



September 10, 2025

Dear New Faculty Senators:

Welcome to the 2024 to 2025 Faculty Senate. Please find time to read this orientation material. It is valuable to your performance as a Senator and is designed to create a common understanding of

- how the various facets of the Faculty Senate work,
- what kinds of legislation are considered by the Faculty Senate and its Executive Committee,
- the basics of parliamentary procedure.

I hope you find this material helpful as you begin your work this year on the Faculty Senate. If you have any questions or would like more information on any topic, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at [lori.jervis@ou.edu](mailto:lori.jervis@ou.edu) or through the Senate's Administrative Manager, Ann Seely, at [aseely@ou.edu](mailto:aseely@ou.edu).

I look forward to seeing you at the first Faculty Senate meeting on September 16<sup>th</sup> and working with you this year.

Sincerely,

*Lori Jervis*

Lori Jervis  
Chair, Faculty Senate

# 2024 to 2025 New Senator Orientation Guide

## 2024 to 2025 Schedule of Faculty Senate Meetings

September 16, 2024  
 October 14, 2024  
 November 11, 2024 (via Zoom)  
 December 9, 2024  
 January: No Senate Meeting –  
 Shared Governance Reception date TBD  
 February 10, 2025  
 March 10, 2025  
 April 14, 2025  
 May 12, 2025

Senate meetings are held at the Thurman J White Forum Building in Conference Room B unless otherwise noted. Forum parking passes will be sent with meeting materials prior to the meeting. Please be sure to display to avoid ticketing

## 2024 to 2025 Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Title	FSEC Member Name	E-mail
Chair	Lori Jarvis	<a href="mailto:lori.jervis@ou.edu">lori.jervis@ou.edu</a>
Chair-elect	Sarah Robbins	<a href="mailto:srobbins@ou.edu">srobbins@ou.edu</a>
Secretary	Stephanie Burge	<a href="mailto:sburge@ou.edu">sburge@ou.edu</a>
At-large member	Kimberly Marshall	<a href="mailto:kjm@ou.edu">kjm@ou.edu</a>
At-large member	Darren Purcell	<a href="mailto:DPurcell@ou.edu">DPurcell@ou.edu</a>
At-large member	Chris Weaver	<a href="mailto:CWeaver@ou.edu">CWeaver@ou.edu</a>
At-large member	Matt Wood	<a href="mailto:Ms_wood@ou.edu">Ms_wood@ou.edu</a>
FCBC Chair	Rebecca Loraamm	<a href="mailto:Rlorraamm@ou.edu">Rlorraamm@ou.edu</a>
FWC Co-Chair	Janet Wickersham	<a href="mailto:jwickersham@ou.edu">jwickersham@ou.edu</a>
FWC Co-Chair	Sarah Breen	<a href="mailto:sabreen@ou.edu">sabreen@ou.edu</a>
FDEIC Co-Chair	Shannon Bert	<a href="mailto:bert@ou.edu">bert@ou.edu</a>
FDEIC Co-Chair	Janette Habashi	<a href="mailto:jhabashi@ou.edu">jhabashi@ou.edu</a>
Past Chair 2023-2024	Hunter Heyck	<a href="mailto:hheyck@ou.edu">hheyck@ou.edu</a>
Past Chair 2022-2023	Dave Hambright	<a href="mailto:dhambright@ou.edu">dhambright@ou.edu</a>
Past Chair 2021-2022	Keri Kornelson	<a href="mailto:kkornelson@ou.edu">kkornelson@ou.edu</a>

## **Overview of the Faculty Senate**

Representative governance at the University of Oklahoma began in 1942, when OU President Joseph A. Brandt called to order the first session of the University Senate. He believed that it would "do much to create a more wholesome democratic feeling on the part of the faculty and that they will have a larger part in determining policies of the University."

The Faculty Senate exercises the legislative powers of the faculty of the University as delegated by the Regular Faculty. It has the power to initiate any legislation requiring the Board of Regents' approval in accordance with the provisions of the University Constitution. It is responsible to the Regular Faculty for all action taken on its behalf and may establish procedures to review the various functions of the University and any matter affecting the welfare of the University.

