

Appendix A

Parliamentary Rules for the Wake Forest University Faculty Senate

The Wake Forest University Faculty Senate is the only body on campus that is composed of faculty members from all of the constituent parts of the University. As such, its role is to serve as a vehicle for communication on matters of University-wide concern to the central administration, and to serve as a vehicle to facilitate communication from the administration to the respective faculties. It is important that senators recognize that they are members in a *representative*, not *individual*, capacity, and do their best to foster two-way communication between their colleagues and the administration.

The Senate functions most successfully if it is a forum with broad participation in discussions at both scheduled meetings and committees. Attendance and participation are expected of the professionals who constitute this body. While committees may function effectively on an informal basis, it is thought that regularizing the procedures at scheduled meetings will help make them efficient and productive.

The following procedural rules are largely derived from *Robert's Rules of Order*. *Robert's* is the most commonly used set of rules for the conduct of deliberative meetings. The following guidelines for Senate procedure are adopted to encourage efficient deliberative meetings that allow all sides to be heard, but permit the majority to make decisions in a timely manner.

These pages are not part of the official Bylaws of the Senate; the goal of these pages is to make the decision-making processes of the Senate transparent, efficient, and professional. These pages should be used by the Senate President as part of the introduction to new members of the Senate's processes. It should be remembered that the only real power that the Senate has is through its reputation to the academic units of Wake Forest University as a wise deliberative body that takes into account a wide variety of views, treats its membership with respect, and follows its own rules.

Meeting Agenda

The typical agenda of a Senate Meeting has the following format:

1. Call to order.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Last Meeting.
 - o Meeting leader typically will ask if there are any additions or changes to the minutes.
 - o This typically will be followed by a vote to approve the minutes.
3. Officers' Reports. These are updates that do not include votes.
4. Committee Reports. These are updates that do not include votes.
5. Old Business
 - a. These are items previously planned for discussion at the current meeting.
 - b. These items are listed on the agenda.
 - c. Old business can include votes.
6. Regular Business
 - a. These items should be listed in detail on the agenda.
 - b. Regular business can include votes.

- c. Reports from committees that require votes should occur here. Note that a member of the Senate may make a motion to amend a report from a committee.
 - d. The Senate may vote to postpone discussion of any item until a later meeting; in doing so, the item becomes “Old Business” to that subsequent meeting and it must be addressed before “Regular Business.”
7. New Business
 - a. These are items from the membership of the Senate that require a vote.
 - b. Generally, controversial items will be referred to a committee. The committee should be given a date to report back to the Senate.
 - c. If it is important that the Senate act immediately on such an item, then the entire motion and all pertinent information should be included in the agenda.
 8. Announcements: Non-voting announcements from members of the Senate.
 9. Adjournment: A Senator moves that the meeting be adjourned and the Senate President adjourns the meeting.

Once an agenda is given for a meeting, the Senate should adhere to its order. If the Senate strays off of the agenda, any member may call for the “Orders of the Day”. If there is a particular need to leave the agenda, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote the Senate can “Suspend the Rules.”

Types of Motions

A motion is a proposal on which the entire membership can take action. There are four basic types of motions:

1. **Main Motions** introduce items to the membership for its consideration.
 - o Main motions cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor.
 - o Once a motion is made and seconded, it belongs to the Senate. It cannot be withdrawn unilaterally by its author because the Senate approved an amendment to the motion that the original author does not like. In theory, friendly amendments should occur before the motion is seconded; in practice, however, friendly amendments are often allowed during the discussion if there are no objections from members of the Senate. If there are objections, then the friendly amendment must be treated as a subsidiary motion (see below). The assembly may permit the author to withdraw a seconded motion but is not required to do so.
2. **Subsidiary Motions** are motions on motions; they help the Senate act efficiently on main motions. Passing a subsidiary motion is not the same as passing the main motion; thus if an amendment to a motion passes, the modified main motion will still need to be voted on by the Senate. Listed in order of precedence from lowest to highest, the subsidiary motions are:
 - o *Postpone Indefinitely* kills the main motion without a direct vote; this motion requires a majority vote to pass. This is typically used when members feel that it would be against the best interests of the Senate to go on record as being either for or against a particular motion; for this reason, it is rarely used.
 - o *Amend* allows the Senate to change the main motion; it requires a majority vote to pass. All main motions can be amended; amendments can be great or small; an amendment could be as large as an entire new text. It is also possible for someone to move an amendment of an amendment. Amendments of amendments of amendments are not allowed.

