

AOU Committees, Charges and Operations

Last updated April, 2008. Blue shows changes not yet sent out

General instructions for Committees

Most of the actual on-the-ground work of the AOU takes place through committee work. If a committee wants Council to discuss an issue or make a decision, its report should outline the issue, list pros and cons to alternative approaches, and if there is committee consensus, should present a recommended decision with justification. Because Council meetings cover a wide array of subjects and must focus on overall policy and budget management, committee requests to Council for open-ended input or discussion are likely to be returned to the committee for investigation of alternatives and presentation of specific recommendations. AOU counts on committees to take leadership and dig thoroughly into issues in a way that is not possible for Councilors during a busy meeting.

Most committee work can be done by email or conference call. (There is an AOU budget for calls, so no call expenses have to be included in committee budgets). The Executive Officer (EO) will set up conference calls for committees on request (aouExecutiveOfficer@aou.org). If there is any desire to have an email sent to a large number of AOU members to accomplish committee business, send the message to the EO for clearance and implementation. The EO can also provide advice on web-based surveys and can be asked to look into other mechanisms for helping committees carry out their activities.

All Committees submit a full annual report to Council. Calls for reports, instructions, deadlines and forms will be sent to all committee chairs. Except where specifically noted, annual reports are submitted to Council for its annual meeting. Interim reports may be requested for the mid-year meeting of Council, and committee chairs wanting Council consideration of recommendations prior to the annual meeting are encouraged to contact the President to arrange this.

Routine budget requests for the following calendar year and summary of any committee expenditures (other than conference calls made through AOU) should be included in the annual report. However, the draft budget for the next year is prepared in June, so notify the Treasurer ASAP if you anticipate requesting a larger amount for a special project. Unbudgeted requests for funds during the current calendar year often cannot be accommodated.

Committee charges listed below cover ongoing tasks. Additional tasks specific to the year may be added by the President in consultation with committee chairs. The 'Operations' sections are guidelines based on past experience, and can be modified by Committee Chairs as experience dictates. Any modified text should be sent to the EO for updating of this Handbook. Committees are encouraged to make suggestions to the President for changing their permanent charges and/or composition, or to suggest special activities for a particular year.

All committee reports to Council are automatically archived by the Committee on Historic Records. Most committees will have nothing further to archive, but if they do, the items should be preserved (electronically or in hard copy), and submitted to the Chair of the Historic Records Committee.

Audit

Charge: This committee shall review the financial statements of the Union after the annual review or audit to approve the audit report, ensure that financial peculiarities of the AOU have been appropriately treated, and alert Council to any problems raised by the auditors.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, who may be of any membership class, including two *ex officio* members (Treasurer of the AOU and the Chair of the Investing Trustees, neither of whom should be Chair). The Chair should be someone who understands financial statements, preferably with professional financial qualifications. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office.

Operations: AOU has an annual 'review' of its finances, rather than a full audit. The Executive Officer shall distribute the audited financial statement to members of the committee as soon as it is available. Through the Executive Officer, the Chair sets up a conference call to conduct committee business. (Email may be sufficient for most items.) The Chair prepares a report for the next Council meeting. Any problems with the review statements should be reported immediately to the President.

Bird Collections

Charge: This committee shall monitor the status of scientific collections of avian materials and promote improvements.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, who may be of any membership class. Members should have experience with and interests in the management of scientific collections of avian material. The AOU's representatives to the NSCA and the Biological Collections Research Coordination Network shall serve on this committee and report to it. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: Each year between the annual meeting and the end of the calendar year, the Chair should set goals for the committee activities for the year, consulting with the full committee by email and/or conference call to plan and implement those goals. Committee activities can include improvement of standards and techniques relative to the acquisition, maintenance, data management, and use of scientific collections of avian materials, and dissemination of this information to curators, managers, and users of collections and to administrators of institutions owning or entrusted with collections. The committee may from time to time conduct and publish inventories of the holdings of collections. The committee shall maintain liaison with related organizations.

The Committee shall regularly review and update its pages on the AOU website (<http://www.aou.org/committees/collections.php3>). Its report to Council shall include relevant information on activities carried out through the Natural Science Collections Alliance (NSCA) and the Biological Collections Research Coordination Network. The representatives to these organizations should attempt to attend one or more meetings annually, within the amount allocated in the AOU budget for this purpose. Try to book travel early to keep expenses down.

Birds of North America Liaison

Charge: The AOU is a partner with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology in the Birds of North America (BNA) series. This Committee will operate in a consultative fashion with the Editor of the BNA, representing the interests of the AOU both as contributor and user of the accounts, particularly with respect to maintaining scientific value and usability.

Composition: The Committee will consist of no fewer than five individuals of any membership class, including the Editor of BNA as an ex officio member. There is no upper limit to membership. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: The Committee will meet by conference call at least once annually, and communicate by email as issues are raised by the Editor, Committee members, or others. The Committee will accomplish most actions in a consultative manner. Unresolved controversies will be presented to Council for deliberation. The annual report to Council should include a status report from the BNA Editor (including financial status of the enterprise), a list of recommendations made to Cornell with respect to BNA and the action that Cornell has taken or plans to take and Cornell's reasons for not following a given recommendation.

Bylaws

Charge: This committee oversees the process of changing By-Laws.

Composition: This committee shall consist of three (3) members, of whom at least two (2) must be Fellows. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: The committee may propose amendments or receive suggestions from outside the committee, and submit these to the Secretary at any time of the year. Requesters may be politely requested to withdraw suggestions that are clearly inappropriate for inclusion in the By-Laws, but proposers have the right to insist their proposals be considered by Council. Regardless of source, proposals must be considered by the Council at the next possible opportunity following submission.

All proposals should be checked to ensure they conform to the District of Columbia code governing non-profit organizations. They should be edited to be clear and unambiguous, and to include changes required to other sections of the By-Laws to ensure internal consistency.

Proposals generated or received by the committee shall be sent to the Secretary in an interim report to Council, in time for presentation to Council at its mid-year meeting (generally in March), so that approved changes can be sent to Fellows at least 2 months prior to the annual meeting. (The Secretary must send Council approved changes to Fellows at least 2 months prior to the next Stated Meeting. In a pinch, therefore, Council could approve changes by conference call between their March meeting and 2 months prior to annual meeting -- but this timing should be avoided if possible.) Proposals should be accompanied by explanatory background information and pros/cons of passing the change (presented as neutrally as possible). The Chair of the By-Laws Committee need not attend the mid-year Council meeting, but should present and explain proposed

amendments to the Fellows at the annual meeting at which they will vote on the change (or arrange for someone else to do so).

The committee's annual report to Council should summarize changes proposed to Council and result of Council's vote, and should also outline any proposals that were considered by the committee but withdrawn. A report must be filed even if no changes were suggested. After Council and Fellow approval, the committee shall provide final text for updated ByLaws to the AOU Secretary for its records and for posting on the AOU website.

Classification and Nomenclature - North and Middle America

Charge: This committee shall keep abreast of the systematics and distribution of North American birds, shall produce new editions of the "Check-list of North American Birds" as it deems appropriate or as the Council directs, and shall produce periodic supplements to the latest edition of the Check-list.

Composition: This committee, and the subspecies subcommittee, shall each consist of no fewer than five (5), who may be of any membership class. There is no upper limit. Committee members must be qualified in the field of avian systematics. Unless the President and Council desire change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office, and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee. At least one person on the committee should be able to maintain and quickly update the committee web pages as needed.

Appointment: The Chair of the committee shall be elected by the Council. Members shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Council and on the recommendation of the committee Chair.

Operations: The Committee operates under the same philosophy outlined in the Preface to the 7th edition of the 'Check-list'. Although the committee recognizes the controversy over species concepts in ornithology, it generally adheres to the principles of the Biological Species Concept. Multiple lines of evidence (e.g., multiple genetic loci, or genes plus other traits) are favored over single data sets for taxonomic changes at species and higher levels. The committee prefers to act conservatively in its taxonomic treatments; thus, proposals that suggest but do not strongly support taxonomic change may be rejected pending further data. At least two independent datasets are generally required for making changes at higher-level classification. Geographic coverage now includes Greenland.

