

AAS Governance and You

August 25, 2020

0:10 Maura Cunningham

Hello and welcome to today's AAS Digital Dialogue session which is called "AAS Governance and You". My name is Maura Cunningham and I'm the AAS digital media manager. And I'd like to get started today by thanking the Henry Luce Foundation for supporting this series of online webinars that enable us to connect with our AAS membership when talking face to face is not possible. And AAS Executive Director Hilary Fincham-Sung who is today's speaker, and I wanted to do this session as a sort of behind the scenes of the AAS what we have realized in speaking with AAS members over the past couple of years, is that many people don't realize exactly what we do at the AAS Secretariat in Ann Arbor, Michigan, or they don't necessarily know very much about AAS leadership and so we wanted to talk about what that leadership structure looks like, who does what, what are the different programs that we run and who's in charge of them. And so, today over the next hour, we will give you an overview of how our organization works and how you can get involved in it. So as I said, today's speaker is Executive Director Hilary Finchum-Sung. She became the AAS Executive Director in April 2019. So just over a year ago. And she is going to give a short presentation today, and then we'll take questions from the audience. Please feel free to put your questions in the Q&A box and we'll respond to them at the end of the program. So Hilary,

1:45 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Alright, thank you very much for that introduction. Thank you all for taking the time to be a part of this webinar today. We know that it's the first week of classes for many of you and we also know that there was a massive Zoom outage almost worldwide yesterday. So I know that we've all been dealing with technology and spending a lot of time in front of our computer. So I'm really grateful for everybody who is, has chosen to be a part of this today. And I think, in many ways, that your participation signals not only just an interest in learning more about the AAS, but also a willingness to become more actively involved and engaged in the activities of the Association and perhaps maybe the governance I hope that many future council members and maybe even presidents and vice presidents are listening in today. So thank you for being here, virtually. So what I'm going to do is we prepared a PowerPoint presentation for today, and I'm going to go ahead and share my screen so that we all can follow along, but also helps us organize our thoughts today. Hold on a second really quickly. I pressed the wrong button. That's normal. Oh, no, there we go. Okay, there we go. And now this is the one I meant to push. All right.

3:19

So welcome to AAS Digital Dialogues "AAS Governance And You". And that title is important to us because one of the things we want to emphasize with today's presentation with today's webinar is that we are not an Association without you. The members are everything for the

Association for Asian Studies. So I want to talk a little bit about what we're going to be going through today. The outline includes speaking about briefly about the institution of AAS what is the Association for Asian Studies, and then to talk about what governance is and how the Association plays a part in that so we'll do a brief introduction to the Constitution, and maybe many of you are aware of what the Constitution, how it reads and what it contains. But a brief overview of what that is, is important for understanding everything that we're going to be talking about today. Also, introduction to the Board of Directors like, how does this function? How does the staff engage with the Board of Directors and so that includes a rundown of who is on the Board of Directors, you know, that includes the elected officers, the elected council members who have become or become elected chairs by their respective councils, and also representatives of publication boards and committees for the Association. Also, we'd like to specifically talk about elections. So this is very timely, again, our motivation that Maura referred to earlier, is we have elections coming up very, very soon in early November, not just national elections here in the United States, but also elections for the Association for Asian Studies, so it's important for you to understand like how this works, how do people become, how do they get on the ballots? And what that process is like, as well as how do we go about processing the election and how you yourself can play a part. And then we'll talk a little bit about how committees and affiliates play a part in the Association for Asian Studies. Alright, so here's the Association for Asian Studies, your members so you know what this looks like. This is your portal to everything AAS. So, the Asian Association for Asian Studies is a nonprofit dedicated to the advancement of the field of Asian Studies through international exchange on networking publications, research, support and career developments. Uh, the Association for Asian Studies was actually founded in 1941 in the form of a journal, so the *Far Eastern Quarterly* was published beginning at that time, this is now what we call the *Journal of Asian Studies*. And then in 1948, the constitution and bylaws were established. And this is when the Association itself became incorporated. So the initial name for the Association was the Far Eastern Association, Incorporated. And then of course, later on, as one of the amendments to the Constitution to test the name itself was changed to the Association for Asian Studies. So like any organization that's been around for as long as the Association for Asian Studies, we've gone through a lot of different changes. You know, there have been some amendments and additions, for example, in nineteen- in the 1970s, the area councils were added to represent the membership in a more full complete way. And in the Council of conferences as well in the late 1970s. And the Association for Asian Studies, importantly, as a member of the ACLS, which is the American Council of Learned Societies, and so many of you are also members of disciplinary Associations, like AHA, and uh, maybe the American Sociological Association, or triple A. So, we are all partners in this particular Association.

