ARTICLE I. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

The name of the organization shall be the Sul Ross State University Staff Council hereinafter referred to as Staff Council. The employees represented are all benefits-eligible, non-faculty University employees hereinafter referred to as the Staff at all locations of the University.

ARTICLE II. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Staff Council shall be to:

1) Promote an atmosphere of unity and cooperation among Staff across departments at all locations of the University;

(2) Promote recognition of the Staff as an integral part of the institution in keeping with the mission of the University;

(3) Provide a forum for Staff members to discuss openly any matter associated with the university;

(4) Provide the Staff a positive and collaborative voice in university matters affecting Staff; and

(5) Serve as an advisory body to the University President regarding interests and concerns of the Staff.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility

All benefits-eligible, non-faculty University employees who have been employed for at least one year shall be eligible for membership on the Staff Council. The President, Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, Librarians, and Deans shall not be eligible for membership in the Staff Council.

Section 2. Staff Council Representation

A. The Staff of each University division or group (see Allocation Chart following Section 2, B) at the University shall be allowed to nominate and vote for representatives within their respective group for vacancies on the Staff Council. (See Article V for additional information on the election process.)
B. The number of the Staff in each group shall be based on the most current information from the Office of Human Resources. The following Allocation Chart shall determine the number of representatives for each group. The allocation of representatives will be reviewed at least every two years, one month prior to the call for nominations.

**University Divisions/Staff Groups**

- Alpine Campus:
  - Academic Affairs Division
  - Finance and Operations Division
  - Physical Plant Operations
  - President’s Division
  - Student Services Division

- Rio Grande Campus:
  - Del Rio
  - Eagle Pass
  - Uvalde

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<th>Group/Division</th>
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<th>Divided by 30</th>
<th>Number of Representatives</th>
<th>Number of Alternates</th>
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<td>Uvalde</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
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**Section 3. Division/Group Review**

On February 1st of each second year beginning in 2010 (i.e., 2012, 2014, etc.), the Office of Human Resources will supply the Staff Council with a listing of benefits-eligible, non-faculty employees by groups. The Staff Council's Nominations and Elections Committee shall then determine the appropriate number of representatives and alternates for each group. Should a group's number of representatives decline as a result of this process, the next position with a term to expire within that group will not be filled.
Section 4. Terms Begin September 1

A. Representatives shall serve staggered two-year terms. Terms begin the first day of September and end on the last day of August.

B. In the Staff Council's first year (2010), at least one representative from each group will be chosen by lot to serve a one-year term. Thus in subsequent years, terms shall be staggered with elections conducted annually for one-half of the Staff Council seats. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms, but may be re-elected after a one-year interval.

C. An elected representative whose group changes during his/her term of office will continue to serve the constituency who elected the representative for the remainder of the term.

Section 5. Representatives' Duties and Time Allowances

A. Representatives shall attend all meetings of the Staff Council.

B. Representatives shall serve on committees as members or be elected as chair of committees, and may be elected as an officer of the Staff Council.

C. Representatives shall be available to their constituents, indicating how they may be contacted. They shall be willing to hear concerns, to receive information and suggestions, and to communicate these effectively to the Staff Council. In turn, representatives must keep their constituents informed of the work of the Staff Council and matters that the University Administration communicates to the Staff Council representatives. The Staff Council will not hear grievances. University employees wishing to file grievances must follow the established University procedures as outlined in the Administrative Policy Manual and The Texas State University System Rules and Regulations.

D. Representatives shall be allowed a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed twenty hours per month, to devote to Staff Council meetings and work as part of their normal working duties. The Staff Council member shall keep their supervisor informed of time needed for Staff Council work and insure this time does not conflict with normal job duties.

Section 6. Alternates

A. Alternates are individuals who receive the next highest vote count in an election by group. The number of alternates in each group is determined by the Allocation Chart following Section 2.

B. If a member of the Staff Council resigns or is unable to serve for any reason, the unexpired term shall be filled by the alternate in the corresponding group. Said alternate shall serve the remainder of the term and be designated as a member of the Staff Council.

Section 7. Provision for Removing a Representative from Office

A. Any representative whose unexcused absences cause a group to be underrepresented for three regular and/or special called meetings of the Staff
Council during the year shall automatically be removed and notified in writing. An alternate, as defined in Section 6, shall serve the remainder of the removed representative's term.

