

## **UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2024 RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**PURPOSE:** The goals of the Rules of Procedure are to ensure that:

- Decisions are based on the will of the majority in accordance with UU values, principles, UUA Bylaws and rules. Delegates have the chance to express a range of opinions as part of the decision-making process.
- Delegates know how they can participate in business discussions and voting at General Assembly in a respectful, transparent, and inclusive way.
- Business discussions are predictable, accessible and smooth, making the best use of everyone's time.

These Rules of Procedure apply to every item on the Final Agenda. They include separate rules for items that may be added to the Final Agenda during General Assembly. They do not apply to UUA elections, which are governed by separate rules.

As used in these Rules of Procedure, the term "Moderator" applies to any individual or team who is appointed by the Board of Trustees to lead or facilitate the business discussion process, unless otherwise specified.

### **RULE 1: ADOPTING AND CHANGING THESE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

The first thing the General Assembly must do is adopt these Rules of Procedure. The Assembly will do this at the first General Session. Delegates may not debate or amend the Rules of Procedure before they are adopted. The Rules of Procedure require a 2/3 majority vote to pass.

Delegates may propose changes to the Rules of Procedure through a mini-assembly prior to General Assembly. If any proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure receive sufficient support at a mini-assembly prior to General Assembly (per UUA Rule 4.18.5), they may be considered after the initial vote to adopt the Rules of Procedure. Once initially adopted, the Rules of Procedure require a 4/5 majority vote to be changed.

### **RULE 2: FINAL AGENDA, CONSENT AGENDA, AND ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Final Agenda is set by the Board of Trustees, and the UUA Bylaws define how items can be added to the agenda. All business items listed on the Final Agenda which require a vote will be scheduled for discussion during a General Session. The Board of Trustees or the Commission on Social Witness will introduce each item of business.

The items of business on the Final Agenda may include:

- Proposed business resolutions
- Proposed changes to Article II of the UUA Bylaws, submitted by the Article II Study Commission under Bylaw Section C-15.1(c)(4)
- Proposed changes to a Bylaw or Bylaw G-Rule
- Actions of Immediate Witness
- Other motions added during General Assembly.

### *Consent Agenda*

The first item of business which can be considered is called the “Consent Agenda,” which allows for quick approval of non-controversial items. The UUA Moderator may propose the Consent Agenda by including it on the Final Agenda with the final language of all business items, which must be published seven days before the start of General Assembly per Bylaws Rule 4.18.15(e). Non-controversial items on the Consent Agenda are voted on as a group, and cannot be discussed by delegates during General Session; an item must be removed from the Consent Agenda in order to be discussed. This is the procedure to propose and consider the Consent Agenda:

1. The Moderator introduces and describes the item(s) on the Consent Agenda.
2. The Moderator asks whether any delegate would like to remove an item from the Consent Agenda. Any delegate can make a request to remove an item from the Consent Agenda via the Pro Line.
3. Once a request is made, the Moderator will ask if at least nine other delegates will join the request; delegates join the request by joining the Pro line. If at least nine other delegates join the request, then the item is removed from the Consent Agenda and it goes back to its original place on the Final Agenda.
4. The Consent Agenda requires a 2/3 majority vote to pass.

If the Consent Agenda does not pass, all items on the Consent Agenda go back to their original place on the Final Agenda.

### *Role of the Moderator*

The flow of discussion will be managed and led by a Moderator who is identified by the Board of Trustees. The Moderator may be a single individual or a team. The Assembly will consider the items on the Final Agenda in the order listed on that agenda. The Moderator decides the order in which amendments to items on the Final Agenda may be discussed.

## **RULE 3: VOTING AND COUNTING VOTES**

At least 300 accredited delegates representing at least 100 congregations located in at least 10 states or provinces must be present for discussion and voting to begin at General Assembly. When this is true, the Assembly has a “quorum,” per UUA Bylaws Section 4.10. Delegates participate in discussion and voting through the online delegate platform. They must log into the delegate platform to receive their credentials, which allows them to access the ballots and other key links, and to be counted towards the quorum.

