



# System Office Staff Council Constitution & Bylaws

*Last amended by SOSC at their April 2021 meeting and ratified by VP Paul Layer April 26th, 2021*

## **Article 1. Name**

The name of this organization shall be the System Office Staff Council of the University of Alaska, hereinafter "SOSC."

## **Article 2. Purposes, Responsibility and Authority**

### **Section 1. Purposes**

In accordance with the Board of Regents' Policy 03.01.01, the purposes of the SOSC are to:

- provide an effective opportunity for system office staff to play a meaningful role in matters affecting their welfare;
- represent the viewpoints of system office staff on the Board of Regents' Policy and University Regulation and other matters affecting the interests of the university;
- address through legislative action (motions) other matters as described herein;
- advise the university president and the cognizant chancellor for the system office in a timely fashion and in a manner set forth herein; and
- communicate to system office staff information which is of interest and concern to the university.

### **Section 2. Responsibilities and Authority**

SOSC shall carry out its responsibilities and functions subject to the authority of the Board of Regents. Representatives shall carry out their governance responsibilities in good faith and to the best of their abilities without fear of reprisal. SOSC actions will shall be binding subject to review and approval of the cognizant chancellor for the system office per regulation.

University of Alaska Staff Alliance contributes to deliberations on the University of Alaska directions and provides two seats to SOSC.

## **Article 3. Membership**

### **Section 1. Employee Membership**

Membership consists of system office active exempt and nonexempt regular employees, as defined in university regulation 04.05.020, hereafter called members. Employees in the executive and student classifications are not eligible. Only members are eligible to vote for SOSC representatives.

### **Section 2. SOSC Representatives**

SOSC representatives are elected by the members and shall consist of eleven representatives, hereafter called representatives.

Only representatives shall be voting members of the SOSC. Alternates may vote in a representative's absence. The SOSC year runs from June 1 to May 31. Representatives shall be elected to terms lasting two years.

### **Section 3. Alternates**

Alternates shall consist of the two non-elected candidates with the most votes in the most recent election. Alternates shall be held to the same attendance requirements as representatives and may contribute to debate at meetings, but may only make motions and vote when filling in for an absent representative.

In the event a representative seat is vacated, the alternate from the campus with the most votes in the most recent election shall fill the seat. If an alternate fills a representative seat, the nominee with the next highest number of votes in the most recent election will fill the alternate seat. If no alternate is available, the SOSC president shall decide to hold a special election, or to appoint a member to complete the current year.

If a vacancy occurs in the first year of the representative's term, the position will be added to the number of vacancies at the next election, and filled for only one SOSC year.

### **Section 4. Elections**

Representatives shall be elected from the geographic campus where system office employees are located.

The number of representatives shall be apportioned based on the number of members contained within each geographic campus. Any geographic campus with at least five percent of all members shall be eligible for at least one representative.

The two-year terms shall be staggered so that full representation is maintained. Elections shall be concluded at least one month prior to the annual on-site meeting in June to allow for attendance and orientation of newly elected representatives and alternates.

## **Section 5. Attendance, Absences, and Recall**

Roll will be taken at each SOSC meeting. In the event a representative must miss a meeting, the absence will be excused if he/she notifies the SOSC president or the System Governance Office prior to the meeting. If a representative has two unexcused absences within a SOSC year the representative's seat may be declared vacant by a majority SOSC vote. In the event a representative's seat is declared vacant, that position will be filled as provided for under "Alternates".

Any representative may be subject to a recall if 25 percent of the members signs a petition to have that representative recalled, and forwards it to the SOSC president or the System Governance Office. A referendum vote of the representative's geographic campus will be conducted. A recall decision shall be determined by the SOSC majority vote.

## **Article 4. Officers**

### **Section 1. Officers**

The officers of the SOSC shall be the president, vice president and secretary. Officers shall be elected by the representatives for one SOSC year term at the annual meeting.

### **Section 2. Responsibilities**

The SOSC officers and representatives shall support and help each other as needed to fulfill the following responsibilities:

The SOSC president shall:

- communicate SOSC actions to the university president, the cognizant chancellor for the system office, and the Staff Alliance;
- preside at all regular, annual, and special meetings;
- appoint special committees and fill vacancies on committees as needed (such appointments are to be confirmed at the following meeting of the SOSC);
- serve on all elected or appointed committees of the SOSC, except when the SOSC president delegates responsibility to another representative;
- serve on, or delegate service to, the Staff Alliance;
- represent the SOSC at the request of the cognizant chancellor for the system office; and
- initiate outreach to members on matters considered by, and of importance to, SOSC.

