

## **BYLAWS OF THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF SENATE**

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**BYLAWS OF THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF SENATE**  
UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

**Article I: Name**

This organization shall be known as the Professional Staff Senate of University at Buffalo, The State University of New York.

**Article II: Definitions**

Unless otherwise specified, terms used shall have the same meaning in these Bylaws as are ascribed to them in Article II of the *Constitution of the Professional Staff*.

**Article III: Membership of the Senate**

**Section A — Membership**

The membership of the Senate shall consist of the following:

1. The President of the University who shall serve *ex officio* without vote.
2. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary of the general membership who shall have identical roles in the Senate.
3. The representatives elected by and from the general membership according to election procedures described in Article IV, Section D, hereafter called “senators” (elected to represent a defined electoral area) or “at-large senators” (elected to represent the membership at large).
4. The Parliamentarian of the general membership-who shall serve *ex officio* without vote.
5. Professional Staff elected as senators or alternates to the SUNY University Faculty Senate.
6. The immediate past chairperson of the Senate who shall serve *ex officio* without vote for two years.

**Section B — Allocation of Senators Among Electoral Areas**

1. Senate representation shall be allocated to electoral areas as determined by the Executive Committee.
2. An annual review by the Executive Committee of electoral representation will be conducted. Adjustments and reallocations will be made as necessary.
3. Professional staff shall be assigned to electoral areas through the functional unit in which they hold their primary appointment. Professional staff holding joint appointments in two or more functional units located in different electoral areas may petition the Executive Committee to be assigned to an area other than their primary appointment.
4. Representation from the areas shall be according to the ratio of one senator for every 45 members in each electoral area rounding to the nearest whole number. Once each available seat is filled within each area, the next highest vote-getter will serve as an at-large senator. There will be one at-large senator for each electoral area.

### **Section C — Terms of Office**

1. Senators shall serve for two years and shall assume office on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. After every two-year term, a senator who wishes to hold a seat must run for re-election.

### **Section D — Election of Senators**

1. Any member of the Professional Staff can nominate themselves or other professional staff members from their respective electoral area to serve as a Professional Staff Senator in that area. Elections shall be held within ten (10) days after the nomination process to fill the number of vacant senator seats in each of the respective areas.
2. All senators shall be responsible for selecting their own alternates to fulfill all the duties and responsibilities of Senate membership at meetings of the Senate in the absence of the senator.
  - a. Alternates must be Professional Staff from the same electoral area as the senators for whom they substitute.
  - b. No senator shall serve as an alternate.
  - c. Alternates may only serve as a proxy for one individual senator at any meeting where business is conducted.
  - d. Each senator shall forward to the Senate Office the name or names of their alternate(s) no later than 30 days from their election or appointment, but at least 1 week prior to a scheduled meeting.
  - e. The list of selected alternates may change at the discretion of the Senator. Changes must be reported to the Senate Office at least 24 hours prior to a scheduled meeting.
3. In the case of a tie, run-off elections shall be held. In the case of a second tie, the winner shall be chosen randomly by the Elections Committee.
4. The election of Senators shall be completed by June 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Section E — Attendance**

1. If a senator is unable to attend a meeting of the Senate, the senator shall notify the PSS Office in advance, if possible, and request to be excused prior to the scheduled meeting.
2. If senators cannot attend a meeting of the Senate or of the general membership, it shall be their responsibility to notify their alternates that they need to attend.
3. It is the senator's (or their designated alternate's) responsibility to report their attendance to the Secretary at every meeting.
4. If both a senator and that senator's chosen alternate are absent from any three meetings all year (beginning July 1st), that senator shall lose their seat in the Senate. The Executive Committee may move to reinstate the Senator.

### **Section F — Resignations**

1. When senators are unable to complete their term of office, they must notify the Secretary of the Senate in writing.
2. Senators must resign as representatives to the Senate, as well as their membership on the Executive Committee of the Senate, when they no longer hold a position

within the University in the same Professional Staff Senate area in which they were elected or selected.

