



OLD DOMINION
UNIVERSITY

Monarch Staff Senate Constitution and Bylaws

CONSTITUTION

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Article I: Name and Definitions

Section 1: Name

The name of this group shall be the Monarch Staff Senate.

Section 2: Glossary

Abstention – An instance of declining a vote for or against a proposal or motion.

Ad Hoc Committee – A temporary committee created to address specific issues or projects.

Bylaws – Rules governing the internal operations of the Monarch Staff Senate.

Cabinet – The executive leadership team of the University, including the University President and designated senior administrators.

Classified Staff – A salaried employee whose terms and conditions of employment are subject to the [Virginia Personnel Act, Code of Virginia Section 2.2-2900 et seq., as amended](#), and who is employed in a classified position.

Ex Officio – Non-voting members serving as liaisons between Monarch Staff Senate and their respective departments, schools, or units.

Exempt Staff – An employee who is not subject to the provisions of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Liaison – A person who acts as a bridge between the Monarch Staff Senate and other University stakeholders to facilitate communication and collaboration.

Monarch Staff – All classified and wage employees of Old Dominion University.

Monarch Staff Senate – The representative body for Monarch Staff, responsible for advocacy, communication, and professional development.

Executive Board – The elected Officers of the Monarch Staff Senate (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Communications Coordinator). The Executive Board may act on behalf of the Senate between meetings, with actions reported to the full Senate.

Non-Exempt Staff – Employees eligible for overtime pay based on the Fair Labor Standards Act regulations.

Parliamentarian – An official responsible for ensuring meetings follow procedural rules, such as Robert’s Rules of Order.

Proportional Representation – The system by which University Divisions are allocated Monarch Staff Senate positions based on the number of Monarch Staff.

Quorum – The minimum number of voting members required to conduct official business: a simple majority of the voting members.

Senator – An elected representative of the Monarch Staff Senate who serves as a voice for their Division’s Staff.

Simple Majority Vote – A voting outcome in which more than half (50% + 1) of the members present and voting support a motion. Abstentions are not counted in the total when determining the majority.

Special Election – An election held outside the normal cycle to fill a vacancy or address an urgent matter.

Stakeholders – Individuals or groups with an interest in the decisions and activities of the Monarch Staff Senate, including Staff, faculty, administrators, and external partners.

Standing Committee – A permanent committee that oversees ongoing responsibilities within the Monarch Staff Senate.

Supermajority Vote – A voting threshold greater than a simple majority, such as two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) or three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the members present or voting. Supermajority votes are required for decisions that significantly affect the structure, authority, or governance of the Senate. Abstentions are not counted when determining the threshold.

Three-Fourths Vote – A voting outcome in which at least three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the members present and voting support a motion. Abstentions are not counted in the total when determining the three-fourths threshold.

Transparency – A commitment to open and honest communication, ensuring decisions and actions are clear and accessible to stakeholders.

Two-Thirds Vote – A voting outcome in which at least two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the members present and voting support a motion. Abstentions are not counted in the total when determining the two-thirds threshold.

University – Refers to all departments, Divisions, and schools of Old Dominion University (ODU), including the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences (VHS) at ODU.

University Administration – The leadership responsible for managing University policies, operations, and Staff relations.

University Division – Units headed by the University President, Provost, Executive Vice Presidents, Vice Presidents, or the Director of Athletics, as defined by the current University organizational chart.

Vote – A formal expression of choice for or against a motion, nominee, or decision. Only affirmative (“yes”) and negative (“no”) responses are counted toward the outcome. Abstention is not included when calculating voting thresholds.

Article II: Purpose and Mission

The Monarch Staff Senate of ODU serves as a representative body for Staff, facilitating effective communication between Staff and University administration, and advocating for Staff interests. The Monarch Staff Senate acts as a liaison among Staff, faculty, administration, and stakeholders, supporting a diverse University community and advising the administration on issues that affect Staff. Upholding principles of honest communication and professionalism, the Monarch Staff Senate is committed to promoting Staff development while respecting the University’s policies and procedures.