**B.** A member of staff council may be censured or removed from membership for good cause by a two-thirds vote of a quorum. If removed, then an alternate, as defined in Section 6, shall serve the remainder of the removed representative's term and be designated as a member of the Staff Council.

**ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

**Section 1. Titles and Membership on Executive Board**

Officers of the Staff Council shall be elected by the Staff Council. The Officers of the Staff Council shall be the Chair, Chair Elect/Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. These officers will make up the Executive Board of the Staff Council.

**Section 2. Duties**

**A.** The Chair shall:
1. Preside at all meetings of the Staff Council;
2. ensure the projects undertaken by the Staff Council are developed, organized, and implemented in an orderly and timely manner;
3. Involve the Executive Board in all decisions;
4. With justification and documentation, grant excused absences from meetings for members of the Staff Council;
5. Vote only to decide any tie votes; and
6. Fulfill other responsibilities and duties as required.

**B.** The Chair Elect/Vice Chair shall:
1. Assume the position and duties of Chair at the end of the Chair's term or as such time as the Chair's position becomes vacated;
2. In order to provide a smooth transition and continuity of duties, become thoroughly knowledgeable of all decisions made by the Chair;
3. Conduct Staff Council meetings in the absence of the Chair;
4. Be authorized to sign all documents for the Staff Council in the absence of the Chair; and
5. Assume other duties and assist the Chair as directed by the Staff Council.

**C.** The Secretary/Treasurer shall:
1. Give notice of all meetings;
2. Maintain a file of the agendas and official minutes for all meetings of the Staff Council with permanent copies (print and electronic) maintained by the University Archives;
3. Following any corrections and/or additions and approval, electronically distribute copies of the minutes to the University Campus in a timely manner;
4. Help in a timely manner with all correspondence as directed by the Staff Council;
5. Keep and archive with the University Archives the history of the formation, member participation, and actions of the Staff Council;
6. In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, conduct meetings of the Staff Council;
7. Be responsible for all financial functions (making deposits, processing purchase requisitions and vouchers, verifying each month's accounting summary/detail reports from the University Controller's Office, and following all applicable University policies and regulations governing University related accounts) of the Staff Council;
8. Provide a Treasurer's Report at each meeting of the Staff Council;
9. Submit an annual, written report of the activities and accomplishments of the Staff Council to the University President; and
10. Maintain communication with Staff Council representatives and the University Community by E-mail and/or the official Staff Council Website.

Section 3. Terms of Office

A. The term of office for all officer positions shall be one year.
B. No member may hold more than one officer position at a time, and no member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.
C. Any member may be re-elected to an office which he/she held for two consecutive terms after being vacant from that position for one year.

Section 4. Executive Board Vacancies

A. Any Executive Board officer vacancy shall be filled only from the remaining Staff Council members.
B. The process shall be by nomination and vote of the remaining members of the Staff Council.
C. A member of the Staff Council elected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the term. The representative selected to fill the vacancy shall be replaced by the appropriate alternate in that group.

ARTICLE V. ELECTIONS

Section 1. Election Process

A. Each Staff Council representative shall be elected by secret ballot for a two-year term.
B. Once elected, each Staff Council representative serves for not only his/her group but also all Staff.
C. The terms shall be linked to even and odd years so that half of the positions of the Staff Council will stand for election each year.
D. Election of Staff Council members shall be held every April with terms beginning on September 1.
E. In the initial year (2010) of the Staff Council, Council members chosen by lot to serve an initial one-year term will be eligible to be re-elected for a new two-year
term. The Chair of the Staff Council shall determine by lot which members will serve the initial one-year terms.

Section 2. Nominations and Elections Committee

Each January, the Executive Board shall select a Council member as Chairperson of the Nominations and Elections Committee. Following the initial four years (2010-2014) of the Staff Council operations, the Committee Chairperson shall not be a candidate for re-election to the Staff Council. Subject to approval by the Staff Council, the Committee may make necessary modifications to operating procedures to the nomination and election process.

Section 3. Vacancies

Staff Council positions that become vacant between annual elections shall be filled by alternates as defined in Article III, Section 6.

