



**Report from LWFNY Convention caucus:
“Working Together to Make the Consensus Process More Efficient”, May 16, 2009**

I. Consensus Study Timeline

1. Committees must be realistic when setting timelines

II. Develop consensus questions that aid in reaching consensus

1. Avoid questions with multiple choice answers and either/or scenarios
2. Avoid vague, leading or misleading language
3. Scrutinize questions to be certain they do not contain bias
4. Pretest questions with a wider group of members including those with a strong point of view and by people who have no point of view, since they may see problems which those "steeped" in the issue would not see.
5. If the board changes the study committee questions, allow the study committee the opportunity to challenge the changes by presenting their rationale for disagreement

III. Consensus Guidelines

1. LWVUS should have consistent, specific, published guidelines for consensus – Consider the number of Leagues participating, number of participants in each League and geographic distribution.
2. LWVUS should have a session at convention on acceptable methods of Leagues reaching consensus – we want Leagues to use similar methods.
3. We need the consensus guidelines sent out with every study.
4. Must remind Leagues NOT to publish the results of their local consensus

IV. Educational Meetings and Information

1. Use bulletins, web sites, Facebook, email, etc. to communicate information
2. Encourage Leagues to have at least one member participate on the study listserv & encourage members to use listserv to share concerns, resources and to ask questions
3. Study committee members should be moderators of the listserv
4. Be prepared to respond to input from outside organizations

V. Consensus meetings

1. Train facilitator prior to consensus meeting -
2. Ideally, the facilitator should not be a committee member
3. Have recorder who does not participate in discussion

VI. Consensus Form

1. Always have 150 word comment section in addition to online form

VI. After study

1. After the consensus is approved by the appropriate board, report the results to all members (and the media if appropriate). Action on the issue is what we're working toward.
2. Get feedback on the study from those participating in order to improve