

# **Legion of Black Collegians**

## **Senatorial Training**

### Parliamentary Procedure

LBC: "Leading, Building Climbing"

Greetings Senators,

The following packet is designed to aid you in your pursuit of excellence as an LBC Senator during Senate Meetings. In this packet are the proper ways to draft a bill or proposal for presentation to the Legion of Black Collegians Senate; how to make and second a motion; how to amend a motion; and many other items and tidbits that should be of interest to you throughout this school year. Hopefully this packet will be beneficial to you.

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## How to Write a Bill/Proposal

Step 1: Think of an activity, service or routine procedure that you feel the Legion of Black Collegians should address. This idea should be one that you feel will benefit the African-American student at MU or help the Senate run more efficiently.

Step 2: Think about all the necessary implications and ramifications of your bill if it is passed. Consider benefits, goals, relativity and possible areas of improvement. (Make a list!)

Step 3: Write a draft copy of your bill/proposal with easy-to-understand terms. (This will make the bill much easier to convert to a proper bill format. Also, keep in mind that this version is only a draft.)

Step 4: Type your bill/proposal in the proper bill-writing format (including date, name author, signature and signature of a witness)

Step 5: Submit your bill/proposal to the Executive Board no later than the Monday morning before the next Senate meeting. (Senate is on Wednesdays. Bill must be submitted that Monday.)

Step 6: The Executive Board will then review your bill or proposal and discuss it in detail. If any mistakes in the format of the bill or the wording of the bill are found, the Executive Board will return the bill to you for corrections. You can then either:

- 1) make the corrections to the bill/proposal and notify the President
- 2) re-submit the bill or proposal the following week

Step 7: Prepare a short presentation about your bill or proposal. This presentation will be given during the Senate meeting after acceptance of your bill by Executive Board. (This presentation should include an overhead of the bill/proposal itself and an overview of why you feel the bill is important. Be prepared for debate if your bill is a hot topic!)

**The Senate will now vote on your bill or proposal. A plurality vote on the documentation is to then proceed, upon passing; the documentation becomes a statement of the Senate.**

SAMPLE

Senate Statement  
Date: 9/25/02  
Author: John Doe – LBC Senator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Author

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

WHEREAS, it has been the history of the Legion of Black Collegians to champion the cause for African-American student interests at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and

WHEREAS, in 1992 the LBC became a government with greater responsibility and importance to the MU Student Community, and

WHEREAS, the provision of programs of substance to our heritage and the heightening of cultural consciousness about the MU campus stand as a charge of our mission,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the LBC sponsor four forums titled:

1. MU'S Black Advocates- Who Really Speaks for MU's Black Students.
2. Is There Such a Thing as Race?
3. News, Community and Journalistic Integrity
4. Self-Imposed Segregation

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these forums be held on the dates of February 29 & 30 and March 1 & 2 and be the responsibility of the Political Committee.

SAMPLE

## Parliamentary Procedure for LBC Proposals

- I. After the proposal is read, there is a question and answer period for which you will lead by stating, "Are there any questions?" If there are not any questions you proceed with someone making a motion to give or not to give ( Insert said organization or proposing entity) money. If there are questions facilitate them by calling on individuals and letting the author of the proposal address them.
- II. Once someone has made a motion by saying "I move that LBC give (said organization or proposing entity) \$300.00," someone else needs to second that motion by saying, "I second that." *Whenever someone makes a motion or seconds a motion they must be directed to state their name and committee*. After this is done your job is to say, "It's been properly moved and seconded that LBC give (said organization or proposing entity) \$300.00 for their (insert cause).
- III. Now the speaker calls for the question. If there be no debates, you move to the vote. If there is some unrest, discussion is held.
- IV. Voting on the proposal is next. This is lead by the Senate Speaker asking "All in favor say I, All opposed say Nay." If there be no distinct I or Nay, then the Speaker will ask again for the vote, but this time by hand.
- V. That's all.

# Introduction to Robert's Rules of Order

What Is Parliamentary Procedure?

