



THE SITUATIONAL GUIDE TO PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

These scripts have been provided to help new Presidents and Parliamentarians run effective meetings. The first set of general guidelines provides a basic script to be used for any motion. The subsequent "Special Motions" scripts present actual motions that could be made, and include step-by-step guidelines that the chair of the meeting can follow to proceed through the motion from start to finish.

When a National standard exists for the number of votes required for a motion to pass (i.e. two-thirds or three-fourths), that standard has been listed. If no such number is given, the motion requires only a simple majority. In either situation, we recommend that the Chair of the meeting announce **before the voting occurs** what the required number of votes will be. This helps avoid questions of impropriety, and maintains the necessary integrity of the voting process.

Also, the Chair should keep in mind that parliamentary procedure is designed to make business simpler, not faster. Moving through motions quickly is never as important as making sure that everyone (including the Chair) understands what is happening. Work through the motions at a pace that allows all Members to follow along.

Please know that these scripts are a starting point. The Chapter is encouraged to adjust the methods (when appropriate) to suit the Chapter's evolving needs. Additionally, these outlines are focused specifically on methodology. For further information on policies and best practices, please contact your Chapter Consultant, who can refer you to the appropriate resources.

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MAKING A MOTION

Motions may be made during New Business. Any Member can make a motion, so long as the Member is recognized by the Chair, usually by raising a hand.

Member 1 "I move that (*insert motion here*)."

Chair "A motion has been made to (*repeat motion*). Is there a second?"

Member 2 "I second."

If the motion is not seconded, it cannot be debated or voted upon.

Chair "Seeing no second to the motion, we will continue with business."

and the meeting would move on to other items of business.

If the motion has been seconded:

Chair "The motion has been made and seconded. We will now begin debate. Would the maker of the motion please offer a pro?"

Member 1 offers pro debate.

The maker of the motion always offers the first pro. After the first pro, Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak. The Chair should recognize each Member in turn, using the following pattern of alternating between pro and con.

Chair "Con?"

Member 2 offers con debate.

Chair "Pro?"

Member 3 offers pro debate

...and so on. The Chair will alternate between pro and con until debate has ended.

ENDING DEBATE

There are two ways to end debate. Either may be used when one or more Members feel that all relevant points have been addressed during the debate.

1. Question (an informal call to end debate; does not require recognition)

A Member may call for "question" after at least two rounds of debate, as long as the Member is not interrupting a speaker.

Member 1 "Question."

Chair "Question has been called. Is there any objection to question?"

If someone objects to ending debate, he or she does not need to be recognized by the chair, so long as he or she is not interrupting a speaker:

Member 2 "Objection."

Chair "There has been an objection to question. We will continue with debate."

...at which point the debate returns to the alternation of pro and con. For example, if the last debate before question was called was a pro, the first debate afterwards would be a con.

If nobody objects:

Chair "Seeing no objection to question, we will now move into voting."

2. Move to previous question (a formal motion to end debate; requires a Member to be recognized by the Chair)

Member 1 "I move to previous question."

Chair "There has been a move to previous question. Is there a second?"

If the motion to previous question is not seconded:

"Seeing no second, we'll continue with debate, starting with (*pro or con, depending on where the debate was before the move to previous question*)."

If the motion to previous question is seconded, it is not debated.

Member 2 "I second."

Chair "We will now vote on whether or not to end debate. All those in favor of ending debate and voting on the motion on the floor?"

Members would indicate their votes by raising their hands. It is important that Members understand that they are voting on whether to end debate, NOT voting on the original motion.

Chair "All opposed?"

Members would indicate their votes by raising their hands.

"Abstentions?"

Members would indicate their votes by raising their hands. The chair should encourage Members to use abstentions as little as possible, because in most cases, an abstention is counted as a no.

It is always the decision of the Chair, with the assistance of the Parliamentarian if necessary, to decide which side has the majority in a hand vote. This motion requires a two-thirds majority to pass.

If the motion to end debate does not receive the required two-thirds vote:

Chair "The motion to end debate has failed. We will continue with debate, starting with (*pro or con, depending on where debate was before the move to previous question*)."

