



POLICIES OF THE AAUW PORT TOWNSEND BRANCH

Please note that this document lists policies that are branch-specific, while the Bylaws conform to AAUW state and national requirements. Refer to Bylaws as needed. Certain Bylaw topics that guide branch-specific policies include:

- Committees
- Financial Administration
- Meetings
- Membership and Dues
- Nominations and Elections
- Officers and Board of Directors
- Organization

TABLE OF POLICIES

Archives
Awards: Named Gift Honoree
Awards: Woman of Excellence
Branch Documents and Decision-making
Branch Leadership and Development
Communications: Announcements
Communications: Directory
Communications: Email List
Communications: Newsletter (FOCUS)
Equipment: Check-out and Use of Laptop and/or Projector
Finance
Friends of Branch
Funds / Special Use: AAUW State and Regional Meetings
Funds / Special Use: Dues Assistance
Nominations and Elections
Programs, Social Activities, and Interest Groups

=====

Archives

Archival materials, assembled by the branch Historian, shall include (1) bylaws and policies; (2) newsletters and minutes of branch and board meetings; (3) branch directories and lists of officers; (4) year-end financial statements; (5) descriptions, programs, photographs, and publicity for events and projects; (6) end-of-year reports; (7) correspondence of historical significance; and (8) research reports. The archives are retained by the Historian for two years, at which time they are transferred to the Jefferson County Historical Society.

Awards: Named Gift Honoree

The branch shall present the “Named Gift” Honoree pin to a member for service to the branch or to the University Women’s Foundation of Jefferson County (UWF).

Eligibility:

1. Prior recipients serve on the Named Gift Honoree Nomination Committee and are ineligible.
2. Current branch and UWF presidents are not eligible.

Criteria:

Those honored contribute or have contributed directly and positively to the branch or UWF.

Selection and Award Process:

1. Each committee member, branch board member, and UWF board member may nominate one candidate. Each nomination shall include a list of the nominee’s specific contributions to the branch and/or UWF.
2. The committee chair (the immediate past honoree whenever possible) shall distribute the list of nominees with their contributions to the committee members to select the honoree. The committee chair will tabulate the results and notify the branch and UWF of the result.

Awards: Woman of Excellence

[reviewed and updated October 2016]

The branch shall present the AAUW Port Townsend Woman of Excellence Award annually to a woman who has contributed significantly to the local community through paid or volunteer work.

Eligibility:

Nominee must be a woman who has resided and/or worked in Jefferson County for a minimum of three years. The woman need not be an AAUW member.

Criteria: Nominees shall be evaluated on each of the following criteria:

1. Role Model: Inspires and energizes others; serves as a model for others to follow.
2. Change Agent: Removes barriers in order to increase opportunities for others.
3. Teacher/Mentor: Instructs, supports and /or advises groups/individuals.
4. Community Activist: Contributes directly and positively to the community.

Process:

1. Board members eligible to vote for nominees continue to be the “voting members” of the Board.
2. Co-Chairs may split their one vote.
3. In the event of a tie, Co-Presidents would then be allowed one vote each.
4. Voting members of the Board are not eligible to be nominating sponsor(s) of candidates.
5. Voting members will utilize the attached evaluation form which assigns possible points for all criteria and gives greater weight to “Change Agent” and “Community Activist” to assist them with their choice.
6. Evaluation forms with information for each candidate will be emailed to voting members one week prior to the December Board meeting. Voting members will email their choice to the Board Co-Chairs no later than the Monday prior to the December Board meeting.
7. The branch honors the recipient at a branch meeting and presents the award to her. Her name is then added on the branch web site to the permanent listing of recipients of the Woman of Excellence Award.

Branch Documents and Decision-making

[updated October 2016]

1. The branch *bylaws* are amended by the membership or by the Board, and voted upon by the membership at the Annual Meeting. They are approved by the State Bylaws Chairman (and National, when required), and take precedence over all other branch documents.
2. The branch *policies* are local branch operating policies and are amended by the board. The board may seek advice and comment from the membership.
3. The branch *budget* and branch *dues rate* are the financial means to accomplish the mission of the branch. They are approved by the board in August and the membership in September. The *dues* rate for the subsequent year will be discussed at the February board meeting. If the board proposes any change of the dues rate, a thirty day advance notice will be given to the membership, in the February Co-Presidents' Email Note to the branch. The members will vote on the dues rate change at the March branch meeting.

Branch Leadership and Development

Officers, directors, and chairs are encouraged to mentor new leaders through the use of job-sharing as co-chairs, committees, and teams. Leaders are requested to be available to assist, encourage, and thank those they are mentoring.

