PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The Basics
Constitution defines the basic structure and regulations of an organization including name, purpose, membership, qualifications, etc. All organizations have constitutions, including Alpha Kappa Psi. When hearing Constitution, you should also think Statutory Code as both are included in the same document for AKPsi.

Bylaws are basic regulations governing the organization. Outside of our organization, it may be common to think of the Constitution and Bylaws as one in the same, but per our governing documents, bylaws typically refer to the chapter bylaws while the Constitution refers to the rules set for the entire fraternity.

Standing Rules are details concerning the administration of the organization. These rules are based on motions passed and adopted by the chapter over time specifically related to policy and administration. They can still be upheld without the need to vote on them each meeting.

Rules of Order are written rules of procedure for conducting meetings in an orderly manner. Alpha Kappa Psi has adopted Robert’s Rules of Order as the parliamentary authority for meetings, which is stated in Article 7, Section 3 of the Constitution. This means Robert’s Rules of Order should be followed when conducting official business.

Quorum is the minimum number of members who must be present in order to hold and conduct a business meeting. While this can vary by organization, Alpha Kappa Psi uses a simple majority, meaning 50 percent plus 1 of the members in good standing must be present. You cannot conduct business until this requirement is met. This is stated in Article 4, Section 2 of the Constitution.

A motion is a formal proposal to take action. Motions are made during meetings at varying times. A question is another name for a motion after it has been seconded by an individual and restated.
**Principles**

Parliamentary Procedure should be used for the facilitation, not the obstruction, of business. It should streamline the meeting’s progress. Keeping these principles in mind will help to correctly execute Parliamentary Procedure.

1. The presiding officer, usually the President of the chapter, is also known as the chair of the meeting who ensures the rules are followed. If the President is not present, unavailable, or unwilling to be chair, the next individual in the line of succession becomes the presiding officer. In a student chapter, that is the Vice President of Administration.

2. To aid in the flow of the meeting, you should only address one main issue at a time. This controls the conversation and focuses the attention on only one discussion item. All members have the right to know the meaning of the motion before the assembly and to know how it will affect the chapter so they can appropriately make a decision.

3. Justice and courtesy should be extended to every member. All members have the right to ask for clarification or bring up a point of discussion. The minority has an equal right to speak on the issue and to be heard in full. While the minority has the right to speak, and should explain their grievances about the issue, it is also important to remember the majority will make the final decision.

4. Each voting member has one vote and those votes are counted equally. Parliamentary Procedure does not allow for absentee voting or voting by proxy. If you are not present at the meeting, nobody is able to vote on your behalf.

5. The desires of individuals must be merged with the desires of the organization. The ideas presented should not align with individual agendas, but instead with the priorities and focus of the organization because, if adopted, the instituted rules will affect the chapter as a whole.
In order to carry out business, you must have these three things:

- A quorum, as defined in the organization bylaws
- A presiding officer to lead the meeting
- A secretary to take minutes

Without these things, you cannot conduct your meeting. Quorum is not enough, which is often what people think of as the only necessary item. If your presiding officer is not present or unable to attend, the next officer in the chain of command should step into the role for the meeting. Additionally, you must have someone taking accurate minutes. This is the job of the secretary, but in his or her absence, you must have someone else filling this role to conduct business.