

UA Faculty Senate Meeting on October 3, 2002

Proposed Resolution concerning procedures for voting (for discussion).

Purposes:

To conform to requirements of the Faculty Bylaws and Roberts Rules and to establish confidence and transparency in voting processes.

This resolution supplements but does not replace any provision in the resolution adopted on 9.12.22. It covers only partially the procedures for decisions by unanimous consent or by secret ballot.

Resolution:

Procedures for all votes.

Before taking a vote, the Presiding Officer (PO) must ask for any final discussion or comments, in a way that indicates that the vote is imminent.

The PO then restates the question on the floor. The PO's restatement is definitive. Any Senator who believes that the PO has mis-stated the motion can raise a Point of Order but must do this before voting commences.

At least two designated persons present should count the votes, whenever votes are to be counted. These should normally include one of the faculty officers and whichever staff member will prepare the meeting minutes. The PO can make default designations and declare exceptions on specific votes, for causes such as absence or perceived non-neutrality on the issue at hand. The Senate can vote to designate who shall count votes, over-riding the PO's discretion.

No discussion can occur during a vote.

Two methods exist to challenge or change a vote, immediately after the result is announced:

Any member may raise a Point of Order concerning the process of the vote.

The Senate can by majority vote decide to retake a vote by hands, in which case the vote must be counted, or it may vote to replace any vote by a new roll-call vote. In these cases, only the final vote shall be recorded in the minutes.

Procedure for a vote by raised hands.

For the purposes of interpreting Roberts Rules, this procedure is equivalent to a “rising” vote.

The PO decides when to use this procedure, though the Senate may override the PO’s decision by requiring a roll call or secret ballot, as described below and prescribed in the Faculty Bylaws.

The PO waits for all hands to be lowered.

The PO asks for Affirmative Votes and has the option to declare initially, or after votes are cast, that the vote will be counted.

After Affirmative votes are cast, the count, if taken, is announced. Any Senator who believes that a count is incorrect may immediately request delay through a Point of Order, for the purpose of confirming the count.

The PO asks for hands to be lowered.

The PO decides whether to ask for Negative votes and subsequently decides whether to ask for votes of “Present.” (“Present” votes, equivalent to abstentions, may be important for the purpose of establishing that a quorum was present; quorum requires that at least half of the voting membership cast a vote, Affirmative, Negative, or Present.) The PO should generally ask for Negative votes if the question is controversial or the Affirmative vote is less than overwhelming. The PO must ask for Negative votes if any voting member requests it..

Whether Affirmative votes are counted determines whether any Negative or Present votes are subsequently counted.

After the casting of Negative votes, the count if taken is announced, mirroring the procedure for Affirmative votes. The same applies to votes of “Present.”

The PO announces the result of the vote (“Passes,” “Fails,” or “Fails for lack of a quorum”) and announces the count if there was one. If there was no count, and the PO is uncertain of the result, then the PO may call for a revote by counted show of hands.

If a count occurred, then the count appears in the minutes, as part of reporting the results of the vote.

Procedure for a roll-call vote.

The PO decides when to use this procedure, or the Senate may force a roll call by a motion gaining at least seven Affirmative votes. The Senate cannot reverse the PO’s decision to hold a roll-call vote.

The resolution of 9.12.22 stipulates the basic procedure for casting a roll-call vote. Each Senator who votes should vote “Yes,” “No,” “Present,” or “Pass.”

After all Senators are polled, the PO repolls (once) any Senator who did not respond to the first poll or voted “Pass”. “Pass” is not an option during the repolling.

The PO announces the result of the vote (“Passes,” “Fails,” or “Fails for lack of a quorum”) and the count.

The PO may choose to announce, or the Senate may by majority vote require, a recapitulation of the vote, meaning a reading of all who voted Affirmatively, followed by a reading of all who voted Negatively, followed by a reading of all who voted Present.

The PO may direct corrections to any error in a recapitulation, or any Senator may request such corrections through a Point of Order.

The minutes shall record how each member voted. The vote counters’ original tally sheets should be preserved as part of the permanent record of the meeting.

Any member can request that the Senate approve, by unanimous consent, his or her request to change their vote. In that case, only the changed vote is recorded in the minutes.

References:

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Faculty Bylaws

Article VIII, Section 3.

Roberts Rules

Sections 4.34-4:44. 4.50-55, 45:6-10