The Regular Faculty of the University is composed of all faculty members with tenure-track, tenured, and renewable term appointments at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, and professor and does not include faculty with temporary appointments or instructors. The Faculty Senate is its chief governing body, and Senators are representatives of the OU-Norman Campus faculty. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) is the executive committee of the Faculty Senate, and the officers of the Faculty Senate are the Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary.

Shared governance is a set of practices under which faculty, staff, and students participate in significant decisions concerning the operation of their institutions. Ideally, academic decisions should be largely independent of short-term managerial and political considerations. Faculty members are in the best position to shape and implement curriculum and research policy, and to select academic colleagues and judge their work. Their perspective is invaluable in making sound decisions about allocating resources, setting goals, choosing top officers, and guiding student life.

### **Importance of the Faculty Senate to Shared Governance**

An effective Faculty Senate is focused on the long-term interests of the University, not the short-term interests of individual faculty. The Faculty Senate needs good working relationships with administration to be effective, but also must be independent of it. The Faculty Senate is most effective when its recommendations are clear and reasonable, with policy alternatives after consideration of both pros and cons.

At OU, the Faculty Senate can initiate any legislation requiring the Board of Regents approval in accordance with provisions of the University's Constitution. It provides a liaison relationship with the University President as well as the faculty of the OU Health Sciences Center (OU- HSC). The Senate deals with broad issues that involve the faculty and is a voice for all faculty.

## **Composition of the Faculty Senate**

The Faculty Senate consists of fifty members of the Regular Faculty. Senators are elected to three-year terms in the degree recommending divisions of the University and may serve consecutive terms. The electors consist of members of the Regular Faculty, and full-time administrative personnel above the department level are excluded from Senate elections. The Senate is re-apportioned every three years

- Non-voting representatives of the Graduate College, the Student Government Association, the Information Staff Association, and the Provost.
- The Chair-elect of the Senate is also an ex-officio non-voting member of the Senate.

## **Liaison with the University President**

Each academic year, the President of the University presents to the Faculty Senate a general message on the state of the University, in which he gives recommendations for the furtherance of the progress of the University. President Harroz will give the State of the University address in mid- September this year.

The President, after receiving a Senate action, informs the Senate by written message of his or her disposition of the measure. If disapproving the measure, the President, in writing, gives the Senate reasons for the action.

University councils and committees are utilized by the President in the development of policies on matters of vital interest to the University community. These areas include teaching, research and creative/scholar activity, professional and University service and public outreach, libraries, budgetary planning, faculty personnel, University relations, University community, athletics, University operations, and University projects. The Faculty Senate makes appointments to these University councils and committees. The Senate also provides a list of nominees from which the President may make his appointments for the coming year.

## **Liaison with the Faculty of the OU-Health Sciences Center and Oklahoma State University**

The Faculty Senate (Norman Campus) maintains a liaison with the Faculty Senate of OU's Health Sciences Center and the Faculty Council of Oklahoma State University through an Inter-Senate Liaison Committee composed of the Chairs, Chairs-Elect, and the Secretaries of the three senates. They typically meet once per year in the to exchange information among the senates on concerns and actions of mutual interest and to recommend actions to the respective bodies on each campus.

## Faculty Senate Meetings

The Senate regularly meets on the second Monday of each month of the academic year. The Senate may also meet on call of the Chair, the Chair-Elect, or in response to a petition signed by five Senate members and presented to the Secretary. A majority of the Senate's members shall constitute a quorum.

Senators assume their duties in September and may only miss three regular meetings within the academic year. **A fourth absence leads to removal from the Senate.** A sign-in sheet is available at each meeting, and senators typically receive notification by email after the second and third absence. Senators that go on leave for any reason, including sabbatical, should be replaced by their college.

Meetings of the Senate are regularly open to attendance by all members of the University Community and representatives of the press. However, the Senate may go into executive session by a majority vote of the members present. Only Senators may speak at a meeting without permission from the Chair. A person who is not a member of the Senate may speak only by invitation or permission of the Senate. Requests from non-members to speak should be addressed to the Chair in writing.

At the beginning of each academic year, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate elects a member of the Senate to serve as the Parliamentarian at all meetings of the Senate, as well as the General Faculty meetings (if any), during that year.