Mission

Our mission is to foster a vibrant, inclusive community where every voice is valued and respected. The Monarch Staff Senate champions a governance model prioritizing transparency and responsiveness to the needs of all stakeholders. We advocate passionately for the empowerment of Monarch Staff through recognition and support, promoting their professional development, benefits, and well-being. Through open communication channels, we ensure accountability and cultivate a culture of trust and collaboration. Our goal is to create an environment where every member contributes to the University's mission of excellence in education, research, and service.

Functions

The Monarch Staff Senate fulfills its purpose and mission through the following functions:

- **Advocacy:** Representing Monarch Staff interests in matters of policies, procedures, and workplace conditions.
- **Communication:** Promoting regular newsletters and updates on Monarch Staff Senate activities and University policies, while promoting transparency through open forums or town hall meetings.
- **Community Engagement:** Organizing social events and team-building activities to strengthen community bonds and foster cross-division collaboration.
- **Feedback & Assessment:** Creating and promoting surveys to gauge Staff satisfaction and implementing initiatives to improve workplace conditions.

- **Information Sharing:** Maintaining access to Monarch Staff Senate proceedings, resources, and policies on a University webpage.
- **Professional Development & Support:** Encouraging mentorship, networking, and growth opportunities for Monarch Staff

Article III: Membership and Governance

Section 1: Membership and Eligibility

1. All classified and wage employees of Old Dominion University are eligible to serve as Senators of the Monarch Staff Senate, except members of the President’s Cabinet.
2. Candidates must have at least one year of employment and be in good standing.
3. The University President may appoint a Cabinet member as a non-voting advisor.
4. Ex officio members may also serve as liaisons from University departments to support Monarch Staff Senate activities.

Section 2: Senator Positions

1. Composition and Representation:

- a. Senators are elected from each University Division to ensure proportional representation according to size.
- b. Each Division has a minimum of two (2) Senator positions, with additional positions allocated according to staff counts:

Number of Staff	Additional Senator(s)
1-99	None
100-199	1
200-299	2
300-399	3
400-499	4
500-599	5
600-699	6
700+	7

- c. Staff counts are requested annually from the Division of Talent Management and Culture, and adjustments are reviewed biennially. Updates are published on the Monarch Staff Senate website.
- d. The maximum number of additional seats allotted per Division is no more than seven (7) Senators.

2. Roles and Responsibilities:

- a. Communicate Monarch Staff Senate activities and decisions to their Divisions.
- b. Represent Staff concerns and interests within the Monarch Staff Senate.
- c. Facilitate forums, mentorship programs, and workshops.
- d. Serve as liaisons and advocates for their departments/units.
- e. Assist with onboarding and orientation of new Staff.

3. Terms and Elections:

- a. Senators serve two-year staggered terms; no more than one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) are renewed annually.
- b. Senators must wait one election cycle before seeking re-election.
- c. Partial or interim terms do not count toward term limits.
- d. Elections are facilitated by the Policies and Governance Committee.
- e. Runoff elections are held in the event of ties.
- f. Term adjustments may occur to maintain staggered cycles; such adjustments apply only to newly elected Senators.

4. Alternates:

- a. Serve as backup representatives for their Divisions.
- b. Attend meetings when primary Senator(s) are unavailable and participate fully.
- c. Maintain communication with primary Senators and constituents to ensure continuity and advocacy.
- d. Report back to primary Senators on meeting outcomes and activities.

Section 3: Officer Positions and the Executive Board

The Monarch Staff Senate's Executive Board shall consist of the following Officers, elected annually from among the Senators, to oversee and execute the Monarch Staff Senate's functions:

1. President

- a. Presides over all Monarch Staff Senate meetings.
- b. Represents the Monarch Staff Senate in communications with the University administration.
- c. Ensures the implementation of Monarch Staff Senate initiatives and decisions.

2. Vice President

- a. Assists the Monarch Staff Senate President and assumes duties in their absence.
- b. Oversees committee work and special projects.
- c. Acts as Parliamentarian during meetings.

3. Secretary

- a. Maintains minutes, attendance, and official records.
- b. Manages correspondence, agendas, and documentation.
- c. Maintains financial records and reports, and oversees fundraising compliance.

4. Communications Coordinator

- a. Manages website, social media, and newsletters.
- b. Promotes Monarch Staff Senate events and initiatives.

