



POLICIES OF 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

Contents

BRANCH LEADERSHIP POLICIES	2
Branch Documents and Decision-making	2
Branch Leadership and Development	2
Nominations and Elections	3
Branch Policies	3
EXECUTIVE [PRESIDENT] POLICIES	4
FINANCE POLICIES	4
DOCUMENTS AND ARCHIVES POLICIES	5
MEMBERSHIP POLICIES	5
Friends of Branch	5
Funds / Special Use: Dues Assistance	5
Interest groups	6
COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES	6
Announcements Policies	6
Publications Policies	6
Email to Membership	7
MISSION PROJECTS POLICIES	7
PROGRAMS POLICIES	7
FUNDRAISING POLICIES	8

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AAUW Port Townsend Policies

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11/12/20*

AWARDS POLICIES	8
Named Gift Honoree	8
Woman of Excellence	8
BRANCH ASSETS / EQUIPMENT POLICIES	9

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BRANCH LEADERSHIP POLICIES

Branch Documents and Decision-making

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, which 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 by 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 President’s 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, on committees, and on 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 information up-to-date in Branch designated digital archives and passing this information on to their successors in a timely manner. Such information will contain, but will not be limited to, copies of the following:
 - End-of-Year Report
 - job description
 - job timelines
 - procedures
 - other documents relevant to the position
2. All leadership positions may be co-chaired. The bylaws allow for staggered two-year terms for the experienced officer to mentor the incoming officer.

3. Board members should present a monthly report to the Board, summarizing progress and issues to be resolved.

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 President(s) should be consulted but are not committee members.
2. The chair of the Nominating Committee will be the immediate past Branch President, whenever possible. The President will guide the discussions, offering the best perspective on who can lead as President and on what is required of other Board positions.
3. At the first meeting of the Nominating Committee, the discussion will center around which candidate will best function in each open position.
4. No candidate will be approached until after the committee has met.
5. No one on the Nominating Committee will be nominated at that first meeting. A person can be approached privately after the meeting if that person is named as 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 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.

Branch Policies

1. Programs are provided for the enrichment and education of the members and will be consistent with AAUW's vision and policy.
2. Branch meetings are open to the public.

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EXECUTIVE [PRESIDENT] POLICIES

1. The President should encourage Branch members to attend state AAUW meetings.
2. The President is the only officer who may sign Branch contracts.
3. The President will annually appoint an Audit Committee to audit the Branch financial records following established audit procedures. The President is to archive and retain the audit reports.

FINANCE POLICIES

1. Members will present requests for financial advances and reimbursements to the Finance/Treasurer VP in writing and within 45 days of the expenditure.
2. Members will obtain Board authorization of non-budgeted requests prior to expenditure. No members may expend funds that are not budgeted, with the exception that the President may authorize emergency expenditures.
3. The Branch will be responsible for gains or losses from Branch-sponsored activities like the Holiday Luncheon.
4. Members of the Board and Branch members may recommend, and the Board may approve, changes in a previously adopted budget.
5. 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 that provides financial support for educational and equity opportunities for women and girls.
6. The President(s) and Finance/Treasurer VP will provide check signatures; only one signature is required for approved items.
7. 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 Home and Kitchen Tour tickets. In addition, members may be asked for non-monetary contributions to the Silent Auction.
8. Use of the debit card is at the discretion of the Finance/Treasurer VP.
9. The Branch may provide funds to enable up to two members to attend area and/or AAUW State events, such as multi-Branch events and State conventions).
10. There will be an annual audit of the Branch finances completed by the end of July.

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DOCUMENTS AND ARCHIVES POLICIES

1. The archives are retained by the Historian.
2. Copies of archived materials are transferred to the Jefferson County Historical Society every two years.
3. Archival materials, assembled by the Branch Historian, will include:
 - Bylaws and policies
 - Newsletters and minutes of Branch and Board meetings
 - Branch directories and lists of officers
 - Year-end financial statements
 - Descriptions, programs, photographs, and publicity for events and projects
 - End-of-year reports
 - Correspondence of historical significance
 - Research reports

MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

See Bylaws for major policies as guided by the national AAUW organization.

Friends of Branch

1. The Friends of the Branch membership category will be open only to persons who do not meet the educational criteria to qualify for AAUW and UWF membership.
2. Friends of the Branch will be welcomed and treated the same as other Branch members except that they cannot be National or State AAUW members and therefore cannot hold an elected Board position. However, they can hold any other leadership role.
3. Like all branch members, Friends of the Branch are expected to buy Home and Kitchen Tour tickets and to volunteer at the Tour.
4. Friends of the Branch dues will be equivalent to the dues paid by Branch members and will go to help support Branch expenses. None of the dues will go to National or State AAUW, so no National or State benefits can be included with Friends of the Branch membership.

Funds / Special Use: Dues Assistance

1. Dues assistance may be available for active members with temporary financial hardship or other special circumstances.
2. The President will determine the level of assistance to be offered, which will be limited to two years per individual.

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3. Confidentiality is to be maintained by the five officers involved in the process.

