

**BY-LAWS OF THE EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY  
STAFF SENATE**

*.....a representative body of employees to promote communication between staff and administration*

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## **Mission of the Staff Senate**

The mission of the East Carolina University Staff Senate is to promote communication between SHRA, EHRA non-faculty and CSS staff and the administration of East Carolina University, as well as faculty and students where appropriate. Reporting directly to the Chancellor, the Senate:

- Serves as a liaison between staff and the Chancellor, Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, and UNC Staff Assembly
- Reviews policies, rules, regulations, and procedures and makes recommendations regarding the interests/concerns that affect Staff
- Assists in the communication of issues and activities affecting staff members
- Promotes participation in the University community through its support of University activities and community service projects
- Encourages a sense of community among all University employees

*(Approved by the Senate on January 20, 2011)*

## **Article I - Membership Requirements**

**Section 1.0: Requirements** – Membership in the Senate is open to full-time SHRA, Clinical Support Staff, and non-faculty EHRA employees with permanent status. Membership in the Senate consists of the following:

- Senators
- Alternate Senators
- Ex-Officio Members

**Section 1.1: Voting units of the Senate include:**

- Academic Affairs
- Administration & Finance
- Athletics
- Brody School of Medicine
- The Chancellor's Area
- Student Affairs
- University Advancement

**Section 1.2: Senator Qualification/Duties** – The SHRA, Clinical Support Staff, and non- faculty EHRA employees within each unit will elect Senators for their respective units to two-year terms.

- A. Each unit will elect one Senator for every 100 SHRA, Clinical Support Staff and non-faculty EHRA employees within the unit. The number of Senators per unit is based on figures rounded to the nearest 100 employees. Voting members in the Senate shall consist of full-time, permanent SHRA, Clinical Support Staff and non-faculty EHRA employees with twelve (12) months of continuous service. Senators:
  - a. Cannot have any active disciplinary actions or active written warnings for unsatisfactory job performance or unacceptable personal conduct,
  - b. Lose their Senate membership upon leaving the University.
- B. Staff Senator duties include:
  - a. Attending all regular monthly meetings as well as special or called meetings. Release time from their work duties is provided to allow participation in the meetings/events held during the Staff Senators' regular work schedule. Should the meetings/events occur at times outside the Staff Senators' regular work schedule, the Staff Senator is not provided compensation or release time.
  - b. Following the Attendance policy found in [Article I Section 1.8: Attendance Policy](#).
  - c. Serving on committees of the Senate. Senators may be elected as Committee Chair or Committee Chair-Elect of those committees.
  - d. Making themselves known to their constituents, indicating how they can be contacted. They shall be willing to hear concerns, to receive information and suggestions, and to communicate these effectively to the Senate. In turn, Senators and Alternate Senators must keep their constituents well informed of

the work of the Senate and matters in which the administration solicits input from the Senate.

**Section 1.3: Alternate Senator Qualifications/Duties** – A maximum of two (2) Alternate Senators for each unit will be selected based on the next highest number of votes received. Alternates shall assist their unit's Senator(s) to maintain an open line of communication with their unit's constituents.

Alternate Senators are non-voting members unless serving in a Senator's absence or when the Senator is on the Executive Committee and they relinquish their vote to the Alternate at which time they will fulfill the voting duties of the Senator. Alternate Senators shall attend all regular monthly meetings and special meetings of the Senate. Alternates may serve on one standing committee of the Senate. Qualifications shall consist of same requirements as listed in [Article I Section 1.2: Senator Qualifications/Duties](#).

**Section 1.4: Ex-Officio Members** – The staff senate has the following ex-officio members. The Executive Committee may appoint additional ex-officio members as they deem necessary.

