



PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE: SPECIAL 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 for additional information on the role of the Chair, General Motions and other relevant topics.



Making an Amendment to the Chapter Bylaws

Changing the Chapter's Bylaws is an action that should not be taken lightly. In the event that a Member makes a motion to amend the Chapter Bylaws, a majority vote is required. When amendments to the Bylaws are passed, the approved changes should not be listed at the end of the Bylaws. 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 term.

Member 1 *I move to add the clause...to Article XX, Section XX of the Chapter Bylaws. OR
I move to strike the clause...from Article XX, Section XX of the Chapter Bylaws.*

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... A copy of the motion will be forwarded to all Members, and the motion will be debated at the next meeting.*

A proposed amendment to the Bylaws should not be acted on for a week to allow 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... Is there a second?*

Member 2 *I 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.



Voting on Potential New Members to Select Initiates (Bid Vote) - 1 of 2

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 about selecting the future Members of the Chapter. A helpful way to approach this voting process is to ask, "Would they make a good Member?" 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 New Business:

Recruitment Advisor *I move to accept (Potential New Member's name) as a member of the (Initiate Class name) Initiate Class.*

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

Member 1 *I second.*

Chair *The motion has been seconded.*

The Recruitment Advisor may share information about the individual who is being considered.

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

Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak, and the Chair should recognize each Member in turn, using the standard pattern of alternating between pro and con. The Recruitment Advisor should refrain from entering debate on the Potential New Members, and should instead be prepared with information about participation and attendance.

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

Chair *Discussion on (Potential New Member's name) 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 PNM or place the names of all PNMs on one larger ballot.

The steps above will be repeated for each Potential New Member. Once all votes have been counted for each PNM, a list would be made of those PNMs receiving the necessary votes.



Voting on Potential New Members to Select Initiates (Bid Vote) - 2 of 2

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

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

Chair *Is there a second?*

Member 2 *I second.*

Chair *The motion has been seconded. All those in favor of accepting these Potential New Members?*

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

Chair *All opposed?*

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

Chair *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 (Initiate Class name) 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 (following 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.



Voting on Initiates for Induction (Final Vote) - 1 of 2

Each Initiate is to be considered and voted on individually on their merits as an Initiate. Members should remember that the Initiation Program is about preparing the future Members of the Chapter. A helpful way to approach this voting process is to 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:

Initiate Advisor *I move to promote (Initiate’s name) to Active Member.*

Chair *A motion has been made to promote (Initiate’s name) to Active Member. Is there a second?*

Member 1 *I second.*

Chair *The motion has been seconded.*

The Initiate Advisor may share information about the individual who is being considered.

Chair *Is there any debate about (Initiate’s name)?*

Members should raise their hands to indicate they would like to speak, and the Chair should recognize each Member in turn, using the standard pattern of alternating between pro and con. The Initiate Advisor should refrain from entering debate on the Initiates, and should instead be prepared with information about participation and attendance.

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

Chair *Discussion on (Initiate’s name) has ended.*

The steps above will be repeated for each Initiate.

Chair *All those in favor of promoting these Initiates to Active Members?*

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.



Voting on Initiates for Induction (Final Vote) - 2 of 2

Chair *All opposed?*

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

Chair *Abstentions?*

Members would indicate their abstentions by raising their hands.

If the motion passes:

Chair *The motion passes, and following Initiates will be inducted as Active Members: (Initiates' names).*

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.



Officer and Committee Chair Nominations - 1 of 2

Selecting the future leaders of your Chapter is important to ensuring the future success of the Chapter and all its Members. Conducting fair and efficient nominations and elections should be a priority for your Chapter. The term of the Executive Board is based on either the academic year or calendar year. The term of the Committee Chairs may be the same as the Executive Board or change from term to term

During New Business:

Member 1 *I move to open the floor for nominations.*

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 is now open for nominations.*

Member 3 *I nominate (Nominee's name) for the position of (position name).*

Chair *(Nominee's name), do you accept the nomination for (position name).*

Nominee *(Responds either "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 ensure that each nominee understands the duties of the position for which they have been nominated, as well as what they need to do to prepare for the next meeting (meet with the current Member in their respective position, prepare a speech, etc.).

At the next meeting, during Old Business:

Chair *Are there any more nominations?*

If there are, the nomination process would proceed as indicated above.



Officer and Committee Chair Nominations - 2 of 2

If there are no more nominations:

Chair *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.

Chair *All those opposed?*

Members would indicate their vote by raising their hands.

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

If the motion passes:

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



Officer and Committee Chair Elections

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 and goals for the position. If Members have questions for the candidate, these would follow their speech. Once each candidate for the position has spoken, all candidates should remain outside of the room while voting occurs.

Following the closing of nominations:

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

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 about (Candidate's name)?*

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, the process will be repeated for each candidate until there is no more discussion.

Chair *Discussion on the candidates for (position name) has ended. Please vote.*

Elections should be done by secret ballot collected and counted by at least two people selected before the meeting begins. They should not be nominated for any position and should not vote. The Chair should ask for volunteers who are willing to not vote if they serve as counters. Alumni who are present may also serve as counters.

Once the ballots have been collected, the candidates may return to the room. The results of the ballot count are given to the Chair for announcement, and the ballots should be saved until the meeting has ended. Members elected should have their names removed from consideration for other positions yet to be voted on. When all elections are complete:

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

The results of the elections are final once the meeting has adjourned. Any motion to reconsider a position or recount votes is out of order unless it is made during the same meeting as the election.