

# MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT

## SENATE STANDING RULES

UPDATED 8/1/01, VPSA APPROVAL 9/26/01

### Section I – Parliamentary Authority

- A. The parliamentary authority of the MUSG Senate shall be *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except whereas amended in these standing rules. The most current version of the Senate standing rules shall be in effect at all Senate meetings.
- B. When differences occur between the Constitution, Senate Standing Rules, and *Robert's Rules*, the Constitution shall take precedence over the Senate Standing Rules, and the Senate Standing Rules shall take precedence over Robert's Rules.
- C. Ambiguous issues and/or errors in procedure contained within Senate Standing Rules that prevent the MUSG Senate from conducting its business in a normal and ordinary fashion shall be subject to Parliamentary interpretation and Legislative Vice President (LVP) final decision.

### Section II – Members of the Senate

- A. The MUSG Senate shall be defined for parliamentary purposes as duly elected or appointed Senators, the Legislative Vice-President, the Administrative Assistant, and the Parliamentarian.
- B. Additional members of the Senate shall be designated as ex-officio. Ex-officio members of the Senate shall be designated in the MUSG Constitution or by the LVP (Chair) with three-fourths consent of the present Senate.
  1. Ex-officio members, with the consent of the LVP (Chair), shall be permitted to answer questions when directed towards them during periods of the questioning, but shall not have rights of speaking during debate.
  2. Ex-officio members shall be permitted to attend meetings unless the meeting held is executive session.
- C. MUSG Senate meetings, unless held in executive session, are to be considered held in the public forum where all members of the public at large are invited to attend and observe.
- D. Representatives to the MUSG Senate from other coordinating councils such as Residence Hall Association, Interfraternity Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, or the Panhellenic Association shall not be considered members of the Senate, but rather observers of it.
- E. Each branch of the MUSG shall have the right of having a representative at any MUSG Senate meeting. There may be more than one representative; however, only one person per meeting shall act in an official capacity and shall be granted exclusive privileges of speaking in accordance with Standing Rules and parliamentary procedure.
- F. The use of written notes by Senators while speaking shall be permitted.

### Section III – Voting Procedure

- A. The seated senate shall consist of all senators currently holding office.
- B. The present senate shall consist of all senators actually present at the time a vote is taken on a motion.
- C. The present and voting Senate shall consist of all senators voting in approval or denial of a motion. Abstentions shall not be considered in the calculation of the percentage needed.
- D. Votes shall not be made by proxy vote. (Reaffirmation)
- E. In the event quorum is not met at the time of a vote:
  1. The legislation under consideration shall be tabled indefinitely by the Chair.
  2. The remaining legislative part of the meeting will be removed from the agenda and placed on the next agenda.
  3. The meeting will then move into the non-legislative part of the meeting (announcements, etc. .)
  4. Finally, the meeting will be adjourned by the Chair.
- F. All votes, unless explicitly defined otherwise, shall be considered to be present votes. The type of vote necessary shall be outlined in the latest version of the MUSG Constitution, its By-Laws, *Robert's Rules of Order*, or within the Senate Standing Rules.

#### **Section IV – Consideration of a Motion**

- A. Motions properly moved for consideration shall be introduced by up to four authors of the legislation taken in order of their listing on the motion. This introduction shall be immediately after the motion receives a second. During this time, each author shall have four minutes to speak on behalf of the motion. Time is transferable only to any of the other three authors. The authors' introductory time period shall not be extended.
- B. Following the introduction there shall be a period of questions.
  1. Questions shall be asked only by senators. There shall be no time limit to the questions period; however, senators shall only be allowed to ask questions on two occasions for ten (10) minutes each. Rhetorical questions shall not be permitted.
  2. The LVP (Chair) has the discretion to alter these limits on questions if announced prior to consideration of the motion.
    - a. An objection to the change in limits shall require an immediate vote both irrespective of where the Senate is on its agenda or at what step of parliamentary procedure.
    - b. A 2/3 vote in the *negative* of the present Senate will sustain the limits as written in Standing Rules. Failure of the Senate to reach a 2/3 vote in the *negative* permits the LVP's (Chair's) modification to be used in consideration of the immediate next motion *only*.
  3. The LVP (Chair) shall:
    - a. Maintain a speaker's list and monitor the time expended.
    - b. Intervene and select who shall ask questions if, in the opinion of the LVP (Chair), there is need to do so and facilitate the process of inquiry.
- C. After the time for questions has been expended or if there are no further questions, the Senate shall move into debate.
  1. Only senators are permitted to speak in debate.
    - a. Each senator is permitted three (3) times in which to speak on a motion during debate.
    - b. Each time a senator speaks, s/he shall be limited to a time period of five (5) minutes. A senator's right to speak longer shall be granted only by two-thirds affirmative vote of the present Senate.
  2. Senators shall be permitted to speak either on behalf or against a motion and then make a motion effectively ending debate on the motion. The introduction of an amendment shall be considered in order.
  3. The LVP (Chair) will actively seek an opposite perspective after three consecutive speeches on one side of a motion have been heard by the Senate. After the LVP (Chair) seeks an opposing viewpoint at least twice verbally, the Senate shall vote on the motion.

#### **Section V – Executive Session**

- A. In executive session, those present shall be the MUSG Senate and any people invited by the Senate and approved by three-fourths affirmative vote of the present Senate to be present during executive session.
- B. Non-Senate authors for any legislation to be considered shall be present during the introduction of their motion and questions of it. They shall be excused during debate on the motion unless otherwise invited by the Senate.