### **Section G — Vacancies**

1. Senators from an area in which a vacancy has occurred shall, acting jointly, forward at least one nomination per vacancy to the Executive Committee for approval.
2. If no senators put forward nominations to fill a vacancy, at-large senators may forward one or more nominations from the electoral area where the vacancy occurs to serve as a senator to the Executive Committee.
3. If no at-large senators put forward any nominations, a call for nominations can be made from the electoral area where the vacancy occurs.
4. If there are no nominations, then the Executive Committee will assign at-large senators to temporarily fill the vacancies in their respective electoral area until a member from that area be designated.
5. If the area where the vacancy has occurred has no at-large senators, then the Executive Committee can appoint an at-large senator from any electoral area to serve for the remainder of the vacated term.
6. At-large senator vacancies can be appointed by the Executive Committee from the general membership to serve for the remainder of the vacated term.

### **Article IV: Meetings of the Senate**

1. The Senate shall hold at least four (4) meetings between September and June of each year. These may be concurrent with meetings of the general membership of the Professional Staff.
2. A special meeting of the Senate may be called by:
  - a. The Chairperson.
  - b. A majority vote of the Executive Committee.
  - c. Petition of ten members of the Senate.
    - i. A petition for a special meeting shall be in writing, signed by each of the petitioning senators.
    - ii. A petition for a special meeting shall set forth the matters to be presented at the special meeting.
3. A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
4. Distribution deadlines can be found in the Constitution, Article IV, Section 4, a–c.

### **Article V: Executive Committee of the Senate**

#### **Section A — Function**

There shall be an Executive Committee of the Senate, which shall represent and act on behalf of the Senate, subject to Senate approval, in all matters within the jurisdiction of the Senate.

#### **Section B — Membership**

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the following:

1. The President of the University who shall serve *ex officio* without a vote.
2. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary of the general membership who shall have identical roles in the Executive Committee.

3. Two senators elected by and from the senators representing each Executive grouping to be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Their terms shall be one year commencing on July 1<sup>st</sup>. They cannot serve more than two consecutive terms without an intervening year.
4. One senator, elected by and from the senators representing each Executive grouping, who shall serve as a non-voting alternate member of the Executive Committee, except when serving as substitute for one of the area senators described in the preceding paragraph, under which circumstances they will have a vote.
5. The immediate past Chairperson of the Professional Staff Senate who shall serve as *ex officio* without a vote for two years.
6. The Parliamentarian of the Senate who shall serve as the Parliamentarian to the Executive Committee without a vote.
7. In accordance with Bylaws Article IX, Section A, all currently seated Senators of the SUNY University Senate who are members of the UB Professional Staff.
8. The Chairperson of the UB Faculty Senate who shall serve *ex officio* without vote.
9. A representative of the leadership of the UB Student Assemblies, selected by the officers and elected senators on the PSS Executive Committee, who shall serve *ex officio* without vote.

### **Section C — Powers and Duties**

The Executive Committee shall:

1. Act as the representative of the Senate between Senate meetings in all matters within the jurisdiction of the Senate under any of the following conditions:
  - a. When the action involves implementation of existing Senate policy.
  - b. When there is insufficient time to bring a matter before the Senate. Such actions shall be reviewed by the Senate at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - c. Pursuant to such delegation and direction as the Senate shall provide.
2. Advise and consult with the University President on any matters of University policy.
3. Have the power to consider and advise the Senate regarding all matters within the jurisdiction of the Senate.
4. Set the agenda for meetings of the Senate and general membership.
5. Submit reports through its Chair on all its non-procedural decisions to the Senate at all regular Senate meetings.
6. Serve as the Senate's Committee on Committees.
7. Establish ad hoc committees as necessary.
8. Determine the charges for all Senate committees.
9. Receive reports from Senate committees and promptly transmit them to the Senate whether with or without endorsement or comment, reserving the right first to recommit reports to committee for further work.
10. Nominate individuals to serve on external committees.
11. Define the duties and responsibilities of senators.

