

Consent Agendas (rev. 31 Oct 2018)

The “consent agenda” refers to a grouping of *non-controversial* agenda items that are expected to be approved without discussion. It must never be used to push through or hide controversial motions. All items on the consent agenda are usually approved with a single up or down vote or simple assent. Grouping items into a consent agenda allows several motions to be dispensed with at once, thus streamlining the meeting and providing time for discussion of more important items. Typically, consent agendas are dispensed with at the beginning of the meeting; however, for the ASU Senate, they have traditionally been presented during “Old Business.”

There are two important caveats regarding consent agendas:

1. Simple questions or *brief* discussion are allowed without removing the item (but before the consent agenda has been approved).
2. Any item on the consent agenda may be removed from the consent agenda upon request. The request for removal of an item requires no second and no explanation. Removal of an item allows full discussion of a motion immediately following approval of the revised consent agenda.

For University Senate procedures, if an item (motion) is removed from the consent agenda, the newly revised consent agenda is placed before the Senate for a vote. Once the revised consent agenda is voted on, the item that was removed is then immediately presented before the Senate. Generally, the person who requested removal of the item should be the first to discuss the objection to the motion. Depending on the nature of the objection and the motion itself, the senator may argue for rejection of the motion and the Senate will discuss and vote on the measure. Alternatively, the senator may propose to postpone the motion, refer it back to committee, or amend it. The Senate President may help to clarify these options. These motions require a second, are opened for debate, and are handled the same way as any motion (see “Motions 101”).

Sample Transcript for Consent Agendas

Note: The Senate President may remind senators that any senator can request removal of a motion from the consent agenda and no reason is given with that request; in addition, the removed item will be immediately presented and discussed after approval of the revised consent agenda.

Consent Agenda with No Objections

President: The “New Course” Consent Agenda has been posted and distributed via email to all senate members on _____(date). Before voting on the consent agenda, does any member want to remove an item from the consent agenda? *(pause)* Hearing no objections, the consent agenda has been approved by the senate. *(silence is considered consent); alternatively, you can take a vote in a standard way and declare it as passed.*

Consent Agenda with Clarification/Brief Discussion

President: The “New Course” Consent Agenda has been posted and distributed via email to all senate members on _____(date). Before voting on the consent agenda, does any member want to remove an item from the consent agenda? *(pause for response)*

Senate Member: I don’t want to remove an item, but I have a quick question. Which unit is requesting the third course?

President (or someone who knows): CLAS

Senate Member: Okay, thank you.

President: Any other questions or comments on this consent agenda? Hearing none, the consent agenda is accepted. *(alternatively, you can ask for the vote in the standard way)*

Consent Agenda with Objections

President: The “New Course” Consent Agenda has been posted and distributed via email to all senate members on _____(date). Before voting on the consent agenda, does any member want to remove an item from the consent agenda? *(Pause for response)*

Senate Member: I would like to remove _____.

President: _____ has been removed from the consent agenda. Without objection, the remaining items are now adopted by general consent. *(pause; alternatively, call for the vote for the consent agenda minus the item that was removed and declare the consent agenda has having passed.)*

President: The item that was removed from the consent agenda is now open for discussion prior to voting on the motion or for possible amendments, postponement, or return to committee. I would like to invite _____ (who asked that the item be removed) to the microphone to begin. *(Proceed with discussion as with a regular motion. The item can then be discussed and voted up or down, or someone can make a motion to return the item for further review. As president, guide the person through the process of making a new motion or asking for a postponement. Allow discussion as provided in Motions 101.)*