

AAUP-Lake Forest College Faculty Governance Committee Elections Endorsement Process - Frequently Asked Questions

November 2025

1. How will the endorsement process work?

- a.** In the Fall semester, AAUP-LFC's Faculty Governance & Elections Committee will put together draft ballots for each governance committee election occurring in the subsequent Spring semester (based on rules of eligibility in the Faculty Handbook) and will reach out to eligible candidates for each committee election to ask if they are willing/ interested in serving on that committee. They will make a particular effort to reach out to new and junior faculty who may be unfamiliar with our committee structure to explain the process. Anyone who is ballot-eligible and interested can fill out a [self-nomination form](#), which asks for a sentence about why that person would be a good fit for the committee they are considering. Then, using the endorsement criteria listed below, the Committee will endorse a ranked list of three candidates per election. These endorsements will be shared on our website Endorsements page in advance of each Spring election.

2. Where can I learn more about the elected governance committees at the college?

- a.** We have prepared a guide and description for all elected governance committees, [linked here](#).

3. Why have AAUP endorsements for governance committee elections?

- a.** AAUP-LFC as a chapter seeks to advance specific values and ideals at the college, particularly strengthening shared governance, academic freedom, and the economic security of all faculty. Endorsing faculty members who are willing and committed to advancing these goals is an important role for the chapter at the college.

- b. Currently, our election process tends to favor name recognition. Many faculty, especially new and junior faculty, are unfamiliar with the committee structure and their colleagues. Even if you have a sense of what committees do and know your colleagues, you might not know whether they even want to be elected or what their approach would be on the committee. There are few spaces for open discussion of what faculty do on our elected committees, why they are important, and how different faculty might approach their roles. Most faculty are thus voting with very little information about candidates on a very long ballot, sometimes with eighty or more candidates listed. AAUP endorsements will not only provide more information, but in the process of soliciting nominations, the Committee will play an active role in educating faculty about committees and their importance, as well as create more spaces for these discussions, increasing engagement in shared governance at the college.
- c. Informal discussions about candidates and who to vote for at the department level, building level, or across some subset of faculty have long existed at the college. These networks, however, are not open to all and the criteria being used to make decisions are not transparent. The AAUP endorsement process will take place out in the open, with criteria that were developed with member feedback, and will be shared with all faculty members.
- d. Having endorsements is written into the [AAUP-Lake Forest College Bylaws](#), approved when the chapter was created in Spring 2025. The charge of the Faculty Governance & Elections Committee includes “shall in consultation with the Executive Committee provide voting recommendations for all major faculty governance elections.” In a November 2025 straw poll among our members, 65% voted in support of an AAUP endorsement process.

4. What criteria will be used by the committee to make endorsements?

- a.** The LFC-AAUP Faculty Governance & Elections Committee will use the following criteria to determine faculty recommendations. **Note that all of the following will be considered but are not requirements.**
1. Willingness and commitment to serve on the committee
 2. Willingness to take the representative role of the elected position seriously, through seeking faculty input and reporting back to faculty as appropriate
 3. Commitment to promoting equitable and fair faculty policies and the equitable treatment of all faculty
 4. A commitment to transparency (while respecting confidentiality) about the work of the committee
 5. A track record of, or expressed support for, faculty advocacy, especially around issues of economic security, strengthening shared governance, and/or defending academic freedom
 6. Willingness to speak up and potentially disagree publicly with colleagues and/or senior administrators
 7. AAUP chapter membership (preferred but not required)
 8. Experience serving as a faculty representative on elected or appointed committees or chairing a department / program
 9. The committee will also consider faculty burnout and the equitable distribution of service labor

5. How were the criteria created?

- a.** The list of criteria were developed by the AAUP-LFC Executive Committee, the Faculty Governance & Elections Committee, and several rounds of feedback from chapter members.

6. How are the faculty on the Faculty Governance & Elections Committee chosen?

- a. Our elected AAUP-LFC Executive Committee appoints all chairs/ members of each standing committee, including the Faculty Governance & Elections Committee, according to our bylaws. The Executive Committee appoints members that they believe will thoughtfully and carefully select strong candidates for endorsement in governance elections. AAUP members who are interested in serving on the Faculty Governance & Elections Committee or any of the other standing committees are encouraged to express their interest to the Executive Committee and/or the chair(s) of the relevant committee. If a member of the Faculty Governance & Elections Committee self-nominates to serve on a particular committee, they will recuse themselves from the discussion of their candidacy for that committee.

