

Basic Parliamentary Procedure for Faculty Senate Meetings
Prepared for Samford University Faculty Senate

Purpose of Parliamentary Process

- Facilitates large groups to make decisions based on the opinion of the majority (consensus)
- Provides due regard to all members' opinions in an efficient manner

Respectful Discourse

- Maintain focus and comments on the motion.
- Gain understanding by listening to colleagues.
- Speak only when you have the floor, directing all comments to the chair.

Helpful Information

Motion:

- Any faculty may bring a proposal (main motion) to Faculty Senate. The motion is subject to debate, amendment, and voting by the Faculty Senate. Only one main motion (question) may be on the floor at a time
- Silence means consent
- To abstain, is to agree to go along with the decision of the majority. A majority means the majority of members voting (aye/nay). Abstentions do not count in the total vote count.
- A motion is a formal proposal that certain actions be taken. All business is introduced through a motion.
 - To make a motion, address the presiding chair by raising hand and await recognition from chair
 - Make the motion: "I move that..."
 - Another member seconds the motion. This opens the motion for discussion. To second the motion is to agree that the motion is worthy of discussion and consideration. The seconder is not indicating agreement with the motion. If no second, the motion is not considered.
 - Presiding chair states the motion and asks if there is any discussion.
 - Members debate the motion. Each member that wishes to speak is first recognized by the chair. Remarks are confined to the motion under discussion.
 - Presiding chair puts motion to a vote, then announces the results

Amendment:

- Any faculty may make a motion to amend a main motion. The proposed amendment could be to add words, remove words, add paragraphs, remove paragraphs, or substitute paragraphs. The proposed amendment must relate to or involve the same question raised by the motion it amends (an amendment must be germane).
 - To make a motion to amend a main motion, address the presiding chair by raising hand and await recognition from the chair
 - Make the motion: "I move to amend by ..." State the exact proposed amendment as if dictating the change to the secretary. It is helpful to write the proposed amendment prior to stating.

- Another member seconds the motion. This opens the motion for discussion. To second the motion is to agree that the motion is worthy of discussion and consideration. The seconder is not indicating agreement with the motion. If no second, the motion is not considered.
- Presiding chair states the motion and asks if there is any discussion.
- Members debate the motion. Each member that wishes to speak is first recognized by the chair. Remarks are confined to the motion under discussion.
- Presiding chair puts motion to a vote, then announces the results

Closing Debate:

- Any faculty may “move the previous question” to immediately close debate on a pending motion. The motion to move the previous question is not debatable.
 - To move the previous question, address the presiding chair by raising hand and await recognition from chair.
 - Make the motion: “I move the previous question.”
 - Another senator seconds the motion.
 - Presiding chair states the motion and confirms two-thirds of senators agree with this motion. Debate of pending motion is closed.
 - Presiding chair puts pending motion to a vote, then announces the results.

Postpone to a Certain Time

- Any faculty may “move to postpone the motion” to a certain time (later during the meeting or at the next meeting). This motion might be appropriate when senators believe more information is needed before making a decision.
 - To move to postpone the motion, address the presiding chair by raising hand and await recognition from chair.
 - Make the motion: “I move to postpone the motion until...”
 - Another senator seconds the motion.
 - Presiding chair states the motion. Debate is limited to whether the pending motion should be postponed.
 - Presiding chair puts pending motion to a vote, then announces the results.

Reference

Robert III, H. M., Evans, W. J., Honemann, D. H., & Balch, T. J. (2011). *Robert's rules of order: Newly revised in brief*. Philadelphia, PA: Da Capo Press.