



# UNM STAFF COUNCIL

Councilor Handbook

[staffcouncil.unm.edu](http://staffcouncil.unm.edu)

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## “Improving the working lives of staff at the University of New Mexico”

It is our sincerest pleasure to welcome you to the University of New Mexico Staff Council!

The Staff Council has been serving UNM staff since 1990, when it was formed by a Board of Regents mandate. Since that time, we have worked on staff issues that have significantly improved this University. We now team with the Board of Regents, the University administration and other university constituent groups to proactively address issues that affect both staff and the general UNM community.

Now that you've taken the big step of joining the Staff Council, we'd like to help you get started down the path to success by providing you with the tools to help you effectively represent the constituents that have elected you to this position. Here are some tips that we'd like to suggest to help make your Staff Council experience successful and rewarding:

- Get Involved - join a Staff Council committee and see what really happens behind the scenes. Find an area that interests you and actively participate in the committee. Attend the meetings, participate in activities, and be involved in the exchange of ideas. Your engagement really makes a difference!
- Find A Mentor - there are a number of past presidents in our group, as well as members who have been involved for the last 5 - 10 years. Introduce yourself and ask for a little guidance. They would love to help you. Alternatively, contact the Staff Council Administrative Officer to help you find a mentor or if you have any questions.
- Read through this handbook and ask questions. There is a lot of information that can help you discover what Staff Council is about and what we bring to the University on behalf of our constituents.
- Read the Staff Council Constitution and Bylaws and *Robert's Rules in Brief*. A knowledge of the governing documents and meeting procedures will increase your ability to participate and achieve your goals as a Councilor.

We are excited that you have joined the Staff Council and hope that you have a fantastic experience!

Sincerely,  
The Staff Council Executive Committee

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## I. History of the Staff Council

In 1970, staff at the University decided to form the University Staff Association (USA). The organization never gained formal recognition but served to educate staff about the need for a unified voice on campus. In 1985, UNM President Tom Farer, recognizing that he needed staff input, called for the creation of a Personnel Advisory Committee to be composed of staff officials from personnel and the administration. When Dr. Farer resigned, the proposal was shelved. It was not until 1987 that non-union staff decided they needed a means of directly communicating their concerns to the administration. The University Staff Association was resurrected, and a membership drive was undertaken. USA discussed the need for a formal non-union staff association with then current UNM President Gerald W. May and Vice President David McKinney. In March of 1988, President May created the Staff Council Study Group. The group was charged with determining if there was a need for staff representation and, if so, what form of representation. To obtain feedback from staff, public hearings were conducted in November 1988. A formal proposal was presented to Vice President McKinney in November 1989, and the Board of Regents approved the creation of the UNM Staff Council in December 1989.

The Staff Council Study Group developed election guidelines and conducted the first election of Staff Councilors in the spring of 1990. The first meeting of the Staff Council was held on July 11, 1990. Secretary of the University, Anne Brown, opened the meeting and UNM President Richard Peck addressed the body. The first Staff Council meeting dealt with how to conduct its meetings, rules for the election of officers, and development of the Council Bylaws. The first Staff Council officers were elected in September of 1990. One of the first tasks of the Staff Council Executive Committee was to create Council Committees and seek members. The committees established included Communications, Benefits, Career Development, Rewards and Recognition, Bylaws, and Constitution.

An offshoot of the Staff Council Study Group was the Committee on Staff Recognition, created by President May in 1989. It was charged with finding new ways to promote and recognize the many contributions of staff. The committee presented its recommendations to President May in July 1989. These recommendations included support for the proposed Staff Council and their Bylaws, a committee on ethics, a career development program, a resource center for staff, a sick leave bank, and a staff community service award.

One of the first things the Staff Council Executive Committee did was review the recommendations from the Committee on Staff Recognition. Council committee chairs met with the Executive Committee and developed a work plan for council committees. Some of the issues addressed at the first few Council Meetings included representation on the search committee for the Director of Personnel, the creation of an advisory board to the personnel office, the creation of an Ethics Committee, and representation on the UNM 2000 Plan.

