

Elections, Membership, and Rules Committee Yearly Report FY12 submitted by EMR Chair, Walker Wheeler

Chair's Remarks:

I personally feel that EMR has done a great deal of quality work this past year. There is always room to have done more, but that balance is a difficult one. We had several time consuming questions and processes that we had to handle and we were able to coordinate these major pieces fairly well. The biggest objective for EMR as we move into the next year is providing a complete proposal for implementing a more agile Staff Council through the Constitution and Bylaws. This one issue did not receive enough attention this year, and is probably the best change that Staff Council can implement as it would finally separate many people from the belief that they only represent a small community, and that their representation is meant on behalf of all Staff at UAF. There are certain challenges in executing this change, but they are ones worth meeting.

Summary of Activities:

Over the past year, EMR has continued to fulfill its role in Staff Council. Several large discussion and investigations took place in EMR this past year.

OIT's affiliation and eligibility for Staff Council were reviewed and explained again to the rest of Staff Council. OIT has full rights to participate at all levels of Staff Council even though they are a split reporting agency to UAF and UA Statewide, including the ability to participate at Representatives, Alternates, and be able to hold any office of Staff Council including President and Vice President.

This past year's annual Representative and Alternate Electronic Election was made a little more difficult resulting from the departure of Brad Havel who had formerly created and stood up the software initially, and not having the experienced leadership formerly held by Katrina Paul. As a result of Brad and Katrina's departure, EMR was off to a shaky start for elections. A new web server to host the elections had to be identified (graciously provided by the UAF Rasmuson Library), the software had to be setup again and configured with little documentation for the manual portions of the processes, and EMR started late on the Elections which pushed back the overall completion. Goes that have come out of this most recent election process included having the information to the Staff Council Calendar Committee to be able to list the SC Representatives and SC Alternates by unit on the calendar so that people would more easily be able to find their Unit's representatives. Another conclusion was to make the request for the employee list to HR much earlier in the process. As a result, the election process will not be held up, if HR needed additional time to furnish the list. The Presidential and Vice Presidential election setup and organization was mainly handled by the Staff Council Secretary, Nicole Dufour, and should conclude at the coming Staff Council meeting.

EMR's maintenance and review of the Constitution and Bylaws had much more activity than anticipated this past year. EMR was asked to enable the President and Vice President to appoint a representative to Staff Alliance in their stead with the hopes of increasing continuity to Staff Alliance and at the same time removing part of the burden of new Presidents and Vice Presidents. Another consideration for the Constitution and Bylaws was raised when; President Veazey and Vice President Sparks were asked by Chancellor Rogers to think about how Staff Council was organized and propose a better way of doing business. EMR was forwarded this request with a focus of making a more agile Staff Council, including a focus to retain representation from 4 different core groups (Off Campus, Administrative, Research, and Academic) around UAF. There are several focuses included in this request including: fair and equitable representation; reduced time commitments for those interested in participating; a group that can respond much better to administrative proposals; and a desire to make Staff Council a much more prestigious group to take part.

The more minor efforts of EMR included:

1. Need for better on boarding of reps and alts. Possible documentation on website and quick tutorials were suggested.
2. Bylaws and constitution review for current organization terminology. This discussion concluded with a list of possible modification to the Constitution and Bylaws, but never was made into a formal proposal to Staff Council. This will be revisited.
3. The question came up regarding temporary employees and if they are to be represented by staff council. Whether we officially are supposed to or not is debatable, but it is agreed that Staff Council should. Interestingly enough, during the election time a very large percentage (between 1/3 and 1/4) of UAF employees were identified to be temporary non-benefitted staff.
4. Vacancy issues: About 50% of reps and alts spots were vacant. This issue is being addressed as part of the reorganization proposal.
5. Question of quorum on committees for doing business, with the following rule identified: "In committee of the whole the quorum is the same as in the assembly; in any other committee the majority is a quorum, unless the assembly order otherwise and it must wait for a quorum before proceeding to business." -- Roberts Rules of Order, Section 43, paragraph 3, line 1
6. Accommodating UAF reorganization of departments by updating units with the current associated TKLs.
7. Hiring directly someone into a temporary position without full hiring process and then being able to allow that person to be able to be considered for an internal applicant. Is there a check and balance that exists for these cases? EMR has not been able to pose this question to HR as of yet, but is interested in the answer.