### Senators' Responsibilities

Senators provide a direct relationship between the Faculty Senate and all academic units and are the voice for the faculty of their department or college in the Senate. On average, there is one senator for every twenty faculty members.

Senators should have a regular place on the departmental or college meeting agenda and should engage colleagues in discussion about the issues that the Senate addresses. They should solicit concerns and input from their colleagues that could be brought back to the Faculty Senate. Senators should encourage their colleagues to identify new issues of importance to the faculty.

Senators should make every effort to attend all regularly scheduled and special Senate meetings. They should familiarize themselves with the Faculty Senate's charter and by-laws. Before each Senate meeting, Senators should prepare by reviewing the agenda and reading all supplementary materials. They should present the issues on the Senate agenda to their colleagues at their department meeting and solicit input. At the Senate meeting, they should be prepared to ask questions and participate in debate.

## Issues addressed by the Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate does not address individual issues unless they are of interest to the whole faculty; it focuses on broad issues like benefits, IT, the library, etc. The Senate may initiate legislation to recommend or review changes in the faculty policies sections of the *Faculty Handbook*. The types of issues addressed by the Senate in the past include faculty salaries and benefits, retirement funds, retiree health benefits, the University grading scale, and concealed weapons on campus.

There are several ways that items get onto the Faculty Senate meeting agenda. A senator may submit an item to the Secretary or Chair of the Senate. A university committee, council, or board may submit an item to the Secretary or Chair of the Senate, and any individual may raise an issue with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

During the Senate meeting, all agenda items are open for discussion by any Faculty Senate member present, and only senators may make motions and vote. An issue may be raised during the new business period at the end of the meeting. However, typically no action may be taken unless an item is on the formal agenda. There is usually a 1-month lag between when an issue is presented and when the Senate votes, so that Senators can get input from their colleagues. A typical order of business for a Senate meeting is:

- Determination of a Quorum
- Call to Order
- Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- Questions Regarding the Chair's Report
- Announcements
- Invited Presentations, if applicable
- Items for Discussion
- Items for Approval
- Any Other Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

*Robert's Rules of Order*, newly revised 12th edition, governs the proceedings of the Faculty Senate. Senators will be more effective if they are familiar with those rules. This guide contains an overview of parliamentary procedure as an appendix.

## Schedule of Senate Meetings

Senate meetings are held at 3:30 p.m. on the second Mondays (unless there is a holiday conflict) of the month in Thurman J White Forum Building. This year, they may also be held via Zoom. The dates for this year are listed on page 1 of this guide.

## Faculty Senate Standing Committees

**Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC):** ten members (Chair, Chair-elect, and Secretary from the Faculty Senate; Chair of the Faculty Welfare Committee; Chair of the Committee on Faculty Compensation and Benefits; Chair of the Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and four at-large members). The at-large members serve 2-year terms and two rotate off each year. The Chairs of University councils are ex-officio - nonvoting members. The three immediate past Chairs of the Faculty Senate are also ex-officio - nonvoting members. In the case of committees with co-chairs, only one vote is permitted/counted.

### **Small Executive Committee:**

The membership of the Small FSEC includes those members listed on page 2 of this document.

Issues are brought to the Senate's Small Executive Committee, which decides whether to present it to the full Faculty Senate. The Small FSEC typically meets a week prior to the Faculty Senate to set the agenda for the Senate meeting. The Provost meets with the Small FSEC once a month, typically on the third Monday of the month. The Small FSEC also meets with the President monthly and meets to collaborate with the executive committees of the OSU Faculty Council and the OU-HSC Faculty Senate once a year.

### **Large Executive Committee (includes Council Chairs):**

The Membership of the Large FSEC includes the Small FSEC members plus the Tulsa faculty liaison and Chairs of these University councils:

- Academic Programs
- Athletics
- Budget
- Continuing Education
- Faculty Awards & Honors
- Information Technology
- Research

The Large FSEC meets twice per year to allow the chairs from the University councils to discuss their activities. This provides an opportunity to learn about areas where the entire Faculty Senate may need or want to become involved. Council chairs submit an annual report at the end of the academic year to the Senate. A compilation of those reports is made and posted on the Senate website and emailed to Senators and University Administration.