Executive Board Duties

1. Plan and coordinate Monarch Staff Senate activities between meetings.
2. Hold meetings with a quorum to conduct business.
3. Report activities and recommendations to the Senate.
4. Initiate Officer removal procedures if necessary, with final decisions made by Monarch Staff Senate vote.

Succession and Vacancy Procedures

1. The Vice President assumes the President's duties during a vacancy.
2. Past Presidents may serve as non-voting advisors until a new President is elected.

3. Other Officer vacancies are filled by special election.
4. Interim appointments may be made by a simple majority vote of Officers present to ensure continuity.

Section 4: Meetings & Decision Making

Meetings

1. Regular meetings are held at least twice per semester, open to Staff and University stakeholders.
2. Hybrid format (in-person and virtual) ensures accessibility.
3. Special meetings may be called by a simple majority vote of Senators present, with at least three (3) business days' notice.
4. Closed sessions may occur by simple majority vote of Senators present for discussion of confidential matters, such as performance or continuance of a Senator.
5. The Executive Board prepares and distributes the agenda for each regular meeting at least five (5) business days in advance.

Decision Making

1. A quorum must be present to make decisions.
2. Decisions must follow the voting procedures as outlined in Article IV: Elections and Voting Procedures.
3. Decisions must follow the parliamentary procedures as outlined in Article III: Membership and Governance.

Section 5: Attendance, Removal, and Reinstatement Procedures

Attendance Expectations

1. Senators must attend all meetings and actively participate
2. Missing more than three (3) consecutive meetings without valid reasons may trigger removal procedures.

Valid Absences:

1. Personal or family emergencies
2. Work obligations
3. Advance notice to the Secretary or designated Chair when possible

Removal Procedures:

1. The Executive Board reviews attendance and other potential grounds for removal quarterly or as needed.
2. Grounds for removal include unexcused absences, neglect of duties, or misconduct.
3. The Executive Board reviews any potential removal cases quarterly or as needed.
4. The Senator in question is notified and given the opportunity to present their case to the Executive Board before a vote.
5. Removal requires a simple majority vote of the Executive Board.
6. The Executive Board communicates the final decision to the full Monarch Staff Senate body.

Reinstatement:

1. Senators removed for attendance or procedural reasons may reapply for membership in future election cycles.

Section 6: Minutes and Record Keeping

1. The Secretary records all meetings, motions, votes, and key discussions.
2. Draft minutes shall be distributed within one week; approved minutes published within two weeks.
3. Closed session content is recorded separately for internal use only.

Section 7: Parliamentary Procedure

1. Monarch Staff Senate meetings follow Robert's Rules or alternative agreed procedures.
2. Parliamentarian advises on procedural matters.
3. A quorum must be present for official business.
4. In cases of parliamentary disputes, the Parliamentarian and Policies and Governance Committee provides clarification and resolution.

Article IV: Elections and Voting Procedures

Section 1: Nomination and Eligibility

1. All Classified and Wage Staff are eligible to nominate and vote in Monarch Staff Senate Elections. Senators seeking re-election must meet the participation requirements outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws.
2. Nominations are open thirty (30) days prior to elections. Staff may self-nominate or be nominated by peers with consent. Nominations must be submitted in writing or via an approved process.
3. The Policies and Governance Committee reviews all nominations for eligibility and compliance.

Section 2: Voting Procedures

1. Voting shall be conducted electronically, in person, or via University-approved methods to maximize participation.
2. Ballots must be distributed to all eligible voters at least fourteen (14) days prior to the election.
 - a. For sensitive matters (e.g., personnel issues, censure, confidence votes), a secret ballot may be authorized by a simple majority vote.
3. Tie-Breaking:
 - a. Runoff elections held within ten (10) business days for ties.
 - b. If a tie persists, the Policies and Governance Committee resolves by drawing lots in the presence of at least two (2) witnesses.
4. Decision Voting:
 - a. Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution or Bylaws, simple majority voting applies to routine Monarch Staff Senate business, Officer elections, and committee decisions.
 - b. Supermajority voting (two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$)) applies to amendments, structural changes, or any vote altering Monarch Staff Senate authority, functions, or Bylaws.
5. Proxy or absentee voting shall not be permitted.

