



California Health Sciences University

CHSU STANDING RULES OF ORDER

I. PURPOSE

CHSU has chosen to adopt a method of consensus decision-making that better aligns with values of Integrity, Excellence, Collaboration, Diversity, Innovation, Stewardship, and Growth.

The rules of order ensure an approach that ensures consensus approval, rather than a more traditional majority rule. Participants in consensus approval will need to display the following:

- Ability to listen carefully to what others are saying;
- Display good faith effort to understand each other;
- Ability to speak their minds;
- Accountability for proposals upon consensus approval and adoption, such that everyone will implement the decisions and actively endorse them.

Let it be known in other documents referring to other “Rules of Order” that this document of the “CHSU Standing Rules of Order” be implied in its place.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Meetings

Meetings, either in person, electronically, or via teleconference, shall be moderated by the designated officer. In most cases this will be the Chair, but may be another member, if there is an agreement to do so. As the meeting business occurs through consensus, the membership/board has a shared responsibility to ensure that the standing rules are being followed.

The facilitator of the meeting will provide a prepared agenda of the topics anticipated to be discussed. This agenda will include any reports from committees or officers, pending business, or proposals for new action. As the meeting continues, the paramount concern is for consensus to be reached on an issue.

Reports: Reports of officers or committees will be a recounting of information and opening for discussion and/or questions.

Proposals: A proposal is a recommendation that a specific action be taken. Generally, using a problem-solving methodology may be a useful process to follow. Multiple proposals related to a



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specific topic/problem on the table at any time in a discussion. Every effort should be made to ensure that all participants understand which proposal is being focused on at each point in the conversation. Proposals on one topic/problem should be settled before proposals on another topic/problem are considered. Once a proposal is made, it belongs to the group, and is no longer “owned” by the person who proposed it. It cannot be withdrawn at this stage; there is no need to second a proposal.

Amendments: Amendment(s) that arise will be adopted by a consensus model which mirrors that of adopting proposals. As the proposal belongs to the group at this stage, anyone in the group may suggest an amendment.

B. Adoption of a proposal

All adopted proposals must be specific in wording and in actions. If the group merely wishes to have an issue explored and brought back for further discussion, the proposal being explored should be referred to a committee (either existing or new). As decisions are made by consensus, the majority of all proposals should be unanimously approved. For instances in which that does not occur are managed as described elsewhere in this policy.

C. Decision-Making

Decisions are made in one or two stages: 1) By consensus, or; 2) By vote if consensus is not reached. Moving to the consensus check can only occur once all opinions on a proposal have been heard. A proposal may be adopted at the consensus check stage, without moving to the vote stage.

1. The consensus check:

- a. The facilitator states the specific proposal being considered.
- b. The facilitator records:
 - i. Who likes the proposal?
 - ii. Who can live with the proposal?
 - iii. Who is uncomfortable with the proposal?
 - iv. Who is uncertain about the proposal?
- c. This is repeated with all the proposals on the topic/problem. The facilitator tracks the results of the consensus check.
- d. For interpretation of the consensus check, the facilitator looks for a balance of



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opinion. If most are uncomfortable with the proposal, it is withdrawn; however, the proposal may be reconsidered and/or revised at a later date. If most are uncertain about the proposal, clarification will be obtained prior to checking for consensus at a later date. If at a later date, consensus is not possible, the facilitator may proceed to a vote as described below.

- e. Depending on the outcome of the consensus check, the facilitator should ask participants to explain what makes them uncomfortable and/or uncertain about the proposal. The entire group is invited to offer explanations, thoughts, or information to resolve the discomfort and uncertainty and move the group toward consensus. After the clarification of these issues, members might have changed their minds. For that reason, it is helpful to repeat consensus checks occasionally to see if consensus has been reached.
- f. If everyone in the group can live with the proposal, consensus is achieved, and the proposal adopted.

2. The vote:

- a. The question at hand for every vote is: "Should we implement this decision over the stated concerns of the minority, when a majority of us think that it is workable?"
- b. If the answer is yes, then majority rule is achieved and the proposal passes (This approach is well-suited to committees managing student admissions, faculty reappointments and promotion, student academic performance etc.)
- c. If the answer is no, there can be postponing of a decision, but only if one of the three defined options below is selected. The Chair will prescribe the time frame for the selected option.
 - i. Option 1: Generate a new proposal, considering the concerns of the uncomfortable/uncertain, or,
 - ii. Option 2: Conclude the issue cannot be resolved and agree to return to the proposal later with the group after additional data or clarifications are available, or,
 - iii. Option 3: Conclude that the issue cannot be decided at this time and refer the proposal and the concerns to another committee. This alternate committee should include at least one person who was in favor, and one



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person who was uncomfortable/uncertain about the proposal. The mandate of the alternate committee is to revise the proposal such that later discussion could occur.

To the extent a vote is required on any committee action, it shall be conducted in accordance with the appropriate University or College policy/governing statute.

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- Policy Owner: Provost
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