

## Introduction

The Brock University Students' Administrative Council (BUSAC) is the third highest governing body of Brock University Students' Union (BUSU), behind the student body as a whole, and the BUSU Board of Directors. According to the Constitution, BUSAC has responsibility for the "conduct of work of the Corporation," and has a number of roles laid out within the Constitution itself, as well as any work that is delegated to it by the Board of Directors.

The business of BUSAC is governed using an established set of parliamentary rules entitled Robert's Rules of Order. The formality of Robert's Rules of Order provides a basis for organization and professionalism within BUSAC. Beyond that, BUSAC has developed its own precedents and common practices that have essentially become the Standing Orders of Council. These Standing Orders of Council are formalized in the legislation of the corporation like Robert's Rules of Order and need to be adopted, via a motion by BUSAC, each legislative year. Such a motion will be presented as part of the agenda of the first meeting in each legislative year. What follows in this document are the Standing Orders of Council submitted to BUSAC for the 2018-2019 year.

## Definitions:

- **BIRT: Be It Resolved That** – Every motion begins with BIRT which is simply saying that the motion we are voting on or discussion is now officially on the table and may be adopted as is.
- **BIFRT: Be It Further Resolved That** – Simply indicates that there is a second part to the original BIRT and that the BIFRT is also officially on the floor for discussion, debate, voting and possible adoption.
- **Simple Majority:** Refers to a vote that requires 50% + 1 of voting members present to be in-favor or opposed.
- **2/3rds Majority:** Refers to a vote that requires 2/3rds of voting members present to be in-favor or opposed.
- **Mover:** Refers to the voting member of the assembly that brings forward a motion.
- **Secunder:** Refers to the voting member of the assembly which is the first member to support the mover on a presented motion.
- **Abstention:** A vote in which a member wishes to neither vote in favor nor against a motion. This is often done when a member needs more information or is unclear on the issue and not comfortable with deciding in favor or opposed.
- **Point of Privilege:** Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc. - may interrupt only if necessary. For example if a member wishes to ask the speaker to slow down or speak louder, they may do so by interrupting professionally with a point of privilege.
- **Point of Information:** Used by a member when they are confused about the proceedings or happenings. For example, if a member is unclear of what is being said they may interrupt with a point of information
- **Point of Order:** Infraction of the rules, or improper decorum in speaking. Must be raised immediately after the error is made. This is also for when the meeting has moved out of the agenda order.
- **Extend Debate:** Applies only to the immediately pending question; extends until a certain time or for a certain period of time. This must come as a motion from the floor to extend debate.

- **Limit Debate:** Limiting debate to fixed period of time or limiting the number of speaking turns each member can have.
- **Lay on the Table:** Temporarily suspends further consideration/action on pending question or motions; may be made after motion to close debate has carried or is pending.
- **Take from the Table:** Resumes consideration of item previously "lay on the table" – The exact motion that was on the table must be taken from the table.
- **Call the Question:** Ending debate in order to take a vote. This can end debate before everyone on the list has finished speaking. Must come at the beginning of a members speaking term (cannot end point with asking to call the question).
- **Appeal Decision of the Speaker:** Appeal to the assembly for decision - must be made before other business is resumed. An appeal is not debatable.
- **Suspend the Rules:** Allows a violation of the assembly's own rules (except Constitution); the object and rationale of the suspension must be specified.
- **Amend:** Inserting or striking out words or paragraphs, or substituting whole paragraphs in a motion or piece of legislation.
- **Move In-Camera:** Move the discussion to that of a secure setting. All members without speaking rights must leave the room, and minutes must not be taken. What is discussed in the room is confidential and thus not to leave the room. Once In-Camera members are in the room they cannot leave until the In-Camera session is over and regular discussion has resumed.
- **Orders of the Day (Agenda):** A call to adhere to the agenda (a deviation from the agenda requires Suspending the Rules)
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Inquire as to the correct motion - to accomplish a desired result, or raise a point of order.
- **Main Motion:** Brings new business (the next item on the agenda) before the assembly
- **Divide the Question:** Divides a motion into two or more separate motions (must be able to stand with seconders on their own)
- **Withdraw/Modify Motion:** Applies only after question is stated; mover can accept an amendment without obtaining the floor.
- **Consider by Paragraph:** Adoption of paper is held until all paragraphs are debated and amended and entire paper is satisfactory; after all paragraphs are considered, the entire paper is then open to amendment, and paragraphs may be further amended. Any Preamble cannot be considered until debate on the body of the paper has ceased.
- **Commit /Refer/Recommit to Committee:** State the committee to receive the question or resolution; if no committee exists includes size of committee desired and method of selecting the members (election or appointment).
- **Postpone to a Certain Time:** State the time the motion or agenda item will be resumed at.
- **Reconsider:** Can be made only by one on the prevailing side who has changed position or view

