Guidelines for
UW Health and Safety Committee Elections
October 2011

I. Introduction
There are 11 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/ohssafcom/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 and in consultation with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), 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), and additional U-Wide members represent specific University entities. The U-Wide Committee reports to and advises the EH&S Director.

UW Administrative Policy Statement 10.11, “UW Health and Safety Committees” (at 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 University and L&I have agreed that the U-Wide and organizational HSCs fulfill the requirements of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 296-800-130 to have representative safety committees. Therefore, the state requirements for selecting committee members are not required for departmental safety “teams” or other University committees that address safety concerns.

II. Size of an Organizational HSC
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.

III. 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.
IV. Committee Membership and “Balance”
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.” Ex-Officio committee members do not vote and do not affect the quorum or balance.

A. Elected Representatives
Individuals are nominated and elected in a process that includes all University staff, faculty, temporary, hourly, and student employees. It must be documented that all employees in a work group are able 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. There is no provision for proxy or delegate-type elections.

B. 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 organizational unit 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. Another type of appointment, historically, has been representatives from specific functional areas such as human resources or facilities, who are generally ex-officio and non-voting members.

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 are almost always voting members and have historically served very well in attending meetings regularly and in representing their units and keeping their unit executives apprised of safety activities. The number of appointed voting members cannot exceed the number of elected members.

Any appointment changes made during a term should be communicated immediately to the Executive Sponsor, Committee Chair, and to EH&S.

C. Faculty Senate Representative
The Faculty Senate may choose one person to represent that body as a voting member of the University-Wide Health & Safety Committee. The U-Wide considers this representative as “elected.”

D. 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.”

E. Union Representatives
- **Authorization:** A union may be represented on an organizational Health & Safety Committee, given the following conditions:
The union’s bargaining agreement/contract with the University specifically provides for representation on an HSC.

The union has members either employed by or performing services for units within the same HSC.

**Coordination with Biennial Elections:** 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 by sending representatives.

- 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.

**Notification:** If a Union chooses to send a representative to an Organizational HSC, by December 1st, it must inform in writing the following:

- Labor Relations Office
- EH&S (Note: EH&S contact information is shown in section IX. below.)

**U-Wide Health and Safety Committee:** A maximum of one representative from each Union may sit on the University-Wide Health and Safety Committee. These representatives must be serving on an Organizational HSC, as well.

**V. Election Responsibilities**

**A. Organizational HSCs:**

- Choose 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. Send the contact information for the Coordinator to EH&S by September 1st. (The EH&S contact is listed in Section IX. below)
- Develop methods and distribution lists to reach everyone in every department. (Tips for how to accomplish this are included in VI. Election Process, below.)
- Request current Letters of Appointment from the Executive Sponsor.
- Send out a call for nominations in late September (with return deadline).
- Verify that each nominee is willing and able to serve.
- Send out ballots to vote in early November (with return deadline).
- Tally votes electronically or by hand.
- Notifications:
  - Provide election results to all candidates and departments and thank them for their participation.
  - Welcome all Committee members for the new term and provide them with contact information for all members.
  - Send a copy of election results and contact information to EH&S by December 16th.
- Select Chair(s) and U-Wide representatives by January of first year. Inform EH&S immediately.
- Provide the Executive Sponsor a complete roster of Committee members for the new term, including contact information. The roster should identify the new Chair, U-Wide representatives, elected, appointed, and Union representatives.
B. EH&S:
- Send a pre-election letter to HSC Executive Sponsors to remind them that a new election must be held, signed by the Director of EH&S.
- Publish the list of election coordinators on its website and distribute a list of coordinators to the U-Wide.
- Ask the UW Labor Relations Office to invite authorized unions to choose representatives for the new term.
- 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.
- Announce election results in the UW Today in late December following the elections.
- Provide guidance to election coordinators.
- Train Committee members in January.

C. Executive Sponsors:
- Assure that an Election Coordinator has been identified by September 1st and that EH&S has been notified giving complete contact information.
- 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.
- Assure that all aspects of the election are completed by the end of December.
- Provide letters to appointed members and to elected representatives approving and commending their participation on the organizational Health and Safety Committee. The Committee Chair or Election Coordinator may prepare letters for the Executive Sponsor.

VI. Election Process

A. Tips:
- Choose an Election Coordinator as soon as possible. Notify EH&S as soon as the election coordinator is named giving complete contact information. (Note: The EH&S contact is listed in Section IX. below.)
- Distribution lists take time to develop from scratch and we recommend that you begin early. You might be able to use lists from the office of your Executive Sponsor.
- Consider “lessons learned” from previous elections and Election Coordinators.

B. Timing:
- EH&S informs Executive Sponsors, HSCs and Labor Relations of pending elections during September.
- Appoint the Election Coordinator by September 1st.
- The election process runs October – December 15th.
- Allow time to reach employees that work in other locations.
- Nominations and voting should both be open for at least two weeks.
- EH&S assistance and promotional announcements can keep you on track.
- Allow enough time – members must be in place for training and the January meetings.
C. Contacting UW Employees

- Any method may be used (e-mail, paper ballots, etc.) but keep in mind that employees may not have easy access to computers. To ensure everyone is reached, most organizations rely on written notification to announce nomination and balloting details.
- A notice must be posted on the required Safety Bulletin Board. If the Health & Safety Committee has a Group website the notice(s) should be posted in both locations.
- Catalyst’s WebQ is an effective way to create a call for nominations form, an election ballot and tallying results.

D. Election Ballots

- List all departments, divisions, or combination of departments that are included in the Organizational HSC - even units that have no candidates. (After the election, the Committee will decide how those employees will be represented by existing members.)
- List all candidate names with their home department, e.g., John Smythe (Financial Services).
- Please note: “Write-in” candidates should not be allowed at this point.
- Provide voter instructions at the top of the ballot. The following are example instructions:
  - “Vote only for the candidate representing your department”
  - “Vote for a candidate in each category”
  - “Vote for x number of candidates”
  - “Write-in” candidates are not allowed”
  - “The deadline for submitting your ballot is ….”
- An election method may be reviewed and changed by Committee vote before an election.
- Election can be online but precautions must be taken to allow only eligible voters and voters to only vote once. Paper ballots must be provided where computers are not regularly available to covered employees.

E. General Rules

- Individuals may nominate themselves and vote for themselves.
- Any UW employee may nominate a potential candidate. Nominators should contact potential candidates to determine if they are willing to run for election and serve on the committee.
- A candidate may run unopposed but must be voted on to win.
- An individual may serve multiple terms.
- Appointees who run for election and win must choose the status they prefer.
- To be listed on a ballot, candidates should notify the Election Coordinator in writing/e-mail that they are willing to run in the election and serve on the Committee. (Save this verification with election documentation.)

VII. 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). It is important to maintain documentation because we have been cited for failure to do so in the past.
- Documentation includes the following:
- Announcements about nominations
- Nominations received and verification of their acceptance of the nomination
- Sample ballots, voting/balloting instructions, and paper ballots or catalyst or other electronic results
- Election result postings

- The location for election records should be approved by the Executive Sponsor to whom the organizational HSC reports.

VIII. 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 they 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.

IX. Contacts
For purposes of the 2011 HSC elections, please contact Michael Blalock (blalock@uw.edu, EH&S Box 354400, 206-221-2852) if you have any questions or if you are submitting any materials.

In Michael's absence, contact Stuart Cordts (scordts@uw.edu, EH&S Box 354400, 206-616-3442).