- A. **The Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources**. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources is a non-voting advisor to the Executive Committee of the Staff Senate and will attend meetings or send a representative. They can appoint non-voting ex-officio members to standing committees to serve in an advisory capacity as they see fit.
- B. **Office of Equity and Diversity**. Representative from the Office of Equity and Diversity is a non-voting ex-officio member and acts in an advisory capacity to the Staff Senate and the Diversity Committee.
- C. **Past-Chair of Staff Senate**. The previous year's Chair (Past-Chair) shall serve as an advisor and non-voting member to the Executive Committee. The Past-Chair shall also continue to serve as a member of the Staff Senate and a delegate to the UNC Staff Assembly.
- D. **Human Resources Committee Advisor**. A representative from the Human Resources office acts as a non-voting ex-officio member of the Human Resources committee. This position is appointed by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources.
- E. **Faculty Senate Representative**. The position of faculty senate representative is part of an exchange of ex-officio non-voting members between the Senate bodies. Faculty Senate will select the representative from their body that will serve as an ex-officio member on the Staff Senate. Staff Senate will select the representative from their body that will serve as an ex-officio member on the Faculty Senate. The selected representative of the Staff Senate will be required to attend all Faculty Senate meetings and provide a summary to the Staff Senate body during monthly scheduled meetings.
  - a. The Staff Senate Representative is appointed by Executive Committee.
  - b. The Staff Senate Representative can be a full or an alternate senator.

### **Section 1.5: Terms of Office**

- A. Staff Senators will be elected by a majority of votes cast by eligible employees within a unit and will serve a two-year term of office beginning June 1 (voting eligibility requirements can be found in [Article II Section 2.1 Election Procedure C](#)).
- B. If an Alternate Senator does not fill a Senator's vacated seat during the first year of

service, the Alternate will automatically assume a vacated Senator's seat in the respective unit at the next election. If the respective unit does not have a vacated seat, the Alternate Senator may seek a term in the next election.

- a. A term as an Alternate Senator does not count toward time served as a Senator. Serving in a Senator's extended absence is not considered filling a Senator's vacated seat. If an Alternate Senator fills a Staff Senator's vacated seat, the Alternate Senator shall serve the balance of the term of the vacated seat.
  - b. If the balance of the term of the vacated seat is less than a year, the Executive Committee may extend the term of an alternate to a full term in that seat, with the approval of the alternate, to stagger the years of experience in a unit, to ensure continuity in leadership, or if the alternate filling a vacated seat assumes the role of Committee Chair-Elect.
- C. Any senator, who is on leave for a total of 6 months or more during his or her term, shall be eligible to serve another term immediately following the completion of their current term, subject to review and approval by the Executive Committee. The affected senator must petition the Executive Committee for this extension before the election period for the new term ends. If approved, the senator will automatically fill a vacant seat for the upcoming term and will be exempt from the nomination and election requirements. For the purpose of requesting an extension, the definition of "leave for a total of 6 months or more", is defined by a senator who is absent from work for a cumulative total of 6 months or more due to medical leave, furlough, or other leave approved by the Executive Committee for this exception.

### **Section 1.6: Vacancies**

- A. If a vacancy in a Staff Senator's seat should occur through termination of employment, change of unit, resignation from the Senate, or expulsion from the Senate, the Senators position shall be filled by the Alternate Senator with the next highest number of votes in that unit from the previous election.
  - a. If there is a tie between two or more individuals with the next highest number of votes who are interested in filling the vacant Senator's seat, there will be a runoff election within thirty (30) days of the occurrence. If no one is available, the Vice Chancellor or designee of the respective unit may, at their discretion, appoint a Senator to serve in the vacant seat for the balance of the term.
- B. If an Alternate Senator leaves the Staff Senate through termination of employment, change of unit, resignation from the Staff Senate, or expulsion from the Staff Senate, the Alternate Senator position will be filled by appointment. The appointment process will be handled by the Membership Committee. First, Senators in the unit where the vacancy occurred will be asked to nominate people for the Alternate Senator position. If unable to fill the position, then all Senators will be asked for nominations. If still unable to fill the position, the Vice Chancellor for the unit will be asked to make appointments.
- C. If a vacancy occurs in the position of Chair, options to replace the Chair could include, but are not limited to:
  - The Chair-Elect shall fill the position for the remainder of the unexpired term
  - The Vice-Chair shall fill the position for the remainder of the unexpired term
  - The Staff Senate will hold a Special Election to fill the vacated Chair position
  - The Chair position is offered to the Senator who received the next highest

number of votes in the previous election

The Executive Committee shall make a recommendation for how the Chair position should be filled. This recommendation must then be approved by the majority of the Staff Senate.

