



# Sheridan Senate Senate Procedures

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# Sheridan Senate Procedures

## Appendix to the Sheridan Senate

### Terms of Reference

## 1. PREAMBLE

Section 1.1(h) of the Sheridan Senate Terms of Reference grants to the Senate the power to “make rules for the conduct of its affairs, through associated Procedures.” Under that authority, the following procedures have been developed to facilitate the processes and operations of the Senate.

## 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENATORS

(See also Section 4. Responsibilities of Senators of the Sheridan Senate Terms of Reference for more comprehensive information)

### 2.1 Attendance Expectations

- (a) Attendance at all Senate meetings is important. It is understood that there are legitimate reasons that Senators may miss a regular or special Senate meeting. Senators who are unable to attend a regular or special Senate meeting for any reason shall notify the Secretary of Senate in writing, indicating the reason(s) for their absence;
- (b) Senators who miss three (3) meetings during any Senate Year may be asked by the Chair to resign from Senate; and,
- (c) Senators may not appoint proxies or designates to vote for them if they are unable to attend a meeting.

## 3. OFFICERS OF SENATE

### 3.1 Officers of Senate – See Senate Terms of Reference for Officer Responsibilities

Chair of Senate  
Vice-Chair of Senate  
Speaker of Senate  
Deputy Speaker of Senate  
Secretary of Senate  
Recording Secretary of Senate

## 4. SHERIDAN SENATE MEETINGS

(See also Section 7. Sheridan Senate Meetings of the Sheridan Senate Terms of Reference for more comprehensive information)

### 4.1 Regular Sheridan Senate Meetings

- (a) Unless otherwise determined and announced by the Senate Executive Committee, regular meetings of Senate shall normally be on the fourth Thursday of the month, except in July, August and December;
- (b) Once finalized, the dates of all regular Senate meetings for any given year shall be published through all channels regularly used for Senate communications;
- (c) Unless otherwise determined and announced by the Senate Executive Committee, regular Senate meetings shall normally commence at 4:00 PM and shall normally end no later than 6:00 PM, unless the meeting is extended with the approval of a majority of those present and voting; and,
- (d) At the discretion of the Senate Executive Committee, a regular meeting of Senate may be cancelled if the volume or urgency of business submitted for inclusion in the agenda is insufficient to warrant holding the meeting.

### 4.2 Special Sheridan Senate Meetings

- (a) A special meeting of Senate may be called at the discretion of either the Chair of Senate or the Senate Executive Committee. Moreover, a special meeting shall be called by the Senate Executive Committee upon receipt of a formal written request signed by a minimum of 15 voting Senators. The written request shall specify the business to be considered at the special meeting;
- (b) Notice of a special Senate meeting shall be provided to all Senators and announced to the Sheridan community-at-large through all channels regularly used for Senate communications, at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. The notice will include an agenda specifying all items of business to be considered at the special meeting;
- (c) Only items of business specifically identified in the notification of a special meeting shall be discussed at a special meeting of Senate; and,
- (d) All documentation relating to the business to be discussed at a special meeting must be distributed to Senators with the Notice of Special Meeting.

### 4.3 Senate Agenda and Senate Minutes

- (a) Items for inclusion on the Senate agenda are reviewed in advance by the Senate Executive Committee and materials pertaining to those agenda items must be received by the Secretary of Senate normally five business days in advance of the Senate Executive Meeting;
- (b) The Senate Agenda Item Request Form is to be used to bring forward an agenda item request to the Senate Executive Committee for consideration to be included on a upcoming Senate Agenda;
- (c) The agenda for all regular Senate meetings will include time for a question period. The primary purpose of the question period is to provide an opportunity for

Senators or others in attendance to raise questions or seek clarification regarding matters which may be of collective interest or concern. Substantive questions for which an adequate response may require research or preparation should normally be submitted to the Recording Secretary in writing at least four (4) days prior to the meeting. Should this not occur, the respondent may elect to answer the question at the next regular Senate meeting;

- (d) The Senate agenda shall be circulated to all Senators at least four (4) business days prior to the regular meeting;.
- (e) Draft minutes of each regular or special Senate meeting shall be prepared and made available for review at least four (4) business days prior to the next regular meeting of Senate, at which they shall be considered for approval;
- (f) Once adopted by Senate, the minutes from the current Senate Year and at least one (1) previous Senate Year shall be posted on the regular Senate communications channels;
- (g) A copy of all approved Senate minutes will be made available to anyone requesting the minutes; and,
- (h) The Senate minutes available for review as noted in (e) and (f) above shall exclude any confidential motions passed during in camera segments of Senate meetings, until such time as the Senate Executive Committee approves them for publication.

