

Proposal for a New Standing Board Committee: The Editorial Committee

Purpose: Selection of a shortlist of editor candidates for appointment by the Board and periodic review of the board appointed editors of the *Journal of Finance*, and advisory role on important editorial issues as they arise such as replication or other general editorial policy questions.

Composition: Three current board members (one each from each cohort, three year terms), three non-board members with non-concurrent three year terms. In addition, a fourth Board member, the AFA President, will serve as chair.

Background

The Board of Directors of the AFA, at the June 2015 meeting, expressed the opinion that there should be a periodic review of the Editors of the *Journal of Finance*. This committee is intended to fulfill that requirement. Because the tasks are complementary, it also makes sense to assign the role of selecting new editors to the Committee, rather than appoint an ad hoc committee on an as needed basis.

Mandate

The Committee is expected to conduct two formal reviews of the current editors, once midway through the Editor's term and again at the end of the term. These reviews will be presented to the Board of Directors and will be used to make informed decisions on editorial appointments. The first review, in particular, also provides the information necessary for the Board to determine whether or not to grant the Editor a second term, should he or she desire it. Another important function of both reviews is to provide useful feedback to the editors.

The Committee should seek anonymous input from outside parties. How the Committee fulfills this requirement is left for the Committee to decide, but it is encouraged to use the standard academic review as a model. For example, the committee should consider soliciting anonymized outside letters from associate editors, referees and authors.¹ An important constituency that is greatly affected by an editor's performance is young, successful, assistant professors. It is important that this group of scholars be included in the set of people who are solicited. The Committee could also use a survey to collect information, although it is important that any results of the survey are interpreted in the context of the Journal's extremely low acceptance rate.

The Committee will be responsible for recommending a replacement to the Board of Directors for an editor that has finished his or her term, or for any other vacancy that occurs. The Committee also serves as an advisory role for editorial policy issues

¹ For example, the committee could provide a list of scholars to an administrative assistant who would request that anonymous letters be sent to them. This assistant would pass these letters to the Committee who would write a report based on them. The editors would only see the report.

or for issues that arise where the Editor seeks advice. The Committee would not have any role to play in editorial appeals which are the responsibility of the Editor.

Election Procedure

In steady state, the executive committee chooses one of the newly elected directors to serve a three year term on the Editorial Committee. At the same time the Nominating Committee nominates three candidates for election to the Editorial Committee for a three-year term. The Board then votes and elects one person. Every year there will be three new members, the Chair (AFA President), a three-year appointment of a new Director, and a three-year appointment of a non-Director. There are no restrictions on membership for the non-Director (this could be former President, etc.).

This year (in the transition to steady state), the Executive Committee chooses three Board members for the Editorial Committee, one from each vintage. The Nominating Committee (which is meeting on the 5th of January) will be charged with producing three names for non-Directors. A slate of six candidates will be presented to the Board, and the Board can vote in June or before. The Executive Committee can then decide on how to allocate the terms, as in the interim, we will appoint one for one year, one for two years, and one for three years.

Should an outside member of the Editorial Committee be elected to the Board, this member will be designated as the three year Board appointment, and the Nominating Committee will nominate a replacement. The Executive Committee then decides which candidate will serve three years and which will serve one or two years.