

GUIDE |

Health and Safety Committee (HSC) Elections

April 2015

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Introduction

There are 10 Organizational Health and Safety Committees (HSCs) representing the University of Washington (UW). Employees in all UW units are represented on the organizational health and safety committee that serves their functional area. These organizational HSCs are referred to by number, as well as by name. Units and their respective organizational committee are listed on the following Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Health and Safety Committees web page: <http://www.ehs.washington.edu/ohsafcom/hsclist.shtm>.

Each HSC reports to a senior University Executive Sponsor. The Director of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S), as advised by the Executive Sponsors, determines the number of organizational health and safety committees.

Each organizational HSC selects two representatives from its membership to sit on the University-Wide Health and Safety Committee (U-Wide). Additional U-Wide members represent specific University entities. The U-Wide reports to and advises the EH&S Director.

UW Administrative Policy Statement 10.11, "UW Health and Safety Committees" (<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/APS/10.11.html>), defines the scope, organization, and compliance responsibility of HSCs at the University. All UW employees are represented by this system. Each University employee must have a chance to nominate and to vote during the organizational HSC elections.

The organizational HSCs fulfill the requirements of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 296-800-130. Therefore, the state requirements for selecting committee members are not required for departmental safety "teams" or other University committees that address safety concerns.

Composition of an Organizational HSC

Committee members consist of elected representatives, employer appointed representatives, and union representatives. The total number of appointed representatives who can vote must not exceed the total number of elected members. This rule is referred to as "balance." A committee may also include ex-officio members; these members do not vote and do not affect the quorum or balance.

Size

The number of members on an organizational HSC is determined by the Executive Sponsor to whom the committee reports, with advice from the committee and EH&S. The minimum membership is five.

Term Length

All HSC members serve for two-year terms unless circumstances make it impossible to complete the term. The two year term length is covered in an Amended Permanent Variance with L&I, FN10200, dated January 9, 2008.

Elected Representatives

Individuals are nominated and elected in a process that includes all University staff, faculty, temporary, hourly, and student employees. All employees represented by a HSC must be given an opportunity to nominate and vote for candidates. Organizational HSCs may generate nominations for their election through an internal process or rely on a general call for nominations.

Employer Appointments

Employer appointments may be made by either the Executive Sponsor or by the head of an organizational unit or department. In order to coordinate with elections, the Executive Sponsor's office and organizational units should identify these appointees by December 1st to the Election Coordinator and to EH&S.

Executive Sponsor appointees typically represent the sponsor and organizational management. Appointees representing organizational units and departments are frequently personnel assigned responsibilities for unit safety or as building coordinators, or someone knowledgeable about and interested in safety. These appointees have historically served very well in attending meetings regularly and in representing their units and keeping their unit executives apprised of safety activities.

Union Representatives

A union may be represented on a HSC, given the following conditions:

1. The union's bargaining agreement/contract with the University specifically provides for representation on an HSC.
2. The union has members either employed by or performing services for units within the same HSC.

Before the elections, EH&S will ask the UW Labor Relations Office to send letters to unions inviting them to participate in the new term. Unions are responsible for choosing their representatives. However selected by their unions, representatives are always considered "elected" members of the organizational HSC and participate fully in committee functioning.

If a union chooses to send a representative to an organizational HSC, it must inform the Labor Relations Office and EH&S in writing by December 1st. EH&S contact information is shown at the end of this guide.

Ex-Officio Representatives

Ex-officio members on organizational committees represent departments or organizations that can contribute to health and safety discussions due to their knowledge or position at the University. They are non-voting members and do not affect the quorum or balance.

Election Responsibilities

HSC Election Coordinator

Each HSC will select an election coordinator who accepts responsibility for the committee's timely completion of the election and who will communicate with EH&S and the Executive Sponsor. Each HSC should notify EH&S of their Election Coordinator by July 31st of the election year. The responsibilities of the Election Coordinator are as follows:

1. Develop a method to communicate to everyone in each department represented by the HSC.
2. Send out a call for committee member nominations.
3. Request current letters of appointment from the Executive Sponsor for the upcoming term.
4. Verify willingness of nominees and sent out ballots for voting.
5. Tally votes and provide results to represented departments, EH&S, and Executive Sponsor.

EH&S

EH&S assists each HSC throughout the election year. EH&S responsibilities include:

1. EH&S Director sends letter to HSC Executive Sponsors.

2. Publish the list of election coordinators on its website.
3. Ask the UW Labor Relations Office to invite authorized unions to choose representatives for the new term.
4. Generally promote the election process through timely announcements for nominations and elections in media such as the UW Today and The Daily. These announcements alert employees to look for specific election information from their own committee and/or department.
5. Provide guidance to election coordinators and ensure the election process is on track for all HSCs.
6. Announce election results in the UW Today in late December following the elections.
7. Train committee members at the beginning of the new term.

Executive Sponsors

Executive Sponsors ensure that their HSC complete the election process. Additional responsibilities include:

1. Assist the committee, if needed, in selecting their Election Coordinator.
2. Assure that all staff, faculty, temporary, hourly, and student employees had the opportunity to participate in the nomination and election by helping the Election Coordinator to identify all departments and employees within the committee's area of responsibility.
3. Provide letters of appointment to the Election Coordinator. The Committee Chair or Election Coordinator may prepare letters for the Executive Sponsor.
4. Assure that all aspects of the election are completed by December 1st.

