

Peru State College Staff Senate Constitution

Preamble

This Constitution is based on the principle that Peru State College continues its commitment to making a vital contribution to the future of the region and the state, according to the laws and governance of the State of Nebraska and the Nebraska State College Board of Trustees.

The Staff Senate derives its authority from three main sources: 1) the Nebraska State College Board of Trustees; 2) the President of Peru State College; and 3) the codes of ethics of the respective members' professions.

The Staff Senate serves to support the College and staff members, and to uphold the Peru State College Mission Statement by promoting life-long learning, fostering independent inquiry, and promoting the value of knowledge and discovery.

Article I. Name

The name of the organization shall be the Peru State College Staff Senate at Peru, Nebraska, herein referred to as the Senate.

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the Senate shall be:

1. to represent and speak on behalf of the staff members at Peru State College;
2. to serve as a means of communication and consultation between the Senate members and the Administration;
3. to serve as a means of communication between the Faculty, Student, and Staff Senates;
4. to initiate suggestions for changes in policies and procedures;
5. to promote the professional and educational development of staff members, as well as the campus as a whole;
6. to encourage open communication among departments on campus;
7. to promote campus and community involvement among staff members;
8. to discuss and make recommendations relating to proposed institutional changes or concerns referred to it by the Administration.

Article III. Membership

Section 1: Composition

The Senate membership shall be based on Policy 5010, found in the Policy Manual of the Nebraska State College System¹.

¹Policy Manual – Nebraska State College System. (2020, January 6). Retrieved from <https://www.nscs.edu/policy-manual?category=personnel>.

- a. The professional staff “category includes all personnel who are not included in the faculty, non-ranked faculty, support staff, student or temporary employee categories. Included in this category are all employees holding titles such as Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, President, Vice President, Dean, and Director, as well as other administrative professional and managerial staff and some graduate assistance positions.” The Senate membership will include those who have a part-time or ten month contract as well.
- b. The support staff “category includes all personnel who are not included in the faculty, non-ranked faculty, professional staff, student or temporary employee categories; who may perform clerical, office, custodial, or maintenance duties and are compensated on an hourly basis.”
- c. Leadership of the Senate will include at least six (6) Elected Officers:

- One (1) Chair
- One (1) Vice Chair
- One (1) Recording Secretary
- One (1) Financial Secretary

At least two (2) Area Representatives for staff members who fall under the leadership of the President, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Vice President of Administration and Finance.

At least two (2) Area Representatives for staff members who fall under the leadership of the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

Section 2: Voting Membership

- a. All Staff Senate members are eligible to vote.
 - i. A simple majority vote of those present will be required for approval.
 - ii. In the case of an electronic or email vote, a majority of the respondents is necessary for approval. A concise voting period is required and must be noted in the call for vote. The Chair will set a timeline.
 - iii. All members who are not present at the meeting, or do not respond to an electronic vote, abstain by no response.
- b. The serving Chair will not provide a vote unless:
 - i. at an Elected Officer or committee level;
 - ii. to break a tie-vote.

Section 3: Non-Voting Membership

- a. The Faculty Senate may select one representative from its membership to attend regularly scheduled meetings of the Senate.
- b. The Student Senate may select one representative from its membership to attend regularly scheduled meetings of the Senate.

Section 4: Elections

- a. The entire membership of the Senate shall vote for the offices of Chair, Vice Chair, Recording Secretary, and Financial Secretary – in that order.
- b. Area Representatives will be voted in by the members of their represented areas.
- c. Preceding elections, the Chair will present a current list of staff members to the Senate membership with the list of Elected Officer positions available.
 - i. The Chair or Vice Chair cannot serve three (3) consecutive terms.
- d. Each member shall nominate one (1) candidate for each available Elected Officer position, with nomination collection ending one (1) week before the scheduled election date.
 - i. Any nominated Chair must have served or be currently serving a term as an Elected Officer with the Senate.
- e. The Chair will verify membership eligibility and contact each candidate for nomination acceptance before a ballot is generated.
 - i. If a member is nominated for more than one Elected Officer position, they will be asked to choose the position for which they would like to run.
- f. Elections will occur by April 30 each year.
- g. Elections will take place at a face-to-face meeting.
 - i. All members who cannot attend, and wish to submit a vote, must request an absentee ballot, which may be acquired within one (1) week of the election date and must be returned to the Chair or Vice Chair by the end of the meeting date.
 - ii. Ballots will be dispersed and collected, while keeping anonymity.