Section 4. Nominations

Eligible Staff members may nominate candidates for the Staff Council from within his/her group. The Nominations and Elections Committee is responsible for verifying eligibility of nominees and for assuring that a minimum number of candidates are nominated for each group. The allocation for the minimum number of representatives for each group is outlined in the Allocation Chart following Article III, Section 2. If the minimum number of candidates is not reached through the nominations process, the Committee shall solicit further nominees from within the respective group(s).

Section 5. Procedures for Elections

A. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall obtain and/or solicit nomination forms by group and verify (in writing) eligibility and willingness to accept the nomination and serve if elected. The Committee shall inform all nominees of attendance requirements, time commitments, and the fact this is a voluntary position with no additional compensation. The nomination process begins on the first working day of February and ends on the last working day of March of each year.

B. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall prepare and distribute ballots adhering to the principles of the secret ballot process. There is no maximum number of candidates for any group. The ballot process begins on the first working day of April and must be finished before the last working day in April of each year.

C. At least three members of the Nominations and Elections Committee will count the ballots. A report of the ballot count will be prepared, certified, and submitted to the Staff Council no later than five working days after the end of voting. In the event of a tie vote, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall prepare a run-off ballot, repeat the election process, re-certify, and present the results to the Staff Council.
D. Any election challenges or disputes must be presented to the Staff Council Chair within seven working days of the end of voting. The Staff Council Chair shall investigate all election disputes and determine what, if any, irregularities occurred during the election process. The Chair shall take whatever remedial action necessary to settle any dispute.

E. Upon final certification and approval of results by the Staff Council, the Chairperson of the Nominations and Elections Committee shall notify new Staff Council representatives and alternates and invite them to attend the next meeting of the Staff Council as guests. After the final certification and approval of the elections results, election results shall be given to the Secretary/Treasurer to be recorded in the Staff Council minutes and for publication.

F. All ballots shall be sealed and held for three months by the Secretary/Treasurer. If no allegations of election disputes or errors are brought forward, the ballots shall be destroyed. The Secretary/Treasurer shall store all remaining records (final certifications, approvals, notifications, correspondence, disputes, etc.) concerning the outcome of the election process with the University Archives.

Section 6. Selection of Executive Board Members.

A. At the first meeting in September, the Staff Council shall entertain nominations from the floor from among its members to select nominees for the positions of Chair (if necessary), Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. These positions constitute the Staff Council Executive Board.

B. Each nominee must acknowledge his/her willingness to serve as an Executive Board member.

C. The Vice Chair nominee(s) must be at the beginning of his/her two-year Staff Council term(s).

D. The election of Executive Board members shall be held at the first meeting of the Staff Council each September. The elected members shall assume office immediately upon the conclusion of the voting process.

E. The Executive Board election process shall be overseen by the out-going Chair. New Board members shall be determined by the candidate receiving the highest number of votes of Staff Council representatives present. The out-going Chair shall use written, secret ballots and count the results in the open meeting.

F. Ties will be decided by run-off elections. In the event of more than two runoff elections for the same position, the out-going Chair shall cast the deciding vote.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Schedule of Meetings

A. Meetings of the Staff Council shall be open in accordance with statutes of the State of Texas. Non-members shall be seated in a separate section. The presiding officer may cause anyone who disrupts the meeting to be ejected.

B. Regular meetings of the Staff Council shall be held on a monthly basis from September to May. There shall be no fewer than four regular meetings per year.
C. At the first regular meeting in September, the Staff Council shall establish regular meeting times. All meetings, whether regular or special, should be held during normal working hours Monday through Friday.

D. The Secretary/Treasurer shall be responsible for publicizing at least seven working days in advance of regular meeting times and places and the deadline for submittal of agenda items. An agenda shall be posted at least two working days prior to the regular meeting date and time.

E. If the Chair and Executive Board have no new agenda items or proposals, they reserve the right not to hold a meeting but they must give three working days notification to Staff Council members.

Section 2. Quorum

A. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority (50% + 1) of the Staff Council or committee membership. Neither the Staff Council nor its committees shall conduct business without a quorum.

B. In the absence of a quorum,
   1. the Chair may only make announcements of an informative nature;
   2. any business transacted shall be null and void; and
   3. the Executive Board may convene a special meeting to consider time-sensitive issues that require immediate action.

Section 3. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the University President, the Staff Council Executive Board, or at the request of a quorum of the Staff Council membership. One working day notice must be given of any special meeting. Without prior notice, the University President may call an emergency meeting at any time. Depending upon circumstances, notice may be given at Staff Council meetings, on the official Staff Council Website and by E-mail. Only business specified in the call of the special meeting may be conducted.

