

CSUSM ACADEMIC SENATE ANNOTATED AGENDA
Guideline to Senate Actions (8/28/07)
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This is an unofficial guideline of typical Senate actions; official rules are defined in Roberts Rules of Order.

I. Approval of Agenda

New business may be added to the agenda from the floor but we strongly encourage that any new business be presented in writing to the Executive Committee prior to the Senate meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes of *previous* Meeting

When possible, please email Marcia in advance with any changes.

III through X. Reports of Officers and affiliated organizations

Reports are for information purposes and do not require Senate action. If the results of a report suggest the need for Senate action, a motion may be introduced but it is preferred that the need for action be conveyed to the appropriate committee.

XI. Consent Calendar

The Consent Calendar contains routine items that have been approved by Senate committees and require full Senate approval but are not likely to generate discussion. Examples include course changes and committee nominations.

The Consent Calendar is presented to the Senate for a single vote of approval without discussion. Any item may be removed from the Consent Calendar for particular consideration, by request of a senator prior to vote. The chair decides whether items removed from the Consent Calendar become New Business or are returned to the sponsoring committee.

XII. Brief Committee Updates

Same as for reports, see III through X (above).

XIII. Old Business (second reading):

(See 'New Business', below, for a description of the flow of Senate actions)

When an item is listed as 'old business', it is considered to be a second reading, at which point the item is official senate business and rules of debate and amendment are followed. Formal debate for or against the motion is made during the second reading, and amendments to the motion are considered.

Also see "other parliamentary procedures" further below.

XIV. New Business (first reading):

New business is typically placed on the agenda for a first reading by having been "moved and seconded" by a Senate committee or the Executive Committee. Note that the phrase "moved and seconded" denotes a decision that the item is ready to place on the agenda and is not necessarily an endorsement of the item.

A first-reading item is not yet official Senate business and thus the rules for amending do not apply -- the purpose of the first reading is to informally discuss the item. Comments on first-reading items should be made on the Senate floor and to the presenters via e-mail or other means. Comments should be provided within a day or two of the Senate meeting, to allow the committee time for consideration and modifications. The presenters may make modifications to an item up until the time that the item becomes a second reading.

First-reading items become official Senate business (second readings) when they become 'old business', which is typically the next Senate session. If necessary, the Executive Committee may delay moving an item from new business to old business.

A motion to suspend the rules and move a first reading item to second reading status in the same Senate session is permitted. Such motions should be undertaken only after any general discussion has concluded.

Also see "other parliamentary procedures" further below.

XV. Information Items

Information items are presentations of information that would be of interest to Senators, but do not result in motions to be considered by the Senate. Information items are thus typically placed in the agenda either before or after the Old and New Business

Other parliamentary procedure considerations

Amending motions: *When an item becomes a motion (old business (second reading)), the motion is then responsibility of the Senators and any amendments to the motion must be made and voted on by the full Senate.*

Once a motion to amend an item has been seconded, debate on the main item ends and all debate is on the subsidiary motion, until debate on the subsidiary motion ends and a vote has been made on the subsidiary motion. At that point, debate resumes on the main motion.

'Friendly amendments' to motions are not permitted, though amendments may be made without a vote through the chair's general consent rights ("hearing no objection, the change is made").

Ending debate: *Debate on a motion may be ended by either the Chair or from the floor.*

The chair ends debate by saying "hearing no more debate, I call the question." This is a motion and if there is objection from the floor to the chair's motion, debate on the preceding motion continues.

A call from the floor to end debate requires a Senator saying "call the question" and a seconding of the call by another Senator. When the call is seconded, debate on the preceding motion ends and there is an immediate vote (with no debate) on the motion to 'call the question'. A two-thirds majority is required to approve.

A senator may request a reconsideration of a vote to "call the question." The senator may give a brief justification for requesting a reconsideration, but the request for reconsideration is not debatable. A request for reconsideration must be seconded and, in this situation, requires only a simple majority vote. If a move to reconsider passes, debate on the preceding motion resumes.

Rules of debate: *The Senate operates under the rule of 'informal consideration' which allows a Senator to speak multiple times on an item or motion. The official (formal) rules of debate allow each Senator to speak only twice on a motion and the second speech cannot occur until all other Senators have spoken on the motion.*

A Senator may, at any time during the consideration of a motion, move that the Senate conform to the official rules of debate. A move to return to the official rules of debate must be seconded, can be debated, and requires a two-thirds majority vote. If passed, the official rules of debate take effect immediately and last until action on the main motion has ended or a Senator moves to return to informal consideration.

The Senate's rules of debate are a deviation from standard parliamentary procedure and require further development.

"Suspend the rules": *As most commonly used, a motion to "suspend the rules" is a motion to move an item from being a first reading item to second reading status. Motions to suspend other Senate rules may also be made, but should be handled cautiously. A motion to suspend the rules must be seconded and is not debatable. A two-thirds vote is required to suspend the rules.*

Voting: *Voting in the Senate is typically by voice vote. If the results are uncertain, we then use a hand vote. Ballot voting is permitted, though it is discouraged since Senators are public representatives of their constituencies. However, if a ballot vote is deemed necessary for confidentiality reasons, a Senator may move that voting be by ballot. A move to vote by ballot must be seconded, is not debatable, and requires a simple majority. Ballots are signed to ensure that only Senators voted, but names are not recorded. The chair appoints a teller or tellers (usually the parliamentarian) to collect and count the votes.*

Parliamentarian: *The parliamentarian assists the chair or the Senate in maintenance of parliamentary processes and is not a voting member of the Senate.*

Committee concerns:

Committee quorum and voting privileges: *A quorum in a committee is more than half of the voting members (those appointed by the Senate). The chair of a committee is a voting member and is considered in counting for a quorum. In many committees it is a matter of standard practice for the committee chair to not speak on issues or vote. This practice is voluntary and should be established in the first meeting of the committee; the practice can be rescinded at any time.*