

## GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE RESPONSES TO THE AAUW NC “CHANGES” SURVEY (N=52)\*

### Respondent Profile

Of 23 branches, at least 1 response was received from all but 5 branches (Franklin County, Gaston Regional, Kinston, Salisbury and Tryon). (Note: 18 respondents did not identify themselves. An even greater number of respondents did not provide email and telephone information).

There were no responses from Malls. Of all responses, 40% came from Brevard and Raleigh/Wake.

Many respondents have leadership experience, especially at the branch level. 68% have been a branch presidents. Fewer have experience in leadership positions at the state level, though 44% of the respondents have been on the AAUW NC board.

Almost 3/4 of the respondents have attended a state-sponsored event such as a state convention or a summer leadership conference. Unfortunately 38% of the respondents have never attended an AAUW NC board meeting.

### Thoughts on Clusters

Clusters appear to be very important to most respondents. 3/4 of the respondents have attended at least one cluster meeting.

Cluster meetings are valued for their social worth as well as the forums these meetings offer for discussion of AAUW-related issues. Clusters should be incorporated into the bylaws, according to 63% of the respondents.

In open ended comments from respondents, clusters are mentioned as a mechanism to get better representation on the Nominating Committee, a means to tie programs/meetings to a central theme and a mechanism for communicating with local branches.

### Concerns with Clusters

We don't need another layer of organization/structure.

Clusters are more work and cost more money than they are worth.

Clusters have value if quality programs would be organized around this idea.

### Thoughts on Committee Structure and Job Sharing

There is strong consensus that the current committee structure should be revamped, by combining current group officers with similar responsibilities into “other” committees. There is strong support for creating a Communications Committee (82%), an Administrative Committee (88%) and Public Policy Committee (85%), given the suggested grouping of each committee on the survey. (There were a couple suggestions for different regroupings but these were isolated responses to the survey questions).

There was strong consensus (76%) that the Strategic Planning Committee should be eliminated and that the Executive Committee assume these responsibilities.

More than one-half of the respondents (73%) favored two people sharing one Board position but giving that position only one vote on the Board (60%).

In addition, respondents strongly believe (91%) that committee chairs should be able to appoint a committee member to carry the chair's vote at the Board meeting (as branch presidents can now do).

Respondents were clearly divided as to how to reimburse (travel?) expenses for those assuming a shared position.

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\* references to strong majority, majority, or strong consensus throughout the report reflect the total percentage of the votes for “great idea” AND “good idea with some changes or clarifications needed.”

A strong majority of the respondents (74%) favored the Nominating Committee electing its own chair, with the AAUW NC President appointing all other officers and committee chairs with the approval of the EC. (Some suggested these appointments should be approved by the entire AAUW NC Board).

### Concerns with Changes in Committee Structure and Job Sharing

Job descriptions need to be very specific.

Communications chair should sit on all committees for "first rate coverage."

How can one avoid the chairperson doing all the work?

Program and members should have committees of their own choice.

Is the THN editor a job in itself?

Subcommittee people are sure to resent not having a vote on the Board.

Success of co-chairs depends on the personalities involved. If all members of state committees attended the leadership meeting and the state convention, they would feel more a part of the group.

This appears to be an overwhelming number of committees with too much power. Don't see how some of these jobs per committee relate to one another. These are a burden rather than a help.

What can we do to strengthen the Branches?

Two people cannot be equally responsible. You need a primary person and a "co-chair." Very difficult to administer a "shared vote." Be careful that a balance of power is maintained.

The makeup of the AAUW NC Board should be the executive committee and Branch presidents only. Committee chairs can provide written reports but not necessarily be at the meetings. The Tar Heel News is a good way to publish committee reports. Committee chairs must connect with their Branch counterparts. It is important to streamline the size of the state board. There is too much reliance on technology for communication. While a wonderful tool, many Branch members do not have either the interest or technological skill to use a computer. We must rely on hard copy to adequately communicate with Branches and members statewide.

### Thoughts on Branch President Representation

Among the choices for condensing branch presidents' input by identifying branch president representatives, ONLY the proposal to elect branch president representatives BY CLUSTER received majority support (68%) from the respondents.

Other choices were clearly BAD IDEAS, especially adding 4-5, appointed Board members (to replace branch presidents) who would be responsible for communicating with the branches.

Following Association practice, a majority of the respondents (73%) agreed that voting privileges at convention should be extended to all members of AAUW NC committees. An even stronger majority (93%) favored allowing branch presidents to name a proxy to carry their vote to convention.

### Concerns on Branch President Representation

Let's use technology to help us and cut costs.

Branch presidents who are active will resent being left off the Board.

Create a statewide branch presidents' email group for support.

Any plan should have at its roots the idea of grooming people for the work of the state.

Transportation not housing costs prohibit attendance (of presidents).

I think we need to describe more fully 17 and 18 for the branches and then have them vote as to how they want to be represented on the State Board. Otherwise I think they will say this is a decision made by the Board for the entire membership without the input of the membership. Depending on the outcome at winter retreat, this could need to

be discussed in a business session at convention.

I am aware of the problems with attendance of presidents but I really don't believe I could support any of these suggestions. If I HAD to choose, it would be #16 (by cluster) but if the President isn't interested, what is to be expected of the branch?

### Communication

The need for ongoing communication between state and branches was mentioned several times in response to various questions on the survey.