota University System Staff Senate Bylaws**

## Section 1. NDUS Staff Senate Agenda

1. The President, with advice from officers and members, will set an agenda prior to each scheduled meeting. The agenda must be distributed to all campus representatives and the Chancellor at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

## Section 2. NDUS Staff Senate Functions

### 1. Liaisons

1. The NDUS Staff Senate shall establish formal liaisons with the State Board of Higher Education, Chancellor and his office, and other groups deemed appropriate by the NDUS Staff Senate.

### 2. Recall and Initiative

1. Any motion passed by the NDUS Staff Senate may be rescinded by a vote of two-thirds of the campus staff governance organizations. Motions may be placed on the NDUS Staff Senate agenda for consideration by a two-thirds vote of campus staff governance organizations.

## Section 3. North Dakota University System Staff Senate Committees

### 1. Bylaws

1. Reviews, suggests and makes amendments to the bylaws.
2. This Committee will be chaired by Past President of the NDUS Staff Senate.

### 2. Elections

1. Rules on questions relating to qualifications of electors and members.
2. Nominates and receives nominations, presents a slate of nominees, and conducts the elections.

## Section 4. Amendments to Bylaws

1. Amendments to the Bylaws may be introduced by any member of the NDUS Staff Senate to the NDUS SS Bylaws Committee for consideration. Upon approval by the NDUS SS Bylaws Committee, the proposed amendments shall be distributed to all members of the NDUS Staff Senate at least ten days before the meeting at which they are to be considered.
2. Amendments to the Bylaws must be approved by two-thirds of the members.

## Section 5. Meetings

### 1. Meeting times

1. Meetings may be held via telephone, interactive video systems or other remote means provided that such action is decided prior to the agenda being published. In the event of weather or other condition that precludes physical travel, a decision to hold the meeting via telephone, interactive video or other remote means can be done by majority vote, by poll done via telephone, email or both.

### 2. Rules of Order

1. Meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition.

### 3. Visitor Attendance

1. All meetings of the NDUS Staff Senate are open to the public.
2. Campuses may bring additional attendees to meetings beyond the representative member, and two alternates. These additional attendees will be seated as visitors.
3. If a visitor/guest wishes to make a presentation or statement on the floor of the Senate, the Secretary shall be notified in advance. The person shall sign up with the Secretary who shall, in turn, notify the President prior to the start of the meeting. The President shall, at the appropriate time, inform the Senate that a visitor/guest wishes to read or make a statement relative to Senate interest, or make a statement on a motion/resolution formally introduced and under discussion. A motion must be made to "suspend the rules" (with a required second) to allow visitors/guests to have access to the floor. A two-thirds vote is required for suspension. The motion to suspend is not debatable.
4. Visitors may speak during the "Communications from the Audience" agenda item. Unless visitors are recognized by the chair during the course of the meeting, they may not participate in Senate debate or discussion.

### Section 6. Officers

#### 1. President

1. Presides at NDUS Staff Senate meetings and otherwise acts as the chief executive officer of the NDUS Staff Senate.
2. Breaks ties in votes held at NDUS Staff Senate meetings.
3. Has the authority to appoint such committees as are deemed necessary for the business of the Senate.
4. Insures that all actions conform to the Senate constitution and bylaws.
5. Is the spokesperson for the Senate at meetings and functions.
6. Serves as the direct communication liaison between the NDUS Chancellor and the Staff Senate.

#### 2. Vice President

1. Presides at meetings in the absence of the President.
2. Assumes the duties of the President for the unexpired term in the event the President is unable to complete the term of office.
3. Carries out additional duties as assigned.
4. Assumes office of the President at the end of the sitting President's term.
5. Presides at the June meeting after the passing of the gavel.

#### 3. Secretary/Treasurer

1. Records and maintains a file of minutes of the NDUS Staff Senate meetings and distributes copies within two weeks after each meeting to all NDUS Staff Senate members and to the Chancellor.
2. Keeps a record of membership and activities of the NDUS Staff Senate.
3. Distributes the agenda to all Senate members prior to each Staff Senate meeting.
4. Maintains an accurate record of all resolutions duly adopted by the Staff Senate and the vote on such resolutions.
5. Receives and keeps all communications and reports to and from the Staff Senate.
6. Maintains permanent records of Senators and terms served.
7. Maintains a roll of current members and their attendance at NDUS Staff Senate meetings.

8. Keeps an account of any and all receipts and expenditures of the NDUS Staff Senate, coordinates reimbursements and is primarily responsible for the Staff Senate's fiscal affairs.

4. Communication Officer

1. Prepares all material that is released to the public.
2. Proofreads and approves all material from other areas of the NDUS Staff Senate.

5. Past President

1. Serves as an active member of the Executive Committee providing continuity in the administration of the Staff Senate.
2. Serves as an advisor to current and proposed activities, using previous Executive Committee experience to give a historical perspective.
3. Serves as chairperson of the Bylaws Committee.
4. Contacts campus representatives to fill vacancies within each campus.

6. Parliamentarian

1. One Representative or Alternate shall be named to serve as Parliamentarian for the Academic Year. This will be a non-voting office.
2. The Parliamentarian shall be available at any time that a NDUS Staff Senate meeting is held to answer questions of procedure.

7. Representative to the State Board of Higher Education

1. At which time that the NDUS Staff Senate is invited to have a representative on the State Board of Higher Education, constitution and bylaws shall be amended to reflect the position.

Section 7. History

1. November 14, 2008- Constitution & Bylaws writing committee named- Liepold, McGray, Nodland, Olson.
2. November 25, 2008- Initial writing of Constitution & Bylaws submitted to Bylaws Writing Committee.
3. December 9, 2008- Version 2 of Constitution & Bylaws submitted to Bylaws Writing Committee.
4. December 15, 2008- Version 2 of Constitution & Bylaws submitted to Members of the NDUS Staff Senate.
5. January 9, 2009- Version 3 of Constitution & Bylaws submitted to Bylaws Writing Committee.
6. January 19, 2009- Version 4 posted to "Blackboard" web site for NDUS Staff Senate evaluation.
7. March 2, 2009 – Version BSC Draft for review and voting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
8. March 4, 2009 – Version BSC 2 for review and voting on March 13<sup>th</sup>.
9. March 12, 2009 – Version BSC2.1 for review and voting on March 13<sup>th</sup>.
10. March 13, 2009 – Version BSC 3 for review and voting on March 31<sup>st</sup>.
11. April 8, 2009 – Version BSC4 for review and voting on April 9, 2009.

NDUS Staff Senate By-Laws- FINAL COPY – voted on and approved