1. Board members are responsible for keeping their position books up-to-date and passing them on to their successors in a timely manner. Position books of board members shall contain, but are not limited to, current copies of the following: (1) branch bylaws, (2) branch policies, and (3) documents relevant to the position, such as End-of-Year Report and job description.
2. All elected positions, except Finance/Treasurer VP, may be co-chaired. The bylaws allow for staggered two-year terms for the experienced officer to mentor the incoming officer.

Communications: Announcements

Announcements at branch meetings, in FOCUS (newsletter), and in the Listserve (email list) will be limited to official AAUW and affiliate UWF activities and business. The Co-Presidents will provide a bulletin board at branch meetings for non-AAUW announcements. When possible, they will announce the names of the groups whose announcements appear on the bulletin board. No signatures will be obtained from members by outside groups.

Communications: Directory

The Directory shall be used only for AAUWPT branch purposes.

Communications: Email List

The email list will be used only for essential and official branch communications. It serves as the main vehicle for distributing the FOCUS newsletter and vital announcements. It is a list of email addresses for current members, and is not given to anyone outside the branch. Members who supplied an email address will automatically be placed on the Email list.

The branch will minimize the number of emails sent to members. The Co-Presidents review emails before they are forwarded to members. To reduce the number of emails sent out, the Co-Presidents may redirect announcements to the FOCUS newsletter, group announcements with other emails, or distribute information by other means.

Communications: Newsletter (FOCUS)

[updated October 2016]

The newsletter, FOCUS, is published 10 months per year, September through June, by the Newsletter Chair(s) after review and approval by the Co-Presidents. It is emailed to all members who provide an email address. Members who cannot access email or the Internet may request a mailed paper copy.

FOCUS content is limited to official branch activities, such as the following:

1. Branch mission statement
2. Date, time, place, and program of the branch meeting
3. Branch meeting minutes
4. Articles written by members of the board and other branch members
5. Calendar of events
6. Sponsorships

FOCUS will not:

- Mention outside groups or members who donate money.
- Show photos with faces of children without permission from their parents.
- Publish an article honoring a specific member, unless it should be regarding an award presented by the branch. Members may be thanked or recognized by the Co-Presidents in the "Applause" section of the Focus.
- Publish information about a member's health or bereavement. When a member dies, a brief "Memorial" announcement may be published. This may include their name, dates of birth and death, and a brief statement regarding the approximate number of years they were a member of this branch.

Equipment: Check-out and Use of Laptop and/or Projector

[policy added Sept. 2016]

1. The Laptop and projector may be used only for official AAUWPT or UWF business, programs, projects or activities. No personal use by members will be permitted. Members are encouraged to use this equipment whenever it can be helpful.
2. The laptop and projector will be housed and managed by the Co-VP's of Programs or another designated AAUWPT board member. It will be signed out by them to other members, using a sign-out sheet to keep track of its location.
3. This equipment will be brought to meetings ONLY if plans have been made to use it.
4. Those members wishing to check out and use this equipment will need to learn how to set it up and use it correctly. They must make arrangements with the Co-VP of Programs who houses the equipment to pick it up and return it. They will need to review the instructions included with the equipment in advance of their program, and practice to make sure they understand how to use it. They can also arrange for a short training session from the Co-VP or another knowledgeable member.
5. Those using the laptop may remove their files to a thumb drive. If information is stored on the laptop, it should be organized in file folders, to be recognizable and easily accessed.
6. Should the laptop or projector be lost or damaged while stored, checked out or in use, the AAUWPT board will address the situation on a "case by case" basis. Repairs may be covered by the 3-year warranty.
7. The board wishes to encourage the use of this equipment for any branch or UWF needs.

Finance

1. Members shall present requests for financial advances and reimbursements to the Finance/Treasurer VP in writing and within 45 days of the expenditure.
2. Members shall obtain board authorization of non-budgeted requests prior to expenditure.
3. The branch shall provide official stationary for branch correspondence, and expenses for effectively carrying out the work of the office or appointment.
4. The branch shall be responsible for gains or losses from branch-sponsored activities (e.g., Holiday Luncheon).
5. No members may expend funds that are not budgeted, with the exception that the Co-Presidents may authorize emergency expenditures.
6. The branch maintains only such organizational memberships as are consistent with the purposes of AAUW.
7. Members of the board and branch members may recommend, and the board may approve, changes in a previously adopted budget.
8. The branch does not raise money or make contributions to any charitable entity. However, members contribute resources and time to UWF, a 501(c)(3) organization which provides the financial support for educational and equity opportunities for women and girls.
9. The Co-President(s) and Finance/Treasurer VP shall provide check signatures; only one signature is required for checks under \$500.
10. There is only one AAUW monetary requirement for contribution and that is for the annual dues renewal in the spring. However, UWF sends out an annual appeal in the fall and expects AAUW members to volunteer and buy Kitchen Tour tickets. In addition, members may be asked for non-monetary contributions to the Silent Auction.

