

Adopted Policies and Procedures of Senate

Summary Listing

N.B. This is not an exhaustive listing.

Meetings of Senate

1. Schedule of Regular Meetings

The schedule of regular meetings of Senate and its committees for the next academic year is presented at the January meeting. The meetings of Senate are generally scheduled on the third Friday of each month, at 1:30 p.m.

2. Cancellation of Regularly Scheduled Meetings

The Chair of Senate is authorized to cancel previously scheduled meetings of Senate in the event of insufficient business.

3. Senate Meeting Times: Guidelines

Senate meetings are scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m. and will normally end by 4:30 p.m. unless extended by a majority vote of those present.

4. Questions for Senate

4.1 Questions regarding matters on the agenda

- (a) It is suggested, though not required, that Senators and Official Observers (collectively “members”) who wish to ask questions on matters on the agenda submit them to the University Secretary at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at which they are to be raised. The University Secretary will forward questions submitted at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to the appropriate individuals for preparation of responses and every effort will be made to have responses available at the meeting.
- (b) Members may ask their questions when the relevant agenda matter is reached in the meeting.

4.2 Question Period

The Question Period has two functions:

- (a) To allow members to ask questions about or re-open matters previously dealt with by Senate, and raise questions on other matters within Senate's mandate.
- (b) To provide time for open discussion and debate of issues within Senate's mandate that are not on the agenda but may be of interest or concern to Senate members or their constituencies.

4.2.1 Questions and Issues for Discussion

- (a) Questions and issues for discussion shall be submitted to the Operations/Agenda Committee (OAC), through the University Secretariat. OAC will determine whether to route the question or issue to Senate or redirect it to an appropriate unit on campus for a response.
- (b) The Chair of OAC shall submit a Chair's report to Senate detailing all questions and issues received, the decision of OAC in respect of routing each question or issue, a brief explanation as to why a question or issue was not routed to Senate (where applicable), and information on the unit to which a question or issue was redirected for a response (where applicable).

4.2.2 General Regulations

- (a) Questions and issues may be submitted at any time. Questions or issues received by the University Secretariat at least eight days prior to the next OAC meeting will be addressed at or in advance of the next Senate meeting. Questions or issues received less than eight days before the next OAC meeting will be addressed at or in advance of the Senate meeting next following.
- (b) Questions and descriptions of issues should be brief and to the point (i.e. 200 words or less). Members are responsible for preparing any background documentation they wish to distribute related to the issue they are raising and must provide an electronic copy.
- (c) No motions may be put forward or considered during the Question Period.
- (d) The length of the Question Period is limited to 30 minutes unless extended by a majority vote of Senate.
- (e) Questions or issues submitted in advance of the meeting will be dealt with before questions or issues raised from the floor.

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- (f) During Question Period, questions or comments on issues should be directed to the Chair who will call upon the appropriate individuals to answer or direct the discussion thereafter.
- (g) A member who has submitted a question is entitled to ask one supplementary question relating to the response.
- (h) If after an answer is received or discussion of an issue concluded, there are concerns or issues remaining that are within Senate's mandate, those issues will be referred to the appropriate Senate standing committee for review and a report will be made back to Senate. If the concerns or issues remaining are not within Senate's mandate, the Chair will refer the matter to the appropriate unit on campus.
- (i) If there are issues or questions that have not been addressed at the end of the 30-minute period or any extension, and there is no further extension, the remaining questions or issues will be carried forward to the Question Period of the following meeting of Senate, unless withdrawn by the member(s) who initially submitted the questions or issues.

5. Procedures for Electing Members of Committees and Subcommittees

The report of the Nominating Committee is circulated with Senate agenda materials in advance of the meeting of Senate. The report will include information about the factors considered in developing slates. At the Senate meeting, the Chair of the Nominating Committee will call for any further nominations for any of the vacancies to be filled. (For membership of the Nominating Committee, the slates are presented by the Operations/Agenda Committee.)

After nominations for all vacancies have been completed,

- (a) those for which no election is necessary are acclaimed.
- (b) if elections are required, the Secretary of the Senate will prepare and circulate to Senate a comprehensive ballot, which will include statements of up to 100 words from each candidate. The results of elections, including the number of votes cast for each nominee, will be announced at or before the next Senate meeting.

In the event of a tie vote, the tie shall be resolved by lottery conducted by the Secretary of Senate in the presence of the candidates concerned or their agents.

