Parliamentary Procedure

An Introduction for WWU Faculty Senate

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The Faculty Senate conducts its business using the Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure developed by the American Institute of Parliamentarians.

This is a simplified version of Robert’s Rules of Order, and it provides structure for meetings, from the agenda to discussions and voting.
The basic premise of parliamentary procedure is to protect individual rights while seeing that the majority rules.

It is a means to focus and seek resolution on one thing at a time while preserving courtesy and respect.
Meeting Structure

- Call to Order and Approval of Minutes
- Reports and Announcements
- Presentations/Committee Reports
- Action Items
- Items from the Floor
- Adjournment

Parliamentary Procedure

Under parliamentary rules, the Faculty Senate follows a set agenda when it comes to the order of business.
The Senate operates collegially when conducting its business. You do not need to be an expert in parliamentary procedure to be a full participant in the proceedings.

A quorum is required before the Senate can take any new action. This is a majority of voting members of the Senate, excluding vacancies. If there is no quorum, the Senate may discuss items or hear reports.

Most action items follow a predictable process . . .
Parliamentary Procedure

Presiding Officer recognizes Senator who wants to offer a motion, which is a formal proposal to do something.

Senator makes a motion from the floor from a Senator by stating “I move that X.”

A Senator seconds the motion.

Senate considers motion (discussion/questions). The motion maker speaks first, then the first person to address the presiding offer should be recognized.

Presiding Officer puts the motion to a vote - “The question is on the adoption of X.”

Senator considers motion (discussion/questions). The motion maker speaks first, then the first person to address the presiding offer should be recognized.

Presiding officer announces results of the vote – approval is by majority vote, and tie votes fail.

Amendments to main motions follow a similar process. When there is a pending amendment, there should be no general discussion of the main motion until the amendment is voted on.
**Parliamentary Procedure**

**Type of Votes**

- **Voice**
  - “Those in favor, say aye. Those opposed, say no.”
  - Senators also may abstain.

- **Show of Hands**

- **Roll Call**
  - Presiding officer or any other Senator may request a roll call vote. It needs to be seconded by two other Senators.
  - Vote of each Senator will be recorded in the minutes.

- **Secret Ballot**
  - Presiding officer or any other Senator may request a secret ballot vote, which also needs two seconds.
  - One example of a secret ballot would be if there were two nominees for a single position on the Senate Executive Council.

“The Senate sometimes agrees to use “general consent” which does not require a formal vote. This happens when there is unanimous agreement.”
These motions are listed in order of precedence, which means that any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion/action on the Senate floor.

## What To Say When - Incidental Motions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You Want To</th>
<th>You Say</th>
<th>Interrupt Speaker?</th>
<th>Need a 2nd?</th>
<th>Debatable?</th>
<th>Amendable?</th>
<th>Vote?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suspend the rules</td>
<td>I move to suspend the rule . . .</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce The rules</td>
<td>Point of Order</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary Question</td>
<td>I rise to a Parliamentary Inquiry</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw motion</td>
<td>I withdraw my motion</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divide motion</td>
<td>I request that the motion be divided</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit matter to Senate</td>
<td>I appeal from the decision of the presiding officer</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a voice vote</td>
<td>Division!</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are a series of motions that arise incidentally and are decided on immediately. These have no order of precedence.
## What To Say When - Restorative Motions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You Want To</th>
<th>You Say</th>
<th>Interrupt Speaker?</th>
<th>Need a 2nd?</th>
<th>Debatable?</th>
<th>Amendable?</th>
<th>Vote?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amend a previous action</td>
<td>I move to <em>amend the motion which...</em></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Same as original motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsider main motion</td>
<td>I move to <em>reconsider...</em></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancel previous action</td>
<td>I move to <em>revoke...</em></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Same as original motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formally approve previous action</td>
<td>I move to <em>ratify...</em></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, there are motions that are restorative, which have no order of precedence and are introduced when nothing else is pending on the floor.
Key Take-Aways

The Faculty Senate uses the basics of making and completing main motions, amendments, and a few of the other incidental motions to conduct its business smoothly and effectively.

If the presiding officer is uncertain how to proceed, they can ask a knowledgeable source about the proper parliamentary procedure or if anyone has a suggestion about how to proceed, or they can propose an action in keeping with fairness and common sense.

Taken as a whole, this approach balances the needs for good meeting practices and accessible, full participation by all Senators.