Manual of Academic Women’s Association

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This Manual of the Academic Women's Association (AWA) is intended to provide assistance for prospective and current members of AWA's Executive Committee. It was prepared for AWA by Bente Roed, President 1995/96 with input from the 1995/96 Executive Committee members. This revised version was completed in 2005 by the 2004/2005 AWA Executive.

BRIEF BACKGROUND ON ACADEMIC WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

An article in Folio (2 October 1975, p. 3) begins

Two years ago a non-association began. A handful of women faculty who knew each other but knew few beyond their small circle decided that it was time for women on academic staff at this University to become acquainted. So the first of many regular dinner meetings was organized, with a small program in which items of specific interest to academic women were raised...

The meetings continued, usually one each month, for two years, with no executive, no organization, no fixed plans. The group, usually fifty or sixty in number, comprised women of all ages, disciplines, and points of view. Although it rejected at its third meeting the idea of a formal name (probably because one or two preposterous acronyms were suggested), the name "Academic Women's Association" just grew.

The Institute of Law Research and Reform requested that the "association" make submissions on the questions of matrimonial property and matrimonial support, and submissions were also made on such matters as daycare, all of which was agreed on by a group consensus rather than a formal vote...

But by the time of the conference, "The Economics of Sex Roles", [Spring 1975] the little non-association had already decided to formalize itself. Possibly the group had been evolving towards a formal organization, or perhaps it was precipitated by the tabling of the report of the Senate Task Force on the Status of Women ten days previously. On March 31, after the task force report and its recommendations were discussed, the group decided, literally and spontaneously as a group, that it was time to organize, if organization was what was needed to see that the report and its recommendations were not to be conveniently buried in the well-known tangle of campus communities...

AWA's initial application, 29 August 1978, to become incorporated under The Societies Act stated that

The objects of the society are:

a) To foster an atmosphere of collegiality among academic women,

b) To encourage and promote equal opportunities for women to participate fully in all aspects of university affairs,

c) To provide a forum for discussion, and a mechanism for affirmative action, on matters that affect women at the university,

d) To initiate any inquiry, study, or affirmative action program as shall be decided upon by the Executive officers of the Association.
1. PURPOSE OF MANUAL

This manual is designed to outline the role, function, and structure of the executive officers and members of the AWA.

2. PURPOSE OF AWA

To provide a voice for women on campus, opportunities for networking and nurturing among women from different disciplines and at different levels of their academic careers and to celebrate the achievements of academic women.

3. ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE

We aim to achieve this purpose by working towards the following goals:

a) to provide a forum for discussion and action on issues that relate to academic women;

b) to support and mentor undergraduate and graduate women students;

c) to provide networking and support opportunities for academic women;

d) to celebrate and honour the efforts of women who have created a dynamic and caring scholarly community;

e) to provide support and recognition of student achievements through an undergraduate scholarship and graduate student award;

f) to support and provide input to university programs relevant to academic women, such as daycare and security;

g) to organize sessions for discussion of issues relevant to academic women.

h) to provide opportunities for social interaction for academic women

4. INCORPORATION

AWA applied to become incorporated under the Societies Act (Alberta) in 1978; the incorporation was not completed. The Bylaws of the Association were revised in 1979, 1995, 1996, and 2005.
5. **MEMBERSHIP**

Active memberships shall be open to

a) women who currently hold or who have retired from full- or part-time academic appointments at the University of Alberta;

b) women who are full- or part-time graduate students at the University of Alberta;

Associate memberships shall be open to:

a) women who currently hold or have retired from academic appointments in other Alberta universities;

b) women in academically-related positions who are interested in and share the objectives of the Association.

c) women who are full- or part-time graduate students in other Alberta universities.

Honorary memberships shall be extended upon the discretion of the Executive to persons who are deemed to have made outstanding contributions in forwarding the goals of the Association.

6. **AUTHORITY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The authority of the Executive Committee is established by the Bylaws. The Committee consists of not less than seven and not more than eleven members elected at the Annual General Meeting. Term of office is one year for the President, Past-President and President-Elect/Vice-President. Other Executive officers shall normally be elected for two years. No member may serve for more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

The Executive shall have a meeting schedule that will allow it to conduct the Association's business in a professional manner. Executive meetings are called by the President. Three members of the Executive shall constitute a quorum for Executive decisions at its regular or special meeting. In case of a tie vote, the President shall cast the deciding vote. If a vacancy occurs the Executive shall attempt to fill the vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting; any vacancy on the Executive may be filled by appointing a new member for the unexpired term.