In 1994, the Council recognized the need for administrative support for the Staff Council. Today, the Council is supported by one, full-time staff employee, the Staff Council Administrative Officer.

The Council continues to be “the voice of staff” at UNM. It is an active, dynamic organization that advocates for issues of particular concern to staff. The President of the Staff Council serves as an advisor to the Board of Regents and is a voting member of the Regent’s Academic and Student Affairs and Research Committee. In addition, the Staff Council President is an advisor to the UNM President’s Executive Cabinet and Budget Leadership Team. The Staff Council is an equal partner with faculty in the Faculty Staff Benefits Committee which tackles issues of employee benefits including retirement.

The workforce behind the Staff Council is in its committees. The Staff Council currently has a variety of internal committees (see page 11 of this handbook or visit <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html>). In addition, the Staff Council appoints, from time to time, representatives who sit on university-wide committees to offer staff input on important decisions that affect staff.

The Staff Council has a long and vibrant history of staff advocacy and continues to function as the elected representatives of staff at the University. To learn more about the Staff Council's accomplishments over the years, visit <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/about/history-and-accomplishments.html>.

## **II. Council Membership**

The Council is divided in half, with one half of the sixty councilors representing job grades and the other half representing precincts (organizational codes grouped by Vice-Presidential reporting structure). Representatives serve a two-year term with elections for grade positions held in odd-numbered years and elections for precinct positions held in even-numbered years.

Any staff member employed in regular status and has an FTE of at least .50 is eligible to serve on the Staff Council. The Staff Council encourages full and equal participation - no staff member is denied full and equal participation for reasons of race, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, spousal affiliation, veteran status, medical condition, political belief, or any other characteristic protected under applicable law. In addition, all staff, regardless of status or FTE, are allowed to participate in any Staff Council committee whether or not they are an elected representative on the Council.

## **III. Staff Council Governing Documents**

- A. Regents' Policy - <http://policy.unm.edu/regents-policies/section-6/6-12.html>
- B. UAP - <http://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/1000/1150.html>
- C. Memorandum of Understanding between the University of New Mexico and the Staff Council – <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/about/pdfs/memorandum-of-understanding.pdf>
- D. Constitution - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/about/pdfs/staff-council-constitution.pdf>
- E. Bylaws - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/about/pdfs/staff-council-bylaws.pdf>
- F. Election Code - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/about/pdfs/election-code-2016-.pdf>
- G. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised

## IV. Staff Council Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics for the Staff Council is intended to be advisory and to provide guidelines for professional and civil conduct of Staff Councilors and members of the staff of UNM who are working on behalf of the Staff Council. It is not intended to be inclusive of all possible contingencies or situations that might arise. Staff Councilors aspire to higher ethical principles and conduct and respect the rights of other members of the University community.

The Code of Ethics will be read by the outgoing President or Speaker after newly elected Councilors are seated. The Code of Ethics reads:

“Staff Councilors shall conduct themselves in meetings with civility and respect for all other members, staff, and guests. Staff Councilors shall respect the Council's chosen processes and follow the Staff Council Bylaws and *Robert's Rules of Order* when participating in formal Staff Council meetings.

Staff Councilors will adhere to all University of New Mexico policies and procedures to include procurement, behavior, and confidentiality in matters affecting themselves, their Council work, and their relations with others on behalf of the Staff Council.

Staff Councilors shall place the interests of the Staff Council above personal and private interests in conducting Staff Council business. Staff Councilors shall make known a conflict of interest or the potential for a perceived conflict of interest.

Staff Councilors shall not condone or participate in unethical conduct and shall conduct themselves ethically and accept full responsibility for upholding this code of ethics.”

Adopted by the UNM Staff Council, January 15, 2002  
Amended by the UNM Staff Council, May 17, 2016

## V. Staff Council Standing Rules

1. Councilors are expected to understand and abide by the Staff Council Constitution, the Staff Council Bylaws, and the Staff Council Election Code.
2. Councilors are expected to understand the basics of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. Councilors will receive a copy of *Robert's Rules in Brief*, as an introduction.
3. Councilors are expected to understand and abide by UAP 1150: Staff Council <http://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/1000/1150.html>.
4. Councilors are expected to understand and abide by UAP 2500: Acceptable Computer Use <http://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2500.html>.
5. Councilors are expected to understand and abide by UAP 2060: Political Activity <http://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2060.html>.

