

NCUU Version of Robert's Rules

1. No one will be called upon to speak for the second time before everyone wishing to speak has spoken once.
2. People are asked to speak for themselves, not for what they think others think. Also, people are asked to be mindful of the feelings of others in the way they phrase their remarks. (It may be necessary for the moderator to monitor this requirement.)
3. People are asked to limit their comments to a specified number of minutes, (usually two or three). If the issue is likely to be difficult, the moderator may devise a method of warning the speaker when a minute remains.
4. The moderator will try to call on people with differing points of view alternately. (Appointing someone to note who wishes to speak and to write it down may help facilitate this process.)

* This is not a debate so the speakers should only present their own view, not rebut a previous speaker's views.

5. If parliamentary maneuvering gets complicated through acts such as the use of amendments and substitute motions, the moderator can declare the meeting to be in a "committee of the whole." In this status, the issues can be discussed and a consensus reached without the need for motions. Then the moderator can declare the formal meeting resumed, and the appropriate motions to ratify the consensus can be made and voted upon.
6. The motion to "call to (or for) the question" is legitimate under Robert's rules, but it can often destroy a congregation's sense of community. It requires immediate cessation of debate and a vote on whether to continue debate. The majority rules on such a vote. If the debate is terminated in this manner, people often leave the meeting feeling disenfranchised and angry. Instead, the moderator can announce before the meeting begins that she or he will not accept a call to the question. A

request to consider whether to end debate would result in a show of hands of those wishing to continue the discussion. Then the moderator could do one of two things: (1) make a judgment as to whether sufficient interest exists to continue (even when such interest is in the minority) or, (2) allow each person whose hand is raised to make his or her statement and then end the debate. Experience shows that use of this adaptation of the rules generally avoids unhappiness about the procedure.

* It would be preferable if discussion could continue until a consensus can be reached, (even though it may lengthen the meeting) because it would help to avoid hard feelings about the final decisions.

7. When routine business, (such as the election of officers), is being conducted, such rules generally are not necessary. They are helpful when controversial issues must be discussed.
8. We will listen deeply and appreciatively to each other and our guests, valuing all opinions whether or not we agree with them. (See #4 comment)
9. We will limit our comments to the topic under discussion. (See #4 comment)
10. We will stay in community with each other even when the discussion is vigorous or tense We will avoid the labeling of others prior to, during, or following the discussion.
11. We will stand behind board decisions once that decision has been reached by the democratic process.
12. We will prepare for meetings by reviewing documents when they are provided prior to meeting dates.
13. We will use email with care. We will refrain from the use of email in dealing with especially sensitive issues that come before us, being mindful that email can reach unintended recipients.
14. When there is a moderator, their vote will only be used for a tie breaker so that they will vote only once.
15. These rules are not meant to be cut in stone. We are a progressive and caring Fellowship.