



**RUTGERS**  
University Senate

# **Rutgers University Senate 2020–2021**

**Chair: Jon L. Oliver**

**Vice-Chair & Parliamentarian: Peter R. Gillett**

**Executive Secretary: Mary J. Mickelsen**

# Overview of the Rutgers University Senate

- What is the Rutgers University Senate?
- What does the Senate do?
- Who are the Senators?
- How is the Senate managed?
- Senate Agendas
- Senate Meetings
- Senate Committees
- How do issues reach the Senate?
- Procedure at Senate meetings
- What happens afterwards?

# What is the Rutgers University Senate?

- It is the sole institution that represents the entire community of faculty, students, staff, administrators and alumni to the president of Rutgers University and to its Board of Governors
- It's comprised of faculty, students, staff, alumni, and administrators
- It is the principal shared-governance advisory body to the president
- It exercises legislative authority on certain matters delegated to it by the Board of Governors

# What does the Senate do?

- The Senate shall concern itself with all academic and non-academic matters pertaining to the mission of the university
- Taking into account the diverse functions of the separate units of the university, it shall establish minimum standards respecting admission, scholarship and honors
- The Senate shall also:
  - regulate formal relationships among academic units within the university, including the organization of the disciplines
  - recommend norms for teaching loads
  - establish the default university calendar

# What does the Senate do?

- The Senate shall advise the President on matters of broad educational and research policy, which matters include but are not limited to:
  - budget priorities and allocations and general planning
  - the establishment or dissolution of colleges, schools, divisions, institutes, and similar educational units
  - special affiliations and programs
  - regulations affecting students and faculty, such as those concerning academic freedom, equal opportunities, and personnel practices and procedures
  - such changes in educational and research policy as are covered in the *University Policy Library*
- The President of the University shall act on such matters only after having received the advice of the Senate or after giving the Senate a reasonable time in which to present its views

# What does the Senate do?

- Either at the request of the president or the Board of Governors, or upon its own initiative, the Senate may by resolution advise the president or the Board of Governors on any matters of concern to the university
- *In practice, though the administration does from time to time ask the Senate to consider specific matters (such as proposed mergers of units, or planned changes in policy documents), the majority of the recommendations made by the Senate arise from issues initiated within the Senate itself*
- The Senate may exercise an appeal function, submitted by a member of the faculty or student body, based on guidelines describe in University Policy 50.2.2.C

# Who are the Senators?

## Voting senators:

- Faculty senators elected by and from the faculty members of the faculties, colleges, schools, campuses, and other units of the University (unit entitlements being based on number of faculty and/or students)
- Student senators elected by and from the student members of each school or college offering degrees (unit entitlements being based on numbers of students)
- Part-time lecturers (8, elected by part-time lecturers)
- Staff senators (20, elected by the staff)
- Alumni senators (8, elected by the Alumni Association)
- Administrative senators:
  - President, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, University Librarian, Executive Vice President for Finance & Administration, Vice President for Financial Planning/Budget
  - Chancellors of Camden, Newark, New Brunswick and RBHS

## Non-voting senators:

- Deans of each faculty, school, and college

# Who are the Senators?

- The total entitlements for Senators thus varies from year to year depending on numbers of students and faculty – tending on the whole to grow
- Total entitlements are approximately 250 altogether, with about 210 voting Senators
- For a variety of reasons, it is common that not all units have elected their complete entitlement of Senators at any specific point in time
- Typically, the number of voting Senators may hover around 180–200
- So we are still a large Senate



# Who are the Senators?

- For the 2020-21 year, the Senate at present comprises:
  - 130 faculty
  - 58 students
  - 20 staff
  - 8 alumni
  - 37 administrators

# How is the Senate managed?

- The Senate and its business are managed by an Executive Committee which is elected by Senators each year at an organizational meeting of the incoming Senate
- Day-to-day administration is the responsibility of the Executive Secretary (a University employee reporting to the EVPAA)
- The Executive Committee comprises:
  - Chair
  - Vice Chair
  - Immediate Past Chair (for one year, if not already elected for another position on EC)
  - Executive Secretary (non-voting)
  - 4 faculty members each representing one of the campuses
  - 4 students each representing one of the campuses
  - 2 additional at-large faculty members
  - 1 part-time lecturer
  - 1 staff member
  - 1 alumnus

