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Faculty Association of
the University of Waterloo

Committee & Working Group Policy

This is a Class M Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a formal framework governing the creation, mandate, operation, and dissolution of Standing Committees and Definite-term Committees (aka, Working Groups), established by the Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo (FAUW).

This policy ensures that such groups operate in a manner consistent with FAUW's policies while supporting the FAUW Board of Directors in its oversight and decision-making role.

Authority and Governance

The FAUW Board of Directors retains full authority over the establishment, mandate, scope, membership, oversight, and dissolution of all Standing Committees and Working Groups, with the exception that dissolution or modifications to the mandate of Standing Committees with an ex-officio Board member must be approved by a plebiscite.

Standing Committees and Working Groups are advisory bodies. They do not possess independent decision-making, representational, or bargaining authority unless explicitly delegated by the Board.

Definitions

Standing Committee

A Standing Committee is an ongoing committee established to address continuing operational, governance, or member-related matters of the Association. Standing Committees are expected to persist unless dissolved in accordance with this policy. Standing Committee Chairs serve as ex-officio, non-voting participants on the FAUW Board. Standing Committees have Board-approved Terms of Reference; maintain formal meeting minutes; provide written reports to each FAUW Board meeting; and report to each General Meeting of the Association.

Standing Committee membership includes the FAUW President or designate as a voting member.

Current Standing Committees are listed in **Appendix A**.



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the University of Waterloo

Definite-Term Committee/Working Group

A Working Group is an ad hoc body established by the FAUW Board of Directors to undertake a specific task, project, or review and to produce defined deliverables (e.g., reports, analyses, recommendations) for consideration by the Board. Working Groups are temporary in nature and are dissolved upon completion of their mandate or at the discretion of the FAUW Board. Can also be referred to as a Definite-Term Committee.

Establishment and Mandate

The Association may establish Standing Committees and Working Groups. Upon establishment the Board shall approve the mandate and scope of each committee or group, expected deliverables, reporting requirements and timelines, and its membership. For Working Groups, the Board shall approve the anticipated duration of the group.

Terms of Reference shall be developed by the group based on the mandate of the group. Terms of Reference will align with the Board-approved mandate and be presented to the Board for ratification. The appropriate terms of reference template will be followed.

No Standing Committee or Working Group may expand or alter its mandate without prior Board approval.

The Association retains control of all materials produced by Committees, including minutes, presentations, research, reports, and communications.

Membership

Members are expected to participate in good faith and in a manner consistent with FAUW's values.

Standing Committee

Standing Committees shall recommend their membership and Chair, with support from the Nominating and Elections Committee (NEC), for ratification by the FAUW Board. Members are appointed for two years or until their successor is appointed. Chairs are appointed for one year or until their successor is appointed. Appointments are renewable. Committee members shall act in accordance with FAUW's policies, and Board-approved mandates.



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the University of Waterloo

Working Groups

Membership of Working Groups shall be approved by the FAUW Board of Directors.

Membership may include FAUW members, FAUW Board members, FAUW staff, or external individuals with relevant expertise, as approved by the Board.

Members are not representatives of FAUW and may not act or speak on behalf of FAUW unless expressly authorized by the Board.

Removal of Members

The FAUW Board may remove or replace any Standing Committee member or Working Group member, including the Chair, at its discretion. A Standing Committee may recommend removal of its Chair or a member to the Board.

Scope, Conduct, and Decision-Making

Standing Committees and Working Groups operate in a capacity advisory to the Board. Groups may seek consensus but are not required to reach consensus unless directed by the Board.

Groups shall conduct their work in a respectful manner, consistent with democratic governance principles.

Unless expressly authorized by the FAUW Board, groups may not negotiate with the employer; represent FAUW in meetings with the University or other stakeholders; communicate FAUW positions publicly or privately; or make commitments on behalf of FAUW.

Confidentiality and Records

Members must maintain confidentiality with respect to sensitive, privileged, or confidential information obtained through their participation. Confidential information may not be disclosed outside the group without Board authorization. Members with access to sensitive information or databases may be required to sign a Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement. The FAUW Board retains sole discretion regarding the use, distribution, or publication of any materials produced by a Standing Committee or Working Group.



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Faculty Association of
the University of Waterloo

Conflict of Interest

Members must disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest to the FAUW Board. The FAUW Board may determine appropriate measures to address conflicts of interest, including recusal or removal from the group.

