

## **Official Rules of the Senate**

*Compiled and Authored by: Brad Stanton, Presiding Officer of the 43<sup>rd</sup> MWSU Student Senate*  
Note: Presiding Officer means the member who is running the Senate, the Executive Vice President or his/her designee. "Executive Vice President" is used in situations where solely the Executive Vice President has that power.

### **TIME OF MEETING**

Rule 1. The time of meeting by the Senate, unless otherwise ordered, shall be when the Presiding Officer of the Senate calls for it to be in session.

### **MAJORITY DEFINED**

Rule 2. The term "majority" shall mean more than half of voting members.

### **QUORUM DEFINED**

Rule 3. A quorum shall be defined as a majority of voting members (filled Senate seats) being present. A quorum shall be required for official business to be acted upon.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Rule 4. After the Senate is called to order, the Senate shall be employed as follows:

- (a) Adoption of the Agenda
- (b) Executive Board Reports
- (c) Committee Reports
- (d) Unfinished Business
- (e) New Business
- (f) Open Discussion
- (g) Closed Session (if applicable, will be used)
- (h) Announcements

### **FIRST AND SECOND READING OF BILLS**

Rule 5. A bill shall be read the first time by the Presiding Officer upon the first meeting the bill is scheduled for. This method of reading shall be sufficient unless further reading is called for. If further reading is called for and no objection made, the bill shall be read at length. If an objection is made, a majority vote shall be required for further reading.

### **PRESIDING OFFICER**

#### *President to Call Members to Order*

Rule 6. The Presiding Officer of the Senate (or his/her designee) shall take the chair at the time which that Senate has been ordered to meet and immediately call the members to order and call for the roll to be called, and on the appearance of a quorum, shall call for the adoption of the agenda.

#### *Parliamentary Rulings; Referral to Parliamentarian*

Rule 7. Only the Executive Vice President may make parliamentary rulings. At his/her option he/she may refer a decision to the Parliamentarian.

#### *Presiding Officer May Speak on Points of Order*

Rule 8. The Presiding Officer may speak on points of order and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal by the Senate. Upon an appeal, each Senator may only speak once, may not question other Senators, and may only address the chair.

#### *Appeal a Ruling of the Chair*

Rule 9. Should a decision on a point of order by the Presiding Officer be appealed, the question "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" must be determined before the Senate proceeds to other business.

## **BILLS**

### *Bills Laid Over Informally*

Rule 10. When a bill is reached to be second read and voted upon, it may upon the request of the Executive Vice President or the sponsor, hold its place on the agenda, or be laid over informally, and be called up at a later time.

### *To Appear in Order*

Rule 11. All bills laid over informally and not taken up and disposed of shall appear upon the calendar for the next meeting.

### *Two-Meeting Rule*

Rule 12. If a bill laid over informally is not taken up for further consideration within two Senate meetings it shall lie on the table and be dropped from Senate consideration.

## **AMENDMENTS**

Rule 13. Proposed amendments must be reduced to writing. Every proposed amendment shall be read by the Presiding Officer unless it has been distributed in advance. Amendments may be offered even though not distributed in advance of the time a bill is taken up for consideration.

Rule 14. When a bill or motion is under consideration, a motion to amend shall be in order. Any amendment to the third degree shall be out of order. Any bill or amendment may be withdrawn by the sponsor before amendment or decision is taken. Once a bill has been amended, it may not be withdrawn.

## **BILLS NOT TO BE PASSED ON PREVIOUS ROLL CALL**

Rule 15. No bill shall be passed by any roll call previously taken on another bill, nor shall more than one bill be passed on any one roll call.

## **PROCEDURE OF DEBATE**

Rule 16. Once a bill has been submitted to the Senate it must be placed upon the agenda.

Rule 17. *Authorship speech.* Upon bringing a bill for consideration the first speech shall be a speech of authorship. The Presiding Officer will give the floor to the author of the bill. Should the author of the bill not be present, a cosigner of the bill shall give the authorship speech. Should there be no cosigner, a Senator that supports the bill may give the authorship speech.

Rule 18. There shall be no time limit placed upon debate nor speeches unless a motion is made and passed to limit debate.

Rule 19. After every speech on a motion there shall be time allotted for Senators to question the speaker.

Rule 20. The Presiding Officer shall entertain speeches in favor of and in opposition of a motion until debate stops or another germane main motion is made.

## **ELECTIONS IN SENATE**

Rule 21. Nominations shall be taken at the Senate meeting prior to the election and at the meeting during which the election takes place.

Rule 22. Candidates shall speak in an order determined by a random drawing of names. Up to two supporters of the candidate may speak for three minutes each expressing their support of the candidate. The candidate shall then speak for up to six minutes.

Rule 23. The Presiding Officer shall facilitate the election. Senators shall vote on paper distributed by the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer shall then collect all ballots and certify the results.

Rule 24. Should one candidate not receive a majority vote on the first ballot, a runoff shall be held immediately between the two candidates receiving the most votes in the first ballot. In the event of a tie, the Presiding Officer shall cast the deciding vote.

Rule 25. Should there be only one candidate; the Senate must give the candidate a majority vote of confidence.

## **DECORUM AND DEBATE**

Rule 26. *Speaking.* When any member is to speak he/she shall respectfully address him/herself to “Mr./Ms. President” and shall refer, as appropriate, to other members as “Senator.” The member shall avoid personalities. If any member violates the rules of the Senate, the Presiding Officer, or any member, may call him/her to order. Any member called to order shall immediately cease speaking, unless allowed to explain by the Presiding Officer.

Rule 27. *To Seek Recognition.* The President shall not recognize any member desiring to speak unless such member raises their hand or appropriately seeks recognition.

Rule 28. *May not name another member in the debate.* No member shall say another member’s first name in debate, but shall refer to the member as “Senator [last name].”

Rule 29. *Members Not to Use Profanity.* No member may use profanity while speaking on the floor or in committee.

Rule 30. *Eating, Distracting Activities.* No food, newspapers, or other items or activities distracting to Senate deliberations shall be permitted on the floor of the Senate while the Senate is in session. Food provided by the Senate shall be permitted.

Rule 31. *Electronic Devices.* Tape recorders, mobile phones, video equipment, television equipment, photography equipment and/or any other electronic recording devices are not authorized for use on the floor of the Senate unless permission has been granted by the Presiding Officer.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND AMENDMENT**

Rule 32. These rules may be enacted, amended, or rescinded via a majority vote on a resolution to those ends.

Rule 33. None of these rules may be dispensed with unless a majority motions for that purpose.

Rule 34. These rules shall not be construed to override the Policies, Bylaws, or Constitution of the Missouri Western State University Student Government Association nor shall they override any policy or governing document of Missouri Western State University. Robert’s Rules of Order shall be utilized in instances where there is no applicable Rule of the Senate. Robert’s Rules of Order shall not override any Rule of the Senate nor document of MWSU SGA or MWSU.