

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

Topic: Selection & Award Committee Participation Policy

Background: In their spring 2015 report, the Selection Committee Evaluation Task Force recommended that YALSA leaders consider the creation of the policy regarding service on selection and/or award committees, with the goal of opening up the committees for broader participation from the YALSA membership. Joy Kim has analyzed selection and award committee service records from 2007-2016 and developed the following proposal for the Board's consideration.

Action Required: Discussion

Proposal

Institute a uniform policy across all of YALSA's award and selection committees that addresses selection committee term lengths, years of consecutive service on selection and/or award committees, and frequency of award committee service.

Rationale

- Creating such a policy would open up the award and selection committees for broader participation from the YALSA membership. Award and selection committee slots are in very high demand as member engagement opportunities, and every year many volunteers for these committees must be regretfully declined.
- Broader participation in award and selection committees supports the integrity and quality of the lists. A wider representation of experts provides the opportunity for more diverse perspectives and experience, which improves the quality of the work.
- While ad-hoc efforts to broaden committee participation have had an impact, an official, uniform policy would be easy to communicate to members and ensure transparency and consistency in committee appointments and nominations for elected award committee slots from year-to-year.
- Award and selection committees require significant time commitments due to their reading requirements, the demands of ongoing virtual work between conferences, and (for non-virtual committees) the required travel to both Annual Conference and Midwinter Meeting. While our member volunteers are dedicated and talented, they

sometimes underestimate the work required to serve successfully. They also sometimes overestimate their ability to sustain that level of commitment over multiple years. Instituting a uniform policy limiting years of consecutive service would help members avoid burnout and have more successful committee experiences.

- Mandating time off from award and selection committees may encourage members to support the work of the organization in other ways, such as blogging, writing for a YALSA publication, participating in strategic committee work, and presenting a webinar or other CE opportunity.
- In May 2014, the Board of Directors voted to institute a uniform policy across all of YALSA's award and selection committees that requires a waiting period before members may serve on the same committee again. The intention of this policy was also to open up the award and selection committees for broader participation from the YALSA membership. Members who provided feedback on this policy expressed a concern that it did not go far enough to broaden committee participation in a meaningful way.

Background and Data

For committee years 2007-2016, 1213 committee slots for chairs, members, and administrative assistants were made available on YALSA's award and selection committees through appointment and election. (Committee years are described by the January in which the selection lists or award are announced, so current year committees are 2016 committees.) The total number of available slots varied from year to year for a number of reasons including:

- Two committees were restructured (Best Books became Best Fiction, Selected DVDs and Videos became Fabulous Films)
- Three committees were added (Odyssey, Morris, Nonfiction)
- One committee was sunsetted (Fabulous Films)
- Outstanding Books for the College Bound only exists every five years.
- Administrative assistant positions are optional, and some chairs choose not to have one on their committee

548 different individuals filled those 1213 slots, for a median of two years of committee service during that ten-year period. These numbers may include some ACRL- and ALSC-only members who were appointed, respectively, to Outstanding Books for the College Bound or Odyssey. Their numbers are included in the total as some YALSA members have membership in multiple divisions and have been appointed to the same committee by two different divisions.

Analysis of selection and award committee rosters from 2007-2016 reveals the following patterns in committee service:

1. A small but significant group of highly engaged members filled a disproportionate number of selection and award committee slots from 2007-2016.

Table 1. 2007-2016 selection and award committee slots filled by members with 4+ years of service during that time period

	# of individuals	% of total individuals (548) serving on selection or award committees, 2007-2016	# of selection and award committee slots filled, 2007-2016	% of total selection and award committee slots (1213), 2007-2106
Members who served 6+ years, 2007-2016	25	4.6%	160	13.2%
Members who served 5+ committee years 2007-2016	45	8.2%	260	21.4%
Members who served 4+ committee years 2007-2016	95	17.3%	460	37.9%

2. Of those same members, many have served several consecutive years on selection and award committees without any gap or break in service. One especially enthusiastic selection/award committee member has served for 9 straight years.