The committee reviews proposals submitted to it for taxonomic changes, English name changes, acceptance of distributional records, and other items related to the charge of the committee. Committee members submit most proposals, but non-members also may submit proposals. Proposals are submitted to the Chair of the committee, and sets of proposals are distributed periodically (2-3 times per year) to the committee for discussion and voting. Occasionally, proposals are sent to non-member "experts" for comment. Proposals, comments, and votes are posted on the committee's website. Proposals must receive a 2/3 favorable vote to pass. Proposals that do not pass may be resubmitted at a later date if additional data are published in favor of the proposal. In documenting species' distribution, the committee generally defers to state committees and the American Birding Association for acceptance of records.

The committee has a working website that is password protected. It includes postings of proposals, discussion and votes on proposals by committee members, systematic literature, working files, minutes from meetings, and other items of discussion. A second, public website, linked from the AOU Committees web page, is intended to explain the committee's mission, policies, operating procedures, and activities, including proposals being considered and their outcome. Both websites are managed by the committee, with aid as needed by the AOU Web Editor and Web Master.

Most committee business is done by email. However, members of the committee should continue to meet in conjunction with the AOU meeting to discuss specific action items or general issues. In addition, the committee may wish to hold mid-winter meetings at a museum collection to discuss specific taxonomic issues focused on subspecies (see general committee notes on budget requests).

Operations: subspecies subcommittee [*This section is a first draft only, and should be revised by the committee as actual procedures are worked out. Procedures for working with BNA should be added.*]

Review the current state of subspecies accounts drafted by the previous committee, agree on a consistent format, update accounts as much as possible, and send accounts to experts on that group for comment and updating. Experts should be invited to serve as lead authors or coauthors on the accounts. Establish a section of the committee's working website to facilitate this process.

Invite experts to author and submit accounts for those that are still lacking, following a standardized format. Submissions would need to specify the basis for treatment, and justify deviations from the "status quo" (e.g., 1957 *Check-list*). This would more broadly engage ornithologists in the committee's work, while making it easier for the subspecies subcommittee to make progress on this volume.

Consider preparing a table for the AOU website showing current status of subspecies for all species recognized by AOU, indicating latest treatment of subspecies in the literature (with citation), and perhaps a brief committee judgment on quality of latest treatment (e.g. 'latest treatment badly out of date').

Subspecies accounts should be published as they are completed, at a minimum in pdf format on the website, citable as supplements to *The Auk*. [*Committee should make recommendation to Council on how it wants to publish.*] Accounts should be authored by individuals, not by the committee as a whole. The subcommittee should submit recommendations to Council for consideration of how/whether to publish accounts in hard copy, either singly or in periodic volumes.

Work with Birds of North America, as appropriate, to update BNA accounts in accordance with AOU subspecies decisions.

Classification and Nomenclature - South America

Charge: This committee shall keep abreast of and contribute to the systematics, nomenclature and distribution of South American birds, and shall produce products that provide ready access to such information.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, who may be of any membership class. Committee members must be qualified in the field of avian systematics. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office, and to provide suggestions for other retirements or

additions to the committee. At least one person on the committee should be able to maintain and quickly update the committee web pages as needed.

Operations: The committee conducts its work largely through its website (<http://www.aou.org/checklist/south.php3>). The starting point for the South American classification shown on the website was a pre-publication draft of Dickinson (2003); the published version differed in a few minor ways from the version used for the starting point. The classification produced by the committee consists mainly of the ranks Order, Family, Genus, and Species. Most traditional subfamilies are omitted unless supported by multiple independent data sets that mark major, deep branches within a family. Subspecies are omitted for now; a future edition will also include the Subspecies rank as designating diagnosable populations (equivalent to phylogenetic species sensu Cracraft) within taxa accorded species rank, as well as synopses of distribution. See Dickinson (2003) for a preliminary assessment of valid subspecies of South American birds.

The region covered by the list is: (1) continental South America and all islands within 1200 km of its shores in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans (including Malpelo, the Galapagos islands, San Felix and San Ambrosio, the Juan Fernandez islands, Fernando de Noronha, Trindade, Martin Vaz, São Pedro and São Paulo Archipelago, and the Falklands/Malvinas); (2) islands in the Caribbean Sea close to South America and not covered by the AOU Checklist (including Netherlands Antilles, Trinidad and Tobago); and (3) waters within 200 nautical miles of the coasts of these land areas, including the islands.

A species is included on the list if the evidence for its occurrence in the area is supported by tangible evidence that is available for verification, namely a museum specimen or an archived or published photograph, videotape, or sound recording.

Proposals for change can be submitted to the committee by anyone. They must be based on previously published data, information, or analyses. The website shows examples of previous proposals as well as commentary from committee members and others on each proposal submitted so far. Proposals may be in English or Spanish.. All aspects of the classification are subject to modification through the proposal system (species limits, boundaries of orders, families, and genera, linear sequences, English names, etc.). Footnotes to the site provide references for all changes from Meyer de Schauensee's (1966, 1970) foundational classification, as well as the "Peters Checklist" series and the "Cory-Hellmayr" series, so that the user can determine how and why (if known) changes were made; citations to alternative treatments are also provided. Also, the notes are intended to signal phylogenetic relationships among taxa that might not be evident from the linear sequence. The notes also indicate where proposals for change have been acted upon (in blue), are pending (in magenta), and where proposals are needed (in red).

Species whose presence is supported only by sight records, or by unpublished or non-archived tangible evidence, are placed on a Hypothetical List. English names follow those in Dickinson (2003), which in turn generally followed those used by Meyer de Schauensee (1970) and AOU (1998). Many, however, have been changed subsequently. Alternative English names are given if they have appeared in reference literature since Meyer de Schauensee (1970). The committee is not involved in producing a list of standardized Spanish names, but hopes to produce Spanish and Portuguese versions of

the Notes once the English version reaches the stage at which the classification is ready for publication as a printed document.

Conservation

Charge: This committee identifies and implements appropriate means for AOU to promote the use of sound ornithological science for making conservation and management decisions for birds.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, who may be of any membership class. They shall be selected for their particular qualifications and interests in conservation or management of birds. The AOU's representatives to the Bird Conservation Alliance shall be members of the committee. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: The committee reviews requests suggested by committee members or others to prepare in-depth scientific investigations relating to the conservation of birds. Requests should be considered both by the Conservation Committee and the President of the AOU, the latter consulting with the Executive Committee as desired. Suitable topics include factors endangering bird populations range wide or habitats at a large scale, or broadly applicable efforts to preserve populations or their habitats. Issues only of local relevance are not suitable.

As soon as possible after receiving a request for AOU participation, the Conservation Committee Chair makes a recommendation to the President on acceptance and the President approves or not. The Conservation Committee Chair then notifies the requesting party of the decision. White papers should review the scientific evidence related to the topic, and come to conclusions based on that evidence, and should avoid taking stands based on political, ethical or societal values that can't be backed up by good science. Outside groups requesting AOU reviews should be made aware of this philosophy. Requesting parties that are agencies or other entities capable of paying page charges for publication should be asked to do so early on, but acceptance of a topic does not require payment.

The Committee is in charge of appointing a subcommittee to prepare white papers on accepted topics, and sets timelines and target length for the paper. As white papers will be published by AOU if agreed to by the requesting party, target length should be set in consultation with the appropriate editor (of *The Auk* or of *Ornithological Monographs*). The manuscript will be reviewed as deemed appropriate by the appropriate editor (i.e., getting some independent review, but not necessarily going through the regular review process for the journal).

One member of the committee should be charged with monitoring requests made by the Bird Conservation Alliance or others for AOU to endorse a conservation statement. If a topic seems suitable to the screener (see below), it is submitted to the committee chair, who should decide as soon as possible (within two weeks maximum – although many requests require faster action) whether to recommend for or against AOU endorsement (consulting with the full committee if deemed necessary). Statements suitable for AOU endorsement should relate to factors affecting bird populations, species or habitats at a large scale or range-wide, or to broadly applicable efforts to manage populations or their habitats, and in general should not be focused on issues of local

relevance. AOU can appropriately support statements calling for action known to be based on sound research. When research data do not exist or provide conflicting views on appropriate action, then AOU may wish to call for additional research. If an issue is deemed important for AOU to endorse but more than a short time would be needed to evaluate the scientific basis for endorsement of a statement, the Committee may decide instead to initiate a White Paper.

