



International Monterrey Model United Nations Simulation

American School Foundation of Monterrey



Senate of the United States of America

Rules and Procedure

The Senate of the United States is the heart of the legislative branch of the American government. It acts as the upper chamber of Congress, while the House of Representatives acts as the lower chamber. Every act and bill passes through Congress before it goes on towards the President of the U.S. for approval, or veto. Senators are familiar with having heavy influence in the government, as they play a vital role through the debates and decisions the country faces every day.

Delegates will have the opportunity to work with peers across the aisle, hopefully supporting bipartisan agreements that will prevail and transcend beyond us. You will participate in debates on the most pressing issues that are facing the nation, trying to balance what your Senator believes in, and what one has to compromise to let matters move forward in a democratic way.

The process under which this body presides in is long and complex; in IMMUNS, we will provide a comprehensive guide to the twists and turns a delegate will face when debating on the coveted podium of the U.S. Senate (U.S.S.)

Notice: The following rules will dictate how the committee is to proceed. Unless otherwise noted standard IMMUNS Parliamentary Procedure shall be assumed.

I. First Session

Before the debating begins, the Senate will go through a motion that will let Senators of both parties choose their 'leaders' for the simulation. This is called, ***motion to break to party caucuses***. Delegates will choose their majority and minority leaders, as well as their whip.

II. Senator Roles

- **Majority and Minority Leaders:** These Senators will take on the role as the leader of each party in the Senate. They are the only ones that will have motions to proceed, consider, and to vote. Said leaders will be heavily involved in the writing process for bills, trying to seek agreements with the opposite party in order to get a bipartisan deal.
- **Party Whip:** This senator is responsible for making sure every member within his/her party vote for the resolution their party wishes.
 - Notice: Leaders and whips will never be considered more than the rest of the delegates for awards, anyone will have the same opportunity to win them. Senators will have many chances to stand out, either in their attempts for bipartisanship, their policy ideas, their oratory, their involvement in resolution writing, and their respect for peers and rules.

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III. Speakers List

This portion of IMMUNS' parliamentary procedure will virtually remain the same, though there are few changes in format.

- Senators that wish to be added to the list will raise their placards, the chair will note each delegate alternating between party.
- Time limit is strictly set to 2:30 min. Although this aspect of debate is not observed in the real U.S.S., it is vital to encourage delegates to be eloquent within their given time, as well as avoiding delays and unnecessary overextensions. It should be noted that one does not have to fill in the entire time slot, yielding time to the chair/questions/comments is in order.
- There will be 5 comments or questions to the Senator speaking.

IV. The Debate

After the speaker's list ends, a motion to debate on the topic will be in order. For the U.S.S., a **Moderated Debate** is usually the norm and go-to for bipartisan debate. Once Senators have a clear idea on what their resolution should look like, leaders can call on the following:

A **Party Caucus (P.C.)** is basically an unmoderated debate, however, the two parties in the chamber are physically separated. Only the leaders, and 2 other delegates can speak to members of the other side under P.C.. This type of debate is most useful when the 2 parties aim to establish positions within their own body. It serves as a tool to get to know the goals of each Senator, as well as a scenario where parties can draft their own separate resolutions.

An **Unmoderated Caucus (U.C.)** will let all members freely debate with each other, with the aim to establish one bipartisan solution. The U.C. helps parties recruit senators of the opposite aisle; those who compromise in order to please their constituents, or because of their views.

Trying to bring **one** solution to the chair is strongly encouraged. Bringing two too early in the simulation will result in the chair sending them back to renegotiate with delegates from the opposite party, in order to find common ground to build upon. Leaders can switch between any of the 3 debate procedures, as long as it clears a **majority vote** [1]

V. Resolution Voting

Voting rules in the U.S.S. are slightly different compared to standard IMMUNS procedure. After the leaders of the party are comfortable with a resolution, the following will take place.

- **Motion for Cloture:** The leader will call upon the end for debate in the Senate, a **Supermajority** [2] is required for such to pass.
- The leader who proposed cloture will then proceed to the floor with 3 other Senators of their choice (can be of any party), to read out the resolution for 5 minutes. Any senator in the chamber can motion to extend the time if needed.

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- 5 questions over the resolution will be entertained; any senator in the chamber can motion to extend the questions if needed.
- The 4 Senators will then go back to their seats, ready to vote with their placards.
- By roll call, voting will then commence
- *A Supermajority* is needed to pass the resolution.
 - If in the rare scenario both parties cannot find the consensus with each other needed to pass a resolution by the time the last session of IMMUNS is held, the ***Constitutional Option*** [3] is available under the *discretion of the chair*. The leader of the interested party will send a note to the chair before voting begins for a resolution. Due to the fact no voting has to take place in order to implement such measure, voting will be held under the conditions of the Constitutional Option. We emphasize that the chair **will not** recognize this until every single attempt has been made to negotiate with the other side of the aisle. The chair will intervene when needed in order to help Senators find common solutions.

VI. Terms

[1] **Majority Vote:** In the Senate, this term means 50% of the vote, plus 1 Senator (any mention of a majority will be under this definition).

[2] **Supermajority:** No less than 60% of votes are needed to pass a motion/resolution.

[3] **The Constitutional Option:** A real-life parliamentary procedure, parties can call upon this in order to override the rule of the supermajority for cloture and voting, opting instead for a majority.

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