If a vacancy occurs in an Executive Committee position other than the Chair for any reason, the Senate will offer the position to the Senator who received the next highest number of votes in the previous election. If they are unavailable, decline, or there was no runner-up, the Senate will hold a Special Election to fill the vacant position. The new officer shall complete the unexpired term of the position that was exited.

- D. If a vacancy in a Committee Chair's seat should occur through termination of employment, change of unit, resignation from the Senate, expulsion from the Senate, or removal of Staff Senator from Committee Chair position, the Committee Chair's position shall be filled by the Committee Chair-Elect.
  - a. If no Committee Chair-Elect exists, a special election will be held within the committee to identify a Chair. The Executive Committee liaison acts as the Chair until a Committee Chair is elected.
  - b. If the Chair-Elect position becomes vacant, a special election among eligible committee members (full Senators in the first year of their term) will be held. If a Committee Chair-Elect seat cannot be filled by an eligible committee member, a special election, open to all committee members, including alternates and Senators in the second year of their term, will be held. If the Committee Chair-Elect position is filled by an alternate or Senator in the second year of their term, they will be granted an additional term.
- E. University restructuring (organizational changes) within ECU that result in a change in the number of Senators and/or alternates a unit is entitled (as defined in [Article I, Section 1.2.A](#)) to have, will be addressed during the next scheduled nomination and election process. Senators and/or Alternate Senators affected by ECU organizational changes shall continue to serve in their elected capacity as representatives of their original respective units until the following May meeting. If the organizational changes occur when a Staff Senator and/or Alternate Senator are serving the first year of a 2-year term, their service will not count as a full term served.
- F. If a Staff Senator or Alternate Senator relocates their employment to a different unit within East Carolina University, and a vacant seat is available within the new unit, the Senator or Alternate Senator may be offered, by the Executive Committee, to fill the vacant seat for the balance of the term.

### **Section 1.7: Removal from Office**

- A. The membership of the Staff Senate may remove any elected Staff Senator or Alternate Senator from office for nonperformance of senatorial duties.
  - a. A petition requesting such removal can be brought to the Executive Committee by a simple majority of the members of the unit.
  - b. Expulsion for excessive absences from meetings does not require a petition from members of the unit. The Executive Committee will investigate the matter on a case-by-case basis. The Executive Committee will make the final decision through a secret ballot. A simple majority of the Executive Committee of the Senate will carry the vote. Possible causes of expulsion shall include, but not be limited to:
    - 1) Failure to consistently report on activities of the Staff Senate to unit constituents,

- 2) Unavailability of the Staff Senator to constituents,
  - 3) Use of powers of the Staff Senate, real or implied, to further personal causes that would be deemed a conflict of interest, or
  - 4) Excessive absences from meetings; see [Article I Section 1.8 Attendance Policy](#).
- c. If a Senator or Alternate Senator meets one or more of the criteria above, that person will automatically be brought before the Executive Committee for potential removal from the Senate. A simple majority vote of those present by secret ballot will be required. In certain cases, a Senator or Alternate Senator will not be eligible to serve in their role and will result in expulsion from the Senate without a vote from the Senate. Circumstances when a Senator or Alternate Senator will automatically be removed from the Senate without voting include:
- 1) When the Staff Senator or Alternate Senator receives an active disciplinary action or written warning for unsatisfactory job performance or unacceptable personal conduct.
  - 2) When the Staff Senator or Alternate Senator separates employment with the University.
- B. Once a Senator or Alternate Senator is removed from office for any reason except voluntary separation from the University, they will not be eligible for election for a period of three years from the time of removal.

### **Section 1.8: Attendance Policy**

As a Senator or Alternate Senator, attendance is expected at all official meetings. If unable to attend, please notify the secretary or committee chair prior to the meeting. Excessive absences will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and addressed as necessary.