**Committee on Committees (CoC):** five members, Chaired by the Faculty Senate Chair-elect. Members must have been faculty at OU for at least 5 years and be tenured. The CoC meets once in the fall to fill committee vacancies due to sabbatical, retirement, etc. and once in the spring to make recommendations for Senate appointments to councils and committees for the following academic year.

**Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC):** five members with one being elected as Chair. Responsible to the faculty for policy review and recommendations on questions of tenure, faculty evaluations, professional conduct, promotion, and working conditions.

**Faculty Compensation & Benefits Committee (FCBC):** seven members with one being elected as Chair. Responsible to the Faculty Senate for reviewing and recommending policy on questions related to the economic welfare of the faculty, including fringe benefits.

**Faculty Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee (FDEIC):** seven members with one being elected as Chair. Responsible to the Faculty Senate for reviewing and recommending university policy and practice on issues related to faculty diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Special Committees:** Created as needed. For example, there is an ad hoc committee on reapportionment created every three years.



## Faculty Senate Communication

### Email

The Faculty Senate Office maintains an email distribution list in Outlook of current Senate members that is used when communications need to go out to all Senators. Typically, these emails will come from the Faculty Senate email address of [facsen@ou.edu](mailto:facsen@ou.edu).

Contact information for the Senate Officers and Executive Committee members is given on page 1 of this guide. Email addresses for the Senators are given on page 2 of this guide. The email address for the Senate's Administrative Manager, Ann Seely, is [aseely@ou.edu](mailto:aseely@ou.edu).

### Faculty Senate Website

The Faculty Senate web address is <https://www.ou.edu/facultysenate>. There you will find the membership of the Senate, the charter and by-laws, historical information about the Senate, a list of faculty members appointed to University councils and committees, the agenda for the next Senate meeting, as well as an archive of meeting minutes. For convenience, there are also links to the Provost's website for the *Faculty Handbook* and Tenure & Promotion procedures.

### Facebook

The Faculty Senate maintains a Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/OUFacultySenate>. It is opt-in, so if you would like to receive updates from this page, please "Like" it on Facebook. The Administrative Coordinator typically posts meeting reminders, links to the meeting agenda and minutes, and notifications of on-campus activities and events to this page.

### In-Person Communication

The Faculty Senate is located on the second floor of The Old Chem Building Room #207.

The mailing/street address is:

Faculty Senate (Norman Campus) The

University of Oklahoma

620 Parrington Oval, Old Chem Building, #207

Norman, OK 73019

You can also reach the Senate by phone at (405) 325-6789 or by email at [facsen@ou.edu](mailto:facsen@ou.edu). Note Due to the many responsibilities of our one-person office, it is necessary from time to time to be closed during our regular hours of operation for meetings and other business. Please email or call the Faculty Senate Office before making a special trip to ensure we will be here to assist you.

## Other Faculty Senate Information

**Interaction with University and campus councils and committees:** The Senate website lists faculty membership on University councils and committees at <https://www.ou.edu/facultysenate/committees-and-councils>. University councils and committees may bring issues and recommendations to the Senate. Senators should consider volunteering for University councils and committees when the call goes out during the spring semester.

**Ed Cline Faculty Development Awards:** The faculty development fund was created by President Boren to provide support to enhance the professional development of the faculty. It is named after Dr. Edward T. Cline (Mathematics), who was Chair of the Faculty Senate in 2002-03. The fund makes awards of up to \$2,500 to provide support for all aspects of a faculty member's mission, including teaching. This differs from the charge of the Research Council, which supports only research/creative activities. Proposals should have a clear connection to the faculty member's professional development as opposed to contributing to the general well-being of their academic unit. All faculty members at the rank of assistant professor and above are invited to submit applications to the Faculty Senate for the Ed Cline Faculty Development Awards. The request for proposals typically goes out in October. Proposals are due in mid-December, and awards are made in February.

