



Union Rules and Procedures Policy

Oversight body: Bylaw and Policy Review Committee

Date Passed by Council: April 22, 2015

Date of Next Review: January, 2017

Related policies, bylaws, legislation: Bylaw 4, 8

Definitions:

“Chair” – The DSU Member appointed to preside over Council meetings.

“Council” – The representative body of elected students charged with carrying out the Mission of the DSU under its Act of Incorporation.

“Motion” – A formal step by a Councillor to introduce a matter for Council’s consideration.

“Quorum” – The minimum number of Councillors needed at a meeting in order to conduct business.

“Proxy” – A DSU Member who is given the authority to take part in and vote at a meeting on behalf of a Councillor not present.

Purpose:

To provide clarity and consistent practice in carrying out meetings of DSU Council.

Scope:

The following rules and procedures apply to the Chair of Council and Councillors.

Policy Statement:

1. Notice of Meeting

1.1 The Chair of Council shall deliver adequate notice of meeting to each member of Council.

1.2 Notice shall only be considered given if the Chair of Council:

1.2.1 sends an e-mail to all members of Council 72 hours prior to the start of the meeting;

1.2.2 attempts to notify every member of Council by phone at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting; or

1.2.3 announces the date and time of the meeting orally at the preceding meeting of Council.

2. The Order of Business of a Council Meeting

2.1 Roll Call; Approval of the Agenda; Business Arising Out of the Minutes; Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting; Communications Received; Appointments by Council; Presentations; Committee Reports; Old Business; New Business; Executive Reports; Notice of Motion; and Announcements.

3. Speaking at Council and Visitors to Council

3.1 Any person who the Chair of Council feels may contribute to a fuller understanding of the issues under discussion, may, upon recognition of the Chair of Council, address Council.

3.2 Any member of Council or visitor wishing to enter the discussion must so indicate to the Chair of Council by raising their hand, and waiting until recognized.

3.3 A member of Council who feels the Chair of Council is deliberately not recognizing them, may rise on a Point of Personal Privilege.

3.4 Council may move in-camera and exclude visitors from the meeting by a simple majority. A motion to move in-camera must be seconded. No minutes are kept while Council is in-camera. In-camera discussions are privileged information regarding the private affairs of the Union, and as such shall be considered confidential.

3.5 The Chair of Council shall have the power to remove any individual, or group, from a

meeting if their conduct is disruptive or inappropriate; a party who is ordered to leave may challenge the Chair of Council.

5. Recording Secretary

5.1 There shall be a Recording Secretary, who shall:

5.1.1 be appointed by Council upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee;

5.1.2 be responsible for recording and distributing the minutes of all meetings of Council;

5.1.3 be required to sign the Statement of Office document and be privy to in-camera discussions;

5.1.4 not be considered a member of Council and not be entitled to vote.

6. Minutes and Roll Call

6.1 Copies of the minutes of each meeting of Council, including the roll call and supplemental materials for all ex camera agenda items, will be made available to all members of the Union within five school days after the approval of the minutes by Council.

6.2 The Recording Secretary shall maintain an official record of the roll call for each meeting of Council, which shall include absences with and without regrets as well as all speaking individuals who are not members of Council.

6.3 The Recording Secretary shall provide an up-to-date record of attendance for members of Council for the current academic year to any member of the Union within 72 hours of a request to do so.

7. Responsibilities of Members of Council

7.1 Members of Council shall:

7.1.1 arrive on time and be prepared to participate in scheduled meetings where notice

is duly given;

7.1.2 in the event of the presentation of a report, ensure that copies are circulated in advance, as per this policy;

7.1.3 be familiar with, and observe the provisions of this procedure, and the Bylaws and Policy of the Union; and

7.1.4 inform the Chair of Council as to circumstances that may, from time to time, cause a member to be unable to attend a meeting. Regrets must be submitted in writing to the Chair, 24 hours in advance. All regrets received by the Chair shall be announced under Communications Received during the meeting of Council for which the regrets were submitted.

8. Agenda, Reports, and Presentations

8.1 An agenda for each Council Meeting shall be prepared by the Chair of Council and distributed to members in a timely fashion.

