



Senate Guidelines for Consent Agendas

In accordance with Faculty Handbook II:7.1.5 (b), the Senate Chair may designate any routine or uncontroversial item on a Senate meeting agenda to be included in the consent agenda for the meeting. These Guidelines have been approved by the Governance Committee to guide the Senate Chair and Senators in the use of consent agendas.

Default classification of agenda items

The following sets out the **'default' classification of agenda items, however, this classification is a guide only and the classification would depend on the specific content of specific items.** Each report writer will be asked to indicate, when submitting their agenda items, whether they believe the report should be included as a consent or discussion item. The agenda items and the advice of the report writers will be reviewed by the Chair of Senate and the Secretary to Senate to determine how the item will be classified.

- Minutes - consent
- Business arising - discussion
- Communications - consent
- Report of the Chair - consent
- Reports of the President, Provost and Vice-President, Research - discussion
- Report of the Academic Colleague - consent
- Report of the actions of the Board of Trustees - consent
- Unfinished business - discussion
- Reports of standing & special committees - classification to be determined by the Chair of Senate in consultation with the Chair of the Committee. **In general, 'routine or uncontroversial' items would be included in the consent agenda.**
- Special reports
 - Approval of graduands - consent
 - Student award recipients - consent
 - Request for early issue of degree diploma - consent
- Other business - discussion

Guiding principles

The Chair will consider the following guiding principles in assessing whether an item is considered routine or uncontroversial:

- Items/topics that have been the subject of discussion in the past should be brought forward for discussion
- Items that have not been considered by Senate in the past (e.g., novel / unprecedented items) should be brought forward for discussion

- Items that present high risk or high significance should be brought forward for discussion -e.g. restructuring of an academic unit
- Items that occur routinely and frequently and are consistent with past practice may be included in consent - e.g., nominations to Senate committees or Advisory Committees from Senate Governance
- Policy decisions should be brought forward for discussion - e.g., any amendments to the Faculty Handbook
- Items of strategic significance should be brought forward for discussion - e.g. SMA

Process

- At the beginning of each meeting, prior to the approval of the agenda, the Chair of Senate will ask whether any Senator wishes to lift an item from the consent agenda for discussion.
- Any Senator who has a question or wishes to discuss an item in the consent agenda may request that that item be lifted and that item will then be included in the non-consent **agenda, either under ‘action items’ (if it is an item for the decision of Senate) or ‘discussion items’ (if it is an item for the information of Senate)**. The request to lift an item does not need to be seconded, debated or voted upon - upon request, the item is automatically lifted.
- **The Chair will then ask, ‘are there any other items to be lifted?’.** Once there are no further items to be lifted, the Chair will list those items that have been lifted. The Chair will then ask for a motion to approve the agenda, including any remaining consent agenda items and the motions contained within them.
- If the agenda is approved, the minutes of the meeting will reference any motions approved by consent.
- If, following approval of the consent agenda but during the same meeting, a Senator wishes to lift an item that was received or approved by consent, the Senator may propose a motion to lift the item from consent for discussion and possible action. The motion must be seconded and passed by a majority and the Chair will then include the item back on the agenda at any point in the agenda deemed appropriate by the Chair.