Introduction to Robert’s Rules of Order and SU Governance
Students’ Union Organizational Chart
May 2011

Coverage of this chart is senior management and direct reports. Divisional and departmental organizational charts not included in this overview. Divisional staff and budgets are approximated.

Senior Management Group
- General Manager
- Senior Management Group

Students’ Council
- Chief Returning Officer
- Executive Committee
- Speaker
  - VP Academic
  - VP External
  - President
  - VP Operations and Finance
  - VP Student Life

Divisional Staff and Budgets
- Facilities and Operations
  - 28 FT, 27-35 PT
  - Unionized
  - Budget: 3.58M rev, 2.88M exp
- Finance and Administration
  - 5 FT, 1-2 PT
  - Unionized
  - Budget: 2.3M rev, 1.1M exp - includes student fees.
  - Reserve and dedicated fees: 1.5M, not including health plan (est 3M)
- Student Services
  - 11 FT, 45-57 PT
  - Non-union
  - Budget: 0.6M rev, 1.4M exp
  - 750-910 volunteers
- Programming and Venues
  - 3 FT, 30-50 PT
  - Mixed union/non-union
  - Budget: 700K rev, 770K exp
  - Cash flow through events of clients and SU is much higher than budget.
- Marketing and Communications
  - 5-6 FT, 1-2 PT
  - Non-union
  - Budget: 155K rev, 310K exp
  - Handbook and Sponsorship are in this department.
- Food and Beverage
  - 100+ FT and PT
  - Unionized
  - Budget: 2.79M rev, 2.44M exp
- Office and Administrative Services
  - 5 FT, 1-3 PT
  - Unionized
  - Budget: 135K rev, 575K exp
  - (includes internal governance costs and associations costs, shares admin costs)
- Student Governance Support
  - 1 FT, 1 T term
  - Non-union
  - Budget: 70K exp
  - Non-political in nature, hence currently under operational side of the organization.

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Legislative Structure

Written by the SU
Legislative Structure

- PSLA
- SU Bylaws
  - SU Political Policies
  - SU Operating Policies
  - Standing Orders of Council
    - Robert’s Rules of Order

Most applicable to Council business
Legislative Structure

- PSLA
- SU Bylaws
  - SU Political Policies
  - SU Operating Policies
  - Standing Orders of Council
    - Robert’s Rules of Order

Rules which Council can “break” (suspend)
Robert’s Rules of Order
• First edition by Henry Martyn Robert in 1876
• Guide for meetings of deliberative assemblies
• Puts basic rules in place to standardize meetings
• Standing Orders Vs. Roberts Rules
General Information

• All business for Council must be brought up in the form of a motion:
  – Member must obtain the floor before moving a motion
  – Motions must be moved and seconded
  – Once stated by Speaker, the motion cannot be withdrawn without unanimous consent
  – Late Additions
  – Moving a motion from the floor
General Information

- Debate
  - Limited to two speaking turns per member, 6 minutes each
  - First speaking turn gets preference over second
  - Speaker try to alternate between debate for and against motion
  - Directed through the Speaker
  - Avoid:
    - Addressing members by name
    - Attacking motives of members
    - Comments that are not germane
General Information

- **Voting**
  - Typically done by show of hands
    - Exception for nominations or call for division
  - Member can change their vote until results are announced
- **Good idea to abstain on matters of direct personal interest**
  - May request to have abstention noted
  - Review Bylaw 100(19)
- **Straw polls are not in order**
Council Format

• Speaker’s Business
  – Attendance
  – Announcements, etc.

• Presentations
  – Written in Standing Orders
  – Restricted to 30 minutes including questions

• Executive and Committee reports
  – Limited to 2 minutes per report.
Council Format

• Question Period
  - 15 minutes
  - May be extended once if at least 5 members wish
  - May be extended again by 2/3 majority vote
  - Written questions take priority (and will get better answers!)

• Board and Committee business

• General Orders
Motions - Amend

- “modify the wording of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon”
- Can only have two layers (no amendment to an amendment of an amendment)
- Must be germane
- “friendly” if unanimous consent
Motions – Postpone Indefinitely

- “is a motion that the assembly decline to take a position on the main question”
- Disposes of a badly chosen main motion
- Can’t be amended
Motions – Call to question

- Ends debate and brings about a vote
- Can’t be debated or amended
- Needs a 2/3 vote to pass
Motions – Suspend the rules

- Suspends a portion of standing orders
- Need 2/3 majority
- Non-debatable or amendable
Motions – Division of a Motion

- Splits the main motion into a set of smaller motions
- Opposite of omnibus
- Non-debatable, but amendable
Motions – Division of the House

- Each member votes by saying for or against in order
- Each vote goes on official minutes
- Happens if requested by any member
Motions – Appeal decision of Chair

• Used to reverse a ruling by the Speaker
• Debatable but non-amendable
• Requires only majority vote
Motions - Reconsider

- Reopens debate on a motion that has already been voted upon
- Can only be brought forward by someone previously on the winning side
- Can only be brought forward at the same meeting
Points

• Point of Order
  – Used to correct breach of rules
  – Ruled upon by Speaker
  – Can be brought forward at any time

• Point of Personal Privilege
  – Used to register a complaint of a personal nature
  – Can also be used to register a complaint of privilege of the assembly as a whole
Points

• Point of Parliamentary Inquiry
  – Used to find any answers to questions not answered by the rest of the presentation

• Request for Information
  – Used to request information from a member of Council
  – Not to be used as a form of informal debate (e.g. “is the councilor aware...”)
Questions?