8.2 The agenda shall be drawn up from items submitted to the Chair of Council by any member of Council, and any business arising from the previous meetings.

8.3 Any member of Council wishing to have the items placed on the agenda for a regular meeting of Council must give written notice to the Chair of Council 72 hours before the meeting.

8.4 At the Council meeting, the Chair of Council shall call for a motion to accept the agenda, which must be both moved and seconded, and after which motion is accepted by the Chair of Council, may be amended by the members of Council.

8.5 Objection to the consideration of an agenda item may only be made in the form of an amendment to delete the item from the agenda, prior to the acceptance of the agenda.

8.6 Items may only be added to the agenda after the agenda's acceptance by unanimous consent of members of Council present.

8.7 Copies of a report shall be delivered to each member of Council at least 48 hours in advance

of the meeting at which it is to be considered, and if copies are not so delivered, the report shall not proceed without consent of two-thirds of members of Council present.

8.8 Presentations shall last no longer than fifteen minutes unless otherwise extended by Council. Presentation materials must be submitted to the Chair of Council no less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

8.9 The DSU will publish up-to-date council motions and documents viewed, discussed, or amended in public session to the website, all within 24 hours of these items being brought to or brought up in council.

9. Length of Meetings

9.1 No Council meeting may last longer than three hours unless extended by a two-thirds vote of members of Council present.

10. Quorum

10.1 Quorum of Council shall be set out in the Constitution.

10.2 The Chair of Council may call a non-quorate meeting to order for the sole purpose to attempt to achieve quorum by exercising the Chair's disciplinary powers to dismiss members of Council for non-attendance. Should this attempt fail and quorum not be achieved, the meeting will adjourn automatically.

10.3 At any point during a meeting, any member of Council, or guest, or the Chair of Council, may ask whether Council has quorum. A call for quorum is non-debatable and may not be withdrawn.

10.4 If quorum is present at the beginning of a meeting and some members leave, thereby reducing the numbers to less than quorum, the Chair of Council may only:

10.4.1 recess the meeting for no more than fifteen minutes in an attempt to achieve quorum;

10.4.2 move to set the time of the next meeting and adjourn the meeting;

10.4.3 attempt to achieve quorum by exercising the Chair's disciplinary powers to dismiss members of Council for non-attendance..

11. Call to Order

11.1 Meetings start, or reconvene after a recess, only when the Chair of Council calls members to order. The Chair of Council shall attempt to do this at the appointed time, but the Chair must exercise reasonable judgment concerning the number of members present and possible reasonable causes for delays.

11.2 In the event of an unexplained absence of the Chair of Council, Council shall not appoint an acting Chair until at least ten minutes after the scheduled start time.

11.3 In the event of the absence of the Chair of Council, a member of the Executive shall act as Chair of the meeting for the sole purpose of allowing Council, by a two-thirds vote, to appoint an acting Chair.

11.4 In the absence of the Recording Secretary, Council may appoint any person as temporary recording secretary, provided that any member of Council so appointed shall not receive an honorarium for such services nor be denied their voting privileges.

12. Motions: The Main Motion

12.1 In order for an item to be placed before a meeting for discussion, a motion must be moved, seconded and accepted by the Chair of Council. This motion is called the Main Motion.

12.2 The Chair of Council may only reject a motion if it is moved in contravention of this policy or the Constitution or policies of the Union. Such rulings are subject to challenge.

12.3 Only when a motion is moved, seconded and accepted may it be debated.

12.4 Movers and seconders have the right to vote for, against or abstain from motions which they have moved or seconded.

12.5 Once accepted by the Chair of Council, a Main Motion may not be withdrawn.

13. Motions

13.1 Secondary Motions

13.1.1 Except where explicitly stated otherwise, Secondary Motions shall be treated the same as Main Motions as per this policy.

13.1.2 Secondary Motions require a mover and a seconder, and must be accepted by the Chair of Council.

13.1.3 Secondary Motions may be moved while a main motion or a secondary motion of lower precedence is on the floor.

13.1.4 The precedence of Secondary Motions shall be as follows: Motion to Divide shall take precedence over a Motion to Table, which shall take precedence over a Motion to Refer, which shall take precedence over a Motion to Amend.

