

Doctoral Education Committee Meeting Minutes, 2015 NCA Convention meeting

Attending: Nathan E. Stormer (Chair), Jeffrey T. Child (Vice-Chair), Kevin Barge, Carl Botan, Jordan Soliz, Craig Scott, Adrienne Kunkel, Mary Stuckey, Trevor Parry-Giles (NCA Office), Gary Kreps, Keith Berry, Sandra Faulkner, Olga Davis.

- I. Welcome and call to order – the meeting was called to order by Nathan Storm
- II. Reminder of the mission of DEC (Trevor). This is the entity that is committed to the interests and goals of doctoral education and maintaining doctoral education in the discipline.
- III. Personnel and DEC Nominations –
 - a. Four new names that will be put forward to the LA for approval. All of the names are not always approved for the committee. Usually the practice is the DEC is consulted, and the committee on committee usually ratifies those nominations. Sometimes the committee on committee steps in to increase the diversity.
 - b. Consider nominations for next year. We do need names. If people have names we can take those. Canvas and encourage people to consider. We want to encourage as much diversity as possible. Think along those lines. The person does not have to be at a PhD instruction but it is preferred. Are we looking for regional representation? Yes, we should try to do that too. We usually send forward four names from this group. As it goes up it can be added to or adapted in consultation with the committee on committees.
 - i. Send any possible names to Trevor and Jeff for a record.
- IV. Elect the new vice-chair. The vice-chair takes the minutes. The chair runs this meeting and the open meeting.
 - a. Are any of the individual interested in the newly appointed group
 - b. Sandra Faulkner was nominated and approved to be the new vice-chair elect.
- V. Miller Dissertation Award
 - a. Report from Craig Scott – We had a record number of submissions – 60 dissertations submitted. This is partly a matter of the calendar change this year. This meant for a lot of reviewing.
 - i. Each reviewer reviewed anywhere from 18-24 dissertations.
 - ii. One issue we had was the wording of the announcement to avoid confusion and clarification.
 1. We really need 10 people on this. One to oversee and nine to do the reviewing in the three areas (qual, quant, and rhetorical).
 2. Trevor said that in the history the number of people had been set at 6. We just approved that the history will be 10.
 3. One of the other issues was what it means to be completed. Some people felt like it is when the committee said it was done. Others said when you filed it. Yet others said when graduate. Craig said that any of those could be considerations and we might want to

clarify in the call to have completed it or we want the flexibility in the window.

- a. Perhaps use the date that the defense documents (on the cover page) were signed by the committee for final approval of the dissertation.
 - b. People didn't think the graduate date or when the committee got it should be used.
 - c. Require the signature page be sent in the materials that would only go to the chair of the committee for verification and not part of the anonymous materials for review.
- iii. Issue about multi-method dissertations. They do not work well with our three categories. I can see how someone doing this might be disadvantaged. In terms of what we had this year. There were mixed methods within qualitative, some that were qualitative and quantitative, but we sent it out in the area where the dominant method was apparent. This is something to be aware of and keep in mind going forward
- iv. What do we do with if the top ones in one area are far superior to the top ones in other areas?
1. Trevor discussed we could do a second round of reviews on the top two from each of the three areas and make decisions.
- v. Trevor and Craig discussed that perhaps people are nominating everyone rather than the best ones.
1. Are links to the dissertations provided on the NCA website? Seeing them all might help nominators evaluate the quality of their students and past winners.
 2. There was some discussion about people not wanting their dissertations on the website as they work with it for publication (an embargo for a few years).
- vi. Nathan discussed the recommendations from the graduate directors chairs meeting previous to this one about ways that we might change the process for the Miller Award to make it easier to manage.
1. This is an award selection committee. There is an assumption that people on this committee have good broad training across the discipline and can read the materials across areas of focus.
 2. Autoethnography is a good example of sometimes people do not know how to review things appropriately. We have to make sure if we broaden this, we have appropriate people to review the submissions effectively.
 3. We might adapt Jordan's recommendation of requiring that advisors who submit be willing to review dissertations the following year as a requirement for submitting a nomination.
 4. Craig has suggested that not having 3 reviewers in each and that we can have a better distribution of workload with more possible reviewers based off of the number of submissions. We will have years where we have lopsided submissions in one area versus another.