## **Article II - Nominations and Elections Procedures**

### **Section 2.0: Nomination Procedures for ECU Staff Senate Members**

- A. Online nominations and voting are the adopted processes for electing ECU Staff Senate members. The Membership Committee prepares the online nomination form. The online form shall identify and provide: The unit and instructions on how to return the form, including method of return, date, time, and place.
- B. Each staff member may nominate any other staff member that is eligible to be elected in the year of the election. After the closing date of nominations, the ECU Department of Human Resources shall certify the eligibility of the nominated staff members and shall notify the nominated staff members that their names will be placed on the election ballots. Procedures are:
  - a. Each nominee must meet the eligibility requirements put forth in [Article I Section 1.2: Senator Qualifications/Duties](#) by the time they take office.
  - b. Each nominated staff member must agree to serve on the Senate before their name can be considered for a vote.
  - c. Approval of the supervisor is also necessary before the name of the nominated staff member is placed on the ballot.
  - d. All records pertaining to the nomination/election process shall be stored with the Department of Human Resources for one year.

### **Section 2.1: Election Procedures**

- A. The Membership Committee shall handle the nomination and election process each year from January through April via electronic balloting (electronic ballots). Staff Senators begin their terms with the June meeting.
- B. The Membership Committee will prepare the initial e-election ballots. The ballots will indicate the:
  - a. name of the unit,
  - b. names of the nominated staff members in alphabetical order,
  - c. number of Staff Senators to be elected, and
  - d. instructions for voting.
- C. Constituents will be given a minimum of twenty-one (21) days with a maximum of thirty (30) days from the time ballots are sent out to cast their vote for an election candidate via e-election ballots.
  - a. All Full-time and part-time SHRA, CSS and EHRA non-faculty are eligible to vote in the election for Staff Senators.
  - b. All Full-time and part-time SHRA, CSS and EHRA non-faculty will make up the count of employees used to determine the representation per unit.
- D. At the end of the voting process, the Membership Committee will count the ballots and notify the newly elected Senators. Also, they will make the results known to the University community. The Membership Committee shall report the names of the elected Senators according to bylaw [Article IV Section 4.1. Standing Committees of the Staff Senate a. Membership Committee](#) and/or appointed under bylaw [Article I Section 1.6 Vacancies](#). Procedures are:
  - a. Senators will be selected based on the highest number of votes received. In the case of a tie, a run-off election will be held.
  - b. If the number of nominees is equal to or less than the number of vacant seats, the nominee(s) shall have won by default.

- c. If the number of nominees is less than the number of vacant seats, the Vice Chancellor or designee of the respective unit (at their discretion) shall be asked to appoint a Senator to serve in any vacant seats for that term.
- E. If the unit has more nominees than open seats, a maximum of two (2) Alternate Senators for each unit will be selected based on the highest number of votes received. If the unit does not have more nominees than open seats, Alternate Senators will be selected via the process in [Article I Section 1.6 Vacancies B](#) for the respective unit. In the case of a tie for the Alternate Senator(s) seat(s), a run-off election will be held. Appointed Senators will have full membership and status as elected Senators.

## **Article III- The Meeting Structure**

### **Section 3.0: Structure**

- A. The Staff Senate will hold meetings monthly.
- B. Meetings will last approximately 2 hours.
- C. Meetings will be open to the entire campus community.
- D. The Secretary will:
  - a. Post agendas electronically at least two days in advance of each meeting.
  - b. Prepare minutes of each Senate meeting and electronically distribute to each Senator at least two days in advance of each meeting.
  - c. Distribute agendas and minutes via Executive Committee approved e-mail distribution lists. Post agendas and minutes electronically.
  - d. File hard copy in the University Archives
  - e. Send an electronic copy to the Communications and Marketing Committee to be posted on the Staff Senate website.

**Section 3.1: Addressing the Senate** – Only Staff Senators and Alternate Senators may address the Staff Senate. Individuals outside of the elected Staff Senators must petition the Executive Committee at least one week prior to the regularly scheduled monthly meeting if they wish to speak at regular monthly meetings. Staff will be allowed to speak once the Chair recognizes them.

**Section 3.2: Robert's Rules of Order for Parliamentary Procedure** – will be followed during all regularly scheduled meetings.

## **Article IV. - The Committee Structure**

**Section 4.0: Executive Committee** – Executive Committee Members are elected by a majority vote of the Senators and Alternates in attendance at the May meeting of each year. Alternate Senators may not be elected to serve on the Executive Committee.

