

# ACADEMIC SENATE MEETINGS & RULES OF PROCEDURE – STANDING ORDERS

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## Section 1 - Purpose and Context

(1) These rules are subject to the provisions of the Academic Senate Rule (referred to in the remainder of this document as ‘the Senate Rule’), as revised and approved by the Board of Trustees as part of the University Rules. They cover the arrangements by which the Academic Senate will conduct business.

## Section 2 - Definitions

(2) “Motion” and “Resolution” mean the same thing.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

### Part A - Regular and Special Meetings

(3) The Academic Senate (*hereafter referred to as ‘Senate’*) is to hold a minimum of four meetings each year.

(4) The Senate is to hold a special meeting –

- a) if it decides to hold one;
- b) if the Chair decides that one is to be held;
- c) at the request of the Vice-Chancellor;
- d) upon the written request of one third of the members of the Senate, addressed to the Secretary to the Senate specifying the business that the members wish to be considered at the meeting.

(5) A special meeting held-

- (i) in accordance with clause 4 (a) (b) or (c) is to be held at a time and date determined by the Chair;
- (ii) in accordance with clause 4 (d) is to be held at a time and date determined by the Chair but not later than fourteen days after the Secretary to the Senate has received the request.

(6) A meeting of the Senate is to conclude no later than two and a half hours after it commences, unless those present at the meeting agree during the meeting that the maximum duration of the meeting should be extended by a further specified period not exceeding half an hour. A meeting may be so extended once only.

(7) If there is unfinished business on the agenda at the time at which a meeting is due to end, or when a quorum is lost before the end of a meeting, that business is to be deferred to the next regular meeting of the Senate, unless the Senate decides –

- e) to adjourn its meeting
- f) to hold a special meeting to consider the business, or
- g) to refer the business for determination on behalf of the Senate the Senate Executive Committee.

(8) Business that has been deferred to the next regular meeting of the Senate is to have precedence over other business to be conducted at that meeting unless the Senate decides otherwise at that meeting.

(9) The Chair of Senate may cancel a meeting if he or she is of the opinion that there is insufficient business to justify the holding of a meeting.

## **Part B - Presiding at meetings of Senate**

(10) The Chair of the Senate is to preside at meetings of the Senate unless the Chair is absent, in which case the Deputy Chair is to preside; in the absence of both the Chair and the Deputy Chair a member elected by the members present is to preside. In these rules, a reference to the Chair is a reference to the person presiding at the meeting if the Chair is not presiding.

## **Part C - Agenda for meetings of Senate**

### **Preparation of the Agenda**

(11) The agenda will be prepared by the Chair and the secretary to Senate.

(12) Items of business and supporting documentation for consideration for inclusion on the agenda of a meeting of the Senate are to be received by the Secretary to the Senate not later than fourteen working days before a regular meeting of the Senate and not later than ten working days before a special meeting of the Senate.

(13) Items from members of Senate or its committees will be accepted by the Chair with accompanying supporting documentation. If the Chair determines that an item raised by members or its committees should not be placed on the Academic Senate meeting agenda, the Chair must report the reasons at the meeting.

(14) Items which are considered to require further report and/or discussion during the Senate meeting are starred on the agenda.

(15) The Secretary to the Senate is to send to the members of the Senate an agenda for each meeting, setting out the time, date and location of the meeting and the business to be conducted at the meeting at least five working days before the meeting is to be held.

(16) The Secretary to the Senate may send an additional agenda to members of the Senate prior to the meeting if the Chair considers that urgent business has arisen that had not arisen, or not arisen in sufficient detail, before the agenda for the meeting was issued, at least two working days before the meeting is to be held.

(17) An agenda or an additional agenda is to contain supporting information about each item of business in sufficient detail to allow members to make an informed decision on the item.

(18) Only business that is shown on an agenda for a meeting of the Senate may be considered by the Senate at that meeting, unless the Senate, on the motion of the Chair, agrees to consider other business of an urgent and important and uncontroversial nature and of which it was impractical to give notice on an agenda or an additional agenda.

(19) The sending of information to Senate members following the dissemination of the agenda and original supporting information, is at the discretion of the Chair.

(20) An agenda or additional agenda sent in accordance with this part may be despatched by mail, facsimile transmission or electronic mail, or may be hand delivered.

### **Notices of motion for the Agenda**

(21) Any member of the Senate may give notice of a motion that they wish to move at a meeting of the Senate.

(22) Notices of motion are to be in writing addressed to the Secretary to the Senate, and are to show the names of the proposer and the seconder, both of whom are to be members of the Senate.

