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
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

  - Now in its eleventh edition

- Jim Slaughter, Parliamentarian
  - [www.jimslaughter.com](http://www.jimslaughter.com)
Thank You!