6. Councilors are expected to attend all Staff Council monthly business meetings. If a Councilor is unable to attend a meeting, the Staff Council Office should be notified by email prior to the start of the meeting in order to record attendance as "excused." Attendance is recorded at all business meetings. If more than three consecutive meetings are missed Councilors may be asked to resign from the Council.
7. Councilors are expected to arrive at Council meetings on time at 1:00 p.m. and must sign in. A quorum is required to conduct business. If quorum is not met no actions or votes may be taken.
8. Councilors must be recognized by the presiding officer, usually the Speaker, before speaking.
9. A Councilor about to address the Council during the business meeting shall state his/her name first, and then state her/his Grade or Precinct. All questions or comments shall be directed to the Staff Council Speaker.
10. Councilors are expected keep abreast of campus issues to gather information, relay concerns, and bring those concerns to the attention of the full Council, a Council Committee, or to members of the Executive Committee.
11. As an elected representative, Councilors are expected to regularly and consistently communicate with their constituents by use of their constituent listserv (provided by the Staff Council Office).
12. All committee reports, resolutions, and requests for action by the Council must be in writing available to Councilors prior to any action being taken.
13. All resolutions, requests for action, or other measures to be considered by the Staff Council shall include the names of the authors, sponsors, and committees that have reviewed them, along with appropriate background information regarding them.

## **VI. Staff Council Meeting Etiquette**

- **Do** be in your place on time, ready to do business.
- **Do** sign in at every meeting.
- **Do** listen to what's going on so you can respond when necessary.
- **Do** silence your cell phone and other electronic devices.
- **Do not** disrupt the meeting by making noise, whispering, or talking loudly.
- **Do** address all remarks to the Speaker (that includes debate and motions).
- **Do** confine remarks to the pending question.
- **Do** avoid the use of members' names.
- **Do** follow the rules of debate (know what they are).
- **Do** be seated during an interruption by the Speaker.
- **Do** ask permission to read from a document (letter, report) or book.
- **Do not** use inappropriate language during debate.
- **Do not** attack a member's motives.

## VII. Staff Council Committees

It is recommended that Councilors serve on at least one Staff Council Permanent Standing Committee or Standing Committee by attending committee meetings and fully participating in committee discussions, activities, and events.

### A. Permanent Standing Committees

Ethics Committee - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/ethics/index.html>

Executive Committee - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/executive/index.html>

Rules and Elections Committee - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/rules-elections/index.html>

### B. Standing Committees

Active standing committees can change based on Council needs or committee participation. Visit <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html> for the current list. The page also has links to committees' webpages, which include more information on their charges, chairs, meeting times, recent minutes, and more.

C. Special (Ad Hoc) Committees - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html>

D. University-Wide Committees - <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/committees/index.html>

## VIII. Administrative Support for the Staff Council

The Staff Council Office is located in Hokona Hall-Zuni, Room 302

The Staff Council Conference Room is located in Hokona Hall-Zuni, Room 352

Phone number: 277-1532

Fax number: 277-1313

Email: [scouncil@unm.edu](mailto:scouncil@unm.edu)

Website: <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/index.html>

The Staff Council participates in the following social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube.

The Staff Council has one full-time staff employee, an Administrative Officer, assigned to assist with the following:

- Manages the day to day operations of the Staff Council and the Staff Council Office
- Serves as the primary point of contact for the Staff Council on all matters directed to the office by University and community constituencies
- Assists with the establishment of goals and objectives for the Staff Council and Staff Council committees