## Recent Faculty Senate Accomplishments

- Collaborated with OU Administration
- Post Tenure Review Process updated
- Faculty Appeals Board process updated
- Creation of the PAPBAC (President's Academic Program and Budget Advisory Committee) to review and provide faculty input to the administration on budget decisions that affect academic units (2018-19)
- Recharging the PAPBAC to work on the University's Strategic Plan (2019-20)
- Competitive elections for Executive Committee (2017-18)
- Faculty Raise Program (2018-19)
- Advocacy for faculty during the Presidential searches and transitions (2017-19)
- Increased promotion raises for faculty (2014-15)
- Established the Faculty Diversity, Equality, & Inclusion Committee (2016-17)
- Faculty can now run for office in partisan elections (2018-19)
- Evaluating faculty awards nomination and selection process (2016-19)
- Resolution in favor of open and transparent internal searches and other pathways to leadership (2020)
- Resolution in favor of more recognition of faculty service and better evaluation of service (2021)
- Improved communication from administration about budget issues

## Some Current Issues Facing the Senate

- New leadership across campus
- Defining, advocating, and engaging in shared governance
- Advising the President on budgetary and administrative issues
- Faculty compensation
- Improved communication from administration about benefits
- Faculty development and retention
- *Developing issues from the faculty*

## Appendix - Parliamentary Procedure

### What are Robert's Rules of Order?

The first edition of the book was published in February 1876 by U.S. Army officer Henry Martyn Robert. Its procedures were loosely modeled after those used in the United States House of Representatives. Robert wrote Robert's Rules of Order after presiding over a church meeting and discovering that delegates from different areas of the country did not agree about proper procedure. The book is now in its 12th edition; Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), published in 2020.

**Robert's Rules of Order provides applicable rules governing key matters of meeting and general procedures, including:**

- Establish a **Constitution and Bylaws** for your organization.
- Structure of the meeting **Agenda** and debate.
- **Motions**; including making, seconding, debating, modifying, and amending motions.
- Sufficient majority and simple majority and which decisions are appropriate to them.
- Establishment of a **quorum**.
- Definition of **membership**.
- **Voting** rights of presiding officer and voting procedures.

### AN OUTLINE OF BASIC PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Prepared by Douglas N. Case

taken from <http://www.dvc.edu/student-services/student-life/pdfs/Roberts-rules-SDSU.pdf>

#### Rules Governing an Organization

- State and Federal Law - governing corporations, tax-exempt organizations, public legislative bodies, etc.
- Articles of Incorporation - applicable to corporations
- Governing Documents of Parent Organizations - applicable to chapters, affiliates, etc. of larger organizations
- Local Constitution and Bylaws - defines the organization's basic structure and fundamental rules. Normally requires a two-thirds vote and prior notice for amendment and are not subject to suspension.
- Standing Rules - operating procedures consistent with all of the above. Normally can be amended by majority vote at any business meeting and can be suspended.
- Rules of Order - parliamentary authority, superseded by any of the above that conflict.
- Precedent and Custom - apply when there are no written rules governing a situation.

### **Purposes of Parliamentary Procedure**

- Ensure majority rule
- Protect the rights of the minority, the absentees, and individual members
- Provide order, fairness, and decorum
- Facilitate the transaction of business and expedite meetings

### **Basic Principles of Parliamentary Procedure**

- All members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations.
- A quorum must be present for the group to act – if the bylaws of the organization do not establish a quorum, the general rule is that a majority of the entire membership must be present in order to transact business.
- Full and free discussion of every motion is a basic right.
- Only one question at a time may be considered, and only one person may have the floor at any one time.
- Members have a right to know what the immediately pending question is and to have it restated before a vote is taken.
- No person can speak until recognized by the chair.
- Personal remarks are always out of order.
- A majority decides a question except when basic rights of members are involved.
- A two-thirds vote is required for any motion that deprives a member of rights in any way (e.g., cutting off debate).
- Silence gives consent. Those who do not vote allow the decision to be made by those who do vote.
- The chair should always remain impartial.

