

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures  
(Final; Action)

SP.19.03 Revision to the *Standing Rules* – Speaking at Senate and Senate Committee Meetings

**BACKGROUND**

The *Illinois Open Meetings Act* requires that “Any person shall be permitted an opportunity to address public officials under the rules established and recorded by the public body.” This is generally referred to as public comment. The proposed time allocation for Senate meetings is parallel to the rules adopted by the Board of Trustees. The proposed time allocation for committee meetings is scaled down from the Senate meeting allocation in order to accommodate public comment but not prohibit the committee from completing its business.

The Senate also permits non-senators to request the privilege of the floor at Senate and Senate Committee meetings to speak during the discussion of a particular item listed on the business portion of the agenda. This is generally referred to as floor privileges.

The new rule below would outline the two separate processes: one for requesting to speak during the public comment portion of a meeting and one for requesting floor privileges on an item of business.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures recommends that the Senate approve the following amendment to the *Standing Rules*. As this is to be a new Rule, the text to be added is not underscored.

**PROPOSED REVISION TO THE *STANDING RULES***

**NEW RULE**

1 **16. Requesting to Speak at a Senate or Senate Committee Meeting**

2 The Senate has developed procedures in compliance with the *Illinois Open Meetings Act* by  
3 which individuals may request the opportunity to speak at Senate or Senate Committee  
4 meetings. This is generally referred to as public comment.

5 The Senate has also developed procedures permitting non-senators to request the privilege of  
6 the floor at Senate and Senate Committee meetings to speak during the discussion of a

7 particular item listed on the business portion of the agenda. This is generally referred to as floor  
8 privileges.

9 The procedures for requesting the opportunity to speak during public comment and requesting  
10 floor privileges on an item of business on the agenda are listed separately below.

#### 11 A. Public Comment

12 Public comment is a portion of the meeting set aside specifically for the public to  
13 address the Senate or a Senate committee (the body). A response to the individual  
14 making the public comment is not required by the presiding officer or by members of  
15 the body. When addressing the body, individuals shall first state their name and any  
16 relevant title or affiliation.

##### 17 1. *Requests to address the body.*

18 Requests to make a public comment at a Senate meeting must be submitted to the  
19 Office of the Senate in writing no later than twelve hours before the scheduled start  
20 of the meeting at which the individual wishes to speak.

21 Requests to make a public comment at a Senate committee meeting must be  
22 submitted to the chair of the Senate committee in writing no later than twelve hours  
23 before the scheduled start of the meeting at which the individual wishes to speak.

24 In making a request to appear before the Senate or Senate committee, individuals  
25 must give their names and any relevant title or affiliation. The request must state the  
26 subject matter to be presented and must relate to matters within the jurisdiction of  
27 the Senate or Senate committee. The Senate Clerk or committee chair will review  
28 each request and notify the individual making the request whether the individual  
29 may give public comment at the next meeting. Substitute speakers will not be  
30 permitted.

##### 31 2. *Time allocation.*

32 The Senate will allow public comment at each meeting. An individual will be  
33 limited to speak for no more than three minutes. This limit will be strictly adhered to  
34 with assistance of a timekeeper. A maximum of ten speakers will be recognized for  
35 each Senate meeting.

36 Senate committees will allow public comment at each meeting. An individual will  
37 be limited to speak for no more than two minutes. This limit will be strictly adhered  
38 to with the assistance of a timekeeper. A maximum of five speakers will be  
39 recognized for each committee meeting.

40 3. *Scheduling of speakers.*

41 When the number of requests to address the Senate or Senate committee at a given  
42 meeting exceeds the number allocated in section A.2 above, requests will be  
43 approved based on the date and time the written request was received by the Office  
44 of the Senate or chair of a committee. In addition, preference may be given to  
45 subject matters that relate to the agenda for the relevant meeting or relate to items  
46 under the committee charge in the Senate *Bylaws*, and to avoid repetitiveness.

47 4. *Discussion moderation.*

48 The presiding officer or committee chair may truncate repetitious or disruptive  
49 comments.

50 B. Floor Privileges

51 The Senate or a Senate committee may grant floor privileges to an individual to  
52 participate in the discussion of an item listed on the business portion of the agenda.

53 1. *Requests to address the body.*

54 Requests for floor privileges at a Senate meeting must be submitted to the Office of  
55 the Senate in writing no later than twelve hours before the scheduled start of the  
56 meeting at which the individual wishes to speak. The individual must include in the  
57 request the business item on the agenda the individual wishes to speak about. At the  
58 beginning of each meeting, the presiding officer will announce the names of those  
59 who have requested floor privileges and the business item the individual wishes to  
60 speak about, and the Senate shall vote on those requests, either separately or  
61 collectively.

62 Requests for floor privileges at a Senate committee meeting must be submitted to  
63 the chair of the Senate committee in writing no later than twelve hours before the  
64 scheduled start of the meeting at which the individual wishes to speak. The

65 individual must include in the request the business item on the agenda the individual  
66 wishes to speak about and must include a brief explanation for the request. At the  
67 beginning of each meeting, the presiding officer will announce the names of those  
68 who have requested floor privileges and the business item the individual wishes to  
69 speak about, and the committee shall vote on those requests, either separately or  
70 collectively.

71 2. *Scheduling of speakers.*

72 Individuals who have been granted floor privileges by the body shall state their  
73 name and relevant title or affiliation before addressing the body and shall speak only  
74 during discussion of the business item on the agenda to which floor privileges were  
75 granted.

76 3. *Discussion moderation.*

77 Precedence of the floor will be given to members of the body. The presiding officer  
78 or committee chair shall moderate the discussion in accordance with *Robert's Rules*  
79 *of Order Newly Revised*. The presiding officer or committee chair may truncate  
80 repetitious or disruptive comments.

UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND SENATE PROCEDURES

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