

# 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 Senate, hereinafter called "the Senate."

## Article II. General Senate Business

All Senate business shall adhere to Brown Act, and unless otherwise addressed in the Constitution, Bylaws or Rules of order, shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's 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
- Public Comment on Agenda Items
- Information Items
- Consent Agenda
- Old Business
- New Business
- Senate Reports

- Presentations
- Public Comment on non-agenda items
- Next Meeting Announcement
- Adjournment

*Section 2.5:* Agenda items will include the following information as it available:

- Description of Item
- Relevant Attachments (i.e., back up documents, historical information etc.)
- Relevant (10+1) Category
- Suggested Action

*Section 2.6:* Annually Reviewed Items

- Fall and Spring ASCCC Resolution Packets
- Senate Goals and Timelines
- Senate Committee Charges, Goals, Membership
- Pre-Approved Flex list
- Faculty Handbook
- Syllabus Checklist
- Senate Meeting Dates and Important Dates

### Section 3. Agenda Item Timeline

Agenda items for action will require two reads. Items will initially be placed on the agenda as an information item and brought back as an action item in a subsequent meeting to allow constituents ample time for dialog and review.

*Section 3.1:* The Executive President can assign items for one read at their discretion.

*Section 3.2:* Items on first read information will not be moved to the Executive Senate until Site Councils act on the item at second read. Items voted up or down at action will then be moved to the Executive Senate for final approval.

*Section 3.3:* Items that are moved to the Executive Senate must be voted on as presented to the Executive Senate by the Site Councils. If the Executive Senate decides to make changes or amendments to an item the item must be returned to Site Councils for reconsideration.

*Section 2.3a:* Items returned to Site Councils will be placed on the agenda for action at the next scheduled Site Council meeting.

### Section 4. Agenda Item Discussion

Discussion on agenda items is intended to afford consideration of a range of ideas and to respect the rights of majority and minority points of view. The President as chair has

the responsibility to moderate discussion, to see that all views are fairly represented, and all interested individuals are allowed the opportunity to speak.

The Site Council Presidents will give information and action items on the agenda an estimated time limit. If more time is needed a senator may motion to extend the time of an item.

### Section 5. Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda items are considered routine or sufficiently supported by back-up information, so more discussion is not required. Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved in one motion unless a Senator requests separate action on a specific item. Items removed from the Consent Agenda will be changed from Consent to Action and considered separately.

Some examples of Senate Consent items include curriculum policy changes, Equivalency Petitions, and committee charges updates.

### Section 6. In Meeting Procedures

Academic Site Council and Executive Senate meetings will follow Parliamentary procedures. The values and use of Parliamentary Procedure. In their excellent reference work, *The Practical Guide to Parliamentary Procedure*, 2nd Edition. Edward S. Strother and David W. Shepard point out the four basic values of parliamentary procedure:

- An Orderly Way to Conduct the Affairs of an Organization
- A Way to Determine the Will of the Majority
- A Way to Protect the Minority
- A Way to Protect the Rights of an Individual Member

### Section 7. Public Comments (Hearing of Individuals, Groups and Delegates)

Guests that speak in open comments on agenda items are limited to no more than two (2) minutes per speaker and 20 minutes total unless further time is granted by the Academic Senate. Any member of the Senate may *Motion to extend* speaking times for guests.

A separate agenda item near the end of each meeting will allow for public comments on non-agenda Items to address any item other than agenda items that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Academic Senate (10+1). Comments shall be limited to two (2) minutes per speaker and twenty (20) minutes per subject unless further time is granted by the Academic Senate.

## Article IV. Voting Procedures

Senators are elected to make decisions on items presented on the senate agenda. Senators should fully research each agenda item and ask questions during discussion

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

Proposed action from a member of the group is called a "motion." A motion that proposes some new action is sometimes called an "original main motion." The proper 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.

Note: During periods of inactive discussion, a member might simply call out "question." To this the chair response, "The question has been called for. If there is no further discussion, we shall vote." A simple "call for the question," however, is not forcing; and if there are members who wish to debate – properly made, seconded, and passed by a majority of two-thirds – should force the organization to terminate discussion.

	Must be 2nd	Open for Discussion	Can be Amended	Vote Count Required to Pass	May be reconsidered or rescinded
Main Motion	x	x	x	Majority	x
Amend Motion	x	x		Majority	x
Kill a Motion	x			Majority	x
Limit Debate	x		x	$\frac{2}{3}$ Vote	x
Close Discussion	x			$\frac{2}{3}$ Vote	x
Recess	x		x	Majority	
Adjourn	x			Majority	
Refer to Committee	x	x	x	Majority	x
Postpone to Later Date	x	x	x	Majority	x
Table	x			Majority	
Postpone Indefinitely	x	x	x	Majority	x

## Article V. Meeting Decorum

The Senate shall make possible the participation of its members in the formulation of educational policies and practices, the upholding of the principles of professional ethics, and the resolution of all matters affecting the academic and professional welfare of the academic program and the faculty of Mt. San Jacinto College. To maintain this pledge of professionalism meetings of the Academic Senate will follow general decorum rules:

- **Listen Carefully.** A good chairperson will clarify what ideas (motions) are "on the floor," including the sorts of comments that are germane to a particular motion.

- **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.