

## Constitution of the Staff Assembly

### I. Name of the Organization

A. The name of this organization shall be the Community College of Rhode Island College Assembly, hereafter referred to as the Assembly.

### II. Purpose and Powers

#### A. Purpose

1. It shall be the purpose of the College Assembly to participate in the governance of the Community College of Rhode Island, hereafter referred to as CCRI. It shall develop policy and other recommendations related to the administrative or business work of the college and its staff members so that CCRI may effectively realize its Mission and Strategic Plan and advance the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion across the organization and its activities. It also shall represent the collective interests of stakeholders and serve as a conduit of information sharing between college leadership and the college community about its administrative work. It shall:

- a. select from its membership representatives to serve on standing and ad hoc committees of the Assembly;
  - b. enhance the democratic and strategic processes of governance at CCRI;
  - c. provide a centralized means of communicating the non-academic needs, concerns, and viewpoints of the representatives to senior administration, faculty, the Council on Post-Secondary Education having to do with the growth, welfare and governance of CCRI;
  - d. collect and disseminate information of interest to the college community;
- and
- e. identify, promote and support activities that develop or increase the skills, productivity and professionalism of the college community.

#### B. Powers

1. The Assembly, subject to provisions of state and federal law, and subject to consistency with the general objectives established by its governing Council, has authority to formulate policy and procedure concerning administrative matters of CCRI. The Assembly is constituted of the full-time professional and support staff. In addition, limited provision is made for students and other employees of the college to participate in Assembly business (see Constitution Article III).

2. The Assembly, with the concurrence of the President, shall formulate such policies and procedures regarding issues (e.g., finance, physical and technology infrastructure, student affairs, external partnerships, fundraising) as it may deem appropriate to advance the strategic administrative and business purposes of the College and to promote satisfactory discipline and behavior among students and employees and to support equitable outcomes for all members of the college community.

3. The Assembly may make recommendations to the President regarding policies affecting employees' status and welfare. This section shall not be construed to conflict with the rights delegated to any collective bargaining agent authorized to represent employees

or Council on Postsecondary Education policies, public laws or any legislative, accrediting, or regulatory body.

4. The Assembly may establish such standing and ad hoc committees as it deems necessary to carry out its functions within the general areas of strategy and finance, administration, student services, workforce partnerships, and institutional advancement.

5. Policies and procedures developed within standing and ad hoc committees of the Assembly shall be discussed and voted upon by the full membership of the Assembly and, upon majority approval, advanced to the President's Council for consideration and recommendation to the President.

### III. Membership

A. The Assembly shall consist of elected representatives of the full-time staff working at least 35 hours/week, along with ex officio members and appointed members.

#### B. Membership Rights

1. Full membership is defined to include the following rights:

- a. vote on matters before the full Assembly
- b. speak on the Assembly floor
- c. make or second motions during Assembly meetings
- d. membership on standing and ad hoc committees
- e. to vote, speak, and make or second motions in standing and ad hoc

committees

f. serve as an Officer of the Assembly

2. Limited membership abridges one or more of the rights described in Article

#### III.B.1.

C. Thirty elected representatives of the Assembly shall represent administrative units of the college as defined by Assembly ByLaws Article II.D. Elected members are responsible for conveying the perspectives and interests of those they represent to the Assembly and for making regular informational reports back to the stakeholders they represent. Elected Assembly representatives have full membership rights.

D. Five elected members of the Assembly shall represent part-time staff, defined as those working less than 35 hours/week. Elected part-time members are responsible for conveying the perspectives and interests of part-time staff to the Assembly and making regular informational reports back to the stakeholders they represent. Elected part-time members are limited in membership rights by the exclusion of Article III.B.1.f. These members are in addition to the elected members described in Article III.C.

E. Members of the President's Senior Leadership Team, or their designees, shall be *ex officio* members of the Assembly, hereinafter referred to as *ex officio/Admin*. Members *ex officio/Admin* are limited in membership rights by the exclusion of Article III.B.1.a and III.B.1.f.

F. Four seats equally representing the Professional Staff Association and the Educational Support Professionals Association (two seats per organization), or their designees, shall be *ex officio* members of the Assembly, hereinafter referred to as *ex officio/Unions*. Members *ex officio/Unions* are limited in membership rights by the exclusion of Article III.B.1.f.

They are responsible for conveying the perspectives and interests of their respective unions and for making regular information reports back to the members of their unions.

