Plans for a new employee relations program is being developed here at Kent State. The University Cabinet recently approved the adoption of a Staff Council process. This is intended as a way for classified (unrepresented) and unclassified staff to engage in information-sharing and advice with the senior administration. Among other things, the Staff Council will act as a forum for the expression of questions, concerns and suggestions – and as a formal means for discussion of related issues.

**Introduction**

The establishment of a Staff Council aligns with the university’s strategic road map, ULI 2.3. or to” Implement a “Great Place Initiative” that prioritizes attention to the diverse human element of the university.” It is intended to be congruent with initiatives being developed as a result of the 2016 Climate Study, particularly as it relates to communications between employees and managers/supervisors.

KSU-SC provides classified(unrepresented) and unclassified Kent State employees with opportunities to impact KSU workplace culture and support the goal of making Kent State University a great place to work. Employees impact on their workplace can manifest itself in the following ways:

1. Providing employees with additional opportunities to connect with the University’s mission, vision and Strategic Road Map.
2. Providing employees with opportunities to gain knowledge and develop professional skills which can enhance their ability to contribute to the success of the University.
3. Providing employees enhanced opportunities to innovate and collaborate to accomplish positive

outcomes for the University and the University community.

1. Acknowledging and recognizing our employees’ outstanding work and unique contributions.
2. Creating an atmosphere of empowerment, developing leaders and creating a bridge between employees.

**Mission of the Kent State University - Staff Council**

The Kent State University Staff Council (KSU-SC) provides a formal framework for classified (unrepresented) and unclassified staff to share ideas, information, and communicate on issues and topics that affect staff and the broader University community. KSU-SC will serve as an advisory body to the President of Kent State University and the President’s Cabinet. Website: [**http://www.kent.edu/staff-council**](http://www.kent.edu/staff-council)

**Purpose of the** **Kent State University - Staff Council**

The Kent State University Staff Council accepts the responsibility and challenge of taking its place alongside faculty, administrators and students in working toward a better University community. Through collaboration, the Kent State University Staff Council will enable the administration to establish better channels of communication and to draw upon the best ideas of Kent State staff and provide staff with leadership experience. To that end, the purposes of the Kent State University Staff Council are as follows:

1. To serve as the advisory group for classified (unrepresented) and unclassified staff, regardless of race, gender, and age
2. To act in an advisory capacity to the University administration on existing and emerging policies, that affect staff and the broader university community
3. To appoint and/or recommend staff representation to other University committees, as appropriate
4. Promote communication and engagement among staff, University administration, Faculty Senate and Student Government
5. To provide a forum for the exchange of information between staff and other University groups
6. To foster a spirit of respect, dignity, unity, and cooperation among staff
7. Provide staff with an effective way to ask questions, express concerns, and provide suggestions to the university administration
8. To provide referrals for individual concerns and problems to appropriate University resources.
9. To share the responsibility with the administration, students and the University community in attaining the goals in Kent State Strategic Roadmap.

**Membership of the** **Kent State University - Staff Council**

All full and continuing part-time classified (unrepresented) and unclassified staff from all campuses. Members must have at least two years of service and have received at least "meets expectations" on their most recent performance evaluation. Classified (unrepresented) and unclassified staff in supervisory roles are limited to a managerial level of 6 or lower. When possible manager/supervisors should not serve on the Council at the same time as their direct reports.

The Kent State University Staff Council shall consist of the following members:

1. Thirty (30) members from across the university system, with the goal of having representation from each division and Regional Campus when possible. Divisional representation shall be proportionate to the number of eligible staff within each division. Regional Campus representation shall reflect the number of full-time equivalency employees for each Regional Campus. Assignment of membership between the various University divisions and campuses shall be re-evaluated every two years. The Executive Committee shall determine the proportions and present to the Council as a whole for approval. No more than 5 of the 30 members shall be made up of continuing part-time staff.
2. Each Council member shall have an alternate.
3. The Council will include two liaisons appointed by the President’s Office. The liaisons, one from the Division of Finance and Administration and one from the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, will serve in an administrative designee role. The President liaisons shall not have the right to vote.
4. A call for new members and alternates shall be conducted annually at the end of the outgoing session and prior to the election of Executive Committee. The Vice President and Deans lacking representation on the current Staff Council will be formally notified of such by the Council Chair. This allows the opportunity to encourage candidates from those areas to run for election.

**Term of Office of the** **Kent State University - Staff Council**

1. Members and Alternates shall serve two years. Terms shall begin on June 1 and end on May 31.
2. In the first year of Council, half the membership will serve a (2)-year term and the other half a (3)-year term.
3. Members and alternates shall be elected by Council members. The election of Council members shall be made using either a paper or electronic ballot (i.e. remotely). Should there be more applicants running for office than open seats in Council for the following year, the applicant(s) with the greatest number of votes will become a Member. In the event of a tie, a coin will be flipped by the Council Chair.
4. A Member may be appointed to serve no more than two consecutive terms and shall have full voting privileges.

**Appointments and Elections of the** **Kent State University - Staff Council**

1. Supervisors, Vice Presidents, and Deans of the University will be notified and must approve participation of the members and alternates elected as indicated in Article IV (Membership). Notification of election to Council will provide general guidelines such as meeting times, committee structure, and other relevant information to indicate employee commitment. Employees attending pre-scheduled Council meeting will be considered performing university business.
2. Elections of officers within the Kent State University Staff Council shall be conducted in accordance with the Kent State University Staff Council Operating Regulations.
3. Appointment of Standing Committee chairs shall be conducted in accordance with the KSU Staff Council Operating Regulations.