

## ***Guidelines for Council Minutes***

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### **Statutory authority**

Procedures governing Council meetings are under the following authority:  
The *University of Saskatchewan Act, 1995*  
Council's *Bylaws and Regulations*  
Kerr and King, *Procedures for Meetings and Organizations, Third Edition*

Relevant excerpts from the *Act*

55: Unless the council decides otherwise, the secretary is the secretary to the council.

61 (1) the Council may:

(a) regulate the conduct of its meetings and proceedings

62(1) Within 10 days of every meeting of the council, the secretary shall give each dean and department head a written copy of all motions passed by the council at the meeting

(2) On receipt of the written copy of a motion pursuant to subsection (1), every dean and department head shall post the written copy in a conspicuous place that is readily accessible to students and faculty members.

Relevant excerpts from Council *Bylaws and Regulations*

5(h) The meetings of the Council and of committees of Council will be conducted in accordance with the rules of order contained in *Procedures for Meetings and Organizations, Third Edition* by Kerr and King.

Relevant excerpts from Kerr and King

114. Preparation of Minutes

Minutes are the permanent record of the proceedings of a general or committee meeting of an organization. The minutes are prepared by the meeting secretary and include the following basic items:

- 1) The date, time, and place of the meeting
- 2) The name of the person in the chair and of any changes in the chair;
- 3) The number of members present and where practical their names;

- 4) All rulings made by the chair and the nature and result of any appeals that arise from these rulings
- 5) All motions properly moved, including the name of the mover and seconder;
- 6) The results of all votes taken
- 7) A list of all reports and documents introduced during the meeting, with copies of these reports being attached to the official copy of the minutes;
- 8) A summary of significant points raised during the debate of motions, but not a verbatim account of the speeches;
- 9) Any commitments made by officers or any other persons present at the meeting;
- 10) The time of adjournment
- 11) The signature of the meeting secretary.

Minutes need to be clear, accurate, brief, and objective. With respect to the last of these, it is important to remember that the minutes are no place for the expression of personal opinions, interpretations, or commentaries on the debates. In the cause of accuracy, the secretary is entitled to ask questions on the meaning of motions, remarks, or proposals, and to determine the names of movers of motions or speakers in a debate.

## **Protocol for minutes**

“The Secretary will indicate the tenor of the discussion without attribution of comments to particular Council members unless they are speaking *ex officio*, *e.g.* as Provost, as Dean of a College, etc. or unless a member asks that the comments be on record (normally at the same meeting).

The Secretary will also record commitments, *e.g.* to investigate something, including the name of the person who will be responsible for undertaking the commitment and/or for bringing a report back to Council.”

*Approved by Council November 2005, reviewed by the coordinating committee of Council October, 2015*



## *Guidelines for Council Motions*

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### **Types of Motions:**

- **Motion to receive:** In receiving a document, Council acknowledges that a report has been presented but leaves open the question of what actions, if any, should be taken as a consequence. Approval of a motion to receive a report means that the committee is discharged (unless it is a standing committee) and is relieved of further responsibility for the matter. The motion to receive a report is neither debatable nor amendable. By receiving a report, Council is not bound by the report's findings or recommendations contained within it; such recommendations may be considered and adopted (or not) in a subsequent motion or at a later meeting.
- **Motion to accept:** This is much like a motion to receive, except that it enables the report to be debated. It is used when a report contains significant information but no specific recommendations. Since a report is a historical document that contains the findings and conclusions of a committee, it cannot be amended, even when a meeting does not agree with its contents. The motion to accept a report is debatable, but cannot be amended.
- **Motion to recommend for approval:** This motion is used where the document being reviewed is under the jurisdiction of one of the other governing bodies of the university (such as the Board or Senate), to indicate that Council has looked at it and is in agreement with the findings and/or recommendations contained within it.
- **Motion to approve in principle [or to endorse]:** Such a motion indicates that Council is in agreement with the general direction and intent of a document, but has not yet approved any specific actions in it; these (if they are under Council's jurisdiction) would require a subsequent motion to approve them.
- **Motion to approve:** in approving a document, Council also approves the particular findings and recommendations put forth within it.
- **Motion to ratify:** This is used in rare circumstances, such as when a negotiated agreement is put to the membership for approval.
- **Motion to adopt:** This motion has an element/flavour of 'owning' what is being recommended—for example, Council could adopt a document that lays out a procedure for something under Council's jurisdiction (such as procedures for program deletion), or a bylaw change. Once adopted, there is an expectation that Council itself will implement the substance of the motion, and that there is a long-term commitment to its intent.

## **Notice of Motion**

The purpose of a Notice of Motion is to ensure that members have an opportunity to know in advance what topics will be on an agenda, and thus to judge the importance of attending the meeting to register their vote. Once a notice of motion is given, other motions on the same topic will generally be allowed by the chair, and/or amendments—even fairly significant ones—can be made to the motion without further notice.

Council's Bylaws indicate that, "a motion to amend the bylaws will be preceded by a notice of motion presented in writing to the members not less than 30 days prior to the date of the meeting at which the motion is considered."

Other motions dealing with substantive matters requiring consideration by members of Council require only 10 days' written notice of motion. Where there is uncertainty about whether a motion deals with 'substantive matters,' the Chair makes a ruling. The requirement for 10 days' notice may be suspended upon vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a Council meeting.

A recommendation to Council contained in a committee report is deemed to be a notice of motion if the report containing the recommendation is included with the agenda of the meeting at which the report is considered.

Kerr and King (*Procedures for Meetings and Organizations*) indicate that Notice of Motion can be made by the executive, committees, or individual members, and that they must include the name of the mover and the seconder of the motion. Movers and seconders of any motion at Council must be members of Council and must be present at the meeting at which the motion is debated and voted upon.

## **Motions from individual members of Council**

Individual members of Council may present motions to Council in any one of three ways:

- 1) send a Notice of Motion to Coordinating Committee along with supporting documentation; the Committee would then put it on the Council agenda or refer it to a committee, which will then report back on the matter to the Coordinating Committee and to Council;
- 2) send a Notice of Motion directly to the University Secretary to include with agenda materials for the next Council meeting, to be included with the agenda materials for that meeting as a Notice of Motion for the following meeting; or
- 3) propose from the floor at a Council meeting that an item and/or motion be added to the agenda. This would then require a 2/3 majority vote to be added to the agenda, and the motion could be dealt with at that meeting.

*approved by the Coordinating Committee Dec 2/08 and revised Dec 3/10*