



STAFF  
COUNCIL

Councilor Handbook



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## 1. History of the Staff Council

In 1970 staff at the University formed the University Staff Association (USA). The organization never gained formal recognition but served to educate staff about the need for a unified voice on campus. In 1985 UNM President Tom Farer, recognizing the need for staff input, called for the creation of a Personnel Advisory Committee to be composed of staff officials from personnel and the administration. When Dr. Farer resigned the proposal was shelved. It was not until 1987 that non-union staff decided they needed a means of directly communicating their concerns to the administration. The University Staff Association was resurrected, and a membership drive was undertaken. USA discussed the need for a formal non-union staff association with UNM President Gerald W. May and Vice President David McKinney. In March of 1988 President May created the Staff Council Study Group. The group was charged with determining if there was a need for staff representation and, if so, what form of representation. Public hearings were conducted in November 1988 to obtain feedback from staff. A formal proposal was presented to Vice President McKinney in November 1989, and the Board of Regents approved the creation of the UNM Staff Council in December 1989.

The Staff Council Study Group developed election guidelines and conducted the first election of Staff Councilors in the spring of 1990. The first meeting of the Staff Council was held on July 11, 1990. Secretary of the University Anne Brown opened the meeting and UNM President Richard Peck addressed the body. The first Staff Council meeting dealt with how to conduct its meetings, rules for the election of officers, and development of the Council Bylaws. The first Staff Council officers were elected in September of 1990. One of the first tasks of the Staff Council Executive Committee was to create Council committees and seek members. The committees established included Communications, Benefits, Career Development, Rewards and Recognition, Bylaws, and Constitution.

An offshoot of the Staff Council Study Group was the Committee on Staff Recognition, created by President May in 1989. It was charged with finding new ways to promote and recognize the many contributions of staff. The committee presented its recommendations to President May in July 1989. These recommendations included support for the proposed Staff Council and their Bylaws, a committee on ethics, a career development program, a resource center for staff, a sick leave bank, and a staff community service award.

The Staff Council Executive Committee also reviewed the recommendations from the Committee on Staff Recognition. Council committee chairs met with the Executive Committee and developed a work plan. Some of the issues addressed at the first Council Meetings included representation on the search committee for the Director of Personnel, the creation of an advisory board to the personnel office, the creation of an Ethics Committee, and representation on the UNM 2000 Plan.

In 1994 the Council recognized the need for administrative support for the Staff Council. Today, the Council is supported by one full-time staff employee, the Staff Council Administrative Officer.

The Council continues to be “the voice of staff” at UNM. It is an active, dynamic organization that advocates for issues of concern to staff. The President of the Staff Council serves as an advisor to the Board of Regents and is a voting member of the Regent’s Academic / Student Affairs & Research Committee. In addition, the Staff Council President is an advisor to the UNM President’s Executive Cabinet and Budget Leadership Team. The Staff Council is an equal partner with faculty in the Faculty Staff Benefits Committee which tackles issues of employee benefits including retirement.

The workforce behind the Staff Council is in its committees. The Staff Council currently has a variety of internal committees (see page 5 of this handbook or visit <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html>). In addition, the Staff Council appoints representatives who sit on university-wide committees to offer staff input on important decisions that affect staff.

## 2. Council Membership

The Council is divided in half with one half of the sixty councilors representing job grades and the other half representing precincts (organizational codes grouped by Vice-Presidential reporting structure). Representatives serve a two-year term with elections for grade positions held in odd-numbered years and elections for precinct positions held in even-numbered years.

A staff member employed by UNM in a regular, contract, or term position; who is at least half-time status; and who has worked at the University for at least six months is eligible to serve on the Staff Council. Staff employed at the University's branch community college campuses are not eligible for election to Staff Council or to vote in elections.

The Staff Council encourages full and equal participation - no staff member is denied full and equal participation for reasons of race, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, spousal affiliation, veteran status, medical condition, political belief, or any other characteristic protected under applicable law. In addition, all staff regardless of status or FTE can participate in any Staff Council committee whether they are an elected representative on the Council or not.