A. Responsibilities include:

- a. Meet at least once a month outside the regular Staff Senate meeting.
- b. Develop the agenda for the upcoming Staff Senate meetings that addresses all matters brought to their attention by the Chair, University Chancellor, or other university affiliate.
- c. Review the By-Laws of the Staff Senate annually and ensure that the By-Laws Committee has updated the By-Laws appropriately.
- d. Record each resolution approved by the Staff Senate.
- e. Obtain the Chancellor's approval of resolutions, as necessary.
- f. Past-Chair, Chair, and Chair-elect shall serve as delegates to the University of North Carolina Staff Assembly.
  - 1) The term of office for the delegates is one year for the past-Chair, two years for the Chair, and three years for the Chair-Elect.
  - 2) Vacancies may be filled by the Vice-Chair and/or (1) elected delegate from the Senate body.

B. Members:

- a. **The Chair** – The Chair will conduct the Senate meetings and the Executive Committee meetings. Recognizing speakers and monitoring the agenda will be the primary responsibility of the Chair. The Chair will attend and/or present at the BOT meetings, and other called meetings upon request from various university officials and committees.
- b. **The Chair-Elect** – The Chair-Elect will participate in the Executive Committee and the Membership Committee. In the absence of the Chair, the Chair-Elect will assume responsibility for running the Senate meetings. The Chair-Elect will serve as liaison between the Executive Committee and the Standing Committees. In this capacity, the Chair-Elect will assist Standing Committees with recognizing goals and achieving objectives.
  - 1) A new Staff Senator may be nominated for the Chair-Elect position. The elected Staff Senator shall serve as the Chair-Elect for one year. A Chair-Elect shall be elected annually. Following one year serving as the Chair-Elect, the Chair-Elect shall be recognized as the Chair for the following year during the meeting when the elections for the other Executive Committee positions are conducted. The term of the Staff Senator serving as a Chair-Elect may be extended for one term to serve as Chair, if necessary.
- c. **Vice-Chair** – The Vice-Chair will serve in an assisting role to the Chair and Chair-Elect. The Vice-Chair will be elected annually to a one-year term and split duties with the Chair and Chair-Elect to help the Senate Executive Committee run efficiently and accomplish Senate goals.
- d. **The Secretary** – The Secretary will be responsible for recording and producing agendas for each Senate meeting. The Secretary will also be responsible for taking minutes of each of the Executive Committee meetings and the Senate meetings.
- e. **The Treasurer** – The Treasurer will be responsible for the budget of the

Senate. The Treasurer will coordinate with the assigned Chair and Secretary on all budgetary matters including but not limited to producing purchase orders through PORT, processing travel reimbursements through on-line Travel System, working with Accounts Payable on various payments generated from the Senate budgets, maintaining monthly credit card payments, and reconciling all Senate accounts monthly through the mechanisms of the ECU Banner/ODS/and e-print financial systems. The Treasurer will be responsible for working with the Standing Committees regarding their budget requests. Additionally, the Treasurer will serve on the Scholarship Committee for the purpose of notifying committee of scholarship balances and availability of funds to disburse and to submit requests to the proper funding source and ECU Financial Aid.

- f. **The Parliamentarian** – The Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Chair and shall serve one year unless reappointed. The Parliamentarian advises the presiding officer and other officers, committees, and members on matters of parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian has no voting rights.
- g. **Ex-Officio Advisors** – see [Article I Section 1.4 Ex-Officio members](#).

**Section 4.1: Standing Committees of the Senate** – When special needs arise, there may be ad hoc committees appointed by the Executive Committee to work on special projects. As appropriate, any existing Committees functioning at ECU may be incorporated into the committee structure of the Staff Senate.

Standing Committees of the Staff Senate will include:

- a. **Membership Committee**. Membership comprised of Staff Senate Chair Elect, ex-officio from the Department of Human Resources, and additional members from the Staff Senate population. The Chair of the Membership Committee shall be selected from the members and shall:
  - 1) Oversee the nomination and election process each year
  - 2) Assist with membership issues including addressing members not attending meetings
  - 3) Assign alternates to assume vacated seats
- b. **Communications and Marketing Committee**. This committee works to devise effective strategies to educate employees on the mission and capability of the Staff Senate, topics of interest to employees, and policies that affect employees. The Communications and Marketing Committee is responsible for the maintenance of the Staff Senate website, located at <https://staffsenate.ecu.edu/>.
- c. **Diversity Committee**. This committee examines and recommends strategies to improve the diversity of the workforce.
- d. **Human Resources Services Committee**. This committee provides advisory input on all issues related to employee policies, compensation, and benefits.
- e. **Rewards and Recognition Committee**. This committee will assist with recognition programs for staff.
- f. **By-Laws Committee** This committee functions to review and update the By-Laws to ensure that they remain consistent with Staff Senate actions as they are deemed necessary. The By-Laws committee will receive amendments and bring them to the floor for discussions and inclusion into

the updated By-Laws.