The Committee's decision whether or not to support a statement is passed to the President, who will decide as soon as possible whether to accept the Committee's recommendation. Either the President, or at his/her direction the Executive Officer, will notify the proposer or other appropriate party of AOU's decision (over the President's signature), and will send a copy to the Chair of the Conservation Committee.

Any requests or committee initiatives for drafting conservation statements (as opposed to endorsing someone else's statement) should be handled as above, with the committee bearing the responsibility of drafting anything it wants the President to sign.

The Committee should regularly review and update its pages on the AOU website by submitting suggested changes to the AOU Web Editor.

The Committee's reports to Council shall include conservation-related activities conducted with the Bird Conservation Alliance or other public affairs partners. One of the representatives to the BCA should attempt to attend one or more meetings annually, within the amount allocated in the AOU budget for this purpose.

Development

Charge: This committee shall encourage donations to the AOU, particularly for enlarging the Endowment Fund.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, who may be of any membership class. The Executive Officer of the AOU shall be an *ex officio* member. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: An annual appeal shall be conducted each fall. [*Needs review – both for format as annual appeal, and timing in year*] Within the constraints of the budget, the Committee should decide who is to be targeted by each appeal (Fellows only, all categories of elected members, etc.). By 1 October, the committee Chair should send a draft appeal letter to the President for approval and signing. By 15 October the letter should be given to the Executive Officer for printing and distribution, and the letter should be mailed about mid-November. Past appeal letters can be obtained from the Executive Officer if they are wanted as models.

The second major development activity (and expense) is a reception for past and potential donors to be held at each annual meeting. Work with the Local Committee to set up a time and place BEFORE the first meeting circular is prepared (i.e. it's a good idea to get in touch very soon after the previous annual meeting.) As soon as the early registration list for the annual meeting is available, use it to select good candidates for the reception (Fellows who were elected long ago -- list of election dates available from Executive Officer, past officers, past major donors, anyone of known wealth with known interest, etc. – plus current Officers and members of the Development Committee.) Decide (based on budget) how many can be accommodated at the reception, and, if

necessary, cut down the list of registered meeting-goers who qualify for invitation by a) dropping those invited in years before, and/or b) increasing the cut-off date at which a person had to have been elected a Fellow. Some or all qualifying invitees who are NOT registered for the meeting should also be invited, as the invitation alone reminds people to support AOU. Send the text of an invitation (including call for RSVP within a week or two of receipt) to the Executive Officer for print and mailing out as soon as possible. (If time and/or money are short, the letter can be sent as an email attachment.) Communicate with the Executive Officer and/or chair of the Local Committee for the meeting to set up catering (mid-price snacks, wine, beer and non-alcoholic beverage). The list of invitees and those who accepted/attended should be provided annually to the Executive Officer for updating the cumulative list.

The Committee should work with UC Press to provide 'filler' ads on planned giving, for printing in AOU journals as space allows. If no advert has appeared for 2 or 3 issues in a row, remind UC Press that we want these run when possible.

The Executive Officer has set up a system for tracking donations, and will update the donor list on the AOU webpage about the middle of each calendar year.

The annual report to Council should include a budget request to cover the costs of the donor reception, and any costs related to the annual campaign.

Early Professionals

Charge: The committee shall study the issues and concerns of members who are early in their professional careers as ornithologists, including post-docs and those within their first few years in professional roles, and recommend actions that may be taken by AOU to enhance training and AOU retention of memberships.

Composition: This committee shall have no fewer than three (3) members, who may be of any membership class. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: Each year the Chair shall set goals for the committee, consulting with the full committee by email and/or conference call to plan and implement those goals.

The committee is encouraged to organize appropriate events at annual meetings (in coordination with Committees on Local Arrangements), and should work closely with the Committee on Student Affairs to ensure there is no duplication of effort and to consider joint sponsorship of events that benefit both groups.

This committee also should periodically review the AOU website and think about ways to improve/add to resources there that would be helpful to early professionals. Suggestions for minor changes should be made to the AOU Web Editor, and more extensive suggestions should be submitted to the Website Committee.

Historical Records

Charge: This committee shall annually collect materials that are of historical importance to the Union, and turn them over to the Smithsonian Institution archivist assigned to looking after AOU records. It shall provide relevant materials to the Memorials Committee on request, and decide how to handle other requests for access to the AOU archives. An index of AOU archived materials can be viewed at http://siarchives.si.edu/research/faprofessional_records.html.

Composition: This committee shall consist of at least three (3) members, who may be of any membership class except for the Chair, who shall be an Elective Member or Fellow. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: This committee annually solicits and gathers material from all officers, committee chairs and from the AOU Executive Officer that are of historical importance to the Union, including annual archival copies of the AOU website, following guidelines of the Smithsonian Institution archivist. The website includes all packets of information for Council meetings, minutes of Council and Executive meetings, lists of officers and committees, committee charges, etc., and the chair should download these materials for transmission to the Archives. This should be done near the end of each calendar year. In addition, an archival copy of the website can be requested from the AOU Executive Officer (who can get it from the Web Master on a CD.) Gather up all material and turn it over to the archivist in a single package early in the next calendar year in the desired format (electronic and/or paper).

In addition, this committee shall gather biographical information on newly elected Fellows and Honorary Fellows of the AOU, and shall periodically (at 15 and 30 years after initial election) ask for updates of biographical information on Fellows for placement in the archives. The biographical questionnaire (last updated in 2007) and cover letter can be sent electronically through the AOU Executive Officer to newly elected Fellows, who should give a deadline for response before the end of the calendar year. The request should be sent out soon after the annual meeting. Respondent's materials should be included in the package provided to the Smithsonian archivist early in the next calendar year.

The committee should annually ask Fellows who were elected 15 and 30 years previously to fill out the standard questionnaire again and to send a new photo. In 2007, everyone 15 or more years from being elected a Fellow was asked to fill in a form. Thereafter, only those elected exactly 15 years before should be approached, until 2013, at which time requests should be made annually to all those elected exactly 15 *and* 30 years before. (This delay in asking for 30-year updates will ensure that 30-year requests are not made until 10 years after the 2007 request was filled in.) Ask the Executive Officer each year to provide the names and email addresses of those Fellows who should be approached each year (specify in the request which years of election should be included). Requests to Fellows for updates should be sent out at the same time as first requests to newly-elected Fellows (under a different cover letter), and the deadline for submission and for turning over to Smithsonian archives should be the same.

Biographical materials in the archives shall be provided to the Memorials Committee on request. Non-routine requests for researchers to examine AOU Archival material within 15 years of submission should be cleared with the AOU Executive Committee. What is "non-routine" is at the discretion of the Chair, and if there is any doubt, consult the Executive Committee. The copyright for non-biographical materials older than 15 years [*check contract held by Executive Officer*] is held by the Smithsonian Institution, so requests for use of older AOU archives should be sent to the archivist.

The committee shall liaise with the archivist assigned to maintain AOU archives

to check that copies of journals are regularly sent to them (if not, talk to the Executive Officer), and to keep up to date on desired materials and format.

International Affairs

Charge: This committee shall investigate and implement appropriate means for AOU to engage with ornithologists outside of the US and Canada, including interactions with regional and indigenous ornithological societies (particularly in Latin America), the North American Ornithological Conference (when held outside of the US and Canada), and the International Ornithological Congress.

Composition: The number or membership class of members of this committee shall not be limited. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: This committee runs AOU's International Grants Program, which supports Western Hemisphere professional ornithological societies. About April, the committee should update the AOU web page describing the program (<http://www.aou.org/awards/internationalgrants.php3>). The Secretary will contact the chair about putting a short announcement in the OSNA Newsletter, containing the crucial information, giving the link to the above page for more information, indicating to whom applications for the funding in the next calendar year should be sent, and giving the deadline (c. November 15 if announcement was in October OSNA Newsletter; later if announcement is to be in December newsletter). Additional advertising (in journal ads, email direct to Latin American members, etc.) are at the discretion of the committee.

