



August 10, 2022 | Volume 12, Issue 8

In This Issue: [A Letter from the First Vice President](#) | [Enhance Your Convention with a Short Course](#) | [Register for a Preconference Today](#) | [Convention Webinar Series](#) | [Early Bird Hotel Reservation Deadline: August 15](#) | [NCA Student Caucus Travel Grant](#) | [Create Your Convention Schedule](#) | [Department Events](#)

A Letter from the First Vice President

I'm going to take the opportunity afforded me in this newsletter to highlight opportunities to participate virtually in this year's NCA Annual Convention. While we are putting together both scholarly and social events for the Annual Convention that you will not want to miss, I know that some of you will be unable to attend in person but still want to be part of the discussions that occur.

To begin, for the first time, there will be six theme-based, online sessions held in the weeks leading up to the Annual Convention. The primary goal of these webinars is to provide engagement opportunities with leading scholars who have shaped conversations related to the convention theme. More information on these sessions appears in this newsletter.

At the convention we will host nine hybrid (in-person sessions at the convention that are livestreamed to a virtual audience) sessions. Included in that lineup is a session that will spotlight the Supreme Court's deeply flawed 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson ("separate but equal") ruling through engagement with descendants of both original parties to that lawsuit as panelists. This discussion takes on even more weight now that Senator John Cornyn (TX) followed the SCOTUS' ruling on Roe v. Wade by tweeting his support for overturning "Brown v. Board of Education," the 1954 SCOTUS which essentially made "separate but equal" unconstitutional. All nine sessions are groundbreaking in their own ways.

Registration is required to view these sessions. For those who register for the in-person convention, access to the online and hybrid sessions are included. Those who cannot attend the convention in person can access these sessions by registering as a virtual attendee using the available link on the [Virtual Convention Registration](#) webpage. Virtual-only registration includes

access to all events described in this column, as well as access to any virtual business meetings. Registration is \$35 for NCA student members and \$45 for all other NCA members. My hope is that future conventions will have greater opportunities for virtual access than the 108th Annual Convention, but, for now, I hope you join us for these events. I appreciate the Executive Committee's financial support of these events.

--[Walid Afifi](#), NCA First Vice President, University of California, Santa Barbara

Enhance Your Convention with a Short Course

Short Courses are extended convention sessions that offer attendees a pedagogically driven experience. Short Courses may address research practices or methods, specific teaching areas, pedagogical techniques, or other specialized topics of interest to attendees. This year, 14 courses are offered Thursday-Saturday of the convention.

When you register for the convention, consider adding one or more Short Courses to your registration. Short Courses are \$10 for student members and \$20 for all other attendees. If you have already registered for the convention, you can still register online for a Short Course by logging into the NCA website, clicking the "my account" link at the top of the page, clicking the "purchases" tab, selecting the "events" section, clicking the "details" button next to your convention registration, selecting the "add session" button and then selecting the Short Course you wish to add to your registration.

For more information, including session descriptions, please visit [NCA Convention Central](#).

Register for a Preconference Today

The Preconferences series is a curation of intensive half or full-day sessions, held on Wednesday, November 16, to facilitate opportunities for thematically focused dialogue, debate, and discussion across interest groups.

This year's Preconferences anchor critical conversations in communication by centering advocacy and liberation as a lens through which communication scholarship can honor place and push through restrictive historical lenses. Preconference sessions titled "Honoring bell hooks' Place in Communication Studies: Love, Cultural Critique and Liberation" and "Water and Ways of Knowing the World" spotlight alternative forms of theorizing Communication for social change, recovering space for knowledge production that prioritizes social justice. The line-up also includes pedagogically focused sessions that challenge how we dominantly teach communication, sessions that seek to expand Communication in how it currently signifies a reductive and singular understanding of sex and gender, and sessions that engage arts-based and immersive methods as translatable opportunities for advocacy and praxis.