- Coordinates and manages meetings for the Staff Council and Staff Council Executive Committee
- Coordinates the goals and objectives for the Staff Council and Staff Council committees with respect to budgets, speakers, facilities, technology, and logistical requirements
- Records Staff Council meeting minutes
- Records Staff Council Executive Committee meetings minutes
- Coordinates and tracks actions, activities, events and projects for the Staff Council and Staff Council committees
- Oversees the operation of office accounts and plans and monitors expenditures
- Maintains Staff Council and Staff Council Committee membership lists
- Coordinates special events for the Staff Council
- Prepares accounting and budgeting reports
- Manages budget allocations for the office and reviews revised and final budgets
- Manages the Staff Council's PCard
- Manages the Staff Council website
- Manages the Staff Council social media platforms
- Manages the Staff Council listservs
- Manages the Staff Council email
- Organizes and maintains Staff Council records
- Archives Staff Council materials

## **IX. Staff Council Communications**

### **A. Email**

Staff Councilors are automatically added to the "official" Staff Councilor email list ([StaffCouncilors-L@list.unm.edu](mailto:StaffCouncilors-L@list.unm.edu)) when they are seated as a Councilor. Sending email to this listserv will reach all members of the Council as well as the Staff Council Administrative Officer. You are encouraged to use this listserv to communicate with your fellow Councilors and discuss issues or concerns or ask questions. Additions or corrections to the list are managed by the Administrative Officer. Membership on this list is required for elected Councilors.

Constituent listserv email addresses (by Grade or by Precinct Representative) will reach all constituents who have email addresses within a specific grade or precinct. Constituents may e-mail back directly to the sender but not to the whole list. The listservs are refreshed nightly and thus do not allow for unsubscribing.

All UNM Staff may send email directly to the Staff Council Office at this address: [scouncil@unm.edu](mailto:scouncil@unm.edu)

Staff Council Committee listservs exist and are managed by the Staff Council Administrative Officer and the Staff Council Committee Chair. These exist to assist standing committees to communicate with each other. Members are added or deleted from these listservs by the Committee Chair and/or by the Administrative Officer.

### **B. How to Communicate with Constituents**

Each Councilor is the "owner" of their respective constituent email listserv. The listservs are managed by the Staff Council Administrative Officer and will be assigned to each Councilor. Once you are an "owner" of your constituent listserv, you may communicate with your own constituents. Many Councilors use this email

communication to summarize meetings or seek input on crucial Council business.

It is suggested that Councilors keep constituents updated on important issues and events by sending a personal message to their constituent listserv. Resending the weekly Staff Council “eNews” is not necessary or recommended, as your constituents have already received this email. All of your emails should be professional in nature, and your personal opinions and prejudices should be left out of these communications.

### **C. How to Communicate with the Staff Council Executive Committee**

The Staff Council Executive Committee has a listserv that includes members of the Committee. The listserv is managed by the Administrative Officer. Councilors or Staff Council Committee Chairs may send messages to the Executive Committee via the Administrative Officer at [scouncil@unm.edu](mailto:scouncil@unm.edu). Messages are then routed to members of the Executive Committee.

All SC Executive Committee meetings are open, unless it goes into executive session.

The Executive Committee meetings are held every week, except during the week that the Staff Council business meeting is held. Check the Staff Council website for date, time, and location.

Staff Councilors may contact any member of the Executive Committee to request to be placed on their agenda, to address them, present them with a request, or ask them for advice.

The Staff Council Executive Committee holds an agenda-setting meeting the week before the Staff Council business meeting.

## **X. Parliamentary Procedure**

### **A. The Staff Council Parliamentarian**

The Staff Council Parliamentarian shall be nominated by the Speaker and approved by the Council to serve on an annual basis. This shall be done at the same meeting in which officers are elected. Bylaws, Article VII, section 2. The Parliamentarian serves as an advisor on matters of parliamentary procedure. Any questions to the Parliamentarian during meetings must go through the Speaker who may or may not choose to consult the Parliamentarian.

### **B. Parliamentary Procedure**

- **What is Parliamentary Procedure?**
  - A system to conduct meetings used to generate desired outcomes in the shortest amount of time. Robert's Rules of Order (newly revised) is the Parliamentary Authority for the Staff Council.
- **What is the Parliamentarian's function?**
  - Serve at the pleasure of the Speaker and advise the Speaker and the Council regarding procedure and protocol.
  - Be a knowledgeable resource regarding the UNM Staff Council procedures and Robert's Rules of Order.