After the deadline for receipt, applications will be distributed to all committee members for review. (The Chair should continue to develop and refine guidelines for proposal-ranking criteria, in consultation with other committee members.) Decisions should be made by end of January. Promptly after selection, the Chair should contact all applicants to inform them of the result of their application. Winners should be informed of the amount of the grant and when it will be sent, and should be reminded of the need for a report in 15 months. The list of grantees, mailing addresses, and amounts of grants should be sent to the Executive Officer, who will look after mailing the checks. Grantees should get their money by early in the calendar year, so their reports should be made in late spring or summer of the following year. The Committee should send reminders at about the same time that results of the current competition are being sent out, reminding previous winners again of when their reports are due, what should be in them, and to whom they should be sent.

At least once a year, the Chair should consult with the full committee by email and/or conference call to discuss ideas for other initiatives and to plan and implement as appropriate. Reports from previous winners of international grants should be reviewed to help determine whether the program is being successful in its intended goals or should be altered.

The annual report to Council should summarize grants given (recipient, purpose, amount) and brief summaries of reports from past recipients to demonstrate that the money was spent appropriately. A specific budget request should be made for the next year's grant program – it should not be considered an automatic renewal.

Additional potential projects for this committee include developing or helping develop directories of New World ornithological societies, helping the AOU develop web pages targeted at ornithologists in New World countries other than the U.S. and Canada, and helping facilitate the communication of ornithological topics within the Western Hemisphere.

Investing Trustees

Charge: This committee shall oversee investments of the AOU, from time to time reviewing policies for investment instruments and evaluating performance of the investments and the professional investment managers. It shall annually present AOU Council with the projected amount of transfer from investments to the operating account for the next fiscal year.

Composition: The committee shall consist of at least three (3) persons with appropriate qualifications. The Chair shall be an AOU member. The members of this committee must be elected annually by the Council. Unless the President and Council desire change, the Chair can be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: Each year the Chair shall communicate at least once with the full committee by email and/or conference call to discuss and review AOU's investments and the fund performance.

The Committee shall keep track of the proportion of investments restricted for specific purposes. As soon as possible after 30 June, the Chair shall calculate the 5-year running average of the investment up to 30 June, and calculate 4% of that average. This amount should be reported as soon as possible to the AOU Treasurer, along with the proportions of that amount restricted for specific purposes, and the same figures should be presented to Council in the Committee's annual report. That report should also include a brief summary of investment philosophy, and an overview of performance over the past 5 years that explains any changes caused by large donations or capital withdrawals.

Local Arrangements (may be more than one active at a given time)

Charge: This committee shall make local arrangements for the smooth conduct of a given Stated Meeting and shall help impart a local flavor.

Composition: The number or membership class of members of this committee shall not be limited.

Appointment: The Chair of this committee shall be appointed by the President and shall serve until all affairs of the particular Stated Meeting are completed. Members shall be appointed by the President on recommendation of the Chair.

Operations: Most local committees are partially formed to prepare a bid for a meeting. The person who spearheads the bid generally becomes the Chair, and recommends the person to be appointed Chair of the Scientific Program Committee. Committees work closely with the professional meeting organizer, the AOU President and Secretary and the Program Coordinator, following instructions and adhering to deadlines outlined in the AOU Meetings Handbook. This committee imparts local flavor to annual meetings, providing input on special events, meals, field trips etc. that make each meeting unique. The amount of work required by local committees has greatly

declined since AOU began hiring a professional organizer for each meeting, and AOU is gradually learning new means of reducing the work load further.

Chairs of current and the most recent past Committees on Local Arrangements are automatically members of the Meetings Committee, for the purpose of increasing communication among meeting organizers to pass on tips and lessons learned. If a Local Committee finds the Meetings Handbook to be misleading or incomplete or lacking in some brilliant ideas, make it better for the next person who has to use it. Ideas can be sent to the Chair of the Meetings Committee or to Peter Lowther for compilation and incorporation.

Chairs are usually requested to provide interim reports to Council at all Council meetings between agreement to organize the meeting and the meeting itself, with length and content appropriate to the stage of planning. A final report is submitted to Council for its first mid-year meeting after the scientific meetings. The final report should consist of the report made to the chair by the professional meeting organizer, which includes a final financial accounting, and a summary of the meeting, number of attendees, any recommendations for alteration of future meetings, and suggestions for revision of the Meetings Handbook. In addition, the Local Committee should add an evaluation of performance of the contracted organizer, and any additional suggestions for improvement of future meetings.

Meetings

Charge: Establish venue and dates for future annual meetings for at least the two meetings for which the chair of this committee (President-Elect) will be President (preferably 2-3 years in advance). This committee shall also consider and make recommendations on ways to make meetings more attractive and valuable for exchange of scientific information and networking.

Composition: The committee shall be chaired by the President-Elect, and shall consist of at least 3 others of any membership class, at least one of whom is a student appointed by the Student Affairs Committee. Members shall include Chairs of active Committees on Local Arrangements and Scientific Program, those of the most recent past meeting, and two *ex officio* members: the AOU Program Coordinator and Executive Officer.

Operations: It is largely the job of the Committee Chair to arrange venues for the two meetings over which he/she will preside. If those meetings have already been arranged, the President-Elect should try to line up at least one additional future meeting. Obtain information from the President on possibilities for future meetings that have already been explored or are pending. Become familiar with the AOU Meetings Handbook, particularly the section on initiating a meeting. If a potential Local Committee Chair cannot be found, arrangements can be made to have a meeting run entirely by a professional organizer (see Meetings Handbook). Think about portions of the continent where meetings have not been held for some time, and identify active ornithologists in those regions who are potential hosts. Contact individuals to invite preliminary expressions of interest, providing information on the amount of support that is provided by the professional meeting organizer. Get commitment from a host at least 2 years prior to the meeting, and oversee the preliminary steps for getting approval

(submission of formal invitation from university President to AOU Council, AOU Council acceptance of invitation).

A professional organizer can be retained to investigate potential venues and local accommodation on behalf of a potential Local Arrangements Chair. Ask the Executive Officer to put out Requests for Proposals and to oversee contracting. Once a meeting site has been nailed down, present it to Council for approval. Soon after Council approval, instruct the Executive Officer to contract with a professional meeting organizer to run the meeting and distribute signed copies to all signatories. The Executive Officer should modify the 'Financial MOU' (addendum to Handbook) as needed and get that signed as well. *[If all provisions of the Financial MOU can be incorporated into the Handbook and contracts with the meeting organizer, this extra step will no longer be necessary.]*

Within 3 months of the end of a meeting, the full Committee should meet byconference call to discuss what went well and what did not, as a means of giving tips to the future meeting organizers. New committee members may not even know they are on the committee, so in arranging the call, indicate who is on the committee and why, give background on the purpose of the call, and indicate that there are few committee duties beyond this. Discussion on the call should include evaluation of the professional organizer, and recommendations for or against using that organizer again. The call can also be used to brainstorm on changes or improvements for future meetings. Ideas can be derived from the Strategic Plan and reports to Council by Committees on Student Affairs, Young Professionals and Teaching Faculty; or by discussions of the committee itself.

Suggested revisions to the Meeting Handbook should be repeatedly solicited from those people who are using it, and sent to Peter Lowther for compilation and incorporation. However, past experience has shown that the handbook tends to accrete without being comprehensively revised, and this committee should be responsible for overall revamps as they become necessary.

Membership

Charge: This committee shall attempt to increase the membership of the Union by securing new members and by dissuading current members from dropping membership. It is responsible for administering the awarding of free student memberships.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, who may be of any membership class. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: Each year the Chair should set goals for the committee, consulting with the full committee by email and/or conference call to plan and implement those goals.