### **Section D — Meetings of the Executive Committee of the Senate**

1. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at regular intervals, no fewer than six times during the months of September through June.

2. A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
3. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Chairperson or by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.
4. Distribution deadlines for meeting-related documents can be found in the *Constitution*, Article IV, Section 4, a–c.

### **Section E — Attendance of Executive Committee Members**

1. If a senator who is a full member of the Executive Committee cannot attend a meeting of the Executive Committee, they must notify the elected alternate from their Executive grouping and ask that they act as their proxy.
2. An alternate may only serve as proxy for one of two senators in from their Executive grouping.
3. If a full member is absent and the Executive grouping alternate is not able to attend, or if the alternate has already been asked to proxy for the other senator, then that senator's absence shall be counted towards the three allowed, as described above.

### **Section F – Vacancies**

1. When a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee in any of the respective Executive groupings, the alternate executive committee member will move up to committee member and the new alternative will be the senator with the next highest number of votes in that respective Executive grouping.

## **Article VI: Senate Committees**

### **Section A — Membership**

1. Members of committees shall be approved by the Committee Chair and shall serve for such terms and shall perform such duties as the Executive Committee shall determine.
2. The Executive Committee shall approve the Chairperson of each committee.
3. A Vice Chair may be appointed by and at the discretion of the Executive Committee. The Vice Chair will assist the Chair with the regular business of the committee and will preside over the committee in the Chair's absence.
4. Voting membership on every committee, except the Executive Committee, may include other members of the university community.
5. Committee members who are nonmembers of the general membership have the privileges of the floor of the Senate, so long as such committee membership continues.

### **Section B — Powers and Duties**

1. The Senate and its standing committees are the policy-recommending bodies of the general members.
2. It shall be the duty of each committee to consider questions and policies within the committee's charge and to initiate investigations of any questions germane to its area of interest.
3. All Standing Committees, Special Committees, and PSS members appointed to Faculty Senate Committees shall report in writing to the Senate by submitting their

reports to the Vice Chair at least five days in advance of each regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting.

## **Section C — Professional Staff Members Appointed to Faculty Senate Committees**

### **Article VII: Parliamentary Authority**

1. *Roberts Rules of Order* shall govern the Professional Staff Senate in all cases that are not in conflict with these Bylaws.

### **Article VIII: SUNY Senators**

#### **Section A — Function**

1. In accordance with Article VII, Title B, of the *Policies of the Board of Trustees*, and the rules and regulations of the SUNY University Faculty Senate, the professional staff in conjunction with the faculty shall elect from their memberships representatives to serve in the SUNY University Faculty Senate.
2. SUNY Senators are responsible for attending all Plenary meetings. SUNY Senators who are members of the Professional Staff shall report back to the Professional Staff Senate with a summary of the Plenary, bringing any necessary business forward, no later than the next scheduled Executive Committee meeting.
3. SUNY Senators have voting rights and responsibilities on the SUNY University Faculty Senate, UB Faculty Senate and UB Faculty Senate Executive Committee. They must attend these meetings to exercise their voting rights.
4. Each professional staff member who is elected to the SUNY University Faculty Senate shall also serve as a voting member in the Professional Staff Senate and the Executive Committee.

#### **Section B — Nominations and Elections**

1. The Chairs of the Elections Committee for the Professional Staff Senate and the Faculty Senate shall jointly issue a call for candidates.
2. Each member of the professional staff may suggest no more than one name for each of the available positions.
3. The Elections Committees of both Professional Staff Senate and Faculty Senate shall conduct the elections in collaboration with the Elections Committee of the SUNY University Faculty Senate.
4. Voting shall be by a secret ballot with the nominees receiving the highest number of votes being elected. The nominee receiving the next highest number shall serve as the alternate.
5. To appear on the elections ballot, a nominee must be nominated by five (5) professional staff and/or voting faculty with full name and University official email and provide a brief written statement of no more than 500 words. One of the five may be the nominee.
6. At least one member of the UB delegation to the SUNY University Faculty Senate must be elected from and by the faculty and professional staff of the health science schools (Dental Medicine, Health Related Professions, Medicine and Biomedical

Sciences, Nursing, and Pharmacy), and the others from and by the faculty and professional staff of all other academic units and of the University Libraries.