It is a set of rules for conduct at meetings, that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

Why is Parliamentary Procedure Important?

Because it's a time tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization.

Today, Robert's Rules of Order newly revised is the basic handbook of operation for most clubs, organizations and other groups. So it's important that everyone know these basic rules!

Organizations using parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business. Below is a typical example:

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call of members present.
3. Reading of minutes of last meeting.
4. Officers reports.
5. Committee reports.
6. Special orders --- Important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting.
7. Unfinished business.
8. New business.
9. Announcements.
10. Adjournment.

The method used by members to express themselves is in the form of moving motions. A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or a stand on an issue. Individual members can:

1. Call to order.
2. Second motions.
3. Debate motions.
4. Vote on motions.

There are four Basic Types of Motions:

1. Main Motions: The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
2. Subsidiary Motions: Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled, and is voted on before a main motion.

3. Privileged Motions: Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
4. Incidental Motions: Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

#### How are Motions Presented?

1. Obtaining the floor
  - a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
  - b. Rise and address the Chairman by saying, "Mr. Chairman, or Mr. President."
  - c. Wait until the Chairman recognizes you.
2. Make Your Motion
  - a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.
  - b. Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ...".
  - c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.
3. Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion
4. Another member will second your motion or the Chairman will call for a second.
5. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.
6. The Chairman States Your Motion
  - a. The Chairman will say, "it has been moved and seconded that we ..." Thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
  - b. The membership then either debates your motion, or may move directly to a vote.
  - c. Once your motion is presented to the membership by the chairman it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.
7. Expanding on Your Motion
  - a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is at this point in time, rather than at the time you present it.
  - b. The mover is always allowed to speak first.
  - c. All comments and debate must be directed to the chairman.
  - d. Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.
  - e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chairman.
8. Putting the Question to the Membership
  - a. The Chairman asks, "Are you ready to vote on the question?"
  - b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.

- c. On a motion to move the previous question may be adapted.

#### Voting on a Motion:

The method of vote on any motion depends on the situation and the by-laws of policy of your organization. There are five methods used to vote by most organizations, they are:

1. By Voice -- The Chairman asks those in favor to say, "aye", those opposed to say "no". Any member may move for a exact count.
2. By Roll Call -- Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
3. By General Consent -- When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman says, "if there is no objection ...". The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
4. By Division -- This is a slight verification of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the chairman so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
5. By Ballot -- Members write their vote on a slip of paper, this method is used when secrecy is desired.

There are two other motions that are commonly used that relate to voting.

1. Motion to Table -- This motion is often used in the attempt to "kill" a motion. The option is always present, however, to "take from the table", for reconsideration by the membership.
2. Motion to Postpone Indefinitely -- This is often used as a means of parliamentary strategy and allows opponents of motion to test their strength without an actual vote being taken. Also, debate is once again open on the main motion.

Parliamentary Procedure is the best way to get things done at your meetings. But, it will only work if you use it properly.

1. Allow motions that are in order.
2. Have members obtain the floor properly.
3. Speak clearly and concisely.
4. Obey the rules of debate.
5. Most importantly, *BE COURTEOUS*.

## The Agenda - Choreography of Rights and Abuses

The more serious an issue is, the more the reason to insist that the issue be included on the agenda, and that the agenda includes explicit starting time for each major section.

The easiest way to defeat an issue is to take so much meeting time so that the issue never comes up. If the agenda specifies times for the major sections, you can always assure that your issue will be addressed before the meeting is adjourned.