(23) Notices of motion to be moved at a meeting are to be received by the Secretary to the Senate no later than 4.30pm on the tenth working day prior to the day on which the meeting is to be held. Notices of motion received in accordance with this part are to be listed on the agenda for the meeting next after any items relating to apologies for absence and minutes of the previous meeting of the Senate, and, if there are two or more notices of motion for one meeting of the Senate, in the order in which the Secretary to the Senate received them. *(Sometimes, it may be helpful for the flow of the meeting for related motions to be considered together, and it will not therefore be appropriate for them to be considered in the order in which they were received by the Senate secretary.)*

### **Recommendations for action to be taken on the Agenda**

(24) An agenda or additional agenda may contain recommendations from the Chair as to the action that the Senate may take in respect of business to be conducted at the meeting.

(25) If the agenda or additional agenda contains recommendations referred to in clause 24 the Senate is to decide whether or not to adopt the recommendations, and if it decides to adopt one or more of the recommendations they become the decisions of the Senate in respect of the business to which they refer.

## **Part D - Quorum for meetings of Senate**

(26) A meeting of the Senate is to commence or continue only if there is a quorum of members present. A quorum at any meeting of the Senate is defined in the Senate Rule as being one-half of the membership then in office, or if one-half is not a whole number, the next whole number higher than one-half.

(27) If a quorum is not present within twenty minutes after the time set down in the agenda for the commencement of the meeting, the business listed on the agenda for the meeting is to be listed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Senate, unless the Chair decides that the Senate is to hold a special meeting to conduct the business, or the Chair decides to hold a meeting of the Senate Executive Committee to conduct the business.

(28) If, during a meeting of the Senate a quorum is lost, because of the departure of members, it is deemed as lost when this is drawn to the attention of the Chair by a member of Senate. The remaining business listed on the agenda for the meeting is to be listed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Senate, unless the Chair decides that the Senate is to hold a special meeting to conduct the business, or the Chair decides to hold a meeting of the Senate Executive Committee to conduct the business.

(29) If business is placed on an agenda for a meeting of the Senate in accordance with this part, this business is to have precedence over other business to be conducted at that meeting unless the Senate decides otherwise at that meeting.

## **Part E - Starring of Items at the Senate Meeting**

(30) At the commencement of each Senate meeting, the Chair invites members to star any additional agenda items. Any member may star an agenda item for discussion. The documents for all unstarred agenda items are noted and, except where alternative action was noted as appropriate, all recommendations contained in those items endorsed.

(31) The Chair invites members to approve action, as noted, on items which are not starred for substantive discussion. Any proposed resolutions in relation to items which are not starred are adopted en bloc. The documents for all unstarred agenda items be noted and, except where alternative action was noted as appropriate, all recommendations contained in those items endorsed.

## **Part F - Order of business at meetings**

(32) Unless it decides otherwise, or at the discretion of the Chair, the Senate is to consider items of business in the order in which they are listed on the agenda and is to conclude its consideration of one item before proceeding to consideration of the next item listed on the agenda.

## **Part G - Apologies and Absences**

(33) Academic Senate records apologies lodged by a member who is unable to attend a meeting. Leave of absence is granted.

(34) Academic Senate records absences when a member is absent without seeking leave of absence.

(35) In the case of elected members who have been absent for two consecutive meetings, Senate will consider granting leave of absence when a member seeks leave (in writing) to miss a third meeting.

(36) An elected member who misses three consecutive meetings without leave of absence will automatically lose their place on the Senate.

(37) As stated in the University Rules..."Members of the Academic Senate may not nominate other people to represent them in their absence, unless that absence is the result of academic study leave, sudden illness or misadventure and then with the agreement of the Chair of Academic Senate. Absent officio members may be represented by the acting incumbent of the position.

The person representing the member in those limited circumstances may attend meetings of the Academic Senate with the approval of the Chair of the Senate, and at those meetings has all the rights and functions of the absent substantive member."

## **Part H - Conflict of Interest**

(38) If at any meeting of the Academic Senate there is to be discussed any matter in which a member of the Senate has a direct personal or pecuniary interest or involvement then that member must immediately declare his or her interest or involvement.

(39) The Senate must thereupon determine whether or not that member may be present during any discussion or participate in any decision with respect to that matter.

## **Part I - Decisions of Senate**

(40) All items of business that come before a meeting of the Senate are to be decided by consensus unless there is a motion or motions before the Senate in respect of one or more specified items, when the business is to be decided in accordance with the voting on the motion or motions.