- **Postpone Indefinitely:** Kills the question/resolution for this session - exception: the motion to reconsider can be made this session
- **Informal Consideration:** Move that the assembly go into "Committee of the Whole" - informal debate as if in committee; this committee may limit number or length of speeches or close debate by other means by a 2/3 vote. All votes, however, are formal.

### Precedence and Common Practice

Brock University Students' Administrative Council (BUSAC) shall be governed by the rules and orders of Roberts Rules of Order for the most part. Over the years BUSAC has adapted these rules of order to fit their particular needs. This combination of precedence, common practice and Robert's Rules of Order ensures the business of BUSAC is done in an organized and professional manner.

All meetings will follow a predetermined agenda that will be approved as the first item of business of each meeting. To add items to the agenda of a meeting you must submit your motion or report along with any supporting material concerning your business to the Speaker ([speaker@brockbusu.ca](mailto:speaker@brockbusu.ca)) before 12 noon, 2 business days before the regularly scheduled meeting. The Speaker will prepare a formal agenda, which will include all submitted motions, reports and supporting material, for circulation to all members of BUSAC no later than 48 hours before the meeting. Each agenda will be approved, via a motion, by BUSAC at the beginning of each meeting. Amendments to the agenda may be presented during the approval process and shall be adopted only once approved by a simple majority of voting members present.

Business during a meeting shall be conducted in a professional and respectful manner at all times. Decorum of the meeting shall be enforced by the Speaker. Rulings, judgments and decisions rendered by the Speaker will be representative, fair, and just. Should BUSAC at any time feel the Speaker has ruled incorrectly or unjustly BUSAC is free to challenge the ruling by making such a motion. The Speaker's ruling will then be voted on by BUSAC and either upheld or defeated.

All members holding speaking rights will be allowed three (3) speaking turns per motion. This procedure is to encourage efficient and effective usage of members speaking rights and to limit one's ability to dominate a debate. A speakers list will be tracked by the Speaker and Deputy Speaker. Members will be allowed to have their second speaking turns only after all members on the speaking list have completed their first turns. This process will be the same before members can have their third speaking turn. Members will be informed prior to their third and final speaking turn that it is such.

All members holding speaking rights have the ability to pass the floor to a non-speaking member, not currently running for a BUSU election or a campaign. Additional speaking turns may be given to members of council who have exhausted their three speaking turns. For elections rules, see Standing Order BUSAC during Elections. This must be done through indicating such to the Speaker when the members speaking turn comes up. Once the floor is passed from the member, they will be considered as to have already spoken once to the motion and thus only have two remaining speaking turns.

Each member holding speaking rights are required to convey all comments "through the speaker" and not to engage in direct conversations with other members nor make personal comments. For example if a member wishes to comment on an issue, they should conduct themselves as follows: "Mr. / Madam Speaker, I feel that the topic at hand..." In addition, if a member wishes to ask a question of a member, it should be done in this manner; "Mr. /Madam Speaker, what is the progress of the VPUA's current policy paper?" No member shall speak until the Speaker has acknowledged them for the minutes.

Each motion put forward to the assembly must be presented by a voting member of the assembly which will be considered to be the “mover” and a voting member of the assembly that will support to motion which will be considered to be the “seconded.”

Overall, the mood, flow and candor of the BUSAC meeting is to remain professional, on topic, respectful and representative of the student constituency each member is representing. Further, the mediation of the meeting by the Speaker will be done in an equal, just, rational and fair manner. Respect is the call of the day, and is expected to be given by both members and administrators.

### **Territorial Recognition**

After calling each meeting to order, the following territorial recognition will be stated:

"We begin this gathering by acknowledging the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people."

