



# Wheaton

STAFF ASSOCIATION  
Last Charter Amendments: Fall 2006

## Charter

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Wheaton College Staff Association is to give all members of the staff the opportunity for and voice in focused and direct involvement in the governance and the life of the Wheaton College community. The Staff Association will strive to contribute to the fulfillment and communication of Wheaton's institutional priorities and goals.

The Staff Council, the governing body of the Staff Association, will ensure appropriate participation of staff in Wheaton's policy-making processes, promote visibility of staff as valuable members of the community, and facilitate a sense of belonging within the community. It will aim to unify all of its constituencies through shared responsibilities and increased communications. The Council will review policies affecting Wheaton's employment environment and the community and make suggestions to the appropriate committees and administrators. The Council will actively seek to involve all segments of the College's diverse staff in the Council's decision-making processes.

### Definition of Terms

**Staff Association:** The organization that encompasses all staff members up to the level of Division Officer. Division officers include the President, Dean of Students, Provost and Vice Presidents for College Advancement, Enrollment and Marketing, Finance and Operations, and Library and Information Services (LIS).

While the Staff Association is a vehicle for communications between the staff and the administration, it is not a labor organization. This charter does not authorize the Staff Council to negotiate grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work.

**Staff Council:** The representative governing body of the Association, with members elected by eligible voting staff members.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Staff Association is to promote the welfare of the staff and the College and to enhance the role of staff within the College. The Staff Council will engage in the following activities in order to realize these goals:

1. Act in an advisory capacity to the President.
2. Advocate on behalf of the rights and needs of College staff.
3. Recommend staff members to the President for appointment to College committees and work groups, plus other groups that are formed to discuss the governance of the College.

4. Establish standing and ad hoc committees as appropriate to the performance of the Association's function.
5. Educate staff about issues that affect them, including the mission of the College.
6. Provide a communication network for the exchange of information among the staff.
7. Enhance communication between staff, faculty, students, parents, alumnae/i, and the College.
8. Review personnel policies and other policies affecting the employment environment and make suggestions to appropriate administrators and committees.
9. Conduct public meetings, forums, surveys, etc., to determine staff needs and opinions and to discuss topics of interest.
10. Exercise control over the internal operations and maintenance of the Staff Council.
11. Act in an advisory capacity to an individual staff member, officer, committee, or group of the College. When acting in an advisory capacity, minutes need not be taken.

## Membership

All members of the staff (as defined through Human Resources classification) up to the level of Division Officer will automatically be members of the Staff Association. The membership will be led by Co-Chairs who are members of the Staff Council. Temporary employees are members of the Association but are ineligible to vote, serve on committees, or hold office on Staff Council.

## Composition of the Staff Council

The composition of the Staff Council will reflect the distribution of employees within Wheaton's staff classification at the time elections are held. These calculations will be done annually prior to the election by:

1. Obtaining the number of members in each of the staff classifications from ***the fall FTE Report from Human Resources***. The four classifications are Administrative/Professional, Office/Clerical and Administrative Non-Exempt, Facilities and Operations, and Public Safety.
2. Dividing the number within each staff group by 30 to determine the number of members to be elected from each staff group to the Staff Council. If not a whole number, the number will be rounded up or down, to the nearest whole number. Each group will have a minimum of one Staff Council member.

Public Safety will have an elected representative on Staff Council and on Nominations and Elections Committee. For the remaining committees and any ad hoc committees, the Nominations and Elections Committee will attempt to get a Public Safety representative on said committees. If none are available, Nominations and Elections can go outside the classification of Public Safety to fill a vacancy, with preference given to bi-weekly paid employees. The final membership number may exceed the classification count by one in those years in which a Co-Chair is serving an additional one-year term.

3. Reporting the calculations in the year end report of the Nominations and Elections Committee.
4. When appropriate, the Staff Council Co-Chairs may invite the Faculty and/or the Student Government to send non-voting representative(s) with speaking privileges to Staff Council meetings.

## **Selection and Election of Staff Council Members and Standing Committees**

### 1. Standing Committees:

- a. The Staff Association will elect the following standing committees: Staff Council, Nominations and Elections Committee, and the staff representatives to the Budget Advisory Committee.
- b. Staff Council and the Nominations and Elections Committee will determine the manner by which Staff is chosen (elected or appointed) for all other Staff Association or College Committees.

### 2. In addition to the committee workload of individual staff members, *Staff Council and Nominations and Elections Committee* may consider the following criteria in formulating slates of candidates or making appointments to committees:

- a. Staff classifications;
- b. Gender and ethnic representation;
- c. Length of service.

In order to encourage participation, each staff member may serve on only one standing Staff Association or major College Committee.

