



Civil Discourse Policy

Recommended Process to Utilize Civil Discourse as a Professional Organization in Considering a Position on Moral Controversies

- ❖ **Evaluate whether the moral controversy is relevant to the mission of the Academy**
 - **KEEP WAFP MISSION AHEAD OF ISSUE**
 - Use the context of the goals and strategies that are currently in place
 - Understand limitations of professional organizations to become involved in or advocates for moral controversies
 - Recognize different communities within the state
- ❖ **Provide a forum for views to be aired**
 - Purpose is to be open and transparent
 - Understand terms and establish a common vocabulary, one more likely to diffuse than heighten the emotional content that could cloud an effective discourse
 - Make the debate effective, not necessarily to completely assess the issue
 - “Seek first to understand, then to be understood” – Covey
- ❖ **When possible, ensure that views are canvassed within the organization**
 - Goal is for everyone to have an opportunity to express their views, or at least for all views to be heard
- ❖ **Place issue before deliberative body within the framework of chapter governance**
 - Respectful listening to understand first, then express viewpoints
 - Clarify and reinforce common goals, and shared interests
 - When differing views can be connected to a common interest, there may be room for compromise
 - Where views so diverge from the purpose or collective interests of the organization that they cannot, in any way, be brought “under the tent”, then neutrality may be the solution, rather than to disenfranchise a significant portion of the membership or threaten the integrity or mission of the organization
 - Exercise leadership responsibility to commit to defining a position that represent the collective interest and avoid a "winner and losers" outcome
 - Solution should not be 'what do we stand for?', but 'what can we agree upon within our organization?'
 - WAFP should encourage members to advocate as individuals for their own beliefs, with clear disclaimers when necessary.
- ❖ **Define and articulate the outcome**

- Ensure that it is communicated throughout the organization

Recommended by Legislative Committee – June 19, 2007