## 5. RULES OF PROCEDURE AT SENATE MEETINGS

### 5.1 General Rules of Procedure at Senate Meetings

Duties of Speaker

- (a) The Speaker shall preserve order and decorum at all meetings of Senate; ensure that meetings are conducted in compliance with the Senate Terms of Reference and these Procedures, and if not provided therein, in accordance with meeting protocols as set out in Bourinot's Rules of Order. (Stanford, 1995).

Speaker to rule on points of order

- (b) The Speaker shall rule on all matters of procedure. The Speaker's ruling may be appealed by any member and in such case, the decision shall be made by the majority of the members present and voting. Once seconded, the appealing member may state the reason for appealing the ruling. The motion to appeal is not debatable and must be put to the vote immediately. If it receives the majority support the Speaker's ruling is overturned.

If the Speaker considers that a successful appeal from the ruling would constitute a suspension of these rules of order, he or she shall rule that section 5.1 (cc) applies to such appeal. A ruling by the Speaker that section (cc) applies to an appeal of a ruling shall be conclusive and will not be subject to further appeal.

Agenda, Order of Business

- (c) The order of business observed at all regular meetings of Senate shall be determined by the Executive Committee in accordance with these Procedures; The order of business at a meeting shall be the order set out on the agenda unless varied or added to as provided for in these procedures.

Vary order of business

- (d) A motion to vary the order in which the items on the agenda are to be taken up shall be in order at any time except when another motion is being debated or voted upon. The mover shall briefly indicate reasons why the order should be varied, but otherwise the motion shall not be debatable.

Add to agenda, two-thirds majority	(e) A matter not on the agenda may be introduced at a regular meeting only if the introduction of the matter is agreed to by two-thirds of the members present and voting. The mover shall briefly indicate reasons why the matter should be introduced, but otherwise the motion shall not be debatable.
Member may give notice of motion at any meeting, to be considered by Executive for inclusion on future agenda	(f) At any meeting of the Senate a member may give notice of a motion to be presented at a subsequent meeting of the Senate. A motion of which notice is given shall be considered by the Senate Executive Committee for inclusion on the agenda of a subsequent meeting or other action as it deems appropriate. The Executive Committee shall report to the Senate at its next regular meeting on its decision regarding the notice of motion.
Member recognized to speak	(g) Any member desiring to speak during a meeting of the Senate shall signify this intention to the Speaker. When recognized by the Speaker the member shall address his/her comments to the Speaker.
No member to be interrupted, except by Speaker	(h) The Speaker may at any time call to order any member, including the member who is speaking, but otherwise, no member shall interrupt any other member. A member called to order by the Speaker shall cease his or her remarks.
Point of Order	(i) Any member can rise at any time on a point of order, interrupting the speaking member if necessary, to point out a breach of the rules. The Speaker must then rule whether a breach of the rules has occurred.
Member may speak more than once only at discretion of Speaker	(j) A member or other person invited to address Senate is entitled to speak only once to a motion, but at the discretion of the Speaker may be permitted to speak again to the same motion.
Length of time to speak	(k) A member or other person invited to address the Senate shall speak for no more than five minutes at one time, except with the permission of the Speaker or with the agreement of the majority of members present and voting. Such agreement shall be granted or refused without debate.
Member may request motion to be stated	(l) Any member may require the motion under discussion to be stated at any time during the debate, but not so as to interrupt a speaker.
No speakers after call to vote Motions to be seconded	(m) No member shall speak to a question after it has been put to vote by the Speaker. (n) All motions, except those for adjournment of the meeting or of a debate, shall be seconded before being debated or put to a vote by the Speaker. The Speaker may at his or her discretion require that a motion be put in writing before being debated or put by the Speaker.
Speaker may permit a question period before the formal debate begins	(o) After the mover and seconder have spoken to a motion presented to the Senate for debate, the Speaker may, at his or her discretion and with the consent of the mover of the motion, allow members to ask questions to obtain information regarding the motion. Such questions shall be directed to the Speaker who may request an answer from any member or any person present. During this period of questioning no further motion, except a motion to adjourn the meeting or a motion to extend the time of adjournment of the meeting, may be put. The Speaker shall determine and declare when the period of questioning is ended, and upon such declaration shall call for formal debate on the motion.

