

**NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY
STAFF ADVISORY SENATE**

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization is the New Mexico Highlands University Staff Advisory Senate.

ARTICLE II: BYLAWS

The Staff Advisory Senate, hereinafter referred to as Senate, shall prepare bylaws for the conduct of its business. If a disagreement arises between this Constitution and the Staff Senate Bylaws, the Constitution will be the controlling instrument.

ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Section 1 The Staff Advisory Senate of NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERISTY will serve as a source of input regarding issues and decisions of the University as they relate to the staff of NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERISTY. The Senate will report to the University President and shall have the Senate President serve on the President's Advisory Council. In addition, the Senate shall promote the general well being of NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY by assisting the University in achieving its goals.

Section 2 The Senate:

- A. Works in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources to establish two-way communication and address matters of concern identified by the Senate or the administration.
- B. Studies problems, concerns, welfare and working conditions of the staff.
- C. Calls to the attention of the administration, other University organizations, and individuals, matters of concern as they relate to the staff.
- D. Cooperates with the Faculty and Student Senates in the formulation of recommendations concerning matters relating to the staff, faculty, and students.
- E. The Senate will not function as a bargaining unit or a grievance committee and does not represent individual employees with individual concerns. Its main objective is to address issues affecting the campus staff at large.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1** The Senate provides a forum for regular, part/full-time non-faculty staff at the main campus in Las Vegas and its Centers across New Mexico. Eligible Center staff are an integral part of the NMHU membership cluster and participation in the Senate is encouraged. (excluded are the President of the University, the Vice Presidents of the University, the Associate Vice Presidents of the University, the Deans of School, the Associate Deans of School, faculty and student employees). The Senate shall be comprised of 12 elected representatives from each of the following membership groups: Administrative/Professional, Clerical, Technical/Skilled and Maintenance. Each membership group will be represented, as nearly as possible, proportionately to its percentage of eligible staff members.
- Section 2** The term of office for members of the Senate shall be staggered and shall be for two (2) year terms. Members of the Senate shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms (four-years) of office. Positions filled by appointment will count as a full elected term. A term is defined as a two year period.
- Section 3** There shall be no alternates for members of the Senate. Whenever a vacancy occurs, the Senate President shall request from the membership group a list of names of persons, with their consent, to be placed in nomination to fill the vacancy for that membership group. After the names of persons nominated are received by the Senate President, a new person shall be appointed to the Senate by the Senate President, subject to the majority approval of the Senate. If an officer position is vacated, the senate shall elect a Senate member to the vacant position at the next regular meeting of the senate. Under no circumstance may a member be appointed to serve an unexpired term on the Senate unless that newly appointed member is from the same membership group in which the vacancy has occurred.
- Section 4** Any member of the Senate who terminates employment with the University shall be removed from the Senate and a vacancy declared. Those who change employment status which affects membership classification shall retain their Senate seat until the selection of the newly appointed member. Any member of the Senate who is absent from three (3) regular meetings of the Senate during a Senate year (July 1 – June 30) may have her/his seat on the Senate declared vacant by the Senate President. The affected Senate member may be reinstated to her/his vacant seat by submitting a written request for reinstatement to the Senate, but such a request must be sustained by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of approval of the full Senate at the next regularly scheduled meeting. If the affected member does not request reinstatement or if the Senate does not sustain the request for reinstatement, the seat shall be filled in accordance with Article IV, Section 3.
- Section 5** A member of the Senate may be recalled by two-thirds majority of the remaining Senate, if it is found that the member has violated the constitution or by-laws. Prior to any recall vote, the member in question may address the senate.
- Section 6** The Human Resource Director will serve as an ex-officio member of the Senate and will be a non-voting member.

ARTICLE V: NOMINATION AND ELECTION

- Section 1** The Senate will be represented by Staff employees from each of the following membership groups in accordance with Article IV, Section 1.
- A. Administrative/Professional
 - B. Clerical
 - C. Maintenance
 - D. Technical/Skilled
- Section 2** Nominations of candidates for election must be made in writing to the Secretary of the Senate at least twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the date of the annual election. Only staff employees in accordance with Article IV, Section 1, may be nominated for election to a seat on the Senate. All nominations must have the consent of the nominee, and all nominations must be validated by the signature of the nominator and nominee.
- Section 3** Elections of members to the Senate shall be held annually by ballot prior to the regular June meeting and the results of the balloting shall be announced by June 30 of each year. Only staff employees in accordance with Article IV, Section 1, may be elected to a seat on the Senate.
- Section 4** The installation of new members and the organization of the Senate shall take place every year at the first regular Senate meeting in July. The Senate shall elect, from its members the representatives to fill the vacant seats of officers.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS, COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS:

- Section 1** The Officers of the Senate shall be:
- A. President
 - B. Vice-President
 - C. Secretary
 - D. Treasurer
 - E. Parliamentarian
- Section 2** The Senate shall have the power to create committees as necessary. Only non-faculty staff employed on a regular, part/full-time basis shall be eligible to serve as a voting member on any of the committees created.
- Section 3** A majority of the Senate shall constitute a quorum.
- Section 4** The rules of parliamentary procedure, as laid down in Robert's Rules of Order in the most recent edition, shall govern all meetings of the Senate.
- Section 5** Regular meetings of the Senate will be open to all and will normally be held each month at a time and place designated by the Senate President. The Senate President shall construct the agenda in collaboration with the Senate. Agenda items should be submitted to the Senate President for consideration to be placed

on the agenda for the next Senate meeting. All such requests, to be placed on the agenda by subject, must be received by the Senate President at least five (5) working days prior to the Senate meeting.

Section 6 In addition to the regular monthly meeting, the Executive Board will meet quarterly. Special meetings of the Senate may be called by the Senate President or by any five (5) members of the Senate at least three (3) working days prior to the meeting.

Section 7 Any person who is not an elected or appointed member of the Senate or serving on one of the Senate's committees and who has not requested to be placed on the agenda may be allowed to address the Senate. The non elected person will be limited to five (5) minutes to present their views or to state their position on any matter.

ARTICLE VII: CONSTITUTION AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1: The Constitution shall become effective upon approval by the University President and Board of Regents.

Section 2: Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by Senate members at a regular meeting. Ratification of an amendment requires approval by two-thirds of the Senate members. Amendments shall become effective on the date of ratification by the Senate.

Section 3: No amendments to the Constitution or By Laws may be voted upon at the same meeting at which it is introduced. This provision of the Constitution may not be altered.

Approved by:

**NMHU President
NMHU Board of Regents**