### 3. Election guidelines are as follows:

- a. A call for nominations will be distributed to all voting members of the Staff Association.
- b. Staff Council and committee members may be reelected for a consecutive two-year term but must wait one full year after the second term before being eligible for election to any Staff Association Committee.
- c. The Nominations and Elections Committee has the authority to determine if a second call for nominations or nominating ballot needs to be distributed to all voting members of the Staff Association. If only one person has accepted the nomination that person will be appointed and an election is not necessary.
- d. A final slate of candidates will be distributed to all voting members of the Staff Association.
- e. The Nominations and Elections Committee is charged with ensuring that staff members vote only once, and reporting elections results.
- f. Any election that ends in a tie will be determined by written ballot by the members of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

### 4. Staff Council members will be elected for two-year terms.

- a. Staff Council membership will be from July 1 – June 30 of the appointed term.
- b. Staff Council and committee members may be reelected for a consecutive two-year term but must wait one full year after the second term before being eligible for election to any Staff Association Committee
- c. Whenever a staff member is unable to serve a portion of her or his elected or appointed term, due to illness, leave of absence, or other circumstances, the portion shall be filled by the Nominations and Elections Committee from among the staff currently constituting the Reserve Pool (see Section e below). If members of the Reserve Pool do not accept the nomination, the Nominations and Elections Committee will conduct a special election for the vacant position from the members of the Staff Association.

- d. If a staff council member changes job classifications during the last semester of his or her term, the member will remain on staff council until the next election. If a staff council member's job classification changes prior to the last semester of his or her term, the council member will vacate the position and the position will be filled from the reserve pool. Incumbents elected to fill these vacated positions would serve the remainder of that position's term.
  - e. The Reserve Pool will consist of those staff members who have completed a term of service within the past two years on Staff Council or any committee whose members are elected or appointed by Staff Council.
5. Staff representatives for the Budget Advisory Committee will be elected in the spring to have the members in place prior to the start of the new fiscal year and budget process. Only Staff members who have been employed by Wheaton College for a minimum of three (3) years are eligible for nomination to the Budget Advisory Committee and other College Committees.

## **Staff Council Governance**

### **Members of Staff Council**

1. A quorum will consist of a majority of the elected members of Staff Council.
2. During a Staff Council meeting, the Staff Council may go into executive session to discuss confidential matters if a majority of the voting members present concur.
3. Any member of the Staff Council reserves the right to request an executive session at any time. Executive sessions as agenda items are at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.
4. Open discussion will be an item on every Staff Council agenda to enable Council and Association members to express individual views without prior arrangement.
5. At least once each semester Staff Council will hold an open forum for the express purpose of allowing staff to raise questions and concerns.
6. The Staff Council may request informal meetings with the President if so desired.
7. Most meetings are informal in nature; however, if needed, Robert's Rules of Order will be the basis of determining procedures for debate and the general conduct of business.
8. Members of Staff Council, including the Co-Chairs, may be removed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the elected members of Staff Council for the following reasons:
  - a. Attendance – Absence from more than three Staff Council meetings in one year
  - b. Duties – Failure to fulfill responsibilities for position held.
9. Co-Chairs, Standing Committee Chairs, and Co-Secretaries of Staff Council cannot serve concurrently on Standing or Ad-hoc Committees of the College (i.e. Budget Advisory Committee). Those holding the above-listed positions on Staff Council must resign their position after being elected or appointed to a Standing or Ad-hoc Committee of the College.

### **Co-Secretaries**

10. Co-Secretaries:
  - a. The Staff Council will elect two (2) Co-Secretaries from its members;
  - b. The Co-Secretaries will make public the reports and actions of the Staff Council, will notify members of upcoming meetings, and will distribute the agenda, in consultation with

the Co-Chairs, for meetings. The Co-Secretaries will take minutes of all meetings and distribute/post them at least one week prior to the next Staff Council Meeting;  
c. The Co-Secretaries will also be responsible for taking roll call and keeping record of Staff Council Members attendance at all Staff Association Meetings.