# How is the Senate managed?

- The Executive Committee meets prior to each Senate meeting, and once more after the final Senate meeting of the year
- Its primary duties are:
  - discussing and issuing charges to committees to investigate and report on matters brought before it
  - receiving the reports of committees
  - docketing reports and other matters for review by the whole Senate
  - setting the Agenda for forthcoming Senate meetings
- In addition, the Executive Committee is responsible for:
  - coordinating the activities of the Senate
  - acting on behalf of the Senate if necessary between meetings

# Senate Agendas

- Agendas follow a general order of business:
  - Call to Order and Determination of a Quorum (1/3 of voting senators)
  - Chair's Report
  - Report of the Executive Secretary:
    - Approval of the Agenda
    - Approval of the Minutes
    - Communications
  - Committee Reports:
    - Standing Committees
    - Ad Hoc Committees
  - Administrative and Special Reports
  - Old Business
  - New Business
  - Executive Committee Report
  - Report of the Senate Representatives to Boards of Governors and Trustees
  - Reports of Campus Faculty and Student Liaisons
  - Adjournment

# Senate Agendas

- The Agenda for each Senate meeting, along with links to supporting materials, is usually issued one week prior to the meeting date
- New Business can be added by a 2/3 vote at the meeting in exceptional circumstances (only if matters are submitted in writing and pertinent to the Senate's mission, and time does not permit them to go through the usual process)
- The Agenda is adopted by the Senate during the report of the Executive Secretary early in the meeting

# Senate Meetings

- The Senate usually meets nine times each year, at roughly monthly intervals, during the fall and spring semesters
  - A schedule of dates is approved by the Executive Committee each year, published to the Senate, and available online. This year's schedule can be found at:  
<https://senate.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/20-21-Senate-Schedule.pdf>
- Senators should plan on devoting the whole of those days to Senate business:
- Senate committees meet in the morning at 10:00 a.m.
  - Faculty, student, and staff caucuses meet at noon over lunch
  - Full Senate meetings start promptly at 1:10 p.m.
- There is a standard time limit for Senate meetings of 3 hours, though the Senate may vote to extend that time in order to complete its business for the day

# Senate Meetings

- Senate meetings are generally open to the public
- Only Senators have the right to speak in debate or to vote on resolutions and other motions
- Senators may speak no more than twice on each motion (the second time only after other senators who wish to speak for the first time), for up to five minutes each time
- In recent years, it has become customary for presenters of administrative reports to field questions afterwards
- The Executive Committee generally extends the privilege of asking questions of reporting administrators to anyone present at the time
- The Executive Committee sets time limits for the asking of questions (to preserve time to hear the replies!)
  - this is NOT an opportunity to make a speech
  - questions must usually be asked in two minutes or less

# Senate Committees

- The Senate has 9 standing committees and 3 panels:
  - Executive Committee
  - Budget and Finance Committee
  - University Structure and Governance Committee
  - Student Affairs Committee
  - Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee
  - Information Technology Committee
  - Instruction, Curricula and Advising Committee
  - Academic Standards, Regulations and Admissions Committee
  - Research and Graduate and Professional Education Committee
  - Appeals Panel
  - Nominating Panel
  - University Commencement Panel



# Senate Committees

- Senators are elected by the Senate to serve on the **Executive Committee** for one-year terms
- In addition, each Senator is assigned to one of the other 8 standing committees (Senators are offered the opportunity to express their preferences, which are generally honored, but subject to the need to have balanced membership of all the committees)
- Senators are appointed to the panels by the Executive Committee as required (in addition to regular committee service)
- Occasionally, *ad hoc* committees are formed to report on specific issues not covered by any of the standing committees
- Committees generally meet in the mornings before Senate meetings
- Committee work is vitally important to the functioning of the Senate: committees hold hearings, investigate issues, and draft recommendations to be considered by the whole Senate

# How do issues reach the Senate?

- Matters for possible consideration by the Senate should be submitted to the Executive Secretary via the Senate website (<https://senate.rutgers.edu/university-senate-charge-proposal>)
- What is required is:
  - a brief statement of any proposed charge
  - a short rationale setting out the issue and any necessary background
  - what committee (if any) you would expect to consider the charge
- If this is an issue the Senate could not address, the Executive Secretary or Chair will let you know
- If there is a problem with the way the proposed charge is drafted, the Executive Secretary or Chair will help you formulate a revised proposal

# How do issues reach the Senate?

- The proposal will be placed on the Executive Committee Agenda
- The Executive Committee will discuss the proposal and decide whether or not it should be issued as a charge, to which committee, and with what reporting deadline
- The Executive Committee may issue the charge in a modified form, if necessary
- The Executive Secretary will communicate any charge issued and the reporting deadline to the chair of the committee
- The Executive Committee keeps pending charges under review
  - List of current Pending charges: <https://senate.rutgers.edu/pending-committee-charges/>

