

Department of Biology Rules of Order (Dobbie's rules)

Reasons for using Dobbie's rules:

1. Using formal rules might make discussions impersonal, but they also ensure that everyone is heard and decisions on policy issues are reached in a fair, transparent and mutually acceptable manner.
2. Using Dobbie's rules, as opposed to lengthier or more complex rules, ensures that everyone has the opportunity to learn and understand the rules, and that no one becomes a higher authority by virtue of their understanding or recollection of the rules.

Dobbie's rules:

1. The Department head conducts the meeting as usual, with an agenda, minutes, announcements, etc. It is the responsibility of the head to ensure that all faculty members' voices are heard and that no faculty member dominates a discussion.
2. Anyone may make a motion, but each motion must be seconded to be discussed. Once seconded, the person who made the motion becomes the discussion leader.
3. Discussion proceeds until there is no response to a final call for comments by the discussion leader. If this happens within 20 minutes, the discussion leader calls for a vote on the motion that requires a simple majority to pass. If this doesn't happen within 20 minutes, the discussion leader tables the motion until the next faculty meeting, at which time the discussion resumes at step 2.
4. There are two alternatives to step 3:
 - 4.1 Someone other than the discussion leader calls the question, which, if seconded, means that the discussion proceeds immediately to a vote that requires a two-thirds majority to pass. If the vote doesn't pass, the discussion returns to step 3 without restarting the clock.
 - 4.2 Someone other than the discussion leader proposes a second motion as either an alternative or addition to the first motion. If seconded, second motions proceed from step 3 without restarting the clock, and must be voted on before discussion of the first motion is resumed.
5. No more than one primary motion and one secondary motion on the table at one time.
6. Individual faculty can propose only one secondary motion per primary motion.
7. Failure to discuss a motion is viewed as tacit support of the motion.
8. Votes only count if more than 50% of the faculty are in attendance.
9. There are no other rules than Dobbie's rules.
10. Dobbie's rules must be available to everyone at every occasion of their use.