Finance: Audit

The Audit Committee, appointed annually by the Co-Presidents, is an oversight committee responsible for the fiscal integrity of the branch and shall audit the branch financial records annually. The Audit Committee provides a written report to the board and membership.

Friends of Branch

[policy added Sept. 2016]

This branch policy consists of the following points:

1. The “Friends of the Branch” membership option will be a **trial run** for the 2016-17 year, since it is a new concept. The Board will review it near the end of this branch year and take appropriate action.
2. This branch membership category will be open **only** to persons who **do not meet the educational criteria** to qualify for AAUW membership (i.e., they are **not** a graduate holding an associate or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a qualified educational institution.)
3. Since this is a new concept, the number of “Friends” will **initially be limited to ten**. After ten are achieved, the Board will review this policy and take appropriate action.
4. If more than ten people apply to be “Friends” by a publicized, predetermined start date, ten names will be drawn by an impartial nonmember. The rest will be put on a waiting list, pending the Board’s review of this process.
5. “Friends of the Branch” will be welcomed and treated **the same** as other branch members **except** that they **cannot be members of AAUW** or hold **elected** board positions. (Those officers must be able to interact with National and State AAUW.)

6. The “Friends” application form will be supplied by the AAUWPT Co-VP’s of Membership. It will clearly state our mission and the branch’s request that they purchase two Kitchen Tour tickets and volunteer two hours at our Kitchen Tour. The applicant will be asked to sign that they have read this and embrace our mission.
7. “Friends of the Branch” dues will be equivalent to the dues paid by AAUWPT members, currently \$76.00. Fifty dollars of the dues will be a tax-deductible donation to UWF and the “Friend” will receive a receipt/thank you letter from UWF. The balance will remain in AAUWPT’s treasury to help support branch expenses. The “Friends of the Branch” application form will clearly state that none of these dues go to National or State AAUW, so no National or State benefits can be included with the “Friends of the Branch” membership.

Funds / Special Use: AAUW State and Regional Meetings

The branch shall provide funds to enable up to two members to attend area and/or state events (e.g. local workshops, multi-branch events, and state conventions).

Funds / Special Use: Dues Assistance

[policy updated Nov. 2016]

Dues assistance may be available for active members with temporary financial hardship or other special circumstances. Membership VPs will notify the Co-Presidents of a request or a special situation impacting the timely payment of a member’s dues. The Co-Presidents will consult the Finance/Treasurer VP to determine availability of funds. The Co-Presidents will determine the level of assistance to be offered, which will be limited to two years. They will instruct the Treasurer VP to pay National and State AAUW dues accordingly for the member, and Membership VPs to enter the member as “paid” in the branch database. If the member is able to pay their dues at a later date, the money will reimburse the branch treasury. Confidentiality is to be maintained by the five officers involved in the process.

Nominations and Elections

The Nominating Committee is an oversight committee responsible for conducting the nominating and election process for elected members of the board.

1. The current Co-President(s) should be consulted but are not committee members.
2. The chair of the Nominating Committee shall be the immediate past branch Co-President, whenever possible. The Co-President shall guide the discussions, offering the best perspective on who can lead as Co-President and on what is required of other Board positions.
3. At the first meeting of the Nominating Committee, discussion will center around which candidate will best function in each open position.
4. No candidate shall be approached until after the committee has met.
5. No one on the Nominating Committee shall be nominated at that first meeting. A person can be approached privately after the meeting if that person is the best one for the job.
6. Those members already in elected positions on the AAUW Board should not be terminated early to fill another position unless all other possibilities have been exhausted. They have been elected by the membership for their positions, and pulling them out to serve in another position discredits the importance of their election. People in “appointed” positions may be asked to serve in another capacity.
7. The bylaws allow for staggered two-year terms for an experienced board officer to mentor an incoming board officer in the position as co-chairs. All elected positions, except Finance/Treasurer, may be co-chaired. These co-positions should be considered a single position for board quorum and entitled to only one vote on the board.

Programs, Social Activities, and Interest Groups

1. Programs, social activities, and interest groups are provided for the enrichment and education of the members, and shall be consistent with AAUW vision and policy.
2. Interest groups shall be self-sustaining, and are supported by the Interest Groups Chair. Non-members may attend no more than two interest group meetings as guests; membership is then required.
3. Branch meetings are open to the public.