Sacramento State Faculty Senate

“How to participate”

Academic Year 2012-13
Robert’s Rules

• Henry M. Robert (1837-1923) was a general in the U.S. Army and began researching the subject of parliamentary procedure after he was elected to chair a group but found limited technical books available.

• “Robert’s Rules” often refer to a set of practices based upon parliamentary procedure(s)

• The first edition of “Roberts” was released in 1876, titled, “Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies”

• Nine subsequent editions followed, many with substantial revisions. The most recent edition was released in 2011.

Organizations using parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business, such as:

– Call to Order
– Roll call of members present to determine quorum
– Review of Minutes
– Consent Information (Actions made on behalf of the Senate)
– *Consent Action (Actions approved with one motion)
– Reports
– Special Orders—important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting
– Second Readings (Unfinished business)
– First Readings (New business)
– Adjournment

*items may be removed and placed on regular agenda under unfinished or new business accordingly*
Parliamentary Procedure is a system of conducting business...

◆ Allows a group of people to come together and make a decision
◆ Comprised of basic principles & rules that determine how the group will proceed through the decision-making process
◆ Helps the group stay focused on a single issue until the members resolve it
◆ Manages meetings by giving it structure
◆ Shortens meeting when tools are used properly

You will find the parliamentary authority for the Faculty Senate in the Constitution, By-Laws, and in the Standing Rules.
Parliamentary Etiquette

• Parliamentary is derived from the French word “parler” to discuss, speak, deliberate
• Every deliberative council presumes two things; the House and the Chair. Business is introduced by motions made by members, and the motions are stated by the Chair
• The Chair recognizes members who wish to speak and, if necessary, uses a “Speaker’s List” to recognize members
• All members should assist in maintaining a certain esprit de corps

Please!!!
• Make motions that are in order
• Obtain the floor properly and yield to others after making your statement
• Speak clearly and concisely
• Follow the rules of debate
• Be COURTEOUS and CIVIL!!
Sac State Senate Protocols

- Senators sit at the table; visitors sit in the gallery
- Alternates (so designated during the annual department election) sit at the table only in the absence of their Senator
- Voting members include Elected Senators (or their alternates in their absence)
Making Motions

• Members express themselves in the form of motions.

• A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or take a stand on an issue. Individual members may:
  – Make a motion
  – Second a motion(s)
  – Debate motions
  – Amend motions
  – Vote on motions
  – Call a point of order
Four Basic Types of Motions

1. **Main Motions**: The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.

2. **Subsidiary Motions**: Their purpose is to either amend a main motion or affect how a main motion is handled. They are voted on before a main motion.

3. **Privileged Motions**: Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.

4. **Incidental Motions**: Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions. They must be considered before the other motion(s).
How to Present a Motion

• Obtain the floor by signaling your intent to the Chair (or Senate Secretary) to be added to the speaker’s list
• Rise or raise your hand to address the Chair and/or Senate
• Speak clearly and concisely
• Always state a motion affirmatively. Say “I move that we….” rather than, “I move that we do not…”
• Wait for someone to second your motion
• Another member will second your motion or the Chair will call for a second.

• If there is no second to your motion, it is lost.
• If your motion is seconded, the Chair will say, “it has been moved and seconded that we…”, thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action
• The membership either debates your motion or may move directly to a vote
• Once your motion is presented to the membership by the Chair, it becomes assembly property and it cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members
Expanding Motions

• The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is during the debate of the motion, rather than when you present it

• The mover is always allowed to speak first

• All comments and debate are typically directed to the Chair
More on Motions

Putting the question to the Membership…

• Keep to the pre-determined time limit for speaking, if a limit has been set

• The mover typically may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chair

• The Chair asks the membership, “Are you ready to vote on the question?” If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken
Voting: voting methods

By Voice: The chair asked those in favor to say “aye”, those opposed to say “no”. Any member may move for an exact count.

By Roll Call: Each member answers “yes” or “no” as her name is called. This method is used when it’s required to record each person’s vote.

By General Consent: When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chair says, “if there is no objection…” The membership shows their agreement by their silence, however if one member says, “I object,” the items must be put to a vote.

By Division: This is a slight variation of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the Chair so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.

By Ballot: Members write their vote on a slip of paper. This method is used when secrecy is desired.

• Voting Outcomes:
  – carried unanimously
  – carried
  – failed
“Everyone here? Good. Meeting topic: Setting world record for shortest meeting. All in favor say aye. Ayes have it. Meeting over.”