

Senate Rules of Order  
Annex to the Rules of Order – Motions in Order at a Senate Meeting

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Senate Rules of Order

1.

The Chair shall conduct the meetings of Senate according to the provisions of these Rules and, for any matter not present in these Rules, be guided by Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure.

2.

Quorum: If a quorum is present when the Chair calls the meeting to order, the quorum is presumed to continue until adjournment unless, in the course of the meeting, it is challenged and it is ascertained that a quorum is no longer present.

3.

Call to Order: After the Chair has called the meeting to order, only one person may speak at a time, and only after being recognized by the Chair, except as provided below.

4.

Agenda: The Chair shall recommend an agenda at the beginning of each meeting, which shall become the order of business unless a motion to amend it is made and adopted. Discussion will be in order on each subject as it comes up on the agenda, and may be on any aspect of each subject as a whole until a specific motion is introduced.

5.

Types of Motions: Senate does much of its work through the consideration of clear statements called motions. Motions are main, procedural or courtesy. A main motion pertains to the main work of Senate and may establish a policy, set up a committee, award a degree or propose a new program, for example. A procedural motion pertains to the management of the meeting itself and its business. A courtesy motion is a brief statement of the will of Senate in a special situation, typically as a vote of thanks, congratulation or condolence. (See the Annex to this Appendix for more information.)

6.

Notice of Motion: The normal Notice of Motion period is ten days. The standard procedure for placing a motion before Senate is for the motion, along with its supporting rationale, to be communicated to Senate Executive, through the Clerk, in time for the meeting of Senate Executive preceding the relevant Senate meeting. Senate Executive meets ten days before the Senate meeting, giving the ten notice period requirement. One way for a member of Senate to meet this deadline is to raise the issue under Other Business at a meeting of Senate; this then becomes a Notice of Motion for the next meeting. See Rule 7 for cases where this advance notification of a motion is not possible. Procedural and courtesy motions do not require advance notice.

7.

Waiver of Notice of Motion: A Senator may place a motion before Senate without proper notice (see Rule 6) only if all of the following conditions are met:

(a) The motion has been handed to the Clerk at or before the start of the meeting;

(b) The motion responds to circumstances that developed after the date for proper notice;

(c) The action specified in the motion cannot be delayed to permit consideration at the next meeting of Senate;

(d) The motion addresses an issue of importance to the University;

(e) A 2/3 majority of those present agrees to waive the requirement for notice after hearing the motion read.

The Chair will rule a motion as out of order if any of these conditions fails to hold. The requirement for Notice is an important principle and should only be waived in the most serious situations.

8.

The Chair may request a motion when she/he believes a motion will aid the discussion. In doing so, the Chair may not go against the principle of giving Senators proper notice of main motions.

9.

When a motion properly made is seconded and stated by the Chair, it becomes the business on the floor, and all discussion must apply to it until it is disposed of, except for those procedural motions that are in order.

10.

Only members of Senate may speak at a Senate meeting, with the exception that the Chair may allow a person who is not a senator, to provide Senate with information.

11.

The Chair may summarize discussions and present alternatives for consideration when no motion is pending, but may state his/her own opinion only (a) during general discussion when no other member requests the floor, (b) by relinquishing the Chair, (c) in deciding a point of order, or (d) if the pending question is an appeal from a ruling on a point of order.

12.

Motions:

12.1.

The principal forms of motions, their order of precedence, and their essential governing rules are presented in the Annex to these Rules of Order. In addition the following rules shall be applicable.

12.2.

Amendments, which are still pending, are considered one at a time as presented. Amendments to amendments (amendments in the second degree) may be made, but not amendments in the third degree.

12.3.

An amendment does not require previous notice. It must be germane to the motion and may not negate the motion.

12.4.

The mover may withdraw a motion at any time, with the consent of Senate.

12.5.

During the course debate, the mover and seconder may receive suggestions from the floor about the wording of motions. If the mover and seconder agree that the intent of the motion would be clarified by a change of wording, they may, with the agreement of the Chair, alter the wording of the motion accordingly. This is called a friendly amendment.

12.6.

Motions that are noted as not subject to debate or amendment may be debated and amended by two-thirds majority consent or at the discretion of the Chair.

13.

### Voting and Records

13.1.

All members of Senate are entitled to vote on Senate business with the exceptions of the Chair and the representatives of the Board of Governors. The Chair does not vote except to break a tie. The Board of Governors has two votes at Senate. The Board designates up to four of its members as representatives to Senate. These representatives may all attend Senate but only two vote on any issue

13.2.

In order to vote a senator must be present. Proxy votes are not allowed.

13.3.

When a motion has been made and seconded, the Chair shall state it and call for discussion on it. When every member who wishes to speak has done so, the Chair shall call for a vote. Approval by a majority of those voting or by consent without objection shall be the necessary vote to adopt a motion, unless otherwise specified in these Rules. A tie vote shall defeat the pending motion.

13.4.

Voting shall be by show of hands unless some other method is decided upon by motion, except that in elections, voting shall be by secret ballot wherever there are more nominees than places. Votes shall be counted whenever the Chair is in doubt as to the result or any member requests a count through a point of order.

13.5.

The record of a vote in the minutes is one of: Passed unanimously, passed on division, and defeated. In particular, the fact that a senator chooses not to vote is not recorded.

#### 13.6.

Once a decision has been taken on a main motion, it may not be reconsidered at the same meeting.

#### 13.7.

Proposals may also be approved by consent. This means that, in the absence of opposition, the Chair declares the item approved. This method of approval is usually restricted to items of regular business such as approving the agenda, approval of minutes and adjournment when all business is complete.