### 3. Staff Council Governing Documents

Councilors are expected to understand and abide by the [Staff Council Governing Documents](#) which include:

#### [Regents' Policy Section 6.12: University of New Mexico Staff Council](#)

The Board of Regents approved and adopted the creation of the University of New Mexico Staff Council in 1996.

#### [University Administrative Policy 1150: Staff Council](#)

The University's official policy concerning Staff Council was first issued in 1995.

#### [Memorandum of Understanding](#)

The Memorandum of Understanding between the University of New Mexico and the UNM Staff Council was first signed in 2006, updated in 2018 and again in June of 2022.

#### [Staff Council Constitution](#)

The Staff Council Constitution describes the purpose of the Council and specifies the makeup of its general membership. The Constitution outlines the Council's election process, the duties of the officers and the role of the Executive Committee. The Staff Council Constitution was originally approved and ratified by the UNM Board of Regents in 1992.

#### [Bylaws](#)

The Staff Council Bylaws set forth rules that determine the function of the officers, administrative officer, committees, business meetings, rules of order and ethics. The Bylaws were originally approved by the Staff Council in 1991.

#### [Election Code](#)

The Staff Council Election Code establishes the procedures for conducting annual Council membership elections and the election of the Staff Council officers who serve on the Executive Committee. The Election Code specifies that the Rules & Election Committee, as established by the Staff Council, is charged with conducting annual elections and carrying out and enforcing the Code in a fair and consistent manner. The Election Code was originally adopted by the Staff Council in 2007.

### 4. Staff Council Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics for the Staff Council is intended to be advisory and to provide guidelines for professional and

civil conduct of Staff Councilors and members of the staff of UNM who are working on behalf of the Staff Council. It is not intended to be inclusive of all possible contingencies or situations that might arise. Staff Councilors aspire to higher ethical principles and conduct and respect the rights of other members of the University community. The elections code was adopted by Staff Council in January 2002 and amended in May 2016.

The Code of Ethics will be read by the outgoing President or Speaker after newly elected Councilors are seated. The Code of Ethics reads:

“Staff Councilors shall conduct themselves in meetings with civility and respect for all other members, staff, and guests. Staff Councilors shall respect the Council's chosen processes and follow the Staff Council Bylaws and Robert’s Rules of Order when participating in formal Staff Council meetings.

Staff Councilors will adhere to all University of New Mexico policies and procedures to include procurement, behavior, and confidentiality in matters affecting themselves, their Council work, and their relations with others on behalf of the Staff Council.

Staff Councilors shall place the interests of the Staff Council above personal and private interests in conducting Staff Council business. Staff Councilors shall make known a conflict of interest or the potential for a perceived conflict of interest.

Staff Councilors shall not condone or participate in unethical conduct and shall conduct themselves ethically and accept full responsibility for upholding this code of ethics.”

## 5. Staff Councilor Responsibilities

Councilors shall:

1. Understand and abide by all University Administrative Policies (UAP). In addition to UAP 1150 mentioned above, others of specific relevance to Staff Council include [UAP 2240: Respectful Campus](#), [UAP 2500: Acceptable Computer Use](#) and [UAP 2060: Political Activity](#).
2. Understand the basics of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised .
3. Attend all Staff Council monthly business meetings. If a Councilor is unable to attend a meeting, the Staff Council office should be notified by email prior to the start of the meeting to record attendance as “excused.” Attendance is recorded at all business meetings. If more than three consecutive meetings are missed Councilors may be asked to resign from the Council.
4. Arrive at Council meetings on time at 1:00 p.m. and must sign in. A quorum is required to conduct business. If quorum is not met no actions or votes may be taken.
5. Be recognized by the presiding officer, usually the Speaker, before speaking.
6. When addressing the Council during the business meeting, state his/her name first, and then state her/his Grade or Precinct. All questions or comments shall be directed to the Staff Council Speaker or presiding officer.
7. Make all committee reports, resolutions, and requests for action by the Council available in writing to Councilors prior to any action being taken.
8. Include in all resolutions, requests for action, or other measures to be considered by the Staff Council the names of the authors, sponsors, and committees that have reviewed them, along with appropriate

background information regarding them.