Table 2. Consecutive years of service on selection award committees, 2012-2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Slots available (includes admin assistants and ACRL/ALSC appointees to joint committees)	124	126	141	118	114
Committee members with 5+ consecutive years of service	4	8	14	8	1
% 5+ consecutive years	3.2%	6.3%	9.9%	6.8%	0.9%
Committee members with 4+ consecutive years of service	13	19	20	9	6

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% 4+ consecutive years	10.5%	15.1%	14.2%	7.6%	5.3%
Committee members with 3+ consecutive years of service	28	34	30	19	18
% 3+ consecutive years	22.6%	27.0%	21.3%	16.1%	15.8%

Ad-hoc efforts in recent years by YALSA President-Elects and their appointments task forces to broaden award and selection committee participation have had a positive impact on this trend. On 2013 award and selection committees, 27% of members were in their third or more year of consecutive service. In 2016, that number is 15.8%.

3. For many highly engaged selection and award committee volunteers, what breaks in service exist tend to be brief and only those effectively mandated by the 18-month committee term of some award committees (Printz, Edwards, Odyssey).

Analysis of the committee service history for the 45 members who served 5+ terms on YALSA award and selection committees between 2007-2016 shows that a select group of highly engaged members serve very frequently on award committees. This is not surprising: successful award committee service in the past makes them experienced, skilled, and desirable candidates for award committee spots by election as well as for chair service. For these individuals, one-year breaks are not uncommon between longer stints of service or following award committee service. (Note: three award committees--Printz, Edwards, and Odyssey--have 18-month terms that effectively require a 1-year break after the award is announced. In other words, a committee member on 2015 Printz would not be eligible to serve on 2016 committees.) Two-year breaks appear occasionally, but three- and four- year breaks are rare.

Table 3. Anonymized service history for members who served 5+ terms on YALSA selection and award committees between 2007-2016

Of the 548 individual members who served on YALSA selection and award committees between 2007-2016, 45 (or 8.2%) served 5 or more years. Collectively, those 45 members filled 260 (or 21.4%) of the 1213 committee slots available during that 10 year time period. This table provides a visual summary of their service histories. Each line tracks the committee service of an individual member. Blue indicates selection committee service; red indicates award committee service; C's indicate chair service.

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	SEL	SEL	SEL-C	AW-C	SEL	SEL	AW	AW	AW
SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL		AW
		SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	AW	AW	AW	
		SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL-C	SEL	SEL	AW	
	AW	AW	AW-C	SEL	SEL	AW		AW	
SEL-C	AW	AW	AW	AW	AW	AW		AW-C	
SEL	SEL		AW	AW	AW	AW	SEL		
		SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL			SEL	SEL
SEL	SEL	SEL			AW			AW	SEL
			SEL	SEL	SEL-C	SEL	SEL		AW-C
			SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL-C		AW
			SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	AW-C		SEL
			SEL	SEL-C	SEL	SEL	SEL		AW
		SEL	SEL	SEL	AW		AW		AW
SEL	SEL	SEL-C	SEL	AW					AW
			AW	AW	AW-C	SEL	SEL	AW	
			SEL	SEL-C	AW	SEL	SEL	AW	
SEL	SEL	SEL-C	SEL	SEL	AW			AW	
		SEL	SEL	AW	SEL	SEL	AW-C		
		SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL-C		
		SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL	AW		
	SEL	SEL	SEL	AW	SEL	SEL			
AW	AW		AW	AW	AW-C	AW-C			
SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL		SEL	SEL			
AW	AW	AW	AW	AW	AW				
		AW			AW	SEL	SEL		AW
SEL				SEL-C	AW		AW		AW-C
	AW	SEL			AW		AW		AW
	SEL	SEL	SEL-C			AW			AW-C
				SEL	SEL	SEL-C	SEL	SEL	
				AW	SEL	SEL	AW	AW	
				SEL	SEL	AW	SEL	AW	
		SEL		AW		AW	AW	AW	
SEL		SEL-C		AW-C			SEL	AW	
SEL	SEL	SEL			SEL			SEL	
			SEL	SEL	SEL	AW	AW		
		AW		SEL	SEL-C	AW	AW-C		
	SEL	SEL			AW	AW	AW-C		
	AW-C	SEL			AW	SEL	SEL		
	SEL	SEL	SEL			SEL	SEL		
AW	AW	AW		AW		AW			
SEL	SEL	SEL	AW			AW			
	SEL	SEL	SEL	SEL		AW			
SEL	SEL	SEL-C	AW			AW			
SEL	SEL	SEL-C	SEL	AW					