### **Section C — Alternates**

1. For every  $N$  vacancy to be filled the  $N$  nominees with the highest numbers of votes shall be elected as senators to the SUNY University Faculty Senate and the  $N$  nominees with the next highest number of votes shall be appointed as alternates, provided that each nominee received at least a majority of votes from those voting.
2. The Alternate with the highest number of votes shall become the Alternate to the Senator who received the highest number of votes; the Alternate with the second highest number of votes shall become the Alternate to the Senator with the second highest number of votes, etc.
3. If there are insufficient nominees to fill all the Alternate positions or the nominees received less than a majority of votes, a separate election for Alternates shall be held. Unsuccessful nominees may run again in the election for Alternates.
4. Alternate representatives shall serve in the SUNY University Faculty Senate in the absence or inability to act for the Senators for whom they are Alternates. Such Alternate representatives shall have and exercise all the powers and duties of the Senators for whom they are Alternates.

### **Section D — Terms of Office**

1. Senators shall assume office on July 1.
2. Each senator shall serve for a term of three (3) years, and Alternates shall serve the same term as the Senators for whom they are alternates.
3. No such representative shall serve as a member of the SUNY University Faculty Senate after severing employment with the University.

### **Section E — Re-election**

1. A senator or alternate who has served a full three-year term or major fraction thereof shall be eligible to serve a second consecutive three-year term. Senators shall not be eligible to serve an additional term until one year from the end of their preceding term has passed. There are no term limits for Alternates.
2. A senator shall not be eligible to serve again as member of the SUNY University Faculty Senate until the expiration of one year from the end of the last preceding term.

### **Section F — Vacancies**

1. In the event of a vacancy resulting from the death, resignation, or termination of the service of either a senator or an alternate, an election will be held, as soon as practicable, to fill the unexpired term in the same manner as the original election.
2. Any person currently serving as an alternate is eligible, if otherwise qualified, to be elected senator.
3. If a senator or an alternate is to be on leave of absence for a period of one academic year or longer, the rest of their term shall be vacated, and an election shall be held, as soon as practicable, to fill the unexpired term in the same manner as the original election.

4. If both a senator and the alternate are simultaneously unable to represent the campus for a period in excess of four months during the academic year, the rest of their terms shall be vacated, and elections shall be held, as soon as practicable, to fill the unexpired terms in the same manner as the original elections.

## **Article IX: Amendment Procedures**

### **Section A — Amendment Proposals**

Proposals to amend the *Bylaws* may be presented as motions to be considered by the general membership by one of the following:

1. A signed petition of at least ten percent of the general membership, as determined by the Office of University Shared Governance under the guidance of the Executive Committee.
2. A majority vote of the Professional Staff Senate.
3. A majority vote of the entire Executive Committee of the Professional Staff Senate.

### **Section B — Deadlines**

Such proposed amendments must be submitted to the elected Secretary at least 20 business days prior to a regular or special meeting of the general membership. They will be placed on the agenda and circulated to the members at least 10 business days prior to the scheduled meeting.

### **Section C — Voting**

Voting must occur within ten business days after the meeting at which amendments were proposed. Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot of the general membership, either by paper or secured electronic (online) method, as decided by the Elections Committee of the Professional Staff Senate. All ballots must be received within 15 business days of mailing or the opening of online voting and shall be counted within two business days from the date the ballots were due.

### **Section D — Implementation**

Amendments shall become a part of these *Bylaws* if approved by two-thirds of the members voting. Amendments shall take effect immediately after ballots are counted unless a specific effective date is provided with the amendment.

Ratified - May 5, 1972

Revised - July 1, 1999

Revised - October 15, 2004

Revised - November 28, 2016

Revised - December 9, 2020

Revised - June 10, 2022

Revised – November 22, 2023