

Texas A&M University  
Graduate and Professional Student Council  
General Assembly  
**Parliamentary Procedure**

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## **I. Parliamentary Authority**

1. The Executive Committee will determine each semester the form of parliamentary procedure that will be used at meetings
2. The parliamentary procedure method chosen will be distributed to the membership each semester.
3. General Assembly meetings will follow a relaxed abridged version of *Robert's Rules of Order* as interpreted by the Executive Vice President.
4. The Executive Vice President is charged to facilitate the effective, professional, and efficient exchange of information and to conduct Business and Special meetings in such a manner as to accomplish the goals of the Graduate and Professional Student Council.
5. The Executive Vice President is the final authority in deciding procedural matters in all Business and Special meetings.
6. The Executive Committee will have the authority to modify the parliamentary procedures as deemed necessary by the Executive Committee to facilitate conducting Graduate and Professional Student Council business.
7. The Executive Vice President may chair all meetings of the General Assembly or appoint a temporary chair to preside in their place.

## **II. Agenda**

1. *Call to Order*: The chair will determine that a quorum of members is present and state, "The meeting will come to order."
2. *Previous Minutes*: The Vice President of Information will take minutes at all meetings of the General Assembly. Minutes for the last meeting will be distributed to members with the agenda for the next meeting one (1) week in advance. Members are expected to read minutes before approval. At the meeting the chair will ask, "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" Depending on discussion, the chair will then state, "The minutes are approved as read," or "The minutes are approved as corrected."
3. *Speaker's Podium*: The chair will introduce each speaker to the General Assembly. If available, materials used by speakers will be disseminated to members prior to the meeting; otherwise, these materials will be sent out directly following the meeting. Unless otherwise voted upon by the body, ten (10) minutes will be allotted for presentations and five (5) minutes will be allotted for a questions and answer period for a maximum of fifteen (15) minutes total time.
4. *Voice Reports*: The chair will call for any reports from any individual present. These reports may relate to graduate and professional student issues, events, or other relevant

developments. The chair will ask, “Does any individual have a voice report?” Individuals will be recognized and given two (2) minutes to speak.

5. *Pending/Unfinished Business*: The chair will proceed to address any items listed as unfinished business. These items may be requested for addition to the next meeting’s agenda directly following the previous meeting. The deadline for any unfinished business to be recognized on the agenda is eight (8) days prior to a meeting.
6. *New Business*: After items of pending/unfinished business on the agenda have been addressed, the chair will ask, “Is there any new business?” At this point, any individual may raise their hand to be recognized to bring forth items for consideration. Individuals should note that any new business should be submitted to the chair at least one week prior to the meeting. Members can attempt to introduce new business during the meeting, but the body will determine whether it is heard during the meeting or tabled to the next meeting.
7. *Committee and Officer Reports*: The chair will ask each committee for a report of ongoing business. For example the chair will state, “Does the Awards Committee have a report?”
8. *Advisor Comments*: The chair will ask, “Does the advisor have a report?”
9. *Announcements*: The chair will ask for any final announcements that have not been heard during the meeting.
10. *Adjournment*: When all business is complete, the chair will ask, “Is there a motion to adjourn.” A member may raise their hand so moved. Once recognized, the member will state, “I move to adjourn.” This motion should be seconded and voted upon prior to moving into committee meetings which will take place for the second hour of the scheduled time.

## **II. Motions**

### **Section I. Types of Motions**

1. *Main motions*: Introduce a main item of business
2. *Subsidiary motions*: Modify a main motion
  - a. Close debate
  - b. Limit or extend debate
  - c. Postpone debate to a set time
  - d. Refer an item to committee
  - e. Amend an item
  - f. Postpone an item indefinitely

3. *Privilege motions:* Maintain the rights and welfare of members
  - a. Raise a question of privilege
  - b. Set the time to adjourn
  - c. Adjourn
4. *Incidental motions:* Clarify or state procedures
  - a. Appeal a ruling of the chair
  - b. Raise a point of order
  - c. Withdraw a motion

