Intro to the General Assembly

Who am I??????

Position, Resources, Responsibilities

Position: Speaker of the Assembly

- Part of Legislative Branch and Executive Branch
- Voting member of Assembly
- After being elected to the Senate externally, elected to Speaker position internally by General Assembly
- Chair of General Assembly

Resources: What I can help you with

- Advice on legislation and procedure
- Committee assignments + reassignments
- Connecting people with common interests
- Navigating school administration
- Excusing absences (when applicable)
- Helping understand instruments
  - Bylaws
  - Constitution

Speaker of the Assembly Responsibilities

- Run General Assembly Meetings
  - Keep order
  - Know bylaws and decorum
- Write General Assembly Agenda
  - Decide what business is considered by the Assembly
- Write General Assembly Minutes
  - Attendance
- Assign committees

General Assembly Agendas

How they work and how to read them

Call to Order

- Speaker initiates the meeting
- All present give their attention to the meeting

Roll Call

- Speaker takes attendance
  - Give me notice of expected absence so we can discuss excusing it
- Say "Aye" or "Present"
- If you miss roll call, meet me after the meeting to let me know you were present and how much of the meeting you missed
- Quorum
  - Half + 1 of voting members
  - Currently 21

Approval of the Agenda

- General Assembly confirms the agenda for the night
- Amend agenda here if needed

Approval of the Minutes

- General Assembly certifies minutes of previous meeting(s)
- Amendments to minutes

Announcements

- Very brief information that does not belong in a committee report
- Info that is not brief can be given in General Discussion and Open Forum

Public Forum

- Guest speakers confirmed by Speaker of Assembly WHEN THE AGENDA IS BEING WRITTEN
- Can be presenters, Q&A, or both
- Granted to non-members because it is at the beginning of the meeting
    - Members of the Senate can give presentations etc during General Discussion and Open Forum

Reports of Standing Committees

- Five chairs give reports on committee progress
  - Academic
  - Campus
  - Cultural
  - External
  - SOC
- Generally the executive committee members also have the ability to give reports on work they do
  - Speaker
  - Prez
  - VP
  - DOC
  - DOT

Report of the Court

- Jurist of Court provides report on court activity
  - Rulings

Reports of Special Committees

- Chair gives report
- Example
  - Elections

Special Orders

- Nonroutine business of the Senate
  - Elections business
  - Expulsions
  - Swearing in

Unfinished Business

- Bills and resolutions
  - Tabled business
  - Business that is not immediately voted on (2 week bills like rec bills and bylaw amendments)

New Business

- Bills/resolutions
- Business that is fresh to the agenda
- May be voted on tonight, may not

General Discussion and Open Forum

- Anyone (senator or non-senator) may be recognized to speak about anything relevant to the Senate

Roll Call

- Right before adjournment
- Voting to end the meeting
- May be used in attendance tracking
- Do not disrupt or I will gavel you

Legislation

Adjournment

- I declare the meeting adjourned
- May ask people to stay after if I need info from them etc

Types

- Bills
  - Internal action
    - Spending
    - Election
    - Recognition
- Resolutions
  - Expressions
    - Demanding internal or external action
    - Congratulatory
    - Disciplinary

Example:

Veto Power

- Bills - all
- Resolutions
  - If representing the General Assembly
    - No
  - If representing the Senate
    - Yes
- An be overruled by ⅔ maj

Types of Resolutions

- Statement
  - Congratulatory
  - Condemnation
  - Request/demand
  - Instruction
- Disciplinary
  - Censure
  - Vote of no confidence

Types of Bills

- $$$
  - Budget
  - Contingency grant
  - Stipend freeze (1 mo)
- Student Organizations
  - Recognition/ReRec
  - Derecognition
- Election
  - Declaring election period
  - Certification of results

Motions

How to make a motion

1. Raise your hand (usually)
   a. Wait until you are called on
2. Say "I move to…"
   a. Wait for someone to second (usually)
3. Discuss (usually)
   a. Maker of motion gets to speak first
4. Vote (usually)

Examples of Motions

Approve Agenda/Minutes

- Requires a second
- Simple majority
- Must be done in their respective sections of the agenda

Amend _____

- Can be done to minutes, agendas, bills, and resolutions
- Can be grammatical and formatting changes or change the content
- Simple majority
- Requires second

Immediately Consider

- Allows the Senate to vote on business that was not set to be voted on tonight
- Requires second
- Simple majority