13.2 Motion to Amend

13.2.1 Amendments must address the Main Motion currently under consideration

13.2.2 An amendment may not reverse or substantially alter the intent of the Main Motion.

13.2.3 An amendment must add to, delete from, or substitute words in the main motion, or divide the motion.

13.2.4 At any one time, only one amendment may be made to a motion, either in amending the main motion, or amending a proposed amendment.

13.2.5 Any number of amendments to any one motion may be made, but they must be made one at a time. An amendment can only be moved after the preceding one has been voted on.

13.2.6 Only after an amendment has been voted on may the debate on the motion being amended resume.

13.2.7 The Chair of Council may rule an amendment to be too similar to an amendment already debated, and thus, out of order.

13.2.8 Unlike a Main Motion, a Motion to Amend may be withdrawn if both the Mover and Seconded wish to do so.

13.3 Motion to Refer

13.3.1 A motion may be made, or a Main Motion may include the directive, to refer the Main Motion to a committee or other body.

13.3.2 A motion to refer, whether made as a main motion or while debate is in progress, is fully debatable.

13.4 Motion to Postpone

13.4.1 A motion to postpone may be made only if the postponement is made until a fixed date or until some specific and known event has occurred.

13.4.2 A motion to postpone may be debated. However, the debate must be confined to the advisability of the proposed postponement.

13.4.3 Postponing motions may only be amended to change the length of the postponement.

13.4.4 A postponing motion may be brought back to the floor for debate at the meeting in which it is postponed, or subsequent meetings, by a two-thirds majority.

13.5 Motion to Divide the Question

13.5.1 A motion to divide the question may be made by any member so as to allow Council to consider any portion of the Main Motion which may stand alone for debate;

13.5.2 A motion to divide the question must be seconded;

13.5.3 The Chair of Council may rule on the validity of this motion, and such rulings may be challenged as per this policy.

14. Debate

14.1 Discussion may begin only after a motion has been accepted by the Chair of Council.

14.2 The mover has the right to speak first.

14.3 The seconder has the right to speak second.

14.4 The Chair of Council shall not permit a member to speak a second time until every other member of Council who wishes to speak has spoken once. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the Chair of Council, for the instance when a particular comment requires clarification from a previous speaker.

15. Ending Debate

15.1 The length of debate before putting a motion to a vote is at the discretion of the Chair of Council.

15.2 Members may request that "the Question be called," meaning the vote be taken, or, when the vote is called, members may request that debate continue, and the Chair of Council may accept or deny the request.

15.3 The Chair of Council may ask for a vote of Council on whether or not to close the debate.

15.4 Members may challenge to ruling of the Chair of Council, as per this policy.

16. Voting

16.1 The voting at any Council meeting may be by voice vote or show of hands at the discretion of the Chair of Council, unless otherwise outlined in this policy.

16.2 During a regular vote, any member of Council may demand that show of hands be used instead of voice vote, or a roll call vote be used instead of a voice vote or show of hands, provided the request is made immediately after the result is announced.

16.2.1 Such a demand does not require a seconded.

16.2.2 Such a demand invalidates the previous results.

16.2.3 Such a demand must be acted on by the Chair of Council.

16.3 Unless where otherwise stated in these procedures, the By-laws or the Policies, a motion

will be declared carried when passed by a simple majority.

16.4 The Chair of Council does not have the right to vote, except when there is a tie in the vote, in which case the Chair shall break the tie by voting according to their own judgment of the issue.

16.5 Results of a roll call vote shall be recorded in the minutes.

17. Proxies

17.1 Members of Council who are not Executives may appoint a proxy to attend and vote at meetings of Council on their behalf, provided:

17.1.1 the Council member has given written notice to the Chair, including the name of the proxy, no less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting;

17.1.2 the proxy is a member of the same constituency as the member of Council;

17.1.3 the proxy has signed the Statement of Office document.

