

REPORT OF THE AD-HOC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TO THE BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP  
June 26, 2019

Ad Hoc Governance Committee membership:

Rhonda Sharpe, co-chair; Heidi Hartmann, co-chair; Haroon Akram-Lodhi; Cheryl Doss, Diana Strassmann

The Ad Hoc Governance Committee (represented by Sharpe, Hartmann, and Doss) met by telephone on June 7, 2019, for approximately 39 minutes, to discuss our committee's agenda and share emerging views on the issues. Our committee has been charged with exploring the possibility of a two-year presidency to lighten the work load and to consider the issue of how and when IAFFE should or could issue political statements as an association.

Also, to augment our membership, we reviewed the interests of several IAFFE members who volunteered to serve on a committee in response to Andrea Collins' call for volunteers. We have asked three members to join us in the coming business year .

### The Two-Year Presidency

Upon discussion, we realized this is a more complex issue than it seems. We decided that each of us would check in with organizations that have presidents with two-year (or longer) terms to see how they arrange that and how it works for them. We also decided to check in with those organizations that have multiple vice presidents, and a president and president-elect as IAFFE does. We discussed how we could consider allocating the tasks between the president and president-elect or potentially the vice presidents differently, as an alternative way to lighten the load of the presidents. Often the president-elect plans the conference that year, and concentrates on the other presidential responsibilities in the year they are president. Each member is to report on his or her findings in a brief paragraph. These can then be presented to the board, and or the membership, along with our recommendations as to what we think will work well for IAFFE.

The concern extends beyond the workload (specifically planning the conference). Presidents run on goals they hope to see accomplished, and a year is not a long enough time period to address most goals. Also if a member who is elected president has not been on the board, they have an especially steep learning curve. We hope to have a report and recommendations by the time of next summer's annual conference.

### Political Statements by IAFFE as a whole

This issue also has many parts: How to decide which issues get such consideration, how to draft statements, how to approve them, how to publicize them, and so on. Of particular relevance to IAFFE is how other international organizations make such decisions. Many political statements could be relevant mainly at the national level and not internationally. On this issue, we also decided to gather more information and look into how other associations handle these issues, especially associations in other countries and international associations. Heidi volunteered to make a start on this.

We decided that it might be fruitful to reconfigure this question as one of issuing policy statements on topics that we as economists have related expertise, which we could show in our statements by grounding them in research. Such statements could also potentially include value statements, although there was less unanimity on this point. There was unanimity among the three committee members on reconfiguring the question to focus on IAFFE policy statements.

The concerns of our membership were summarized:

- \* Some members are eager for IAFFE to make such statements.
- \* Others are fearful that they individually could suffer reverberations depending on which country they live in.
- \* Some are worried it could affect their ability to get visas to enter the U.S.

\* Others are concerned it would be difficult to choose among the many, many topics IAFFE could enter in on.

\* Most are comfortable with individual members wanting to make statements and contacting IAFFE members to recruit co-signers.

Possible avenues for IAFFE to solicit more input or create forums for members to discuss issues:

\* Host a session at the annual meetings to discuss the ins and outs of making such statements and whether 'policy

statements' is a good way to cover what is meant (in the U.S., political statements generally mean that a candidate

in an election is being endorsed). Such a session could help the committee establish ground rules for recommendation.

\* Host online chat rooms on specific topics of interest to members

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Hartmann, co-chair