### **Typical Order of Business for OU Faculty Senate Meetings**

1. Determination of a Quorum
2. Call to Order
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
4. Questions Regarding Chair's Report
5. Announcements
6. Invited Presentation, if applicable
7. Items for Discussion
8. Items for Approval
9. Any Other Unfinished Business
10. New Business
11. Adjournment

### **Role of the Presiding Officer, the Senate Chair**

- Remain impartial during debate - the presiding officer must relinquish the chair in order to debate the merits of a motion
- Vote only to create or break a tie (or two-thirds for matters requiring a two-thirds vote) – exception: the presiding officer may vote on any vote by ballot
- Determine that a quorum is present before transacting business
- Introduce business in proper order
- Recognize speakers
- Determine if a motion is in order
- Keep discussion germane to the pending motion
- Maintain order
- Put motions to a vote and announce results
- Employ unanimous consent (general consent) when appropriate

### **General Procedure for Handling a Motion**

1. A member normally must obtain the floor by being recognized by the chair.
2. Member makes a motion.
3. A motion must normally be seconded by another member before it can be considered.
  - a. Before the motion is restated by the chair, any member can rise, without waiting to be recognized, and suggest a modification of the wording to clarify the motion. The maker of the motion can choose to accept or reject the modified wording (does not require a second).
  - b. If the motion is in order, the chair will restate the motion and open debate (if the motion is debatable). The maker of a motion has the right to speak first in debate.
  - c. Debate is closed when:
    - i. Discussion has ended, or
    - ii. A two-thirds vote closes debate ("Previous Question")
4. The chair restates the motion, and if necessary, clarifies the consequences of affirmative and negative votes.
5. The chair calls for a vote.
6. The chair announces the result.
7. Any member may challenge the chair's count by demanding a "Division of the Assembly."

### **General Rules of Debate**

- No members may speak until recognized by the chair.
- All discussion must be relevant to the immediately pending question.

- No member may speak a second time until every member who wishes to speak has had the opportunity to do so.
- No member can speak more than twice to each motion.
- No member can speak for more than ten minutes.
- All remarks must be addressed to the chair – no cross debate is permitted.
- It is not permissible to speak against one's own motion (but one can vote against one's own motion).
- Debate must address issues not personalities – no one is permitted to make personal attacks or question the motives of other speakers.
- The presiding officer must relinquish the chair in order to participate in debate and cannot reassume the chair until the pending main question is disposed of.
- When possible, the chair should let the floor alternate between those speaking in support and those speaking in opposition to the motion.
- When a large number of people wish to speak to a motion, it may be advisable for the chair to make a speakers' list.
- Members may not disrupt the assembly.
- Rules of debate can be changed by a two-thirds vote.

### **Motions in Ascending Order of Precedence**

*Only one main motion may be on the floor at a time, but more than one secondary motion may be on the floor. When any of the motions on the following list is the immediately pending motion (i.e., the last motion made), any motion listed below it on the list can be made at that time and any motion above it on the list cannot be made at that time. Pending motions must be disposed of in descending order of precedence.*

- A. **Main Motion** - introduces business to the assembly for its consideration. A main motion can only be made when no other motion is pending. A main motion yields to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
- B. **Subsidiary Motions** - change or affect how the main motion is handled (voted on before the main motion)
  - a. **Postpone Indefinitely** - made when the assembly does not want to take a position on the main question. Its adoption kills the main motion for the duration of the session and avoids a direct vote on the question. It is useful in disposing of a poor motion that cannot be either adopted or expressly rejected without undesirable consequences. Unlike other subsidiary motions, debate on the motion to postpone indefinitely can go into the merits of the main motion.
  - b. **Amend** - changes the wording of the main motion before it is voted upon. An amendment must be germane to the main motion. Its acceptance does not adopt the motion thereby amended; that motion remains pending in its modified form. Rejection of an amendment

leaves the pending motion worded as it was before the amendment was offered. An amendment can: delete words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs; strike out words, phrases, or sentences and insert new ones; add words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs; or substitute entire paragraph(s) or the entire text of the motion and insert another. When an entire motion is substituted for another, the chair must first call for a vote on the **Motion to Substitute** to determine the advisability of substituting a new motion. If the Motion to Substitute passes, the chair then throws the Substitute Motion open to debate. The **Substitute Motion** in turn must be voted upon and is subject to amendment. *Note: There is no provision in Robert's Rules for a "Friendly Amendment."* The only way a motion can be modified without a vote, after it has been stated by the Chair, is with the unanimous consent of the members present.