4. Two-year terms on selection committees and the Alex Awards committee significantly limit the number of slots available for appointment each year.

In this past, it has not been uncommon for members on certain committees to serve an initial two-year term, then be reappointed for a second two-year term, therefore serving for a total of

four years on a single committee. This has a major impact on the number of spots available to new volunteers and returning volunteers who have taken a break from service. YALSA members who are looking to serve on their first selection or award committee can find it challenging to “get their foot in the door.” While there is certainly a value to having some experienced members on each committee each year, it seems likely that this can still be accomplished with shorter maximum appointments. Those appointments could be staggered, and experienced members returning from breaks in service could also be strategically appointed to address gaps in experience.

Conclusions from Committee Service Data

- A policy designed to broaden member participation in selection and award committees needs to address maximum years of consecutive service, frequency of award committee service, required waiting periods, and term length to have a significant impact on broadening committee participation.
- Term lengths should be standardized across all selection committees. Currently, some selection committee policies state the default term is two years, while other state the default term is one year. If the Board desires to broaden selection and award committee participation, it makes sense to establish one-year committee terms as the new standard across all selection committees. It also makes sense to limit service on the Alex Award Committee to a single term of one or two years; this would be consistent with the one-term limit on other award committees. Shorter maximum appointments would also make it easier for chairs and the Board to address committee performance issues. Also, increasing participation in selection committees is an essential first step in expanding overall participation in award committees as well; it grows the pool of qualified candidates with selection and evaluation committee experience.
- The updated policy should also apply to administrative assistants as well as regular/virtual members and chairs. Because administrative assistant positions are often filled outside the regular appointments process, at the request of the chair, there is sometimes less formal oversight regarding their past committee service. President-Elects should remind chairs to any appointments of potential administrative assistants need to be consistent with any policy instituted.
- Appointments to jointly administered committees (Odyssey, Outstanding Books) by partner divisions should be counted in years of consecutive service, as well as toward eligibility and waiting periods for award committee service.
- Strong committee leadership is essential for effective committee work, so it is not recommended that an updated policy apply strictly to the position of chair. However, it would be ideal if committee chair appointments were consistent with the spirit of the

updated policy. President-Elects should be encouraged to consider recent consecutive years of service and frequency of recent award committee service whenever possible in appointing committee chairs.

Suggested Wording for Selection Committees

Current Language:

"Members who have served two consecutive years as a member and/or administrative assistant may not be appointed to the same committee for three years from the conclusion of their last term. This guideline will not apply to the Chair. In extreme circumstances, and at the President's discretion, an exception may be made if a committee member resigns suddenly. The President, after discussion with the Committee Chair, may determine that the best course of action is to fill the vacancy with an experienced committee member, and appoint a member in good standing who successfully served on the committee in question during the previous three years."