- *Commit or Refer to a Committee* sends a main motion to a committee for consideration; it requires a majority vote. Generally speaking, in the Senate, all new motions will be referred to a committee with the committee being given a date to return with a report.
- *Postpone to a certain time* delays the vote on a main motion; it requires a majority vote.
- *Limit or Extend Limits of Debate* can be used to set up rules on how a debate on a main motion will proceed; it requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote since it puts limits on rights of members to speak. This motion can be used to limit the amount of time of individual speeches or the total number of speeches that can occur before a vote is taken. This motion can also be used to set a time when a vote will occur. Care must be taken to ensure that all sides are given an opportunity to participate in the discussion before a vote occurs.
- *Call the question (or move to close debate)* is a subsidiary motion that moves both an end to the debate and a vote on the motion that is on the floor; *Call the Question* requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote to pass. Since this motion stops debate, care needs to be taken so that every point of view has been considered before this subsidiary motion is made.
- *Lay on the Table* interrupts pending business so as to take up something of immediate importance; this requires a majority vote. This subsidiary motion takes the main motion off the floor so that something of more immediate importance can be considered. Since this subsidiary motion stops debate on an issue with a less than $\frac{2}{3}$ vote, it comes with some additional checks and balances. In particular, a motion laid on the table can be taken off of the table by a majority vote at any subsequent time or meeting during the following three months when no other items are on the floor even if that main motion is not on the agenda (for example, taking items off of the table can be done easily during New Business). Hence, *Laying on the Table* is not an effective way of disposing of motions. An example of when *Laying on the Table* might be useful is when the University President arrives late to a meeting to give a report and needs to leave again promptly. In going through the agenda, since the President is not in attendance when it is her/his turn, the Senate votes by a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority to suspend the rules and continue with its business until the President arrives. When the President arrives, the main motion that is currently on the floor is *Laid on the Table* by a majority vote, the University President gives her/his report and then the main motion is brought back off of the table by majority vote for continued consideration. When a motion to *Lay on the Table* is made, the chair should ask what the item of immediate importance is. If there is no item of immediate importance, the chair should rule the *Lay on the Table* motion out of order and refer the author to another a more appropriate subsidiary motion such as *Postpone Indefinitely* or *Previous Question*.

3. **Privileged Motions** bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business. Motions listed in order of precedence from least to most important are:

- *Call for the orders of the day* forces the Senate to get back to the agenda.
- *Raise a question of privilege* asks that something that is wrong be set right. Examples would include: the meeting room needs the air conditioning turned on, questions about conduct of members or leaders, punishment of members or of accurate reports of proceedings, etc.
- *Recess*
- *Adjourn*
- *Fix a time to adjourn*

4. **Incidental Motions** provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion. There are many such motions. The most important are:

- *Point of Order* includes items such as a lack of a quorum, asking who is assigned the floor, calling a member to order, lack of a second for a motion, etc. The President rules on these issues but any individual member may appeal the ruling to the full Senate.
- *Appeal* requires a majority vote to overturn a President's ruling.
- *Suspend the Rules* allows the Senate to do something that is against its own rules; for example, taking items on the agenda out of order. This motion requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote to pass.
- *Object to the Consideration of a Question* allows members to ask whether a particular motion is under the purview of the Senate.
- *Division of a Question* breaks a single motion into multiple motions that are considered and voted on individually.
- *Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatum* is used to consider long reports.
- There are several motions concerning votes, how they are taken, etc. that are also part of this category. Senators may always request that a vote be taken by ballot

How to present a Motion

Motions are presented by:

1. Obtain the floor:
 - Wait until the last speaker has finished.
 - Wait until the Senate President recognizes you.
2. Make the motion.
3. Wait for someone to second the motion. Items considered by the Senate should be important to at least two individuals. Reports from committees come in seconded since they have the support of at least two individuals. If there is no second, the motion is lost.

Committees

Generally speaking, the work of the Senate will be done through committees. Motions brought to the assembly that are controversial or that need some clarifying will be sent to a committee with a date to report. When the committee returns with its recommendation on a motion, it will generally ask the Senate to accept its report. In the report, the committee should describe their deliberations and why particular items were accepted, rejected or modified. Any Senator may make a motion to amend the report; this amendment may ask the Senate to substitute an entirely new report for what the committee brought back to the Senate. In this way, items important to individual Senators are not "bottled up" inside committees.

Members of committees should be members of the Senate unless otherwise specified by the Bylaws. If there is a need to appoint a non-Senator to a committee, it should be done by a motion to the full Senate.

Quorum

A quorum is the fewest number of people who must be present in order for any business to be conducted. It is not in the best interests of the Senate for a small group of members to be making important decisions for the entire group. If more than half of the voting members are not present at a meeting, a quorum is not present. The Senate can still hear reports and deliberate. All votes and decisions, however, must be made with a quorum present. Thus, Senators who cannot regularly

attend meetings should resign their positions in order to allow individuals who can participate to be elected in their places.