- c. **Secondary Amendment** - An amendment can be offered to an amendment (amendment of the second order). Amendments of the third order are not permitted.
  - d. **Refer (Commit)** - sends a pending motion to a standing committee, or to an ad hoc (special) committee to be appointed or elected, for consideration. The motion to refer may include instructions to investigate, recommend, or take action, and may specify the composition of the committee.
  - e. **Postpone Definitely (Postpone to a Certain Time)** - delays action until a certain time specified in the motion (not beyond the next regular business meeting).
  - f. **Limit or Extend Debate** - is used (1) to reduce or increase the number or length of speeches permitted or (2) to require that debate be closed at a specified time. It requires a two-thirds vote.
  - g. **Previous Question ("Call for the Question")** - immediately closes debate if passed. Requires a second and a two-thirds vote.
  - h. **Lay on the Table** - enables the assembly to lay the pending question aside *temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen*. It is not debatable. *A motion to lay on the table is out of order if the evident intent is to avoid further consideration of the motion*. Frequently when one indicates a desire "to table" a motion, the correct motion is either to Postpone Indefinitely or Postpone Definitely.
- C. **Privileged Motions** - do not relate to the pending business but have to deal with urgent matters which, without debate, must be considered immediately.
- a. **Call for the Orders of the Day** - requires the assembly to conform to the agenda or to take up a general or special order that is due to come up at the time ("time certain"), unless two-thirds of those voting wish to do otherwise. A member can interrupt a speaker to call for the orders of the day.
  - b. **Raise a Question of Privilege** - permits a request or main motion relating to the rights and privileges of the assembly or any of its members. Examples include requests relating to members' ability to hear a speaker or a request to go into "executive session" (closed session). A member may interrupt a speaker to raise a question of privilege.
  - c. **Recess** - used to request an intermission, which does not close the meeting.
  - d. **Adjourn** - used to close the meeting immediately. Not debatable.



- e. **Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn** - sets the time, and sometimes the place, for another meeting (“adjourned meeting”) before the next regular business meeting to continue business of the session.

**Incidental Motions** (Questions of procedure that arise out of other motions and must be considered before the other motion)

- A. **Point of Order** - used when a member believes that the rules of the assembly are being violated, thereby calling on the chair for a ruling and enforcement of the rules. A member can interrupt a speaker to raise a point of order.
- B. **Appeal** - used to challenge the chair’s ruling on a question of parliamentary procedure. A member can interrupt a speaker to appeal from the decision of the chair.
- C. **Suspend the Rules** - used to make a parliamentary rule or special rule of an organization temporarily inoperative. The motion cannot be applied to the constitution and bylaws unless those documents include specific provisions for suspension. Normally requires a two-thirds vote.
- D. **Withdraw** - permits the maker of a motion to remove it from deliberation after the motion has been stated by the chair. If there is not unanimous consent, the motion is debated and voted upon.
- E. **Point of Information** - requests to the chair, or through the chair to another officer or member, to provide information relevant to the business at hand. A point of information must be in the form of a question. A request for information regarding parliamentary procedure or the organization’s rules bearing on the business at hand is referred to as a Parliamentary Inquiry.
- F. **Objection to the Consideration of a Question** - suppresses business that is irrelevant or inappropriate and undesirable to be discussed. The objection must be made immediately (acceptable to interrupt a speaker). Does not require a second, is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote opposed to consideration in order to pass.
- G. **Division of a Question** - divides a motion containing two or more provisions that can stand alone so that each provision can be considered and voted upon separately. Not debatable.
- H. **Division of the Assembly** - used to demand a rising vote to verify the vote count. The motion can be made without obtaining the floor, does not require a second, is not debatable, and does not require a vote.

**Main Motions That Bring a Question Back Before the Assembly**

- A. **Take from the Table** - resumes consideration of a motion laid on the table earlier in the same session or in the previous session. Not debatable.
- B. **Reconsider** - reopens a motion to debate that has already been voted upon in the same session. The motion to reconsider can only be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side. It

suspends action on the motion to which it is applied until it has been decided. It cannot be postponed beyond the next regular business session.