07:17

So just to break down, if you think of AAS as an institution, this is pretty much the core. First and foremost, members are at the top. So without membership, without the community, we wouldn't exist. So that's really important to remember that everything that we do as an organization should be for, for the sake of the community for the sake of enriching the community, but also connecting people across international borders, state borders, institutional borders. So

members are number one on the list. And then you have the Secretariat because the Secretariat, um, the AAS staff, does the work of the Association. We actually do the day to day activities that allows for the Association to sustain itself to continue as an organization. And then the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors, looks at the big picture. Um, the Board of Directors, fundamentally works on kind of the big questions about what the function and the direction of the mission of the Association is. And it is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to make sure that we maintain focus and that we move towards that mission and those goals that we state. And again, those are fluid over time, of course, life changes, and society changes and times change, our priorities change as well. And therefore, we're always kind of trying to figure out like, what, how should we be positioning ourselves now in the world, and how is academia changing? And how can we respond to that? So I'm going to break some of these down for you today. The Secretariat, there's me the Executive Director. I'll talk a little bit more about what that role entails here in a minute. So we have this triangle here, which sort of implies a hierarchy. But overall, I think of the Secretariat as a team. The Executive Director may play a more visible role. And Maura, of course, is not the Executive Director, but I'm sure many of you have seen her in many webinars. So she's also quite visible as well as our digital media manager. But as a collective, we really make the Association work. And we have a very, very small staff all total there are only nine of us and a lot of people are very surprised when they learn this. The Chief Financial Officer Alicia Williams, is pretty much the guru for finances at the Association for Asian Studies. She handles all of the grants, she doesn't grant management, she makes sure that we are ready for audits that we are, that we are reporting responsibly and accurately, our financial status. Her role is incredibly important. The conference manager Robyn- all roles are important conference manager is Robyn Jones. Robyns- Robyn Jones job is to of course run the annual conference. And so her role has been incredibly difficult this year, as you know, where the cancellation of our annual conference and she is working on ways to determine the best path forward for our conference in 2021. As many of you who have received that survey would know. And then we also have the membership manager. Many of you have had conversations with Doreen Ilozor she, she really worked very hard to connect with the members and to make sure that everybody's needs are met on a daily basis. The digital media manager is Maura. Maura, would you like to say a little bit about what your job entails?

10:49 Maura Cunningham

Sure. So I oversee all of the online presence of the Association which includes our website, our blog, which is #AsiaNow. I do all of our social media and I'm also running of course, this new webinar series. So basically anything online, we have a separate publications manager that Hilary will talk about, but anything online falls under my purview.

11:14 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Yes. Thank you, Maura. So the publication's manager is Jon Wilson. He takes care of our many publications series. He also liaises with the editor of the *Journal of Asian Studies*. And they've been working very, very hard with Jon at the helm at producing open access materials. This year, some on the COVID crisis and one potentially in the works on Black Lives Matter. So his job is a very, very busy one. Always. We have an advertising and marketing manager, that's

Jenna Yoshikawa. She really designs the look of AAS and she's the one who works on the annual program and she's the one who actually works with people and advertising on our platforms like the job board. We also have an accounts and development coordinator, who works primarily with the CFO, in making sure that we are, we are all our T's are crossed and our eyes are dotted in the financial world and that we are reporting our finances accurately and really working in a very sound way. The conference and event coordinator works very closely with Robyn Jones, our conference manager, she's one of she's the newest hire at the Association for Asian Studies, well, one of the newest hires of the Association for Asian Studies. And her job is to work with our conference manager and making sure that our annual conference is a success, but also on various workshops and other meetings. And then more recently, we've hired a programming assistant and she's made doing this particular type of event very, very possible. So Molly was our intern and she has become a part time staff member at the Association for Asian Studies. We also have a variety of IT and HR consultants as well, who we work with to make sure that we run smoothly. And we also most significantly, we have a senior consultant to the board on outreach and strategic initiatives. So this particular position is very fundamental and kind of looking at what kinds of opportunities there are for outreach for designing strategic initiatives. And so this individual works very closely with the board but also the Executive Director in making things like this very, very possible. So we have beyond the Secretariat, very crucial individuals who make the work of AAS happen. So the role of the Executive Director here, based on the slide is kind of complicated. You know, a lot of people who have worked on boards or have actually been in a position like this know that part of your job was to manage staff. The other part is also to work with the board to run the Association. So part of this is to determine what is AAS's relevance to the world, you know, when our lives have been turned upside down this year with COVID-19, and with so much happening, that we really had to reevaluate the relevance of Asian Studies in the world around us. And it's really required a lot of contact with the board and talking about how we can adjust our vision and our mission to this new era and to really build a stronger Association to better serve members. We also make sure again, that my responsibility or the Executive Directors responsibility is to ensure accountability towards diverse constituents. So that means really striving to make sure that nobody gets lost in the mix that we all recognize that we have diverse members and that we want to ensure equity for everybody and that's one of the things that we're striving for actively right now. So things like providing direction to the board are important in addition to managing the day to day operations. One thing that's important to note is that the Executive Director sits on the Board of Directors, but it's Ex Officio. And so what that means is that the Executive Director does not have a vote. And the purpose of that is to remain impartial. Because the Executive Director runs the day to day operations, it would be difficult to remain impartial as a voting member of the board. So therefore, information is gathered, presented to the Board and the board makes an informed decision on what is the best step to take for any given issue we're discussing at that time.