If the motion passes:

Chair "The motion to end debate has passed. We will now vote on the original motion to (*repeat motion*)."

MAKING AN AMENDMENT TO A MOTION

Amendments to a motion on the floor may be made if a Member would like to see a change in the original motion before it is passed. For example, if a motion has been made to “order a cake to celebrate Founders Day”, a Member may wish to amend the motion such that it would read, “order a cake *and ice cream* to celebrate...”

Motions to amend may be made during the debate phase of considering a motion, but may not change the original intent of the motion. For example, if a motion has been made to “order a cake to celebrate Founders Day,” and a Member proposed an amendment to the motion such that it would read, “order a cake to celebrate the President’s birthday”, this changes the intention of the motion because it changes the entire purpose for ordering the cake (Interpretation of intent is the responsibility of the Chair).

Member 1 “I move to add the clause “*insert clause here*” to the motion.” or

“I move to strike (*remove*) the clause “*insert clause here*” from the motion.”
or

“I move to replace the clause “*insert original clause here*” in the motion with the clause “*insert proposed clause here*”.

The Member should also provide a copy of the amendment in writing to the Secretary. If the Member does not already have it in writing, the Chair may pause to allow the Member time to write it down.

Chair “There has been a motion to (*insert motion here*). Is there a second?”

Member 2 “Second.”

If the motion is not seconded, it cannot be debated or voted upon. Then,

Chair “Seeing no second to the motion, we will continue with debate on the original motion.”

Debate on the original motion would continue in the alternation of pro and con.

If the motion is seconded:

Chair “The motion has been seconded. We will now move into debate.”

At this time, the standard procedure for debate and voting would apply. When voting, the motion to amend requires a simple majority.

If the motion to amend passes:

Chair "The motion to amend has passed. We will resume debate on the main motion, which now reads *(insert amended motion here)*.

If the motion to amend does not pass:

Chair "The motion to amend fails. We will now resume debate on the original motion."

In either situation, the debate on the main motion returns to the alternation of pro and con.

VOTING BY CONSENT

"Voting by consent" is an abbreviated way to vote on a motion, and is used when a Member believes that the entire body will vote in favor of the motion.

Calling for consent is done once the voting process begins, and the Member does not need to be recognized, as long as the Member is not interrupting a speaker.

When the chair asks for "all those in favor", the Member calling for consent would say:

Member 1 "Consent."

Chair "Consent has been called. Is there any objection to consent?"

A Member most often objects to voting by consent because the Member wants either to vote against the motion, or to have an actual count of the votes on record.

If someone objects to consent, the Member does not need to be recognized by the Chair, so long as the Member is not interrupting a speaker:

Member 2 "Objection."

Chair "There has been an objection to consent. We will continue with voting. All those in favor of the motion?"

...at which point the regular voting process resumes.

If nobody objects:

Chair "Seeing no objection to consent, the motion passes."

MAKING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHAPTER BYLAWS

(requires a majority vote as outlined in the Chapter Bylaws)

During New Business, a Member would propose an amendment to the Bylaws in one of the following ways:

Member 1 "I move to add the clause *"insert clause here"* to Article #, Section # of the Chapter Bylaws." or

"I move to strike (*remove*) the clause *"insert clause here"* from Article #, Section # of the Chapter Bylaws." or

"I move to replace the clause *"insert clause here"* in Article #, Section # of the Chapter Bylaws with the clause *"insert clause here"*.

The Member should also provide a copy of the amendment in writing to the Secretary and to the Members of the Chapter. This can be done with handouts, or by email following the meeting. It would be acceptable for the Chapter to delay future consideration of the motion if copies are not provided in a timely manner.

Chair "There has been a motion to (*insert motion here*). A copy of the motion will be forwarded to all Members, and the motion will be debated at the next meeting."

Allowing a proposed amendment to the Bylaws to sit for a week is standard procedure, and allows all Members the time to review the motion.

At the next meeting, during Old Business:

Chair "At the previous meeting, a motion was made to (*insert motion here*). Is there a second?"

Member 2 "Second."

If no second is made, the motion is not considered.

If the motion is seconded:

Chair "The motion has been seconded. We will now move into debate."