17.2 Proxies shall be noted in the minutes as "acting" in the Council position for which they are a proxy.

17.3 Members of Council are responsible for informing their proxies of the responsibilities of a member of Council.

17.4 In the event that a proxy is not in attendance at the meeting for which they are appointed, the member of Council shall be considered absent without regrets.

17.5 The attendance of a proxy does not exempt a member of Council from recall as outlined in the Constitution.

17.6 Notwithstanding any other provision in this policy, the following restrictions apply when appointing proxies:

17.6.1 under no circumstance may a current member of Council appoint another current member of Council as proxy;

17.6.2 no proxy may be appointed by more than one member of Council or hold more than one vote; and

17.6.3 the appointment of a proxy shall only be valid for the duration of a single meeting.

17.7 Any appointed proxies shall be brought to the attention of Council during the roll call of the meeting for which they are appointed.

17.8 Upon request by any member of Council at any time during the course of a meeting, the Chair shall provide to Council:

17.8.1 confirmation of written notice to appoint a proxy pursuant to this policy;

17.8.2 confirmation of a signed Statement of Office.

18. Dissent and Support

18.1 Members of Council are entitled to have their votes on a particular motion noted by name in the minutes. Particularly, a member who votes against a motion that carries, or who votes for a motion that is defeated, may have their dissent from the majority recorded in the minutes by so requesting after the result of the vote is announced.

19. Notice of Motion

19.1 If a motion has the potential to significantly affect a large part of the student body, it must be announced in Council as a notice of motion at least two weeks before the meeting at which it will be moved.

19.2 In the event of uncertainty, whether or not a motion must appear first as a notice of motion is at the discretion of the Chair of Council.

19.3 A notice of motion is not debatable.

19.4 Business requiring a notice of motion includes, but is not limited to, proposed changes to the Constitution, policies, or levies.

19.5 Any motion announced in Council as a notice of motion shall be automatically placed on the agenda for the following meeting of Council unless otherwise withdrawn by the mover.

20. Points of Order, Personal Privilege and Information

20.1 A member may interrupt a speaker only to raise a Point of Order, Personal Privilege, or Information. The member who is speaking will yield the floor until such time as the Chair directs him or her to resume.

20.2 A Point of Order shall be raised when a member of Council feels the rules of procedure, By-laws or policy of the Union are being violated in some way in the meeting.

20.3 A Point of Personal Privilege shall only be raised by a member who feels that they are being misrepresented, misquoted, or over a matter of honour.

20.4 A Point of Information may be made by a member as a request for information relevant to the business at hand. The member asks the Chair of Council "Will the member yield for a question?" The Chair of Council shall then ask for the reason for the interruption and either act on the information or declare it unjustified and direct the speaker to continue.

21. Appointments by Council

21.1 Any member of Council may nominate a candidate for a position.

21.2 A nomination does not require a seconder.

21.3 The Chair of Council shall confirm that the nomination is accepted by the candidate.

21.4 The Chair of Council will then ask three times if there are any further nominations, and if there are none, the Chair of Council shall declare nominations closed.

21.5 If the number of Candidates nominated exceeds the number of vacancies, the Chair of Council shall conduct a vote by ballot.

21.6 Each candidate will have an equal time to speak to Council, not exceeding four minutes each.

21.7 The speaking order of the candidates shall be in alphabetical order of last names.

21.8 The candidates who are not speaking shall leave the meeting during the speeches.

21.9 There will be a short question period after each speech.

21.10 The Chair of Council will then ask all the candidates to leave the room, and there shall be a brief in-camera debate.

21.11 The Chair of Council will then conduct a vote by ballot. Any members of Council who are candidates shall not be denied his or her right to vote.

21.12 The Chair of Council shall count the votes with the assistance of the Recording Secretary, and declare those candidates appointed.

21.13 Each candidate may appoint one member of the Union to act as a scrutineer of the ballot counting.

21.14 Any member of Council can request that the ballots be destroyed; the Chair of Council must comply with the request.

21.15 Where the number of members nominated equals or is less than the number of positions to be filled, unless there is a call for a yes/no vote that is moved and seconded, the Chair of Council shall declare the member(s) elected by acclamation.