The Executive shall ensure that the Association has a minimum of one meeting per year. Notices of meetings shall be sent to the membership two weeks before each scheduled meeting. A special meeting may be called on the instructions of any two members provided that they request in writing that the President call such a meeting, and state the business to be brought before the meeting. Fifty-one percent of active members present shall constitute a quorum for decisions at a regular or special meeting. In case of a tie vote, the President shall cast the deciding vote. Meetings are open to the membership and minutes are a matter of public record.
7. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is responsible for the conduct of AWA's affairs. Its responsibilities include:

a) establishing and planning the AWA programming and advocacy activities;

b) advertising, selecting, and honouring the annual AWA Woman of the Year and Graduate Student Award winners;

c) ensuring that the AWA has adequate financial resources for its goals and activities;

d) promoting the AWA, inspiring confidence in its mandate and services, and interpreting the work of the association to the community.

8. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Preparation for meetings

Members are expected to prepare for meetings by reading minutes and materials and by noting points they wish to discuss at meetings.

Active Participation

Members are expected to attend all Executive Committee meetings. If they are unable to attend they must advise the President in advance of the meeting. Active participation in the Association requires each member to serve in her appointed office and, if possible, to be prepared to serve on additional ad hoc or task oriented committees.

Confidentiality

Items of Executive Committee business are confidential by nature, and Executive Committee members should be aware that although minutes of meetings are a matter of public record, discussion at the Executive Committee level should be considered confidential.

9. GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Position

A member of the Executive Committee of the AWA. The term of appointment starts July 1 each year; new members are elected at the AWA’s Annual General Meeting, and a joint transition meeting between old and new Executives is typically held in May/June.

Area of Authority
Each Executive Committee member is responsible for considering and deciding upon all matters of Association's policy, programs, and expenditures. Members collectively exercise full authority over all operational aspects.

The specific authority of a position is covered in the Bylaws of the Association. All Executive Committee members shall be elected by the general members of the AWA and are answerable to them.

Requirements for Executive Committee Membership

Specific qualifications and/or experience in one of the major areas of board: administration, planning, advocacy, finance, or the ability to represent special interests in community to the Association.

a) Commitment to the work of the Association.

b) Willingness to serve on committees.

c) Willingness to volunteer sufficient time to be involved in the Association's affairs.

Task Analysis

Executive Committee members are expected to be fully informed about the Association's matters, to contribute to the debate on issues, to make a judgment on matters as they arise, and to accept their portion of the collective responsibility for Association’s affairs.

The affairs for which the Executive members are collectively responsible are:

a) The administration of the Association.

   i) Defining and, if necessary, revising the mission statement of the AWA.

   ii) The articles of incorporation.

   iii) The Bylaws and their periodic review.

   iv) Decision making on all policy matters.

b) Program planning and budgeting.

   i) Long range planning in line with AWA's goals.

   ii) Short range planning.

   iii) Setting priorities in planning.

   iv) Approval of budgets.
v) Recruitment and orientation of new Executive Committee members.

c) Evaluation.

i) Periodic evaluation of the programs and of their contribution towards achieving AWA's stated goals.

ii) Periodic evaluation of current University and community climates and the AWA's response to new situations.

iii) Evaluation of the Executive Committee itself, and of the President.

d) Resource Development.

i) Generating the resources necessary to implement policy decisions.

ii) Fund raising.

iii) Enhancing AWA's image in the community and thereby gaining the support of the community in terms of funds, support, and volunteers.

e) Maintaining community relations.

i) Representing the community and their interests to the Association.

ii) Representing the AWA to the community.

10. **OFFICERS**

Officers are members of the AWA Executive Committee; they are part of a slate of Officers proposed by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Association from among its members at the Annual General Meeting.

It is recommended that the past and incumbent Presidents have an overlapping term from July 1 to September 1 of the same year in order to facilitate joint meetings of the past and incumbent Executives and allow projects begun in the past presidency to be concluded.

Unless authorized at any meeting and after notice of the same shall have been given, no member of the Executive shall receive remuneration for her services.

