
FOR INFORMATION ONLY

RULES OF ASSEMBLY OPERATIONS (RAO)
AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE 51st GENERAL ASSEMBLY
2024

ITEM 1: Amend *RAO 4-21.d* to require enrollment data from higher ed institutions (underlining for additions)

RAO 4-21.d

5) If a Committee or Agency is a higher education institution, the minutes shall include the following data, updated annually and delineated by degree program: total student enrollment, number of students by full-time or part-time status, number of students by gender, and number of students by learning modality (whether in-person, online, or hybrid). The minutes should indicate that the data have been reviewed by the respective Committee or Board.

ITEM 2: Amend *RAO 11-5* to clarify process for *RAO* amendments (strikethrough for deletions, underlining for additions)

RAO 11-5

~~11-5. Upon receipt the Stated Clerk shall refer all overtures requesting amendment of the *Book of Church Order* or the *Rules of Assembly Operations* to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the Overtures Committee. Upon receipt, the Stated Clerk shall forward all overtures concerning presbytery boundaries or a new presbytery to the permanent Committee on Mission to North America. Any overture, other than an overture proposing amendment to the Constitution (which shall be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the Overtures Committee), having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred by the Clerk to the appropriate permanent Committee or Agency or ad interim committee. All other overtures shall be referred to the Overtures Committee. An overture proposing amendment to the Constitution shall be referred only to the Overtures Committee for consideration and recommendation; such an overture, however, may be referred to other Committees of Commissioners, other permanent Committees or Agencies, or other ad interim committees for advice only, to the Overtures Committee. All overtures shall be published in the *Commissioner Handbook* with reference for consideration indicated.~~

11-5. All overtures shall be published in the *Commissioner Handbook* with reference for consideration indicated. The Stated Clerk shall refer overtures as follows. The Stated Clerk's referral shall be final unless redirected by a vote of the General Assembly.

- a. All overtures requesting amendment of the *Book of Church Order* or the *Rules of Assembly Operations* shall be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the relevant Committee(s) as listed below.
- b. All overtures proposing amendment to the Constitution shall be referred to the Overtures Committee. The Stated Clerk may also refer such overtures to other Committees of Commissioners, other permanent Committees or Agencies, or other ad interim or special committees for advice only to the Overtures Committee.
- c. All overtures proposing amendment to the *Rules of Assembly Operations* having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred to the Overtures Committee and to the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) that would be impacted by the proposed change. In such cases the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) and the relevant Committee(s) of Commissioners shall be given the opportunity to meet with the Overtures Committee to share their proposed response(s). Such opportunity shall occur at a mutually convenient time or at the beginning of the Overtures Committee's Tuesday afternoon session. The General Assembly shall act on the overture on the basis of the recommendation of the Overtures Committee, recognizing that the members of the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) and the relevant Committee(s) of Commissioners will be able to enter into floor debate on that recommendation.
- d. Any other overture having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the appropriate permanent Committee or Agency, ad interim committee, or special committee.
- e. All overtures concerning presbytery boundaries or the formation of a new presbytery shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the permanent Committee on Mission to North America.
- f. All other overtures shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the Overtures Committee.

ITEM 3: Amend RAO 16-3.e.5 and insert a new 16-3.e.6 to clarify requirements for recording examinations (strikethrough for deletions, underlining for additions).

RAO 16-3.e.

- 5) Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure, ~~and/or~~ ordination, and/or transfer which have been accomplished. This does not mean that a separate vote on each item must be recorded.
- 6) Minutes of presbytery shall record that each candidate being examined for licensure, ordination, or transfer from another denomination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO* 13-6; 19-2; 21-4). ~~This does not mean that a separate vote on each item must be recorded.~~ Presbytery minutes shall record ministers’ and ministerial candidates’ stated differences with our Standards in their own words. Each presbytery shall also record whether:

- a) the candidate stated that he had no differences; or
- b) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or
- c) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but “not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (*BCO* 19-2; 21-4); or
- d) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be “out of accord,” that is, “hostile to the system” or “striking at the vitals of religion” (*BCO* 19-2; 21-4).

[Renumber the subsequent sections of 16-3.e]

ITEM 4: Amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1 to update citation to reflect the new *RAO* 16-3.e.6 (underlining for additions).

***RAO* 16-6.c.1**

- 1) Exceptions of substance: Apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord with the deliverances of the General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and important delinquencies, and any noncompliance with *RAO* 16-3.e.5-6 should be reported under this category.