

ILUC Rules of Order

Decorum Statement

Meetings will be conducted according to these rules of order, adapted from Robert's Rules of Order. This time-honored system for conducting business is the clearest way yet devised for getting a maximum amount of business done in a minimum amount of time, and to get it done regardless of the degree of disagreement among the participants. By following these rules of order, we strive to be sure that we are making decisions on the basis of principle, rather than personality. In keeping with the spirit, we encourage all participants to become familiar with these rules of order, and to conduct themselves accordingly. Once the meeting is underway, only one matter will be before the committee at any one time, and no other discussion is in order. Please respect the chairperson's right to be in control of the process of this meeting so that you can have maximum benefit of its content. You must be recognized by the chair before speaking.

Quorum

Per ILUC Guidelines, a quorum of 10 GSRs must be present at the ILUC in order for the voting committee to take place.

Debate: Limits

Debate is the formal exchange of views on an idea. Unless otherwise specified, debate on both main motions and parliamentary motions is usually limited to two or three pro's and two or three con's (speakers for and against the motion). Speakers addressing motions in debate usually have two or three minutes in which to speak their minds.

Debate: Types

There are two basic types of motions. It is important to understand the difference between them. The two kinds of motions are main motions and parliamentary motions.

Main Motions

A motion is a statement of an idea a committee member wants the committee to put into practice. After being recognized by the chairperson, the member says, "I move that such-and-such be done by (this committee, one of its subcommittees, or a particular individual: under these terms." The person making the motion then speaks briefly about why he feels the idea is important -- this is called speaking to the intent of a motion. Because the exact wording of all motions must be recorded into the minutes, the maker of the motion should write it out whenever possible. This is especially important for complicated or long motions.

Every motion requires a "second" -- the backing of another person who also wants the idea put into practice, or who simply wants to see further discussion of the idea take place. The chairperson will ask, after one person makes a motion, whether the motion has a second. The seconder simply raises his hand and, when recognized by the chair says, "I second that." If nobody seconds a motion, the chair will say, "The motion dies for lack of a second." This means that the idea will not be discussed any further because there is not enough interest in it. The committee then moves on to other business.

Once a motion has been made, the chairperson may rule it "out of order." A motion may be ruled out of order for any one of a number of reasons: the motion goes against the committee's standing policy, clearly contradicts one of the Twelve

Concepts for NA Service or Twelve Traditions, or is inappropriate at the particular point in the meeting at which it is made. Robert's Rules of Order can be consulted for more specific examples of motions which are out of order at any given time.

Any member of the committee who wishes to challenge a ruling made by the chairperson may appeal that ruling, as described below. If no appeal is made. Or if the decision of the chair is upheld, the committee moves on to other business.

Parliamentary Motions

Parliamentary motions can be best understood as "sub-motions" that are made during debate on a main motion, which affect in some way the main motion. There are many more of these than space and practicality permits us to include here, but a few that seem to be the most practical are discussed here.

Motion to Amend -- Simple Majority Required -- Is Debatable

This is perhaps the most commonly used motion. During debate on a motion, if a member feels that the motion would benefit from a change in its language, the member can say, "I move to amend the motion..." and suggest specific language changes in the motion. If an amendment has been moved and seconded, debate then turns to the merits of the amendment with one speaker pro and one speaker con. After debate the body votes on the amendment. Then, debate resumes on the merits of the main motion (as amended, if amendment carried). When debate is exhausted on the merits of the main motion itself, a vote is taken and the body moves on to the next item of business.

Motion to Call the Previous Question -- Majority Required -- Is Not Debatable

For our purposes, this may be the most important motion. Use it often. This motion is made by a member saying, "I call for the question," or "I move the previous question." It is another way of saying, "I move that debate stops right now and that we vote immediately." This is one of many that can be used to prevent needless, lengthy debate on an issue is clearly understood. This motion is in order after any speaker is finished. You need not be called on. The chair must recognize you when you make this motion, and a vote must be taken with no debate. If two-thirds of the body feels that no more debate is necessary, then it is time to vote and move on.

