



Council of Graduate Students

Parliamentary Procedure Report, 2011-2012

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*Up to date
committee
information can
be found online
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Tips on Robert's Rules

To make a motion:

I move that CGS adopt xyz resolution as written (or you may read the resolution aloud).

This motion must have a second to be debatable and to come to a vote. In most cases, it will take a simple majority to pass.

Amendments:

If you think a main motion should be changed, you may make a motion to amend:

I move that xyz resolution be amended to read (by striking, by replacing, etc...) ...

At this point debate is limited solely to the amendment; debate is not on the main motion! An amendment is adopted by a simple majority.

To end debate and bring the motion to a vote:

Call the question.

Question. or I call the question.

If there are still members who want to speak, you must then make a motion to bring an end to discussion and a vote.

I move the previous question.

This motion requires a second and to pass, two-thirds vote is needed. There is no debate.

Postpone Indefinitely:

This motion is used when an inappropriate or irrelevant issue has arisen. It will kill the motion, i.e. the motion cannot return in any form.

I move to postpone indefinitely xyz resolution.

A second is required. Debate can be on both the main motion and the motion to postpone indefinitely. It requires a simple majority to pass.

Postpone to a certain time etc...

This is used when the motion could be considered at another time. Some reasons for this would be insufficient information at the present time, lack of urgency when a meeting is running late, or a specific individual relevant to the discussion is absent.

I move to postpone consideration of the motion until our next meeting (or until Ms. Smith addresses the body, etc...).

Debate is on the motion to postpone, not on the main motion. A simple majority if needed for passage.

Tips on Robert's Rules (continued)

Questions regarding voting:

If there is a question regarding the interpretation of a voice vote, a member may call for division.¹

Division.

Or make a regular motion for a recount

I move that the votes be counted.

Limiting Debate

There are two primary ways of limiting debate. First, you can limit the amount of time any single person is permitted to speak. The other option is setting a time limit for the entire debate. A combination of the two is also permissible.

I move that debate be closed at 5:15 p.m.

I move that debate be limited to 30 minutes.

I move that debate be limited to 3 minutes for each member.

I move that debate be limited to 3 minutes for each member and be closed at 5:00 p.m.

Any of these motions need a second. There is no debate. It requires a second and a two-thirds vote to pass.

Providing information or addressing a mistake in procedure:

If you have information relevant to the discussion, not an opinion, you may do the following.

Point of information. (Wait until the chair recognizes you.) *The date of the event under discussion is the 3rd not the 8th.*

Point of Order. (Wait until the chair recognizes you.) *Passage of an amendment only requires a majority vote.*

Mock Parliamentary Procedure

New Business:

Cristine: I motion to approve the Act implementing the Advertising Policy.

[need to MOVE a motion]

Chair: Is there any discussion?

[needs a second before discussion]

Ann: Second.

Kurt: Are we sure that the Executive Committee should not have a final decision making authority?

Cristine: Yes.

Kurt: But what would the appeals process be?

Jessica: Well, we can establish one.

Kurt: I think Exec should have final authority. I move to strike "not" from the last sentence of section 5.

Ann: Second.

Chair: Is there any discussion?

{adlib a fight over motion between Cristine and Kurt}

Chair: All in favor.

Kurt: No you can't do that.

[Point of Order]

[I move to appeal from the chair's decision.]

Kurt: I move to appeal from the chair's decision.

Cristine: Second.

Chair: Any discussion.

Ann: I don't think we should have advertising at all.

[out of order – you must keep discussion to the motion on the floor which is not the main motion]

Chair: Kurt, would you like to explain your motion?

Kurt: I think I haven't been able to fully explain my position.

Chair: Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor.

[vote - affirmative]

Tips on Robert's Rules (continued)

Chair: Now we are discussion the amendment to section 5.

Jessica: I move the question.

Ann: Second.

Chair: Any discussion?

Jessica: I think we have had enough discussion on this point and the body is ready to vote.

Chair: {take vote on motion from chair's decision, take vote on amendment} We are now discussing the main motion.

Kurt: I move to postpone indefinitely.

Cristine: Second.

Chair: Discussion?

Kurt: I do not think it is appropriate for us to pass a policy that allocates money to students on a committee. Therefore, we should not vote either way but kill this motion.

Cristine: I agree. It's inappropriate. No other committee members receive compensation for their services.

Jessica: We do a lot of hard work. We serve all of the other committees; it is completely fair. I call the question.

Chair: {take vote}

[vote motion down]

Kurt: I move to table the discussion until the next meeting when the President can provide us with information regarding the history of this kind of action.

Ann: Second.

Chair: Discussion?

Ann: I think it is best we take some more time on this issue.

Chair: Any further discussion? {take vote}

THE END!