

Expectations and Best Practices for Staff Council Representatives

What is Staff Council?

Purpose

1. To serve as a representative advisory council.
2. To provide a vehicle for communication of interests, concerns, and issues that affect staff.
3. To present recommendations to University leadership.
4. To provide nominations to university committees and task forces.

More information can be found on the of the council can be found on the [Staff Council wiki](#) .

Our values

Our values were decided by the members of the 2017-2018 Staff Council and are more than just words on a page. They're the way we do business. They're how we build and maintain trust with our stakeholders. They're how we decide what's important for us to work on. They're the way we ACT.

Advocacy

- Serving staff by representing their best interests to the university community
- Fostering a pathway of communication between upper administration and our constituents
- Seeking diversity in membership, perspectives, and ideas when representing staff culture

Collaboration

- Creating a sense of community by forging effective partnerships with campus stakeholders
- Executing projects that are valuable to the organization

Transparency

- Maintaining honest and transparent communications and processes
- Remaining accountable to ourselves and to our constituents by holding open meetings and publicizing our decisions
- Intentionally sharing unbiased information with our stakeholders

Accomplishments

A public list of highlights can be found on the [Accomplishments page of the Staff Council website](#). A more detailed list can be found on the [Staff Council wiki accomplishments page](#).

UTSC accomplishments for the year are shared with the university's president via [written reports](#) at the end of the Staff Council term (May), as well as at the UTSC May meeting, which the president and other university administrators typically attend.

Benefits of being a Representative

- Special access to programs, initiatives, and opportunities across campus.
- Opportunities to represent the interests and concerns of members of your department, and neighboring departments, to campus leadership.
- Opportunity to build relationships across the campus community.
- Opportunities for strengthening your skills in: professional written communication, negotiation, strategy, project management, delegating, public speaking, building partnerships, and managing without formal authority.
- Chance to meet the university's senior leadership, such as the university's president and other university administrators.
- Opportunity to identify a need on campus and influence program development in concert with campus stakeholders to answer that need. Practice taking a leadership role in solving problems and responding to needs.

Responsibilities

- Represent your district. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Attend monthly Staff Council General Meetings, where information that is relevant to both Staff Council Representatives and their constituents is shared.
 - Note: If you cannot attend the monthly General Meeting, communicate with the UTSC Secretary.
 - Pass along information that may be relevant to your constituents in a clear, concise way.
 - Gather the interests and concerns of your constituents and escalate those interests and concerns to Staff Council as appropriate.

- Contribute to UTSC Standing Committee work, which is where projects are done and progress is made for the benefit of our community. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Responding to committee emails in a timely manner.
 - Attending committee meetings, which typically occur monthly.
 - Working collaboratively with your committee to ensure goals are being met and tasks are getting completed in an equitable manner.
 - Using [UTLists](#) to communicate with your committee, which will help capture accurate records for historical value. Records that might impact or benefit future Staff Council members should be added to the [Staff Council wiki](#).
 - Note: committee work is estimated to take one to two hours per month. This includes time spent in committee meetings.
- Report [Clery Act violations](#) that you become aware of.
 - Staff Council representatives are considered [Campus Security Authorities](#), and are therefore required by law to always properly report violations.
 - Become familiar with the [Clery Act](#).
- Contribute 4 hours of work time each month to Staff Council, [approved by university leadership](#) and referenced in Staff Council's [Standard Operating Procedures](#).
- Review and abide by Staff Council's [Bylaw and Standard Operating Procedures](#).
- Keep your supervisor informed of your work on the Staff Council and its committees. Depending on your supervisor's position within the university, they may not receive the communications you send to your district. Helping your supervisor see the value you bring to this group will help your supervisor be more understanding of the time you commit to it.
 - If your supervisor does not seem supportive or is not allowing you the time approved by university leadership, please bring this to the attention of the [Chair](#).

Communication

Expectations

As a Staff Council Representative you communicate to various groups, including your supervisor, your constituents, your fellow committee members, and other Representatives. You may also need to communicate with various stakeholders or people within the university who can help you make progress on a specific UTSC-related task. Always use professional language when communicating as an official Staff Council Representative.