One point worth making about this motion is that you must be careful not to squelch debate before an issue has been thoroughly aired. Be sure to vote "no" to this motion if you are still confused about the issue, or if you are unsure how to vote. By allowing debate to continue, we avoid half-baked decisions about half-understood questions. On the other hand the liberal use of this motion makes it unnecessary for the chair to be heavy-handed in stopping discussion, because the chair knows you will stop it soon enough.

Motion to Table -- Simple Majority Required -- Is Not Debatable

One way of disposing of a motion that is not ready for a vote is to table it. This is done by saying, "I move we table this motion until such-and-such a date/meeting." This motion is not debatable, if it is made and seconded, it is voted on immediately. If it fails, debate continues on the motion itself. If it passes the committee moves on to its next item of business. The tabled motion will be included in the committee agenda on the date specified.

Motion to Refer -- Simple Majority Required -- Is Not Debatable

Sometimes the committee does not have enough information to make an immediate decision on a motion. Such motions can be removed from debate and sent to one of the subcommittees for further study, or it can be sent to a special ad hoc committee. This can be done by a member saying, "I move to refer the motion to such-and-such subcommittee." If the motion to refer passes, the committee moves on to its next item of business. The subcommittee to which the motion is assigned will take it up at the next meeting. The subcommittee will report back on what it has come up with at the next meeting of the full committee.

Motion to Reconsider or Rescind -- $\frac{2}{3}$ Majority Required -- Is Debatable

Sometimes a member feels that a motion the committee has passed will prove harmful. He can move to either reconsider (reopen for debate and voting) or rescind (void the effect of) the original motion. There are a few conditions on motions to reconsider or rescind:

- The motion must have been passed in either the last month's or current meeting.
- The member making the motion must have information on the issue that was not available in the original debate on the motion.
- The member must have been with the winning side in the original vote.

These limits are placed to protect the committee from having to reconsider again and again the motions it passes, while still allowing it to examine potentially harmful situations it has created inadvertently. If any of these requirements are not met, the chairperson will declare the motion out of order.

Request to Withdraw a Motion -- Unanimous Consent Required -- Is Not Debatable

Once a motion is made and the debate begins, the maker of the motion may move to withdraw it. The chair asks if there are any objections. If there is even one objection, the motion stays on the floor, and debate resumes. If there are no objections, the motion is withdrawn and the body moves on.

Other Procedure

In addition to parliamentary motions, there are other ways in which members may alter or clarify the proceedings. Here are a few of the most common.

- **Order of the Day:** If a committee member feels that business is going too far astray from the original agenda, the member can help get things back on track by saying, "I call for the order of the day." This means, "I move that the chair bring us back on track and conduct the meeting according to procedure, adhering to the agenda." This does not require a second and is not debatable. Regardless of what else is going on at the time, it requires an immediate vote.
- **Suspend the Rules:** This enables the committee to do something without violating one or more of its own regular rules, for instance, to bring a matter up at a different time from originally scheduled. The chair cannot move this, but can entertain another member to. To change the order of the day is an application of "suspend the rules" and means to take a question out of its proper order or to consider one before the time to which it was postponed.
- **Point of Information:** This is a request directed to the chair or through the chair to another member, for information relevant to the business being considered but is not a matter related to procedure and requires no vote. A point of information is not properly used to create a discussion between two members.
- **Point of Order:** If a committee member feels that something that is happening is in violation of the rules of order, and if the chairperson does not appear likely to do anything about it, the member can raise a point of order. The

member need not raise his hand, but may simply state out loud, "Point of order." The chairperson then says, "What is your point of order?" The member then states how he feels the rules of order are being violated. If the chair agrees with the member's judgment, the chair says, "your point is well taken," and the situation is cleared up. If the chair does not agree, he says, "Overruled." This decision, as all others, can be appealed.