Procedural Motions	(p) When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received by the Speaker except for one of the following purposes, and the order of precedence of these motions shall be as follows:
(q) not debatable	(i) to adjourn the meeting;
(r) not debatable	(ii) to extend the time of adjournment;
(s) limited debate	(iii) to recess;
(t) not debatable	(iv) to adjourn the debate;
(u) not debatable	(v) to call the vote;
(v) not debatable	(vi) to withdraw the motion;
(w) debate	(vii) to refer back;
(z) debatable	(viii) to amend;
(aa) not debatable	(ix) to divide.
Adjourn meeting	(q) A motion to adjourn the meeting shall always be in order, and shall be decided without amendment and without debate.
Extend time of adjournment, two-thirds majority	(r) A motion to extend the time of adjournment shall not be debatable and to be carried shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting.
Recess	(s) A motion to recess for a stated period of time shall always be in order and may be amended only with respect to the duration of the recess. The Speaker may limit debate on the motion and amendments if such debate continues for more than five minutes.
Adjourn debate	(t) A motion to adjourn the debate shall always be in order, and shall be decided without amendment and without debate. The item so adjourned shall appear on the agenda for the next regular meeting.
Call the vote, two-thirds majority	(u) A motion to call the vote shall be decided without amendment and without debate. If the motion to call the vote is decided in the affirmative by two-thirds of the members present and voting, the question under debate shall be put forthwith without further amendment and without further debate. If the motion to put the question is not carried by a two-thirds majority, debate on the question shall continue.
Withdraw motion	(v) When a motion has been made and seconded, it shall be dealt with unless, at the request of the mover and with the consent of the meeting, it is allowed to be withdrawn. Consent shall be understood if no objection is made to the motion being withdrawn. If objection is made, the Speaker shall put the question "that this motion be withdrawn", which shall be decided without debate by the majority of the members present and voting.
Motion to refer	(w) A motion to refer the question to a committee, or to commit it to a committee for consideration and report, shall be debatable.
Limit of two amendments on floor	(x) If two amendments are before the meeting at one time, no motion to amend further shall be in order until one of the amendments has been disposed of. When no further amendments remain to be disposed of, the motion (as amended if amendments have been passed) shall be put to a vote.
Amendment cannot contravene sense of motion	(y) An amendment which contravenes the sense of the motion to which the amendment is proposed or negates it shall be out of order.

Withdraw amendment	(z) An amendment proposed may be withdrawn prior to its being seconded. Once seconded, the motion to amend may be withdrawn with the consent of the mover and the meeting.
Divide	(aa) A motion to divide the question under consideration into parts that can be considered and voted on separately may not be introduced while an amendment to the question is being considered. Such motion shall not be debatable but the mover may briefly explain reasons why the question should be divided.
Voting Procedure	(ab) Voting on motions, except for procedural matters (e.g. approval of agenda or approval of minutes), shall be by secret ballot.
Suspend rule or rules of order	(ac) Suspension of the foregoing rules of order contained in sections (c) to (bb) rules of order inclusive shall require a unanimous decision by members present and voting.

## 6. RULES OF PROCEDURE AT SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### 6.1 Senate Committee Procedures.

- (a) A committee of the Senate may conduct its meetings by such rules of order as are considered fair and expedient for the transaction of the business before the committee. The Chair of a committee may at his or her discretion, invoke the rules of order of the Senate in order to expedite the transaction of business. Senate may at any time determine rules of order for any of the committees it establishes under its Terms of Reference.
- (b) Each voting committee member present at a meeting of a committee of the Senate, is entitled to one vote on any question. Committees may choose to allow designates to attend for members to serve a communications function. However, no designate will have voting rights.
- (c) All questions that come before any committee of the Senate shall be decided by a majority of the committee members present and voting and in the case of an equality of votes, the Chair will vote.
- (d) All Standing Committees shall make an annual report to the Senate;
- (e) A Senate Standing or ad hoc Committee may also report to another such Committee at the other Committee's request. Any such report shall also be conveyed to Senate, for information; and,
- (f) Senate Standing or ad hoc Committees may form working groups to deal with specific tasks within these Committees for consideration and possible conveyance to Senate. Terms of reference and membership of these working groups shall be determined by the Committee.
- (g) Normally, it is expected that members attend committee meetings in person. At the discretion of the Chair, however, any member(s) unable to attend in person may participate in that meeting by telephone or other communication means that allow all members to communicate simultaneously and instantaneously. A member participating in such a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting. For those meetings, or portions thereof, held in camera, it is expected that members participating by telephone or other communication means will ensure that the necessary standards of confidentiality are maintained and that their participation is conducted in a setting that ensures such confidentiality.