Suggested Replacement Language:

"Duration and Frequency of Service:

- Committee members are appointed by YALSA's President-Elect and may serve up to two one-year terms. The first year will be a trial year; the member may serve an additional one-year term based on the member's first year performance and his/her interest and availability in serving another year for a two-year maximum appointment on each of YALSA's selection committees. Reappointment is not automatic, but instead is based upon participation. Any individual who wishes to be appointed for a second year must fill out a committee volunteer form the fall prior to their desired reappointment.
- Members who have completed two consecutive years as member and/or administrative assistant on a selection committee may not be appointed to the same committee for three years from the conclusion of their second term. For example, a member who served on this committee for the 2015 and 2016 lists would be not be eligible to serve on the 2017, 2018, or 2019 committees.
- Members who have served three consecutive years as a member and/or administrative assistant on any YALSA award and/or selection committees (regardless of appointing division) may not be appointed to another YALSA award and/or selection committee for two years from the conclusion of their third year. For example, a member who served on 2014, 2015, and 2016 YALSA award and/or selection committees would not be eligible to serve on 2017 or 2018 YALSA award or selection committees.
- These guidelines will not apply to the Chair. In extreme circumstances, and at the President's discretion, an exception may be made if a committee member resigns suddenly. The President may determine after discussion with the Committee Chair that the best course of action is to fill the vacancy with an experienced committee member,

and appoint a member in good standing regardless of their recent award and selection committee service history.”

Additional changes to specific committee policy and procedures: The individual selection committee policies and procedures will need specific additional changes to clean up duplicated and superseded language.

- **Amazing Audiobooks Policies and Procedures:**
 - Strike the following language, as term lengths will be clarified through the update above: “Members serve for two-year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms.”
- **Best Fiction Policies and Procedures:**
 - Strike the following language from its current location, as it is being moved by the proposed change above: “Committee members are appointed by YALSA's President-Elect and may serve up to two one-year terms. The first year will be a trial year, and the member may serve an additional one-year term based on the member's first year performance and his/her interest and availability in serving another year (for a two-year maximum appointment on each of YALSA's selection committees).”
 - Strike the following superseded language, as it contradicts the proposed language: “Members who have served two consecutive years may not be appointed to the committee for five years from the conclusion of their last term. If someone resigns, the current President of YALSA appoints a new person to finish out that particular term. Reappointment is not automatic, but instead is based upon participation. Any individual who wishes to be appointed for a second year must fill out a [Selection Committee Volunteer Form](#) the summer prior to their desired reappointment.”
- **Great Graphic Novels Policies and Procedures:**
 - Strike the following superseded language, as it contradicts the proposed language: “Members serve for two-year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms.”
- **Popular Paperbacks Policies and Procedures:**
 - Strike the following language, which is duplicated in the proposed addition above: “Committee members are virtual and appointed by YALSA's President-Elect and may serve up to two one-year terms. The first year will be a trial year, and the member may serve an additional one-year term based on the member's first year performance and his/her interest and availability in serving another year (for a two-year maximum appointment on each of YALSA's selection committees).”
 - When adding the proposed new language, add a reference to the committee’s virtual status in the first bullet: “Committee members **are virtual** and appointed by YALSA's President-Elect and may serve up to two one-year terms.”

- **Quick Picks Policies and Procedures:**

- Strike the following duplicated and superseded language, as this is updated by the proposed new language: “Members are appointed by the Vice-President/President-Elect of YALSA for a one-year term, renewable for a one-year consecutive term. Reappointment is not automatic, but instead is based upon participation. The current President of the Association will appoint a new person to fill a committee vacancy, should one occur. After a member has served two years, a period of five years shall elapse before a committee member is eligible for reappointment.”

Suggested Wording for Award Committees

Current Language:

“Members who have completed one term on an award committee may not be appointed to the same committee for three years from the conclusion of their last term. This guideline will not apply to the Chair. In extreme circumstances, and at the President’s discretion, an exception may be made if a committee member resigns suddenly. The President, after discussion with the Award Committee Chair, may determine that the best course of action is to fill the vacancy with an experienced committee member, and appoints a member in good standing who successfully served on the committee in question during the previous three years.”

