

Public Policy Committee Charter

The Public Policy Committee (the “Committee”) is a special advisory committee of the board (the “board”) of the American Association of University Women (“AAUW”). The Committee acts in accordance with this charter, AAUW’s articles of incorporation and any amendments thereto, AAUW’s bylaws and policies and all applicable laws, and the overall direction of the organization as determined by the board.

Purpose

The purpose of the Committee is to advise AAUW on the six-month and two-year Public Policy Priorities and support AAUW’s advocacy work with AAUW’s membership by informing and engaging with members at the local, state, and federal levels on AAUW’s policy priorities.

Responsibilities

In carrying out its purpose, the Committee, under direction of the board, shall:

- Conduct its responsibilities for the purpose of making nonbinding advice and recommendations to the board and its committees.
- Review and provide input to staff and management on the six-month public policy priority levels on federal issues;
- Biannually, solicit input from members, review suggestions and staff recommendations, and report to the board recommended changes to the Public Policy Priorities for membership vote. Propose draft rationale to the board for the recommended changes for presentation and vote of the membership;
- Provide guidance to management and staff on resources to help support AAUW member engagement in AAUW’s advocacy work;
- Act as a resource for AAUW members on state and branch advocacy programming and participate in state and branch programming when appropriate and financially viable;
- Actively participate in AAUW’s local, state, or federal advocacy work;
- Help to identify and engage partners to advocate for AAUW’s mission, including relevant coalitions;
- Provide feedback on dissemination campaign plans and assist in disseminating position papers, briefs, policy statements, and other public policy products;
- Carry out such other responsibilities as may from time to time be assigned to the Committee by the board.

Committee Membership

The Committee shall consist of at least 7 members and at least a majority of the members of the Committee shall be members of AAUW. The chair(s) and members of the Committee shall be appointed by the board chair and approved by the board of directors or as appropriate by the Executive Committee and shall serve at the pleasure of the board.

Members of the Committee shall have policy and/or advocacy experience.

The board chair serves as a nonvoting ex officio member of the Committee. The board chair shall appoint a board liaison to the Committee from among the directors of the board. The board liaison shall serve as a voting member of the Committee. The board liaison communicates board priorities to and for the Committee and serves as a consultative resource to the Committee chair as needed. Committee recommendations and other communications shall be brought to the board by the board liaison.

A staff member designated by the CEO shall serve as a nonvoting staff liaison to the Committee.

Terms

Committee members (other than nonvoting ex officio members) shall be appointed for a term of two years beginning July 1 following appointment and shall be eligible for reappointment to the committee for one succeeding term only. In no case shall an appointed member serve for more than three consecutive terms on one committee, the third term being possible only if a committee member becomes chair of the committee. The term limit for a mid-term appointment shall be calculated from the next annual term start date.

In the event that a member misses two consecutive meetings or is unable to fulfill the requirements of the Committee, the Committee chair may recommend to the board that the member be replaced. In the event that the Committee chair misses two consecutive meetings or is unable to fulfill the requirements of the Committee, the board chair may recommend to the board that the Committee chair be replaced.

Committee members who have served for two consecutive terms as members or three consecutive terms if they become chair of the Committee, exclusive of any partial term, shall be eligible for reelection to the Committee following a one-year hiatus.

Subcommittees

The Committee may create subcommittees for the purpose of gathering information, conducting analyses, and developing draft recommendations for consideration by the Committee with respect to particular matters related to the responsibilities of the Committee. The specific authority of all subcommittees shall be specified in writing and reviewed at least every other year. All subcommittees must report their recommendations and advice to the Committee for deliberation and discussion. A subcommittee may include members who are not members of the Committee. Subcommittee members are appointed by the Committee chair.

Voting and Quorum Requirements

Each member of the Committee, other than nonvoting ex officio members, shall have one vote. A majority of the then-serving members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting. The presence of ex officio members shall not be counted for purposes of determining quorum. The act of a majority of Committee members present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Committee. There shall be no proxy or ballot voting.

Meetings

The Committee shall meet not less than four times each year. Meetings may be held telephonically or electronically so long as all members participating have the opportunity to read or hear the proceedings substantially concurrently with their occurrence. Special meetings of the Committee may be called by the chair of the Committee or any two members of the Committee unless otherwise provided in the bylaws or by a resolution of the board.

Minutes, Reports, and Records

Minutes of Committee meetings shall be maintained at AAUW headquarters. The Committee chair shall prepare written reports on the Committee's activities and recommendations to the board for the board's regular and annual meetings. The board liaison shall review the written reports from the Committee chair and submit them to the board for review.