- g. **Scholarship Committee**. This committee develops and maintains guidelines and applications for the scholarships the Staff Senate manages. The Scholarship Committee is responsible for reviewing applications and selecting recipients based on the set guidelines for the specific scholarship, as well as maintaining applicant records for 3 years.
  - h. **Leadership and Professional Development Committee** This committee will encourage leadership and professional development among all staff members. The Leadership and Professional Development Committee will also promote opportunities to advance one's understanding of leadership within the ECU community.
- B. The Committee Chair and Committee Chair-Elect are elected by majority vote of the members of the Standing Committee during a meeting specified by the Executive Committee, generally the July meeting of each year. Procedures are as follows:
- a. The Committee Chair-Elect should be serving in the first year of their term.
  - b. Alternate Senators may be elected to serve as Committee Chairs. ([See Article I Section 1.3 Alternate Senator Qualifications/Duties B.](#))
  - c. A Committee Chair-Elect shall be elected annually. The elected Senator shall serve as the Committee Chair-Elect for one year. Following one year serving as the Committee Chair-Elect, the Committee Chair-Elect shall be recognized as the Committee Chair for the following Senate year.
- C. Removal – A petition requesting removal of a Senator from Committee Chair position can be brought to the Executive Committee by a simple majority of the members of the Standing Committee. Procedures are as follows:
- a. The Executive Committee will investigate the matter on a case-by-case basis and will recommend action to the Senate and/or the standing committee body.
  - b. Removal of a Staff Senator from a Committee Chair position does not affect the Staff Senator's membership in the Staff Senate unless the reasons for removal from a Committee Chair position reflect the Staff Senators' nonperformance of senatorial duties pursuant to [Article I Section 1.7 Removal from Office](#) of the By-Laws.
- D. Additional request for Staff Senate members to participate in other University Committees may be presented to the Staff Senate membership.

## **Article V - Staff Senate Resolutions**

**Section 5.0** A *resolution* is a main motion that needs to be expressed formally in writing, to attach a special level of importance. Because of the form — beginning with the word *Resolved* and following with either a statement of opinion or a statement authorizing or directing some action — such a motion is called a resolution.

- A. Resolutions will be managed by the Executive Committee.
- B. Staff Senators may propose a resolution topic.

## **Article VI- Amendments and Restatements**

### **Section 6.0 Amendments:**

- A. An amendment changes the meaning of individual provisions within the by-laws. For example, a condominium association may amend the by-laws to divest itself of maintenance and upkeep responsibilities for common areas and transfer them to the association members. Amendments generally require approval by a majority of the organization's board of directors or other governing body to take effect, and only the amendments are voted on while the rest of the by-laws remain in effect as before.
  - a. The Senate by-laws may be amended at any meeting of the Senate by a two-thirds ( $2/3$ ) vote of the members present at the meeting.
- B. A restatement corrects ambiguity in the text of a by-law by rewording for clarity, or updates by-laws to track changes in the law or the procedural needs of the organization. For example, changing a minimum lease length from six months to one year may be accomplished through restatement. Generally, an organization's executive director or equivalent may restate the bylaws without board approval, at which time the entire bylaws document is restated.

## **Article VII – Policies and Procedures**

**Section 7.0: Policies and Procedures** - The following is not intended to be an official part of the East Carolina University Staff Senate Bylaws, but a governing set of policies and procedures for the Staff Senators to refer to as needed.

- A. Effective 04-11-02: Chair and Director of Human Resources must approve Staff Senate travel.
- B. Staff Senators and Alternate Senators must submit to the Secretary reasons for the travel and direct benefits to ECU and ECU staff.
- C. All costs will be kept to minimal levels and only a reasonable number of Staff Senators or Alternate Senators will be approved to go.