



Rules of Procedure of the University of Waterloo Senate

Part 1: Matters Not Covered by These Rules

These Rules of Procedure are supplemental to the Senate’s bylaws and the University of Waterloo Act, 1972, which constitute the primary authorities governing the conduct of Senate proceedings.

The Rules of Procedure are a regulation of the Senate adopted to provide a procedural framework that facilitates the orderly, transparent, and equitable conduct of Senate business.

These rules are intended to ensure that all members entitled to speak may do so, that debate proceeds in a respectful and substantive manner, that shared and collegial governance is upheld, and that diverse perspectives, both supporting and dissenting, are considered. Decisions of Senate shall be made on a clear and well-informed basis, consistent with the Act, the bylaws, and sound procedural principles.

Part 2: Definitions

The following definitions are in use throughout, except as context requires otherwise:

- The Board shall mean the Board of Governors of the University of Waterloo
- The Chair shall mean the Chair of meetings of the Senate, or the chair of one of its committees as context requires
- Councils of Senate shall mean the Councils and Committees of the University of Waterloo Senate
- University shall mean the University of Waterloo
- The Act shall mean the *University of Waterloo Act, 1972*



Part 3: Rules and Procedures of the Senate

3.1 Application

The provisions of this Regulation apply to all general and special meetings of Senate and may provide guidance to meetings of Senate committees and councils.

3.2 Presiding Authority

The chair of Senate shall preside over meetings, is responsible for maintaining order and decorum, and for ensuring that proceedings are conducted in accordance with this regulation.

3.3 Reference Authority

Where a matter of procedure is not addressed in this regulation, Bourinot's Rules of Order, most recent edition, shall govern. Senate relies primarily on Part II of Bourinot's, which outlines Rules and Usages for Assemblies Generally.

3.4 Speaking Rules

A member may speak to a motion or discussion item for up to two (2) minutes at a time, unless the chair permits the member to speak for a longer period.

A member who has already spoken to a motion or discussion item shall not be recognized to speak for a second time on the same motion or discussion item unless all other members who wish to speak have been recognized.

Subject to the discretion of the chair, a member shall not normally speak more than twice on the same motion or discussion item.

The mover of a main motion shall have the right of reply, which shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

3.5 Recognition and Order

No member shall speak unless recognized by the Chair. Members shall address all remarks through the Chair and shall confine remarks to the matter under consideration.

3.6 Procedural Motions

When a motion is under debate, no motion shall be received except the following, which shall have precedence in the order listed:

- to adjourn the meeting;
- to recess;
- to defer debate;
- to put the question/call the question (closure);
- to refer or commit;



- to amend;
- to divide the motion.

3.7 Closure

A motion to put the question shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting.

3.8 Suspension of Rules

Unless the Senate has resolved into an informal session as set forth in By-Law 1, no rule set out in this section may be suspended except by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting.

3.9 Questions on Items for Information

- a. Where an item is presented to Senate for information, is not accompanied by a motion, and is not noted on the agenda for discussion, members may ask questions of clarification when recognized by the chair, and the person presenting the report may answer. Items for information shall be submitted in accordance with rule 4.6.
- b. Questions under this section shall be limited to requests for factual clarification or explanation of the content of the report.
- c. The Chair has discretion to proceed to the next item on the agenda without hearing from every member who wishes to ask a question.
- d. The Chair shall have the authority to rule questions out of order where, in the Chair's judgment, they exceed the scope set out in subsection "b" above.
- e. If, following a report, a member wishes Senate to take action or engage in substantive debate, the member shall do so by submitting a motion in accordance with the agenda procedures set out in section 4 of this regulation.

3.10 Extension of Meeting Time

Meetings of Senate shall conclude no later than time scheduled in the agenda, unless extended in accordance with the following:

- a. At the chair's discretion, by no more than ten minutes and no more than once.
- b. A motion to extend the duration of a meeting shall specify the length of the proposed extension and shall be decided without debate. The chair may invite a member to make a motion to extend.
- c. A motion to extend the duration of a meeting shall require the affirmative vote of two-



thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting.

d. Further extensions shall require a separate motion under this section.

Part 4: Order and Scope of Business

4.1 Approved agenda to be followed

Business shall proceed in the order set out in the agenda approved by Senate, unless Senate resolves otherwise.

4.2 New Business

During a meeting, no substantive item of business shall be introduced that does not appear on the agenda as circulated in advance, except with the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting.

4.3 Matters Beyond Senate's Jurisdiction

Senate shall consider only matters within its statutory authority and mandate.

Where a question arises during a meeting as to whether a proposed motion or amendment falls within the jurisdiction of Senate, the chair shall rule on the question, subject to appeal to Senate. An appeal of the chair's ruling shall be decided by a simple majority of the members present and voting.

4.4 Right to Submit Agenda Items

Any member of Senate may submit a request to place an item on the agenda of a general meeting of Senate.

4.5 Form and Timing of Submission

A request under subsection 4.4 shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of Senate during normal business hours not less than twenty-four (24) hours before the start of a scheduled Senate Executive Committee meeting, and shall include:

- a clear description of the proposed item;
- the form in which the item is proposed to come forward (information, discussion, or motion);
- where applicable, the text of any proposed motion; and
- a brief statement of relevance to Senate's mandate.

4.6 Consideration by the Senate Executive Committee

The Senate Executive Committee shall consider all properly submitted agenda requests and shall determine whether:



- the item is to be placed on the agenda;
- the item should be referred to a committee or other body prior to Senate consideration; or
- the item is outside the jurisdiction of Senate or otherwise not appropriate for inclusion on the agenda;
- the item is to be heard in formal or informal session.

4.7 Notice of Decision

Where the Senate Executive Committee determines not to place an item requested by a member or members on the agenda, the secretary of Senate shall provide the requesting member and the Senate with written notice of the decision and a brief explanation, along with access to the original agenda request and related materials.

4.8 Challenge of Agenda Exclusion

A member who has properly submitted an agenda request that was not placed on the agenda (or, if the agenda request included a formal motion and was placed on the agenda to be heard in informal session), may move that the item be added to the agenda, and such motion shall be decided by a simple majority of members present and voting.

Part 5: Voting

5.1 Participation and voting in online meetings

Where a meeting is conducted in whole or in part by electronic means, the chair shall ensure that:

- all participants are able to hear and be heard by one another;
- procedures are in place for recognition of speakers;
- votes can be taken and recorded in a manner that ensures accuracy and integrity.

Members participating electronically shall be deemed present for purposes of quorum and voting.

5.2 Abstentions

An abstention occurs when a member chooses not to vote either in favor or against a motion. Only votes cast “for” or “against” are counted when determining whether a motion is approved. A senator may request that their abstention be noted in the minutes.