Section 3: Senators' Elections

1. Elections shall be conducted annually by the end of February, or as necessary to fill vacancies.
2. Voting shall be conducted electronically, in-person, or through University-approved methods to maximize participation.
3. Ballots shall be distributed to all eligible voters at least fourteen (14) days before the election.
4. The Policies and Governance Committee shall administer elections, ensuring fairness, transparency, security, and confidentiality.

5. Representation numbers shall be reviewed biennially; additional or reduced seats shall be adjusted during elections to reflect changes in Staff population.

Section 4: Officer Elections

1. Officer elections shall be held at the first regular meeting following the seating of new Senators.
2. Nominations may be submitted in advance or from the floor.
3. Officers shall be elected by a simple majority vote of Senators present and voting.

Section 5: Committee Chair Elections and Appointments

1. Each standing committee shall elect its Chair from among its members at its first meeting of the year.
2. Chairs may also be appointed by the Senate President with Senate approval
3. Ad hoc committees shall elect a Chair at their initial meeting or accept a Chair appointed by the Senate President.

Section 6 Filling Vacancies

1. Vacancies in Senate seats shall first be offered to the runner-up from the most recent election, if available and willing to serve.
2. If no runner-up is available, a special election shall be held.
3. Interim appointments may be made by the Executive Board until the vacancy is formally filled.
4. Officer or committee Chair vacancies shall be filled by a special election within the Senate or committee, as appropriate.

Section 7: Election and Voting Records

1. The Policies and Governance Committee shall maintain records of nominations, ballots, and results for at least two (2) years.
2. Records shall be treated as confidential and used only for official Senate purposes.

Article V: Committees

The Monarch Staff Senate may establish committees as necessary to carry out its mission. Committees may be standing or ad hoc and shall operate under rules established by the Monarch Staff Senate.

Section 1: Standing Committees

Each standing committee shall be composed of Senators and, when appropriate, other Staff members appointed by the Senate. Standing committees shall include:

1. **Community Engagement and Outreach Committee**
 - a. The Community Engagement and Outreach Committee shall oversee the Staff Senate's website and social media presence, develop and distribute newsletters, announcements, and other communication materials to promote Monarch Staff Senate events and initiatives within the University community. Additionally, the committee will plan and organize social, networking, and community-building events to foster a sense of connection and collaboration among Staff. It will also coordinate volunteer and outreach activities within the University and the broader community.

2. Health, Well-Being, and Access Committee

- a. The Health, Well-Being, and Access Committee will develop initiatives and programs aimed at creating a welcoming and supportive workplace while prioritizing the health and well-being of Staff. It will organize training sessions, events, and wellness activities, advocate for policies that improve accessibility, work-life balance, and health resources, and provide information to cultivate and maintain a positive and collaborative work environment.

3. Policies and Governance Committee

- a. The Policies and Governance Committee examines and recommends changes to University policies impacting Staff, advocating for their interests in policy discussions, and preparing proposals for Monarch Staff Senate review and approval. Additionally, the committee manages the election and voting processes for Monarch Staff Senate, handling nominations and ensuring that elections and the voting process are fair and transparent.

4. Professional Development and Training Committee

- a. The Professional Development and Training Committee identifies and promotes professional development and training opportunities, advocating for and organizing workshops, training sessions, and mentorship programs. The committee will also collaborate with Talent Management and Culture, and other University Divisions to ensure the delivery of relevant and impactful training initiatives.

Section 2: Committee Chairs

1. Each Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members by a simple majority vote at the first committee meeting of the academic year.
2. Committee Chairs shall serve one-year terms and may be reelected.
3. Chairs are responsible for scheduling meetings, reporting committee activities to the Senate, and ensuring that records of committee actions are maintained.

Section 3: Committee Membership

Membership in standing committees is open to all Senators, and non-Monarch Staff Senate staff may be invited to serve when appropriate. Each committee must have at least three members to remain active, with membership determined through voluntary sign-up or Monarch Staff Senate leadership assignments.

Non-Senator Staff may serve as members with the approval of the Senate, but may not serve as Chair.

