Bylaws
Texas A&M University-Texarkana
Staff Council
As Amended

Article I. Mission

The University Staff Council’s stated mission is to represent the interests of and the issues impacting both classified and non-classified staff employees at Texas A&M University-Texarkana. Throughout the Bylaws, items pertaining to Staff Council members will be referred to as “Representatives” and the University Staff will be referred to as “Staff”

Article II. Purpose

The council will provide a voice and integrate staff perspective by:

1. Acting as a conduit for two-way communication between staff and administration.
2. Engaging staff and bringing their interests before the administration.
3. Identifying university issues and their impact on staff.
4. Exploring and researching possible solutions to issues.
5. Providing options and recommendations to the President.
6. Interacting with other councils.

The Council will NOT be involved in any specific employee/employer matters or disputes.

Article III. Staff Council Membership

All benefits-eligible, non-faculty, A&M-Texarkana employees - with the exception of the 1) President, 2) Provost, 3) Vice President, 4) Assistant Vice President and 5) Associate Vice President - will be eligible for Council membership after 6 months of employment.

Section 3.01 Representative Groups

The Council will consist of a minimum of five (5) representative groups, with one representative elected from each representative group. Groups will be identified yearly as reported in the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Categories. Currently a ratio of 1 to 9 will be utilized to set representative numbers of the Council. The Council will publish the representative groups on the Staff Council Website and shall amend established representative groups each year. There will be no more than (5) ex-officio staff.

Section 3.02 General Elections

Elections for vacant positions on the Council will be conducted annually during the month of May by secret ballot. One-third of the Council will be elected each year. The
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election will be carried out by the Election Committee in accordance with election procedures as established by the Election Committee and approved by the Council.

Nominations of candidates may be made by eligible staff employees in their established representative group. Nominations will occur in April. Winners of an election will be determined by candidates receiving the most votes within their representative group and have agreed and accepted to serve. If the winning representative declines, the next staff with the most votes will be invited to serve.

If there is only one nominee from a representative group, the vote will carry automatically without the necessity of distributing and collecting ballots.

Section 3.03 Term of Office

The Council will be elected to a three (3) year term. There are no term limits for the Council members.

The Chair will be required to stay on the council for one (1) year following their term. If the out-going Chair does not seek or fails to win reelection, he/she will be required to serve on the Council as an ex-officio member. This will ensure continuity of the Council.

Section 3.04 Vacancies

Vacancies of Representatives for unexpired terms may be made by eligible staff in their established representative group.

If an outgoing Representative leaves the Staff Council before his or her term expires then the Council will contact all eligible staff within the exiting Representative’s representative group to determine who is willing to serve on the Council as a Representative. Once willingness to serve is determined, there will be a Staff-wide vote to elect the new Representative.

Winners of an election will be determined by candidates receiving the most votes within their representative group and have agreed and accepted to serve. If the winning representative declines, the next staff with the most votes will be invited to serve the remainder of the vacated position.

Section 3.05 Quorum
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A quorum will consist of at least sixty percent (60%) of the members of the Council. No action will be taken by the Council unless a quorum is present.

Article IV.  Staff Council Officers

Section 4.01  Duties

Officers of the Council will consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Council Chair will preside at meetings of the Council, serve as liaison to the President and major A&M-Texarkana committees, and carry out other duties as specified in these Bylaws. The Chair will not be a voting member unless required to break a tie of the Council.

The Vice Chair will assume the responsibility of the Staff Council Chair when the Staff Council Chair is absent or otherwise unable to perform Staff Council duties, and will assist the Staff Council Chair as required. The Vice Chair is responsible for fund raising events during the year and will Chair a Fund Raising Committee as needed.

The Treasurer will maintain an account of all monies received and expended, make disbursements as authorized by the Council, and prepare an annual report of financial transactions on a Fiscal Year basis. The Treasurer will chair the Budget Committee.

The Secretary will maintain accurate records of attendance; keep minutes of all business conducted by the Council; prepare meeting agendas one week prior to Staff Council Meeting; and coordinate, prepare, and distribute required reports and correspondence for the Council. Minutes should be distributed to Council members prior to the next meeting.

All actions taken by these officers that are reasonably required by their official positions within the Council will be reported to the Council. Officers may not take a public stand or voice an opinion on an issue in the name of the Council without prior approval by a majority vote of the Council.

Section 4.02  Election of Officers
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Officers of the Council will be elected annually by the new Council membership at the first regularly scheduled meeting following annual elections, based on eligible staff receiving the largest number of votes.

Only Council representatives with at least one year of membership experience are eligible to serve as Chair. This rule may, however, be waived by a two-thirds vote of the full-voting Council membership.

Section 4.03 Terms of Office

Officers will be elected annually to one-year terms. No member may hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms, but the member may be re-elected after a one-year interval. This rule may, however, be waived by a two-thirds vote of the full-voting Council.

Section 4.04 Vacancies

Vacancies of officers for unexpired terms will be filled by election at the next regular meeting of the Council under the rules identified in Article III, Section 2.

Article V. Committees

Section 5.01 Standing Committees

Standing Committees are those established by the Executive Committee for a specified purpose and indefinite span of time, with size and composition to be determined under the guidance of the Executive Committee. The Chairpersons of said committees shall be chosen by the members and report to the Executive Committee. If the members are unable or unwilling to select a Committee Chairperson, the Chairperson of the Staff Council may appoint one. The term of service shall be one year but may serve consecutive terms.