The SOSC vice president shall:

- perform all duties of the SOSC president during the SOSC president's absence;
- serve on the Staff Alliance; and
- convene standing committees as defined herein.

The SOSC secretary shall:

- draft SOSC meeting minutes no less than one week prior to the next SOSC meeting;
- collaborate with System Governance Office for publication;
- coordinate *SOSC Highlights* with System Governance Office;
- preside at SOSC meetings in the absence of the President and Vice President; and
- represent SOSC on the Staff Alliance in the absence of the president or vice president.

### **Section 3. Succession**

The order of succession of officers shall be: SOSC president, vice president, and secretary. Should either the office of the SOSC president or vice president become vacant, it will be filled by the next successive officer. The office of SOSC secretary will be filled by majority vote of representatives at the next SOSC meeting.

## **Article 5. Meetings**

### **Section 1. Regular Meetings**

Regular SOSC meetings shall be held monthly. The meeting dates shall be decided at the annual meeting.

### **Section 2. Annual Meeting**

The annual SOSC meeting shall be held in June or as determined by the current representatives. In addition to election of officers, this meeting serves as a reminder to examine bylaws, goals, activities, and accomplishments.

### **Section 3. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the SOSC may be called by the cognizant chancellor for the system office, the university president, the SOSC president, a simple majority of the SOSC, or upon written request of one-fourth of the membership. The call for a special meeting shall be given at least 24 hours in advance by written notice, which shall state the purpose of the meeting. No business other than that stated shall be conducted.

### **Section 4. Quorum**

At regular meetings, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the representatives. For committee meetings, quorum is a simple majority of committee members.

### **Section 5. Participation in Meetings**

All meetings of the SOSC are open to all members and the public. A public comment period may be allowed at the discretion of the SOSC president. Only representatives may participate (make motions and vote) in the meeting unless the rules for participation in a meeting are suspended by a two-thirds vote of the representatives present.

The SOSC may meet in executive session at any meeting when the subject to be discussed tends to prejudice the reputation or character of any person, or when the subject under discussion includes matters which are required by law, university policy, or regulations to be held confidential.

## **Article 6. Committees**

### **Section 1. Committee Eligibility and Responsibilities**

All representatives are eligible to serve on committees and are encouraged to reach out to members as appropriate. Committee chairs are selected on a volunteer basis. Committees shall report to SOSC at each regular meeting for the duration of the committee. The committees shall follow the SOSC rules regarding attendance and recall.

### **Section 2. Committees**

#### *Standing Committees*

Standing committees are perennial and core to the mission of SOSC; current standing committees are outlined herein.

#### *Ad Hoc Committees*

Ad Hoc committees further assist in achieving the goals and objectives set forth by SOSC and are formed for a specific task or objective on an as-needed basis. Past examples include but are not limited to: Adopt-a-Family, Toys-for-Tots, Morale and Bylaw committees.

### **Section 3. Standing Committees**

#### a) Awards Committee

An Awards Committee, acting on behalf of the university president, shall be formed to solicit member nominations for the annual outstanding employee/department awards, and facilitate the outstanding and longevity awards ceremony. The committee shall follow the process stated herein.

#### *Outstanding Awards*

The committee will solicit nominations from members and system office executives for Outstanding Awards for the following categories: student, non-exempt, exempt and department. The award recipient from each category may receive a plaque and/or a monetary award. Executives are not eligible to receive an outstanding award and self-nominations are not permitted. If a representative is nominated, the representative must recuse themselves from voting.

The System Governance Office will do the preliminary vetting and forward all nominee names to Human Resources for verification prior to committee review. Human Resources will verify eligibility and the nominee's category (student, non-

exempt, or exempt) and return eligible nominations. The nominator's name will be redacted from all documents prior to sharing with the committee.

The committee will summarize each nominee's application and present it to SOSC at the next regularly scheduled meeting during executive session. The SOSC shall take action (review, and discuss,) the nominations in executive session, and the voting shall occur in the open session of the regular meeting.