## How do issues reach the Senate?

- The committee will consider any charges at its scheduled meetings
- When the committee concludes its work and issues a report, it will be placed on the Executive Committee agenda
- The Executive Committee does not vote on the merits of any recommendations or resolutions, but does consider whether the committee has discharged its responsibilities, and whether the report is drafted in a form acceptable for consideration by the Senate
- If necessary, the Executive Committee may ask the committee to revise the draft report if it does not meet minimum standards
- When the report is ready, the Executive Committee docket it for review by the Senate at a forthcoming meeting

# How do issues reach the Senate?

- Why might a proposed charge NOT be issued?
  - Personnel issues and issues subject to collective bargaining are not usually addressed by the Senate
  - The issue is of concern primarily on one campus or to a limited part of the Rutgers community
  - The issue could be better addressed (possibly because of the above) by another body (e.g., the Newark Faculty Council, RUSA, etc.)
  - A direct approach might be expected to be more effective (for example, submitting an inquiry directly to the administration rather than asking a committee to start a time-consuming investigation)
  - The issue falls outside the (wide!) remit of the Senate
  - The issue has recently been addressed by the Senate already
  - The issue can best be addressed by incorporating it into an existing charge

## How do issues reach the Senate?

- The issuing of charges and the setting of the Senate agenda are both, in practice, managed by the Executive Committee
- This is not a bad thing:
  - the Executive Committee is not the enemy
  - it is not the Administration not is it beholden to the administration, and does not report to it
  - it is just us
- The EC is a group of Senators elected by the Senate itself with responsibilities to carry out precisely the tasks laid out in University Policy 50.2.1.E
- Its job is to ensure the best use is made of the precious and limited time available, both for committees who usually have to meet multiple times to consider each charge, and for the Senate itself, which meets only nine times per year

# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Though very occasionally substantive issues can be raised under New Business, most matters for decision come before the Senate as part of reports by committees charged to address them
- Reports usually discuss the charge itself, the underlying issue(s) and background, the work the committee has done, the conclusions it has reached, and any proposed resolutions for adoption by the Senate
- The committee chair usually presents the report, in as much detail as considered necessary, ending with any proposed resolutions
- The Senate Chair states the question on the resolution and opens the debate

# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Motions proposed from the floor of the Senate generally require a second – but resolutions from committees do not (the presumption being that already more than one Senator on the committee approves of debating it)
- Senators who wish to speak on the motion should proceed to one of the microphones and wait to be recognized (usually the Chair will recognize the sides of the room alternately)
- Argument – for or against the motion – should be the main currency of our debate
- Passion is not forbidden – but repeatedly informing the Senate that you feel strongly is not itself an argument



# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Taking the sense of the Senate is something of an art; but if a motion is clearly already won or lost, it may not be necessary to hear further debate – it's always acceptable to sit down again without being recognized or speaking
- Similarly, it's not always necessary to repeat points made by other Senators just to show the strength of feeling – if there's little new to add, the vote itself will reveal the Senate's views
- Nevertheless, each Senator has the right to speak, up to twice, for up to five minutes (though if everyone did, the Senate would be dysfunctional)
- After the committee has presented its resolutions, it may not be necessary to hear from supporters unless and until there are objections that need to be countered or discussed

# Procedure at Senate meetings

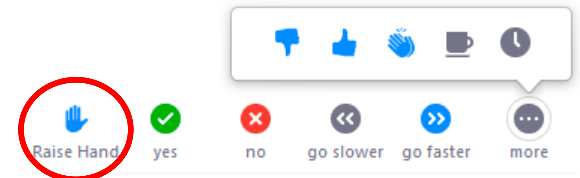
- The most important thing is to ensure that all points of view, arguments, concerns, issues, objections, and problems are represented in the debate
- This is more helpful than fewer points made more often
- The debate ends when everyone who is entitled to speak and wishes to do so has had the opportunity, unless:
  - time limits on debate have been imposed in advance by the Executive Committee or the Senate itself
  - the time limit for the whole meeting has been reached
  - a motion to call the previous question has been seconded and approved by a 2/3 majority

# Procedure at Senate meetings

- The Chair will usually allow the presenter of a motion to speak last before closing the debate by asking: “Are you ready for the Question?”
- The Senate then votes on the motion
  - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for our meetings to be held virtually – our mechanism for voting has changed to an online system via our Senate website and CAS
- The Chair announces the outcome of the vote
- The Senate proceeds to the next item of business
- But things are not always so simple, because motions can be amended! . . .

# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Senate meetings will be hosted on Zoom for the foreseeable future
- Traditional meetings provide for order by the Chair recognizing each speaker at the microphone. Because our meetings are virtual, the Chair, Parliamentarian, and Executive Secretary will provide order while enabling Senate debate by recognizing speakers using the “hand raising” function within Zoom
  - You can “raise your hand” by clicking on the Participants button on the Zoom menu bar.
  - Once the Participants list is open, you will see the non-verbal features on the bottom of that window. See screenshot:
  - The Chair will recognize you and you will then have opportunity to speak
  - Please “lower your hand” after you have been called upon, utilizing the same button
- All questions and all debate are to be directed to the Chair who will guide the process and keep the meeting moving smoothly



# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Our procedure requires that amendments of committee resolutions be submitted in writing to the Executive Secretary, and that the chair of the committee be notified in advance
  - this allows the committee to consider incorporating the amendment BEFORE the resolution is placed on the floor of the Senate (saving us all time)
  - it allows for careful drafting so that the text says exactly what is wanted
    - experience shows that drafting on the floor of the Senate in the heat of the moment is often unsuccessful
- This can only work, of course, if the Agenda is issued in advance and if Senators set aside time to study the Agenda, the reports to be considered, and any proposed resolutions prior to the day of the meeting
- Any less is unfair to our hard-working committees

## Procedure at Senate meetings

- The procedure for making amendments is to proceed to a microphone, wait to be recognized, and then propose your amendment
- The Chair will seek a second – we are a large group and there almost always is a second, but if not, the amendment cannot proceed
- If there is a second, the Chair will allow you to speak first in favor of your amendment
- It is not in order to speak to the amendment **before** you propose it and it is seconded
- Nor is it in order to speak against some flaw in the main motion and end by proposing an amendment to fix it

# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Debate then proceeds ON THE AMENDMENT
- If it is a helpful amendment that clearly is welcomed, it is not necessary for multiple senators to speak in favor of it – if no-one speaks against it after the proposer has presented a case, the Chair will proceed to a vote
- If it is more controversial, debate will continue as usual
- Senators have the same, but separate, rights to speak on the amendment as on the main motion
- While the amendment is being debated, you may not speak to the original motion
- When debate on the amendment concludes, the Chair will hold a vote and announce the results

# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Once the question on a motion has been stated by the Chair, the motion is on the floor of the Senate, and the committee chair has no longer has power to modify it (there are no “friendly” amendments), so this procedure must be followed
- If the amendment fails, the Senate returns to debating the original main motion
- If the amendment passes, the Senate returns to debating the main motion **AS AMENDED**
- Amendments may themselves be amended, by following the same procedure, after which debate returns to the amendment in original or amended form
- Amendments to amendments may not be amended!!!
- So faulty amendments to amendments must be defeated and then can be replaced by improved versions



# Procedure at Senate meetings

- Sometimes senators speaking on a motion may seek additional information or clarification that may best be provided by the committee member presenting a report
- The Chair may allow a senator who has the floor to ask for information, and may allow the presenter of a report, who may still be conveniently positioned at a microphone, but who no longer has the floor, to reply. This is often a practical way of proceeding
- Nevertheless, presiding over the debate and assigning privilege of the floor are still the responsibilities of the Chair; not of the presenter of a report or the maker of a motion
- Questions and replies should be addressed to the Chair; Senators do not address each other directly during the course of debate.

# What happens afterwards?

- The Executive Secretary works with committee chairs to produce final versions of reports with resolutions as amended on the floor of the Senate
- Senate reports and resolutions are transmitted to the President's office
- They are also posted online: <https://senate.rutgers.edu/reports/>
- The President considers the reports and resolutions and submits a response in writing to the Executive Secretary
- The President's responses are submitted to the Executive Committee via the Executive Secretary's report, and noted or discussed. They are also posted under on the individual report's page via the above link.
- They will again be presented at the next Senate meeting during the Executive Secretary's Report

## Questions?

- This overview was prepared by the Senate Parliamentarian
- A more formal summary of Senate procedure may be found on the Senate website at:  
<http://archive.senate.rutgers.edu/ReportOfTheSenateParliamentarianJanuary2017.pdf>
- Do you have questions? Concerns? Confusions?

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