

STAFF SENATE  
CONSTITUTION  
AND  
BYLAWS

Approved  
June 1 2024

# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE I. NAME

Section 1. The name of the organization is the St. Bonaventure University Staff Senate; here after referred to as the Staff Senate.

## ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

Section 1. The Staff Senate is responsible for receiving and providing advisory feedback on certain university policies and procedures, which substantially affect the working conditions of university staff.

Section 2. The Staff Senate may make appropriate recommendations to the President and Executive staff for consideration. The Ex Officio Member shall be responsible for communicating recommendations to the President and/or President's Cabinet for consideration.

Section 3. The Staff Senate meets as needed to address issues of mutual interest and concern to the staff and to the university when such issues arise.

Section 4. The Staff Senate may be consulted as appropriate in planning for the overall well-being and future of the university in an advisory capacity.

Section 5. Staff Senate members are informed of general campus information, policies, and are invited to participate as members of applicable university committees.

Section 6. The Staff Senate shall follow all University policies and procedures, including the Staff Handbook, and refers individuals with concerns to seek resolution through the appropriate channels.

Section 7. The terms of this Constitution shall constitute the primary governing document of the Staff Senate and take precedence over other documents such as the Bylaws.

### ARTICLE III. DEFINITIONS

Section 1. For purposes of this Constitution, “staff” consists of full and part-time staff, with the exception of seasonal staff, temporary staff, and members of the President’s Council and President’s Cabinet.

Section 2. The areas of representation are based on St. Bonaventure University’s current governance areas as defined in the organizational chart in the governing documents.

Section 3. A quorum consists of a majority of elected Staff Senate members.

Section 4. Executive Sessions are defined as closed meetings when confidentiality is required.

Section 5. One Ex Officio Member of the Staff Senate shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the University President.

### ARTICLE IV. ELECTIONS

Section 1. The Constitution Committee will organize and administer the entire election process to assure the integrity of the election and results.

Section 2. The Constitution Committee shall notify all eligible staff of the election process no later than March 31st of each academic year. Any eligible employee should notify the Constitution Committee of their intent to seek election by a deadline set by said committee in April of each academic year. Official elections shall take place during the month of May and newly elected Senators will begin office on June 1<sup>st</sup>, coinciding with the start of the new academic year.

Section 3. In cases where multiple employees are vying for one position during an election, the person who receives the most votes will be announced as the winner and serve in office until the following election cycle.

Section 4. The Constitution Committee will ask the Ex Officio to verify the results of the election and announce the winners.

#### ARTICLE V. REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution may only be proposed at a regular meeting of the Staff Senate by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Senate. All proposed changes and amendments shall be provided to all Staff Senators at least 15 days before the meeting. Once approved by the Staff Senate, proposed amendments shall be submitted to the President for final approval.

Section 2. The Constitution shall be reviewed periodically by the Constitution Committee, who shall make recommendations on changes or amendments to the Executive Committee before being provided to the full Staff Senate.

## **BYLAWS**

### ARTICLE I. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Section 1: The Staff Senate will hold monthly meetings during the academic year, with the option of additional meetings either during the academic year or other months as needed. Members and staff will have the option to attend in person or virtually.

Section 2. Meetings will be attended by elected members, invited guests or speakers and open to all staff, faculty and students.

Section 3. The Staff Senate will engage in an open staff forum outside of monthly meetings at least one time per year, notice of which shall be provided to the University community at least 15 days in advance.

### ARTICLE II. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings will be held once a month during the academic year. Special executive sessions to discuss matters of a confidential nature, will be held upon notice as may be required.

Section 2. All Staff Senate members can bring forward matters that concern issues related to the staff and the University community.

Section 3. Staff Senate members should direct individual staff members with concerns to appropriate venues per official University policy for resolution if the Staff Senate is unable to address or resolve the concern.

Section 4. Staff Senate members are encouraged to seek input from all staff members in their respective areas of representation.

Section 5. Meetings will be recorded digitally. The Chair or their designee is responsible for the recordings. Copies of recordings will be made available to all staff and destroyed annually.

Section 6. During the initial meeting following an election, the Ex Officio will open and administer said meeting until a Chair is elected.

### ARTICLE III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Section 1. An Executive Session may be called by an officer or any Staff Senator during a Staff Senate meeting.

Section 2. An Executive Session shall be a private “special meeting-within-a-meeting” that will consist of only Staff Senate members. All non-Staff Senate members, including the Ex-Officio, shall be asked to leave the room to allow the Staff Senate to discuss matters in a private and possibly confidential manner.

Section 3. When appropriate and helpful, outside individuals may be invited to be part of an Executive Session. These non-Staff Senate members may be asked to join in all or only part of a session; the purpose of the meeting determines who should be present. The Ex Officio Member shall be present whenever a non-Staff Senate member is invited to join.

Section 4. The purpose of an Executive Session is to allow Staff Senators to speak freely and privately, void of outside entities. Meeting minutes during this time may be suspended, unless official business is conducted. At that time, the secretary will include the minutes of the Executive Session in the regular Staff Senate meeting minutes.

### ARTICLE IV. STAFF SENATE MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership of the Staff Senate shall consist of staff from the divisions or areas as defined by the President’s Cabinet in the organization chart and the relevant governing documents.

Section 2. The Staff Senate will be filled by nomination of staff from divisions or areas as described in ARTICLE III, Section 1 of these By-Laws. Where there is more than one nomination the seat will be filled by election of staff from those same divisions or areas.