Committee membership shall be reviewed annually by the Policies & Governance Committee.

Section 4: Committee Meetings and Voting

1. Committees shall meet as needed to fulfill their responsibilities.
2. All actions or recommendations of a committee shall be approved by a simple majority vote of its members.
3. Committee decisions that require Senate action must be submitted to the Executive Board for placement on the Senate agenda.

Section 5: Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees may be created by a simple majority vote of the Senators present or upon recommendation by the Executive Board to address specific projects or initiatives. Such committees:

1. Are temporary and dissolve upon completion of their assigned tasks or projects.
2. Must have a clearly defined scope and timeline.
3. Shall submit progress reports and a final report upon project completion.
4. May include non-MSS members with relevant expertise.

Section 6: Committee Oversight

1. Failure to meet responsibilities may result in restructuring or dissolution of the committee.
2. The Executive Board has oversight authority, reviews committee effectiveness, and takes corrective action if needed.
3. The Executive Board may also mediate and resolve internal committee disputes.

Article VI: Amendments

Section 1: Proposal of Amendments

Amendments may be proposed by any elected Senator, Officer, or standing committee in writing.

Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Policies and Governance Committee, which will review and refine the language before presenting it to the Senate.

Section 2: Review and Discussion

The Policies and Governance Committee shall ensure proposed amendments comply with the Constitution, University policies, and applicable laws. Amendments must be presented for discussion at two (2) consecutive regular meetings before a final vote.

Section 3: Voting on Amendments

Notice of a proposed amendment shall be provided at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the vote. During this period, there shall be an open comment period of no fewer than fourteen (14) days. Adoption of a proposed amendment requires a supermajority vote of two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of Senators present.

Emergency amendments may be approved by a supermajority vote of three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of Senators present, if the usual discussion requirements are waived.

Amendments that materially alter the structure, authority, or function of the Senate must also be approved by the University administration.

Section 4: Implementation and Notification

Unless otherwise specified, approved amendments take effect immediately. All amendments shall be recorded in the official Constitution and Bylaws, published on the Senate website, communicated electronically to University Staff, and entered into the official meeting minutes.

Article VII: Ratification and Adoption

This Constitution shall be ratified upon approval by a simple majority vote of participating Staff, unless the ratification includes major structural or governance changes, in which case a supermajority vote of two-thirds

($\frac{2}{3}$) of participating Staff is required. This Constitution shall take effect immediately upon ratification.

Article VIII: Severability and Dissolution

If any provision of this Constitution is held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, the validity, legality, and enforceability of the remaining provisions shall not be affected or impaired.

In the event of dissolution of the Monarch Staff Senate, any remaining assets shall be distributed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations governing Old Dominion University at the time of dissolution.

Article XI: Authority and Affiliation

The Monarch Staff Senate derives authority from this Constitution and Bylaws through the voice and intentions of the Monarch Staff. The existence of the Monarch Staff Senate does not preclude the existence of or the right of any University employee to belong to any other organization.

Article X: Adoption Date

This Constitution was adopted by the Monarch Staff Senate members of ODU on [TBD].

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Article I: General Provisions

Section 1: Name and Purpose

- The organization shall be known as the Monarch Staff Senate at Old Dominion University (ODU).
- The Monarch Staff Senate serves to promote communication, advocacy, and development of Monarch Staff in alignment with the purposes outlined in the Constitution.

Article II: Membership and Eligibility

Section 1: Detailed Eligibility

Membership is open to Monarch Staff who have been employed at ODU for at least one year, excluding those in the University President's Cabinet.

Eligibility for Senators includes a demonstrated commitment to representing Staff interests.

Section 2: Membership Rights and Responsibilities

Members have the right to vote in elections and participate in Monarch Staff Senate activities. Responsibilities include engaging in Monarch Staff Senate initiatives and adhering to attendance requirements.

Article III: Senators and Officers

Section 1: Detailed Senator Responsibilities

Senators communicate Monarch Staff Senate decisions, represent Staff concerns, facilitate forums, and participate in committees. They assist in Staff onboarding and promote engagement.