At this time, the standard procedure for debate and voting would apply.

When amendments to the Bylaws are passed, the approved changes should not be listed at the end of the Bylaws, as the United States Constitution does. Instead, the changes should be made within the body of the document. It is recommended that new, updated copies of the Bylaws be distributed to Members at the beginning of each semester or quarter.

VOTING ON POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS TO SELECT INITIATES

(commonly referred to as "bid vote")

The minimum vote for a Potential New Member to be promoted to Initiate is a simple majority. The Chapter may choose to amend this in its Bylaws to a higher level such as two-thirds.

During the consideration process, each Potential New Member is to be considered and voted on individually, on their merits as a Potential New Member. Members should remember that the recruitment process is not a personality or popularity contest; rather, it is about selecting the future Members of the Chapter. A helpful way to approach this voting process is to set aside the question, "Are they a good person?", and instead ask, "Would they make a good Member?"

During New Business:

Member 1 "I move to accept (*insert Potential New Member's name here*) as a member of the (*insert Initiate Class name here*) Initiate Class."

Typically, the Recruitment Advisor would make the motions nominating each Potential New Member.

Chair "A motion has been made to accept (*insert Potential New Member's name here*). Is there a second?"

Member 2 "Second."

Chair "The motion has been seconded."

If basic information about the individual is available, this could be included here to remind the Members of who is being considered. For example, if an information sheet or recruitment application was collected from the Potential New Member, it could be read at this point. Often, the Recruitment Advisor does this.

Chair "Is there any pro debate about (*insert Potential New Member's name here*)?"

Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak. The Chair should recognize each Member in turn, using the standard pattern of alternating between pro and con. Although the maker of the motion typically offers the first pro, it is recommended that the Recruitment Advisor refrain from entering debate on the Potential New Members. Instead, the Recruitment Advisor should be prepared with information about the Potential New Members' participation and attendance, and to provide other objective answers to the Members' questions.

Once debate on the individual has come to a close using the standard guidelines for ending debate:

"Discussion on *(insert Potential New Member's name here)* has ended. Please vote."

Voting on Potential New Members should be done by secret ballot. The Chapter may choose to use individual ballots for each Potential New Member, or to place the names of all Potential New Members on one larger ballot. When using one larger ballot, the Members would circle the names of each Potential New Member they are voting to accept

Member 1 "I move to accept *(insert second Potential New Member's name here)* as a Member of the *(insert Initiate Class name here)* Initiate Class."

The steps above will thus be repeated for each Potential New Member.

Once all votes have been counted for each Potential New Member, a list would be made of those Potential New Members receiving the necessary votes.

Then:

Chair "The following Potential New Members have received the necessary votes for promotion to Initiate:*(read list of names)*. Is there a motion to accept these individuals into the *(insert Initiate Class name here)* Initiate Class?"

Member 1 "I move to accept these Potential New Members into the *(insert Initiate Class name here)* Initiate Class."

Chair "Is there a second?"

Member 2 "Second."

Chair "All those in favor of accepting these Potential New Members?"

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

"All opposed?"

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

"Abstentions?"

Members would indicate their abstentions by raising their hands.

If the motion passes:

Chair "The motion passes, and these Potential New Members will be invited to join the *(insert Initiate Class name here)* Initiate Class."

If the motion fails, the Members should be consulted as to why. Additional motions to reconsider individual Potential New Members may be necessary (so long as they follow the guidelines for reconsideration), or other actions may

be needed. Once any conflicts or concerns have been resolved, the motion to accept the Potential New Members should be made a second time. For no reason should the list of Potential New Members be approved or accepted without a Chapter vote.

For additional information about bid votes, please consult the Recruitment Advisor manual in the Resource Center.

VOTING ON INITIATES FOR INDUCTION

(commonly referred to as "final vote")

(requires a three-fourths vote for each initiate to be promoted)

Each Initiate is to be considered and voted on individually, on their merits as a Potential New Member. Members should remember that the Initiation Program is not a personality or popularity contest; rather, it is about preparing the future Members of the Chapter. A helpful way to approach this voting process is to set aside the question, "Are they a good person?", and instead ask, "Will they make a good Member?"