#### **Section VI – Committee of the Whole**

- A. While within Committee of the Whole, the MUSG Senate shall be considered within its meeting structure and Standing Rules shall apply to it. Any rules concerning subcommittee structure shall not apply to the Senate while in Committee of the Whole unless specifically stated below.
- B. The LVP (Chair) shall step down as chair of the Senate meeting and designate a new chair, selecting from individuals present in the following order:  
President Pro-Tempore  
Committee Chair (Standing Committees)  
Senators at large
  1. The LVP shall be permitted to sit in the place of the Senator designated with full rights pertaining to a senator.
  2. The Senator shall immediately lose all rights of questions, debate and voting in consideration of the motion before the Senate.
- C. Decisions of procedure shall be made by the new chair without influence from the LVP.

- D. The period of questions shall be open to the entire Marquette University community. The length and duration of such a period shall be left to the discretion of the chair or by a motion to end questions and enter debate. Members of Senate shall be permitted to ask questions of any person, but questions shall not be asked of any member of Senate.
- E. After questions come to a close, the Committee of the Whole shall move into debate. Ex-officio members do not have the privilege of debate.
- F. Upon returning to the formal Senate:
  - 1. There shall be a period of questions not previously asked, followed by debate.
  - 2. A newly arriving senator, not present for questions in Committee of the Whole, shall be given ten (10) minutes to ask questions in general.
  - 3. The authors' introductory time period shall be omitted.
  - 4. In the event that the Chair of Committee of the Whole becomes the Chair of the Senate, the rights of questions and debate shall be withheld; however, the chair shall be permitted to vote on the motion. No voice vote may be called, and the Chair must vote last.

### **Section VII – Subcommittee Structure**

- A. Subcommittees, standing or special, shall conduct business as detailed in this section.
- B. A subcommittee shall consist of all Senators appointed to it plus any ex-officio members of the Senate who choose to be present.
- C. The President Pro-Tempore shall be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees of the Senate but does not have rights of debate and voting except as outlined in the MUSG Constitution.
- D. All subcommittees shall begin the meeting in public forum.
- E. After the meeting is called to order, the subcommittee shall conduct its business in parliamentary fashion according to Robert's Rule of Order, Newly Revised, except where these Standing Rules conflict.
- F. The authors of the item to be considered shall be given a time to speak on behalf of their item in a fashion similar to the MUSG Senate.
- G. The period of questions shall be open to the entire Marquette University community. The length and duration of such a period shall be left to the discretion of the chair or by a motion to end questions and enter debate. Members of Senate shall be permitted to ask questions of any person, but shall not be asked of any member of Senate.
- H. After questions come to a close, the subcommittee shall move into debate. Ex-officio members do not have the privilege of debate.
- I. The LVP shall be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees of the Senate and shall be permitted to attend all subcommittee meetings except if held in executive sessions.

### **Section VIII – Public Forum**

- A. The Senate may wish to hold a public forum concerning any issues that may come before it. The LVP, with consensus of the President Pro-Tempore and the Chairs of the standing committees, shall then announce a public forum notice using local media at least three (3) class days in advance of the forum.
- B. The forum is an opportunity for dialogue between the Marquette University community and the MUSG Senate.
- C. The forum shall not be considered part of the meeting and notes need not be kept. Attendance will also be optional.
- D. The forum shall begin by announcement of the LVP (Chair) and may end at the chair's discretion.
- E. Any procedure to be followed shall be announced by the LVP (chair), prior to the introduction of any item to be discussed or questioned but after the forum has started.
- F. Members of the Marquette University community may:
  - 1. Ask questions of the Senate
  - 2. Speak freely on any item on the forum's agenda.
- G. The Senate may ask questions of the Marquette University community.
- H. The LVP (Chair) is always in order and may interrupt any speaker.

### **Section IX – Disciplinary Procedures**

- A. The MUSG President shall have the power to direct the Judicial Committee of the Senate, with the LVP's concurrence, to investigate any issue internal or external to MUSG.
  - 1. The investigation may not include any issue which falls under the domain of the Office of Student Development, Office of Residence Life, or any other Marquette University office.
  - 2. This type of investigation may not be focused on a member in any branch of MUSG.
  - 3. The Judicial Committee shall have as an officio member the President Pro-Tempore.
  - 4. The committee shall report its activities only to the Judicial Administrator.
  - 5. The LVP and the President shall only be informed of the start and end of the committee's activities.
  - 6. All meetings held by the committee shall be in executive session.
  - 7. The committee shall have the power of subpoena of any member in MUSG.
  - 8. The LVP, President, and Judicial Administrator, determine the merit of the committee's findings.
    - a. If there is no merit, no action shall be taken.
    - b. If there is merit, the committee shall report its findings to the Senate for trial.
- B. The MUSG LVP shall direct the Judicial Committee of the Senate to investigate any MUSG member (s) only after Senate has formally affirmed his/her impeachment (ordered a trial).
  - 1. The Judicial Committee shall have as an officio member the President Pro-Tempore.
  - 2. The committee shall report only to the MUSG Senate and LVP; however, the committee may receive some guidance from the Judicial Administrator.
  - 3. All meetings held by the committee shall be in executive session.
  - 4. The committee shall have the power of subpoena of any member in MUSG.
- C. In the event a trial is to be held concerning the reprimand, suspension, or expulsion of a member/group, loss of recognition by MUSG, loss or reduction of funding, suspension or termination of employment or contract, or any other issue, the committee shall summarize its findings and report to the MUSG Senate. The Senate shall then function as the trial body and render a verdict. A conviction requires a three-fourths affirmative vote of the seated Senate.

### **Section X – Amendments**

These Senate Standing Rules may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the seated Senate. The amendment shall become effective after approval by the MUSG President and the Vice President for Student Affairs.