

Parliamentary Procedure

Hofstra University

Student Government Association

- **Quorum:** Quorum is when a majority of the members are present. This means that $\frac{1}{2}$ the student government +1. A senator may ask for the presence of a quorum if he/she doubts one is present. No business should be done without a quorum.

- **Motions:**
 - **How to make a Motion**
 - A senator simply states the motion that he/she would like to make. If the motion is seconded then that motion is open to discussion.

 - **Declining a Motion**
 - The presiding officer has a right to decline a motion made by the senator. If he/she feels it worthy.

 - **Overturning a Decline:**
 - If there is another senator who did not originally make or second the original motion then he/she may call for a point of order that the motion be recognized. If $\frac{1}{3}$ of the members present, second the point of order, then the question shall be put to senate.

 - **Types of Motions**
 - **Privileged Motions**
 - ❖ Fix the time to Adjourn
 - ❖ Adjourn
 - ❖ Take a Recess
 - ❖ Raise a question of privilege
 - ❖ Call for the orders of the day
 - **Subsidiary Motions (Main Motion Pending)**
 - ❖ Lay on the Table
 - ❖ Previous Question
 - ❖ Limit/Extend Debate
 - ❖ Postpone Definitely
 - ❖ Commit or Refer
 - ❖ Amend
 - ❖ Postpone Indefinitely
 - **Motions that bring that Same Question Back**
 - ❖ Take from the table
 - ❖ Rescind or amend something previously adopted

- ❖ Discharge a Committee
- ❖ Reconsider
- **Incidental Motions (Procedural)**
 - ❖ Appeal the decision of the chair
 - ❖ Consideration by paragraph or Seriatim
 - ❖ Division of the Question
 - ❖ Division of the Assembly
 - ❖ Objection to the consideration of a Question
 - ❖ Parliamentary Inquiry
 - ❖ Point of Information
 - ❖ Point of Order
 - ❖ Request permission to Withdraw a Motion
 - ❖ Suspend the Rules
- **Voting**
 - ❖ Secret Ballots: Two members may order a secret ballot to be taken
 - ❖ Roll Call: 1/3 order a roll call vote
 - ❖ Presiding officer may order a roll call vote
- **General Procedure:**
 - ❖ Anything not expressed by these by-laws or other order of Student Government Association shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (9th Edition).

Basic Principles

1. Parliamentary procedure exists to facilitate the transaction of business and to promote cooperation and harmony.
2. All members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations.
 - The majority has the right to decide.
 - The minority has rights which must be protected.
3. A quorum must be present for the group to act.
4. Full and free discussion of every motion considered is a basic right.
5. Only one question at a time can be considered at any given time.
6. Members have the right to know at all times what the immediately pending question is, and to have it restated before a vote is taken.
7. No member can speak until recognized by the chair.
8. No one can speak a second time on the same question as long as another wants to speak a first time.
9. The chair should be strictly impartial.

Handling a motion.

Three steps by which a motion is brought before the group

1. A member makes a motion.
2. Another member seconds the motion.
3. The chair states the question on the motion.

Three steps in the consideration of a motion

1. The members debate the motion (unless no member claims the floor for that purpose).

2. The chair puts the question to a vote.

A. The chair restates the question.

B. The chair takes the vote:

"All in favor of the motion, say aye."

"Those opposed, say no."

3. The chair announces the result of a vote. A complete announcement should include:

A. Report on the voting itself, stating which side prevailed (and giving the count if a count prevailed).

B. Declaration that the motion is adopted or lost.

C. Statement indicating the effect of the vote or ordering its execution.

D. Where applicable, announcement of the next item of business or stating the question of the next motion that consequently comes up for a vote.

Voting

Basic Methods of Voting

Voice vote A vote by voice is the regular method of voting on any question that does not require more than a majority vote for its adoption.

Rising vote Used principally when a voice vote has produced an inconclusive result and as the normal method of voting on motions requiring a two-thirds vote, members indicate their vote by standing.

Show of hands As an alternative to the voice vote or as a way to verify an inconclusive result, members show their vote by raising their hand. A vote by show of hands should be limited to very small meetings.

Other methods which may be ordered:

Ballot Voting by ballot is used when secrecy of the member's votes is desired. Voting by ballot is sometimes required in certain cases by the bylaws of an organization. Any vote relating to charges or proposed charges against a member or an officer should always be by ballot.

Roll call A roll call vote has the effect of placing on record how each member votes. It should not be used when members are not responsible to a constituency.