**An agenda according to Robert's (RONR(10th ed.),p.342-351), with a few comments.**

- I. **Reading and approval of the minutes.**  
(Motion to approve is not necessary. The minutes are either approved as read or as corrected, but without a vote.)
- II. **Reports of Officers, Boards, Standing Committees.**  
(This includes correspondence, treasurer's report, etc. Treasure's report is never adopted or voted upon unless it has been audited. )
- III. **Reports of Special Committees.**  
(Each report could conclude with a motion which the assembly must address.)
- IV. **Special Orders.**  
(Any motion which was adopted as a Special Order which guarantees that the motion will be dealt with before the meeting is adjourned.)
- V. **Unfinished Business and General Orders.**  
(Any issue which was not concluded, was postponed, or was tabled during the prior meeting. The secretary's minutes should inform the chair which items to add to this section. Only a clueless chair would ask the assembly, 'Is there any unfinished business?')
- VI. **New Business.**  
(This is when the chair and the parliamentarian can be surprised by the sequence of events. It is best to always anticipate issues the membership may present, or else be embarrassed by the complications.  
It is at this time that announcements, educational programs, and speakers are introduced.)
- VII. **Adjournment.**  
(A motion to adjourn may be made at any time of the meeting. The assembly should never be forced to meet longer than it is willing to meet.)

## Six Steps to Every Motion!

Every motion requires 6 steps (with some exceptions ). The shoulds and shouldn'ts are as follows: (RONR(10th ed.),p.31-54)

**STEP 1. A member stands up, is recognized, and makes a motion;**

*Common Mistake:* Members do not stand up, do not wait to be recognized, and typically start to discuss their motion before completing STEP 2, STEP 3, and STEP 4 below!

**STEP 2. Another member seconds the motion;**

*Common Mistake:* The person seconding the motion dives into the merits of the motion.

**STEP 3. The presiding officer restates the motion to the assembly;**

*Common Mistake:* Motion is restated differently from the wording of the maker! Beware because the motion that is adopted is the one stated by the presiding officer, not the one stated by the maker of the original motion.

**STEP 4. The members debate the motion;**

*Common Mistake:* Debate gets out of control in temper, in duration, in relevance! Members talk at each other across the room rather than through the presiding officer.

**STEP 5. Presiding officer asks for the affirmative votes & then the negative votes;**

*Common Mistake:* The presiding officer states 'All in favor' and fails to tell the members what to do as a matter of voting (for example, 'say aye', 'stand up', 'raise your hand', etc.); or the negative vote is never requested or counted!

**STEP 6. The presiding officer announces the result of the voting; instructs the corresponding officer to take action; and introduces the next item of business.**

*Common Mistake:* Presiding officer fails to pronounce the result of the voting! No one is instructed to take action. Commonly, dead silence follows because the presiding officer is lost and stares at the assembly

# MOTION MADE



**Seconded**



**Call for the question**



**Debate is on!**

or

If friendly amendment is made,

or

If Non-Friendly Amendment is made, then majority vote is required.



**If Sponsor Agrees**

or

**If Sponsor Disagrees**

**Debate is on!**



**Amended Motion is now open for debate.**



**VOTE!**



Not Seconded,  
(The motion dies)



Secondary Motion  
(Depending on Type)



## Some General Exceptions

For the sake of expediency, the chair can always say "***If there is no objection ...***", and then declares what action the chair is going to take in the name of the assembly! If no one objects, the 6 steps are skipped and the motion has been adopted in 5 words. If someone objects, the chair follows the 6 steps, cheerfully.

On the other hand, not all motions require the 6 steps. Your power comes in knowing which motions do and which motions do not require the 6 steps, especially when the chair cannot get away with "If there is no objection ...".

### **STEP 1. State the Motion:**

Some motions are so important that the maker can interrupt the speaker and not even wait to be recognized by the chair! - *Question of Privilege, Orders of the Day, Point of Order, Appeal, Parliamentary Inquiry, Point of Information, Division.*

### **STEP 2. Second the Motion:**

Some motions do not require a second - Generally, if Robert's Rules of Order allow you to interrupt a speaker, you do not need a second (except *Appeal*).

### **STEP 3. Chair Restates the Motion:**

The presiding officer may help a verbose person rephrase the motion.

### **STEP 4. Discuss the Motion:**

Some motions may not be debated because the debate would defeat the purpose of the motion - *Recess, Orders of the Day, Lay on the Table, Limit or Close Debate, Division of the Assembly, Division of the Question.*

### **STEP 5. Vote on the Motion:**

Some motions are made and passed without voting - *Question of Privilege, Orders of the Day, Point of Order, Division.*

### **STEP 6. Announce Result of Vote:**

No exceptions here. The result of the voting must always be announced.