When communicating with your constituents, best practices are:

- Send an email at least once a month, letting them know what you've learned in the General Meetings. Using [Emma](#), the university's group email system, will ensure the correct people are being emailed.
- Often the Chair or the Communication Committee will draft something for you to send to your constituents. You are welcome to use that draft as a starting point or create your own communication. YOU know how your people prefer to be communicated with and what's important to them. Feel free to add emphasis to things you think are more important and delete things that are irrelevant. The important part is that they're hearing from YOU and know who to bring issues to.
- Be sure to include your district email address or contact information at the bottom of the email.
- If you are serving in a district with multiple Representatives (multi-seat district), coordinate communication with your fellow district Representatives.
- Our General Meetings are open to the university community, so invite your constituents to join you for one of our monthly General Meetings - especially if you know the guest speaker will be of interest to them.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is made up of all Standing Committee chairs, the four UTSC elected officers, the UT System Employee Advisory Council Representatives for UT Austin (ex officio), and the UTSC Program Coordinator (ex officio). A list of the current [Executive Committee members](#) and their contact information can be found on the [Staff Council website](#) by following these directions:

- Hover your mouse over the "Who we are" menu
- Click on the item "Officers and Committees"

Elections and Appointments

Officer elections

Staff Council's Officers are elected with the assistance of the Parliamentarian and vote counters. The nomination period begins the day of the January General Meeting and ends at 5pm (CST) the day prior to the February General Meeting. Voting opens the day of the February General Meeting and closes no more than 5 days later. Officers shall be elected in a vote that has a quorum of at least half of all UTSC Representatives participating. Voting shall occur with a ranked-choice voting system. See the [UTSC Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures](#) for additional information.

Committee Chair Appointments for Standing Committees

Staff Council's Committee Chairs are usually informally elected by Standing Committee members prior to the end of the current term in May.

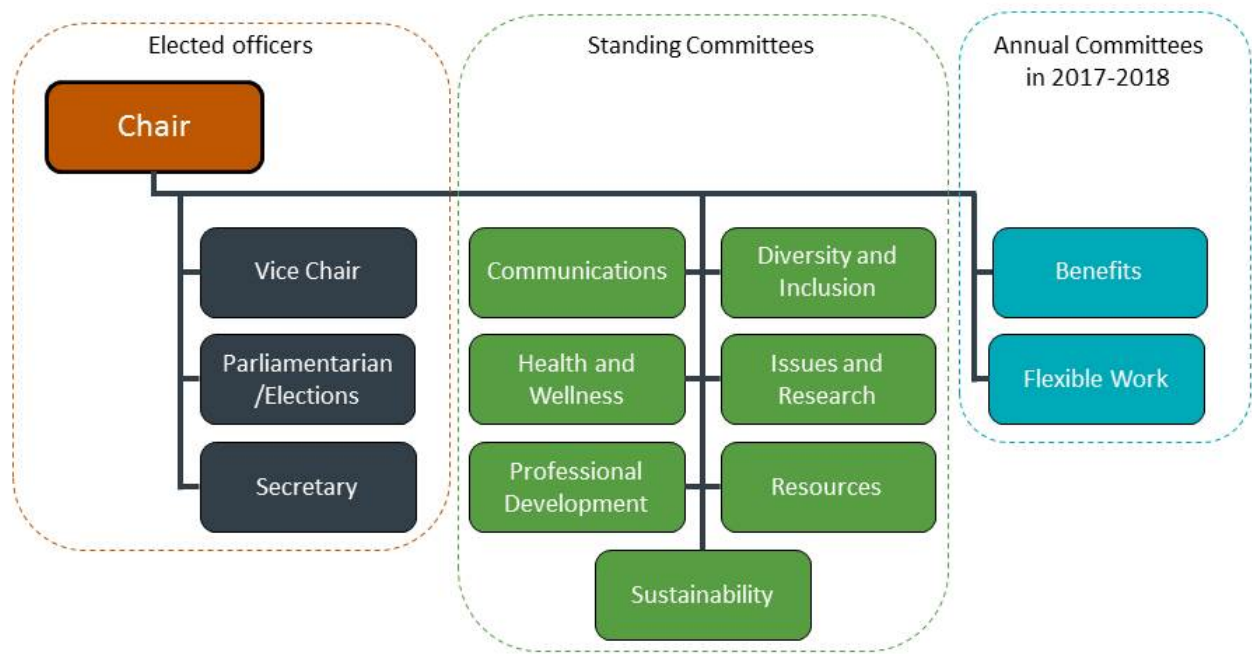
More information on Executive Committee

- COMING SOON: Link to expectations and best practices for Executive Committee members

Organizational Chart (OUTDATED)

This chart is an example of how committees are typically organized. The Chair oversees the whole UTSC body and each representative is either an officer or part of a committee. The Standing Committees are written into our bylaws and will always exist unless the bylaws are changed. Sometimes there are Ad Hoc committees formed as the need arises. The Elected Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Parliamentarian, and Secretary), all of the Committee Chairs, the UT System Employee Advisory Council Representatives for UT Austin (ex officio), and the UTSC Program Coordinator (ex officio) make up the Executive Committee.

UT Staff Council Organizational Chart 2017-2018



Appendix

[Staff Council Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures](#) (last updated March 2022) can be found on the [How We Work](#) page of the Staff Council website .