9. Keep abreast of campus issues to gather information, relay concerns, and bring those concerns to the attention of the full Council, a Council Committee, or to members of the Executive Committee.
10. Regularly and consistently communicate with their constituents by use of their constituent listserv (provided by the Staff Council office).

## 6. Staff Council Meeting Etiquette

- Do be in your place on time, ready to do business.
- Do sign in at every meeting.
- Do listen to what's going on, so you can respond when necessary.
- Do silence your cell phone and other electronic devices.
- Do not disrupt the meeting by making noise, whispering, or talking loudly.
- Do address all remarks to the Speaker (that includes debate and motions).
- Do confine remarks to the pending question.
- Do avoid the use of members' names.
- Do follow the rules of debate (know what they are).
- Do be seated during an interruption by the Speaker.
- Do ask permission to read from a document (letter, report) or book.
- Do not use inappropriate language during debate.
- Do not attack a member's motives.

## 7. Staff Council Committees

It is recommended that Councilors serve on at least one Staff Council Permanent Standing Committee or Standing Committee by attending committee meetings and fully participating in committee discussions, activities, and events.

### A. Permanent Standing Committees

**Ethics** - The Ethics Committee shall establish and maintain, subject to Council approval, a Code of Ethics.

The Ethics Committee shall function as a resource to the Council. The Ethics Committee shall advise on ethical questions relative to Council business and the Council Code of Ethics at the request of the Council.

**Executive** - The Executive Committee transacts the routine business of the Council and is convened by the Staff Council President, who serves as Chair of the Committee. All business transacted by the Executive Committee is reported at Staff Council meetings by the President-Elect. The Executive Committee receives committee reports, via the Staff Council Speaker, for Staff Council committees and via the Staff Council President for external (University-wide) committees. The Executive Committee determines the agenda for Council meetings.

**Rules and Elections** - The Rules and Elections Committee reviews and makes recommendations on all proposed amendments to the Staff Council Constitution, Bylaws, General Rules, and Special Rules of the Council. The committee develops election procedures for the annual Staff Council elections and any special elections and prepares and counts ballots cast and reports to the Council the results of each election. The Committee sets, with Council approval, campaign guidelines.

### B. Standing Committees - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html>

Active standing committees can change based on Council needs or committee participation. Visit the website for the current list. The page also has links to committees' webpages, which include more information on their

charges, chairs, meeting times, recent minutes, and more.

**C. Special (Ad Hoc) Committees - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html>**

Special or Ad Hoc committees are special committees established by the Staff Council to carry out limited, specified business of the Council. The charge to such committees is determined at the time of formation. Ad Hoc committees automatically go out of existence upon either the expiration date stated by the Council at the time of formation, or when the committee submits its final report to the Council. The Staff Council Speaker, with approval from the Council, makes appointments to Ad Hoc committees.

**D. University-Wide Committees - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html>**

University-wide committees are composed of representatives from the various University constituent groups. These committees are typically formed at the administrative level of the University and may be charged with specific tasks over a stated time or may continue permanently. The Staff Council President, with approval from the Council, makes staff appointments to University-wide committees.

## **8. Staff Council Communications**

**A. Email**

Staff Councilors are automatically added to the Staff Councilor email listserv ([StaffCouncilors-L@list.unm.edu](mailto:StaffCouncilors-L@list.unm.edu)) when they are seated. Sending email to this listserv will reach all members of the Council as well as the Staff Council Administrative Officer. You are encouraged to use this listserv to communicate with your fellow Councilors! Additions or corrections to the list are managed by the Administrative Officer. Membership on this list is required for elected Councilors.