G. Two seats shall be reserved for student representatives selected according to the ByLaws of Student Government. Student representatives are limited in membership rights by the exclusion of Article III.B.1.a and III.B.1.f. They are responsible for conveying the perspectives and interests of their respective governing bodies and for making regular information reports back to Student Government.

H. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Faculty Senate, or their designees, shall serve as liaisons to the Assembly to ensure communication between the two governance bodies. These seats shall be *ex officio*, hereinafter referred to as *ex officio/Senate*. Their membership rights are limited by the exclusion of Article III.B.1.a and III.B.1.f.

I. Unless otherwise members of the Assembly, Deans of the college shall be *ex officio* members of the Assembly, hereinafter referred to as *ex officio/Deans*. *Ex officio/Deans* are limited in membership rights by the exclusion of Article III.B.1.a and III.B.1.f.

J. Appointed members of the Assembly are chosen by *ex officio/Admin* to serve on standing or ad hoc committees according to their expertise in areas of administration that is necessary for the functioning of the college and good governance therein. *Ex officio/Admin* may appoint themselves. One appointment shall be a representative of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Every effort will be made to appoint subject-matter experts who are not already members of the President's Council. Appointed members of the Assembly are limited in membership rights by the exclusion of Article III.B.1.f.

#### IV. Officers

A. The officers of the Assembly shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Officers shall represent the Assembly in meetings with the President, President's Council, Commission on Post-Secondary Education, and other bodies as needed. The responsibilities of each officer are those usually associated with the titles of Chair or Vice Chair and Secretary, except as modified or added to in the Assembly ByLaws Article III.

B. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of the Assembly from among its members, excepting those members whose rights are limited according to Article III.

C. If any officer anticipates an absence exceeding 30 days, he or she shall delegate the full duties of the position to one of the other officers. In the absence of a statement of delegation, the Assembly shall vote to assign the duties of the absent Officer to another officer for a period not to exceed 90 days.

D. If an officer is absent for longer than 90 days, the Assembly shall elect a new officer according to ByLaws Article II.

#### V. Meetings

A. Meetings of the Assembly shall be held during regular working hours.

B. Regular meetings of the Assembly shall be held at least once a month during the calendar year. The Assembly may vote to cancel meetings in January, July, and August if more than 30 percent of members anticipate an absence for vacation.

C. Meetings shall be chaired by Chair of the Assembly. At least 5 business days in advance of meetings, the Secretary of the Assembly shall distribute an agenda directly to all

members, as well as in an appropriate all-college online newsletter and on a publicly accessible subsection of the CCRI website reserved for the College Assembly.

D. Assembly meetings shall be open to all members of the college community and have provision, as feasible, for both in-person and online attendance. Any full- or part-time employee of the College not elected to the Assembly, or any full- or part-time student enrolled in the current semester, shall, upon application to the College Assembly within 10 business days, be eligible to speak on matters pending before the Assembly and committees.

E. Special meetings of the Assembly may be called upon due notice by 1) Assembly Chair, 2) majority vote of the Assembly at any regular or special meeting, 3) petition submitted to the Assembly Secretary and signed by at least 10 percent of the non-faculty employees of the College, or 4) written request of the President or an *ex officio/Admin* member.

F. A meeting of each year's newly constituted Assembly shall be held within two weeks of the close of elections, including any run-off elections, for the purpose of orienting new Assembly members and officers. A date for this meeting shall be included in the yearly calendar of meetings, but ordinarily shall fall in June. The out-going Chair shall preside at this meeting. New members shall assume their duties at the close of this meeting. Out-going members shall have no vote.

## VI. Amendments

A. Amendments to the Assembly Constitution or ByLaws may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly or by petition signed by at least 10 percent of the staff employees of the College, in writing, and submitted to the Chair of the Assembly.

B. Regardless of amendments proposed and/or passed to the Constitution and ByLaws in any year, the Chair of the Assembly shall convene an ad hoc Constitution and ByLaws Committee and charge it to conduct a thorough review of these foundational documents every four years to ensure adequate continuity between the documents and among their provisions and to maintain alignment with best practices of shared governance.

C. Voting and ratification shall be conducted in accordance with Assembly ByLaws Article VII.E.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Procedure on committee appointment to be developed and posted to Assembly website.

<sup>2</sup> A template for a Committee Charge to be developed and posted to Assembly website.

<sup>3</sup> A template to propose (or abolish) a standing or ad hoc committee to be developed and posted to Assembly website.

<sup>4</sup>The Constitution and By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee is currently updating information pertaining to Part Time Staff, Student Representation and Term Limits on the Assembly