

**BYLAWS**  
**EMPLOYEE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**AMENDED 03/09/2016**  
Updated 6/13/2017

**UNIVERSITY CHARGE**

The Employee Relations Advisory Committee (ERAC) is strongly committed to a proactive stance in advising the President, through the Vice President for Finance and Administration, on matters of policy and programs pertaining to employee relations. Areas of primary concern include the following: communication, problem solving mechanisms (resources), compensation (salary and benefits), working conditions, staff recognition and development.

**PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

**Article I: Name of the Body**

The body known as the Employee Relations Advisory Committee shall hereinafter be referred to as ERAC.

**Article II: Mission Statement**

The ERAC represents the exempt and non-exempt staff of Lehigh University. Its purpose is to support the university and assist in making the managerial process more effective by encouraging the enhancement of the work environment and work life of employees, fostering staff involvement in university matters as appropriate, and uphold and strengthen the mission of Lehigh University.

**Article III: Membership**

The committee will consist of 24 voting members and two ex-officio members:

1. Membership will include 12 exempt staff members and 12 non-exempt staff members.
2. Eight new members will be added each year, serving three year terms, by the following process:
  - a. By campus nomination and popular vote: 3 exempt, 3 non-exempt;
  - b. By appointment through ERAC committee discussion and majority vote: 1 exempt, 1 nonexempt;
    - i. Appointed positions may be considered from the nominated pool, or suggested as potential candidates by an ERAC board member;
    - ii. The appointments will have final approval from the Vice President of Finance and Administration.
3. Vacancies: The Election Committee, in collaboration with the chair, will meet to select and appoint a replacement, taking into account the candidates for previous positions. They will offer a recommendation to the ERAC board. They may use their discretion to leave the position vacant. The replacement will only fill the remainder of the term.

4. Transitions in classification: Should an ERAC member change classification (exempt/nonexempt), they will serve out the remainder of their term. Upon completion of the term, the position will be filled with a candidate of the original classification.
5. A member of Human Resources will serve as the ex-officio member.
6. The outgoing Chairperson will also serve as a non-voting consulting member for one year following their term as Chairperson.

To be eligible for election to the committee, employees must be nominated by the Lehigh staff community or the ERAC board, have at least 75% effort and have completed one year's service at the university.

Members of all ERAC committees are expected to participate in the work of the group. Participation includes both attendance at monthly or committee meetings scheduled during the year, as well as contributions through communication methods that may be utilized by the group outside of formal meetings. Attendance at meetings may be in person, or through other means that enable communication.

Members of ERAC are expected to provide explanation of their absences and/or inability to participate to the committee chair. Failure to provide adequate explanation of absences from two consecutive monthly or committee meetings or to participate otherwise in the work of the committee constitutes grounds for removal, upon request of the chair and approval of the entire ERAC membership.

Members will serve three-year staggered and non-consecutive terms. The ERAC Board will determine all questions of membership eligibility.

#### **Article IV: Ex-Officio Members**

**HR Ex-Officio Member:** The Director, Employee Relations and Workplace Learning & Performance will serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee. This person will be the liaison between the Committee and the administration and will serve in the capacity of an advisor to the Committee. The ex-officio person is a non-voting member of the Committee and will not serve on sub-committees.

**Outgoing Chair Ex-Officio Member:** The Outgoing Chairperson of ERAC will serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee for one year following his/her term as Chairperson. This person will serve in the capacity of an advisor to the Committee. The ex-officio person is a non-voting member of the Committee and will not serve on sub-committees.

At the conclusion of each meeting, the ex-officio members will be asked to step out for the last thirty minutes. If upon seeing the agenda, voting members would like additional time added to this thirty minutes, voting members must submit a request to the Executive Committee at least 24 hours before the meeting.

## **Article V: Terms of Office**

Representatives will generally be elected to serve three-year non-consecutive terms.