7. Do other AAUP chapters make endorsements for elected faculty governance committees?

- a. Yes. The AAUP-UChicago Executive Committee makes endorsement decisions in advance of committee elections and the endorsements are sent out via email. According to Gabriel Winant, one of the Executive Committee members of [AAUP Local 6741](#), a chapter which represents all AAUP advocacy chapter members, “I would guess it's pretty common.”

8. I am interested in serving on a committee - where can I find the self-nomination form?

- a. The [self-nomination form is linked here](#). The committee is currently accepting nominations for Spring 2026 elections.

9. Shouldn't the Faculty Personnel Policies Committee (FPPC) or the Office of Faculty Development (OFD) do this work? Why AAUP?

- a. FPPC and OFD could certainly implement a number of new practices or programming to improve our elections process, including soliciting and publishing information about who is interested, why those people are

interested, and any other information that they think would be useful to support informed voting in faculty elections. AAUP-LFC would support these efforts! But they would likely not endorse candidates, since it would not be within their charge or within their institutional role to advocate for the election of some faculty members over others. Our AAUP chapter, however, as an advocacy chapter, is premised on advocating for specific principles. It is logical that one of the ways to do that advocacy work is to find and elect faculty willing to champion those principles on our elected committees.

10. Don't we trust that all faculty would champion issues like shared governance and academic freedom?

- a. Having a commitment at the level of an attitude is not the same as having that commitment motivate one's activity in governance committees. Decades of research on individual and collective human behavior makes it clear that believing that something is good, desirable, or important is quite distinct from actively taking steps toward obtaining or safeguarding that thing. For example, there are many more people who are concerned, as an abstract matter, about climate change than the number of people who are actively taking steps to try to address climate change. Thus, just as we would generally want the faculty who are most active in the sustainability space to preferentially be appointed to the campus sustainability committee, so too we would want faculty who are most active in spaces related to shared governance, academic freedom, etc. to be elected to governance committees. In addition, there are many reasons why someone would not want to be on an elected committee beyond disagreeing with AAUP principles. Some faculty are just not interested in committee work, or they are but don't have time, or they are passionate but are just not comfortable being outspoken, or they need a break from committee work and are

relieved that another person is willing to step up. Endorsements, based on the above criteria, would take all of these factors into account.

11. Won't having AAUP endorsements create division at the College?

- a. We do not believe AAUP-LFC endorsements will create divisions, although they may bring to the surface existing divisions and disagreements among faculty. However, rather than unaccountable networks of faculty, the AAUP endorsement process will be out in the open with explicit criteria for endorsement decisions. There have never been any rules barring faculty from discussing elections or even deciding to support a particular candidate as a group. As we see it, an endorsement is simply providing more information.

12. Is an AAUP endorsement process “putting its thumb on the scale” of faculty elections?

- a. Every individual faculty member is free to vote for whomever they choose. Again, there is no rule barring discussions about candidates or groups of faculty deciding collectively who they would like to vote for, and indeed, this process has long occurred informally at the college. AAUP-LFC endorsements are merely providing more information that faculty members can use, or not. There will be no expectation that individual chapter members necessarily need to vote according to the endorsements. In addition, any group of faculty who oppose the AAUP endorsed candidates are more than welcome to organize around an alternative set of candidates. These are basic practices of democratic elections.
- b. No potential candidate will be pressured to take any position with regard to AAUP.
- c. Having endorsements in no way interferes with or alters any election procedures. For example, the votes cast by faculty members will remain secret as they always have.

13. Does being an AAUP member, or an endorsed AAUP candidate, and serving on an elected committee represent a "conflict of interest"?

- a. First, on AAUP-LFC membership: every faculty member already holds a particular set of values / viewpoints / identities that may or may not line up exactly with your own. AAUP-LFC membership is simply an additional one, with a stated commitment to particular values like academic freedom and shared governance, on top of a range of differences between faculty already. And when faculty participate in democratic elections, as they have for decades, they are already distinguishing between different faculty members and deciding whom to vote for based on stated or unstated criteria of their own.
- b. Second, on AAUP-LFC endorsed candidates: one does not need to be an AAUP-LFC member to be an endorsed candidate. Additionally, AAUP endorsed candidates are not " beholden " to AAUP in any way. They are free to make their own decisions in any and all circumstances when it comes to their service on a particular committee. Endorsements simply means that AAUP-LFC believes they meet our explicit criteria for endorsements and would do a good job on a particular committee.