### C. Making a Motion

- Any member of the body, when recognized by the Speaker, may make a motion. State your name, the precinct or grade that you represent, and then address the Speaker.
- Proper Language:
  - "Jane Doe, Precinct 12. Madame or Mister Speaker, I move that we adopt/pass/accept Resolution #6"
  - "John Smith, Grade 16. Madame or Mister Speaker, I move to amend this resolution to read ..."
- The Speaker may solicit motions "The Speaker will entertain a motion to ..."
- All Main **Motions** and **Amendments** must be moved and seconded. However motions made on behalf of a committee do not require a second. Nominations are not motions and therefore do not require a second.
- There is one main motion on the floor at a time.
- Abstentions are not to be called for, nor recorded except for roll call and balloted votes.

### D. Amendments to Motions

- You can move to amend an amendment to a motion.
  - Main Motion
    - Primary Amendment
      - Secondary Amendment
- No "friendly amendments" are allowed because once a motion has been seconded, the item of business becomes the property of the body.

### E. Ending Debate: Only one of the following is required:

- **When all members who wish to speak have done so, debate is over and** the Speaker calls for the vote.
- **When the Previous Question is moved by a Councilor.** "John Doe, Grade 2. Madam or Mister Speaker, I move the Previous Question." A two-thirds vote of the body is required to end debate and is non-debatable.
- **When an item is tabled, postponed or referred to committee.**

### F. Changing a Decision

- **Reconsider:** Moved by a member who voted with the prevailing side,
- **Rescind:** Can be moved by any member,
- **Amend Something Previously Adopted:** Same characteristics of Rescind.

### G. Incidental Motions

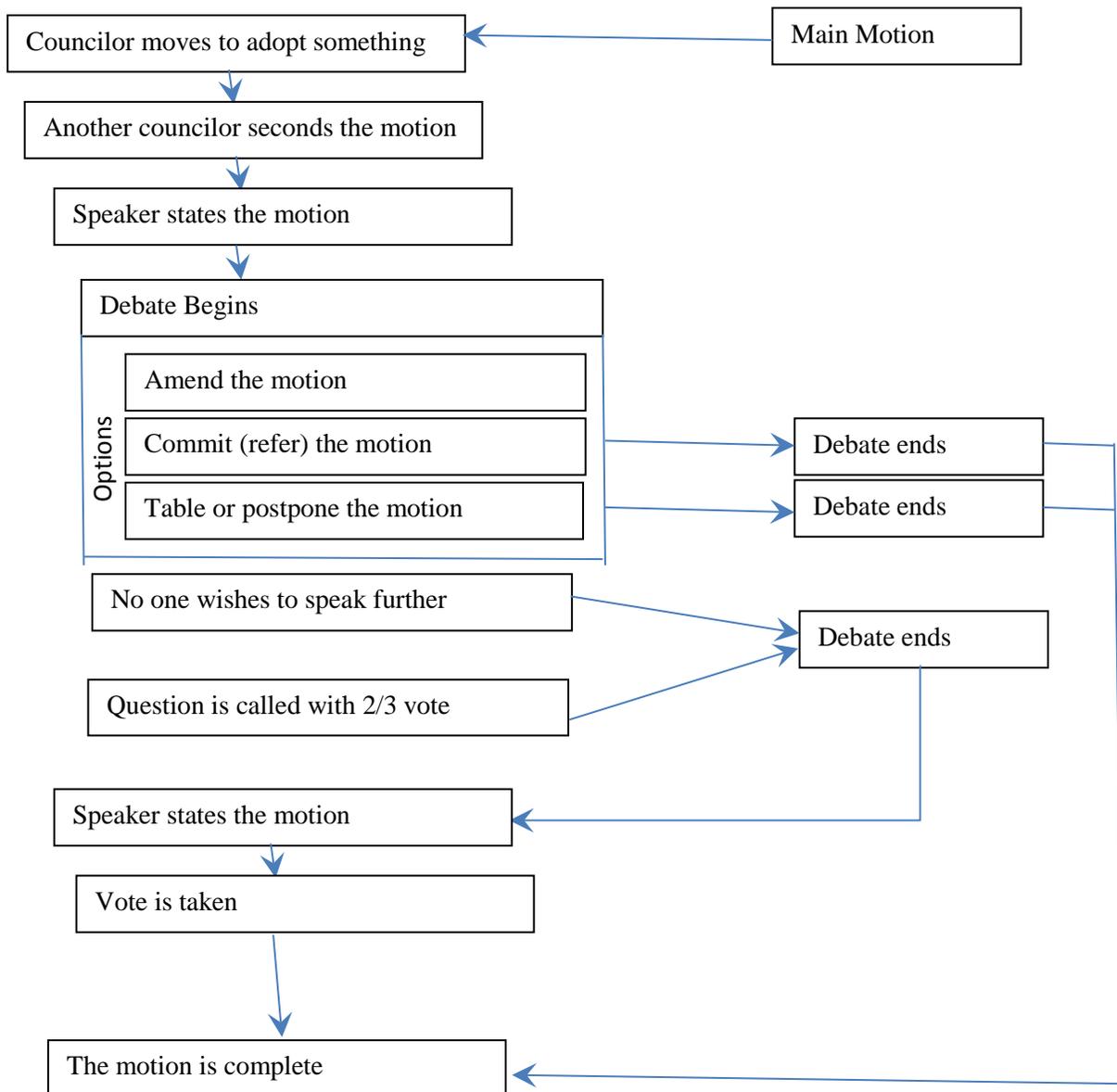
- **Request for Information:** Is a question to any speaker (through the chair) made by any member of the body. The speaker is not required to answer.
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Simply a question on procedure or rules. Not subject to an appeal since it is the Chair's opinion and not a Point of Order
- **Point of Order:** Made by any member of the body and interrupts the current speaker to bring up a perceived violation of the rules. The decision of the chair may be appealed.