### **BUSAC Meeting Time Limits**

BUSAC meetings shall begin at 6:30pm on approved dates and will end no later than 9:30pm. Meetings may continue past the three-hour limit only after a motion to do so is passed by two-third majority of those present and voting

### **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

During opening procedures the Speaker will ask for any conflict of interests to be declared. Conflicts of interest will be left to the discretion of the Speaker. Any Councilors who are in conflict of interest will be asked to remove themselves from discussion and voting when required.

### **Quorum**

Quorum is the fixed minimum number or percentage of members that must be present in order for business to be conducted legally. According to Article IX, Section 2 of the BUSU Constitution, "No action taken at a meeting of the Brock University Students' Administrative Council shall be effective unless a quorum consisting of a majority of the voting members of council are present." Mathematically, this means that 50%+1 of the voting members must be present to conduct official business at BUSAC.

Quorum can and will fluctuate throughout the year as voting members are added to council, are removed from council, or take leaves of absence. The number of people at individual meetings may also fluctuate as members arrive and depart. If at any time quorum is not in place during a meeting, business must be halted until quorum can be obtained. If at any time quorum can not be obtained, the meeting will be suspended, or will not begin, depending on the circumstances at hand.

Official quorum will be regularly monitored by the Speaker and Deputy Speaker and detailed each meeting in the Notes from the Speaker.

### **Agenda / Minutes:**

The agenda for BUSAC meetings will be set by the Speaker. All materials to be placed on the agenda for a meeting must be submitted no later than two business days prior to the meeting by noon. This includes motions, reports, presentations, topics of discussion and any other items to be dealt with at the meeting.

All meeting materials will be circulated electronically at least 48 hours before the meeting.

All members of council are expected to have read all meeting materials prior to the meeting and are expected to be prepared to speak, discuss, and vote on meeting materials.

### **Motions**

#### **There are four Basic Types of Motions:**

1. **Main Motions:** The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
2. **Subsidiary Motions:** Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled, and is voted on before a main motion.
3. **Privileged Motions:** Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
4. **Incidental Motions:** Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

#### **How To Present a Motion and How a Motion is Dealt With (The steps):**

1. **Obtain the floor:** (this step is the process to obtain the floor at all times, not just in regards to a motion)
  - a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
  - b. Indicate to the Speaker that you wish to address the room. Once given the floor address the Speaker by saying, "Mr. Speaker." Always wait until the Speaker recognizes you.
2. **Make Your Motion:**
  - a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.
  - b. Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ..."
  - c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.
3. Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion
4. Another member will second your motion or the Speaker will call for a second.
5. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.
6. **The Speaker States Your Motion**
  - a. The Speaker will say, "It has been moved and seconded that we ..." Thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
  - b. The membership then either debates your motion, or may move directly to a vote.
  - c. Once your motion is presented to the membership by the Speaker it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members. Therefore if something comes up that you feel should be added or subtracted, you alone cannot change the motion, the assembly must agree upon the amendment,

often these are “friendly” meaning it is not a major change but rather a wording issue.

#### 7. Expanding on Your Motion

- a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is at this point in time, rather than at the time you present it.
- b. **The mover is always allowed to speak first.**
- c. All comments and debate must be directed to the Speaker.
- d. Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.
- e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Speaker. The Speaker will call upon you if there are questions asked from the floor he/she feels you could answer.
- f. Your answer or comments must be on the question or within the parameters of the Speaker’s request only. This is not another time to further your point or opinion.

#### 8. Putting the Question to the Membership

- a. The Speaker asks, "Seeing no other members wishing to speak, I will call the question" or a voting member places a motion on the floor to call the question has been seconded and passed a 2/3rds majority vote.
- b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
- c. The Vote is taken in on one of the five (5) fashions listed below and the results are calculated to determine majority rule.

It is recommended that all motions be delivered to the Speaker and Deputy Speaker in writing so that clarity and accuracy in the minutes is maintained.

Part of the role of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker is to assist members form and word motions prior as well as during meetings.

#### Voting

Voting is an essential function of BUSAC. Each motion put forward must be voted on. Voting requirements will come in two (2) forms, Simple Majority or 2/3rds Majority. Each type of motion or topic at hand has its own requirements.

Voting methods may occur in the following methods;

1. **By Voice** -- The Speaker asks those in favor to say, "Aye", those opposed to say "no". Any member may move for an exact count or to have their vote stance recorded.
2. **By Division** -- This is a slight verification of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the Speaker so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
3. **By Ballot** -- Members write their vote on a slip of paper; this method is used when secrecy is desired.
4. **By Roll Call** -- Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
5. **By General Consent** -- When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Speaker says, "if there is no objection ...". The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.