Section 2: Officer Responsibilities

- **President:** Presides over all meetings, represents the Monarch Staff Senate, ensures execution of initiatives, appoints committee chairs, and performs other duties as necessary.
- **Vice President:** Assists the Monarch Staff Senate President, assumes duties in the absence, oversees committees, and serves as Parliamentarian.
- **Secretary:** Manages Monarch Staff Senate business and financial records, correspondence, attendance, and meeting agendas.
- **Communications Coordinator:** Manages website and social media, and coordinates outreach materials.

All Officers are responsible for ensuring a smooth transition to their successor and an orderly transfer of records.

Section 3: Non-Voting Members' Roles

- **Advisors:** Provide expertise and support without voting rights.
- **Ex Officio Members:** Serve as liaisons, offering departmental insights.

Article IV: Meetings and Decision-Making

Section 1: Meeting Procedures

- Regular meetings occur at least twice per semester, with agendas distributed five (5) days in advance.
- Special meetings require notice stating the purpose and are called with three (3) days' notice.

Section 2: Decision-Making Process

Decisions require a quorum and a simple majority vote of present Senators.

Section 3: Agenda and Order of Business

Standard agenda includes Call to Order, Quorum Confirmation, Approval of Minutes, Reports, Old and New Business, Open Forum, and Adjournment.

Any Senator or committee may submit items for inclusion in the agenda to the Secretary.

Guest speakers or presenters must be approved in advance by the Executive Board.

The Communications Coordinator is responsible for posting agendas to the Monarch Staff Senate website and notifying Senators; if unavailable, duties revert to the Secretary.

Section 4: Record Keeping and Transparency

Minutes recorded by the Secretary are reviewed and approved, then made publicly accessible on the Monarch Staff Senate website. The Policies and Governance Committee shall maintain records of nominations, ballots, and results for a period of two years.

Article V: Elections & Voting Procedures

Section 1: Nomination and Election Process

Nominations open thirty (30) days prior to the elections, with submissions required by the deadline.

The Policies and Governance Committee verifies nominations and manages the process.

Section 2: Voting Procedures

Conducted electronically or in person to maximize participation.

Runoff elections for ties occur within ten (10) business days; unresolved ties are settled by drawing lots.

Section 3: Filling Vacancies

Vacancies are filled by the runner-up from the last election or by a special election if needed.

Article VI: Committees

Section 1: Formation and Structure

Committees are formed by the Executive Board, requiring at least three (3) members to operate.

Section 2: Duties and Reporting

Committees operate under a charter, meet regularly, and provide updates at Senate meetings. Annual reports summarize activities.

Committee charters are composed upon the creation of and implementation of said committee.

Article VII: Financial Management

Section 1: Budget Development

The Secretary develops budgets as needed, with Executive Board input, requiring Monarch Staff Senate approval.

Section 2: Financial Oversight

Prepares financial reports to ensure transparency and compliance as requested.

Article VIII: Amendments to the Bylaws

Section 1: Proposal Process

Proposed amendments require Executive Board review and supermajority vote for adoption. Proposals must be submitted in writing to the Executive Board for initial review.

Section 2: Review and Approval

After review, the proposed amendment is presented to the Monarch Staff Senate for discussion. Amendments that materially alter the structure, authority, or function of the Senate must also be approved by the University administration.

Section 3: Voting

Amendments to the Bylaws must be approved by a simple majority vote of the present Senators during a regular or special meeting where the amendment is on the agenda.

Notice of the proposed amendment must be distributed to all Senators at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting.

Section 4: Documentation

Approved amendments are incorporated into the current Bylaws document promptly.

A historical record of amendments, including dates of adoptions and brief descriptions, is maintained by the Secretary and made available to all members.

Article IX: Records and Archives

The Secretary maintains complete and accessible records of Monarch Staff Senate activities. The Policies and Governance Committee shall maintain records of nominations, ballots, and results for a period of two years.

Article X: Conflict Resolution

Disputes are resolved through Executive Board mediation, ensuring fairness and transparency.

Amendments Log

AMENDMENT NUMBER	DATE ADOPTED	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	AFFECTED SECTIONS
1			
2			
...			

Appendix

Appendix A: Historical Notes

[Any historical context or notes about major changes]