## H. Appealing the Chair

Must be moved, seconded, and voted on by the body and requires majority to uphold the decision of the Chair. "John Doe, Precinct 1. Madame Speaker, I appeal the decision of the Chair" and states the reason.

- If seconded, the Chair states the motion calls for debate, if appropriate, and takes the vote "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?"

## XI. Life Cycle of a Motion



## XII. Councilor Resources

- **Councilor Getting Things Done Guide:**  
<http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/councilors/procedures-forms/flowchart---councilor.pdf>
- **Committee Chair Getting Things Done Guide:**  
<http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/councilors/procedures-forms/flowchart---chair.pdf>
- **Councilor Resource Page (includes form templates and other guidelines):**  
<http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/councilors/staff-councilor-resources.html>

## XIII. Resolutions

A resolution usually requests that action on a particular issue be taken. It may also express an opinion or position of an organized body. All resolutions must be submitted to the Council in writing and to the Council office either electronically or on disk prior to presentation at the Council meeting. This allows the office to number the resolution and begin the history/tracking of its life. Usually, resolutions must be introduced at one meeting and discussed and voted on at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting, but this is tradition and not a rule.

A resolution should begin with a preamble, "Whereas," and should not end with a period but with a semicolon. Each "Whereas" should be simple, express a complete thought, and follow a logical train of thought. The summary statement of a resolution begins with the phrase "Resolved, That... (State action to be taken)", or "Resolved, That... (State further action to be taken)".

Usually after the adoption of a resolution a member of the Council, the resolution sponsor, or any other member of the body may request that the resolution be directed to one or more University Officials for consideration and action. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that a resolution is sent and reviewed by the person or the office to which it is sent. It is also their responsibility to report back to the Council on any action or non-action taken. Any Councilor may write and introduce a resolution. All resolutions must state the author's name and position (Grade or Precinct). Resolutions may be sent directly to a Staff Council standing committee for discussion, review, and recommendations. A Councilor may also present a resolution to a standing committee. Resolutions may be submitted to the Executive Committee for similar action.

Once a resolution is moved, seconded, and stated by the Speaker, it is no longer the property of the author. The full body now owns the resolution. It can be adopted, amended, or rejected by the Council.

See <http://staffcouncil.unm.edu/about/resolutions.html> for examples of recent resolutions to help you in drafting your own resolutions.