**Roberts Rules and Procedures at Mason Staff Senate Meetings**

**Debate**

* Whoever is chairing the meeting, usually the Staff Senate chair, will serve as the Presiding Officer (PO). The PO will introduce agenda items.
* If a senator wants to speak at any time during a meeting, s/he must raise a hand to get the PO’s attention or say her/his name if participating via teleconference. The PO will keep track of the order of people to speak.
* The PO will recognize an individual when it is her/his time to speak. Senators may not speak if not recognized by the PO.
* Senators should keep comments brief (under two minutes) and relevant to the topic at hand. (Do not offer tangentially related anecdotes, introduce new topics or repeat anything already said and, of course, be courteous to other senators and guests.)
* If a senator wants to ask a question before commenting, s/he he may request a “point of clarification.” Once approved by the PO, the question may be asked; once the response has been made, the senator may make her/his point.
* If someone questions the senator speaking or believes a clarification of the point is necessary, s/he should ask the PO for permission to respond before the next speaker is recognized.
* A senator may speak a second time on a topic only after all other senators who want to speak have done so.
* The PO will close the debate and request any action when time requires or when the discussion ends

**Motions**

* If there is an item on which a vote is needed, any senator (except the PO) may say, “I move that XYZ.” The PO may request a motion, if necessary.
* Another senator must second the motion.
* The PO then opens the floor for any debate following the rules outlined above.
* If a senator wants to alter what is to be voted on, s/he must request to “amend the motion.” Once acknowledged by the PO, the senator states his/her proposed amended motion.
* If the senator who originally made the motion approves the amendment, then it replaces the original motion. If that senator rejects the amendment, the group must debate and vote on the motion as it stands.
* Only one motion may be up for debate and vote at a time.
* When the PO decides enough debate has occurred, s/he will close the floor and restate the motion.
* A voice vote of ayes and nays will follow. If the PO feels the voice vote is too close to call, s/he will ask for a raise of hands and a roll call vote for people on teleconference.
* If the original motion is voted down, another person may make a new motion pertaining to the same topic.

**Enforcement**

* The PO will ensure that people are following these rules at meetings.
* If a senator speaks out of turn, the PO will notify her/him of being “out of order.”
* If a senator is called “out of order” twice in one meeting, s/he will not be allowed to participate further (speak or vote) in that meeting.