

IV. Distinguished Scholar Award

A. Nomination and Selection Process

The awards are for a distinguished “career.” Career is operationally defined as a person who has at least twenty complete years of scholarly contributions since their Ph.D. was awarded. This keeps the membership limited to scholars showing a long-term commitment but does not limit the awardees only to those of a particular age. These awards should, however, be considered “select”— only the people who we would present to others to showcase the profession. There are many active scholars in the discipline, but the recipients of this award should be considered the “cream of the crop.” Breadth, in the selection process, should be considered, but it should not in any way override the quality considerations. One award each year may be posthumous.

The Executive Director of NCA will send out an open call for nominations each year. Nominations can be made by any current NCA member. Self-nominations will not be considered.

Nominations of living scholars must include the following:

- A cover letter indicating who is making the nomination;
- *CV* of the person being nominated;
- Separate from the cover letter, a brief statement, not to exceed one page, in which the nominator contextualizes the nominee’s record as presented in the *CV*. The brief statement should be unsigned and should not reveal the identity of the nominator. The purpose is to provide guidance to the voting Distinguished Scholars whose specialty areas may be removed from the nominee’s and who may wish assistance in understanding the *CV*. The statements will be distributed to the voting Distinguished Scholars along with the nominee’s *CV*. If the same person is nominated by multiple members, only one statement will be distributed to the voting Distinguished Scholars. In such a case, the Executive Director will select the statement to be distributed. Statements that exceed one page will be returned for editing.

A persuasive letter of nomination can be substituted for a *CV* in cases of posthumous nominations.

No letters of reference or third-party endorsements of nominations will be accepted.

Nominations must be received at nominations@natcom.org by April 1.

After nominations have been submitted, the statements and *CVs* of nominees will be sent to all Distinguished Scholars with a ballot asking each voter to rank order only those nominees they think will qualify for Distinguished Scholar.

Voting

For a nominee to be chosen as a Distinguished Scholar:

1. At least two-thirds of the living Distinguished Scholars must vote. Any retired Distinguished Scholar may elect to withdraw from further voting without affecting this requirement;
2. The ballot will allow those voting to select nominees in rank order. The voter may vote for, in rank order, up to one half of the total nominees. In the case of an odd number of nominees, the number of ranks will round up. For example, if there are 8 nominees, the voter may rank up to 4 nominees. If there are 9 nominees, the voter may rank up to 5;
3. A nominee who is not ranked by at least 50% of those voting will be dropped from further consideration;
4. The remaining nominees will have their ranks tallied. Nominees will get points based on each rank. For example, if the voters have been asked to rank up to three nominees, a first-place rank will count three points, each second place rank will count two points, and each third place rank will count one point. The number of points for each rank will vary depending on the number of nominees and rankings. The ones with the highest totals will be selected as Distinguished Scholars;
5. If there is a tie, the tie will be broken in the following manner. The person receiving more first place ranks will be chosen. If there is no difference, the person receiving more second place ranks will be chosen. If these are the same, the persons have precisely identical scores and the tie will require a run-off ballot, which will be administered by the Executive Director of NCA.

Ballots must be returned to the NCA National Office by second Friday in May.

Normally, no more than five awards will be given in any year. However, if a deceased nominee is among the top five in the rankings, then an additional award may be made, provided that the sixth-ranked nominee is ranked by enough Distinguished Scholars to qualify.

Reporting

The resulting nominations will be forwarded to the NCA Executive Committee for endorsement.

Following the voting by the Distinguished Scholars, the Executive Director will provide a report to all Distinguished Scholars, the purpose of which is to track inclusion of gender and ethnicity. The report should indicate the number of nominees of each gender and each ethnicity category who were (a) elected, (b) ranked but not elected, and (c) eliminated for failure to be ranked by enough

Distinguished Scholars. The report should not include any of the above data when doing so would identify a specific nominee (e.g., only one person of a certain gender or ethnicity falling in category (b) or (c)). This information report should be provided only to the Distinguished Scholars. Individual Distinguished Scholars may choose to use this information to assess the possible impact of their rankings on gender and ethnic diversity among the Distinguished Scholars, and also to have a fuller understanding of the final placement of candidates by gender and ethnicity than is revealed by the knowledge only that a nominee was or was not elected.