### **Co-Chairs**

11. The Staff Council will elect two members to serve as Co-Chairs of the Staff Council from its elected members. Co-chair appointments should be staggered for continuity. To be eligible for election as Co-Chairs, candidates should have served on Staff Council for a minimum of one year at any time in the past. The Staff Council may assign other responsibilities among its members.
12. A Staff Council Co-Chair will be elected each year by majority vote by written ballot for a term of two years. If a Council member is elected Co-Chair in their second year on Council, they will serve one additional year.
13. In years where the Council membership is an even number and a vote results in a tie and no consensus can be met, the senior Co-Chair will abstain from the voting process.
14. The outgoing Staff Council Co-Chair will conduct the election of the new Co-Chair and convene a transition meeting(s) in the summer.
15. The Staff Council Co-Chairs have the responsibility to call regular Staff Council meetings as necessary, but at least once a month during the academic year, and special meetings as necessary and appropriate. These meetings are open to members of the Staff Association. The Staff Council Co-Chairs will set the agenda of and preside over all meetings. The Staff Council Co-Chairs will delegate responsibility as necessary to ensure the effective functioning of the Staff Council.
16. Both Co-Chairs are responsible for keeping the permanent record of the activities of the Staff Association and Staff Council for their terms. The outgoing Co-Chair's records will be passed on to the new Co-Chair. Co-Chairs and committee chairs are responsible for submitting end-of-year reports.
17. Co-Chairs are responsible for maintaining all non-current official records of the Association, its Council, and its standing and ad hoc committees, such as minutes, reports, and recommendations, and forwarding them on a yearly basis to the College Archives.
18. The Staff Council Co-chairs may request a meeting with the standing and ad hoc committees, and/or their Chairs may request a meeting with the Staff Council Co-Chairs at any time.
19. The Staff Council Co-Chairs may call special meetings to consider matters demanding immediate attention, or meetings will be called when requested by one quarter of the elected members of the Staff Council.
20. The Staff Council Co-Chairs will serve as the liaisons between the President and the Association. The Staff Council Co-Chairs will meet with the President a minimum of twice a semester (and as per the availability of the President) for Staff Council updates. Generally, the Co-Chairs will be the only staff members present at such meetings. Others may be invited to attend at the discretion of the Co-Chairs or the President as appropriate according to the nature/agenda of the meeting

### **Staff Association Committees**

The Staff Association will have three standing committees.

Each of the committees will be chaired by a member(s) of Staff Council, selected by Staff Council. Staff Council may appoint committee co-chairs at its discretion. Each committee will generally include at least

one person from each staff classification group. The Chair may add non-voting ad hoc members as appropriate.

Chairpersons will have the responsibility of reporting to the Staff Council on the committee's work and progress at each regularly scheduled Staff Association Meeting.

Membership on the committees is open to all members of the Staff Association.

The standing committees are

1. **Nominations and Elections Committee:** Responsible for all elections and appointments. The Chairperson will be the only member on this Committee from Staff Council, to avoid the possibility of conflict-of-interest between elections and Staff Council members. This Committee will ensure that elections are conducted properly and will provide nominations for appointment to Staff Council committees. At year end the committee will report details of FTE numbers, percent of members voting, and positions filled. The Committee may be asked to assist with appointments to other campus committees. The Committee will also maintain records of Staff Council committee membership. Nominations and Elections Committee members will be nominated and selected through the election process.
2. **Communications Committee:** Responsible for keeping the staff informed of the actions of the Staff Council by promoting a sense of community among the Staff through the publication of a monthly newsletter and maintaining the Staff Association web site. Members will also assist the Co-Chairs in coordinating all aspects of the All Staff Meetings. A non-voting liaison from the Communications Department may be appointed by that Department. The Nominations and Elections Committee will appoint committee members.
3. **Employment Environment Committee:** Reviews personnel policies and other policies affecting the employment environment and makes suggestions to Staff Council. The Committee will not negotiate grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work. A non-voting liaison from the Human Resources Department will be appointed by that Department. Committee members will be appointed by the Nominations and Elections Committee.
4. The Staff Council will create ad hoc committees if the need arises. Ad hoc committees will have broad representation. Members of the staff who are directly involved in an issue that is being studied will be included.

## **College Committees**

College committees (standing and ad hoc) play an important role in the affairs of the College. For College committees that impact staff, the Staff Council will be informed of each committee's charge, and its composition.

1. The Staff Council will determine if staff representatives to a college committee will be elected by the Staff Association or appointed by the Council. Whenever possible, Staff Council will consult with Staff Association membership to determine which of the following options is most appropriate to decide staff representatives to College committees:
  - a. If it is determined that Staff are to be elected to a College committee, the Nominations and Elections Committee will conduct the election with advice of Staff Council.
  - b. If it is determined that a call for nominations is not required, Staff Council will approve a slate of candidates for election and the Nominations and Elections Committee will then conduct an election.
  - c. If it is determined that Staff are to be appointed to a College committee, Staff Council will recommend candidates to the President or other appropriate college official.

- d. If it is determined that Staff are to be appointed to a College committee, Staff Council can solicit nominations from Staff Association for consideration and selection in Executive Council.

## **Amendment Process**

An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the elected members of Staff Council will be required to amend the charter. The President will be notified by the Co-Chairs of all amendments made to the Staff Association Charter. Amendments will be ratified by a majority of those Staff Association members who vote on the amendment(s), either by ballot or at an open meeting.

Ratification Date:  
November 8, 2006