Standing Committees should meet at the discretion of the Committee Chairperson. They will submit minutes from each meeting to the Secretary of the Staff Council at least one week prior to the monthly Council meeting. Final drafts of committee proposals require Council approval. Each standing committee will, upon request, act as a resource to the other standing committees or Council.

Meetings will be held as needed with Committee Members expected to attend all meetings. A simple majority of the Standing Committee membership shall constitute a quorum with a majority consisting of one-half of the voting membership plus one. The
committee will submit a final report including recommendations regarding the issue(s) at the time of the established deadline.

(5.01.1) Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall ensure overall Staff Council group cohesiveness and the validity and attainment of collective group goals. The membership shall consist of the elected officers. This committee shall ensure active member participation. The committee shall provide information and recommendations to the President of the University. Executive Committee meetings shall be held at least once a month and/or as necessary to conduct Staff Council business.

(5.01.2) Elections Committee

The Elections Committee will review eligibility and ensure representation across classification levels and executive reporting levels. They shall announce the call for officer nominations and conduct the election of officers. The committee will create and recommend election procedures to the representative units as well as assist in election processes if needed. The elections committee shall present proposed representation changes to the Staff Council body as a whole preceding each election cycle in order to reflect a council that is representative of the university.

(5.01.3) Communications Committee

The Communications Committee shall oversee and coordinate all internal and external Staff Council communication protocols to include but not limited to listservs, Staff Council website, press release and marketing materials, and other materials, both electronic and print in collaboration with the Executive Committee.

(5.01.4) Budget Committee

The Budget Committee shall oversee and promote budget planning in a manner that is consistent with the Staff Council’s goals (i.e. representative events, workshops, and incentives, etc.) and Unit Budget Plan for the fiscal year. The committee shall consult with the Vice President for Finance and Administration to determine budgetary priority.

(5.01.5) Enhancement Committee

The Enhancement Committee shall oversee, develop, recommend and coordinate with the Staff Council’s Chair, Human Resources and Administrative Council criteria from
representatives that aid in the evaluation of issues and concerns submitted to the Staff Council.

Section 5.02  Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees are those committees established by the Executive Committee or the Chairperson of the Staff Council, and are conceived as having temporary, finite, or exploratory functions. An Executive Officer cannot serve as the chair or co-chair of an ad hoc committee. These committees are charged by the Executive Committee or the Chairperson of the Staff Council. Charges include the purpose, composition, size and the terms of the appointments to the Committee as well as an indication of the date or completed task that determines the dissolution of the Committee.

Meetings will be held as needed with Committee Members expected to attend all meetings. A simple majority of the Ad Hoc Committee membership shall constitute a quorum with a majority consisting of one-half of the voting membership plus one. The committee will submit a final report including recommendations regarding the issue(s) at the time of the established deadline.

Article VI.  Meeting

Section 6.01  General Representative Meeting Schedule

The Council will conduct a general representative meeting of all employees at least once a year at a time and place determined by members of the Council.

Section 6.02  Staff Council Meeting Schedule and Notification

The Council will meet once a month at a time and place determined by members of the Council. The secretary will notify council members of the time and location of all council meetings. Such notification should be by written/email correspondence at least seven days in advance of the meeting and should include a tentative agenda. Officers will meet one week prior to monthly Staff Council meeting.

The order of business will include, but need not be limited to, the following items: call to order, determination of members present, disposition of minutes of previous Council meeting, Chair's report, Treasurer's report, reports of standing committees, reports of special committees, unfinished business, new business, and adjournment. Any A&M-Texarkana employee may present a written suggestion for Council consideration to one or more members of the Council. If the Council determines the proposal is one of merit, a recommendation will be formulated and
communicated to the President and/or proper authority. The individual(s) initiating the proposal will be notified of the Council’s action.

Section 6.03 Executive Session

Council meetings will be open to all interested parties. A majority vote of the Council membership present and voting may, however, determine that a meeting will, in whole or in part, be conducted in executive session during which time only Council members, as well as others designated by the Council membership, will be present.

Section 6.04 Voting

Voting on motions and issues brought before the Council will be by voice or show of hands unless a roll call or vote by secret ballot is requested by a voting member (roll-call votes will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting). A simple majority vote of the quorum present and voting will decide a question, unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws.

Article VII. Parliamentary Authority

Robert’s Rules of Order may be invoked by the Chair as needed. The Chair has the discretion to conduct meetings in a less formal manner.

Article VIII. Adoption of Bylaws

The Bylaws were adopted based on an affirmative vote by a majority of the Council and became effective September 28, 2010.
Article IX. Amendment to Bylaws

Amendments to the Bylaws may be initiated in two ways:

1. Through a petition signed by twenty percent of the A&M-Texarkana staff; or
2. Through action originated by the Council and approved by a majority of Council members.

Proposed amendments will be distributed to all A&M-Texarkana employees at least three weeks prior to the Council vote on the amendment. A two-thirds vote of the Council will be required for action.

The Bylaws of The Texas A&M University-Texarkana Staff Council are hereby amended on Date Required by a majority vote of the council.