

Parliamentary Procedures for Faculty Senators

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Motions

- Parliamentary Motions Guide

- <http://www.jimslaughter.com>

- Main Motion

- Introduces a substantive question as a new subject
- Basic device by which a matter is presented to the Senate for possible action
- Generally from SEC and Senate committees
- Open for debate, amendment, and voting

Motions: Amendments

- To modify wording of a pending motion
- Amendments vs. friendly amendments
 - An amendment is an amendment is an amendment whether it has the word “friendly” or not
 - Uncontroversial amendments can be handled by unanimous consent instead of debate
- Open to debate, further amendment, and majority vote

Motions: To Divide

- Main motion relating to a single subject
- Containing several parts
- Each of which is capable of standing alone if others are removed or rejected
- Division must be possible without rewording the original motion
- Not debatable, majority vote

Motion: Postponing, Tabling, and Referring to Committee

- **Postponing: To a certain time**
 - So that it may be considered at a more convenient time
 - Or when the debate has shown reasons for holding off a decision for later
 - A question can be postponed not beyond the next regular session
 - Debatable, majority vote, and amendable

Motion: Postponing, Tabling, and Referring to Committee

- Postponing: Indefinitely
 - “It is useful in disposing of a badly chosen main motion that cannot be either adopted or expressly rejected without possibly undesirable consequences.”
 - An affirmative vote on the motion to Postpone Indefinitely can be reconsidered – a negative vote on it cannot be reconsidered
 - Debatable, majority vote

Motion: Postponing, Tabling, and Referring to Committee

■ Tabling

- More formally called – a motion to “lay on the table”
- When something else of immediate urgency has arisen
- There is no set time for taking the matter up again
- Question may be taken from the table by majority vote
- Not debatable, majority vote

Motion: Postponing, Tabling, and Referring to Committee

- Referring to Committee (Motion to Commit)
 - Should be referred to a particular committee (including ad hoc)
 - Instructions to the committee may also be included
 - The committee has freedom of action after the referral
 - Debatable, amendable, majority vote

Motion: Previous Question

- Previous Question also called close debate; call the question; move to a vote
- Not debatable but if the debate has not yet been sufficient, the Chair can rule the motion out of order
- 2/3 present and voting

Motion: Incidental Motions

- Point of information
 - Request for information
 - Often for background information from the person or committee making the main motion
- Point of order
 - A request to the Chair to enforce regular rules
- Parliamentary law question

Votes and Voting

- Who gets to vote on what?
 - Senators who are faculty members including retiree representative – full voting and debating rights
 - Ex officio Senators (students and administrators)
 - Full voting and debating rights
 - Except: not eligible for Senate standing committees or Senate offices and may not vote in those elections

Votes and Voting

- When the Chair gets to vote
 - Generally, Chair remains impartial and does not vote
 - Exceptions
 - Paper Ballot (must vote when the rest of the assembly votes)
 - In cases of a tie the Chair can break the tie with an affirmative vote (the motion passes)
 - The Chair can create a tie with a negative vote (the motion fails)

Votes and Voting

- Types of Votes
 - Hand votes
 - Voice votes
 - Ballot votes
 - Roll call votes
 - Votes by mail
- Proxies

Votes and Voting

- Abstentions
 - Permissible
 - Do not count as votes (for purposes of “present and voting”)
 - Abstentions in votes on amendments to Part A of the Charter are effectively “no” votes

Meeting Etiquette

- Use microphones
- Speak to the assembly through the Chair and not directly to a previous speaker
- Senators are expected to stay for the entire meeting
- Make sure the Secretary knows you are in attendance
- Promote an atmosphere of civility, professionalism, and academic freedom

Resources

- *Robert's Rules of Order* (revised).
 - Now in its eleventh edition

- Jim Slaughter, Parliamentarian
 - www.jimslaughter.com

Thank You!