The committee should periodically review the description, criteria and application procedures for free 1-year student memberships that is posted on the AOU website to make sure it is up to date. The Secretary will contact the Chair about sending a brief notice of the program (with link to web page) to the OSNA Newsletter, preferably before the 1 September deadline for publication in the October issue, with an application deadline sometime in November so that awards can be issued before the start of the

membership year (1 January).. All applicants should receive a response, telling them whether they have been accepted or not (giving reason for rejection – presumably only because of ineligibility under the stated criteria), telling them they will receive a membership number from OSNA which will allow them access to member-only benefits on the web page. *[Develop a standard letter that includes all member benefits, and expresses hope they will continue to be part of AOU at the end of the year by renewing membership at low student rates.]* Send all names & full contact info of awardees to aouExecutiveOfficer@aou.org with the request that he send these to OSNA for incorporation into the database.

Periodically review the membership pages on the AOU website and sent all required or suggested changes to webeditor@aou.org.

Work with Executive Officer to update and improve the AOU display, and recruit volunteers to man the display at AOU meetings (mainly at coffee breaks and other peak times for people visiting the vendor/display area). The display is kept between meetings by the Executive Officer, who will arrange on request for shipping to the AOU annual meeting or other meetings to which the committee arranges for display. When possible, it's nice to have a computer at the display that allows showcasing of the AOU website. Coordinate with the Student Affairs Committee, which also has a display at annual meetings, to ensure contiguous placement and possible sharing of coverage duties.

Consult with other committees that can have effects on membership. One of the difficulties of a membership committee is that its mandate is very open-ended, and it isn't always clear that the committee itself can do much to increase or retain membership. The attractiveness of the AOU depends not on brochures, advertising and desk displays, but on how attractive the journal, meetings and website are (not to mention availability of research & travel funds). All of these topics have committees devoted to them already. However, there is an important role for a Membership Committee to play in periodically reviewing the journal, website and meetings with the specific goal of developing recommendations to these committees on things they could do to increase intake and retention of members.

The main membership issue is not lack of new recruits, but rather retention of members after about 1-3 years. Doctoral students given free memberships are more likely to remain as paying members than undergrad/M.Sc. students (although we have never determined whether retention rate for students who never had a free membership is any better.) There have been occasional surveys of people who failed to renew membership, but it would be useful to know what features are related with CONTINUED renewal (such as participation in committees, or making a presentation at a meeting). The committee should periodically brainstorm on ways to improve retention.

Occasionally review the entire membership structure – are there too many/few categories? Are the membership rates, and differentials among categories, reasonable?

When new means of attracting members are instituted, work with OSNA (through the Executive Officer) to ensure that OSNA can track the future of those people so we can evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Memorials

Charge: This committee shall obtain information and keep records on the deaths of members of the Union and nonmembers who are prominent in the field of ornithology, and direct the preparation of memorials for *The Auk*.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, who may be of any membership class. Members should be selected on the basis of long and wide acquaintance in the Union. With agreement of the Editor of *The Auk*, the Chair should be appointed as an Associate Editor to facilitate soliciting authors and editing memorial manuscripts. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: The Chair maintains regular contact with the Secretary so that both are aware of the deaths of any AOU members or others who are prominent in ornithology. The Chair coordinates with the Secretary for the announcement in the OSNA newsletter of the death of any AOU member (often these are written by the Chair). The Chair then consults with the committee to identify appropriate authors for memorial articles for deceased Fellows, Elective Members and Honorary Fellows and other prominent ornithologists. Authors should be provided with information on style, length of articles and prepublication review procedures (which the committee shall determine in consultation with the Editor of *The Auk*), any biographical information from the AOU/Smithsonian Archives that may be on file, and a preferred deadline for submission. Memorials for Elective Members are generally short; those for Fellows are frequently accompanied by a photo.

Nomination of Officers and Councilors

Charge: This Committee, acting in accordance with the By-laws, shall ensure that a sufficient number of persons are nominated for the positions of President- Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Elective Councilor.

Composition: This Committee shall consist of no fewer than six members, including the President-Elect (who shall serve as Chair), the four Elective Councilors serving in their second year, and one Fellow at large. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*.

Operations: Activate the committee at least 7-8 months prior to the annual meeting (as names of nominees who have agreed to stand should be sent to Secretary 5 months prior to meeting). Provide committee members with information from the AOU Governance Handbook on duties of the Officers and Councilors whose positions must be filled. It's important to find candidates with qualifications for the jobs at hand rather than basing choices on scientific credentials alone.

The Secretary and Treasurer continue in office indefinitely, but the committee chair should ask for email confirmation from the incumbents of willingness to continue in office before making the formal nomination. When incumbents announce impending retirement, work should begin right away to find replacements. This process should involve the full Executive Committee rather than falling on the Nomination Committee alone.

A system for developing a list of candidates for other Offices and for Councilor follows, but the Chair is free to use other procedures. Ask committee members to suggest at least one name per position that will be open that year, and request that they

specifically think about nominating qualified candidates from under-represented groups such as women, Latin Americans or visible minorities. Nomination quotas should be avoided, but a reminder to consider under-represented groups will often bear fruit.

Compile the suggested names and remove any people who do not meet the membership status required by the By-Laws for the position to which they were nominated (paid-up Member, Elective Member or Fellow).

Ask committee members to pick their top 2-3 for each position in contention, ranked by preference. Compile a ranked list, and approach the target number of top-ranked candidates to learn whether they are willing to stand, sending them a copy of the appropriate sections of this Handbook describing duties. If a candidate declines, approach the next person on the backup list until you have enough acceptances. The Committee should nominate at least two and preferably three persons for each of the openings for President-Elect and Elective Councilor. (Three leads to more disappointed candidates, but also lessens feelings of rejection in losers, because they are not so conspicuous.) Inform nominees who accept nomination that the Secretary will contact them in due course about preparing a biographical statement, and inform the Secretary of the nominees' names and contact information. Send all nominees' names and contact information to the Secretary at least five months prior to the annual meeting.

The Secretary will prepare a call for nominations from the membership for Officers and Councilors, which will be placed on the AOU website, in the OSNA Newsletter (1 November deadline for inclusion in December issue), and in the AOU email Newsletter. The announcement calls for full nominations (with a link to the website for complete instructions), and should also indicate that members may simply suggest names to the committee for them to consider – but that this carries no guarantee of nomination. Full nominations from the membership go direct to the Secretary, without involving this committee. Names suggested to the committee informally should be considered, but need not be including in the committee's final slate.

Nomination of Honorary Fellows

Charge: This committee shall nominate candidates for the class of Honorary Fellows.

Composition: The committee consists of three (3) members, who shall be Fellows. The members shall be selected because of their special knowledge of international ornithology. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: The Chair should ask the Secretary how many positions are open in the class of Honorary Fellows (limited to 100 members). If spots are open and the chair so desires, the Secretary will send a notice to the Ornithological Newsletter before the 1 January deadline for publication in the February issue, asking for suggestions to be sent to the committee by 31 March.

The committee should be reminded of the criteria in the bylaws for membership in this class (which should also be on the web page and included in requests for nominations), and should be expressly reminded to consider qualified candidates from under-represented groups such as women & non-Europeans. The committee should attempt to nominate one candidate for each opening. The chair then submits a list of

nominees and supporting documentation, including name, address, position, and a brief statement of achievements in ornithology (about a paragraph), to the Secretary at least 75 days before the Stated Meeting, so that the Secretary may notify the Fellows within the required time period.

Nomination of Fellows and Elective Members

Charge: This committee shall survey the membership and prepare nominations of qualified Members for the classes of Elective Member, and nominations of qualified Elective Members for the class of Fellow, according to the criteria established in the Bylaws of the Union.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, who shall be Fellows. Additional members may be Fellows or Elective Members. One Fellow shall be appointed each year for a three-year term, and shall serve as chair in the third year. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*.

Operations: Activate the committee at least 8 months prior to the annual meeting (as the slate of candidates willing to stand should be in Secretary's hands at least 4 months prior to the meeting). Provide committee members with information from the AOU Bylaws on qualifications of Elective Members and Fellows, and with an updated list of current members of those classes (on the AOU website, although names of the most recently elected group may have to be obtained from the Secretary).

