



Luke Hollister, WWU

# Parliamentary Procedure

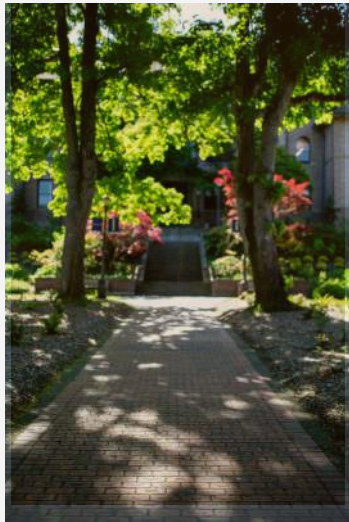
An Introduction for WWU Faculty Senate

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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

Under parliamentary rules, the Faculty Senate follows a set agenda when it comes to the order of business.

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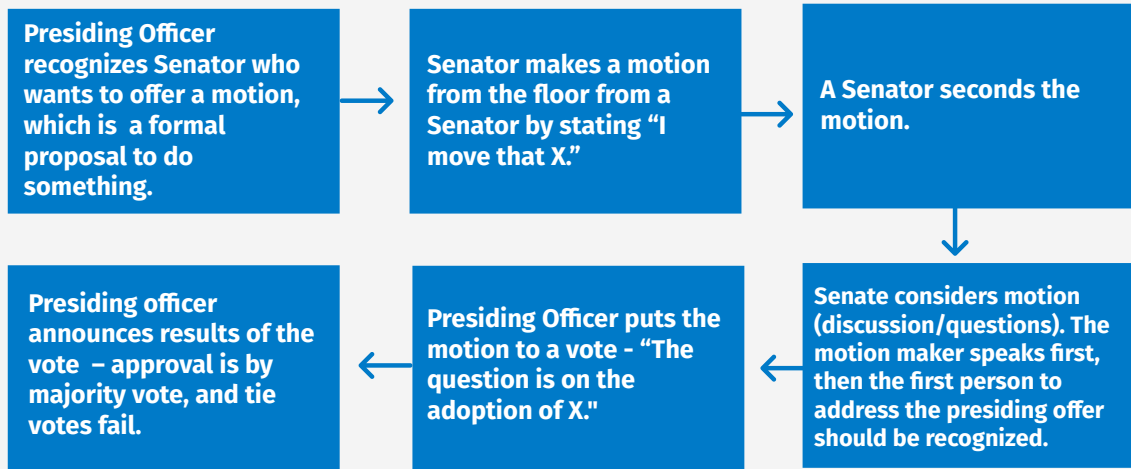
## Action Items

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 . . .





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.

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## Type of Votes

### Voice

“Those in favor, say aye.  
Those opposed, say no.”

Senators also may  
abstain.

“The Senate sometimes agrees to use “general consent” which does not require a formal vote. This happens when there is unanimous agreement.

### 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.

## What To Say When - Main Motions

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.

You Want To	You Say	Interrupt Speaker?	Need a 2 <sup>nd</sup> ?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote?
Close meeting	I move that we <b>adjourn</b>	N	Y	Y	Y	Majority
Take a break	I move to <b>recess</b> for x (minutes/hour)	N	Y	Y	N	Majority
Register a complaint	I rise to a <b>question of privilege</b>	Y	N	N	N	N
Kill a motion without debate	I move that the main motion be <b>tabled</b>	N	Y	N	N	2/3
Close debate and vote immediately (minority views should always be given a fair hearing)	I move <b>to close debate and vote immediately</b>	N	Y	N	N	2/3
Limit or extend debate	I move to <b>limit/extend debate</b> to . . .	N	Y	Y	Y	2/3
Postpone to a certain time	I move to <b>postpone the motion until</b> . . .	N	Y	Limited	Y	Majority
Refer to a committee	I move to <b>refer</b> the motion to . . .	N	Y	Limited	Y	Majority
Modify the wording of a motion	I move to <b>amend the motion</b> by . . .	N	Y	Y (mostly)	Y	Majority
Bring business before the Senate	I <b>move</b> to/that . . .	N	Y	Y	Y	Majority



## What To Say When - Incidental Motions

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

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

You Want To	You Say	Interrupt Speaker?	Need a 2 <sup>nd</sup> ?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote?
Amend a previous action	I move to <b>amend the motion which</b> . . .	N	Y	Y	Y	Same as original motion
Reconsider main motion	I move to <b>reconsider</b> . . .	N	Y	Y	N	Majority
Cancel previous action	I move to <b>rescind</b> . . .	N	Y	Y	N	Same as original motion
Formally approve previous action	I mote to <b>ratify</b> . . .	N	Y	Y	Y	Majority

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.