Delegates must vote on an electronic device, such as a computer or smartphone, which can access the delegate platform. The Secretary may approve any other method needed to meet any accessibility requirements for delegates to participate.

### *Ballot Time Limits*

On Friday, June 21, 2024, and Saturday, June 22, 2024, there will be a daily ballot on the delegate platform which lists the items delegates will vote on that day. Each item on the daily ballot will be scheduled for discussion that day (if discussion is needed). The ballot will open once the General Session has ended, and remain open until 11:00 PM ET / 10:00 PM CT / 9:00 PM MT / 8:00 PM PT.

On Thursday, June 20, 2024, there will be two ballots. The first will open at the end of General Session I and will remain open until 3:30 PM ET / 2:30 PM CT / 1:30 PM MT / 12:30 PM PT.

This first ballot will contain the vote to approve the Rules of Procedure. The second ballot will open at the end of General Session II and remain open until 11:00 PM ET / 10:00 PM CT / 9:00 PM MT / 8:00 PM PT.

All business items and amendments requiring discussion may only be voted on if they have been able to be discussed in a General Session within the discussion time limit. The Moderator may extend the ballot's time limit if they determine it is essential for the business of the Assembly. The results will be available online promptly after balloting has closed.

The UUA Bylaws or these Rules of Procedure specify the percentage of affirmative votes needed for an item of business to pass. Only votes for and against a business item will be counted towards the percentage needed to pass.

The Moderator may ask for a straw poll on any question. Straw polls are not official votes, they are a tool to help the Moderator understand how delegates are currently feeling or thinking.

Delegates may not make any motion which is not specified under these Rules of Procedure, such as a proposal to table (postpone), reconsider, move the previous question (end discussion), suspend the rules, or take any other action related to a business item, unless the Moderator determines it is in the best interests of the General Assembly to consider such a motion.

#### **RULE 4: MINUTES**

The UUA Recording Secretary and legal counsel write the minutes of the General Assembly General Sessions, which are the official record of the decisions made. The Board of Trustees will approve the minutes at a future Board meeting.

#### **RULE 5: AMENDMENTS TO REGULAR BUSINESS ITEMS**

Amendments to items on the regular business agenda must be submitted in advance of General Assembly so that they can be considered by a min-assembly, per Rule 4.18.5 of the UUA Bylaws. Amendments will be voted on by the full General Assembly if they receive majority support at the mini-assembly. Amendments will be scheduled for

discussion during a General Session unless they are incorporated by the Board of Trustees into the final text of the item on the final agenda. Such discussion and voting for amendments will be scheduled as a separate business item at least one day before the item they are amending is scheduled for discussion and vote. This will allow time for approved amendments to be incorporated into the final version of the item. Proposed amendments require a 2/3 majority vote to be approved.

Items added to the Final Agenda during General Assembly, including Actions of Immediate Witness, Budget Motions, and Responsive Resolutions, may not be amended.

The Moderator may make exceptions to this rule for technical amendments (these help make things clearer or more consistent but do not change the meaning).

## **RULE 6: AMENDMENTS AND VOTING ON THE ARTICLE II PROPOSAL**

Amendments to the Article II proposal were submitted by congregational petition through the process defined by Bylaws Rule 15.1.1(c). This required all submitted amendments to only apply to a single section of the Article II proposal, match the structure of the UUA Bylaws and Rules, and not conflict with other rules, bylaws, or adopted statements. Each amendment submitted by congregational petition under Section C-15.1(c)(4) was submitted by no later than February 1, 2024, had a primary congregational sponsor which was the primary sponsor of only one amendment, and had the support of at least 15 certified congregations.

The Board of Trustees reviewed all submitted amendments to ensure they met the standards listed above. All submitted amendments which were received and supported by the deadline and met these standards were publicly posted on [discuss.uua.org](https://discuss.uua.org) on February 2, 2024. Amendments must receive a 3/4 vote of support to be approved.

Final approval of the Article II proposal, including any approved amendments, requires a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly. If the Article II proposal is not approved, it cannot be revisited for two years, under Section C-15.1.

