



# UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA

## STAFF SENATE

### Staff Senate Working Group Best Practice Guidelines

A companion to the Staff Senate bylaws

June 13, 2017

#### STAFF SENATE WORKING GROUPS

- Working groups of the Staff Senate are created to address a specific interest or concern of the Staff Senate or the Staff Senate Executive Committee.
- Work of a Staff Senate working group must fall within the mission, scope, and bylaws of the Staff Senate.
- Working groups may only exist for a finite period of time and must produce a product at the end of their time.
- Working groups must provide updates of their progress or future plans at all Staff Senate meetings.

#### PARTICIPATION ON WORKING GROUPS

- The Staff Senate may allow persons who are not senators to serve on a working group but the chair of the committee must be a senator, and a majority of its members must be senators or alternates. Exceptions to this rule may be made with approval of the Executive Committee.

#### WORKING GROUP FORMATION

- The Staff Senate Executive Committee may convene a working group at any time to conduct work on behalf of Staff Senate.
- Any Staff Senator or Alternate may propose an idea for a working group.
  - The idea may be presented in writing to the Executive Committee for support before being presented to the Staff Senate or;
  - The idea may be proposed in the Senate Business portion of a Staff Senate meeting.
    - For ideas proposed to the Staff Senate directly, a show of hands will be taken of those Senators present as to whether the idea:
      1. Adds value to Staff Senate or is necessary for Staff Senate to undertake
      2. Does not add value to Staff Senate
    - A majority vote in favor of Option 1 or 3 means that the working group can be formed provided a member of the Staff Senate Executive Committee is willing to sponsor the working group.
    - If no member of the Staff Senate Executive Committee is willing or able to sponsor the working group, the working group idea will be tabled until a sponsor can be found within the Staff Senate Executive Committee.
      1. If an idea is tabled, the Staff Senate Executive Committee is expected to discuss the working group at their next meeting and report back to the Staff Senate at the subsequent Staff Senate Meeting as to why a sponsor was not able to be found.
      2. Tabled ideas may be held into future Staff Senate terms.



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- The Staff Senate Executive Committee may help further refine the charge of the working group before it is formed to ensure the work aligns with the Staff Senate mission, scope, and bylaws.
- Any Senator or Alternate who proposes an idea for a working group must participate in the working group once formed unless a member of the Staff Senate Executive Committee is willing to take responsibility for the project without the assistance of the Senator or Alternate who proposed it.

### WORKING GROUP LEADS

- A working group lead must be chosen for each committee.
- The working group lead may be the member of the Staff Senate Executive Committee who is sponsoring the working group or may be chosen from the volunteers within the working group by the Staff Senate Executive Committee member who is sponsoring the working group. The working group lead must be a Senator or Alternate.
- If a Senator or Alternate proposed the idea of the working group to the Staff Senate, they are not required to be the working group lead.
- The working group lead will work with the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor to determine the charge of the working group, develop a timeline for the work to be completed, and clearly articulate the deliverables
  - The charge, timeline, and final product of the working group can be modified at any time upon consensus between the working group lead and the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor.
- The working group lead is responsible for ensuring working group meetings are scheduled at a reasonable interval to meet established deadlines, setting agendas for meetings, and documenting the activities of the working group.
- The lead is responsible for keeping the efforts group members focused on the charge of the working group. Any perceived need to change or expand the scope of the working group must be discussed with and approved by the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor.
- The lead will provide regular progress updates to their Staff Senate Executive Committee Sponsor prior to providing updates at Staff Senate Meetings.
- The working group lead will work with the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor to determine who will provide updates on the working group's progress at Staff Senate meetings.
- If a working group lead steps down, the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor may designate a new lead.

### WORKING GROUP PRODUCTS

- Each working group must be created with the intention of producing a defined product.



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- Working group products may include, but are not limited to a guidance document, a resource for staff, a recommendation, a presentation, a collection of research from peer institutions, etc.
  - Products do not need to be tangible, but expectations on the final product should be clearly defined.
- Working group products will be shared with the Staff Senate upon completion.

### **WORKING GROUP COMMUNICATION**

Communication from Staff Senate to the University community should be infrequent, meaningful, and brief and should be carefully edited to ensure a consistent voice and a clear, well-written message.

If a working group is interested in sending communication (letter, survey, etc.) to any University entity regarding Staff Senate business, the working group must first present their proposed communication to the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor who will determine if it needs to be reviewed by the Executive Committee. Executive Committee review is required if the Executive Committee sponsor or working group wishes to conduct a survey or provide any communication in which they represent themselves as speaking on behalf of Staff Senate. This review is not required if the Executive Committee sponsor or working group is sending communication for the purposes of gathering information as long as the communication is clear that the Executive Committee sponsor or working group is not speaking for or on behalf of Staff Senate.

### **WORKING GROUP REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY**

- Working groups are required to provide updates on their progress at all Staff Senate meetings during their existence.
- Reports from the working group may come from the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor, the working group lead, or an appointed member of the working group.
- Updates on working group progress are required even if there has been no progress since the previous Staff Senate Meeting. These updates are required to remind staff senate that the work is being done and allow senators the opportunity to engage on the subject.
- UVA Collab is the official repository for all Staff Senate and Staff Senate documents. Working group leads should ensure any work generated under their purview is documented on UVA Collab as needed.

### **WORKING GROUP DISSOLUTION**

- Working groups will be officially dissolved once their designated product has been completed. The dissolution notice will be sent by the Staff Senate Executive Committee sponsor of the working group, confirming that the product has been completed.
- Working groups may be dissolved at any time at the discretion of the Staff Senate Executive Committee if the working group is veering from its intended charge, is not aligning with the mission, scope, and bylaws of Staff Senate, or it has been determined that due to time and priorities, that the issue should be tabled until a future time.