Section 4. Forum

The first regular meeting following the election of the Executive Board members shall be an open forum of the Staff. The Staff Council Chair shall invite available University administrators to be speakers and answer questions from the floor.

Section 5. Voting

A. Only elected Staff Council representatives may vote.

B. Unless a roll call vote or vote by secret ballot is requested by a majority of the voting representatives, voting on motions and issues brought before the Staff Council shall be by voice or show of hands. The Secretary/Treasurer will record all roll call votes in the meeting minutes.

C. Each representative is entitled to one vote.

D. Representatives are not allowed to use proxy votes.

E. A simple majority vote of the Staff Council representatives present and voting shall decide a question. The Chair shall only vote to break any tie votes.
Section 6. Floor Privileges

Only Staff Council representatives may introduce proposals, measures, and resolutions on the Staff Council floor. Persons who are not members of the Staff Council may be granted the right to speak, but not to vote, on matters before the Staff Council. When a request is made for this privilege, the Chair shall ask the Staff Council for objections and, hearing none, shall grant permission to speak. If objections are raised, the privilege shall be extended only by majority vote of the Staff Council representatives present.

Section 7. Agenda

A. Meetings of the Staff Council shall have an agenda that includes the time and place of the meetings, the order of business, and copies of any substantive proposals. The Executive Board shall set the agenda; however, items may be added to the agenda at the meeting if approved by a majority of the Staff Council representatives present. The Secretary/Treasurer shall solicit agenda items and set a deadline of five working days prior to the next meeting of the Staff Council for receiving agenda items. The agenda shall be posted two working days prior to a regular meeting on the Staff Council's official website and distributed by E-mail to the Campus community.

B. The Executive Board shall:
   1. receive proposals for Staff Council action or other presentations to the Staff Council from any Staff Council committee or representative, from any individual Staff, or from the University President or his/her designee;
   2. use an Agenda Request form, including the following requirements for information submitted with a proposal:
      a. the name and contact information of the Staff presenting the proposal as well as date submitted,
      b. a one-line caption describing or naming the proposal,
      c. the reasons for submitting the proposal, such as goals and objectives, problem to solve, etc.,
      d. details of proposal, and
      e. backup documentation of materials, when appropriate;
   3. include on the agenda of a regular meeting as soon as possible all items presented from various sources;
   4. set the agenda so that business may be addressed in a meeting of reasonable duration;
   5. if necessary, advise the Staff Council of the need for a special meeting; and
   6. respond to the submitted proposals within a reasonable amount of time, considering the circumstance of the proposal.

Section 8. Minutes

Minutes shall be made available to the Staff Council within ten working days after each regular meeting. After any corrections and/or additions and approval at the next regular meeting, the Secretary/Treasurer shall electronically distribute copies of the minutes to
the University Campus within ten working days. A permanent copy of the minutes shall be kept in the University Archives.

Section 9. Order of Business

The order of business for meetings shall be set forth in the agenda. Unless modified by the Chair, the order of business shall be:

1. call to order and establishment of a quorum;
2. approval of the previous meeting’s minutes;
3. committee reports;
4. unfinished business;
5. new business;
6. miscellaneous (comments, announcements, round table items, tributes, etc.);
and
7. adjournment.

Section 10. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern the Staff Council and its committees in all cases to which they are applicable except when they are not consistent with these guidelines, The Texas State University System Rules and Regulations, or with any special rules of order the Staff Council may adopt. The Executive Board shall appoint a parliamentarian.

ARTICLE VII. BUDGET AND FINANCE

Section 1. Source of Funds

The University shall establish and fund an operating budget to meet reasonable operating expenses of the Staff Council.

Section 2. Account Management

The Staff Council Secretary/Treasurer shall serve as the account holder and shall serve as the department head with alternate signature authority assigned to the Staff Council Chair.

Section 3. Account Review

At all times, details of expenditures made on behalf of the Staff Council shall be available for review and audit. The Staff Council Secretary/Treasurer shall maintain all transaction records. (See Article IV, Section 2 for complete details.) Permanent storage for all records shall be with the University Archives.

