

UNION UNIVERSITY SENATE

RULES OF ORDER

The Union University Senate Rules of Order are a blend of *Robert's Rules of Order* and the Rules of Order for the Tennessee General Assembly.

1. Speaker to Preside The Executive Vice President (Speaker) will convene the Senate at the times established by the Senate Schedule and at such other times as the Senate may establish by adopting a motion to recess.

In the absence of the Executive Vice President, the Speaker Pro Temp shall convene the senate and proceed with the regular order of business.

In the absence of the Executive Vice President and the Speaker Pro Temp, the Chief Clerk shall preside until a Temporary Speaker is elected by a majority of members voting, provided that a quorum is present.

2. Orders of the Day The regular order of business goes as follows.

Invocation - Chaplain

Announcements from the clerk

Finance Report - Vice President of Finance

Ambassador Report - SGA Ambassador

Legislation

Organizational Announcements

Motion to Recess/Adjourn

3. Calendars The Vice President of Administration shall publish a calendar for each legislative session that lists bills properly before the Senate.

4. Rank of Motions Motions rank in the following order:

1. Adjourn (highest)
2. Recess
3. Lay on the table
4. Previous question (close debate)

5. Postpone to a certain time
6. Amend an amendment
7. Amend the bill
8. Postpone indefinitely
9. Adopt a bill (main motion; lowest)

A senator must be recognized by the presiding officer to make a motion. A motion is in order when it outranks all other pending motions. For example, if a motion to postpone to a certain time is pending, a motion to adjourn shall be in order. On the other hand, if a motion to adjourn is pending, a motion to postpone to a certain time shall not be in order.

All of these motions require a second.

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

5. Adjourn A motion to adjourn is not debatable and shall be voted on immediately. It requires a simple majority to pass.

A motion to adjourn should include a specific time to reconvene.

A motion to adjourn *sine die* (without a time to reconvene) shall be out of order except at the final senate of the semester.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to adjourn until the next legislative session.”

6. Recess A motion to recess should be expressed in terms of recessing for a specified length of time (e.g., recess 10 minutes for a restroom break), until a specific time (e.g., 10 p.m.), or at the call of the Speaker. A motion to recess is not debatable and takes a simple majority for passage.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to recess for 10 minutes.”

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

7. Lay on the Table This is a quick method to dispose of an undesirable motion. The motion to Lay on the Table may apply to any motion ranked below it.

All debate ceases when the motion is made and seconded, except that the proponent of the lowest-ranking motion that might be tabled is allowed closing remarks.

The motion to Lay on the Table passes with a simple majority, and the motion to Lift from the Table requires a simple majority (Rule 24).

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to lay [motion] on the table.”

8. Previous Question Previous Question is a motion to end debate. It requires a second, is not debatable and requires a two-thirds majority to pass. As soon as this motion is made and

seconded, the presiding officer puts the motion to a vote. If the motion fails, debate resumes as before.

The previous question may be moved on any motion that ranks below it. However, if more than one motion is pending, the person moving the previous question must specify to which motion the previous question applies.

For instance, if a motion is pending to amend a bill, the previous question may be moved on the motion to amend *or* on the motion to adopt the bill.

If the previous question applies to the motion to adopt the bill, it implicitly includes closing debate on the motion to amend. If the previous question is adopted, the body will first vote on the amendment and then, without further debate, on the motion to adopt the bill.

If the motion for the previous question applies only to the amendment and is adopted, the house will proceed to vote on the amendment and continue debating the bill.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move for the previous question.”

9. Postpone to a Certain Time This delays consideration of a bill for a specified period of time (as opposed to tabling, which postpones until a motion to lift from the table is adopted). The motion to postpone is debatable and requires a simple majority for adoption. A motion to amend is in order.

The motion to postpone may be expressed as a specific time (*e.g.*, 10:30 p.m.), as relative time (*e.g.*, the end of the bill calendar), or as a specific legislative session (*e.g.*, the beginning of the next legislative session).

If a bill is postponed to a certain time, it automatically becomes the next bill considered after the time set in the motion to postpone.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to postpone Bill [number] until [time].”

10. Amend an Amendment Also known as an amendment to the second degree. After an amendment has been proposed (Rule 12), an amendment to the first amendment may be proposed. The second-degree amendment is considered before the main amendment.

A second-degree amendment is debatable and requires a simple majority for adoption. An amendment beyond the second degree (*e.g.*, an amendment to the third degree) is out of order.

Rules for amendments (Rule 12), also apply to second-degree amendments.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to adopt an Amendment to the Amendment”

11. Amendment An amendment is a method to change part of a motion to eliminate flaws, clear ambiguities and otherwise change the motion.

The motion to amend is debatable, may be amended further (Rule 11) and requires a simple majority for adoption.

Amendments to bills are to be submitted in writing on an Amendment Form available from the Clerk or Vice President of Administration.