Suggested Replacement Language:

“Frequency of Service:

- Members who have completed one term on a YALSA award committee may not be appointed to another YALSA award committee for three years from the conclusion of their term. For example, a member whose award committee term ended with a 2016 committee would not be eligible for service on a 2017, 2018, or 2019 award committee. However, they would be eligible for service on a 2017, 2018, or 2019 selection committee.
- Members who have served three consecutive years as a member and/or administrative assistant on any YALSA award and/or selection committees (regardless of appointing division) may not be appointed to another YALSA award and/or selection committee for two years from the conclusion of their last term. For example, a member who served on 2014, 2015, and 2016 YALSA award and/or selection committees would not be eligible for service on 2017 or 2018 YALSA award or selection committees.
- These guidelines will not apply to the Chair. In extreme circumstances, and at the President’s discretion, an exception may be made if a committee member resigns suddenly or if there is a shortage of qualified candidates for elected positions. The President, after discussion with the Committee Chair or Award Nominating Chair, may determine that the best course of action is to appoint a committee member or nominate a

candidate regardless of their recent committee service history.

Additional changes to specific award committee policy and procedures:

- Alex Awards:
 - Strike: “Committee members are appointed by YALSA's President-Elect and serve a two-year term, with the possibility of reappointment for an additional two-year term. There are 9 voting committee members, including the chair. Each term begins at the conclusion of one Midwinter and ends at the conclusion of the Midwinter that is at the end of the term. If someone resigns, the current President of YALSA appoints a new person to finish out that particular term. Reappointment is not automatic, but instead is based upon participation. Any individual who wishes to be appointed for a second term must fill out a Selection Committee Volunteer Form the summer prior to their desired reappointment.”
 - Replace with: “There are 9 voting committee members, including the chair. Committee members are appointed by YALSA's President-Elect and may serve a single term of one or two years. Each term begins at the conclusion of one Midwinter and ends at the conclusion of the Midwinter that is at the end of the term. If someone resigns, the current President of YALSA appoints a new person to finish out that particular term.”
- Edwards Award:
 - Strike the following superseded language: “Committee members are not eligible for consecutive reappointment but they can stand for election to the subsequent committee.”
- Odyssey Award:
 - Because this award is jointly administered with ALSC, we will need to consult with them regarding these recommended edits to the policy and procedures.

Considerations

- If adopted, this policy should go into effect with the 2017 committees who begin work on Feb. 1, 2016. Any members who were elected to 2017 award committees in the spring 2015 elections or appointed to 2017 award committees before Annual 2015 would be necessarily exempt from the policy for its first year.
- One concern with instituting this type of policy may be the potential impact on committee leadership and experience levels. There are several reasons to believe that YALSA can maintain a critical level of leadership and experience on these committees while still broadening participation.
 - The number of potential committee members who would be ineligible for some or all selection and/or award committees in a given year due to previous committee

service is small compared to the overall number of individuals (548) who have award and selection committee experience in the last ten years.

- The move to virtual committees for Edwards and Popular Paperbacks has enabled more people to participate in committees, also expanding the overall pool of experienced individuals.
 - Finally, by broadening participation, this policy would also hopefully diversify the overall pool of YALSA members with selection and award committee experience, therefore expanding the pool of potential committee chairs and award committee candidates. It will probably take about 2 years to see the full effect of this policy change. In the meantime, caveats in the policy allow for select exceptions at the President's discretion in extreme circumstances.
- Instituting a new policy will impact the work of the President-Elect, Appointments Task Force, Award Nominating Committee, and YALSA staff.
 - Currently YALSA's Membership Coordinator works with the President-Elect to verify volunteer eligibility. This new policy will add to their workload as volunteers would now also need to be vetted against the new policy. However, there are some ways that workload could be made more manageable. For example, the spreadsheet developed for this analysis provides a ten-year history of YALSA selection and award committee service and would only need to be updated once a year to provide a good resource for this vetting.
 - The Appointments Task Force would also need to become familiar with the policy's intent (to broaden participation) and details. This would better prepare them to assist the President-Elect with appointments, and they could provide a second level of vetting in case anything was missed in the first round.
 - Perhaps the biggest impact would be on the Award Nominating Committee. Presently, many candidates for award committees are individuals who have very recently served on other award committees. Their past service naturally makes them strong candidates for future service. Under the proposed policy, these individuals would need to take longer breaks between award committee service. As a result, the Award Nominating Committee would need to:
 - Review additional years of past committee rosters to identify experienced YALSA members who are eligible for service in the given year;
 - Increase outreach to identify and invite with members with meaningful non-YALSA experience (such as successful service on other ALA division, ALA roundtable, and state committees) to submit their names for consideration;
 - Re-evaluate and likely expand their definition of what it means for a candidate to be qualified;

