

Mt. San Jacinto College Academic Senate Standing Rules

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Article I. Name and Purpose

The name of this organization shall be the Mt. San Jacinto College District Academic

Article II. General Senate Business

All Senate business shall adhere to Brown Act, and unless otherwise addressed in the

Rules of Order, supplemented by the resolution process as described in the ASCCC (Academic Senate of California Community Colleges) Resolution Guidelines and Procedures. The President and the parliamentarian shall see to this obligation. On questions of order the President shall have final authority.

Article III. Site Council and Executive Senate General Meetings

Academic senate site council meetings are held monthly on the first Wednesday of the month from 2-4:30pm, in linked rooms on the San Jacinto and Menifee Valley campuses. Executive Senate meetings are held monthly on the third Wednesday of the month from 2-4pm, in linked rooms on the San Jacinto and Menifee Valley campuses. All efforts will be made to broadcast Site Council and Executive Senate meetings live on Zoom.

Senate Site Council meetings will adjourn by 4:30pm and Executive Senate meetings will adjourn by 4pm. Unfinished items will be tabled until the next regular meeting unless there is a motion to extend the meeting. Motions to extend the meeting will require a majority vote.

Public notice shall be given of all meetings consistent with applicable open-meeting laws. Places, dates, and times of regular meetings shall be fixed at the onset of each academic year. Such Schedule shall be posted and maintained throughout the academic year.

Section 1. Quorum

The Senate President or designee holding the meeting shall adjourn any called meetings of the Academic Senate that lacks a quorum one half hour after the announced time of the meeting.

A quorum is established when 50 percent of the membership plus one is present. For Site Council meetings a quorum is established when each council has 4 of its 6 members present. For executive Senate quorum is reached when 4 of its 6 members are present.

Section 2. Establishing and Organizing Meeting Agendas

Meetings shall proceed according to a published agenda, subject to modifications by vote of the Representative Council. The Senate establishes its own agenda. Any individual or group wishing to present an item for inclusion on an agenda may submit it to the Senate Site Council Presidents or Senate support staff.

Section 2.1: The Senate will send out official calls via email for agenda items prior to each Site Council Meeting.

Section 2.2: Site council presidents will collaborate on the creation of the senate site council agenda; the Executive President shall oversee creating the Executive Senate Agenda.

Section 2.3: Senate Site Council, Executive Senate and Senate standing committee meeting agendas must be posted 72 hours (3 days) prior to the date of the meeting in accordance with Brown Act. Agendas will be published and featured on Board Docs. The senate will make every effort to send out a corresponding email alerting constituents of the posting of the agenda.

Section 2.4: Agendas will normally contain the following elements:

- < Call to Order
- < Approval of Minutes
- < Revision/Adoption/Ordering of the Agenda

to cast an informed vote. The record of each action taken shall specify the number of senators affirming, not affirming, and abstaining. The total number of votes on any action shall always be equal to the total number of electors present at the time the vote was conducted.

Section 1. Voting Counts and Abstentions

The number of votes cast shall be used to determine the passage or failure of an item. Abstentions are not votes and therefore have no impact on the number of votes cast. Votes requiring a two-thirds majority for passage shall be of the entire quorum of the Senate less abstentions.

A senator has the right to abstain on any vote, but should, to the best of their ability, avoid abstentions. The following are typical reasons for an abstention:

- < Absence from previous meeting (Typically for meeting minutes)
- < Conflict of interest

Lack of knowledge or understanding are not sufficient warrant for an abstention. A senator should in good faith strive to achieve enough knowledge of an agenda item to arrive as a decision. If an understanding cannot be reached during general discussion a motion to table should be made.

Section 2. Majority Requirements

Unless otherwise specified, actions of the representative council shall be adopted only upon an affirmative vote by simple majority of more than half of those present and voting less abstentions.

Any Senator may motion to approve items by unanimous consent. Such a motion would need to receive a second and have zero dissenters to pass.

Section 3. Proxy and Absentee Votes

Senators should be present at all senate meetings to represent their constituents and vote on agenda items. There is no proxy or absentee voting except when required by applicable law.

Section 4. Voting Types

Voting is most often done by General Consent or Voice vote. The Executive President has discretion on the type of vote that will be cast on an item, but any Senator may call for a Roll Call vote on an item at any time.

Advisory votes. The Executive President may at their discretion call for a non-binding advisory vote on any item under consideration.

General consent. The quickest and most simple method of determining the will of the majority is by the chair's asking if "there are any objections." If no one voices an

objection, the announced ruling stands. If this procedure is used, it is primarily on questions of procedure and very rarely on main motions.

Voice. A voice vote is first in popularity and second in order of ease. The chair asks those favoring a motion to say "aye" and those opposed to say "no." After hearing the vote, the chair judges which has the majority and announces the decision. A member who doubts the accuracy of the judgment calls for a division of the house, which is an order for another vote, this time by standing.

Roll call. When conducting a roll call vote, the chairperson or secretary calls the roll. Affirmative voters respond with "yes," negative with "no." If a member does not choose to vote (and no one can be forced), he/she answers "present." This type of vote is very rarely used by small organizations.

Section 5. Motions

way to state a main motion is to introduce it with the three words, "I move that. . . ." After a main motion has been made, a second is required to show that one other member approves of having the matter considered.

It is not necessary to gain recognition to second a motion nor does a second to a main motion necessarily indicate approval of the motion itself.

A person seconds a motion by simply saying, "I second the motion." After the main motion has been seconded, the chairperson will open the floor for debate on the motion.

Besides being used for argument about the main motion, the debate period can also be used for amending the motion, which is a formal change or modification of a main motion. The motion before the group at any one moment is sometimes called the Question.

After the debating and amending period is over, the chairperson will ask the group if they are ready to vote "on the question."

If the group is ready to vote, they will join in a general chorus of "Question." Upon receiving this approval, the chairperson will state the question (or motion) again before the vote is taken.

The chairperson will say, "The question (or motion) is . . ." There are two other commonly used ways to close or end debate.

A member may move the previous question, or a member may simply call the question. Both are motions and require a second. They also require a two-thirds majority for passage. There is no debate on either of these motions. A defeated motion returns debate to the floor.

- ◁ **Ask Questions.** You can always "raise a question of privilege," to ask either the chairperson or the parliamentarian what is happening, what sort of motion is relevant to the discussion, when you can speak or how you can properly accomplish a goal you wish to pursue.
- ◁ **Speak To the Point.** Always tailor your remarks to the specific motion on the floor.
- ◁ **Avoid Unnecessary Parliamentary Gymnastics.** If the members of a group yield to the temptation to play with the rules, parliamentary procedure becomes counterproductive and rational decision making is seriously undermined.
- ◁ Avoid the use of electronic devices for texting and outside communication
 - ◁ * Principles of Speech Communication, D. Ehninger, B. Gronbeck, A. Monroe, 8th Brief Edition, Scott Foresman and Company, 1980, pp. 296-297.

Article VI. Records

A written record of meetings of the Academic Senate shall be archived on Board Docs. All records shall consist of an accurate record of members present, actions considered, and votes cast. Additional items shall be entered into the written record only upon approval by the senators. The official record shall be published, and a copy maintained in the senate archives.

All official Senate documents (including those on the internet) shall include adoption and update dates.

Article VII. Annual Review of Standing Rules

The standing rules are reviewed by the Academic Senate. An annual review shall take place with the Academic Senate Bylaws after new senators have been seated and before the first Senate meeting of the Fall semester (for example, during the annual senate training). Any proposed changes are presented and voted upon by the second Senate meeting.