Section 3. The total size of the Staff Senate shall not exceed 19 members; 16 elected by their divisions or areas and 3 at-large will be elected by all staff. The number of members for each division or area of representation are determined as follows:

1 – 19 staff	1 representative
20 – 39 staff	2 representatives
40 – 59 staff	3 representatives
60 – 79 staff	4 representatives
80 plus staff	6 representatives
At-large	3 representatives

Section 4. Elections will be held every two years for the entire Staff Senate. Therefore, each Senator will serve a two-year term between elections. There is no limit to the amount of times a person can be elected.

Section 5. The Staff Senate shall have an Ex Officio who will be appointed by the President. The Ex Officio shall not have voting rights.

#### ARTICLE V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Nominations for the officers are made by Staff Senate members at the first meeting of the election year and will be elected on a majority vote.

#### ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS

Section 1. The Staff Senate shall have three officers: Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

Section 2. The Staff Senate elects its officers every two years based on the Senate election cycle.

Section 3. Election of officers shall be conducted through a majority vote at any properly constituted meeting.

Section 4. Nominees for officers should have a minimum of one full year of service as a Staff Senate member before being nominated, excluding the inaugural year.

Section 5. Current officers will determine the most suitable individual to update the Staff Senate website, social media and other sites.

Section 6. The duties of the Chair shall include presiding over all meetings, providing the agenda, serving on University committees as requested by the President, and updating the Staff Senate on various University matters and staff concerns.

Section 7. The duties of the Vice Chair include assisting the Chair in their responsibilities and acting as Chair in the absence of the Chair.

Section 8. The Secretary's duties include taking notes at meetings, preparing minutes from each meeting, sharing of the minutes with Staff Senate for review and final approval. The Secretary will coordinate distribution and posting of final approved minutes. Minutes will be posted at the Staff Senate website.

#### ARTICLE VII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary and the chairs of the standing committees. The Executive Committee shall meet as needed to conduct business as needed in-between meetings.

Section 2. The Chair of the Staff Senate shall serve as the Chair of the Executive Committee. The Chair of the Staff Senate with input from the Staff Senate will appoint the chairs of the other standing committees.

#### ARTICLE VIII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Staff Senate members may serve on other University committees. When the Chair is asked to identify or recommend representation from the Staff Senate for another University



committee, any Staff Senate member may volunteer. In cases where there are multiple volunteers, the Senate members will vote. Staff Senate members serving on other committees are requested to report back to the Staff Senate.

Section 2. The Staff Senate will establish standing committees, including but not limited to the Constitution Committee, Staff Handbook Review Committee and Staff Compensation Committee.

Section 3. The Constitution Committee will periodically review the Constitution and By-Laws and will recommend changes as needed to the Staff Senate for consideration.

The Constitution Committee will review the assignment of membership and the number of staff in a representative division or area and make revisions to the number of representatives from each division based on data at that time. These recommendations will be brought to the entire Staff Senate for consideration and vote.

The Constitution Committee is in charge of the member election process and integrity.

Section 4. The Staff Handbook Review Committee will be apprised of changes made and may be asked to give input on changes being made to the Staff Handbook. They will review the Staff Handbook annually and will bring concerns or recommendation to the Staff Senate. The Chair will then bring any concerns or recommendation to the Ex Officio who will bring them to the appropriate University Vice President for consideration.

Section 5. The Staff Compensation Committee may initiate and formulate proposals concerning staff salaries and fringe benefits – including but not restricted to professional, paid and unpaid, leaves of absence, medical insurance and life insurance. The Chair will bring any concerns or recommendation to the Ex Officio who will bring such concerns or recommendations to the President's Cabinet for consideration.

## ARTICLE IX. VACANCIES

Section 1. Senators shall remain for the term to which they were elected unless their position on the Senate becomes vacant by reason of termination/resignation of employment, inability to act, death, withdrawal, removal or change of employment position that removes them from the Senate.

Section 2. Vacancies shall be filled by eligible persons, who are recommended by the Chair, vetted and approved by the Constitution Committee and must receive a majority vote at any properly constituted meeting.

Section 3. Persons who become a Staff Senator through the vacancy process shall fulfill the remainder of time left until the next election.

Section 4. This process shall be the same for cases of vacancies due to open positions not being filled after an election cycle.

#### ARTICLE X. REASONS FOR WITHDRAWAL/REMOVAL FROM THE STAFF SENATE

Section 1. Change in employment status, such as transitioning from a staff position to a faculty position (excluding adjuncts) or no longer being employed by the University will constitute removal or withdrawal.

Section 2. Any Senator can make a personal decision to resign from the Staff Senate.

Section 3. Continued lack of meeting attendance by a Staff Senate member whether in person or via virtual attendance; missing more than two consecutive meetings, unless extenuating circumstances are communicated to the Staff Senate Chair or Vice Chair will constitute removal.

#### ARTICLE XI. REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Section 1. These by-laws shall be changed or amended at any regular meeting of the Staff Senate by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the entire Senate. All changes and amendments shall be provided to all Staff Senators at least 15 days before the meeting. Once approved by the Staff Senate, proposed amendments shall be submitted via the Ex Officio to the President for final approval.

Section 2. These by-laws shall be reviewed periodically by the Constitution Committee, which shall make recommendations on changes or amendments to the Executive Committee before being provided to the full Staff Senate.