The Secretary will prepare a call for nominations from the membership for Officers and Councilors, which will be placed on the AOU website, in the OSNA Newsletter (1 November deadline for publication in December issue) and in the AOU email Newsletter. The announcement calls for full nominations (with a link to the website for complete instructions), and unless the Chair of the committee instructs the Secretary otherwise, it will also indicate that members may simply suggest names to the committee for them to consider (without guarantee of the nomination going forward). Full nominations from the membership go direct to the Secretary, without involving this committee. Names suggested to the committee informally should be considered, but need not be placed on the slate.

One system for developing a list of candidates (although the chair may use any methods desired) is to ask each committee member to suggest about 5-10 names for each class, requesting that they specifically think about nominating qualified candidates from under-represented groups such as women, Latin Americans or visible minorities. Nomination quotas should be avoided, but a reminder to consider under-represented groups will often bear fruit. Compile all suggested names, and circulate to the committee. A conference call (arranged through the Executive Officer) is the preferred medium for discussion of candidates, for the sake of confidentiality. Try to nominate at least 10 Fellows and 20 Elective Members; member nominations may add half to as many more for the final slate. *[Should check with Secretary past total nomination numbers to get a target for committee – numbers in this paragraph done off the cuff.]*

Nominations shall be submitted to the Secretary five (5) months prior to the beginning of each Stated Meeting, leaving time for the Secretary to contact candidates to ask for biographical information and to mail the election packet to members eligible to vote.

The Committee shall update the biographical information format from time to time as necessary, in conjunction with the Secretary.

Publications

Charge: This committee shall regularly review journal and book publications, and make recommendations for improvement.

Composition: The committee shall consist of at least five individuals, including the Chair, appointed by the President to term appointments that insure continuity and breadth of expertise. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*. Sitting editors of AOU publications shall not be voting members of this committee but may be included in committee communications. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: The committee should consider issues related to: 1) attractiveness of journals to authors, 2) accessibility/visibility to readers, and 3) production procedures. The 2009 recommendations of the Publications Task Force will likely provide direction for the committee for some time. In addition, , the committee shall periodically review the Publications pages on the AOU website, and make sure they are clear and up to date.

Most committee work can take place via email, but a conference call should be held at least once a year to identify issues of concern and develop plans for any action needed. Contact aouExecutiveOfficer@aou.org for information on conference call numbers and codes.

Public Responsibility

Charge: This committee shall track actions of AOU public policy and report on their collective success in addressing AOU's Council-approved list of public responsibility priorities.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, who may be of any membership class. AOU representatives to AOU's public policy partners shall be members of the committee. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: AOU's representatives to the AAAS, AIBS, OC, and NABC shall report to this committee on activities of those organizations. At a convenient time in the first half of the calendar year, the chair should request the latest reports from each representative, and send them to committee members along with a copy of the AOU public policy priorities. The committee should then discuss via email or conference call the degree to which AOU priorities are covered by these public policy partners. The committee's annual report to Council should indicate the level of success, and make recommendations as deemed necessary for changing or enhancing those partnerships to better address the public policy priorities of the AOU.

Requests to AOU to write or sign on to letters on public affairs shall be sent to this committee (except that conservation matters should be referred to the Conservation Committee). If the committee feels it is appropriate for AOU to respond, it shall, in a timely manner, draft responses for the AOU President to review and sign. Appropriateness should be judged according to relevance to AOU (related to the Council-

approved policy priorities) and likelihood that the response will carry any weight. Response from OC or one of AOU's other partners might be more appropriate and effective, in which case the request should be forwarded to them for possible action along with an indication of AOU's views on the matter's importance.

Research Awards

Charge: This committee shall solicit and review applications for research grants made from the research grant funds of the Union.

Composition: The committee shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, who may be of any membership class. Members of the committee shall be knowledgeable in the conduct of ornithological research. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee.

Operations: The Secretary will work contact the Chair about a call for applications for the Ornithological Newsletter, and will send it before the 1 September deadline for publication in the October issue (or 1 Nov. for December issue). The notice should include an application deadline that allows for decisions to be made by early in the next calendar year, and should provide a link to the website for obtaining more details. Make sure the website (<http://www.aou.org/student/researchaward.php3>) has been updated as needed (via webeditor@aou.org). The Chair may wish to consult at this stage with the committee to decide whether to restrict research awards to students, or whether to word the announcement to allow leeway for non-student applicants (in which case, wording must specify who is and is not eligible, to avoid getting applications from professionals, etc.). The Committee may also send a notice to the Executive Officer (aouExecutiveOfficer@aou.org) for distribution to students in an email blast (send this to him at least 2 weeks prior to the date on which you want it to go out).

Find out from the Executive Office how much money is available for distribution each year. Distribute copies of applications to all committee members [*or rewrite this section to describe your recommended system*], and provide them with information on criteria for ranking (which the committee may from time to time modify as desired. For example, there may be a desire to support a few undergraduates even if qualifications are somewhat lower.). Communicate as required by email and/or conference call to make selections. Try to make decisions before end of January.

Notify all applicants as to the success of their requests (both positive and negative), before mid-February if possible so they can plan field seasons accordingly. Notify successful applicants of the date they should expect their checks, and any requirements for reporting back to the committee on how the money was used. [*If this is actually done, this section needs more instructions on what to do with reports*]. Send the list of names, addresses and social security numbers and amounts awarded to the Executive Officer and Treasurer and ask that the funds be distributed as soon as possible. The names, institutions and project titles should also be sent to webeditor@aou.org for posting on the website.

The annual report to the Council should include the number of applications received and funded, preferably with a breakdown of each by undergraduate, M.Sc. and

Ph.D. student status and proportion of foreign applicants. List name, institution, project title and amount awarded for each successful applicant.

Scientific Awards

Charge: This committee shall recommend candidates for the William Brewster Memorial Award, the Elliott Coues Award, the Ned Johnson Award for Young Investigators, and the AOU Conservation Award. Following approval by Council, the committee shall prepare full citations.

Composition: This committee shall consist of five (5) members, who shall be Fellows or Elective Members. Three (3) members shall serve staggered 3-year terms, each becoming Chair in the third year. Two (2) shall serve 1-year terms. Three members of this committee shall be appointed annually, one for a 3-year term and two for 1-year terms. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*. Previous award winners are often invited to serve on this committee.

Operations: The Secretary will get in touch with the Chair about preparing a notice for the OSNA Newsletter, before the 1 November deadline for publication in the December issue. The announcement should include the AOU website address where details on award criteria are posted, and should call for suggestions from members that include a statement of reasons why the person should be considered. Suggestions should be sent to the committee by the end of January. The Committee may wish to send another notice directly to members via an email blast, and if so, the announcement should be sent to the Executive Officer by mid-December for sending out in early January.

Activate the committee in early to mid-January, as recommendations must be made to Council by early March for consideration at the mid-year Council meeting. Provide committee members with information on award criteria and names of former award recipients (all on the AOU website). Ask for suggestions by the end of January, to coincide with receipt of member suggestions. (Each person could suggest several names for each award). Request that committee members specifically think about nominating qualified candidates from under-represented groups such as women or visible minorities, or people in under-recognized areas of research. Nomination quotas should be avoided, but a reminder to consider under-represented groups will often bear fruit.

Nominations should be fleshed out with about a paragraph of information justifying the nomination, but further information is not needed until the list has been winnowed down. The chair should double check that all nominees meet the criteria for their proposed award and have not been given the same award in the past. Committee discussion and selection should preferably be done by conference call rather than by email, as deliberations of the committee should be strictly confidential. (Contact aouExecutiveOfficer@aou.org for instructions on AOU conference call numbers and codes.) One means of selection is to compile all suggested names and have each committee member choose their top one or two for each award to narrow down the list for final choices. If there are several top candidates for a particular honor, the committee may wish to collect additional information on the candidates.

The annual report of this committee shall be submitted to the AOU Secretary for Council to consider at its mid-year meeting. It should include names of nominees and 1-3 paragraphs of justification for each choice.