Additionally, any Initiate who has not met the National and local requirements for Initiation is not eligible for Induction. Therefore, the Initiate should not be considered or voted on.

Finally, always bear in mind the 48-hour rule laid out in the National Constitution, which requires that all voting on Initiates be completed at least 48 hours prior to the Formal Induction.

During New Business:

Member 1 "I move to promote (*insert Initiate's name here*) to Active Member."

Typically, the Initiate Advisor would make the motions nominating the Potential New Members.

Chair "A motion has been made to promote (*insert Initiate's name here*). Is there a second?"

Member 2 "Second."

Chair "The motion has been seconded."

If basic information about the individual's progress as an Initiate is available, this could be included here to remind the Members of who is being considered. For example, if attendance records were available, they could be shared at this point.

Chair "Is there any pro debate about (*insert Initiate's name here*)?"

Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak. The Chair should recognize each Member in turn, using the standard pattern of alternating between pro and con.

Once debate on the individual has come to a close using the standard guidelines for ending debate:

"Discussion on (*insert Initiate's name here*) has ended. Please vote."

Member 1 "I move to promote (*insert second Initiate's name here*) to Active Member."

The steps above will thus be repeated for each Initiate.

Once all Initiates have been considered, and all votes have been counted for each Initiate:

Chair "That concludes our consideration of the Initiates. Are there any other motions regarding the Initiates?"

This pause in the voting process is used in case someone wishes to reconsider the vote on any one particular Initiate. The standard guidelines for reconsideration apply here. If someone wishes to make a motion to reconsider, they would do so now.

If no motions to reconsider are presented, a list would be made of those Initiates receiving the necessary votes. Then:

Chair "Seeing no other motions, is there a motion to promote these Members of the *(insert Initiate Class name here)* Initiate Class for Induction as Active Members: *(read list of Initiates)* ?

Member 1 "I move to promote these Initiates to Active Members."

Chair "Is there a second?"

Member 2 "Second."

Chair "All those in favor of promoting these Initiates?"

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

"All opposed?"

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

"Abstentions?"

Members would indicate their abstentions by raising their hands.

If the motion passes:

Chair "The motion passes, and these Initiates will be inducted as Active Members."

If the motion fails, the Members should be consulted as to why. Additional motions or other actions may be needed. Once any conflicts or concerns have been resolved, the motion to promote the Initiates should be made a second time. For no reason should the list of Initiates be approved or accepted without a Chapter vote.

For additional information about final votes, please consult the Initiate Advisor manual in the Resource Center.

OFFICER NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

During New Business:

Member 1 "I move to open the floor for nominations for the *(insert term here)* Executive Board and the *(insert term here)* Committee Chairs."

The term of the Executive Board is based on either the academic year (i.e. 2006-2007 academic year) or calendar year (i.e. 2007), and typically is determined by when the Chapter was activated. The term of the Committee Chairs may be the same as the Executive Board, or change from semester to semester (or quarter to quarter).

Chair "A motion has been made to open the floor for nominations. Is there a second?"

Member 2 "I second."

Chair "The motion has been seconded. The floor for nominations is now open."

During nominations and elections, it will be helpful for the Chapter to have a way to display the lists of nominees, whether it's a chalkboard or a computer projection. Each office that needs to be filled should be listed on this display, with space underneath each listing for names to be written as Members are nominated.

To Nominate a Member:

Member "I nominate *(insert name of nominee here)* for the position of *(insert position here)*."

Chair "*(insert name of nominee here)*, do you accept the nomination?"

Nominee "Yes." or "No."

If the nomination is accepted, the person's name is added to the list of nominees. If it is not, the floor is opened to other nominations.

When all nominations appear to have been made:

Chair "If there are no further nominations at this time, we will move on to the next item of business. The floor will remain open for additional nominations until the next meeting."

Following the meeting, the Chair should also ensure that each nominee understands what the nominee needs to do for the next meeting (i.e. preparing a speech).

At the Next Meeting, During Old Business:

Chair "Are there any more nominations?"

If there are, the nomination process would proceed as indicated above. If not, then:

"Seeing none, is there a motion to close the floor to nominations?"