(41) Voting is normally by show of hands. A secret ballot may be used at the discretion of the Chair with votes distributed and counted in front of members present at the meeting by the secretary to the Senate.

(42) A motion is to be moved by a member of the Senate and seconded by another member of the Senate, except in the case of a motion from the Chair, a recommendation made under part C, or a motion of dissent under part K, which do not require a seconder.

(43) All motions are to be decided in accordance with the votes of the majority of members present and voting.

(44) If there is an equality of votes for and against a motion, the Chair may make a casting vote, whether or not the Chair has exercised a deliberative vote. If the Chair declines to make a casting vote, the motion is not passed.

(45) The Chair is to put a procedural motion that would end discussion of an item of business only if the Chair is satisfied that sufficient discussion of the item has occurred.

(46) A decision of the Senate may be rescinded by a motion that is given in accordance with part C “Notices of Motion for the Agenda” and for which two-thirds of the members present and voting vote.

(47) Non-compliance with these procedures will not in itself invalidate a decision of the Senate.

## **Part J - Points of Order**

(48) A member of the Senate may alert the Chair by means of a point of order to an apparent departure from the provisions of these rules or from normal meeting practice not covered by these rules.

(49) The ruling of the Chair on a point of order is to take precedence over other items of business at the meeting.

## **Part K - Motion of dissent**

(50) A member of the Senate may move a motion of dissent from a ruling made by the Chair. The member is to move such a motion immediately after the Chair makes the ruling.

(51) If a motion of dissent from the ruling of the Chair is moved, the Chair is to relinquish the role of presiding at the meeting, and the Deputy Chair is to preside. The Senate is to elect a member to preside at the meeting if the Deputy Chair is absent, if the Deputy Chair is presiding at the meeting under part B, or if the Deputy Chair moved the motion of dissent.

(52) The mover of a motion of dissent under this part is not eligible to be elected under part B to preside at the meeting.

(53) Upon the Deputy Chair or the person elected under part B assuming the role of presiding at the meeting, they are to put the motion of dissent without debate.

(54) Once the motion of dissent is decided, the Chair is to resume the role of presiding at the meeting.

## **Part L - Open and Closed Sessions**

(55) Meetings of the Academic Senate shall be open to members of the University, that is, staff (including members of staff who are involved in media liaison), students and graduates, who may attend meetings of the Senate as observers and shall be admitted subject to the availability of space. Observers shall not be accorded speaking rights.

(56) The Academic Senate may, if it so wishes, and provided that a quorum is present, resolve to go into “closed session”, whereupon all non-members who are present shall, with the exception of those non-members as the Academic Senate may, from time to time, determine, be required to leave the room and shall not be readmitted until the Chair declares that open session has been resumed.

## **Part M - Suspension of Standing Orders**

(57) In exceptional circumstances the Chair may move the suspension of Standing Orders. A resolution for the suspension of a Standing Order requires a two-third's majority of the members present.

## **Part N - Matters not dealt with in Standing Orders**

(58) Should questions which are not dealt with in these Standing Orders arise during a meeting of Academic Senate, the decision of the Chair is final. The protocols and procedures in this document are not exhaustive. The Chair will determine any protocol or procedural matter which may arise from time to time and is not covered in these Standing Orders.”

## **Part O - Changes to Standing Orders**

(59) A motion for making, rescinding or amending a Standing Order will not be made except in pursuance of notice given at the previous meeting of the Academic Senate, or conveyed to the Secretary in writing at least ten (10) days before the meeting. A resolution for any such purpose requires a two-thirds majority of the Academic Senate members present.

## **Part P - Minutes**

(60) The Secretary to the Senate is to prepare and circulate draft minutes to members of the Senate for confirmation either with or without amendment at the next regular meeting of the Senate.

(61) When they have been confirmed the minutes are to be signed by the person who presided at the meeting of the Senate at which they were confirmed.

(62) The Secretary to the Senate is to make the minutes available electronically.

## **Part Q - Rotary Resolutions**

(63) The Chair of Academic Senate may determine that a matter requires the urgent consideration of the Senate and if no meeting is imminent, members be consulted in writing or by electronic mail and be asked to vote in favour or against a resolution.

(64) If passed, such resolutions will have the same status as resolutions passed at a Senate Meeting.

(65) A report on the outcome of a rotary circulation will be provided to the next Senate meeting.

## **Section 4 - Procedures**

## **Section 5 - Guidelines**

## **Section 6 - References**

(66) In the event that reference to a standard text on meetings procedures is required, the text to be used is Horsley's Meetings: procedure, law and practice, 4th edition or later (Butterworths).

**ENDS**