## **RULE 7: HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS**

Delegates can discuss a business item during the General Session by joining one of the two lines for speakers and can speak when they are recognized by the Moderator. Tellers designated by the Board of Trustees will monitor each line.

### **Pro and Con Lines**

1. The first line is called the Pro Line. If a delegate wants to speak in favor of the item being discussed, they can join the Pro Line.
2. The second line is called the Con Line. If a delegate wants to raise a concern about the item being discussed, they can join the Con Line. Only concerns that would

prevent the delegate from voting in favor of the item being discussed are allowed in the Con Line.

Each delegate may speak only once in the Pro or Con Line on an item of business until everyone else who wants to speak has had the chance.

The Moderator will decide if a comment is appropriate, or “in order,” for each line. The Moderator may also allow other miscellaneous comments if the Moderator thinks it would be helpful to the Assembly.

### **Information Desk**

Delegates may ask clarifying questions during General Session or raise a procedural concern at the Information Desk. Tellers can relay issues raised at the Information Desk to the Moderator so they can be addressed.

### **Progressive Stack**

Tellers will use progressive stack in determining the order of delegates joining the queue to speak in a pro or con line. Progressive stack is a technique used to give marginalized groups a greater chance to speak. To use progressive stack, at least the first two speaking slots for discussion in both the pro and con lines will be reserved for delegates who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color, disabled, fat, transgender or nonbinary, or delegates with otherwise marginalized identities. Delegates who want to participate via progressive stack must notify the tellers when they join a speaking line.

## **RULE 8: ROLE OF PROCESS OBSERVERS DURING DISCUSSIONS**

The UUA Moderator may appoint process observers to ensure the conversation remains constructive and respectful during all discussion portions of the general sessions, and help the business process live up to its democratic and liberatory values. Process observers may provide comments, recommendations and reflections at various points before, during or after a General Session. If they deem it necessary, they may pause or enter the flow of the delegate discussion to address comments or issues that arise. Comments by Process Observers do not count against the discussion time limits.

## **RULE 9: TIME LIMITS FOR DISCUSSION**

There will be a time limit for each item scheduled for discussion during a General Session. The Moderator may make small extensions or changes to these time limits to help the meeting move smoothly and remain within the agenda, or to make an ability-based accommodation.

- During discussion time, delegates may speak on the item up for discussion from the Pro or Con line for up to ninety seconds when it is their turn.
- The only time that counts against the discussion time limit is when someone is speaking from the Pro or Con Line. Time spent by members of the Board of Trustees or Commission on Social Witness explaining the business being discussed does not count against the time limit.

- The Moderator will try to divide the time between Pro and Con speakers equally and will alternate between speakers in the Pro and Con lines.

### **Time Limits**

Individual items included on the Final Agenda have individual time limits specific to those items. Items which may change after the publication of the Final Agenda, such as amendments to regular business items, have an overall time limit for all items of that type. For item types with an overall time limit, sponsors will have up to 90 seconds to present their submissions and will be allowed an additional 90 seconds at the end of the discussions to respond to any of the comments made from the Pro/Con lines, with additional Pro/Con discussion time as determined by the Moderator.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Discussion Time Limit</b>	<b>General Session</b>
Regular business item, e.g. business resolution (individual)	15	IV
Amendments to regular business items (overall)	15	III
Amendments to Article II proposal (individual)	15	II, III
Full Article II Proposal, including any approved amendments	30	IV
Action of Immediate Witness, once added to the final agenda (individual)	12	IV
Responsive & Budget Resolutions (overall)	30	IV

If time for an item scheduled on the agenda is not needed, the Moderator may choose to add unused time to the overall discussion time limit of another item in the same General Session.

Note: The process to admit AIWs to the business agenda is defined in Rule 12.

### **Close of Discussion**

Discussion on a business item ends when the time limit is up, or when no one is waiting to speak in either the Pro or Con line. The Moderator may end the discussion before the time limit if one of the Pro or Con lines has no one waiting to speak.