15:43

So just to break down governance before we go into introducing members of the board, I'm going to go ahead and go through sorry, here we go. What is governance? So governance is

and I'm going to actually break this down. So governance is a process whereby a group of individuals work as a collective to strive for the legal and moral health of an organization. So in that respect, it's really important for the board to keep in mind some basic principles of board membership. So, these I like to think of as understanding that you're a team. And then as a collective, the board has authority. No one individual board member has authority over anybody else. And that's how board should work and our AAS board works very hard to ensure that this is, this is important to maintain. Also governance serves the concept of governance is really about due diligence, you know, best practices, where we assure that as a collective the board makes it possible for the legal and moral health of the organization to continue or perhaps to even improve if there are issues in it, at any given organization. The board itself is a body that carries out the governance process for any organization so that the organization can fulfill its legal and moral obligations for its constituents. So, in the case of the AAS, that's really complicated, right we have constituents we have members all over the world, but we also must make sure that we abide by the rules for nonprofit organizations and there are laws that govern our status as a type of organization. In addition, a board is legally and morally accountable for the health of any organization and importantly to fulfill the mission of the organization itself.

17:50

Alright, so when you look at the governance of any organization, any organization will have a constitution. So the constitution basically just tells you, you know, who's who in the organization, it essentially outlines the general objectives, the activities and the and the essential or the basic parameters of the governance structure of the organization. The Constitution is not written in stone, so to speak, it can change, but the changes must take place methodically and carefully, according to the ways by which changes should take place. And so the constitution outlines that you can make changes, but these changes must be initiated either by the Board of Directors or by 3% of the membership. So, it's either or scenario, sometimes it can be both, it doesn't matter. But as long as we have those representative numbers, and that activity taking place, then we can put forth a petition to change certain aspects of the Constitution and changes to this constitution are solidified via membership vote. So just to show you where this is located if you go to the Association for Asian Studies homepage, if you go to the about section and you look under governance, first of all you can find out about our governance structure. But then underneath that is the Constitution. And here all of the articles even including like the article one is basically about who we are, the name of the society shall be the Association for Asian Studies Incorporated, all the way down to what is a member, who is a member, what do members do? What does it take to be a member, all of these things are very, very important to outline. It seems a little nitpicky, but these things are very, very important to make sure that we have a solid government structure. Another aspect of governance are bylaws and so bylaws actually provide more details. They provide in depth descriptions regarding things like membership privileges, how much do members pay? What does it take to change the membership, the amounts and the categories of members? Also, what does the fiscal year mean? Like what is the fiscal year for the Association? All kinds of things like obligations of the Association specific roles and responsibilities. So in the bylaws for example, you'll see, you know what the roles and responsibilities are- Oh, goodness, I'm not scrolling down- of officers, for example of different

committees of the Finance Committee of the President. So these kinds of details are provided in the bylaws. So anyway, basically, it builds on the constitution by providing a lot more information regarding the very specifics of how things function. And just like the Constitution, these things can change and they do require a petition by the board or by 3% of the membership and of course, finalized by inclusion on the ballot in the elections and approval by the membership. So now I want to talk about the Board of Directors. So again, the Board of Directors is responsible for governance for the Association for anyone in society, you're going to have a Board of Directors for any nonprofit, you're going to have a Board of Directors and these individuals are- carry the weight on their shoulders of governance a pretty heavy, hefty weight. Again, the board is a collective, no one has authority outside of the group or as an individual within the group. The group itself is the authority. And so the board comes together fairly frequently. In the past, the board has typically gathered twice a year, but with this new kind of developments and the fact that we now discover we can do things on Zoom and have outreach programs like this, we're now gathering quite often to talk about ways that we can move forward in 2020 and beyond. So the important thing to note is that individual board members are that they believe in and they serve as active advocates and ambassadors for the values, mission and vision of the organization. The most important thing to remember about a board member is that their role is to really work for the organization. And that really means essentially working for the- the membership.

22:30

Any kind of decisions that are made are made by a core or majority of the board members. So that's about two thirds of the members of the board. A lot of many times the board members will discuss and the majority will agree on issues that we then move forward on. So I'd like to introduce you to our Board of Directors. So on our homepage as well under governance you can see the images and the information about each individual board member. So I'm going to break those down here in successive slides. So the officers who are currently in office to be redundant, Christine Yano is the president of the Association for Asian Studies. Hy V. Luong just came in as the vice president this past year, he will be president beginning in 2021. Our past-past or past president sorry, is Prasenjit Duara. And our past-past president is Anne Feldhaus. It's important to note that each one of these individuals represents an Area Council in the organization. Christine Yano representing Northeast Asia, Hy Luong representing Southeast Asia, President Duara China and Inner Asia Anne Feldhaus representing South Asia so there's a rotation among the officers regarding who will be elected. So for example, because Anne Feldhaus is rotating off next year, then the next person up for election then you'll see it the ballot is a South Asia specialist so that there will always be this representation amongst the officers on the board. We also have council chairs. So the council chairs our members are elected members of the various councils now we have five councils four these are area councils, which means they represent a region somewhere in Asia. And then of course, we have the council of conferences. So just really briefly on the Councils themselves are really significant, especially area councils because subcommittees within these councils will determine things like book prizes will determine things like small grants, so certain area councils like CIAC China, Inner Asia, have small grants that people can apply for to help support their research. Northeast Asia