21.16 A newly appointed Chair of Council assumes the office immediately.

22. Rescind, Reconsider

22.1 A motion which has been acted on (in that money has been spent, a contract has been Signed, a meeting adjourned, for example) may not be reconsidered.

22.2 Any motion passed at the previous meeting but not yet acted on may be reconsidered at the subsequent meeting only if a Motion to Reconsider is carried by council. A motion to reconsider shall require a two-thirds majority to pass.

22.3 To reconsider a motion that was dealt with earlier in the same meeting, the mover of the

motion to reconsider must be a member who voted with the prevailing side.

22.4 A motion to adjourn cannot be reconsidered or rescinded.

23. Challenge the Chair of Council

23.1 Every member of Council has the right to challenge any specific decision or ruling of the Chair of Council.

23.2 Those proposing the challenge to the Chair of Council must first have stated a Point of Order or Privilege, and if not satisfied with the Chair of Council's ruling, may then state "I challenge the Chair of Council."

23.3 If there is a seconder, the Chair of Council must recognize the challenge.

23.4 The challenger may briefly state his or her challenge and the Chair of Council may state a brief defence of his or her decision, not to exceed two minutes each.

23.5 The Chair of Council shall put the matter to a vote.

23.6 Only a majority vote can reverse a decision of the Chair of Council. In the event of a tie vote, the decision of the Chair of Council is sustained.

24. Next Meeting

24.1 The Chair of Council shall confirm the next meeting date or, should a special meeting be required, or no meeting is scheduled, coordinate the selection of the next meeting date, before the current meeting is adjourned.

25. Recess

25.1 The Chair of Council may declare a recess whenever he or she considers it prudent to do so.

25.2 A member may interrupt to move that a short recess be declared. Such a motion requires a seconder and is fully debatable.

26. Adjournment

26.1 Members may move to adjourn at any time during a meeting but may not do so when another motion is being discussed.

26.2 Motion to adjourn does not require a seconded and is not debatable.

26.3 The Chair of Council may adjourn the meeting without a vote only if:

26.3.1 Discussion and conduct have degenerated to the point where order cannot be restored;

26.3.2 An emergency exists that could threaten the security of Council;

26.3.3 All other business on the approved agenda has been concluded.

26.4 A move to adjourn by the Chair of Council may be challenged.

27. Parliamentary Authority

27.1 Except for as provided for in the Constitution and Union policy, the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the procedures of the Union."

28. Recognition of Mi'kma'ki Territory

28.1 At the start of each Council Meeting, the Chair shall read the following statement following Roll Call:

The Dalhousie Student Union acknowledges that Dalhousie University and the Dalhousie Student Union Building are located on traditional, unceded and unsurrendered Mi'kma'ki territory. The Dalhousie Student Union seeks to honour the relational treaty process in its programming, events, and meetings.

28.2 At the start of a General Meeting of the Union, the Chair shall read the following statement:

The Dalhousie Student Union acknowledges that Dalhousie University and the Dalhousie Student Union Building are located on the unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Mi'kmaq people. The DSU wants to acknowledge that the ongoing impacts of colonization are present on

campus and in the Halifax community. This is reflected in a number of ways, including, but not limited to, the under-representation of indigenous students enrolled in university, ongoing racism faced by indigenous people, the disproportionate number of indigenous people in the judicial system, the high number of indigenous children in state care, a chronic lack of basic services available to indigenous communities, the failure of government to honour treaty rights, and the disproportionate levels of violence faced by indigenous women. The Dalhousie Student Union recognizes and respects the Mi'kmaq people as the traditional keepers of this land with valuable coded-knowledge regarding its use and value, and seeks to honour the relational treaty process in its programming, events, and meetings.

29. Union rules and procedures governing General Meetings

29.1 The rules and procedures governing General Meetings shall be the same as the rules and procedures governing Council meetings, except as provided for here.

29.2 Order of Business of a General Meeting: Roll Call, Adoption of the Agenda, Executive Reports, Motions Served with Notice, New Business, Questions and answer, Announcements, Adjournment.