Constituent listserv email addresses (by Grade or by Precinct Representative) will reach all constituents who have email addresses within a specific grade or precinct. Constituents may e-mail back directly to the sender but not to the whole list. The listservs are refreshed nightly and thus do not allow for unsubscribing.

Staff Council Committee listservs are managed by the Staff Council Administrator. Members are added or deleted from these listservs by the Staff Council Administrator.

**B. How to Communicate with Constituents**

Each Councilor is the “owner” of their respective constituent email listserv. The listservs are managed by the Staff Council Administrator and will be assigned to each Councilor. Once you are an “owner” of your constituent listserv you may communicate with your own constituents. Many Councilors use this email communication to summarize meetings or seek input on crucial Council business.

It is suggested that Councilors keep constituents updated on important issues and events by sending a personal message to their constituent listserv. Resending the weekly Staff Council “eNews” is not necessary or recommended, as your constituents have already received this email. Guidelines for appropriate listserv use can be found in the Staff Council Communications and Marketing Policy at <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/councilors/staff-councilor-resources.html>.

**C. How to Communicate with the Staff Council Executive Committee**

The Staff Council Executive Committee has a listserv that includes members of the Committee. The listserv is managed by the Administrator. Councilors or Staff Council Committee Chairs may send messages to the Executive Committee via the Administrator at [scouncil@unm.edu](mailto:scouncil@unm.edu). Messages are then routed to members of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee meetings are held every week, except during the week that the Staff Council business meeting is held. Check the Staff Council website for date, time, and location. All Staff Council Executive Committee meetings are open, except when in executive session.



Staff Councilors may contact any member of the Executive Committee to request to be placed on an upcoming meeting agenda, to address them, present them with a request, or ask them for advice.

## 9. Parliamentary Procedure

What is Parliamentary Procedure?

A system to conduct meetings used to generate desired outcomes in the shortest amount of time. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is the Parliamentary Authority for the Staff Council.

The Staff Council Parliamentarian

The Staff Council Parliamentarian shall be nominated by the Speaker and approved by the Council to serve on an annual basis. This shall be done at the same meeting in which officers are elected. Our bylaws state, "the Parliamentarian serves as an advisor on matters of parliamentary procedure. Any questions to the Parliamentarian during meetings must go through the Speaker who may or may not choose to consult the Parliamentarian."

The Parliamentarian's function is to:

- Serve at the pleasure of the Speaker and advise the Speaker and the Council regarding procedure and protocol.
- Be a knowledgeable resource regarding the UNM Staff Council procedures and Robert's Rules of Order.

### A. Making a Motion

Any member of the body, when recognized by the Speaker, may make a motion. State your name, the precinct or grade that you represent, and then address the Speaker. Proper Language:

✓ "Jane Doe, Precinct 12. Madam or Mister Speaker, I move that we adopt/pass/accept Resolution #6"

✓ "John Smith, Grade 16. Madam or Mister Speaker, I move to amend this resolution to read ..."

- All Main Motions and Amendments must be moved and seconded. However, motions made on behalf of a committee do not require a second. Nominations do not require a second.
- There is one main motion on the floor at a time.
- Abstentions are not to be called for, nor recorded except for roll call and balloted votes.

### B. Amendments to Motions

You can move to amend an amendment to a motion.

- Main Motion
  - ▣ Primary Amendment
    - ▣ Secondary Amendment

### C. Ending Debate

Only one of the following is required:

- When all members who wish to speak have done so, debate is over, and the Speaker calls for the vote.
- When the Previous Question is moved by a Councilor. "John Doe, Grade 2. Madam or Mister Speaker, I move the Previous Question." A two-thirds vote of the body is required to end debate and is non-debatable.
- When an item is tabled, postponed or referred to committee.

**D. Changing a Decision**

- Reconsider: Moved by a member who voted with the prevailing side,
- Rescind: Can be moved by any member,
- Amend Something Previously Adopted: Same characteristics of Rescind.

