



The University of Vermont
Staff Council

Serving as a voice and advocate for all staff at UVM, since 1971.

STAFF COUNCIL WORKING RELATIONSHIPS POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Statement

Staff Council representatives and committee members are required to communicate respectfully to each other, UVM staff, UVM administration, and to the community-at-large. Representatives will maintain confidentiality whenever appropriate and will represent Council views with openness, clarity and transparency.

Reason for the Policy

This policy aims to provide guidance to the representatives and members of Staff Council, and its committees, regarding ways to work and communicate with the various entities with which they come in contact.

Applicability of the Policy

1. This policy applies to all relationships between Staff Council representatives, committee members and others.
2. Staff Council representatives and Committee members will be made familiar with the contents of this Policy Statement at the first Committee Meeting of each Academic Year and at every orientation.

Policy Elaboration

1. Council representatives represent the University, as a whole, and the unit from which they were elected, in particular. They are responsible for sharing with the Council the concerns of their constituents and for keeping their constituents informed of Council actions.
2. Representatives will uphold the Staff Council Statement of Values and the University Common Ground (see Staff Council Bylaws, Article III).

Definitions

Working Relationships: Relationships with constituents, coworkers, UVM administration, other Council Representatives, the media, and the community-at-large based on one's role as a Staff Council Representative, which differentiates one's personal views or opinion from those of the Staff Council in the communication of Council business.

Forms

N/A

Contacts

Staff Council President
Staff Council Office
University of Vermont
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Related Documents / Policies

UVM Staff Council Constitution and Bylaws
Rv. September 1, 2009 <http://www.uvm.edu/~stffcnc1/pdf/scbylaws090109.pdf>

University *Common Ground* Statement
<http://www.uvm.edu/~president/?Page=miscellaneous/commonground.html>

Effective Date

Approved October 6, 2009.
Updates to this policy shall be recommended by the Executive Board and approved by Council



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STAFF COUNCIL

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS POLICY STATEMENT PROCEDURES

Responsibilities and Guidelines

1. Council representatives and Committee members will communicate regularly with their constituents and University personnel while carrying out the work of the Council and its Committees. Requests for information from the University administration, and responses to them, will go through the Staff Council administrator.
2. The Staff Council president (or designee), in collaboration with the Council administrator, is responsible for the issuance of statements and communications to UVM's President and Provost, Vice-Presidents and deans, UVM's community and the media. When deemed appropriate by the president and the Council administrator, consultation may be sought from the Staff Council Executive Board and/or the full Council. Statements will be issued to Council representatives in advance of public dissemination.
3. When entering into discussions outside of Council and Committee meetings, Council representatives will differentiate their personal views from positions democratically determined by the Council. If a representative is unable to separate his/her personal opinion from Council opinion it is important for him/her to abstain from discussion and/or ask another Council representative to replace him/her in the discussion.
4. All newly elected Council representatives shall attend an orientation program provided by the Staff Council office and the Staff Council President which contains training on the understanding of working relationships.
5. The methods used by Council representatives to communicate with their constituencies should adjust to fit departmental need and culture. Some units may have existing resources, e.g. a blog or listserv for all staff, or monthly staff meetings. It is the responsibility of Council representatives and the Council office to help identify an effective means of communication for sharing staff concerns with the Council and vice versa.
6. It is the responsibility of Council Committee chairs to familiarize their members with this policy and the communication process used by the Council.

Conduct during meetings (Full Council and Committee)

- All meetings should encourage and cultivate a free exchange of ideas and views.
- Dissent and debate are essential.
- Rudeness and personal attacks are unacceptable.
- There will be times when agreeing to disagree is the best possible outcome.

- Roberts Rules of Order will be consulted as deemed appropriate (See bylaws, Article IV, sec. C, # 2).
- The Council Parliamentarian will provide support and clarification upon request (See Article VI, sec. C, # 4a).

Confidentiality

- It is the responsibility of every Council representative and Staff Council Office employees to maintain confidentiality and exercise appropriate judgment around:
 - The identity of staff who submit Contact Sheets for Council consideration or action or who communicate directly with individual Council representatives or Council Office employees;
 - Facts, evidence, and testimony (oral, written or digital) handled or viewed in the course of Council work.
- Confidentiality is an understanding that at various points one may be privy to sensitive personnel or personal information regarding members of the UVM community and will need to exercise appropriate judgment regarding the disclosure of this information.
- No policy on confidentiality can be established which will fit all circumstances. It should be stressed that the maintenance of confidentiality requires tact, common sense, and an appreciation of privacy.