- Revise their handbook to reflect the new policy and any updated criteria and/or processes.

- Additional work needs to be done to clean up and standardize the language of the selection and award committees policies and procedures. These policies were developed at different points in time and lack a standard format and structure. As a result, some policies address certain issues that other policies do not address at all. The Selection Committee Evaluation Task Force also mentioned this issue in their report, recommending the creation of one standardized set of policies and procedures for award committees. This should be a high priority project for the Organization and Bylaws committee or a task force.

- This change in policy should be evaluated by the Organization and Bylaws committee after two years' worth of implementation.
 - The proposed language for Award Committee provides a caveat that allows for exceptions if there is a shortage of candidates for the election. This caveat is necessary for the immediate future, as the current Award Nominating Committee is already halfway through their work of vetting candidates for the 2016 elections. It is strongly recommended that this caveat be eliminated after two years, and this is a topic that should be explored during the O&B evaluation of this policy change. Two years allows enough time for YALSA to build up a larger pool of interested and qualified members for elected award committee positions and for the Award Nominating Committee to adjust to the new eligibility requirements.

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, including deletions of any duplicated or superseded language, and inform members of the change.

The Board also directs the Award Nominating Committee to incorporate this policy into their work going forward and to work with the Organization and Bylaws committee to update and revise the Award Nominating Committee Handbook to support this new policy.

The Board also directs the 2016-2017 President-Elect to notify their Appointments Task Force, if appointed, of this policy and to incorporate mention of the policy change into the next round of selection and award committee recruitment and training.

Additional Resources:

- Selection Committee Evaluation Task Force Report (Spring 2015)
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/SelectionEvalTF_spring15.pdf

- Broadening Committee Participation (Annual 2014)
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BroadeningParticipation_AN14.pdf
- ALSC has a policy that is uniform across all awards committees as well as their notable books committee which mandates that once an individual serves on an ALSC award committee, they must wait four years before they're eligible to serve on any other ALSC award committee:
 - “Frequency of Service on Award or Notable Children’s Books Committees: No individual may serve on the Batchelder Award, Caldecott Award, Geisel Award, Newbery Award, Sibert Award, Wilder Award, or Notable Children’s Books Committees more often than once every four years. The four-year period shall begin from the last year of the term of service regardless of length of term. This guideline will not apply to the appointment for Chair. This guideline will not apply to other ALSC committees.”
- Alex Awards Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/bookawards/alexawards/alexawardpolicies>
- Amazing Audiobooks Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists/amazingaudiobooks/policies>
- Best Fiction Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/bfya/policies>
- Edwards Award Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/bookawards/edwards/policies>
- Great Graphic Novel Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists/greatgraphicnovelsforteens/policies>
- Morris Award Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/bookawards/morris/morrispolicy>
- Nonfiction Award Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/bookawards/nonfiction/policies>
- Popular Paperbacks Policies and Procedures
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists/popularpaperback/popularpaperbacks_young
- Printz Award Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/bookawards/printzaward/aboutprintz/criteria>
- Quick Picks Policies and Procedures
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists/quickpicks/quickpicksreluctantyoung_adult

Respectfully submitted,
Joy Kim