#### 14.

##### Points of Privilege, Order and Information

#### 14.1.

Points of Privilege: A point of privilege is a statement relating to the rights and privileges of Senate or any of its members. For example, the issue may be that a statement reflects on the reputation of a member or Senate or the university. It may also relate to the conduct of a person or the physical conditions of the meeting. Action to be taken in response to a point of privilege is decided by the Chair without debate.

#### 14.2.

Points of Order: A member who believes that the Rules are being violated or that action is needed to handle an emergency, or who wishes a count on a vote may call out "point of order" at any time, in which case he/she shall be recognized for the sole purpose of stating briefly what he/she believes to be the correct procedures. Action to be taken in response to a point of order is decided by the Chair without debate.

#### 14.3.

Points of Information: Any member wishing information on a point under discussion when no one else has the floor may call out "point of information", in which case the Chair shall recognize the member for a brief question, and either give an answer or recognize someone to do so. Points of information may also be raised while a member is speaking, unless the speaker has asked not to be interrupted, and such questions will be directed by the Chair to the speaker

14.4.

Appeal: The Chair shall decide all points of order and privilege, but any member may appeal such decisions by calling out, "I appeal the ruling of the Chair". In that case the Chair and the member making the appeal shall state briefly the reasons for their views, after which an immediate vote shall be taken, a majority of those voting being sufficient to uphold or overrule the ruling of the Chair. The Chair does not participate in this vote.

14.5.

It shall be the duty of the Chair to rule out of order all motions and tactics designed to delay or divert the work of Senate and any undignified behavior or remarks. Such rulings by the Chair remain open to appeal except in the case that the behavior ruled against is a repetition of an appeal from a ruling of the Chair on the same or similar issue where this ruling has already been upheld at the meeting.

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### **Annex to Senate Rules of Order – Motions in Order at a Senate Meeting**

The business of Senate is conducted through motions. The motions in use by the Carleton University Senate are presented here. Over the years these have proven to be sufficient to conduct the work of Senate in an orderly fashion. There are a few additional types of motion in use by other assemblies. The standard reference for Carleton is Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure. A type of motion that is novel to Carleton but mentioned in the reference can be used if the Chair rules it in order.

#### **I Main Motions**

Most of these motions, will be concerned with the substantive work of Senate and hence are called main motions. Once a main motion has been introduced, it becomes the focus of attention; it must be dealt with in some way before another main motion is introduced.

There are also a number of procedural motions that can be introduced during the debate on a main motion.

**Amendment** This is a motion that proposes a change in the wording of a main motion already on the floor.

**Request to divide the Motion:** If a motion has been presented as a sequence of distinct parts, a member may request that these parts be considered separately. This is a request, does not require a seconder and is decided by the Chair.

## **II Procedural Motions: Motions that end a debate**

**Postpone consideration until another unspecified time:** this motion ends the debate without a conclusion or a specific time to return. It thus closes debate for today.

**Postpone until a specific time:** this motion closes debate at this point but requires that Senate return to consideration at a specified time.

**Refer the matter to a committee:** this motion directs that the debate be terminated in Senate and the issue be referred to a specified committee, which may be required to report back to Senate at a specific time.

**Limit the debate in some way:** Rather than seeking to close debate immediately, it may be desirable to limit the discussion in some way such as total remaining time, time per speaker, only those on the current speakers list may speak etc.

**Call for a vote immediately:** the Chair will call a vote once discussion has concluded, but a member of Senate may ask for an immediate vote at an earlier stage if he or she feels that this is in the best interests of Senate.

**Withdraw the motion:** if discussion of the motion convinces the mover that the motion was ill advised, the mover may request that the motion be withdrawn. The Chair makes the ruling on the request.

### **III Procedural Motions: Previously Consider Motions**

Motion to reconsider: This motion asks that a motion previously approved be reopened for renewed debate. The effect is to remove the previous vote as if it had never happened and debate is resumed.

Motion to rescind: This motion asks that a previously approved motion or part of a motion now be considered defeated. Such a motion is not retroactive and actions already taken as a result of the rescinded motion remain unchanged.

Motion to resume consideration: this motion responds to an earlier motion to postpone further discussion. It asks for the discussion to resume.

### **III Procedural Motions: General**

Adjourn: Senate is adjourned automatically when there is no further business to discuss. At an earlier stage, a member may move for adjournment if this is in the best interests of Senate. The effect is to terminate consideration of any pending business.

Recess: This motion proposes a break in proceedings without terminating pending business. It must state the time to resume the meeting.

Appeal a decision of the Chair: There are frequent occasions during a meeting when the Chair decides on an issue of procedure, privilege, order, method of voting etc. Such decisions by the Chair may be appealed.

Request for a counted vote: This is a request to the Chair to count the votes when the Chair has declared an outcome without an actual count.

### **IV Precedence and Properties of Motion**

A motion appearing higher in the table takes precedent over a motion further down.



For example, no matter what else is happening you can always move to close the meeting.

<b>Order of Precedence</b>	<b>Debate</b>	<b>Amendable</b>	<b>Vote Required</b>
Close the meeting	No	Yes	Majority
Recess the meeting	No	Yes	Majority
Question of Privilege	No	No	No vote
Close debate and vote	No	No	2/3
Limit or extend debate	Yes	Yes	2/3
Postpone to a certain time	Yes	Yes	Majority
Refer to a committee	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend the motion	Yes	Yes	Majority
Make the main motion	Yes	Yes	Majority

Seconders: All motions require a mover and a seconder except Questions of Privilege, Order or Information and requests of the Chair (e.g. request a count of the votes)

Interruption: Interruption of the speaker who has the floor is allowed only in rare circumstances. These include: Points of Order, Points of Privilege, Appeals from a decision of the Chair, Request to withdraw the motion, Request for a counted vote.