If there is only one eligible nominee for a given category, the nominee will be subject to a majority vote. All representatives will vote once per category. Based on the voting results, SOSC, through the System Governance Office, will make a recommendation to the university president for final approval.

#### *Longevity Awards*

Longevity awards are presented to current employees reaching milestones in five year intervals. The System Governance Office will request a list of names from Human Resources for employees having reached a milestone within the past calendar year.

#### b) Nominations Committee

The committee will facilitate the effort to solicit members interested in serving on SOSC. The System Governance Office will forward all nominee names to Human Resources for verification of eligibility prior to committee review. The nominations committee shall be formed no later than the regular meeting in February.

Once a nominee has consented to be nominated, the committee will work with System Governance Office to collect photos and biographies highlighting their individual skills and why the nominee would like to serve on SOSC. Nominee information will be posted to the SOSC website and used by the System Governance Office when creating the electronic ballot.

The System Governance Office will share the member voting results with the committee. The committee will announce the results of the election.

## **Article 7. Communications**

### **Section 1. Formal Actions of SOSC**

The SOSC president, or their designee, with the assistance of the System Governance Office, shall make all necessary efforts to communicate formal actions of SOSC, such as motions or resolutions, to the cognizant chancellor for the system office and/or other appropriate decision makers and stakeholders in a timely manner. Likewise, the SOSC president shall communicate any decisions, responses, and/or feedback to SOSC representatives.

SOSC representatives and alternates should make reasonable efforts to communicate information to members regarding formal actions of the SOSC, which are under

consideration or have been adopted. The SOSC secretary shall publicize formal actions and other activities of SOSC electronically or as appropriate.

## **Section 2. SOSC**

Any regular or special meeting of the SOSC will be available via audio or video conference when feasible, as stated in BOR Regulation 03.01.010(H).

Agendas and draft minutes of each regular meeting of the SOSC shall be published by the System Governance Office at least three calendar days prior to the next meeting and made available to representatives and members. The System Governance Office shall keep a record of all SOSC proceedings.

The SOSC shall communicate to members via electronic mail. SOSC agendas, minutes, directory and other information shall be posted on the SOSC website for public access. The *SOSC Highlights* will be electronically mailed to system office employees and posted online.

## **Section 3. Staff Alliance**

Representatives who represent SOSC on the Staff Alliance shall make all necessary efforts to communicate to SOSC the proceedings, actions, and activities of interest. They shall take forward to the Staff Alliance any motions, resolutions, issues, or concerns of SOSC for consideration.

## **Section 4. System Governance Office**

The System Governance Office shall maintain an electronic archive and backup of relevant information regarding SOSC formal actions, activities, projects, events, and meetings. The System Governance Office shall facilitate communications of the SOSC as feasible and requested.

## **Section 5. Executive Guidance**

The cognizant chancellor for the system office has the right to veto any SOSC actions. SOSC actions shall be binding unless vetoed by the cognizant chancellor within 45 days of notice. Instead of outright vetoing the cognizant chancellor for the system office may modify any motion provided that the modification does not adversely affect or nullify the purpose or principle involved in the main action. The cognizant chancellor for the system office shall convey in writing to the SOSC president the reason for any veto or modification.

Any SOSC action vetoed by the cognizant chancellor for the system office may be appealed to the university president by a two-thirds SOSC vote within 45 days following the veto notice. If the university president overrides the veto, the SOSC action shall stand.

## **Article 8. Parliamentary Authority**

The parliamentary authority shall be the latest edition of Roberts' Rules of Order when not in conflict with any of the provisions herein.

## **Article 9. Amendments to the Bylaws**

### **Section 1. Submission**

Amendments to the bylaws must be proposed by a representative in writing to the SOSC President. SOSC representatives and alternates shall receive copies of the proposed amendments at least two weeks prior to the SOSC meeting at which they will be have the first reading.

### **Section 2. Voting**

The proposed amendments shall be put to a vote at the following SOSC meeting or postponed for further consideration. Amendments to the bylaw shall be approved by a two-thirds vote.

### **Section 3. Approval**

Approved bylaw amendments shall be sent to the cognizant chancellor for the system office and general counsel for approval and to the university president for information.