Council also has pretty hefty support from different granting agencies that allow for small grants travel grants, workshop grants to be a part of the administering of this particular council. Now, we often get asked by people, why is it that some councils have more support than others, and a lot of it has to do with the availability of funding for this particular regional areas. So one of the things that we would want more than anything is to make sure that the funding available for South Asia or Southeast Asia would be equivalent to that for China, Inner Asia, Northeast Asia, but it's not always the case. So it's one of the goals that we constantly strive for. The council of conferences is the organization or the council that works very closely with regional conferences. So we have nine regional conferences, from the southwest of the US to New York area to the Mid Atlantic region to the Midwest, to just the West. For example, we have a regional conference in Japan. So the council chair serves as very important representatives. For the constituents within their councils, but also as a representative of council discussions that take place. So we have Jack Chen as chair of CIAC. We also have Akiko Takenaka as chair of NEAC. We have Catherine Becker as chair of SAC, we have Richard Fox as the chair of SEAC. And we have Ethan - [pauses] sorry Ethan Segal as the chair of the Council of Conferences.

26:39

We also have representatives from publication boards and committees on our Board of Directors. So that includes representatives from the finance committee, from the program committee, the editorial board, and the J.S. editorial board. So just really briefly, the finance committee is a committee that consists of the vice presidents the Executive Director, and other members that are consistent, are appointed typically by the Board of Directors and they convene several times a year to discuss issues related to finances, but also investments and endowments and grants, etc. So they're very important part of the functioning of the AAS. Program committee handles the call for proposals every year. And they vet those proposals. And so you have representatives from different regional councils that actually work on the program committee to do that. The editorial board is headed by Bill Tsutsui. I'm sorry, the program committee is headed by this year Brian Hatcher. The finance committee is headed by Tom Rawski. And the editorial board is chaired by Bill Tsutsui. And so the editorial board handles all of the book publication series for the Association and they've been very active recently. And then of course, Vinayak Chaturvedi is the editor of the Journal for Asian Studies and they all serve on the board.

28:02

So this is kind of the heart of our presentation today is talking about elections. So this is where we want people to understand how to play a role in, in, in governance in the Association and this is via the elections. So each year the elections take place in the fall, and the election served to select the incoming vice president. And of course last year, the incoming vice president was Hy Luong this year. It's one of two South Asian candidates who have been already posted on our Association for Asian Studies web portal. And the whoever's nominated for vice president will, it will rotate so for example, this coming year, it's a representative of SAC next year will be a representative of another Regional Council. So it always kind of, it rotates in that particular way to make sure we have equal representation. You also will have three representatives who are

elected each for one of the area councils and then one representative elected each for three of regional councils and those go in rotation but because we have nine of those, and they change every year in terms of who is up for election, the election provides an opportunity of course for members to approve any proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws. So if we have any wording changes or we have something new that we want to add, the membership must weigh in, in order for that change to officially take place. Okay, the nomination process is an important aspect of, of governance. So each year, the respective councils of the Association will put forth on nominations for these offices that I outlined previously, the vice presidents and then representatives for each of the councils. It's important to note that while the Councils themselves can be in and discuss who they'd like to nominate that the membership can submit nominations to council chairs. So for example, if your area of research is India, then you would want to maybe think about somebody, oh, this person will be great as a representative, either contact the council chair directly and discuss with them or you can actually officially nominate somebody by- through petition. And so it's important to note that in order to do that you have to have 1% of the Association for Asian Studies membership representatives, that's about 60 members in your petition, or signatures of those individuals in your petition in order to make this a formal nomination that will be accepted. So there are a couple of ways to do that right contact your council representative and discuss with them say, you know, kind of put that in their ear or actually take initiative and put forth nomination yourself. So those are important things to note. So this is also important to note who is worthy of a nomination right. So you know, you I've always wondered how does somebody get nominated. And it's very important to note that people who are elected that should represent diversity in the Association ideally. So this includes gender diversity. This also includes racial diversity. It includes sexual identity, it includes like all the myriad, you know, important ways. It means to be a human being, we want to have a firm representation, and also includes rank, position, institution, like we can't have everybody from UCLA, for example, we have to make sure that there is a really good broad representation across the membership. So beyond trying to make sure that there's a balanced representation, we also have to make sure that those who are nominated truly understand what it means to be a member of the board and so they need to understand I guess three things, you know. I've been thinking about quite a bit lately and that includes a duty of care, duty of loyalty, and duty of obedience. And it sounds really terrible. It sounds like ah, obedience. Ah, you know, the thing that most academics hate the most is being told what to do, right? So that's not what I mean by obedience. When I'm talking about things duty of care, I'm talking about duty of care means preparation. So when you're a member of the board, you're always presented with a number of different things, you're presented with spreadsheets, you know, that tell you what the financial status of the Association is, or where we should make a decision on how we should spend our money, the board has to weigh in to this. So it's very, very important for board members to prepare for meetings by reviewing materials that are presented to them and to bring these materials to the meetings to understand these materials. And if they don't, to ask questions that allow them to fully understand what they've been presented with. So this is what I call the duty of care. I mean, it's very important that people do this. And I know it's hard to know, for example, I don't know if somebody would be able to actually do this. But we all know like we work with colleagues on a regular basis, or we've worked with people that we know. And we're

