

Simplified Robert's Rules of Order for the WOU Faculty Senate



Rules of procedure

- WOU Faculty Senate formal business starts promptly at 3:30 p.m.
- A majority of the members of the senate shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business.
- All actions or recommendations of the senate shall be by a majority of members present and voting. Abstentions are not votes; they are instances of members choosing not to vote.

Motions and debates

- Motions can be offered by any senate member.
 - Secure recognition, "I move ... (some action)".
- A motion must be seconded by another member.
 - A second can be made by any member simply by calling out "Second".
- After a motion is moved and seconded, the president will state "it has been moved and seconded that we ...", and the motion is then subject to action by the senate.
- The floor is open to discussion at which time members of senate are at liberty to offer their views on this motion, after receiving recognition from the president.

Rules of debate (secure recognition by the president before beginning to speak)

- The senator who made the motion has the first right to speak to the motion. S/he does so by obtaining the floor after the president places the motion for discussion.
- A senator can speak twice to a motion on the same day, but s/he can take the second turn only after everyone who wishes to speak the first time has spoken. If debate on the motion is continued at the next meeting, which is held on another day, the member's right to debate is renewed.
- When the speaker may be interrupted [no second required].
 - "Point of order" for a breach of the rules
 - "Parliamentary inquiry" to get information about rules
 - "Point of information" to get information about the business under discussion
 - "Question of privilege" if one can't hear; for safety reasons, comfort, etc.

Common motions during debates (secure recognition by the president prior to making a motion)

- Simple word changes
 - "Move to amend the motion by ..." [must be seconded].
- Rewording beyond simple word changes
 - "Move to substitute the motion by ..." [must be seconded].
 - If seconded, debate will continue until the senate decides which motion is the main motion.
- "Move to limit debate" to a set period of time or set number of speakers [must be seconded, 2/3 vote].
- "Move the previous question" to close debate [must be seconded, 2/3 vote].
- "Withdraw a motion" (by the person who originally made the motion).
 - The president asks if there is any objection; if not, then the motion is withdrawn.
 - If someone objects, a vote is taken: if a majority is in favor, then the motion is withdrawn; otherwise, discussion on the motion continues.
- "Move to postpone (to a definite time or date)" if more time is needed to personally study the proposal under debate [must be seconded].
- "Move to postpone indefinitely" (to kill a motion) [must be seconded].
- "Move to refer the motion (to a committee)" [must be seconded].
- "Move to table" if a member wants to discuss the topic at another time. It can be until later in the meeting, or until the next meeting - if left on the table later than this, the matter is dead [must be seconded].

Unanimous consent

- Unanimous consent is adopted to save time during routine business. For example, the president may say the following without requiring a motion, second, or vote to proceed (assuming no objections).
 - If there is no objection, *~pause~* (the minutes are approved as posted, the motion is amended as "...", since we have completed our scheduled agenda, the meeting is adjourned).

Closing the meeting

- (FS Bylaws) Meetings may be extended beyond the 5 p.m. adjournment time by a majority vote.