President

The major responsibilities of the President are to
a) preside at all meetings of Executive Committee and the Annual General Meeting;
b) call special meetings when necessary, subject to limitations contained in the Bylaws;
c) organize and co-ordinate the activities of AWA;
d) ensure that the AWA holds firm its stated purpose, goals, and objectives, and continues to show leadership in its role;
e) ensure that the selected activities are carried out;
f) represent the Association in the community;
g) maintain provision for the discharge of the necessary duties of absent or suspended members;
h) see that the regulations of the AWA are enforced;
i) carry out assignments and instructions given to her by vote of the members of the AWA;
j) create and co-ordinate committees and task forces deemed necessary to accomplish the goals of the AWA;
k) ensure updated comprehensive job descriptions exist for all AWA positions, and interpret their meaning as required;
l) be an *ex officio* member of the nominating committee;
m) be an *ex officio* member of all committees;
n) receive, and manage the processing of, all applications for the Woman of the Year and Graduate Student Awards;
o) have custody of the minutes of the proceedings of the recent meetings of the Association and of the Executive;

**President-Elect/Vice President**

The major responsibilities of the Vice President are to assist the President and to be prepared to perform the duties of the President in her absence.

**Past President**

The major responsibilities of the Past President are to
a) serve as an adviser to the President during the year following her term as president;

b) participate as an active member of the Executive Committee;

c) chair the Nomination Committee; prepare and present to the AWA for approval a slate of nominees for election to the Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting. The slate of nominees should emphasize balanced representation and appropriate expertise;

d) act, in the case of a resignation during the year, to make nominations to fill this vacancy on the Executive Committee.

e) ensure that the files of the association are deposited at the conclusion of each term in the University of Alberta Archives. The access to these files shall be obtained through the President.

Secretary

The major responsibilities of the Secretary are to

a) prepare the minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of the Association and of the Executive Committee and arrange for their appropriate distribution;

b) prepare such letters and communications as requested by the Executive Committee for the Association and send copies to the President for the records.

Treasurer

The major responsibilities of the Treasurer are to

a) receive all monies paid to the Association and shall be responsible for the deposit of same in whatever bank the Executive may order;

b) keep proper accounts for the funds and such books as may be directed;

c) issue the appropriate payments;

d) present a full and detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the Executive Committee whenever requested;

e) prepare draft budgets, financial statements, and reports as required;

f) keep the operation of the AWA within the approved budget;

g) prepare for submission to the Annual General Meeting a statement duly audited of the financial position of the Association and submit a copy of same for the records.

Newsletter Editor
The major responsibilities of the Newsletter Editor are to

a) keep informed of AWA business and information that should be shared with the general membership through the newsletter, AWAre;

b) maintain regular contact with contributors of the newsletter regarding the publication's information and its deadline;

c) initiate, coordinate, and edit articles for the newsletter and arrange for publication;

d) attend AWA program seminars and write reports for AWAre.

Web Manager

The major responsibilities of the Web Manager relate to the ongoing development and maintenance of the AWA’s website (http://www.ualberta.ca/~awa), including posting notices of events, coordinating content for inclusion on the site, and responding to queries about the AWA’s web presence.

Member-at-Large

The major responsibilities of Members-at-large are to

a) participate actively in AWA's affairs;

b) serve on sub and ad hoc committees;

c) participate in program planning and implementation;

d) act in specific capacities such as Daycare Liaison and Membership Chair. The following describes these positions:

Daycare Liaison will

i) act as contact person for child care issues;

ii) maintain relationship with Directors in University Daycares;

iii) prepare and arrange programs on daycare issues;

iv) keep AWA members updated on daycare issues through newsletter.

Membership Chair will

i) act as membership contact;

ii) send out membership recruitment material, including a late August/early September mailing to all women on campus eligible for membership, and at least one other
reminder to members whose membership has lapsed;

iii) maintain the computerized membership database and e-mail list of members;

iv) as holder of the e-mail list, send out communications between the Association and its members (e.g. announcements or events, requests for input etc.),

11. **COMMITTEES**

Committees (sub and *ad hoc*) are established to streamline the Association’s operations. As they have no final authority and all decisions must be approved by the Executive Committee, committees serve the following purposes:

a) studying issues to be acted on by the Association;

b) widening the base of information;

c) recommending actions to be taken;

d) assimilating, analysing, and evaluating information for the Association.

Each committee, following the Annual General Meeting, shall develop its goals and objectives for the coming year. Each committee shall submit a report to the Executive Committee listing the tasks to be assumed and a date for their completion. Reports of committee meetings including attendance, will be maintained. A simple majority of members of a committee shall be in quorum.