Reporting

Standing Committees and Working Groups must report their full membership to the FAUW Board and promptly advise the Board of any departures.

Standing Committees and Working Groups shall provide written reports in accordance with timelines established in their terms of reference.

All reports are advisory in nature and do not bind the FAUW Board.

Resources and Staff Support

Standing Committees and Working Groups operate within resource limits approved by the FAUW Board. No financial commitments, expenditures, or use of FAUW resources may occur without prior Board authorization.

Standing Committees are provided designated staff support, and an annual budget approved by the FAUW Board.

Any administrative or staff support provided to a Working Group shall be coordinated through the Executive Manager under the authority of the FAUW Board.

Professional Development

Some Standing Committees have annual professional development budgets which can be used for its members, Chair, and assigned staff for professional development specific to the committee role. Any expenditure exceeding the budgeted amount must be approved by the Board. See Appendix A.

Professional development requests specific to the role must be approved by the Board for Standing Committees and Working Groups without a budget allocation.



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the University of Waterloo

Legal Opinions

Standing Committees and Working Groups do not have authority to seek legal opinions, legal advice, or legal interpretation on behalf of FAUW without prior approval of the FAUW Board of Directors. Where the Board approves seeking a legal opinion the request shall be coordinated exclusively through the Executive Manager, acting under Board direction. Any legal opinion, memorandum, correspondence, or advice obtained pursuant to Board approval is the property of FAUW and subject to solicitor-client privilege. Legal opinions may not be shared, quoted, summarized, or distributed without explicit authorization of the Board.

Nothing in this policy permits Standing Committees or Working Groups to obtain independent legal advice for their own purposes using FAUW resources.

Dissolution

Standing Committees without an ex-officio board member may be dissolved or restructured by Board resolution. The Membership may dissolve a standing committee by a plebiscite following resolution at a general meeting, as described in the constitution.

Working Groups are dissolved upon completion of their mandate or at the discretion of the FAUW Board of Directors. The FAUW Board may dissolve a group at any time, with or without notice.

Dissolution does not affect FAUW's control of records or materials.

Approved by the FAUW Board of Directors February 26, 2026

Amendment approved by the FAUW Board of Directors March 26, 2026

Policy Version Control

Approval Date	Summary of Changes	Approving Body
March 26, 2026	Added dissolution of committee must be approved by plebiscite	FAUW Board of Directors
February 26, 2026	New Policy	FAUW Board of Directors



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APPENDIX A

Standing Committees as of March 1, 2026

Compensation Strategy Committee (CSC)

The CSC committee maintains ongoing familiarity with the University's public financial data and the provincial and national funding landscape and advises the Association's negotiating team during compensation and benefits negotiations under the MoA. The CSC does not have its Chair as an ex-officio Board Member.

Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee (AF&T)

The AFT committee assists faculty members with any problem arising with the employer regarding terms and conditions of employment and application of university policy, tenure and promotion issues, annual performance reviews, and pension and benefits issues. The committee also plays an advisory role in the development and revision of relevant University policies and, with the approval of the Board of Directors, works to inform members about such matters.

The Chair is an Ex-officio Board Member.

The AF&T committee has the AF&T Policy officer as an assigned staff resource.

The AF&T committee has an allocated annual professional development budget.

Equity Committee (EC)

A committee concerned with equity issues, including those covered by the protected grounds of Ontario's Human Rights Code. The committee engages in educational and advocacy activities as appropriate and liaises with other related committees of the University, OCUFA and CAUT.

The Chair is an Ex-officio Board Member.

The EC has the AF&T Policy officer as an assigned staff resource.

The EC has an allocated annual professional development budget.

Teaching-Stream Faculty Committee (TSFC)

A committee which provides input on matters pertaining to all aspects of the working conditions of Teaching Stream Faculty, and communicates issues raised by TSF to the Board.

The Chair is an Ex-officio Board Member.



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Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC)

The role of the NEC is twofold:

(1) to solicit, gather, and when appropriate, evaluate high-quality nominations for FAUW positions, including the Board of Directors, its committees, and any other committees and roles that FAUW is responsible for filling; and

(2) to organize elections among Voting Members (with staff support).

The Chair is an Ex-officio Board Member.

The NEC has the Communications & Membership services officer as an assigned staff resource.