Interest groups

1. All interest groups will be self-sustaining and supported by the Interest Groups Chair.
2. Non-members may attend no more than two interest group meetings as guests. Continued attendance in an interest group requires Branch membership.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

Announcements Policies

1. Announcements at Branch meetings, in the FOCUS newsletter, and in the Listserve email list will be limited to official AAUW and affiliate UWF activities and business.
2. The President will provide a bulletin board at Branch meetings for non-AAUW announcements.
3. No canvassing of members is allowed by outside groups at Branch meetings.
4. A brief announcement of a member's passing may be made.

Publications Policies

1. Members' personal information will not be publicly disseminated.
 - a. No Branch Directory information will be given to any outside entity or used by any individual or organization for non-AAUW purposes.
 - b. When a member dies, a brief "Memorial" announcement may be published internally. This may include their name, date of death, a brief statement regarding the approximate number of years they were a member of this Branch or any other AAUW organization, and any Branch awards they may have received.
2. All content will be factually accurate and provide useful information for members and the public.
3. All internal and external communications will be reviewed to ensure National AAUW standards are followed, including the use of Style Guides and Logos in all Branch publications.
4. The newsletter, FOCUS, is published 10 months per year by the Newsletter Chair(s) after review and approval by the President.
5. 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.

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6. FOCUS content is limited to official Branch activities.
7. FOCUS newsletter will NOT:
 - a. Mention groups, individuals, or members who donate money
 - b. Show photos with faces of children without permission from their parents
 - c. 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 President in the "Applause" section of the FOCUS.
 - d. Publish information about a member's health

Email to Membership

1. 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.
2. It is a list of email addresses for current members and is not given to anyone outside the Branch.
3. Members who supplied an email address to the Membership Chair will automatically be placed on the email list.
4. The President will review emails before they are forwarded to members.
5. The Branch will minimize the number of emails sent to members. To this end, the President may redirect announcements to the FOCUS newsletter, group announcements with other emails, or distribute information by other means.

MISSION PROJECTS POLICIES

1. Members may propose a new project by contacting the Mission Project Director.
2. Projects should be in alignment with the AAUW mission and goals.

PROGRAMS POLICIES

Branch meeting programs should be related to the stated mission of AAUW national or our Branch.

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FUNDRAISING POLICIES

The Chairs of Branch fundraising events report directly to the President and the President informs the UWF President.

AWARDS POLICIES

Named Gift Honoree

The Branch will annually identify a member as the “Named Gift” Honoree for service to the Branch or to the University Women’s Foundation of Jefferson County (UWF).

1. Funding amount for this award will be determined by UWF Board. That amount will be sent to AAUW national in the name of the named gift honoree.
2. Prior recipients will serve on the Named Gift Honoree Nomination Committee.
3. Prior recipients and current Branch and UWF Presidents are ineligible for the award.
4. Selection and award process:
 - a. Each committee member, Branch Board member, and UWF Board member may nominate one candidate. Each nomination will include a list of the nominee’s specific contributions to the Branch and/or UWF.
 - b. The committee chair (the immediate past honoree whenever possible) will 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.

Woman of Excellence

The Branch will 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.

1. Eligibility:
 - a. A nominee must be a woman who has resided and/or worked in Jefferson County for a minimum of three years.
 - b. The woman need not be an AAUW member.
2. Criteria: Nominees will be evaluated on each of the following criteria:
 - a. Role Model: Inspires and energizes others; serves as a model for others to follow
 - b. Change Agent: Removes barriers in order to increase opportunities for others

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- c. Teacher/Mentor: Instructs, supports, and /or advises groups/individuals
 - d. Community Activist: Contributes directly and positively to the community
3. Process:
- a. Voting members of the Board are not eligible to be a nominating sponsor(s) of candidates.
 - b. The calendar will be determined by the WOE chair in consultation with the Board no later than the Monday prior to the November Board meeting.
 - c. Information for each candidate will be emailed to voting members. Voting members will email their choice to the Board President.
 - d. Each voting Board member is eligible to cast one vote for a nominee.
 - e. In the event of a tie, the President(s) will make the final decision.
 - f. Voting members will utilize an evaluation form that assigns possible points for all criteria and gives greater weight to “Change Agent” and “Community Activist” to assist them with their choice.
 - g. The Branch honors the recipient at a Branch meeting and presents the award to her. Her name is then added on the Branch website to the permanent listing of recipients of the Woman of Excellence Award.

BRANCH ASSETS / EQUIPMENT POLICIES

1. Branch signage, computers, and projectors will be used only for official Branch 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. Electronic equipment such as the computer and projector will be housed and managed by the VP of Programs or another designated Board member. Signage consisting of banners and stand-alone signs will be housed and managed by the President.
3. Sufficient time should be given by the planned user to learn correct operation, as well as ensure functional support to any guest user’s presentation software/tool. Manuals and user guides are stored with the equipment.
4. Computer users will introduce their files/documents via a thumb/flash drive. If information needs to be temporarily stored on the laptop, it should be organized and named to be easily recognized, accessed, and deleted upon the end of temporary storage.
5. Loss or damage to equipment will be addressed by the Board on a “case by case” basis.

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