The default method of voting is “By Division” unless the motion specifies otherwise. If a voting member expresses a desire to vote using an alternate method, this shall automatically be deemed as ‘friendly’ unless another member objects or requests a different alternate method. In this situation where the method of voting is contested, a vote “By Division” shall determine which method of voting is to be used for the motion at hand.

#### Voting Requirements:

Some motions require a **simple majority vote** and some require a **2/3rds majority vote**.

**2/3rds Majority Votes: (The following motions require 2/3rds, all other motions not listed here require simple majority vote)**

- Capital expenditure requests
- By-Law Amendments
- To take up a question out of its proper order
- Motion to Suspend the Rules
- Motion to remove an agenda item prior to its place in the agenda
- Motion to re-open or go to the previous or a past question
- Motion to limit or extend limits on debate
- Motion to censure

**In-Camera**

There may be times in which BUSAC will need to deal with very sensitive issues. These issues may range from Human Resources, Ethics cases, Appeals, Legal issues or discussions that are not pertinent to be recorded into public record. For these issues and some others BUSAC will make a motion to move to an "In-Camera" session.

In-Camera is defined as a portion of a meeting where all recording devices are halted, strict confidentiality is in place and members in the room (only members allowed to be present during In-Camera sessions are those who hold voting or speaking rights) are not permitted to leave during the session. If a member does leave the room they are not permitted back into the session until its completion, unless special circumstances are arranged or agreed upon.

During an In-Camera session BUSAC can decide whether or not to continue to use the Orders of Council, Suspend the Rules, Limit Debate or set a time in which the session will conclude.

During an In-Camera session no motions can be made other than to go into In-Camera or come out of In-Camera sessions.

Discussions that occur during In-Camera sessions are held in the highest of confidence and members that are present are legally bound to this confidentiality once they leave the discussion. If at any time a member does not feel comfortable about going into or continuing in the In-Camera session they may express this discomfort and request to leave the proceedings. If a member has removed themselves from the session, any information or discussion they have been privy to is still bound to the same level of confidentiality as if they had remained in the room during the entirety of the session.

**Notes from the Speaker**

Notes from the Speaker is an opportunity for the BUSAC Speaker to address BUSAC directly regarding the orders and procedures concerning past rulings and current business. This address will always be presented to BUSAC prior to any Old or New Business at each BUSAC meeting. In their Notes, the Speaker will try to clarify and explain rulings, procedures and other operational governance issues.

Each meeting, the Speaker will, as part of their notes, outline the quorum requirements for the meeting, and indicate whether or not quorum is reached. The Speaker will also indicate, based on the number of members in attendance, how many votes will be needed for a majority and a 2/3 majority.

The Speaker will make mention of any motions requiring a 2/3 majority vote. Any motion that does not require 2/3 majority will require a simple majority.

### **Presentations**

Presentations is a section of the agenda that take places directly before Old Business and gives members the opportunity to present to BUSAC any supporting material they have prepared to complement a motion in either New or Old Business. Furthermore, this is an opportunity for those who are not members of BUSAC to present and speak in front of BUSAC.

While Robert's Rules of Order still govern the business being conducted within the Presentations section, this section of the agenda is designed to be less formal. No motions of any kind will be made and evaluation or editorializing with regard to the corresponding motion is not acceptable. Members are free and encouraged to ask questions of the presenter regarding the content of their presentation.

Members are encouraged to organize presentations for items such as capital fund requests, club funding requests, and bylaw amendments. Members should simply indicate to the Speaker and Deputy Speaker when submitting the supporting material that they wish to make a presentation.

### **Committee/Board or Slate Elections**

Multiple times throughout the year, BUSAC will elect members to committees, elect the BUSAC representatives to the Board of Directors, and choose slates of candidates for various positions. When the floor is opened for nominations, members in the room may nominate their fellow councillors and/or members (as the position allows) to fill the seats or fill the slates. Members are allowed to nominate themselves for these positions. Once it appears that no more nominations are to be gained, the Speaker will close the nominations, and ask each nominated candidate, in the order to which they have been nominated, whether they accept their nomination. Those who do accept their nomination shall move to the next phase of the election process.

