



Clubs & Committees: Guide to Robert's Rules of Order

Club Council Leadership Training

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9 September 2016



Defining a Student Club



Student Club Authorization

- Federal & State Law
- Southwestern Community College
- Club Constitution & Bylaws
- Parliamentary Authority
 - Robert's Rules of Order
 - Other Parliamentary Source?

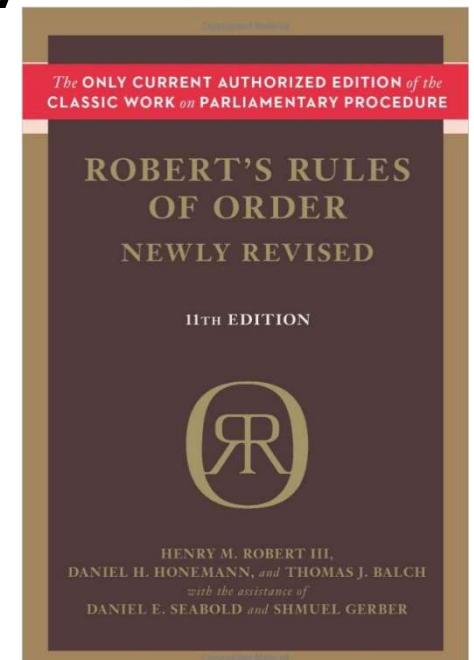


A Typical Student Club

- Student Officers
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
- Student Members
- Faculty Advisor

Robert's Rules of Order

- General Henry M. Robert
- Robert's Rules of Order
- Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised
- RONR, 11th Edition (2011)





RONR Underlying Principles

- Majority's Right to Rule
- Minority's Right to be Heard
- Respect for All Parties
- Orderly & Efficient Conduct of Business



Role of the Presiding Officer

- Call the Meeting to Order
- Conduct the Business
- Moderate the Discussion
- Adhere to the Rules & the Spirit

⌚ *Ensure that everyone understands what is happening as it happens.*



Role of the Secretary

- Send Notice of Meetings to Members
- Prepare a Draft Agenda for President
- Read Minutes and Correspondence
- Listen
- Record Activities of the Club



Role of the Treasurer

- Entrusted with Club Funds
- Spend Money Only as Directed by the Club or its Bylaws
- Prepare Treasurer's Reports for Meetings
- Collect Dues and Maintain a List of Members



Role of the Member

- Adhere to the Rules & Spirit
- Prepare for Meetings
- Listen
- Vote Your Conscience



Quorum

- The minimum number of members who must be present if the club is to conduct substantive business
- RONR default for a MAJORITY is “**more than half**” of the membership
- If the quorum is lost, the group may not conduct substantive business

🕒 *Always begin on time!*



What Happens at a Meeting?



Standard Order of Business

- Reading & Approval of Minutes
- Reports (Individual and Committee)
- Unfinished Business (in any exists)
- New Business

🕒 *A better approach is to have an Agenda...*



The Agenda: SOB Alternative

🕒 *Prior to a meeting, provide members with draft minutes of the previous meeting and a tentative Agenda*

- Approval of the Agenda
- Approval of Minutes & Reports
- Agenda Items

🕒 *Agenda: Stating Adjournment Time*



Decisions & Actions



Motions

- A formal proposal by a member that the group take a certain action
- An issue cannot be debated until it is in the form of a motion

Main, Subsidiary, Privileged, Incidental



Main Motion

- Workhorse of Meetings
 - ~90% of Motions are Main Motions
 - Lowest in hierarchy
 - Consider only one main motion at a time

I move that...



MAIN MOTION: Example

A: Madam President

Ch: Mr. A

A: I move that we form a Bowling League.

B: Second

Ch: It is moved and seconded that we form a Bowling League



Debate by Committee Members

- Begin with "*I favor the motion because...*" or "*I am opposed to...*"
- Stick to the Subject
- Debate Issues, Not Personalities
- Address Your Comments to the Chair
- Member may not "yield" or "bank" time



Debate Limits & Format

- Members may speak twice, for ten minutes per comment
[RONR (11th ed.) p. 387, ll. 31-34; p. 389, ll. 1-2.]
- Motion to Extend or Limit Debate
- President should attempt to alternate debate between Yea and Nay positions

⌚ *Special Rules of Order*



Voting: an Example

During debate, the chair recognizes members to speak for or against the motion

Ch: Are you ready for the question?

Ch: The question is on the motion that we form a Bowling League.

Ch: All in favor say Aye.

Ch: Those opposed say Nay.

Ch: The motion is adopted—we will form a Bowling League



Voting

- Majority is defined as “**more than half** of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions” [RONR (11th ed.) p. 400, ll. 7-12.]
- A two-thirds vote is defined as “**at least two-thirds** of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions” [RONR (11th ed.) p. 401, ll. 8-17.]



Discussion Before a Motion

- “Informal discussion of a subject is permitted while no motion is pending” [RONR (11th ed.) p. 488, ll. 7-8.]
- “When necessary, a motion can be prefaced by a few words of explanation, which must not become a speech; or a member can first request information, or he can indicate briefly what he wishes to propose and can ask the chair to assist in wording an appropriate motion” [RONR (11th ed.) p. 34, ll. 9-13.]



Subsidiary Motions ⁽¹⁾

- Postpone Indefinitely
 - Kill a Motion; Must immediately follow the motion (prior to any debate) [debatable]
- Amend
 - Clarify or Modify the Motion on the Floor
- Commit or Refer
 - Send the issue to a standing or ad hoc committee



Subsidiary Motions ⁽²⁾

- Postpone Definitely
 - Delay discussion until later in the current meeting or until a subsequent meeting
- Limit or Extend Debate
 - Change amount of time allotted to each speaker during the debate of a motion
[nondebatable, 2/3]



Subsidiary Motions ⁽³⁾

- Previous Question
 - Force the group to end debate and vote on the most recent motion [nondebatable, 2/3]
- Lay on the Table
 - Similar to Postpone, but without a set time for resumption. Requires a majority vote to resume the topic



Privileged Motions

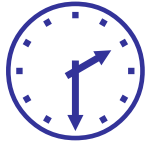
Not related to pending business; special matters of immediate importance; allowed to interrupt, without debate, all other matters

- Call for Orders of the Day
- Recess
- Adjourn



Incidental Motions

- Point of Order
 - A simple informational statement
- Request for Information
 - Member asks a question
- Parliamentary Inquiry
 - Question about the rules, procedure, etc.
- Suspend the Rules [nondebatable, 2/3]



Unanimous Consent

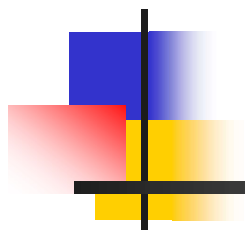
- Save time when debate is unlikely:

Ch: If there are no objections, we'll consider the Agenda adopted.

<listen for any objection>

Ch: Very well, the Agenda is adopted

Ch: There being no other business before the committee, we are adjourned until October 9



Questions?