29.3 Speaking at a General Meeting:

29.3.1 Any person in attendance at a General Meeting may speak freely.

29.3.2 A speakers list shall be kept and followed.

29.3.3 Any person wishing to enter the discussion must raise their hand and be recognized by the Chair of Council.

29.3.4 Any person who feels as if the Chair of Council is deliberately not recognizing him or her may raise a point of privilege.

29.4 The Recording Secretary:

29.4.1 The Recording Secretary shall be that of Council.

29.4.2 In the event of their absence, an alternate shall be appointed by the Executive.

29.5 The Agenda:

29.5.1 An agenda shall be provided by the Chair of Council.

29.5.2 The agenda shall be drawn up from those items submitted to the Chair of Council 24 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting.

29.5.3 Any member of the Union may submit an item to be placed on the agenda.

29.5.4 At a General Meeting, a "Motion to accept the Agenda" will be called for by the Chair of Council.

29.5.5 Any amendments to the agenda must be made prior to its approval.

29.5.6 An item may only be deleted from the agenda in the form of an amendment to remove that item from the agenda.

29.5.7 Two thirds vote is needed to amend the agenda.

29.5.8 After the agenda has been approved, items may only be added by a two thirds vote.

29.6 Length Of Meetings:

29.6.1 No meeting is to exceed three hours in length, unless extended by a two thirds vote.

29.7 Quorum:

29.7.1 Quorum for a General Meeting shall be set out in the Union bylaws.

29.7.2 At any point during the meeting any member of the Union present may request a call for quorum. A call for quorum is non-debatable.

29.7.3 If quorum is present at the beginning of the meeting and some members leave reducing the number of those present to below 75, the Chair of Council may only;

29.7.3.1 recess the meeting for no more than fifteen minutes in an attempt to

achieve quorum;

29.7.3.2 move to set a time of the next meeting and adjourn the meeting;

29.7.3.3 move to continue the meeting in the form of a forum.

29.8 Call to Order:

29.8.1 Meetings start, or reconvene after a recess only when the Chair of Council calls members to order. The Chair of Council shall attempt to do this at the appointed time, but she/he must exercise judgment concerning the number of persons present and the possible, reasonable cause for delays.

29.9 Appointing a Chair:

29.9.1 In the event of the absence of the Chair of Council, the membership shall appoint a Chair for the meeting.

29.9.2 In the event of the absence of the Chair the President shall act as Chair for the sole purpose of allowing the members present to appoint an acting Chair by a two thirds vote.

29.9.3 Any member of the Union may nominate a candidate for Chair.

29.9.4 A nomination does not require a seconded.

29.9.5 The President shall confirm the candidates' acceptance.

29.9.6 The President shall ask three times for any further nominations and then declares the nomination period closed.

29.9.7 Each candidate will have an equal amount of time to speak not to exceed four minutes each. The candidates not speaking shall leave the room.

29.9.8 After each speech there will be a short question period.

29.9.9 The speaking order of the candidates will be alphabetical in accordance to their last names.

29.9.10 The President shall then conduct a vote. Any member of the Union shall not be denied his or her right to vote even if they are a candidate.

29.9.11 Where there is only one nominee, the President shall declare the member(s) elected by acclamation. A member may move a motion for a yes/no vote provided it is done immediately following the close of nominations. The motion must be seconded and requires a simple majority,

29.9.12 A newly elected acting Chair assumes the position immediately.

29.10 Voting:

29.10.1 Voting at a General Meeting shall be by a show of hands, voice vote, or secret ballot at the discretion of the Chair of Council.

29.10.2 During the vote any member may move a motion for an alternate vote provided the request is made immediately after the result is announced. The motion requires a seconder and a simple majority to pass. A motion for an alternate vote invalidates the previous results.

29.10.3 A motion shall be considered carried by a simple majority.

29.10.4 The Chair may vote according to their personal opinion on the motion should their vote impact the results of the motion (e.g. break a tie), and as long as they are a voting member of the Union.

29.10.5 There shall be no voting by proxy.