

**Resolution**  
**Regarding the Addition of Shared Governance to Staff Senate Constitution**

**Resolved by the Southeastern Staff Senate**

As the official representative body of the staff of Southeastern Oklahoma State University, the Staff Senate is tasked with ensuring non-faculty employees are able to effectively participate in achieving the goals of the University, which includes meaningful and intentional staff participation in shared governance of the University. With the approval by the University President to add a third Shared Governance forum to each fall and spring semester to be led by the University staff, the Staff Senate must ensure that the purpose and responsibilities of shared governance are clearly outlined and communicated to the University staff and that the role and responsibilities of the Staff Senate are clearly defined. Thus, the following addition to the Staff Senate Constitution and Bylaws is recommended:

**ARTICLE 8: SHARED GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT**

Two primary forms of communication between the President and the staff will be utilized in order to further the issue of shared governance:

**Executive Committee Meetings:**

The Staff Senate Executive Committee shall meet periodically with the President and Vice President of Business Affairs to develop a line of communication between the Staff Senate and the administration. The Chair of the Staff Senate and President will establish a time and place for the meeting (approximately once a month) to discuss concerns of the Senate directly with the President. The Chair of the Staff Senate will provide the President and Vice President of Business Affairs an agenda of items to be discussed and delivered to the President one week in advance of the scheduled meeting to provide the President sufficient time to prepare for the meeting. The Executive Committee will provide a report to the Staff Senate at the next Senate meeting.

**Shared Governance Forums:**

The purpose of these meetings is to establish lines of communication among the administration, faculty, and staff of the University and to share information about specific areas of concern in order to resolve specific issues. While concrete solutions may not be possible in the forum, solutions to the issues should be sought and action (where and when possible) be implemented at the earliest possible time.

Three forums will be held each fall and spring semester. The President, the Faculty Senate Chair, and the Staff Senate will each determine the topic of one forum each semester. For the staff-led forum, the Staff Senate Chair will arrange the meeting details (date, time, place) and agenda with the President and the Staff Senate, and all staff as well as faculty will be notified and invited to attend the meetings.

The goal of these forums is to ensure that all parties are:

1. Being informed on issues that confront higher education and the institution;

2. Acting within time constraints that are imposed by external agencies and influences, sometimes with little or no notice;
3. Sharing appropriate information and providing feedback in a reasonable amount of time;
4. Recognizing the specific goals and needs of the institution, and being accountable to the constituencies represented; and
5. Aware of the roles played by various units and individuals in decision making and administration.

Given the dynamic nature of institutional governance, it is understood

1. That there may be occasions when institutional leaders must act in the best interest of the institution on major issues affecting the institutional constituencies without full benefit of the shared governance process. In such cases the representative bodies shall be informed in a reasonable amount of time and have an opportunity to comment on the issues.
2. That administrators shall inform relevant constituencies in a reasonable amount of time if they choose to disregard, in whole or in part, the advice and recommendation of constituencies, and they should provide the reasons for their decision. In these cases, the shared governance body may, if it so chooses, present a written statement of its position and/or any objections to the decision as part of the institution's or unit's record on the issue.
3. Faculty and staff who do not hold administrative appointments, and all students may express their opinions freely on all shared governance matters without retaliation. Administrators, including faculty holding administrative appointments, may also express their opinions freely during policy discussions, without retaliation, but once a decision is determined, all stakeholders are expected to implement policy as determined by the institutional leadership.

Shared governance requires a commitment of resources and time from the University. The University shall provide a proper level of resources, as determined by the President, to faculty, staff, and students to allow them to carry out their shared governance responsibilities effectively.

While participation in governance by faculty, staff, and students is necessary and important for the wellbeing of the university, the final responsibility for decision-making rests with the institutional President, the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board of Regents, and/or the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education who are ultimately held accountable by the public and its elected leaders.

Resolution Drafted by the Southeastern Staff Senate Executive Committee  
November 8, 2022

Resolution Approved by the Southeastern Staff Senate  
November 17, 2022