Regardless of whether the seat or slate is contested or uncontested, each candidate will receive the option of speaking for no more than two (2) minutes to state why they should be selected for this position. If any nominee wishes, the other nominees must vacate the room during this two minute presentation. At the completion of these brief statements, members of council have the opportunity to ask questions of the nominees under the following constraints:

- a) The question must pertain to the position being sought, or the duties performed within that position
- b) The question must be directed to all candidates for the position
- c) Nominees will be given a reasonable length of time to answer each question.
- d) The number of questions asked during this process shall be limited to no more than five (5).

At the conclusion of the questions, any uncontested nominations shall be ratified by council. For any contested nominations, there shall be a vote held by secret ballot. When the ballots are tabulated, the election of the winning candidate(s) shall be ratified by council.

### **Question Period**



Question period is a time in the meeting in which questions can be freely asked of the executive, committees, members of council or guests present. Open Question period will always be the first item after the agenda is adopted and the previous meeting minutes have been ratified. Open Question Period is designed for any members of the Corporation who are not empowered with speaking rights at BUSAC by legislation. This is designed so that the average student is able to ask questions of the councillors or members in the room, without having to sit through all the items for discussion. A Closed Question Period will always be the last item of New Business. The purpose for this time is for those who do have speaking rights at council to ask questions for informational purposes and to gain updates otherwise not found in reports.

The method of asking questions will be held to the same rules as if a member was debating during regular motions. Questions are to be direct as are answers. Above all, a professional domineer is to be held, and the goal of information gathering must remain.

Each meeting may be predetermined as to which body will be open for questioning. For example for the first meeting of the year there would be no reason for questions to be asked of incoming councillors as they have not conducted any business until this meeting. Therefore question period will be open to the executive committee or guests present in the meeting.

## **Reports**

Written Executive and General Manager Reports are to be submitted with the agenda and circulated before each meeting. During "reports" each Executive and the General Manager is encouraged to verbally report on any areas they wish to highlight from their report.

When required, committees are to report to BUSAC. They may report without a motion (for information purposes only) or with a motion (open for discussion).

**End of Semester/Year reports:** In accordance with By-Law 103;

*BUSAC Councillors must individually or collectively, with the other representatives of their faculty (i.e. all Social Science reps) submit a 250 or more word statement summarizing the major issues (of department) that BUSAC had dealt with and their opinions to the speaker before the last BUSAC meeting each semester. The statements will be kept on file for public perusal and presented to the Editor of the Brock Press to be utilized as he or she sees fit.*

*BUSAC Councillors will be reminded, by the Speaker, of their obligation to complete the assigned submission no later than the second last BUSAC meeting of the semester.*

*BUSAC reports should be concise, provide a brief overview of happenings, and present clear recommendations.*

These reports will be kept in corporate history and be made available to the Brock Press upon request as well as on the BUSU.net website. Once submitted, these reports will become available to the student population.

### **Time Limits**

Due to the volume of material covered in BUSAC meetings, it has become important to establish time limits for various aspects of the meeting. These limits will be monitored by the Speaker, or their designate, and will only be extended by the will of the council through a motion to extend debate (50%+1 Support).

- Open Question Period (15 Minutes)
- Presentations (10 Minutes, 30 Minutes for Questions)
- Club Funding Request Presentations (5 Minutes, 10 minutes for Questions)
- Old/New Business (15 Minutes, 90 sec speaking times)
- Reports (10 Minutes)
- Closed Question Period (10 Minutes)

### **Camera Use and Cell Phone Use**

Any video recording devices shall be allowed in Council meetings

When council makes a motion to move in camera and it is approved, all recording equipment, including but not limited to, cameras, microphones, etc. must be removed from the council chamber until council comes out of camera, at which point they can return during open session.

An exception is to be made for devices belonging to members of council, though they shall remain off.

Members of BUSAC are required to turn off and put cell phones away during all presentations

### **Video Conferencing**

Video conferencing shall be allowed at the discretion of the Speaker.

Voting shall be allowed via video conferencing

### **BUSAC During Elections**

BUSAC councillors will not be required to take a leave of absence while participating in an election period as a candidate or campaign team member. Councillors will be required to attend BUSAC during the campaign period but cannot campaign while acting as a councillor during any BUSAC meeting. Any campaigning during BUSAC will be subject to an infraction as decided upon by the Chief Returning Officer.