When a delegate submits an amendment to the Clerk for the pending bill, the Clerk shall notify the Speaker, and the Speaker shall recognize the sponsor as soon as possible.

The sponsor of the amendment shall ask the Clerk to read the amendment. If the bill is seconded, the sponsor will be allowed introductory remarks on the amendment, after which the floor will be open for debate.

An amendment may take one of three forms:

1. **To Delete** ... Be specific about the part of the bill to be deleted.

Delete Section 3 and renumber subsequent sections accordingly.

2. **To Insert** ... Give the specific wording to be inserted and the specific location of where it is to be inserted.

In Section 3, insert "or community college" after the word "university".

3. **To Delete and Insert** ... A combination of the above.

In Section 5, delete "200" and insert in lieu thereof "150".

Tabling an amendment has the effect of defeating it unless the same body votes to lift the amendment from the table before another body has acted on the bill.

Amendments to the title of the bill are *prima facie* unconstitutional and out of order.

"Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to adopt an Amendment to Bill [bill number]."

12. Postpone Indefinitely This causes a main motion to face a preliminary test of support. It is debatable, may not be amended, and requires a simple majority for passage.

If the motion is adopted, consideration of the bill ceases and the senate proceeds to consider the next item of business. The only way the senate can return to consider the bill is to reconsider the motion to postpone indefinitely. (Rule 25).

13. Main Motion This is primarily the motion to adopt a bill as presented to the house by the sponsor. It is subject to all of the motions listed above, is debatable, and requires a simple majority to pass.

"Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to adopt Bill [bill number]."

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

14. Incidental Motions Incidental motions concern matters that need to be brought before the senate immediately.

Incidental motions must pertain to the business before the senate. They have no rank among themselves and outrank all other motions. Only one incidental motion of each type may be pending at a time.

15. Point of Order If a senator believes the rules of order are being breached, he/she makes a Point of Order, asking the Speaker to rule on the issue. If the Speaker doesn't understand the Point of Order, he/she may ask the senator to explain the point.

If the speaker agrees with the Point of Order, he/she will rule that the point "is well taken." Conversely, he/she will rule that the point "is not well taken."

This motion does not require a second or a vote. Point of Order is the only motion that doesn't require recognition from the Speaker and can interrupt when someone else is speaking.

"Point of Order!"

16. Appeal the Ruling of the Chair After the Speaker has ruled on an issue such as a Point of Order, the senate may review his/her decision.

For example, if the Speaker rules that a motion is out of order, a senator who believes the motion is in order may appeal the Speaker's ruling. If the appeal is seconded, the senate decides whether to uphold or overrule the Speaker's decision.

An appeal is subject to the general rules of debate, and the presiding officer may explain his/her decision. The presiding officer does not have to relinquish the chair during the discussion. A simple majority can overrule the presiding officer's decision.

"Mr./Madam Speaker, I appeal the ruling of the chair."

17. Suspend the Rules When the senate desires to consider a matter or do something that would violate these rules or to establish a special rule for itself, it may suspend the rules.

A motion to suspend the rules requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds majority for passage.

A motion to suspend the rules must include the purpose for suspending the rules. Once that purpose has been accomplished, the rules are automatically reinstated. No motion or action is necessary to reinstate a rule that has been suspended.

A suspension of the rules applies only to actions that are in pursuit of the stated purpose for suspending the rules.

It is necessary to suspend the rules to make any motion not listed in this Delegate Manual.

A motion to suspend the rules and consider a bill in advance of its regular order on the calendar must be submitted in writing and approved by the Speaker or the Speaker Pro Tem before it may be considered on the floor.

The rules may not be suspended to permit a person outside of the original assembly to speak.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to suspend Rule [number] for the purpose of [purpose].”

18. Division of the Senate Immediately after a voice vote, any three members in the Senate may request a count of the yeas and nays in a manner directed by the presiding officer.

A senator requesting a roll call should raise a hand immediately after the presiding officer announces the results of the voice vote.

REQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

19. Requests and Inquiries Requests and Inquiries require no motion, second, or vote and are the prerogative of any senator. They are proper at any time but may not interrupt another speaker.

20. Parliamentary Inquiry A request for information about the parliamentary situation or for the presiding officer’s opinion on a matter concerning the Rules of Order. This is not a request for a ruling.

21. Point of Information A request for facts affecting the business at hand directed at the chair or another member. A point of information cannot address the substance of legislation.

MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS

22. Lift from the Table After a motion has been tabled, a motion to lift it from the table can bring the question back before the house. A motion to Lift from the Table requires a second, is debatable and requires a simple majority for adoption.

If a bill is still pending on the floor, a motion is in order to lift from the table a motion previously tabled that pertains to the pending bill. If the bill is no longer being considered, it is necessary to bring the bill back before the senate by reconsideration or other appropriate motions.