Call the Question

- Ends debate and moves the Assembly into voting
  - May be done on a bill or a motion
- Requires second
- ⅔ majority

Vote by Secret Ballot

- No second
- No vote
- Overridden by roll call in almost all cases
  - Excluding some elections
- No talking until votes are collected

Vote by Roll Call

- Vote one by one with votes recorded by name in the minutes
  - Automatically takes effect
  - Irreversible unless the person making the motion withdraws it
  - Not debatable
- No second
- No vote on motion

Enter a Recess

- Simple majority
- Second
- Break for x time or not to exceed x time

Remove a Senator

- Requires prior approval and recommendation from the Court
  - Via report of the Court
- Second
- ⅔ majority

Enter Executive Session

- Enters a part of the meeting where only voting members of the Senate may be present
- Discussion is not recorded
- No business is voted on in exec session
- Requires second
- ⅔ majority

Suspend the Rules

- Alters a procedure
- Example:
  - Suspend the rules of executive session to allow executive members or advisor to remain in the chamber
- Second
- Simple majority

Table _____

- Delays business
  - "Indefinitely" - business is removed for good
  - "To the next meeting" - business is put into unfinished business in the next meeting and not voted on
- 2nd
- Simple majority

Point of Privilege

- Used to address inequities brought up by the surrounding environment
  - If it's hot, may use point of privilege to request having a recess with all the windows open
  - If there isn't enough space at the table, may use PoP to request a recess while bringing up more chairs etc
- No second
- No debate
- Only vote if it involves procedural action (like a recess)

Point of Order

- Interrupt
- Request for a rule to be applied/enforced
- Second
- ⅔ majority

Appeal Decision of Speaker/Chair

- Either term refers to Speaker at General Assembly
- If I make a ruling then the General Assembly may undo it
- Does not apply to rules that I don't make
- 2nd
- ⅔ majority

Withdraw _____

- Interrupt
- Whoever makes a motion or handles a bill/resolution can withdraw
  - Unilateral
  - No second
  - No vote
  - No override

Point of Information

- Interrupt
- Request clerical information from the Speaker
- No other uses
- No vote or second

When NOT to Make a Point of Information

- When you want to make a point or share information
- To debate something
- To express something
- To tell the Senate the rules of the meeting (leave it to the speaker)
- To ask for details about the topic being discussed

When to Make a Point of Information

- To ask the Speaker what is happening
  - Which topic is being discussed or voted on
- To ask the Speaker how to make a motion
- To ask the Speaker any other PROCEDURAL question

General Assembly Meeting Rules

Wait to Be Called On

- Raise your hand to be recognized for discussion

No Side Conversations

- Pay attention
- Don't interrupt meetings
- Texting counts

Phones Go Away During Voting

- We discuss bills during the debate period and everyone deserves the same opportunity to hear and listen to the discussion
- Speaker may invalidate a vote if it is disrupted
- Speaker will probably expel people who are disruptive

Criticisms of Character

- ~~Stupid~~ misinformed
- ~~Discriminatory~~ hurtful and inflammatory towards group(s) of people
- ~~Criticizing intent~~ criticizing effect

Germaneness

What it Means

- Relevant
  - Stick to the topic
- Appropriate/Professional
  - Respectful
  - Remember where you are
- Sticking to the Rules
  - Wait until called on
  - 5 min is max speaking time

What if You Aren't Germane

- Told to stop and what isn't germane
- Gavelled
- Kicked out
- Censured

Absence Policies

Absences

- If you have more than three unexcused absences you may be subject to expulsion
- Same applies for more than five absences (excused or combo)

Absences (cont.)

- Reach out to me to explain reason for absence **if you want your absence to be counted as excused**
- Excuses include (not limited to)
  - Car troubles/lack of transportation
  - Academic stuff (exams and events)
  - Family issues
  - Health (physical)
  - Career opportunities

Expulsion from Absences

1. VP reaches out to Court
2. Court reaches out to involved parties
3. Court hears out all sides
4. Court gives a recommendation on whether or not to expel
5. General Assembly decides on expulsion during special orders

Speaker's Advice

Abstentions

- There are very few times when a voting member should abstain from voting
- NOT TO AVOID PERSONAL CONFLICTS
- To avoid conflicts of interest or if you absolutely cannot make up your mind
- It is our job to make decisions

Taking on Higher Roles

- History of the General Assembly's leadership
  - Attended lots of Senate events
  - Frequently in the office
  - Actively contributed to committees
  - Added to discussion at General and Committee meetings