## **Article VI: Officers**

The committee shall choose from its elected members a vice chairperson and a secretary to serve on an annual basis. The vice chairperson will be selected from among the returning (second-year) members of the committee. The vice chair will serve also as “chairperson elect” and will become the chair in the third year of their term. If a vice chair is unable to serve as chair, a new chair will be selected by the members. Selection of officers will normally be made during the scheduled meeting in June. Officers who are not carrying out their responsibilities properly may be removed from office by a quorum vote of the committee.

### ***A. Chairperson***

Duties of the Chair include, but are not limited to, presiding at meetings, calling meetings, appointing members to ad hoc committees, approving minutes, must coordinate the committee to ensure that appropriate by-laws and procedures are being followed, may from time to time be called upon to represent the ERAC and sometimes be its spokesperson at, for example, functions or meetings and should do so in a positive and professional manner and otherwise facilitating and directing the affairs of the ERAC.

### ***B. Vice-Chair and Treasurer***

Duties of the Vice-Chair and Treasurer in this combined role include, but are not limited to, presiding at meetings, calling meetings, appointing members to ad hoc committees, approving minutes, and otherwise facilitating and directing the affairs of the ERAC in the absence of the Chairperson. The Vice-Chair will become the new Chairperson when the current Chairperson completes their term of office. Duties of the Treasurer include, but are not limited to, providing monthly treasurer’s reports of income and expenditures of the ERAC funds, make deposits and handle reimbursements to vendors, have complete knowledge of the fiscal status of ERAC with accuracy. The Vice-Chair and Treasurer may from time to time be called upon to represent the ERAC and sometimes be its spokesperson at, for example, functions or meetings and should do so in a positive and professional manner.

### ***C. Secretary***

Duties of the Secretary include, but are not limited to, recording and distributing the minutes of the ERAC, maintain an attendance log and membership roster, keep a record of ERAC events, supply needed information when called upon. Will assist in coordinating events throughout the term of office. The secretary may from time to time be called upon to represent the ERAC and sometimes be its spokesperson at, for example, functions or meetings and should do so in a positive and professional manner.

## **Article VII: Officer Vacancies**

In the event an executive officer cannot complete their term, the remaining Executive Committee members shall with advice and consent from the entire ERAC Board, appoint an elected representative from the ERAC Board to fill that position to the conclusion of the term.

## **Article VIII: Meetings**

The committee shall determine its own meeting schedule. Normally, the committee meets monthly from September to June. Meetings may be called by the chairperson, written request of three members, or at the request of the vice president. The committee shall determine whether it shall meet during the months of July and August.

## **Article IX: Majority and Quorum**

All actions of the committee are by simple majority vote of those members present. The committee may act at all times unless challenged by an elected member that a quorum is not present. **A majority (50% plus one) of representatives shall constitute a quorum to conduct official business at any regular meeting or special meeting of ERAC.**

## **Article X: Budget**

The chair and vice chair shall act as account executives of ERAC's budget for the duration of their term. The vice chair will monitor and maintain the budget. The chair will be responsible for notifying the Controller's Office of any changes pertaining to the ERAC budget, including change of account executives and/or authorized signers.

## **Article XI: Elections**

The committee, or subcommittee thereof, will conduct an election each spring to fill vacant seats and expiring terms for exempt and non-exempt staff. During March or April of each year, the committee will announce a nomination process that is open to all exempt and non-exempt staff. Anonymous nominations will not be accepted. Nominators can nominate persons outside their employee group. Individual's nominated and willing to serve will have their names placed on the electronic ballot of their respective employee group. Voting will take place by April 30 and results will be announced by May 31.

Elections will be by written, secret ballot or via secure electronic ballot. The electorate will electronically vote for as many individuals as there are announced openings.

The committee will determine all questions of nominee eligibility, election process and balloting.

## **Article XII: Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the total ERAC Board at any regularly scheduled meeting provided that a written proposal for the amendment was submitted to the members of the Board at least one (1) week prior to said meeting.