## **Section II. Use of Motions**

1. *Obtain the floor:* The member must raise their hand and be called upon by the chair before speaking.
2. *Make a motion:* The member states, “I move that...” or “I move to...”
3. *Seconding a motion:* Before proceeding with a motion, another member must second the motion by stating, “I second the motion,” or “Second.” If there is no second, the chair will ask, “Is there a second?” If none is heard, the next item of business will be introduced.
4. *Presentation:* The motioning member will have the chance to speak first after making a motion, although this is not required. The speaker will receive five-to-ten (5-10) minutes, as determined by the chair.
5. *Clarifying the motion:* After the presentation, the chair will ask, “Are there any questions about the motion?” Each member will be able to ask questions to clarify the motion only. Each member should address the chair and the issue at hand. If a member is off topic or enters debate, they will be declared out of order and will be asked to stop speaking.
6. *Debating the motion:* After restating the motion, the chair will ask “Is there any discussion?” The discussion will recognize pro, con, pro, con, etc. Each member will be able to speak two times. A member’s second opportunity to speak will not be recognized until all other members wishing to speak have done so. Each member should address the chair and the issue at hand. If a member is off topic, he or she will be declared out of order and will be asked to stop speaking.
7. *Calling for a vote:* When it appears that the debate has ended, the chair will ask, “Are you ready for the question?” If no one objects, the chair will restate the motion under consideration and call for the vote by saying, “All who are in favor, say aye... Those opposed, no...” The chair may opt to take a hand vote as opposed to a voice vote; in this case, the chair will also include a category for those who choose not to vote (abstentions). The chair will immediately announce the result for the record of minutes before moving on to other business.

## Parliamentary Procedures At A Glance

<b>To Do This: (1)</b>	<b>You Say This:</b>	<b>May You Interrupt Speaker?</b>	<b>Must You Be Seconded?</b>	<b>Is the Motion Debatable?</b>	<b>Is the Motion Amendable?</b>	<b>What Vote Is Required?</b>
Adjourn the meeting (before all business is complete)	"I move that we "adjourn."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Majority vote
Recess the meeting	"I move that we recess "until..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Amendable	Majority vote
Complain about noise, room temperature, etc.	"Point of privilege."	May interrupt speaker	No second needed	Not debatable (2)	Not amendable	None (3)
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move we table it."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Majority vote
End debate	"I move the previous "question."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Two-thirds vote
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone "this matter until..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote
Have something studied further	"I move we refer this "matter to a committee."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion "be amended by..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote

### Notes

1. These motions or points are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that's listed below it. But you may introduce another that's listed above it
2. In this case, any resulting motion is debatable.
3. Chair decides.

## Parliamentary Procedures At A Glance (continued)

<b>To Do This: (4)</b>	<b>You Say This:</b>	<b>May You Interrupt Speaker?</b>	<b>Must You Be Seconded?</b>	<b>Is the Motion Debatable?</b>	<b>Is the Motion Amendable?</b>	<b>What Vote Is Required?</b>
Object to procedure or to a personal affront	"Point of order."	May interrupt the speaker	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	None (3)
Request information	"Point of information."	If urgent, may interrupt speaker	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	None
Ask for a vote by actual count to verify a voice count	"I call for a division of the house."	May not interrupt speaker (5)	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	None unless someone objects (6)
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question."	May interrupt speaker	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	Two-thirds vote required
Take up a matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Majority required
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	May interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable if original motion is debatable	Not amendable	Majority required
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Two-thirds vote required
Vote on a ruling by the chair	"I appeal the chair's decision."	May interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Not amendable	Majority in the negative required to reverse chair's decision

### Notes

4. The motions, points and proposals have no established order of precedence. Any of them may be introduced at any time except when the meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed in the chart (motion to adjourn, motion to recess, point of privilege).
5. But division must be called for before another motion is started.
6. Then majority vote is required.