- a. Trevor feels there is some good latitude of how we can approach this.
 - b. Getting approvals for slight adaptations with leadership is not difficult and Trevor can seek that.
- 5. There was a recommendation to go from a pool of 10 to 20 to increase the reviewers.
 - a. Trevor wants to see how the 10 will work first before considering more reviewers.
 - b. He thinks the calendar time frame for this last submission might have impacted the larger submission pool.
- 6. Until two or three years ago the award evaluation process was not anonymous. The minute it was anonymized, the biases with who was selected as the winners went away. That was a great change.
- 7. Are there large submissions in a content area that come through?
 - a. There are competing dissertation award in some concentration areas perhaps than submitting to here.
 - b. Award have been scattered throughout all of the concentration areas.
- vii. Summary: People want to have people who nominate also be willing to review the following year. Stick with 10 reviewers this year and evaluate process and revisit the procedure.
- viii. Miller Review Committee:
 - 1. Who wants to be the chair? Nathan will chair the Miller Award submissions this year.
 - 2. Who wants to review? Keith Berry will review. Gary Kreps will review. Olga Davis will review. Mary Stuckey will be willing to review and find other rhetoricians to review.
 - a. Olga asked if we could have reviewers in the backstage who have expertise in multimethod submissions.
 - b. If we find them they can function in two ways.
 - c. Gary said he has multimethod expertise.

VI. Doctoral Honors Seminar Discussion

- a. The seminar is usually the 3rd week of July.
- b. The three areas of focus for the seminar have to be broad enough that it covers a good range of issues and perspectives within each one (rhetoric, mass media, and social science is the third area for submissions).
- c. NCA provides 20k in support to the institution who hosts it. The institution needs to get usually a 20k match in funds to make it happen.
- d. There was some discussion about sometimes the narrowness of selecting a specific area of focus and it's a delicate balance. Fewer students will apply if you have more refined categories.
- e. Encourage people to think about it and talk to colleagues.
- f. Jordan asked if NCA could get some data from previous institutions about reputation and impact of hosting the NCA doc honors seminar to help make an

argument for return on investment for programs who might consider doing it down the road.

- g. We have just one program at this point who expressed interest this next year.

VII. Report on the doctoral program guide.

- a. We are expanding it to include other programs.
- b. We update in annually.
- c. Please keep your program websites up to date. That's your front door to recruitment. We use that for updating.
 - i. Any new rankings or studies will be included in the updates.
 - ii. We added the world university rankings the last year.
 - iii. We monitor who leaves and comes as faculty.
 - iv. We have had some changes in areas of specializations.
 - v. It is the second page most visited beyond convention stuff that people visit.

VIII. Doctoral Chairs and DGS Forum Report

- a. Talked about the Miller dissertation awards
- b. We discussed different types of data that NCA collects or that people would want NCA to collect.
 - i. The job report that looks at all of the postings on the NCA job board and CRTNET. This report is a useful way to see how many jobs are available.
 - 1. We have had no downturn in job ads and postings when other disciplines have experienced downturns.
 - 2. We trace out primary versus secondary areas of interest.
 - ii. People wanted data about:
 - 1. Department growth and replacements for faculty lines.
 - 2. Numbers and amounts for assistantships.
 - 3. What kinds of CVs do graduating PhDs have when they finish.
 - 4. Jordan added that we might look at the types of TA/RA are provided and what training RAs might get for grants if they are being brought in this way.

IX. New Business

- a. Thanking the outgoing members on the DEC

X. Adjournment (12:10 pm)