- C. **Rescind (Annul or Repeal) or Amend Something Previously Adopted** - repeals or amends a motion for which it is too late to reconsider. Normally requires a two-thirds vote of those present or a majority vote of the entire membership; however, if previous notice has been given then only a majority vote of those present is required. A motion to rescind cannot be applied to an action that cannot be reversed.

## Voting

- A. **Majority vote** - defined as more than half of the votes cast by those present and voting (i.e., excluding abstentions) unless the organization's rules specify otherwise (e.g., majority of those present, or majority of the entire membership)
- B. **Two-thirds vote** - defined as at least two-thirds of those present and voting, unless otherwise specified by the organization's rules. Examples of motions that require a two-thirds vote: to close, limit, or extend debate; to suspend the rules; to amend the constitution and bylaws; to close nominations; to remove an officer or expel a member; or to object to the consideration of a motion.
- C. **Voting by the Chair** - except when there is a ballot vote, the chair only votes when his/her vote would affect the result.
- D. **Methods of Voting**
  - 1. Voice vote - method normally used
  - 2. Show of hands or rising vote - used to verify an inconclusive voice vote or on motions requiring a two-thirds vote
  - 3. Ballot - normally used for election of officers and when ordered by a majority vote
  - 4. Roll call vote - used when it is desired to have a record of how each member voted. Can be ordered by a majority vote unless the organization's bylaws specify otherwise.
- E. **Proxy voting** is prohibited unless specifically provided for in the charter or bylaws.

### **Recommended Resources:**

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, Eleventh Edition, 2020  
Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, In Brief, 2020  
The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules, Nancy Sylvester, 2010  
Robert's Rules for Dummies, C. Alan Jennings, 2016  
[www.robertsrules.com](http://www.robertsrules.com)  
[www.parliamentarians.org](http://www.parliamentarians.org)  
[www.rulesonline.com](http://www.rulesonline.com) [www.parlipro.org](http://www.parlipro.org)

# Parliamentary Motions Quick Guide

Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (12<sup>th</sup> Edition)*

The motions below are listed in order of precedence. Any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

YOU WANT TO	YOU SAY	INTERRUPT?	2nd?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?	CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED?
End the meeting	I move to <b>adjourn</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Take a break	I move to <b>recess</b> for	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Register complaint	I rise to a <b>question of privilege</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None	No (usually)
Make follow agenda	I call for the <b>orders of the day</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None	
Lay aside temporarily	I move to <b>lay</b> the question <b>on the table</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Close debate	I move to the <b>previous questions</b>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No (unless vote on question is not yet taken)
Limit or extend debate	I move that <b>debate be limited</b> to...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	
Postpone discussion to a certain time	I move to <b>postpone</b> the motion to...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Refer to committee	I move to <b>refer</b> the motion (matter) to committee	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes (unless committee has already taken up the subject)
Modify wording of a motion	I move to <b>amend</b> the motion by...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Kill main motion	I move that the motion be <b>postponed indefinitely</b>	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	
Introduce business before assembly (a <b>main motion</b> )	I move that (to)...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes

**Incidental motions** – no order of precedence. Arise incidentally and decided immediately.

YOU WANT TO	YOU SAY	INTERRUPT?	2nd?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?	CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED?
Enforce rules	<b>Point of order</b>	Yes	No	No	No	No	None
Vote on a ruling of the chair	I <b>appeal</b> the chair's decision	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority	Yes
Suspend rules	I move to <b>suspend the rules</b> so that...	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
Avoid main motion altogether	I <b>object to consideration</b> of this motion	Yes	No	No	No	2/3	Only if the main question or motion was not, in fact, considered
Divide motion	I move to <b>divide the question</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	
Demand rising vote	I call for a <b>division</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None	No
Parliamentary law question	<b>Parliamentary inquiry</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None	
Request information	<b>Point of information</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None	No

**Motions that bring a question before the assembly again** – no order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

YOU WANT TO	YOU SAY	INTERRUPT?	2nd?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?	CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED?
Take matter from table	I move to <b>take from the table</b> ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Cancel previous action	I move to <b>rescind</b> ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 Majority with notice	
Reconsider motion	I move to <b>reconsider</b> the vote on...	No	Yes	Varies, only if the motion to be reconsidered is debatable	No	Majority	No