**E. Incidental Motions**

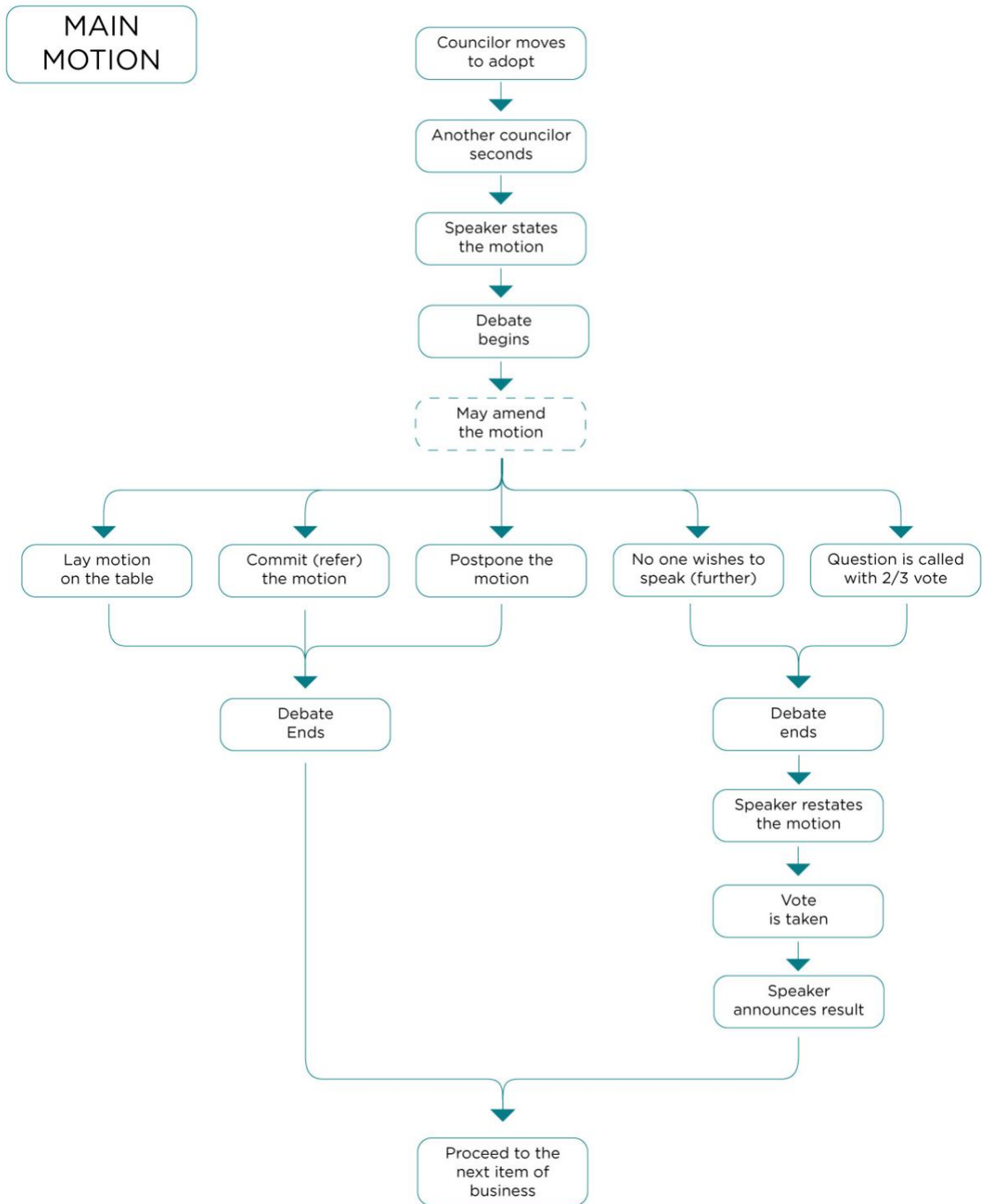
- Request for Information: Is a question to any speaker (through the chair) made by any member of the body. The speaker is not required to answer.
- Parliamentary Inquiry: Simply a question on procedure or rules. Not subject to an appeal since it is the Chair's opinion and not a Point of Order
- Point of Order: Made by any member of the body and interrupts the current speaker to bring up a perceived violation of the rules. The decision of the chair may be appealed.