ARTICLE VIII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Membership
A. With the exception of the Executive Board members, all Staff Council representatives shall serve on at least one standing committee or established subcommittee.
B. Each committee shall be comprised of at least three members.
C. Staff Council representatives may volunteer to serve on standing committees and/or subcommittees.
D. The Executive Board shall determine the standing committee representation, first considering volunteers. Each committee will elect a chairperson.
E. The term of a committee member shall be for the representative's term on the Staff Council.
F. All committee members shall be elected Staff Council members.

Section 2. Removal and Reappointment

A. Without an excused absence, a committee/subcommittee member who has missed three regular and/or special committee meetings will automatically be dismissed from the committee.
B. The committee/subcommittee chairperson shall notify the Staff Council Chair of the vacancy, and the Executive Board shall fill the vacancy.

Section 3. Meetings

A. Each committee should meet at least twice during the period September through May. Additional meetings may be called by the committee chairperson, or upon written request of at least two members of the committee.
B. Meetings shall be conducted following the guidelines set forth in Article VI of the By-Laws.

Section 4. Duties

The standing committees of the Staff Council shall accept business items assigned to the committee by the Executive Board and address the item(s) in a responsible and timely manner. If need arises, the committee may form a subcommittee(s) to study specific issues, make recommendations, and refer items as necessary. Standing committees have the authority to request the Executive Board to appoint an ad hoc committee for special business under its jurisdiction. Under no circumstances shall information be disseminated from a committee until it has been brought before the Staff Council or is authorized by a majority of the Executive Board or adopted by majority vote of the Staff Council. The committee chairperson will make a report to the Staff Council at each meeting; maintain and provide the Staff Council Chair and Staff Council Secretary/Treasurer with a written report of each committee meeting; and prepare a complete written annual report concerning the work of the committee to be submitted to the Staff Council Chair and Secretary/Treasurer by the last meeting of the year.

Section 5. Standing Committees

The standing committees of the Staff Council will be determined at a later date.
Section 6. Ad Hoc Committee

A. The ad hoc committees of the Staff Council shall be appointed by the Executive Board as needs arise, or as requested by a standing committee for special business under their jurisdiction, to review and address specific issues. Each ad hoc committee will have at least three members. Ad hoc committee members shall elect a chairperson who will be charged with presenting the issues and responding with the committee’s findings to the Staff Council.

B. The term of an ad hoc committee shall be determined by the matter under consideration. Following the completion of its task(s), the ad hoc committee will disband.

C. Ad hoc committees shall accept the issues assigned to the group by the Executive Board; address the item(s) in a responsible and timely manner; and make progress reports on the group’s activities to the Staff Council, as well as a final report and/or recommendation(s).

Section 7. Recurring Ad Hoc Committees

The Executive Board appoints the recurring ad hoc committees. The Staff Council recurring ad hoc committees are the Nominations and Elections Committee and the Constitution and By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee.

A. Nominations and Elections Committee: The Executive Board shall appoint members to this committee each year. The committee shall handle all nominations and elections procedures as set forth in the *By-Laws* and coordinate and validate all elections to the Staff Council. No Staff Council representative who is a candidate for an open position may be a member of this committee.

B. Constitution and By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee: Upon request of the Executive Board or Staff Council representatives, this committee shall review the Staff Council Mission Statement, Constitution and/or By-Laws to assess the continued appropriateness to current Staff Council needs. The committee will review, propose, and recommend through the Executive Board to the Staff Council any changes or revisions to the Mission Statement, Constitution and/or By-Laws.

Section 8. Staff Council Representation on University Committees

The Staff Council will seek to have a representative on appropriate University committees. The Executive Board shall make such recommendations to the University President at the last regular meeting of the Staff Council for service in the following academic year.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Section 1. Proposals to Amend

A proposal to amend the *By-Laws* may be made by either:

A. A majority vote of the Staff Council;
B. A petition signed by not less than 20% of the Staff employees represented by the Staff Council; or
C. The University President and Systems Vice Chancellor and General Counsel following their determination that some portion(s) of the By-Laws are at variance with Texas state law or the adopted Rules and Regulations of The Texas State University System.

Section 2. Publication

Proposals for amendments must be made available to the Staff at least ten working days before the issue comes up for a vote in the Staff Council.

Section 3. Approval

Amendments proposed pursuant to Section 1 shall require approval of a majority of current Staff Council representatives casting ballots and by the University President.