WHEREAS, in the spirit of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University’s (University) motto, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve), engagement in community through participation in shared governance is valued; and

WHEREAS, as mentioned in a statement from President Sands to the University community on August 28, 2023, the University’s shared governance system requires an informed and knowledgeable community and allows for transparent, comprehensive, and open communication amongst governing bodies and the University community; and

WHEREAS, staff participation in the shared governance system promotes collaboration and inclusiveness among the University community; and

WHEREAS, support for professional development opportunities should be encouraged at any higher education institution where the pursuit of knowledge is the basis of the institution’s mission; and

WHEREAS, job responsibilities and in-person staffing concerns can hinder staff participation in shared governance and professional development opportunities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a statement of the University’s support for staff participation in the University’s shared governance system and professional development opportunities be added to staff position descriptions as an enduring and unifying invitation to the community.
A statement from President Tim Sands on staff participation in governance

Dear colleagues,

Navigating Virginia Tech’s opportunities and challenges over the past few years has given me great appreciation for our robust system of shared governance and the collaboration and inclusiveness that comes from having staff working alongside students and faculty.

Participation in governance brings value to our staff members and the university, providing important representation and perspective, along with opportunities for unique and impactful professional development that can cultivate future leaders. While ensuring individual primary job responsibilities are completed, it is important that we endorse and support staff participating in our shared governance system. Staff members who have an interest in serving on committees and commissions should be encouraged to participate. The Division of Human Resources is available to help supervisors through conversations centered on balancing job responsibilities with university service. It has been our long-standing practice that employees serving the institution through committee participation are not required to use leave.

Maintaining our momentum and achieving our goals for the future will be challenging and complex, requiring all the tools and resources we have worked to develop. Active engagement in our system of shared governance, by all our constituency groups, is essential for the university to thrive.

I look forward to meeting with chairs and learning more about each commission’s plans for the year. We have much to do and some exciting work ahead of us. Thank you for everything you do to support Virginia Tech and represent the perspectives of staff, students, and faculty.

Sincerely,

Tim Sands,
President
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