

Appeals

Compiled by Patrick Wilson, January 2010

Although the chair plays an essential role in the fair and efficient conduct of business at faculty meetings, it is important to keep in mind that the faculty itself has the final word on any ruling of the chair. There is nothing impolite or confrontational about “appealing from the decision of the chair to the judgment of the assembly”; indeed, doing so relieves the chair of responsibility and is often welcomed. “The situation is no more delicate than disagreeing with another member in debate” (*RONR* [10th ed.], p. 250).

- The chair may directly ask for the faculty’s advice, e.g., on a point of order: “The chair is in doubt and submits the question to the assembly” (*RONR* [10th ed.], p. 246).
- Any two faculty members—one making the appeal and the other seconding it—may take a decision out of the hands of the chair and place it before the faculty.

Limitations

- An appeal must be made immediately after the chair’s ruling, even if another person has the floor.
- The appeal must be dealt with before other business is taken up or resumed.
- A ruling on a point of order cannot be appealed when another appeal is pending.

Debatability

- An appeal of any ruling by the chair (e.g., a ruling on a point of order or a ruling that something is out of order) is debatable, except a ruling that
 - relates to indecorum in debate (e.g., using inappropriate language, questioning someone’s motives)
 - concerns rules of speaking (e.g., speaking too long or too many times)
 - deals with the order of business (e.g., departing from the agenda)
 - is made while an undebatable question is immediately pending
- The chair has the right to speak first and last in debate.
- Every (other) faculty member may speak once.
- Speeches are limited to ten minutes each.

Voting

- The decision of the chair is upheld by a majority or tie vote.
- The chair may vote to create a tie.