like, man, this person is really prepared this person is takes us really seriously. This person would be a great representative for this particular counsel or would be a great nominee for vice president. So these are things that we would consider in determining who can be nominated. Another thing is, I think duty of loyalty is another one that I had mentioned before. And so that's really about confidentiality and confidentiality in this case means that discussions take place without worrying about, you know, kind of pre ready information being kind of sent out into the world. In other words, it provides kind of a freedom and a comfort to actually engage together as a board. But it doesn't mean to not tell people about what decisions that we're making. So that's a big difference there. And another aspect of that is, you know, obedience to the laws and the bylaws make sure that we are complicit make sure that we comply to the things that help keep us running that we abide by our constitution and bylaws and also by local laws governing nonprofit organizations and also by the ethics you know, that that we should, that we should abide by as academics and people who engage in the learned society. So part of that is keeping informed about the organization understanding the organization's history, if you don't, ask the questions, read. These things are all very important in order to actively participate in this community of the Association for Asian Studies. And another aspect of this as appropriate use personal and professional contacts, expertise, etc, to benefit the organization so that that's there's a fine line there. You don't want to compromise ethics or trespassing on relationships. But the reason why we have board members from different institutions and different walks of life, and who have different personal experience is so that we can benefit from that broad network that people will bring to the fore. And another thing is respect the authority of the chief executive officer who is the Executive Director and staff. This is important, because the first thing the board needs to always be aware of is, you know, do we have the money to do this particular initiative? Are we able do we have the staff to be able to accomplish the goals that we put for so those are very important questions that always board members should be cognizant of when they're discussing. They need to be considered and understanding that there are people in a very small group of people who actually would be charged with making certain decisions move forward.

35:58

So the nominating committee convenes every year, usually at the time of the annual conference, so the nominating committee is comprised of the Vice President, the President, the past president and the past past presidents and the representative of the council, who is nominating the vice presidential candidate. And also the Executive Director joins this particular meeting. So basically, the council's will present the nominees usually a list of seven nominees for area councils, and three, two to three for the council conferences with a list of alternatives. So sometimes people say, "oh, I can't I'm up for tenure this year," or "I'm chairing my department. I'm really sorry, I can't run this year, maybe in the future." So we have these alternatives that we can then say, "Oh, thank you very much for your consideration" and we move on to the person who would be a good alternate for that individual. So we look through these different nominations just to make sure that just in case somebody knows this person and they will be able to verify, "Oh, yes, this person will be a great member of the board" and more times than not people agree that those who are nominated would be great. So the election

process goes something like this. The nomination committee confirms the nominees with the Executive Director at least 120 days prior to the election beginning, then the nominees are presented. Well, the next step actually, that's not included here is the Executive Director has to call people or to email them, and make sure you know, you've been nominated for this particular position, are you willing to run? and so that's the purpose of the alternates on that list. And then once the nominees are confirmed, they're presented to the members and we've done that on our website. So you can, when you go to our homepage, you'll see at the bottom there's a square that says, 'oh, see who is up for election this year,' and you can read through their biographies and, and make an informed decision. So each member in good standing has an electronic ballot, and each member in good standing has voting rights. So it's something to note is that our election date always coincides with the US national election debate. No sorry, date, which is what the first Tuesday in November. So we do that so people will remember not to make people do double duty on voting. And you can vote before that date. By the way, that's just the deadline. When you're voting as well, you're able to write in your own candidate, but I think it's way more effective to in advance during the nomination process to contact your council chair or to, to go through the process of nominating somebody so that they actually appear on the ballot in advance. That's the goal because if you just put somebody you know or yourself up on the ballot, then usually there's just one vote that you'll have. So again, keep that in mind as we move past election season and look towards nominations beginning sometime in January or February of next year. So it's important to note as well, that three persons receiving the highest number of votes for each area council are elected to that Council for a three year term. And for the Council of conferences, the person who gets the most vote will become the representative, and also the vice president as well, the person who gets the most votes will become representative. So, sorry, I'm going to move past this quickly.