Election Process

All employees represented by the HSC must be notified of the upcoming election by providing an opportunity for nominations. HSCs and Executive Sponsors can determine if employees can nominate others outside their department/organization but within the same HSC. Once nominees are determined for the ballot(s), the election can be held. Catalyst's WebQ is an effective way to create a call for nominations form, an election ballot, and tallying results. Two weeks should be allowed for both the nomination and election period.

A suggested timeline for the election process can be found in [Appendix I](#).

Contacting UW Employees for Nominations

Any method may be used (e-mail, paper ballots, etc.) to contact employees. Some employees may not have easy access to computers. A notification method that is appropriate for the employees represented by the HSC should be chosen. Distribution lists take time to develop from scratch and EH&S recommends beginning early on this process. It is possible that distributions lists are available from the office the HSC Executive Sponsor.

A notice must be posted on the Safety Bulletin Board. If the Health & Safety Committee has a group website the notice(s) should be posted in both locations.

The rules below offer general guidance for the HSC nominations:

1. Individuals may nominate themselves and vote for themselves.

2. Managers and supervisors are not restricted from being nominated and elected.
3. Any UW employee may nominate a potential candidate. Election coordinators should contact potential candidates to determine if they are willing to run for election and serve on the committee. Candidates should respond in writing/e-mail that they are willing to run in the election and serve on the committee. Save this verification with election documentation.
4. A candidate may run unopposed but must be voted on to win.
5. An individual may serve multiple terms.
6. Members who are appointed and elected must choose the status they prefer.

Election Ballots

Voter instructions should be provided within the ballot. All candidate names should be listed with their home department (e.g., John Smith, Financial Services). A committee can decide if a separate election should be held for each department/organization in the group or one election across all departments/organizations. An election method may be reviewed and changed by committee vote before an election.

Election can be online but precautions must be taken to ensure eligible voters vote only once. Paper ballots must be provided where computers are not regularly available to covered employees.

Documentation

Because the University has a variance allowing two-year terms on HSCs, nomination and ballot documentation must be kept for at least 2 years rather than the usual 1 year (i.e., at least through the January of the year following the end of a term). Documentation includes the following:

1. Announcements about nominations with distribution lists.
2. Nominations received and verification of their acceptance of the nomination.
3. Sample ballots, voting/balloting instructions, and paper ballots or catalyst or other electronic results.
4. Election result postings.
5. The location for election records should be approved by the Executive Sponsor to whom the organizational HSC reports.

Changes in Membership

If an elected member must stop participating on a committee, that member must be replaced by:

1. Sequentially asking the next runner-up from the previous election if he/she would like to complete the term or
2. Conducting a replacement election in that member's unit to fill the vacancy. Any changes in membership made during a term whether by appointment, replacement of an elected member by another elected

member, union participation changes, etc., must be communicated expeditiously by the Executive Sponsor, Committee Chair or EH&S to the other two.

All roster changes made during the term should be communicated to the Executive Sponsor, Committee Chair, and to EH&S.

U-Wide Health and Safety Committee

The University-Wide (U-Wide) Health and Safety Committee is comprised of member representation from HSCs, unions, the Faculty Senate, the Associated Students of UW, and any other organizations that would contribute to discussions of health and safety at UW. The U-Wide reports to and advises the EH&S Director.

HSC Representation

The new members of each HSC will select two representatives to sit on the University-Wide Health and Safety Committee (U-Wide). At least one of the members selected must be an elected member to the HSC.

Union Representation

A maximum of one representative from each union may sit on the U-Wide. These representatives must be serving on an organizational HSC, as well.

Faculty Senate Representative

The Faculty Senate may choose one person to represent that body as a voting member on the U-Wide. The U-Wide considers this representative as “elected.”

Associated Students of University of Washington Representative

The President of the Associated Students of University of Washington (ASUW) may arrange for one person to represent that body as a voting member of the U-Wide. This representative is considered to be “elected.”

Ex-Officio

Ex-officio members on organizational committees represent departments or organizations that can contribute to health and safety discussions due to their knowledge or position at the University. These members are non-voting and do not affect quorum or balance.

Contacts

If you have any questions or if you wish to submit election materials please contact EH&S, Research and Occupational Safety, at 206.543.7388, ehsdept@uw.edu, or Box 357165.

Appendix I: Timeline for 2015-2016 Term Election

	July 2015					August 2015					September 2015					October 2015					November 2015				
Week:	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Choose an Election Coordinator	█	█	█																						
Notify EH&S the name and contact information of Election Coordinator		█	█	█	█																				
Work with Executive Sponsor to review committee organization and verify units			█	█	█																				
Verify organizational contact lists with office of Executive Sponsor				█	█	█																			
Open nominations with e-mail, paper copy, or Catalyst for nominations. Allow 1-2 weeks for entries.						█	█	█																	
Verify willingness of nominees							█	█	█																
Solicit candidates if none nominated.								█	█	█															
Prepare ballot - either paper or website.											█	█	█												
Begin election - allow 1-2 weeks.												█	█	█	█										
Tally ballots.																█	█	█	█	█					
Contact all nominees.																		█	█	█	█	█	█		
Send election results to EH&S Coordinator.																					█	█	█	█	█