

## Guidelines for Chairs Making Recommendations for Committee Appointments

The President-elect is responsible for making appointments to over sixty ASA committees. A primary source of assistance in this daunting task is recommendations provided by committee chairs. Thoughtful recommendations are highly appreciated and carefully considered by the President-elect.

Your recommendation should explain why the proposed individual will be an asset to the committee in carrying out its charge. The explanation need not be lengthy, but it does merit careful thought about the kinds of people who will best serve the needs of the committee. This document offers suggestions for making recommendations, recognizing that each committee is unique in its needs.

### Recommending a New Appointment

Committee balance is a major consideration in the appointment process. When you recommend a new appointment, you should consider how it will balance your committee in one or more of the following dimensions:

- sector (academia, government, industry)
- education (highest degree level attained)
- gender, race, or other demographic factors
- career phase (student, early career, mid-career, late-career, retired)
- area of statistical application

Other important needs to consider are the following:

- specialized experience relevant to the purpose of the committee
- level of interest in the work of the committee
- gaps created as experienced members rotate off the committee
- individuals who would bring enthusiasm, fresh ideas, or energy to the committee
- individuals with influence/connections whose participation would advance the committee goals

Your recommendation should mention needs specific to your committee and indicate how they will be met by the individual.

Concise, thoughtful recommendations are most helpful. Here are good examples written by recent chairs (modified to maintain confidentiality).

*Example 1: In making recommendation for new appointments to the award committee, I considered (i) geographical balance, (ii) ethnicity and gender balance, (iii) age representation, and (iv) areas of expertise which match well with the focus area for the award. The following are my recommended names in decreasing order of preference:*

*[Person A] has a broad interest in XXX methods, has organized several conferences in this area, and is a very active member of the ASA Section on ABC. As the program chair, he has been involved in selecting winners of the best paper award for the section, and that experience would be particularly helpful for the award decisions made by our committee. You can read more about [Person A] at [website].*

*[Person B] is well known for her contributions to YYY models, has served as chair of the ASA CDE section, and one of her accomplishments as chair was to introduce a section award for the best JSM poster. She is*

*from a university in the West, which would add to our geographic diversity. Also see [website].*

*[Person C] has a strong background in the area of Bayesian methods for ZZZ. Many young researchers are active in this area, so her inclusion could be very helpful in making decisions involving nominees from that sector. Also see [website].*

*Example 2: One recommendation for a new member is [Person B]. She is currently a student, anticipating graduation with a PhD in May of next year, but she has already participated actively in two events that our committee has organized. I've observed her to be a person of initiative. She supports the work of the committee, and her appointment will enable the committee to have representation from someone closer to the student experience to ensure that our approaches to that audience remain relevant. I think she'll bring positive energy to the committee and a willingness to roll up her sleeves and WORK.*

### **Recommending a Reappointment**

Your recommendation for a reappointment should document the contributions that the committee member has made. Individuals who have not been active should not be considered.

The reappointment of highly active members is often merited, and such reappointments add experience and continuity to a committee. On the other hand, reappointments should not be viewed as automatic. If three members of your committee are completing their terms, a good rule of thumb is to recommend (a) one reappointment, (b) one appointment of a new person with experience who will add balance and proven skills, and (c) one appointment of a new person (such as a younger ASA member) who can gain experience and enrich the committee in the long run.

Here are good examples of recommendations for reappointment.

*Example 1: I hope you will invite [Person A] to continue serving an additional term. He is deeply engaged in the work of the committee and consistently contributes a helpful perspective in our discussions. The other two members completing their terms have not been as active in the past year and should be replaced with new members. Also, since our committee is now more focused on [new area], we need two new members with experience in [specialization], so I suggest you consider appointing ...*

*Example 2: I strongly recommend the reappointment of both [Person A] and [Person B] for second three-year appointments. They are equally involved in the work of the committee, but they have distinct skills and contribute from different perspectives, since [Person A] is in a department of XXX, while [Person B] is a private consultant. Both have taken the lead in many activities of the committee over the past two years, and they finish what they start. Failure to reappoint them would be a setback to the effectiveness of the committee.*

### **Recommending the Appointment of a Committee Chair**

When recommending the appointment of a committee chair, you should naturally consider an experienced member of the committee who has been exceptionally active. However, you should also consider the leadership and organizational skills needed to help the committee achieve its goals. In some situations, recommending a new person with significant leadership experience might be appropriate, especially if the committee needs reactivation or a change in direction.

Here are good examples of recommendations for new chairs.

Example 1: *For the next chair, I strongly suggest [Person A]. During her time on the committee, she has worked well with the other members, listened carefully to their opinions, and displayed a well-balanced set of opinions. She has always completed her assignments on schedule. She understands the goals of the committee, and she should be comfortable chairing the committee because she is a manager at her company. [Person A]'s writing skills are not the best, but there are others on the committee who can help with writing articles and announcements, and I know she will turn to them.*

Example 2: *Regarding my recommendation for the next chair, I strongly urge you to consider [Person B]. He has not previously served on the committee but is highly regarded as a leader in [statistical area], which is especially important to the committee since the agency we advise is now asking us to emphasize this area. He has been instrumental in [accomplishments], and you can read more about that at [website]. I know that the current committee members would be happy to work with [Person B]. My only concern is whether he will have time to chair the committee. If you invite him to take on this position, I suggest you ask him to think about the time commitment. I can provide details about the work involved, and we have a document that explains the duties.*