39:26

Okay. So I want to briefly introduce you as well to another aspect of our governance before we take questions. So there are other committees on our website that we call committees, and so I wanted to kind of explain to you what those are. So there are two kind of subgroups or collectives that are part of our governance in a way. At least they're listed on our website. So one of these is committees. So the Secretariat, the thing that distinguishes committees and I'll show you where they are on our website. They're actually under governance and then committees, you can see that here, and that there are several different kinds of committees, some are multi council committees, such as the Council on East Asian Libraries or the Committee on Teaching about Asia. And then they're also very specifically council related committees such as Committee on Korean Studies, or the Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation. And a lot of these committees will actually have their own book prizes or translation prizes. They also have a strong structure and governance. So what's important to remember about these committees is they have to be accepted by the Board of Directors, as an AAS committee, they must be composed of AAS members. So this allows people to be active in their counsel, but also more specifically focused on their area of study like Korea instead of just Northeast Asia. If that makes any sense. A lot of the committee's will also convene at the AAS annual meeting in meetings in conjunction as a meeting in conjunction sorry, and they have they

tend to have their own way bylaws and governance, and they file annual reports with the AAS Secretariat, it's also important to note that the AAS Secretariat administers the finances for the committee's so this allows for them to benefit from our nonprofit tax status. Another type of group are the affiliates. So the affiliates are different. They don't function like committees, they really are external to the Association for Asian Studies, but it's kind of a mutual relationship. So if somebody is an affiliate of the Association for Asian Studies, it basically means that we can put their name on our website with a link to their website and to their information. And they would also put a link to AAS on their website. So it's kind of about kind of a friendship but a kind of a distant in some ways friendship and that we don't we're not intimately involved, for example, in the running of their, of the affiliates. We don't handle their finances in any way. Um, and but one of the things that we do ask is that affiliates have 40% AAS membership in order to kind of really benefit mutually from, again, this relationship, but these, even though they're kind of external to the Association for Asian Studies, affiliates must be accepted by the Board of Directors. And the way that you do that is you write a proposal about, you know, why did you want to be an affiliate? What are your goals as an organization and whatnot. So the best way to kind of say, oh, I, I, whether we could be a committee or an affiliate is just to reach out to me, and my information is on the AAS website, and I can walk you through the process, and then we can determine what might be most appropriate for your organization. Um, last but not least, we want you to get involved. So one of the things that a lot of people are very good at doing is writing us and saying, I think the AAS should create a statement about this or AAS should be publicly talking about this. And so I know that many of you have noticed over recent months that we've become a lot more involved in world events, and I think that's where we should be and the board definitely agrees with that. So our board's very supportive of us being of this kind of outreach. So for statements, for example, it's kind of a complicated process. But basically, if we decide we want to release the statements publicly about any issue that's pertinent to Asian studies or just the world around us, we first I might propose it, somebody else might propose it, and then the board must convene and discuss. And if there's going to be a statement, we have to shape that statement. So sometimes that means I might write a draft and then board members contribute or board members might write a draft and then contribute. So it's definitely a team effort. But it's something that takes time for us to look at, agree that this is how we want to present ourselves and then it will be released. So it's never an immediate process. Also nominate, you know, be a part of that. Participate in the election also provide us feedback. So these are ways that you can be really actively involved as a member members have a lot of autonomy but also have a lot of ways to contribute that hopefully, today's webinar will have helped you to at least understand what that can be. Maura is there anything else you wanted to add? Before we take questions?

44:14 Maura Cunningham

I think just to say, in terms of feedback, so as I said earlier, I oversee the social media for the Association for Asian Studies. And, you know, certainly giving feedback on social media is very common these days. And it's absolutely welcome. I would like to say that when you like tweet something at us, I'm the person who sees it. And I absolutely I always, always acknowledge the tweet and I always take a screenshot or copy it and forward it to the appropriate you know,

whether it's a staff member, a board member, or Hilary, but I can't necessarily give [gap in audio] if there if you have a question about something or if you would like to see the AAS take action on something in particular, you know, that's something that isn't a case where I have to then consult with Hilary with the board members. With the officers of the Association, so I know I think many of us, myself included, we're very accustomed to tweeting at businesses and getting, you know, immediate feedback or immediate action. And just like with statements, that's not always how AAS can work in the so- even in the social media sphere, but I said, I always acknowledge your tweets. So if you've tweeted something at us and you haven't gotten a response, that probably means that I'm not in the office that day or working at home as the case may be. And, you know, I'll get to it as soon as I possibly can. But I certainly don't ever want people to feel like we're not listening to you because we absolutely are.

45:49 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Okay, great. Thank you. Thank you for that. And there's some questions here that I might need your help with Maura. One of them I don't even know what a bitly link is. But yeah, thank you. Thank you, Paula, for that.

46:00 Maura Cunningham

Thank you, Paula, I will fix that.

46:03 Hilary Finchum-Sung

I mean, we mean by feedback, we want people to let us know when things aren't working or when they are too. Yeah.

46:09 Maura Cunningham

Yeah. So unfortunately, it seems that the link that you see on the PowerPoint, where it says learn more doesn't seem to be working, I apologize for that. I will try to fix it. But certainly if you go to our website, if you look at the professional tab professional developments tab, that is where the AAS Digital Dialogues page resides. And so you'll be able to get information about today's sessions, past sessions, future sessions, things like that.

