

## **ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER**

Plenary uses a form of communication based on *Robert's Rules of Order*. They ensure that the will of the majority is done while protecting the voice of the minority. The rule of order may seem awkward and sometimes constraining, but it will limit chaos and personal attack. Please give your attention to the guidelines and follow them. In the long run, they will make Plenary run smoother and faster.

Quorum is essential and required. This means that everyone must enter and exit from the side door of Goodhart. **Votes are only valid if there is quorum.**

Order of Business:

Each resolution will be presented as follows:

- Reading of the resolution by the presenter(s)
- Explanation of the resolution by the presenter(s) 3 minutes
- Floor open to questions and Pro/Con statements 12 minutes  
(*questions are given priority during this time*)  
(*If amendment is presented, it is given an additional 8 minutes*)
- Floor open to Pro/Con statements only 7 minutes
- Rebuttal period for presenter(s) of the proposal 3 minutes
- Voting on the resolution

If there is discussion occurring at the microphones, then discussion will occur for at least 12 minutes as outlined above, before the question may be called. This is to ensure that a minimum discussion is given to all proposals, as the community has already warranted these resolutions worthy of discussion.

**If there is no discussion at the microphone, the SGA executive Board will give a 30 second time limit for those who wish to speak to identify themselves by either**

**approaching the microphone or alerting their section counter. If after the 30 seconds no one has announced that they wish to speak, the amendment or resolution will be voted upon.**

There will be a member of the SGA Executive Board moderating as well as another member keeping time for each resolution. One minute and 30 second warnings will be given for each timed period.

### **SPEAKING**

\*\*If you wish to ask a **question**, please line up at the middle YELLOW microphone.

\*\*If you wish to make a statement **in favor** of a proposal, please use the GREEN microphone.

\*\*If you wish to make a statement **in opposition** to a proposal, please use the RED microphone.

There will be a moderator at each microphone who will limit the number of people standing in line. Please keep your statements to one minute, so that everyone may have time to speak. Please listen carefully to the speakers to avoid asking the same question or making the same basic point. If you have already spoken on an issue, you will not be allowed to speak again until everyone else who desires to speak has done so. If you must talk while in your seat, please be considerate of those around you who may be trying to listen to the discussion. Most importantly, **please be patient and respectful** of all other members. Even though you might not agree with an idea, everyone has the right to speak and be heard.

The President will call on microphones alternating Pro/Con. Only the people at microphones who are recognized by the President

will be permitted to speak, and again, no one will be allotted more than one minute to the proposal.

### **VOTING**

Voting is a right and privilege extended to all members of the Association. The options for exercising this right are pro, con, and abstain (no opinion, or you feel like you don't have enough information to provide an informed vote). For a motion to pass a majority of members present must vote pro.

Please raise hands high, and know who your counter is for your section. The President will ask that everyone return to her proper seat during a vote, as to make sure everyone is counted accurately.

All votes will be done visually unless there the majority of the vote is unclear. If you believe you are not being counted, please see a counter or come to the front of the stage.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**AMENDMENT:** An addition or change that is proposed to a resolution which is on the table for discussion. Please try to use language such as "strike," "add," and "replace with." If the amendment strays too much from the original intent of the proposal, the President may declare the amendment to be out of SCOPE, or outside of the resolution's jurisdiction or purpose.

After an amendment is presented, it must be seconded at a microphone by another member of the Association, and is then open for debate. At this time, all discussion regarding the original resolution ceases to allow adequate attention to be given to the amendment. If you are speaking to the main resolution during this time, the President may request you to come back to the microphone when debate on the main resolution resumes.

MOTION TO EXTEND TIME: This needs a simple majority for approval. When making the motion, please specify a length at which time shall be extended (4 more speakers/5 minutes, etc.). It must be made before time has expired, seconded, and then passed by a simple majority.

MOTION TO COMMIT/REFER: If you feel like more research needs to be done in order to support the motion you may move to refer to a committee (I move to refer \_\_\_\_\_ to a committee/task force). Upon doing so please specify the size, responsibilities and whom will be on the committee.

POSTPONE INDEFINITELY: This may be done if you feel like there is inadequate information and you feel like the motion does not warrant discussion. The effect would be to postpone debate entirely and move on to the next order of business. If desired, it could then be brought up at Plenary the following year.

CALLING THE QUESTION: A request to stop all discussion IMMEDIATELY and put the resolution to a vote. This MUST be voted upon, and requires 2/3 support. It is basically a vote to vote. The first vote will be to close discussion and move to the final vote. If this fails discussion continues; if this passes then the presenter moves to the rebuttal period and then we vote on whatever debate is currently occurring—i.e. an amendment or the original resolution. If you CALL ALL PREVIOUS QUESTIONS, this would include the same premise as calling the question, only we would proceed to vote systematically on any amendment on the table and the original resolution. This motion may only be made after the original 10 minutes of discussion have elapsed, and must be recognized by the President.

POINT OF ORDER: A motion made after an infraction of *Robert's Rules of Order*. May be made from any place in the room. The Parliamentarian will confer with the President regarding the error and then will present a method of recovery to regain order.

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\***

Each of these motions as well as the amendment process are serious procedures which can, if abused, hinder the process or render it unfair. Please use them with discretion and allow the existing process to work as efficiently as possible. **All motions must be presented at the microphone, and all amendments must be written down in advance of approaching the microphone and presented to the microphone moderator. All amendments must be presented and discussed as written.**