For example, if an amendment is tabled and the bill is defeated: to revive the amendment, the house must first pass a motion to reconsider the bill, and then vote to lift the amendment from the table.

In the same circumstances, if the amendment was tabled but the bill is still pending on the floor, the motion to reconsider would be unnecessary.

If a main motion is tabled, a motion to lift it from the table is in order when no other main motion is pending.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move to lift from the table [motion to be lifted].”

23. Reconsideration Reconsideration is a motion to bring back before the senate or a question that was previously decided.

Reconsideration requires a second, is debatable, and requires a simple majority for adoption.

A motion to reconsider must be proposed by someone who voted with the prevailing side. For instance, if a bill is defeated, only someone who voted against it may move to reconsider it. A motion to reconsider may be made only on the day the original vote was taken or in the next legislative session.

The rank of a motion to reconsider is the same as the rank of the motion to which it is applied.

For example, a motion to reconsider an amendment is in order in the same circumstances as a motion to adopt an amendment.

A motion to reconsider a bill is in order only when no other motion is pending. If the bill has already been disposed of, it is first necessary to reconsider the bill, then the amendment. If the bill is still before the house, it is necessary to only reconsider the amendment.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, having voted with the prevailing side, I move to reconsider our action in regard to [motion to be reconsidered].”

24. Consideration of a Veto If the Executive President returns a bill or resolution to the Senate after vetoing it from going into effect, the sponsor may move that it be passed notwithstanding the objection of the Executive President. Said motion must be seconded to be considered.

The sponsor will notify the Clerk in writing of his/her intention to make such a motion and said notice shall be read in the senate before the motion is to be considered.

The motion to override a veto is debatable. The motion may not be amended but is otherwise subject to all other subsidiary and incidental motions.

Having once failed, the motion to override a veto may not be proposed again except by adopting a motion to reconsider the previous action.

“Mr./Madam Speaker, I move that the Senate pass Resolution/Bill _____, notwithstanding the objection of the Executive President.”

25. Other Motions The rules must be suspended to consider any motion not set forth in the Rules of Order.

MISCELLANEOUS RULES

26. Amend the Rules To amend these Rules of Order, the senate must pass a bill in the usual manner.

27. Voting In putting a question, the presiding officer will specify the method of voting. Each delegate shall vote in the manner prescribed by the presiding officer. The presiding officer shall make clear the question being decided and give everyone a reasonable opportunity to vote.

28. Majority Vote A majority of those present and voting shall decide any question unless a different majority is specified by these Rules of Order or by the Union University SGA Constitution. A senator who abstains from voting is not counted for either side when deciding the outcome of a vote.

30. Voting by Proxy Proxy voting is prohibited in all situations.

31. Voting by the Speaker The Speaker may vote only when his/her vote will affect the fate of the motion.

If the vote is tied, the Speaker may vote "aye" and pass the motion. If the motion passes by one vote (without the Speaker's vote), the Speaker may vote "no," creating a tie and denying the motion a majority.

The Speaker Pro Tem may vote as a Senator for his/her organization or class.

32. Debate In debate, the presiding officer shall recognize senators in the order in which they rise seeking recognition.

Except for the Prime Sponsor, no senator may speak a second time on the pending motion if a senator who has not spoken seeks recognition.

The Prime Sponsor shall be given reasonable priority to be recognized in debate, and there shall be no limit on the number of times the Prime Sponsor may speak. No senator may speak more than five minutes at a time without permission of the senate.

All debate must pertain to the merits of the pending question.

The Speaker may not participate in debate, unless he/she relinquishes the chair to the Speaker Pro Tem and speaks from the floor. The speaker may return to the chair once the question he/she spoke to is resolved. This paragraph does not apply to discussion following an appeal of a Speaker's ruling (Rule 17).

Every motion is debatable unless otherwise specified in the Rules Of Order.

33. Time Limits for Introductory The prime sponsor of the bill will be recognized by the Speaker for introductory remarks not to exceed five minutes.

34. Time Limit for Debate of Bills If the senate has more than 10 bills pending on its calendar at the beginning of the legislative session, the period for debate on each bill in the senate shall be no more than 10 minutes, including the sponsor's introductory remarks and the consideration of any subsidiary motions. At the expiration of the prescribed time, the presiding officer shall put the question on any pending motion(s) as if a motion for the previous question on the bill had been adopted.

A motion to suspend the rules and change the debate time limit for either a specific bill or for all bills shall be in order. It shall be non-debatable, notwithstanding Rule 18 (Suspend the Rules). Such a motion regarding all bills shall be in order when no other motion is pending.

35. Quorum A quorum is required to conduct any business except to adjourn until a specific time.

A quorum in the Senate is the number of participating organizations.