Section 5: Terms of Office

- a. The term of office for Elected Officers is one (1) year, alongside the fiscal year.
- b. Terms begin and end on July 1, while transitions take place in the months of May and June.

Section 6: Elected Officer Vacancy

- a. In the event that any officer is unable to complete his/her term of office, an election from within the Senate will be held to replace that officer.

Section 7: Removal of Officers

- a. A letter, including explanation, asking for the removal of an Elected Officer from his/her office must be submitted to the Chair by any member of the Senate.
 - i. If the letter is asking for removal of the Chair, the letter may be submitted to the Vice Chair.
- b. Following an Elected Officers' meeting, without the Officer in question present, the Officers will decide to move forward with the removal process or cease the action.
 - i. The Elected Officers shall meet with the Officer in question during this time.
- c. If the Elected Officers move forward with the proposed removal of office, they will inform the Officer in question of their decision. At that time, they will allow the Officer to step-down.
 - i. If the Officer chooses to continue, the Elected Officers shall grant permission for a removal petition to be completed. The petition must be signed by the majority of the current Senate. The completed petition and original letter would be record of the Senate and, at the discretion of the Elected Officers, be subject to reading at a meeting.

- ii. After official review, the Officers will make a recommendation to the Senate. A vote will immediately follow. A 3/4th vote of the members present is required to remove an Officer. If the Officer is removed, the Senate shall elect a replacement.
- d. Cause for removal from office shall include one or more of the following:
 - i. neglecting duties;
 - ii. failure to regularly attend scheduled Staff Senate meetings;
 - iii. failure to regularly attend Elected Officers' meetings;
 - iv. failure to regularly attend additional committee meetings;
 - v. finding of unprofessional conduct – on campus or outside of work.
- e. Removing an Elected Officer from an office does not remove them from the Senate.

Article IV. Meetings

Section 1: Regular Meetings

- a. A minimum of five (5) members, including at least one non-Elected Officer of the Senate, must be present to hold a regular meeting.
- b. During the fiscal year, there shall be a regular meeting of the Senate once a month.
- c. The agenda for this meeting will be prepared by the Chair and distributed to all members in advance of the meeting. The Senate, by majority vote of those present, may reorder the agenda.

Section 2: Special Meetings

- a. Special meetings may be called to discuss time-sensitive policies or procedures. These meetings will be scheduled with the majority approval of the Elected Officers.

Section 3: Open Meetings

- a. All regular and special meetings of the Senate shall be open to all staff members and visitors.

Section 4: Elected Officers' Meetings

- a. The Senate Elected Officers may hold a meeting that is closed to everyone except Elected Officers, but must share the outcomes of such meetings with the Senate.

Section 5: Meeting Attendance

- a. Attendance shall be taken at each meeting and be recorded in the minutes.

Article V. Duties of the Officer

Section 1: Chair

The duties for this office must include:

- a. calling regular and special meetings and presiding over those meetings;
- b. being an ex-officio member of all standing and special committees of the Senate;
- c. serving on or appointing as needed a representative to other campus committees;
- d. appointing members to subcommittees;
- e. voting during meetings in the case of a tie-vote;

- f. creating the agenda for regularly scheduled meetings;
- g. to be responsible for receiving reports from the Senate committees and transmitting the various recommendations contained therein to the College President and/or appropriate organization for further action;
- h. attending meetings regularly;
- i. performing other duties beneficial to the Senate.

Section 2: Vice Chair

The duties for this office must include:

- a. assuming the duties of the Chair in his/her absence;
- b. serving as an ex-officio member of all standing and special committees of the Senate;
- c. enforcing Robert's Rules of Order;
- d. maintaining the Constitution and heading the Constitution Committee;
- e. attending meetings regularly;
- f. performing other duties beneficial to the Senate.

