

The Art of Meaningful Meetings

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Faculty and Academic Staff Professional Development Conference

Parliamentary procedure is not intended to make meetings more confusing or challenging. If used correctly, parliamentary procedure can make meetings run more quickly and smoother.

4 basic principles of parliamentary procedure:

- Extend courtesy to everyone
- Focus on one item at a time
- Observe the rule of the majority
- Ensure the rights of the minority

Tips for increasing the effectiveness of campus meetings

1. Set an agenda following the order of business for meetings

*note- this is simplified version of the Orders of Business

Step 1: Reading and approval of the secretary minutes

- Can be handled either by asking for corrections OR by asking for a vote. Simply depends on what your assembly prefers. Both are permissible forms of adopting the minutes.
 - If there are no corrections, the minutes are approved by unanimous approval.

Step 2: Reports of officers, boards, and committees

- The presiding officer should know ahead of time if there will be any reports and thus should not have to waste time calling for reports if there are none.
- No motions to accept officer reports are needed **unless a recommendation** is given (then a motion to accept the recommendation is in order). This means that treasurer reports DO NOT require a motion for acceptance at the meeting. If your assembly desires a motion to accept treasurer's reports- you should move to accept the auditor's report after the treasurer's report is audited (usually done annually).
- Having the chair state a "thank you" after reports is sufficient.
- Motions which arise from recommendations are handled immediately, rather than coming up later under new business.

Step 3: Unfinished business

- Unfinished business are items postponed from the previous meeting, laid on the table at the previous meeting, and items that were still pending when the previous meeting was adjourned

Step 4: New business

- New items of business that have not yet come before the assembly.

Step 5: Announcements

- At this time, the presiding officer or any other member may make announcements that affect the group.

2. Utilize Committees

Establish Standing Committees

- Standing committees are established in the by-laws

Utilize Special/Ad Hoc Committees

- Set up a special committee for matters that are short-term

Determine what *power* the committee has prior to assigning tasks

- Power to Act- the committee can make decisions and enact items of business without the approval of the larger group
- Power to Report Back- the committee cannot make decisions and enact items of business without the approval of the larger group. They must bring recommendations to the larger group for a vote of the entire membership

3. Utilize the Rules of Parliamentary Procedure to Handle Decisions

Ensure there is quorum

- Quorum is set by the by-laws
- If not set by the by-laws, quorum is 50% of the membership
- Any business conducted without quorum is null and void

Using main motions to handle business

- The purpose of a main motion is to put an item of business on the floor for consideration. ***No debate is in order until a main motion is made, seconded, and stated by the chair.*** This will ultimately save you time in meetings. The assembly is free to alter the motion by using subsidiary motions (such as amend or refer to a committee).

What motions can be made during a meeting?

There are numerous abilities that you *can* utilize during a meeting, but most will not be necessary.

<i>If you want to...</i>	<i>Then use...</i>
Avoid taking a direct vote on a motion	Postpone Indefinitely
Change the wording of the motion	Amend
Have a committee discuss a motion in detail and come back with a recommendation or act on the main motion with the group's consent	Refer to a Committee
Discuss a motion later in the meeting or put it off until the next meeting.	Postpone Definitely
Provide for a certain amount of time for discussion of the motion (either increase or decrease the length or numbers of debate)	Limit or Extend Debate
End debate on the motion and vote immediately	Previous Question
Stop dealing with the motion temporarily to allow something of an urgent nature to be done immediately	Lay on the Table
Get the meeting back on schedule	Call for Orders of the Day
Deal with something affecting the comfort of the group (sound, temperature, lighting, etc.)	Raise a Question of Privilege
Take a short break	Recess
End the meeting	Adjourn
Continue the current meeting on another day	Fix the Time to Which Adjourn
Enforce the rules or correct a parliamentary error	Point of Order
Overrule a decision of the chair	Appeal
Do something that violates a rule (change the orders of business or ignore a standing rule)	Suspend the Rules
Avoid any consideration of a main motion	Object to the Consideration of the Question
Divide a motion into separate parts for debate and vote	Division of the Question
Question the result of a voice vote	Division of the Assembly/House
Ask a question about procedure	Parliamentary Inquiry
Ask for information pertaining to a motion	Point of Information
Withdraw or change a motion already stated by the chair	Withdraw a Motion
Revote on something you already voted on in this meeting	Reconsider
Repeal (or strike out) a motion that has been adopted	Rescind
Resume considering a motion you laid on the table	Take from the Table