Bases for determining a voting result

Majority vote The basic requirement for approval for action, except where a rule provides otherwise, is a majority vote. The term "majority" means "more than half," excluding blanks and abstentions, at a properly called meeting with a quorum.

Two-thirds vote Two-thirds vote means at least two-thirds of the votes cast, excluding blanks and abstentions, at a properly called meeting with a quorum.

Modifications

- Majority of members present (or two-thirds of . . .)
- Majority of entire membership (or two-thirds of . . .)

INFORMATION ON RULES OF ORDER

Use for reference during meetings

The Order of Business

A typical order of business includes:

- Call to order
- Roll call (or determine quorum)
- Reading and approval of minutes
- Reports of officers and standing and special committees
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Adjournment

Possible additions: invocation or ceremony, communications, announcements, a speaker, pass the gavel, etc.

Typical language used by chair

"I call this meeting to order."

"Will the secretary, Joe Davis, please call the roll?"

"We have a quorum. Will the secretary please read the minutes of the last meeting?"

"Are there any corrections to the minutes?"

"If there are no (further) corrections, the minutes stand approved (as read / as corrected)."

"We'll now move to officers' reports. Will the treasurer, Maria Johnson, please submit her report?"

"Are there any questions concerning the treasurer's report?" (If none) "Thank you, Maria. Will the vice-president, Jack Holmes, please give his report?"

"We'll now move on to unfinished business. At the last meeting Janice Ryan of the Office Operations Committee moved that . . . is there discussion?"

"The meeting is now open for new business."

"The chair recognizes Nidia Arroyo." (or simply, "Nidia?")

"It has been moved and seconded that . . . Is there any discussion?"

"We will now vote on the motion that . . . All in favor say 'Aye.' All opposed say 'Nay.' The motion is carried."

"If there's no objection, the meeting is hereby adjourned." (Or, "Is there a motion to adjourn?")

Types of motions

Main motions introduce new business before the group. They take the form of proposing actions. Example: "I move that we reduce our first-year dues for new members."

Motions that bring a question again before the assembly provide ways to readdress a motion considered earlier, but in the same meeting. Example: "I move we reconsider the motion, that we reduce the first year dues for new members."

Subsidiary motions propose various ways of dealing with a main motion that's on the floor. Example: "I move that we refer this motion to committee."

Privileged motions deal with issues requiring immediate attention but not related to the motion on the floor. Example: "I move that we recess until 7:00 pm this evening so that members may attend the dinner program."

Incidental motions deal with procedural matters that must be resolved before the meeting continues. Example: "Point of order. We do not have a quorum."

Handling a main motion

- Member asks for and gets recognition from the chair.
- Member says, "I move that . . ." Another member seconds motion, or chair asks, "Is there a second?"
- Chair states motion and asks for discussion.
- Members ask to be recognized and enter into debate. Maker of motion has first right to floor. Debate only on merits of motion, addressed only to chair.
- Debate is closed when no members seek floor, or when previous question is moved seconded, and voted.
- Chair puts question to vote.
- Chair announces result of vote.

While a main motion is pending no other main motions may be introduced. Privileged, subsidiary and incidental motions are permitted in order of rank.

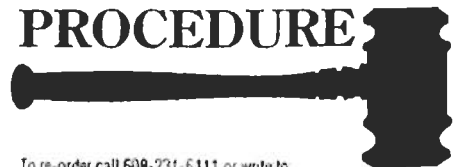
What minutes must include

- The kind of meeting being held: regular, special (e.g., annual), adjourned
- The name of your organization
- The time, date and place of the meeting
- The names of the secretary and presiding officer serving at that meeting
- For small gatherings, the names of all members present and a list of those absent for large gatherings, the number present and the number absent
- Approval of the previous minutes, and any corrections
- Summaries of reports (separate paragraph for each)
- Exact final wordings of all main motions, with the names of movers
- The results of votes on main motions -- when votes are counted or taken by ballot, the numbers of votes on both sides are usually included
- Motions that have been tabled or postponed
- Points of order raised and appeals made, with the chair's ruling on each
- Announcements
- The time of adjournment
- The signature of the acting secretary

Types of votes

- Voice vote—most often used.
- Rising vote—members stand to be counted.
- Show of hands—used in smaller groups instead of voice or rising votes, if no member objects.
- General (or unanimous) consent—members vote by remaining silent when asked for objections.
- Ballot or roll call—must be done when majority orders it.

BASICS OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE



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