

B F2020.16

An Amendment to the Second Chapter of the Bylaws to Address Decorum in Debate

A bill for the consideration of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government

November 11, 2020

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Whereas, the mission of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government (hereafter LSA SG) is to “actively seek the voices of LSA students and advocate their interests to improve academic and non-academic life”;¹ and,

Whereas, LSA SG utilizes its Bylaws to structure and facilitate official business, and recognizes the need for amendments to the Bylaws to improve its function; and,

Whereas, decorum in debate is essential to democratic discourse with LSA SG; and,

Whereas, the interactions within debate should be respectful and be centered on the motions before the body as opposed to the personalities and individuals in the meeting; and,

Whereas, the use of a member’s name during debate is a practice that directs critiques toward the individual, as opposed to their arguments; and,

Whereas, it is the practice within the House of Commons in the United Kingdom, as well as the House of Representatives and the Senate within the United States, to refer to members by their constituency during debate; and,

Whereas, this manner of address is encouraged by Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, which advise our Bylaws; and,

Whereas, it is the opinion of the sponsor that this practice should be codified within the Bylaws to further instill this practice within LSA SG.

Be it therefore resolved, that the Bylaws be amended in accordance with the language in Appendix A; and,

Be it further resolved, that this amendment take immediate effect; and,

¹ The Constitution of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government. Article II

Be it further resolved, that during the Old and New Business, as well as Appointments, Elections, and Nominations, that reference be made to an individual solely by their title, or by the phrase “previous speaker”, or something similar; and,

Be it finally resolved, that members treat one another with respect and understanding during debate, as we meet here to pursue ideas and projects to help the students of the College of LSA.

Appendix A

Procedures for Debate

2.01.00 **Procedures.** Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised) shall be used except as stated otherwise in this chapter.

2.01.01 **Time Limits.** The time limit for each subagenda item shall be thirty minutes. The time used to debate amendments to the main motion shall be included in the total time limit. The time limit for debate may be extended by a majority vote of the Government.

2.01.02 **Extension of Time Limit for Debate.** The time for debate may be extended by a majority vote of the Government; it still requires a two-thirds majority to reduce the time for debate as described in Robert's Rules of Order.

2.01.03 **Maximum Time for a Speaker.** No speaker may have the floor at any one time for more than three minutes. The intent of this section is to prevent filibustering, and not to stifle debate. The Government may enforce this section at its discretion.

2.01.04 **Speaker Qualifications.** Elected representatives, appointed representatives, associate representatives, and executive board members at General Meetings may speak exclusively towards motions at General Meetings. Elected representatives, appointed representatives, and associate representatives shall be given priority on the speakers' list. Individuals who are not members of the government may speak only on government business if they are the sponsor of a resolution currently being discussed. This excludes individuals speaking during constituents' time and invited guest speakers, who are allotted time on the agenda to speak.

2.01.05 **Amendments.** The speaker of a motion may choose to accept or reject an amendment before the main motion has been made and seconded. The Government may choose to accept or reject amendments once the main motion has been made and seconded.

2.01.06 Decorum in Debate. *During a debate, the names of individuals within the meeting shall not be included in speakers' orations. References may be made to individuals using solely their title (i.e., the President, the Representative) or as "the previous speaker", or a similar suitable description. A speaker using the name of a member of the Government during debate should be called to order.*