## Totally Wrong Phrases!

I am sure you have frequently heard these phrases applied with loud and blind confidence.

I. **SO MOVED!**

This is a common statement which means nothing. One must state the actual motion so as to avoid confusion in the audience.

Everyone has the right to know exactly what is being moved and discussed. "So moved!" is vague and pointless. Do not allow your club members to be vague and pointless.

II. **I MOVE TO TABLE!**

First of all, the motion is "*Move to Lay on the Table*". According to Robert's Rules of Order, this motion is in order only as a **temporary interruption of the agenda**, so as to allow something special and urgent out of turn. It is not intended to kill a motion. If your members wish to kill a motion, let them use the correct motion - "*Move to Postpone Indefinitely*".

III. **CALL FOR THE QUESTION!**

This is not a motion. The person calling "Question! Question!" is being disorderly, if another person has the floor. At best, it is a nagging hint to the chair to stop the discussion and get on with the voting. The chair should make sure that everyone has had an opportunity to speak and still please the nagging "call for the question" hint. The chair should state that after one or two more speakers' comments, the vote shall be taken.

It is critical that the chair not automatically stop the discussion when someone says "Call for the question". The disorderly member who wishes to stop the discussion does not have more rights than the members who wish to discuss the issue. Actually, a motion to stop the discussion ("*I Call for*" or "*I Move the Main Question*") would **require a 2/3 vote** to be adopted.

## Bylaws - The Best Advice

**Parliamentary Procedure is useless to you, unless you are familiar with your organization's Bylaws.** The best advice anyone can give you is to become familiar with the Bylaws and Constitution of your organization. You will never win if you do not even know which parliamentary authority (= rule book) was adopted as part of your Bylaws.

Your Bylaws state which one Parliamentary Authority will rule your organization. I have seen many club officers blend several parliamentary rule books to rationalize their decisions. Later, the same club officers cite a different parliamentary source to justify other actions. The powerless membership allows itself to be manipulated and deprived.

If you become familiar with your Bylaws, you will win half of your battles merely because you will probably be the only person who has ever read the Bylaws in your organization. Knowing a little Parliamentary Procedure and the Bylaws will make you the most successful member of your organization!

### Typical Basic Bylaw Articles

- I. **Name.**  
*There must be no ambiguity as to the identity of the group.*
- II. **Object and Reason for the group's existence.**  
*This alone will help you combat abuse of power, and will help you keep the organization focused.*
- III. **Members.**  
*This explains the members' rights, limitations, and qualifications. It clarifies issues such as fees, attendance, resignations, and honorary membership.*
- IV. **Officers.**  
*Explains methods for nominations, voting, elections, and filling vacancies, as well as term of office and duties.*
- V. **Meetings.**  
*Details quorum, regular meetings, special meetings, and conventions.*

Often, the remaining Articles are referred to as the Constitution. In many cases, organizations refer to all the 9 Articles as the Constitution and the Bylaws as if they were one document.

- VI. **Executive Board or Board of Directors.**  
*The board's composition, power, and quorum are clearly stated in this article.*

VII. **Committees.**

*Standing committees must be described as to name, composition, manner of selection, attendance, and duties.*

VIII. **Parliamentary Authority.**

*The rules of order must be clearly established. It could be Robert, Sturgis, Cannon, Demeter, Riddick, etc. The important thing is to have a document which assures order under fire. Regardless of the rule book, an organization is ruled first by local, state, and federal laws; and then by its parent organization; followed by any adopted special rules of order; and finally by its adopted parliamentary authority.*

IX. **Amendment of Bylaws.**

*Typically, a Bylaw can be amended with 2/3 of the collected votes, if a prior notice has been given during the prior meeting. Otherwise, it takes a majority of the entire registered membership to amend any Bylaw.*

Some organizations have additional Articles for matters of Finances, Policies, or Discipline. Nevertheless, once you read the Bylaws, you will be more powerful than any club officer. Try it. After all, you do know what is best for your organization. Right?