



# Parliamentary Procedure: General Motions

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Here are a few things to keep in mind when using the scripts provided to help run meetings more effectively:

### National Standards for Votes

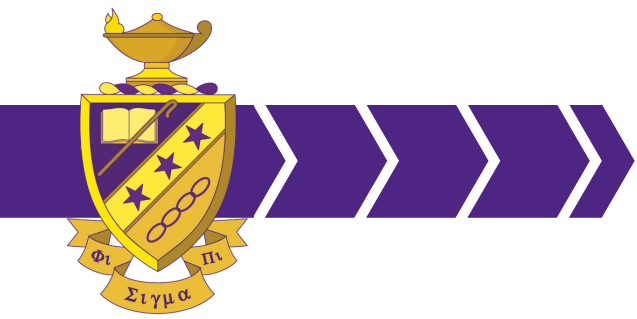
Each script lists the National standard for the number of votes required for a motion to pass (i.e. two-thirds or three-fourths). If it is not listed, the motion passes with a simple majority. The Chair of the meeting should announce the required number of votes for the motion to pass before the voting occurs. This helps avoid questions of impropriety and maintains the integrity of the voting process.

### Parliamentary Procedure is Designed to Make Business Simpler, Not Faster

The Chair should keep in mind that moving through motions quickly is never as important as making sure that everyone understands what is happening. Work through the motions at a pace that allows all Members to follow along.

### These Scripts Are a Starting Point

Chapters are encouraged to adjust the methods appropriately to suit the Chapter's evolving needs. There is a wealth of online resources available to guide you in using Parliamentary Procedure. You can also check out the Resource Center at [phisigmapi.org/resources](http://phisigmapi.org/resources) for additional information on the role of the Chair, Special Motions and other relevant topics.



# Parliamentary Procedure: General Motions

## 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...*

**Chair** *A motion has been made to... Is there a 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.*

**If the motion is seconded:**

**Member 2** *I second.*

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

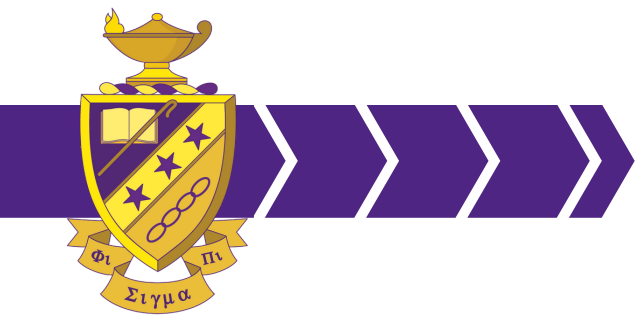
**The maker of the motion always offers the first pro. After the first pro, Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak. The Chair should recognize each Member in turn, alternating between pro and con.**

**Member 1** *(Offers pro.)*

**Chair** *Is there a con?*

**Member 3** *(Offers con.)*

**Member 2** *(Offers pro.)*



# Parliamentary Procedure: General Motions

## 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. Motions to amend may be made during the debate phase of considering a motion, but may not change the original intent of the motion. Interpreting intent is the responsibility of the Chair.

**Member 1**      *I move to add the clause...to the motion. OR I move to strike the clause...from the motion.*

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

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

**Member 1**      *I second.*

**If the motion is not seconded, it cannot be debated or voted upon. Otherwise, if the motion is seconded, debate on the original motion would continue, alternating between pro and con.**

**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.**

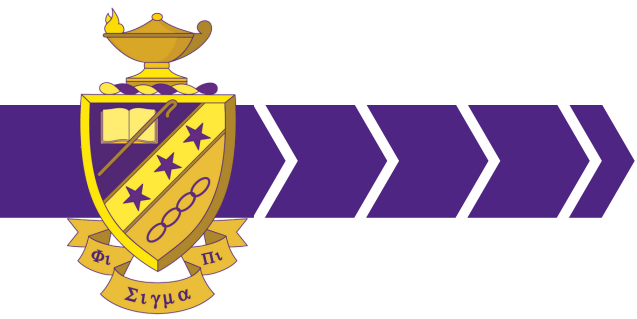
**If the motion to amend passes:**

**Chair**            *The motion to amend has passed. We will resume debate on the main motion, which now reads...*

**If the motion to amend does not pass:**

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

**In both situations, the debate on the main motion returns to alternating between pro and con.**



# Parliamentary Procedure: General Motions

## Ending Debate by Calling Question

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. The first is by calling "Question," an informal motion to end debate that 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 the speaker.

**Member 1**      *Question.*

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

**If someone objects to ending debate, they do not need to be recognized as long as they are not interrupting the speaker.**

**Member 2**      *Objection.*

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

**At this point, the debate returns to alternating between pro and con, picking up where you left off before "Question" was called.**

**If no one objects:**

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



# Parliamentary Procedure: General Motions

## Ending Debate by Moving to Previous Question

The second way to end debate is to "Move to previous question." This is a formal motion to end debate, and the Member must 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:**

**Chair** *Seeing no second, we'll continue with debate, starting with (pro or con, depending on where 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.**

**Chair** *Abstentions?*

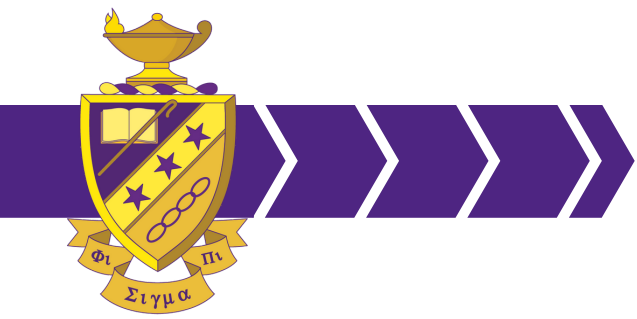
**Members would indicate their votes by raising their hands. Abstentions should be used as little as possible because, in most cases, an abstention is counted as a "no." It is always the decision of the Chair, with the assistance of the Parliamentarian as necessary, to decide which side has the majority 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).*



# Parliamentary Procedure: General Motions

## 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 either wants to vote against the motion or have an actual count of the votes on record. The Member objecting to consent does not need to be recognized by the Chair as long as they are not interrupting a speaker.**

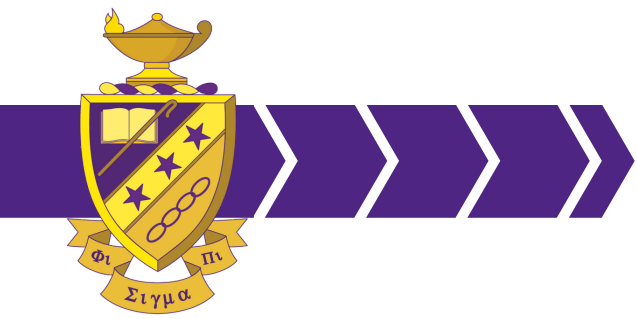
**Member 2**      *Objection.*

**At this point the regular voting process resumes.**

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

**If nobody objects:**

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



# Parliamentary Procedure: General Motions

## Adjourning a Meeting

At the end of a meeting, when all business has been completed, a Member may make a motion to adjourn. Adjourning a meeting requires a simple majority of all Members present.

**Chair** *Is there a motion to adjourn?*

**Member 1** *I move to adjourn.*

**Chair** *Is there a second?*

**Member 2** *I second*

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

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

**The body would move on to any remaining items of business. If a motion to adjourn is seconded and is not debated, the Chapter moves directly into voting.**

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

**Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.**

**Chair** *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, 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.**