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6. Minutes: Form, Editing, Correcting and Retention

Minutes

1. Committee reports and other reports (Exhibits) distributed with the agenda for a meeting shall constitute a part of official Senate Minutes and the Minutes per se will include appropriate references to those reports.
2. The agenda and supporting documentation for meetings of the Senate may be published electronically by the Secretary 7 days prior to each Senate meeting. The Minutes of meetings of the Senate may be published electronically by the Secretary following their approval by the Senate.
3. The minimum requirements for Senate Minutes will be the name of the mover and seconder of a motion, the precise wording of the motion, and the outcome of the vote (passed, referred, deferred, defeated, etc.); and amendments will be treated in the same way, in accordance with accepted parliamentary procedure.
4. In general, reporting of discussion will be limited to point-form general statements relating to concerns, objections, or benefits of a proposal not otherwise cited in the agenda material (Exhibits). On a Senator's request, and with the Chair's permission, the text of a statement made in Senate shall be included in the Minutes if such inclusion appears desirable as a means of clarifying the intended interpretation of a motion.
5. Information items will be cited briefly by appropriate heading and reference to detail contained in the agenda material.
6. Resolutions or information presented at the Senate meeting but not otherwise detailed in the agenda materials will be described briefly in the Minutes, such that a person who did not attend the meeting can get a basic understanding of the issue discussed. Any written material distributed at the Senate meeting that relates to such resolutions or information will be maintained in the official Senate Minutes.

The Secretary of Senate is responsible for summarizing the deliberation of the Senate. Requests for alterations of edited reporting of Senate proceedings (Minutes) should be referred to the Secretary, who shall be required to review the requests in light of transcript evidence, and to report to Senate for adjudication.

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Record Retention

1. The Official Minute Book shall be retained in a safe place in perpetuity, with appropriate copies (microfiche, CD, etc.) maintained off site.
2. As public documents, Senate Minutes will be available to any person for inspection in the office of the Secretary of Senate during normal office hours. These Minutes will include committee reports and other reports (Exhibits) distributed with the agenda and at the meeting.
3. Senate meetings will be recorded for use by the Secretariat. The recordings will be erased following the official approval of the minutes by Senate.

7. Conduct of Open Meetings

1. The following provisions apply to open meetings:
 - a. Senators, Official Observers, and members of the public (Spectators) shall sit in the designated areas.
 - b. Spectators (including representatives of the news media) attending open meetings are not permitted to address a meeting, communicate with individual members during the meeting, or disturb the conduct of a meeting in any way. Spectators must remain in their assigned seats while in the meeting room.
 - c. Except as provided under "Records Retention" above, recording of any kind is not permitted at the meeting unless by express permission of the Chair.
 - d. Space permitting, and with the approval of the Chair, placards or signs may be brought into the meeting room, provided that they are of a size that will not obstruct any doorway or the view of others in the room, and are made of materials that could not be used to harm individuals or damage property.
 - e. Undue disturbance during the meeting will result in removal.

8. Calling the Question vs Motion to Limit Debate

Senate's consideration of several important items over the past few years has been brought to a vote with a motion "to close debate" (or "to move the question" or "to move the previous question" in older terminology). While in every case it was entirely legal to introduce and adopt the motion, the Senate Operations/Agenda Committee would observe that it is regarded as the most drastic action a deliberative body can take to stop or indeed to prevent debate; and that, given the obligation of a body to hear minority views, members should be aware that there are alternatives to a motion to close debate.

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The Committee would draw Senate's attention to a similar motion that may often be more satisfactory, especially when a number of Senators have indicated to the Chair that they would like to speak. It is the motion "to limit debate." The mover states the limitation desired in the motion, for example:

"I move that debate be limited to those now on the Chair's speakers list."

"I move that debate be limited to 10 more minutes."

"I move to limit the time of each speaker to [x] minutes."

"I move to limit debate to a total time of 1 hour."

Unlike the motion "to close debate" -- which in Senate's experience has tended to come without warning, and which must be put to a vote immediately -- the motion "to limit debate" is itself amendable and debatable (but only as to the type and time of limits). If introduced fairly early, in the form of the last two examples above, it provides advance guidance both to the Chair and to Senators who intend to speak. Since the limitations can be changed or removed by a similar motion (generically called "to extend debate") at any time, Senate retains flexibility to control its debates.

One who moves "to limit [or extend] debate" may not interrupt another speaker; a second is required; and a 2/3 majority is required to carry.

The Operations/Agenda Committee asks that, when a motion to end debate is presented, the Chair of Senate remind Senate of the options available.

9. Observer Designates

Observers are permitted to send designates in their place to Senate meetings provided that:

1. The Secretariat is informed in advance of the meeting who will be attending in an Observer's place
2. The Observer is responsible for providing his/her designate with meeting documentation.

Revised: April 25, 2025