46:36 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Yeah. And to let you know as well that the recording of this session will be up on that. On that page. That is the Digital Dialogues page. Under professional opportunities, right on the Association for Asian Studies website, so that will be up, pretty fairly soon, kind of working our way up from the bottom are the minutes of the AAS board directors available to members or to the public? To we have not- it hasn't been a part of common practice for the Association for Asian Studies to provide its minutes openly, but I think that this is a good part of good governance. And it's one of the things that, you know, in the process of kind of thinking about how we could be accessible to members, know what's being discussed and how it's being discussed. I think there are ways to provide that information. So again, it's something that we are always thinking about and thinking about how we could do it and how we could do it better. And so that's actually a very, very good question. So I'm gonna start from the top then I'll say

what happens in the event of a tie, so I've never experienced a tie in an election for the AAS, have you, Maura?

47:45 Maura Cunningham

A couple of years ago, we had one and it's a little complicated but basically, the the two people who thought this was for an Area Council, so I don't know what we would do if the vice president tied, that would. I don't know if that's ever happened before an Area Council, the two people who did tie I think they discussed, one agreed to start the first year and then the other came on to the Area Council the next year. But that meant that that Area Council only elected two people in the following election. So basically, if there is a tie, both people will get to serve, it's just that there's a little bit of a delay before the second person starts.

48:27 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Right. And there are processes that are outlined in the bylaws. And for one, I would have to review that before speaking incorrectly here, but it's one thing that we can clarify in the Q&A posting after this particular webinar is complete so that I make sure that I can answer accurately, but there are ways to handle it. And overall, these are processes that the one for the council's that Maura discussed right now. It's pretty, you know, that's, it's really about thinking of this position as a partnership and encouraging engagement, despite the fact that there's a tie for the vice presidential candidate. That's something that, again, is built into our processes. And then again, I'll clarify in writing just to make sure I don't say something incorrectly right now. So thank you for that question. Another question is do write-in nominees need to submit a CV? So it depends on what you mean by write-in, I guess you mean, for the election itself. When people are voting, they can actually write in a candidate, but they're usually no people do not submit their CVs. Because usually, typically, I'll be straightforward. During the election process, if somebody writes in the person that they think should be elected, usually, I've heard that one person is voting for that person. So again, a more effective way to nominate somebody would be to actually contact your Area Council chair and let them know I think you have you all considered this particular would you mind discussing if this person would be a good candidate, this is why I think this person would be a good candidate. So in many ways, you're partnering with your counsel and to bring this up and discuss this, but you could also go through the process of gathering a petition of 60 signatures and submit that as an official nomination, which again, would be considered by the Council and the nomination committee. And then that person say would actually appear. And in that case, that person's information, the CV, including the most recent publications, and their most recent kind of service, whatever they're doing at the university or outside of that would be included so people can make an informed decision. So that's- are students ever considered for leadership positions. So that's one thing that I don't want to reveal too much necessarily. Because, again, I believe that this is something that's important and many of our board members also believe that it's very important for equity and diversity. That people who that individuals who are students, graduate students, contingent faculty should be represented on the board or and on committees in order to make sure that we have strong representation across the board for all of our members who are engaged. So yes, that's something that I believe is important. A lot of learned societies have graduate students on their

boards. And I think that that's really a good part of good governance. So at the moment, no, but it doesn't mean that it wouldn't, it won't happen. So how long are the commitments for the elected positions?, so three years for people who are elected to councils. So the area councils if you're elected, for example, as a member, or representative of CIAC, would serve three years. And it's sort of been the general practice for chairs to serve one to two years because you kind of get your bearings your first year and then the council will elect their representative who would be chair who would serve on the Board of Directors. But overall part of best practices is having people on the board for more than one year. So again, that's something that is always kinda it's a little bit fluid right now for the AAS. And it's something that I think we should definitely work for.

52:10 Maura Cunningham

And Hillary.

52:11 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Oh, go ahead.

52:12 Maura Cunningham

Sorry, I just wanted to clarify when you say, like the council electing its chair, just to be clear, that's, that's something that the council determines. They talk to the different members they see like you who has a word who can work it into their, into their daily life who can manage the workload who can attend board meetings. So when you see when you as a member see the ballot this fall when we release them, which I think will be sometime in September, that's when members will get their ballots, probably. Yeah.

52:40 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Probably. Usually after Labor Day is when you're going to see the ballot. You see the candidates now though.

52:46 Maura Cunningham

Yeah, the candidates are posted on our website. But when you see the ballot, you're not necessarily you're not electing somebody for the chair of the committee. You're electing them as members of the Area Council. And then the council decides internally who will be the chair and serve on the Board of Directors.

53:02 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Yes, yeah. Great. Thank you. Thank you for that clarification Maura. So this is a question for you, actually, for blog announcements. So how do they do that Maura?

53:10 Maura Cunningham

So if you are a member in good standing of the Association for Asian Studies, which everyone watching this webinar is, you receive an email called the AsiaNow Digest on the last business day of every month. So for August, that will be next Monday, I think August 31st. And the AsiaNow digest, it includes a link to every single thing we've posted at the blog over the

previous 30 or 31 days. So there's no way to sign up at the moment for individual blog announcements, every time we post something, you do get a compilation at the end of every month. And also if you follow us on Facebook and or Twitter every single time I post something in the blog, it is linked to on those platforms. So you immediately see that we've published something.