Following Council approval at its mid-year meeting, the committee shall oversee preparation of final citations (which will be read in part at the award ceremony, and published in full on the AOU website and in *The Auk*). These should be finalized 2 months prior to the annual meeting, so get this step underway immediately following the mid-year Council meeting. The committee can recruit outsiders who know the candidates well to prepare or contribute to citations, or can prepare them in-house. Follow the style and length of recent previous citations, and focus on the reasons the award was made by AOU (omitting bibliography and list of other awards the person has won, unless particularly relevant). While the process should remain confidential, the awardees themselves will have been informed by the President following Council approval and invited to attend the annual meeting to receive their awards. The completed citations should be run by the winners for correction of any errors, and at the same time the winner should be asked to submit a photograph for use in announcements (if not already provided via the President). Send the corrected citations and photos to the Secretary, President and Editor of *The Auk* at least 2 months prior to the annual meeting, to allow for timely posting on the website and publication in *The Auk*. Send the citations also to the Executive Officer, who will print them for presentation at the meeting.

Finally, the committee shall prepare a news release on each award and send it to the awardees' home institution as soon as possible after the public announcement at the AOU annual meeting. (The Secretary reports on awards for the OSNA Newsletter.)

Scientific Program (more than one may be active at a given time)

Charge: This committee shall issue a call for papers with the announcement of each Stated Meeting prepared by the Committee on Local Arrangements, and shall arrange the scientific program.

Composition: The committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, who may be of any membership class. At least one member shall be a student who is also on the Committee for Student Affairs.

Appointment: The Chair of this committee shall be appointed by the President after consultation with the Chair of the Committee for Local Arrangements, and shall serve until all affairs of the particular Stated Meeting are completed. Members shall be appointed by the Chair.

Operations: Follow the procedures and suggestions for this committee outlined in the Meetings Handbook (<http://www.aou.org/meetings/coordinator.php3>).

This committee makes no report directly to Council, but should provide any requested information to the chair of the Committee on Local Arrangements for that committee's reports.

Student Affairs

Charge: The Student Affairs Committee (SAC) is responsible for overseeing and advising on the roles of students, on their special needs and issues, and on actions that may be taken to enhance the value of AOU membership to students

Composition: The committee shall have no fewer than three members, with a suggested maximum of ten. The chair and majority of members will be students when appointed, and all must be AOU members throughout their tenure on the committee. A new committee chair will be appointed every two years, and must have been a committee

member for at least one year prior to becoming chair. Members generally serve a maximum of three years on the committee, with no more than two of those years as chair, but may petition the committee to invite them to continue involvement for up to two more years. Committee memberships begin and end at the annual meeting. The chair and all committee members are strongly encouraged to attend the annual AOU conference. Unless the President desires change, the Chair should be invited annually to continue in office and to provide suggestions for changes or additions to the committee (including suggestion for new chair).

Operations: The committee conducts most of its work via email and quarterly teleconference. The first conference call of the year typically discusses current activities to ensure there is interest in continuing them and brainstorms ideas for new activities. There is no requirement to continue events just because they have been successful in the past. After the initial teleconference, potential action items to pursue for the upcoming year are voted on by committee members. The action items are then finalized based on the level of interest, and each action item is pursued by a subcommittee comprising 2-4 SAC members, with SAC members typically serving on 2-3 action item subcommittees each year. The chair is responsible for establishing the final list of action items, assigning members to action item subcommittees, ensuring that all subcommittee goals are met, and that the committee is able to function within its allocated budget. The annual budget consists of an amount allocated by the AOU Council, [plus – or reduced by?] funds raised in special events (e.g., proceeds from a silent auction). [Council decision needed]

The committee chair shall submit a full annual report to Council for its mid-year meeting, indicating success or problems with activities of the previous year and making recommendations for change. An interim report should be prepared for the annual Council meeting, containing any items for Council discussion, and budget requests for the following calendar year.

Specific chair duties: The chair and subcommittee appointees will work with the Local Committee to provide logistical support for student events held at the annual conference. The committee is also asked to suggest one of its members to the President as a candidate for serving on all active Scientific Program Committees, for the purpose of providing student input, particularly on choice of plenary speakers. Finally, the President may call on this committee chair to suggest names of students suitable for appointment to the Website Committee (and possibly others). The chair will also communicate with the chair of the Early Professionals Committee to ensure there is no duplication of effort and to consider joint sponsorship of events that benefit both groups.

Specific subcommittees of 2007 include:

1. Increasing Student Involvement: This subcommittee seeks ways to increase the ways in which students can be involved in the society and at the annual conference. This subcommittee typically ensures proper maintenance of the SAC website, organizes the opening reception (see below), and coordinates with the Local Committee and SAC members to establish and staff the SAC information table (see below).

2. Student-Professional Ornithologist Dinner: The Committee annually invites professional ornithologists to participate in a dinner designed to increase interactions with students. Professional ornithologists are assigned to tables based on their primary research interests, and students are able to move freely among tables to maximize their interactions with professionals with different research backgrounds. Participation from

students is solicited via the SAC website and the meeting webpage, and invitations are emailed to professional ornithologists. Student sign-ups are solicited shortly after the early registration deadline passes. The Local Committee chair facilitates this process by providing a database of registered members so that emails can be directed to those individuals who plan to attend the meeting. The subcommittee in charge of this event is also responsible for coordinating with local meeting organizers to schedule the dinner and to plan the menu. The event is free of charge for participants, with costs covered by the committee's annual budget.

3. *Student Workshop(s)*: Each year, at least one workshop for students is held at the annual meeting and the committee actively engages in student input to determine the workshop topic. Workshop topics may be repeated if there is sufficient temporal distance between workshops on the same topic (e.g., 3+ years). The workshop subcommittee is responsible for coordinating with local meeting organizers to schedule the workshop and to advertise the event.

4. *Student Quiz Bowl*: This event is typically held immediately following the student-professional ornithologist dinner at the annual conference. Participation in this event is limited to current students who are members in good standing in the AOU. An email solicitation for teams is placed on the AOU listserve, meeting website, and through directed email to students registered for the conference, with participation based on a first-come first-served basis. The subcommittee in charge of this event is responsible for coordinating with the Local Committee to establish and time and place for this event and soliciting free or reduced-costs prizes from vendors. In addition, this subcommittee is responsible for signing up 9 teams (each containing three students), generating questions, and enlisting the assistance of a faculty judge and students who help with scoring and logistical considerations.

5. *Student-Professional Ornithologist Mentor Program*: This event pairs students of all levels with professional ornithologists from many different fields, experiences, and employments in order to provide students with opportunities to interact with researchers in their area of interest and learn steps to become successful in their field. Mentor-mentee pairs are introduced at a short (ca. 15 min) introductory meeting that occurs during the opening reception, and a lunch voucher is provided for all participants to allow for in-depth discussion in a quiet setting. Approximately three months prior to annual meeting, invitations to participate in the program are sent to professional ornithologists and the program is announced to students on the website of the annual meeting, via the AOU Students listserve, and via direct email. Within a month of the meeting, the mentor program subcommittee matches mentors and mentees based on availability and common research interests and then connects pairs via email about pairings.

6. *Silent auction*: During the 2007 conference the SAC will attempt to raise additional funds for their events via a silent auction. This subcommittee is in contact with the Local Committee for space to hold the auction and to identify a mailing address at the meeting site that can be used for receipt of donated items. Requests for donations are to be posted on the AOU student listserve, AOU SAC website, and in the February edition of the OSNA newsletter (deadline for submission is 1 January).

7. *Student Affairs Committee Information Table*: This table is set up in the vendor section of the annual meeting and is meant to provide information for students at the meeting on student-related events and how to become more involved in the AOU.

Although it can be difficult to staff the table throughout the meeting because of the numerous student events and general meeting activities, special care should be taken to staff the table during key social events (e.g., poster sessions) when the majority of students will likely be in the general area of the table and will have time to interact with SAC members staffing the table. Funding for the table supplies comes from the SAC annual budget.