- **Point of Appeal:** Anytime the chair makes a decision, that decision may be appealed. Any voting member who wished to appeal a decision may do so by saying, "I appeal the decision of the chair." The chair then says, "On what grounds?" The member states his reasons. The chairperson then speaks briefly to the intent of his ruling. A vote is taken, requiring two-thirds majority to overrule the decision of the chair.
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** If a committee member wants to do something but doesn't know how it fits in with the rules of order, all he has to do is ask. Without raising his hand, he simply says out loud, "Point of parliamentary inquiry." The chairperson must immediately recognize him, so that he may ask how to do such-and-such. The chair will answer the question, possibly by referring to a specific passage in this document.
- **Point of Personal Privilege:** If the smoke is getting too heavy for you, the air conditioner or heater is on too high, or if there is too much noise in the room, you can ask that something be done about it. You may interrupt the proceedings by saying, "Point of personal privilege." The chair must recognize you immediately. State the situation and ask that it be corrected. The chair will request that whatever needs to be done, and is reasonable, be done to help make you comfortable.

Voting Procedures

There are several ways that votes can be taken. Here are the three commonly used by ILUC.

- **Show of Hands:** This can mean that the duly appointed representative of a meeting raises their hand as a signal of voting. It is an efficient way to determine if there is a simple majority.
- **Counted Vote:** Procedure is the same as a show of hands, except the members are asked to keep their hands raised and counted for yea, nay, or abstain. This procedure would be used when a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of quorum is needed.
- **Ballot Vote:** Voting by ballot is used whenever you don't want a member's individual views disclosed.

Committees

There are two kinds of subcommittees: standing subcommittees and ad hoc committees.

- **Standing Subcommittees:** These are the regular subcommittees such as Hospitals & Institutions, Public Relations, Activities, Merchandise, Policy & Administration, Literature, Outreach. The description of these can be found in the ILUA Committee Guidelines.
- **Ad Hoc Committees :** Sometimes a question or special project needs to be referred to a subcommittee, but the question does not fit with the focus of any existing subcommittee. In such cases, the motion can be made to refer to a special committee. These special committees are set up for specific purposes, and they have limited lives --- when they have finished their jobs and have reported back they are disbanded. A motion to refer to a special committee should specify what the committee's purpose will be. The chair may then appoint an ad hoc committee chairperson, who will put the committee together later.

There are only brief notes of rules of order for business meetings. For further information see Robert's Rules of Order --- Newly Revised.

The Process

1. A motion is made. This is the beginning of the process of bringing a matter before the committee. A motion should be clear, concise and comprehensive so that the committee is not voting on the perceived intent but on the actual

wording as it will be officially recorded in the minutes. The motion is also written on a motion form available at the secretary's table.

2. The motion is seconded. A second merely indicates that another member wishes the matter to come before the assembly; it does not necessarily mean that the seconder is in favor of the motion.
3. The chair asks the motion to be reread.
4. There is then debate (if the motion is debatable). Debate is of the motion, not of the member making it. Motives should never be questioned.
5. When ready, the committee votes to adopt (carry) or reject (fail) the motion.

Standing Rules

1. No member may make two motions at the same time.
2. Debate -
 - a. The number of speakers on each motion will be limited to 3 pro and 3 con.
 - b. No member may speak on a motion more than once unless others desiring to speak on the motion have exercised their opportunity.
 - c. There shall be a time limit on debate by any member. No member may speak longer than three minutes on a motion for each time they are recognized by the chair to speak. However, the chair may exercise discretion to extend the time limit or the number of speakers when in the chair's opinion such action is warranted. To otherwise extend debate, a motion (extend or limit debate) must be adopted.
3. An adopted motion shall take effect at the close of the committee meeting, unless otherwise stated in the motion.

A Rules of Order Summary Page is attached