**F. Appealing the Chair**

Must be moved, seconded, and voted on by the body and requires majority to uphold the decision of the Chair. "John Doe, Precinct 1. Madam Speaker, I appeal the decision of the Chair" and states the reason.

- If seconded, the Chair states the motion calls for debate, if appropriate, and takes the vote "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?"

## Life Cycle of a Motion



## 10. Resolutions

A resolution usually requests that action on an issue be taken. It may also express an opinion or position of an organized body. All resolutions must be submitted to the Council in writing and to the Council office electronically prior to presentation at the Council meeting. This allows the office to number the resolution and begin the required tracking and updating of the document. It is considered best practice to submit your written resolution at

least a week prior to its consideration at a Council meeting so that it can be sent out to the Council with the agenda. This is not a rule, and you can introduce a new resolution at a meeting without any advance review.

A resolution should begin with a preamble beginning with, "Whereas," and each "Whereas" statement should end with a semi-colon. Each "Whereas" should be simple, express a complete thought, and follow a logical train of thought. The summary statement of a resolution begins with the phrase "Resolved, That... (State action to be taken)" and continues with "Resolved, That" statements until all desired actions have been requested.

Usually after the adoption of a resolution a member of the Council, the resolution sponsor, or any other member of the body may request that the resolution be directed to one or more University Officials for consideration and action. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that a resolution is sent and reviewed by the person or the office to which it is sent. It is also their responsibility to report back to the Council on any action taken. Any Councilor may write and introduce a resolution. All resolutions must state the author's name and position (Grade or Precinct). Resolutions may be sent directly to a Staff Council committee for discussion, review, and recommendations. A Councilor may also present a resolution to a committee. Resolutions may be submitted to the Executive Committee for similar action.

Once a resolution is moved, seconded, and stated by the Speaker, it is no longer the property of the author. The full body now owns the resolution. It can be adopted, amended, or rejected by the Council.

See <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/about/resolutions.html> for adopted resolutions and a template to help you in drafting your own.

## 11. Administrative Support for the Staff Council

The Staff Council Office is in Hokona Hall-Zuni, Room 302 with the Staff Council Conference Room right next door in Hokona Hall-Zuni, Room 352. All Councilors and Committees have access to the conference room through the Administrator and are encouraged to use this meeting space for Staff Council business. The Staff Council participates in the following social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube. The Staff Council has one full-time staff employee, a Unit Administrator, assigned to assist with the following:

- Manages the day to day operations of the Staff Council and the Staff Council Office
- Serves as the primary point of contact for the Staff Council on all matters directed to the office by University and community constituencies
- Assists with the establishment of goals and objectives for the Staff Council and Staff Council committees
- Coordinates and manages meetings for the Staff Council and Staff Council Executive Committee
  
- Coordinates the goals and objectives for the Staff Council and Staff Council committees with respect to budgets, speakers, facilities, technology, and logistical requirements
- Records Staff Council meeting minutes
- Records Staff Council Executive Committee meeting minutes
- Coordinates and tracks actions, activities, events and projects for the Staff Council and Staff Council committees
- Oversees the operation of office accounts and plans and monitors expenditures
- Maintains Staff Council and Staff Council Committee membership lists
- Coordinates special events for the Staff Council
- Prepares accounting and budgeting reports
- Manages budget allocations for the office and reviews revised and final budgets
- Manages the Staff Council's PCard
- Manages the Staff Council website
- Manages the Staff Council social media platforms
- Manages the Staff Council listservs
- Manages the Staff Council email

- Organizes and maintains Staff Council records
- Archives Staff Council materials