Section 3: Recording Secretary

The duties for this office must include:

- a. assuming the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair;
- b. keeping complete records of all proceedings of the Senate;
- c. reporting the minutes of the meetings in writing to the Senate, except when circumstances beyond his/her control make it impossible to do so. Such reports shall be made on or before the time of the next meeting;
- d. making minutes available electronically to all members of the staff;
- e. sending notice of upcoming meetings at least one (1) week prior to meetings;
- f. being responsible for maintaining the Senate web page with current list of officers, minutes, and any other information deemed appropriate or necessary by the Elected Officers;
- g. attending meetings regularly;
 - i. If unable to attend a meeting, find a replacement for record-keeping purposes.
- h. performing other duties beneficial to the Senate.

Section 4: Financial Secretary

The duties for this office must include:

- a. updating the Senate regularly on the status of the budget;
- b. maintaining records regarding budgetary and financial information for the Senate;
- c. heading the Budget Committee;
- d. attending meetings regularly;
- e. performing other duties beneficial to the Senate.

Section 5: Area Representatives

The duties for this office must include:

- a. serving as a point of contact for questions or concerns from members within their representative area, and to present that information before the Senate;
- b. distributing information among their representative areas;
- c. attending meetings regularly;
- d. performing other duties beneficial to the Senate.

Article VI. Standing and Special Committees

Section 1: Membership

- a. Membership on committees is open to all staff members. An Elected Officer is encouraged to head these committees.
- b. Committees may not exceed six (6) official members.
- c. The Chair and Vice Chair must serve as ex-officio members or shall serve as official members of standing committees.
- d. The Chair will appoint representatives from the general membership to serve on committees, based on volunteers.

Section 2: Standing Committees

- a. Budget Committee
 - i. Chaired by the Financial SecretaryThe duties for this committee shall include:
 - ii. overseeing the Professional Staff Senate Scholarship, including its promotion, review of its criteria, and related communication;
 - iii. receiving, reviewing, and recommending the approval or disapproval of all Professional Staff Fund Requests for Professional Development.
- b. Campus and Community Engagement Committee
 - i. Chaired by an Area Representative, appointed by the Chair.The duties for this committee shall include:
 - ii. overseeing campus and community initiatives, which may include the planning, promotion, and/or organizing of events. This may also include the recruitment of volunteers to assist.
- c. Constitution Committee
 - i. Chaired by the Vice ChairThe duties for this committee shall include:
 - ii. regularly reviewing this Constitution;
 - iii. confirming that the practices of the Elected Officers and of the members are in line with the Constitution;
 - iv. updating the Constitution as requested, by a majority vote of the Senate. *See Article VII. Amendments.*

Section 3: Special Committees

- a. Special or ad-hoc committees may be formed each year, and approved to continue through the next fiscal year when appropriate.
- b. Committee chairs will be appointed by the committee members.

Article VII. Amendments

Section 1: Proposed

- a. Amendments may be proposed by any member.
- b. A proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Vice Chair, as chair of the Constitution Committee.
- c. The Constitution Committee will review the proposed amendment.

Section 2: Consideration

- a. The proposed amendment shall be placed on the agenda for discussion at the Senate meeting.
- b. The Vice Chair will then announce the amendment to members of the Senate, with the Constitution Committee's recommendations.

Section 3: Ratification

- a. If approved by the Senate, based on Article III, Section 2, the revised Constitution will be submitted to the Administration for approval.

Article VIII. Parliamentary Procedure

Section 1: Governing Authority

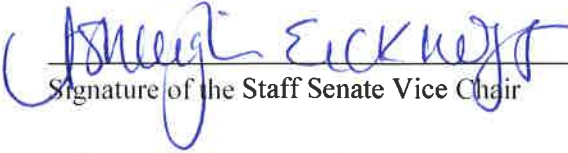
- a. The defining authority governing the Senate and its various subcommittees shall be *Henry M. Robert III and others, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised in Brief, 2nd edition* (Da Capo Press, 2011). ISBN: 9780306820199

Article IX. Ratification

The Constitution will become operative when approved by a simple majority vote of the Staff Senate and the President of the College. The President's continuing approval is required for the Constitution to remain in place and for the Staff Senate to operate.


This Constitution of the Peru State College Staff Senate was approved by the President on 12/10/2019 (date).

This Constitution of the Peru State College Staff Senate was approved by the Staff Senate on 12/06/19 (date).



Signature of the Staff Senate Vice Chair

12/10/19
Date



Signature of the Staff Senate Chair

12/10/19
Date



Signature of the Peru State College President

12/10/19
Date