

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, San Francisco
June 26 – 30, 2015

Topic: Award Committee Term Length

Background: It has been an ongoing effort to standardize YALSA selection and award committees; however, the term length for YALSA’s six award committees is not consistent, which has created unintended problems with committee appointments since the 2015 policy mandating a two-year wait period between serving on YALSA award committees went into effect. Nichole O’Connor has presented the following proposal for the Board’s consideration.

Action Required: Action

Problem

In June 2015, the Board of Directors voted to institute a uniform policy across all YALSA’s six award committees that requires a two-year waiting period before members may serve on another YALSA award committee. Because not all YALSA’s award committees have the same term length, this has become overly complicated when trying to determine a member’s eligibility for committee appointments, and has undermined the original intent of the policy. For example, a member serving on Printz beginning February 1, 2017, will not end their term until June 30, 2018. Per YALSA policy, they are eligible to serve on another award committee two years after their end date, which means they are not eligible until July of 2020. However, since appointments are made in fall, it would not be before Feb. 2021 when the member could serve again. Because of terms ending in June, then, members actually have to wait three years before serving again.

Proposal

To make the process easier for members, and to comply with the original intent of the 2015 policy, institute uniform committee terms across all YALSA’s six award committees that standardizes committee, making all award committees have an end date of January 31. Committees in question are: Alex, Edwards, Odyssey, Morris, Nonfiction and Printz.

Rationale

- This proposal aligns with the overall effort to standardize policies and procedures as much as possible across selection and award committees.
- An official, uniform policy would be easier to communicate to members, and ensures transparency and consistency in committees from year-to-year.
- A consistent policy decreases the chance for errors when making appointments. More than one member has been accidentally appointed to a committee only for YALSA to

discover after the fact that they were not actually eligible, due to the fact that within the last three years they had served on an award committee that had a June end date. This has caused members undue frustration.

- Making this adjustment will help YALSA implement the intended two-year wait period between serving on award committees that was approved in June 2015.
- After the award winners are selected at Midwinter, award committees have no required responsibilities remaining, so ending the term sooner will not have a negative impact.
 - The Morris, Nonfiction, Edwards, and Printz ticketed events are planned by staff.
 - If Odyssey and Alex Committee members are interested, they can opt to present a program at Annual or the Symposium, but this is not a requirement.

Financial Implications

This change would save both the time of the President-Elect and staff when making committee appointments, as there would be less confusion around a member's eligibility

Measuring Impact

- Reduction of errors during the appointments process, and decreased member frustration
- Time saved by President-Elect and staff

Recommended Action

The Board adopts the proposal as presented in this document and directs the Executive Director to work with staff to update the policy language in all policy documents and inform members of the change. This action will go into effect beginning with the award committees that are appointed after the 2017 election.

Additional Resources

June 2015 Board Document #29 “Selection and Award Committee Participation Policy,”
<http://bit.ly/2iVJakN>