Upon recognition by the presiding officer, a delegate may question the presence of a quorum. If the quorum is questioned, the presiding officer will direct the clerk or Vice President of Administration to ascertain whether a quorum is present. If so, the body shall proceed with its business. If not, business stops until a quorum is present.

The Speaker may take actions to ensure the maintenance of a quorum and may direct the Sergeant-at-Arms to summon absent members.

36. Dilatory Motions The presiding officer may declare a motion as dilatory and refuse to put it to a vote. Such a decision may be appealed to the members present. However, if the presiding officer has consistently won such appeals, he/she may rule further appeals out of order.

37. Modification of a Motion A delegate making a motion may modify that motion before a vote has occurred, with the permission of the senate and of the person who seconded the motion.

38. Omnibus Bills Bills that embrace more than one subject are prohibited.

39. Two-Thirds Majority The following motions require a two-thirds majority for adoption. A motion requiring a two-thirds majority is adopted if the 'aye' votes are twice or more as many as the 'no' votes.

- Previous Question
- Suspend the Rules

40. Filling Blanks No bill or amendment shall be considered which leaves to the floor the task of filling blanks.

41. Admission to the Floor Only the members of the senate, the officers of the senate, and the staff shall be admitted to the floor of the senate except that the Sergeant-at-Arms shall provide suitable seating for guests.

This rule shall not apply for the introduction of an invited guest or dignitary.

Guests with the privilege of sitting on the floor should refrain from interacting with delegates.

42. Senators Each approved organization shall designate two Senators. Each Senator has one vote and voice privileges. Each class shall have four representatives with one vote and voice privileges. The Executive Branch has voice privileges but not voting privileges.

43. Motions to be Seconded Every motion must be seconded unless otherwise provided.

44. Announcements Announcements, including announcements pertaining to the proceedings of the Senate are to be given by the clerk following the invocation. Before a motion to recess/adjourn, senators will have the ability to share an announcement relative to their organization when recognized by the speaker.

45. Prime Sponsor to be Present The Prime Sponsor of a bill must be present when the bill is considered by the Senate.

The Prime Sponsor shall stand in the well while the bill is being considered.

If a bill is the next order of business and the Prime Sponsor is absent, the bill shall be postponed a reasonable interval to give the Prime Sponsor an opportunity to arrive.

46. Withdraw a Bill To withdraw a bill or resolution from consideration, file a Withdraw a Bill/Resolution form with the Vice President of Administration signed by all prime sponsors of the bill/resolution.

47. Add or Delete a Sponsor To add or delete a sponsor from a bill, file an Add or Delete Sponsor form with the Vice President of Administration. A blank form is available from the Vice President of Administration.

48. Attorney General's Opinion Pursuant to the SGA Constitution (Article II, Section 5), the senate may request an official opinion from the Attorney General about one bill in each legislative session.

Such request shall be presented as a motion to postpone consideration of the bill until the opinion is received from the AG. Rule 9 (Postpone To A Certain Time) shall apply to consideration of the motion unless otherwise provided in this rule.

A request for an opinion shall include specific questions, not to exceed three, and shall be reduced to writing by the clerk on a form to be provided. Two copies shall be delivered to the

Attorney General, who shall record the time of receipt on one, which shall be returned to the house where the request originated.

The two week time limit set forth in the SGA Constitution shall commence at the time the request was received by the Attorney General.

Upon receipt of the Attorney General's opinion, the bill shall be the next bill considered in the regular order of business.

An opinion is non-binding but may be cited in debate.

49. Robert's Rules of Order *Robert's Rules of Order 10th Revised Edition et seq.* (Perseus) is the basis for interpreting these rules and for resolving issues not otherwise addressed herein.

50. Citations Not Binding Citations in these Rules of Order to the SGA Constitution or to other rules within the Rules of Order are for the convenience of the user. Errors in citations are inconsequential.

51. Seating Assignments The Speaker and Vice President of Administration will assign seating at their discretion.

52. Chaplain/Sergeant-at-Arms The offices of the Chaplain and Sergeant-at-Arms shall be appointed by the Executive Vice President and confirmed by a simple majority of the Student Senate in its first regular session of the semester.

The Chaplain shall provide spiritual leadership and support the Student Senate. They shall also lead the Student Senate in prayer.

The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be charged with maintaining conduct of the Senators and guests. At the discretion of the President of the Student Senate, the Sergeant-at-Arms may be called upon to remove disorderly individuals from the Student Senate chamber.

53. Amendments to the SGA Constitution An amendment must be presented to the Student Senate and passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senators present. Upon passage, the proposed amendment shall be conspicuously publicized and shall be presented to the Student Body for adoption by popular election. It shall be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting Student Body. Failure to achieve said majority shall prohibit adoption of the proposed amendment to the SGA Constitution. Upon ratification, the amended constitution shall be established at the commencement of the following academic semester.