Member 1 "I move to close the floor for nominations."

According to Roberts' Rules of Order, this motion is not in order "until the assembly is ready to close nominations." In other words, this should never be used to close the nominations prematurely or to prevent someone from being nominated. If such a motion is made earlier than is appropriate, the Chair should explain that and continue accepting nominations.

Chair "Is there a second?"

Member 2 "I second."

If a motion to close the floor is seconded, it is not debated. Instead, the Chapter moves directly into voting.

Chair "All those in favor of closing the floor?"

(Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.)

"All those opposed?"

(Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.)

If the motion fails, the floor would remain open for any nominations that still remain.

If the motion passes:

Chair "The motion passes, and we will now move to elections."

The elections should begin with the office of highest significance and progress downward. Each vote should be counted immediately, and the results announced accordingly. (This allows someone who is not elected to one office to be eligible for others.)

Each candidate is given the opportunity to speak briefly on his or her qualifications, goals, etc. for the position. (All other candidates for this position should be outside the meeting room at this time.) If the Members have questions for the individual, these would follow the speech. (Questions should be brief, and seek only to gather additional relevant information or to clarify previous statements. This is not a time to debate with or about the candidate.)

Once each candidate for the position has spoken, all candidates should remain outside of the room.

Chair "We will now enter debate on the candidates for *(insert position here)*."

The pro-con debate on each candidate should be done individually, and in the order in which they spoke to the group. Members should also be reminded that they are debating only the individuals' qualifications for the office they seek. Personal feelings or comments are not appropriate for these debates.

Chair "Is there any pro debate about *(insert first candidate's name here)*?"

Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak. The Chair should recognize each Member in turn, using the standard pattern of alternating between pro and con.

When the Chair feels there is no more debate for the first candidate:

Chair "Is there any pro debate about *(insert second candidate's name here)*?"

Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak. The Chair should recognize each Member in turn, using the standard pattern of alternating between pro and con.

This process will continue until there has been a pro-con debate for each candidate for the position in question. Then:

Chair "Discussion on the candidates for *(insert position here)* has ended. Please vote."

Voting during elections should be done by secret ballot, with Members writing the name of the candidate they want to elect to that position on their ballots. These ballots should be collected and counted by at least two people.

These counters should be selected before the meeting begins, should not be nominated for any position, and should not cast votes of their own. Because Members are losing their opportunity to vote if they serve as counters, it is recommended that the Chair ask for volunteers first. Another option is to ask if any Alumni who are present would be willing to serve as counters, since they would not be voting anyways.

Once the ballots for that position have been collected, the candidates may return to the room.

When the ballots have been counted, the results should be given to the Chair for announcement. Individuals elected to office should have their names removed from consideration for other offices yet to be voted on.

Also, it is wise to save the ballots until the meeting has ended.

This process shall be repeated for every position being considered. When all elections are complete:

Chair

“That concludes our elections. We will now move on to the next order of business.”

Once the meeting has been adjourned, the results of the elections are final. Any motion to reconsider a position or to recount the votes for a position must be made during the same meeting as the election; otherwise, such a motion is out of order.

For additional information about elections, please consult the Election Guidelines Resource manual in the Resource Center.

ADJOURNING A MEETING

(requires a simple majority of the Members present)

At the End of the Meeting, When All Business has been Completed:

Chair "Is there a motion to adjourn?"

Member 1 "I move to adjourn."

Chair "Is there a second?"

Member 2 "Second."

If the motion is not seconded, it cannot be voted upon.

Chair "Seeing no second to the motion, we will continue with business."

...and the body would move on to any remaining items of business.

If a motion to adjourn is seconded, it is not debated. Instead, the Chapter moves directly into voting.

Chair "All those in favor of adjourning the meeting?"

(Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.)

"All those opposed?"

(Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.)

If the motion passes

Chair "The motion passes, and the meeting is adjourned."

If the motion fails:

This usually happens when Members have announcements or other items of business they feel must be addressed before the meeting is adjourned. After the motion fails, the floor remains open for any announcements or business that Members wish to address. When it appears that all business has been completed, the Chair could then ask again for a motion to adjourn.