

Parliamentary Overview for the ECU Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate of East Carolina University follows Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, currently using the 10th edition, published by Perseus Publishing (ISBN #0-7382-0384-X). The 704-page text is available for purchase through bookstores, but many websites contain summaries of the most common procedures and practices of these parliamentary rules.

Why use a set of rules in the Faculty Senate?

Robert's Rules provides organizations like the Faculty Senate a set of rules for conduct at meetings, all in an effort to allow everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

What else governs the meetings of the Faculty Senate?

Appendix A of the ECU Faculty Manual contains the Faculty Constitution and By-Laws of our Faculty Senate. These documents describe the organization of the senate, elections, and the order of agenda. When there is no specified "rule" within these documents, Robert's Rules prevail.

What should senators do to prepare for the Faculty Senate meetings?

Each senator and alternate will receive a notice that the Faculty Senate agenda is available via e-mail and on the Faculty Senate website. Senators need to print the entire agenda, all attachments, and then review the documents to familiarize themselves with the content and issues before each meeting. Talking to other faculty members in a unit is a good way to find out the ideas on key issues that are relative to each unit.

Do senators have to stand up if they want to speak?

The Chair of the Faculty will recognize all speakers and will call them by name (be sure your name is clearly displayed in front of you at the table). It is especially helpful for senators who wish to speak during a senate meeting to stand, state their name, state their academic unit, and then make their point. The Secretary records these comments in the minutes of the meeting. It is important that persons are credited with their own comments if those ideas are included in the meeting minutes.

What do senators call each other during senate meetings?

The generic term "professor" is usually used as a title for all senators. For administrators with titles, it is appropriate to use that title. The Chair of the Faculty is usually addressed as Mr./Ms. Chair or Mr./Ms. Chairperson.

What do I need to know about parliamentary procedure if I'm serving as a faculty senator?

There are some basic points of parliamentary procedure that are most critical: making a motion, waiting for a motion to be seconded, debating a motion, and voting on the motion. A good review of these basic motions is available on the following website:

<http://cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/apo/robert.html>. The following websites offer summaries and overviews of parliamentary procedures and may be helpful tools. The deciding factor, though, are the strictest interpretations of the stated Robert's Rules. It is the responsibility of the Parliamentarian to make those interpretations and to advise the Chair during the actual meetings.

<http://www.robertsrules.com/course.html>

<http://www.robertsrules.org>

<http://www.taa-madison.org/q+d-rules.html>

http://www.arga.org/mr_robrt.htm