- (h) At the discretion of the Chair, a committee meeting may be held by telephone or other communication means that allows everyone participating in the meeting to communicate with each other simultaneously and instantaneously. A person participating in such a meeting is deemed to be present at the meeting. If such a meeting, or a portion of it is held in camera, it is expected that members will ensure that the necessary standards of confidentiality are maintained and that their participation is conducted in a setting that ensures such confidentiality.
- (i) If a matter arises that the Chair judges to be critically time-sensitive, a committee may be asked to consider a matter outside of a committee meeting by means of an electronic vote. Such matters would also, in the judgment of the Chair, normally require little, if any, discussion prior to voting. Matters considered in this manner shall be reported at the next regular meeting of the committee and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. Committee members shall be given one full day's notice of the intent to use an electronic vote prior to the distribution of the materials on the matter to be considered. Members with concerns, who would like an item to be discussed by the committee in advance of the electronic vote, must notify the Chair prior to the proposed voting period. The Chair will then determine an appropriate course of action and inform the committee of the decision on the matter.

## 7. ELECTIONS

### Elections

Elections will be held annually to fill vacancies in the elected Senate membership. Elections are held to fill positions normally vacant due to Senators' completion of their membership term; however, positions may also be vacant for a variety of other reasons. Each of the faculty and student constituencies<sup>1</sup> will have the opportunity to elect their own representatives to Senate. Elections are also conducted annually for Senate Officer positions, including Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Senate Executive Committee members.

#### 7.1 Chief Returning Officer

The Secretary of Senate, serving as Chief Returning Officer ("CRO") will manage the Senate electoral process and procedures for voting. The CRO's responsibilities include, but are not limited to: promoting and planning the elections; ensuring that the election process is organized in a fair, unbiased, non-partisan manner; strictly enforcing all election rules and guidelines as outlined in Sections 7 and 8 of these Procedures; and providing a report to Senate and the Sheridan community at the conclusion of each election as appropriate.

#### 7.2 Elections Timeline and Documentation

The annual elections process will normally begin in February with the specific dates to be determined by the CRO as part of the annual Election Guidelines published on the Senate website.

Documentation related to the Senate election process will be made accessible to the Sheridan

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty and student constituencies consist of: FT faculty, NFT faculty, Counselling faculty, Centre for Teaching and Learning faculty, Library and Learning Services faculty, student constituency includes current students from each PS Faculty.

community through the Sheridan web site, and the Secretary of Senate/CRO.

### **7.3 Electoral Process and Voting Procedures – Elections to Senate**

- (a) Members of the full-time (FT) and non-full-time (NFT) faculty in the Faculties, FT faculty in Counselling, Library and Learning Services and Centre for Teaching and Learning, and students elected to represent their constituencies will be determined as follows:
- (b) Elections will be conducted annually through the Senate Secretariat by the Senate Secretary in the role of Chief Returning Officer.
- (c) Annually the Chief Returning Officer, or designate, will determine the number of members to be elected in each constituency based on the number of expired terms and/or vacancies of 12 months or longer.
- (d) A Senate Election Timeline will be developed by the CRO and made available to the Sheridan community through regular communication channels including the Senate pages on the Sheridan website.
- (e) The CRO will issue a Call for Nominations and advise the Senate membership constituencies (Faculties, Centre for Teaching and Learning, Library and Learning Services, Counselling, and Students) of the number of members to be elected.

#### **7.3.1 Eligibility to Nominate**

- (a) All FT faculty members of a Faculty (including those on leave) are eligible to nominate FT faculty candidates for that Faculty and to vote in the election. Nominees must be current academic staff members of the Faculty or constituency (Counselling, Library and Learning Services, or Centre for Teaching and Learning), for which they are nominated to represent.
- (b) All NFT faculty members of a Faculty who hold a current teaching contract are eligible to nominate NFT candidates for that Faculty and to vote in the election. NFT faculty member nominees must have a current teaching contract in the Faculty which they are nominated to represent.
- (c) All current Sheridan students are eligible to nominate student candidates and are eligible to vote.

#### **7.3.2 Eligibility to Stand as a Senator**

- (a) NFT faculty with current teaching contracts are eligible to represent the Faculty they are employed by as a NFT Senator.
- (b) FT faculty members who hold cross-appointments shall be eligible to serve as and nominate Faculty Senators and to vote for Faculty Senators in their primary Faculty.
- (c) FT faculty members who are seconded to areas that are not part of a Faculty but who retain their faculty status, shall be eligible to serve as Faculty Senators, nominate faculty Senators and to vote for Faculty Senators in their home Faculty.
- (d) FT faculty members who are seconded to administrative positions are not eligible to serve as Faculty Senators, nominate faculty Senators or vote for Faculty Senators during the period of their secondment.
- (e) Faculty on leave are not eligible to serve as Senators.

