



AS Parliamentary Procedures

This procedure describes how governing body and committee meetings are run.

Specific Rules: The governing bodies of the ASWWU and committees that act on behalf of them must adhere to the Open Public Meetings Act, RCW 42.30. ~~Some meetings must adhere to the Open Public Meetings Act, RCW 42.30.~~

I. General Principles

Rather than referencing standing rules of order (e.g., Robert's Rules, Reed's Rules) when questions or ambiguities arise out of these procedures, the **Chair should make a fair ruling** with consideration to these general principles:

1. **One person speaks at a time.**
2. The chair of a **voting body** will recognize or call upon **those members** who wish to speak.
3. **Voting bodies will consider one item at a time.**
4. The will of the majority shall determine the **voting body's** action.
5. The rights of the minority are preserved.
6. The public (students) are informed of actions taken or considered by a **voting body**.

II. Holding a meeting

1. **A date, time, place, and agenda are set for a meeting.**
Voting bodies will often regularly schedule meetings: weekly, bi-weekly, etc.
2. **The chair calls the meeting to order.**
This marks the start of this meeting's proceedings.
3. **The chair moves the **voting body** through the agenda, sponsors present their agenda items, **voting members may make motions.****
Each agenda item is subject to action by the **voting body**. A member of the **voting body** may move to take some action on the item (e.g., "[Last Name] moves to approve [item]").
4. **The chair adjourns the meeting.**
The marks the end of the meeting's proceedings.

III. Presenting an agenda Item

1. **The chair asks the sponsor to present their item.**
The chair may cede a set amount of time to the sponsor: this amount may be stipulated in the agenda.

2. The sponsor presents their item.

The sponsor may present their item in whatever manner they wish, within reason. Typically, sponsors go through an associated document or presentation. This initial presentation should only take up a portion of the allotted time.

3. The sponsor opens the discussion.

Members will seek recognition to participate in the discussion. The chair will recognize ~~speakers~~members. The chair may elect to have sponsors recognize ~~speakers~~members, temporarily delegating facilitation.

4. Discussion ends.

Discussion ends when the allotted time expires (the chair or designee will keep time), ~~at the chair's discretion~~ when conversation slows or stops and the chair transitions to the next item, or when a relevant, substantive motion passes. Discussion is paused while motions are ~~passed~~considered.

5. Discussion continues.

Discussion may continue if a motion to add time to the discussion passes: the new time remaining in the discussion will be the balance of the current allotment plus the time added.

IV. Considering and passing ~~Passing~~ a motion

1. A voting member of the voting body is recognized by the chair and makes a motion.

An example of a motion would be: "I move to table the parliamentary procedure discussion."

2. The chair affirms or contests that the motion is in order.

Affirmation may take the explicit form "the motion is in order" or is implied when the chair asks for seconds.

A contesting may take the form "the motion is not in order..." the chair should always explain why the motion is not in order and give the proposing member the opportunity to correct or withdraw the motion.

A motion is in order if it applies to the agenda item under consideration or if it's procedural in nature.

~~2.3.~~ A second is made by another voting member.

E.g., "[last name] seconds the motion" or "[last name] seconds." If no second is made, the motion dies.

~~3.—The chair affirms or contests that the motion is in order.~~

~~Affirmation may take the explicit form "the motion is in order" or is implied when the chair moves to the next step.~~

~~A contesting my take the form "the motion is not in order..." the chair should always explain why the motion is not in order and give the proposing member the opportunity to correct or withdraw the motion.~~

~~A motion is in order if it applies to the agenda item under consideration or if it's procedural in nature.~~

4. The chair opens discussion on the motion.

For example, "~~the motion is in order~~moved and seconded, do we have any discussion?"

If there's no comments, the chair closes the discussion and holds a vote.

5. The chair holds a vote.

The number of votes needed for a motion to pass can vary: the chair will let the [voting body](#) know the [vote](#) threshold (e.g., 11/20 for a simple majority (50%+1), ~~supermajority (60%+1), or 15/20 for 3/4ths~~)

There are few ways to vote:

A vote by acclamation or a vote by unanimous consent is one where no member objects. This is often done by the chair asking, "are there any objections [to this motion]?"

A voice vote is one where each side (yes, no, abstention) says their vote aloud in series. The chair would ask "those in favor say 'aye'... those against say 'nay'... those abstaining say 'aye'..." and then estimate the results by ear.

A vote by show of hands is one where each side raises their hand in series. The chair might say ask "those in favor raise your hands... those against raise your hands ... those abstaining raise your hands..." and count the hands for each side.

The ASWWU tends to combine the voice vote and show of hands. This is the middle ground between accuracy and efficiency.

A vote by electronic means is one where each member types out their vote into the meeting chat or otherwise casts their vote electronically.

A roll-call vote is one where the chair goes through the list of all members of the [voting body](#) and asks each of them how they vote (yes, no, abstention). This form of voting is time-intensive and is usually only used for contentious votes or transparency.

6. All present members of the [voting body](#) vote; the chair and secretary record the votes.

If the vote is not unanimous or it's a roll-call vote, the chair and secretary should record the names of the voting members who voted yes or no, or who abstained.

7. The chair announces the result of the vote.

This usually takes the form of "this motion passes unanimously" or "this motion passes 12-1-0." The vote counts are usually written out in the order of yes-no-abstentions. The chair should give opportunity for those dissenting to explain their vote.

V. Amending a motion

Note: A motion to amend should not be itself amended. While not usually out of order, amending an amendment is inefficient. Usually, the first amendment should first be defeated and then another amendment moved and seconded.

1. **A member of the [voting body](#) moves to amend a motion.**
A motion to amend is like any other motion and follows the procedure in [Section III](#).
2. **The [voting body](#) considers the motion to amend.**
3. **The [voting body](#) returns to considering the original motion, with or without the amendments depending on passage of the amendment.**
In some cases the motion to amend may be worded as a competing motion (i.e., the original motion is “motion to approve policy A” and the motion to amend is “motion to approve policy A with X amendments”). In these cases, at the discretion of the chair, an affirmative vote on the motion to amend may be taken as an affirmative vote on the original motion.

VI. **Overruling the Chair**

1. **When a voting member objects to a procedural ruling of the chair, they may move to overrule the chair.**
A motion to overrule the chair is like any other motion and follows the procedure in [Section III](#).

Global Definitions: these definitions are consistent across all AS/VU Policies, see Master Definition List

Voting Body – The governing bodies or committees of the ASWWU.

Procedure-specific definitions

Member – ~~A voting member of the voting body.~~

Sponsor – ~~The sponsoring A~~ member of the voting body that’s bringing an item to the agenda.

Chair – The person with the authority to preside over the meeting of the voting body (e.g., Chair or Vice-chair).

Agenda – The list of topics planned for discussion and/or action during a meeting.

[Return to Procedure Policy](#)

Policy Procedure Information:

PRO-AS-GOV-02

AS Parliamentary Procedure

Policy Procedure Owner: ASWWU Government

This policy procedure cancels: AS Board Parliamentary Procedures (ASB-14-W-45, Feb. 19, 2014)

Policy Procedure Approved By: ASWWU Government ([ASWWUSEN-23-F-?](#); [ASWWU-EB-23-F-?](#))

Effective Date: [01/01/2024](#)

Revision Date:

See also:

AS Governance [Rules of Operation Meeting Guidelines](#) [GUD-AS-GOV-03]

AS Student Government Handbook, Meeting Agenda Guidelines

Draft: Nov. 10, 2023

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