## **RULE 10: BUDGET MOTIONS**

A Budget Motion is a request to consider a change in the amount of money in an area of the UUA operating budget. Any motion to spend more money in one area must also say which area(s) of the budget will receive less money equal to the amount of the requested increase. All Budget Motions must include a title, and text of up to 200 words explaining the requested change. The UUA Financial Secretary, Treasurer, or Co-Financial Advisors may provide commentary to delegates on any Budget Motion. Budget Motions will be reviewed by the UUA Board of Trustees to ensure the proposed motion meets

the requirements stated above (see UUA Bylaws Rule 10.1.4). These motions are non-binding.

A discussion about the budget for 2024–2025 will take place at 12:00 PM ET/ 11:00 AM CT / 10:00 AM MT / 9:00 AM PT on Friday, June 21, 2024. Any delegate can submit a Budget Motion to be added to the Final Agenda, and all submissions must be made in writing. Delegates may submit Budget Motions through a form on the delegate platform. Budget Motions will be reviewed by UUA legal counsel to ensure they meet the qualifications for consideration.

The deadline to submit 2024–2025 Budget Motions is 7:00 PM ET / 6:00 PM CT / 5:00 PM MT / 4:00 PM PT on Thursday, June 20, 2024. Budget Motions require a 2/3 majority vote to be affirmed.

## RULE 11: RESPONSIVE RESOLUTIONS

Per UUA Bylaw Rule 4.16.2:

*Responsive resolutions are brief, advisory statements that express the sentiment of the delegates. They must be in response to a substantive portion of a report by an officer or committee reporting to a regular General Assembly. Responsive resolutions are not binding and do not set policy for the Association. They may not act as a substitute for other types of business items, such as business resolutions, budget motions, study/action issues, bylaw amendments, or actions of immediate witness. The Moderator will determine whether a proposed responsive resolution may be added to the final agenda under this rule.*

Any delegate can submit a Responsive Resolution to be added to the Final Agenda, and all submissions must be in writing. All Responsive Resolutions must include a title and body text of up to 200 words.

Delegates may propose Responsive Resolutions through the form on the delegate platform. The deadline to submit Responsive Resolutions is 7:00 PM ET / 6:00 PM CT / 5:00 PM MT / 4:00 PM PT on Friday, June 21, 2024. Responsive Resolutions require a 2/3 majority vote to be affirmed.

## RULE 12: ACTIONS OF IMMEDIATE WITNESS (AIWs)

An Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) is, per Bylaw 4.16(b), a statement about a significant action, event, or development in the world that needs immediate engagement and action from UU member congregations and groups. The process for submitting an AIW, including criteria for eligibility, is set by the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) and published online: <https://www.uua.org/action/process/aiw>.

Per the UUA Bylaws, up to three AIWs can be considered by the General Assembly. If more than three proposed AIWs are eligible, the CSW will follow its published process which may include a delegate poll.

### **Discussion and Voting on AIWs**

Delegates must vote on whether to add each proposed Action of Immediate Witness to the Final Agenda in order to discuss and consider it, per Bylaws Section 4.16.

- Only AIWs that have been put forward by the CSW through its selection process may be admitted to the final agenda.
- The sponsor of each proposed Action of Immediate Witness has two minutes to speak in favor of it before the Assembly votes to admit it to the Final Agenda.
- The motion to add a proposed Action of Immediate Witness to the Final Agenda is not otherwise debatable and requires a 2/3 majority vote to pass.
- If the motion to admit fails, the AIW will not be considered.

Delegates will discuss and vote separately on each Action of Immediate Witness which is admitted to the final agenda. AIWs require a 2/3 majority vote to be affirmed.

### **RULE 13: QUESTIONS OF PROCEDURE**

If there is a question about how these rules should be interpreted, the Moderator will consult with the Legal Counsel and Parliamentarian. If these Rules of Procedure and the Bylaws and Rules of the UUA are in conflict, the Bylaws and Rules of the UUA take precedence. If these Rules of Procedure do not address an issue that arises, the Bylaws and Rules of the UUA will be the basis of any decision.

### **RULE 14: END OF BUSINESS**

The final business session of General Assembly 2024 ends at 5:00 PM ET / 4:00 PM CT / 3:00 PM MT / 2:00 PM PT on Sunday June 23, 2024.