8. Opening reception welcome: This event makes use of a lively senior ornithologist to welcome students during a short meeting (ca. 15 min) held during the opening reception to provide students with tips on how to get the most out of their meeting attendance. In addition, the President (and perhaps other officers) may provide a few words of welcome, to put a face on AOU governance, and to indicate that senior ornithologists are indeed approachable. The subcommittee responsible for this event works with the Local Committee for each meeting to arrange a time and place for this event. An announcement should be placed on the AOU meeting website, the student listserv, the Meeting Program, and as an insert to the registration packet. This is a pilot program for the 2007 conference, and the success at this meeting will determine if there is enough interest to hold it in future years.

9. Student Social: Time permitting, the committee organizes an event at each annual meeting where students can gather and socialize, although other AOU members are welcome to attend if space allows. The nature of this event is flexible and is typically designed with help from students on the local organizing committee. Funding for the social is generated by charging a nominal fee for participants. This event may consist of a post-conference outing, depending on local opportunities.

Student Travel and Presentation Awards

Charge: This committee shall advertise and select candidates for Marcia Brady Tucker Travel Awards (student travel to Stated Meetings) and prizes for the best student scientific papers and posters presented at those meetings.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than five (5) members, who may be of any membership class. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*.

Appointment: The Chair of this committee shall be appointed by the President after consultation with the previous Chair of the Committee for Student Travel and Presentation Awards and also the Chair of the Committee for Local Arrangements, and shall serve until all affairs of the particular Stated Meeting are completed. Members shall be appointed by the Chair. The Executive Officer will serve *ex officio*.

Operations: This committee conducts much of its business via email and also at the annual Stated Meeting. Principle activities occur throughout the year, but mostly just prior to the meeting itself. In years when AOU has joint meetings with other societies, awards committees may be merged to coordinate student travel and presentation award programs.

The committee should begin its work by checking with the AOU Executive Officer on the amount available for travel grants (usually \$20,000 for travel, although \$4,000 was added for 2008 for post-doc travel awards) and updating the web page advertisements for student travel and presentation awards (send new information to webeditor@ou.edu). Information should include the instruction that anyone who has already had two travel awards from AOU at any stage of their student career are no

longer eligible. The deadline for application should be the same as that for submission of abstracts to the Stated Meeting (often about 3 months prior to the meeting), and the web page should be updated as soon as the abstract submission date is known (usually around the first of the calendar year). These advertisements are published in the meeting circular as well, and the chair of this committee will be called upon by the meeting planners to provide the needed information on judging criteria and application procedures. The meeting circular and detailed info on the website should direct students to <http://www.aou.org/student/links.php3> for advice on preparing oral and poster presentations.

After the deadline for travel award applications, the committee evaluates the applications and discusses them (typically by phone or email), and develops a plan for distribution of awards (see below). Finally, at the Stated Meeting itself, committee members (plus additional judges) attend and judge student presentations, present awards, and also hold a short meeting to discuss other committee business.

Marcia Brady Tucker Student Travel Awards are meant to defray the costs of travel to the Stated Meeting, and are made several weeks in advance of the meeting. Recipients must be members of the AOU and must be presenting an oral or poster presentation at the meeting; students graduating the semester prior to the meeting are also eligible for travel awards. In 2008 (perhaps to be renewed in future), \$4,000 is available for travel awards to post-docs who have not yet had 2 AOU travel awards. Criteria for judging applications are determined by the committee, but should include (in some way) quality of the abstract and possibly student standing. Undergraduates are eligible for travel awards, though preference will often be given to advanced graduate students because experience has shown that these students are more likely to stay in the profession. If it is not too onerous, check the lists of previous recipients before making final awards to ensure that none is receiving more than 2 awards life-time (or assume honor system). The committee reviews the applications and decides how much will be awarded to each student.

Once a final list of recipients and award amounts has been prepared, this should be forwarded on to the Treasurer for issuance of the award checks and instructions on how the checks are to be distributed. It is best to distribute checks at the meeting (to ensure that students have actually attended), so most checks can be sent to one person for distribution at the meeting (e.g. at the registration desk). The committee chair notifies all student applicants as to whether or not they will be receiving a travel award, the amount of the award where applicable, instructions on how and when to pick up their checks, and a request for them to supply the Treasurer with a SIN (required for cutting the checks). (Alternatively, the application could require SIN, so you don't have to go through another step of asking for it). Anyone who cannot attend without getting the check ahead of time should be told to contact the chair to make other arrangements.

Awards presented at each Stated Meeting include the *Nellie Johnson Baroody Award* (named for an early mentor of Frank Pitelka, who later endowed the award in her name) and two *AOU Council Awards*, for a total of three regular awards per meeting. Recipients of these awards each receive a \$300 check (details from Treasurer). In 2007, a 5-year commitment was made to award \$500 (the Berry award) for best student presentation related to conservation. Craig Benkman and Jeff Walters are funding this, and should be contacted each year to ensure that it is still on offer. In addition to the

monetary awards, additional items may be arranged by the committee each year. The committee chair typically arranges for book vendors at the meeting to donate books for these presentation awards, and from time to time members of the award committee can arrange for other awards (e.g., currently we are awarding a donated pair of Zeiss binoculars (arranged by Kevin Omland) and a membership in ABC Birds (arranged by Craig Benkman) to each award recipient.

The Committee has the option of dedicating one award to best poster, and/or one award for an undergraduate student. Alternatively, the committee may request Council ahead of time to fund new awards for these (or other) purposes.

At or before the start of the annual meeting, the committee should arrange a schedule indicating who will attend which presentations, and set up a meeting after the end of presentations to select the winners. The Chair of the committee is responsible for announcing winners at the annual banquet and for distributing book or other extra prizes.

Following the meeting, the committee will prepare a news release on each award and send it to the local or college newspaper of each awardee. The list of awardees will also be provided to the AOU Secretary for permanent records, publicity in OSNA Newsletter and for posting on the website.

The chair of the committee prepares an annual report for Council that should be submitted in time for the Council's mid-year meeting (rather than for the annual meeting, when much of the work has not yet been completed.) An interim report is prepared for the annual Council meeting, giving progress to date and making any budget requests for the next calendar year.

Website

Charge: This committee is responsible for periodic review of the website and for suggesting changes or additions that ensure the website as a whole presents a coherent, complete, balanced, attractive and user-friendly package that accurately represents the activities of the AOU and provides value to users.

Composition: The committee shall consist of no fewer than two (2) members, who may be of any membership class. At least one member should be a student. The President-Elect, AOU Secretary and AOU Web Editor serve additionally, *ex-officio*.

Operations: Final decisions on website content and structure lie with the Website Committee, except for routine postings by the AOU Secretary related to AOU business. The Web Editor can make routine changes and updates to the website on request at his/her discretion without seeking further approval, but the Committee ultimately has the authority to call for changes.

The Committee should review the web site annually and prepare a list of proposed changes, including any good ideas that come from other sources. Any proposals for very substantive change should be briefly described to the Executive Committee to ensure there are no objections to proceeding (although this should be very rare). Major suggestions or draft pages should be circulated to the Website Committee and to those committee chairs, editors, etc. whose pages are to be altered. Substantive changes can be posted on a restricted access page for testing and review prior to public posting. The Web Editor shall be the person who communicates with the Web Master to implement changes he/she cannot handle directly.

The Website Committee should encourage other AOU committees, editors, etc. for whom AOU web pages are appropriate to develop and add to their own pages, submitting draft materials to the Website Committee for approval and implementation. Certain committees (e.g. Classification and Nomenclature) host their own web pages (linked to AOU page but not part of it), and they may alter their pages as they wish. However, the Website Committee should check these pages in their periodic reviews to ensure that content is appropriate, that links all work and things are up to date, and to make any suggestions for improvement.

The committee's report to Council should highlight any major changes/additions to the website since the previous report.

Special Affairs Committee (There may be more than one active at any time)

Charge: This committee shall investigate and act on whatever matters are referred to it by the President or the Executive Committee.

Composition: This committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) members, who may be of any membership class.

Appointment: The Chair and members of this committee shall be appointed annually by the President, and shall automatically go out of existence when annual appointments are not made.