53:55 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Yes. Okay. Thank you. Another question is does the AAS post an annual performance review so no, not at this time, but it doesn't mean that we won't. So I think that that's actually a really great part of best practices. It's something that allows members to really see what are some of the issues we've been discussing, as a board and how decisions are made. It's definitely a goal to work towards. We do have annual reports submitted by committees, for example, and also by councils. And part of, kind of working on how we can kind of better out provide outreach for our members and make sure that members are increasingly more and more aware of how we run. That's a really good way to do it. So yes, thank you for that. Thank you for that question. Again, we don't do it now. But it doesn't mean we won't, and I think we should. And I think that the board would agree it's just how we present the information is also always an interesting discussion that we would have as a board. Is there any way we can get a better sense of what nominate representatives actually do on a day to day basis? Well, I'll just answer that. The representatives like the chairs of the different councils are the people who serve on the area councils aren't most of the time faculty. So there are people right now who are struggling with teaching online and mentoring students and publishing and, and working within the tenure. Not always but working on the tenure track, or working as contingent faculty, or working, you know, some are retired members. So this is not a full time job to serve as a representative of a council. It's volunteer, it's not compensated. It is 100%, pro bono. And especially lately, our board members have been so busy, have been so engaged in trying to work out how we function as an Association in the world, the way it's changing rapidly around us and how we can actually further increase our reach, but also our service to members. So again, it's a lot of work. But a lot of people are surprised that we don't compensate. We can't really we're a nonprofit and people have day jobs. You know, this is a committee you think about it, I think it your institution or, or whatever. If you've worked on a board or if you've worked in an organization where you've served on a committee, it's kind of like that, but it's a lot more involved and it requires a really heavy responsibility for the membership. So you said that is a what are their concrete responsibilities if they're elected? So, again, that sort of depends on the council, for example, council members would be if you are a member of NEAC, for example, Northeast Asia Council, part of your responsibilities are vetting grant proposals. So there are a lot of Northeast Asia Council is one of our better funded councils because Korea Foundation and Japan US Friendship Commission support that particular Council. So there are a lot of grants available, but the members of that Council have to sit down and go through those applications and make a decision regarding who will receive what also they have the distinguished speakers bureau. So they have to work on preparing that and announcements about that are coming out soon. So, but for South Asia Council, that particular there, there really are no grants, for example, there should be and we hope to find some. So the level of responsibility is a little bit different. But

when the council's meet, they also discuss issues. For example, if there is an issue affecting South Asia, then that council will convene, now convene via zoom and talk about what they should do about it. And then usually, I'll get some sort of written documentation that says the South Asia council recommends that you know, the Board of Directors of the Association for Asian Studies takes this particular action and then we would discuss that so I think it's sort of context specific, but also, um, you know, any moment in time can be different. The vice president, who is elected really kind of works to get their bearings to understand the government structure of the Association. Really kind of gets an idea about the rules of running a meeting, we go by Robert's rules of law. So the President of the Association for a year serves as the chairman or the chairperson of the board. So they run the board meetings, they are responsible for keeping everybody on task and making sure that everything is working properly without running over time, and then also works very closely with the Executive Director on big ideas and picture that is then communicated openly with the board. So again, it depends on your role on the board. What it is that you do on a day to day basis. So how can we serve on the conference program review committee? I wish Robyn were here. We're a part of it. But most of the time what how this happens is because Robyn works more intimately with a program committee, but we do. Basically each Council, this rotates as well. So for example, when any given year this past year, we had to bring in some new members for CIAC who would actually serve as representatives of China, Inner Asia on the program committee, the council members, with their council chair will talk about, oh, this person will be great on the program committee, and then they then communicate with this person, are you willing to serve on the program committee? And if that person says, yes, that person's name is given to me, given to the Executive Director so that we can then fill that slot if somebody is rotating off of the program committee. So this is determined, again, by the area councils. And we have one more minute, is there an annual business meeting for members at the end? No, and we're, you know, there used to be it was like at 7am, or something, or 8am on a Saturday or I don't know, but I think that it's something that's very, very important. There's a way to, to incorporate this into the annual meeting. And we've actually been talking about this. I don't know in what format this would happen. But again, we recognize that having a business meeting, wherein members stand up and there's an open forum for discussion is very, very important, and it's one of the things that we would like to see happen. Yeah, thank you very much for participating Maura, would you like to close?

1:00:11 Maura Cunningham

Yeah, so I'll just say, in closing, if you're interested in serving or getting involved in the Association in any way, please reach out to us. Also reach out to us if you would like to propose a topic for a future AAS Digital Dialogue. We're trying to do two of these sessions every month. And we will be announcing September and October sessions very shortly. All of that will be posted on our website, and you'll receive emails about it. But if you have an idea for something that you'd like us to address, please reach out to me. I'm always interested in hearing what those topics might be.

1:00:48 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Thank you all for taking the time to participate. And thank you for your great questions. The video will be posted fairly soon, and we will have the Q&A listed with answers to those questions online on our site, so thank you have a good rest of your day. Thank you so much.

1:01:05 Maura Cunningham

Bye.

1:01:06 Hilary Finchum-Sung

Bye.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

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