- (f) All current Sheridan students are eligible to stand as Senators.

### **7.3.3 Senate Membership Nominations**

- (a) Those faculty or students eligible to stand may declare their candidacy by completing and submitting the appropriate Senate Membership Nomination Form.
- (b) Nominations must be signed by a nominator and a seconder both of whom are eligible voters from the same constituency as the nominee, and endorsed by the nominee and returned to the CRO by the stipulated deadline. Nomination deadlines will be noted on the nomination form. No nominations will be accepted after the deadline.
- (c) The signature of the nominee/candidate on the nomination form will indicate an intention to stand for election, as well as a statement indicating the ability and intent to fulfill the term and the requirements of Senate membership.
- (d) Candidates will be asked to submit a candidate profile or statement for posting during the campaign and voting period. .
- (e) A slate of candidates for each constituency will be prepared by the CRO. A designated campaign period will be set.
- (f) Election Guidelines to implement these Procedures will be prepared annually by the CRO and made available on the Senate Site.
- (g) If the same or fewer nominations are received for the number of positions to be filled in any one constituency by the deadline date, the candidate(s) will be acclaimed.

If fewer nominations are received than the number of vacant positions a Second Call for Nominations will be issued for the remaining positions.

In the event that a Second call for nominations ends with positions left unfilled the position(s) will remain vacant until the next regular election period.

### **7.3.4 Voting**

- (a) Voting will be by electronic ballot through the office of the CRO.
- (b) Eligible voters may vote for no more than the number of candidates required to fill the vacant positions. Only one vote may be cast per candidate.
- (c) In the event of a tie for a position, a second ballot will be conducted with only the names of the candidates who are tied for the remaining position(s).
- (d) Verification of on-line votes will occur and then election results will be announced.
- (e) An Election Report will be presented to Senate at the next regular meeting of Senate following the conclusion of the elections.

### **7.3.5 Ex-officio Associate Deans**

Ex-officio Associate Dean representatives are appointed through processes determined by their Faculties for terms of three years.

## 8. VACANCIES

Resignations from Senate or Senate Standing Committees shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of Senate or the Chair of the Standing Committee.

A Senator ceases to hold office when they are no longer a member of the constituency they were elected to represent.

### 8.1 Vacant Senate Positions

- (a) A vacancy in any ex-officio Senate position shall remain vacant until the position in question is filled (including an interim or acting appointment);
- (b) A vacancy in any elected Senate position shall be filled from the same constituency as that of the departing Senator, and shall normally be filled for the duration of the departing Senator's original term of office; and,
- (c) A vacancy in any elected Senate Officer position (e.g. Speaker) shall be filled:
  - (i) i. As part of the next annual election cycle; or,
  - (ii) ii. By holding a by-election within thirty (30) days where there is deemed by the Executive Committee to be sufficient time remaining in the current Senate year to make such a by-election practical.
- (d) The Senate Executive Committee shall be responsible for initiating and overseeing any arrangements necessary to ensure that Senate vacancies are appropriately filled as described fully in these Procedures.

### 8.2 Temporary Absence

- (a) In the event that a Senator is unable to continue to serve on the Senate for a temporary period (three (3) to twelve (12) months) during his/her term, a replacement member will be elected by the constituent LAC in the case of a Faculty Senator or Student Senator, or the Chair of Senate in the case of an ex-officio Senator, for the period of the absence;
- (b) No replacements shall be appointed for absences of less than three (3) months; and,
- (c) In the event of a planned absence of more than 12 months, a Senator shall be required to resign from Senate and Section 8.1 shall apply.
- (d) When a Senator returns from a temporary absence his/her term on Senate will expire as originally set out upon their election to Senate.

### 8.3 Vacancies and Temporary Absences on Committees

- (a) Vacancies and temporary absences on Senate Committees will be filled in the same manner as vacancies and temporary absences on Senate as outlined in Sections 8.1 and 8.2; and,
- (b) The relevant Committee chair, in consultation with the Senate Secretary, is responsible for initiating and overseeing any arrangements necessary to ensure that vacancies and temporary vacancies in Senate Standing or ad hoc Committees are appropriately addressed.