Preconferences enable NCA attendees to learn, grow, engage, network and heal. This year, with a focus on envisaging a discipline that honors PLACE. Attendees can register for a Preconference when registering for the convention. Preconferences are \$10 for students and \$20 for all other attendees. To view the full slate of sessions, please visit [NCA Convention Central](#).

--[Satveer Kaur-Gill](#), Postdoctoral Fellow, CARE, Massey University, Preconferences Co-planner, and [Jessica Wendorf-Muhammad](#), Florida State University, Preconferences Co-planner

Convention Webinar Series

In the weeks leading up to the Annual Convention, online sessions will be held that focus on the convention theme of "Honoring PLACE: People, Liberation, Advocacy, Community, and Environment." Convention registration is required to participate in these online sessions, and in-person and virtual registrants will have access to them included with your registration. Please visit the [Registration Information](#) webpage to learn more about the virtual and in-person registration options. All sessions will be held from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Central Time.

Beginning the series, Barbara Israel, University of Michigan, and Angela Reyes, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, will present "[The Role of Community in Community-Based Participatory Research](#)" on October 6. This session will discuss community-based participatory research (CBPR), especially the role of community within CBPR.

On October 13, Michael Yellow Bird, University of Manitoba, will discuss neurodecolonization from an Indigenous methods perspective in his session "[Decolonizing the Mind, Liberating the Soul](#)"

The following week, on October 20, Robert McRuer, George Washington University, will present "[Disability Art on Lockdown; or, Crip World-Making](#)." Building on McRuer's work, "Crip Times: Disability, Globalization, and Resistance," this session will examine art, culture, and disability justice.

On October 27 "[Borderland Reckonings: Haunted Spaces and Landscapes of Memory on the Bordered Frontier](#)" will be presented by Cordelia E. Barrera, Texas Tech University. In this presentation, Barrera draws from her recent book *The Haunted Borderlands*.

Molefi K. Asante, Temple University, will present "[Communicating Being Human Being: The Transformation of the Race Discourse](#)" on November 3. Asante will discuss the social transformation of an illusory concept that has penetrated domestic and international space since its beginning.

Closing out the series on November 11, Amber Johnson, Saint Louis University, will present "[If We Want to Heal, We Must Tell the Truth: Truth, Reconciliation and Racial Justice in the Midst of Ahistorical Narratives Part I](#)." Johnson will focus on the recent history of the disciplines racial climate leading up to #communicationswhite and other recent movements.

Please join us for what are sure to be interesting and enlightening conversations. Please visit [NCA Convention Central](#) to add these sessions and more to your convention schedule.

Early Bird Hotel Reservation Deadline: August 15

Hotel reservations are [now open](#). This year, there will be a discounted early bird hotel reservation rate until **August 15**. Hotel rooms will be available at the New Orleans Marriott and the Sheraton New Orleans. The hotels are directly across the street from each other but are not connected via a skybridge. There will be sessions held at both hotels; the exhibit hall and NCA registration area will be located in the New Orleans Marriott. For more information, including reservation links and travel resources, please visit the [Hotel and Travel Information](#) webpage.

NCA Student Caucus Travel Grants

In support of its commitment to promoting diversity within the Communication discipline, NCA offers a travel grant of up to \$300 for student members of NCA's caucuses to attend the Annual Convention. The grant amount depends on the number of applicants, all qualifying applicants will receive equal funding. Applicants must be student members of NCA, and a member of one of its nine caucuses. To learn more about the NCA Student Caucus Travel Grants, including application requirements, visit the [NCA Student Caucus Travel Grant](#) webpage.

Create Your Convention Schedule

Build your convention schedule by using "My Schedule" on [NCA Convention Central](#). Search the online program for your sessions, or for other sessions, by presenter, title, or keywords, and then add those sessions to your itinerary. "My Schedule" even allows you to add personal activities such as lunch meetings, interviews, or coffee meet-ups to your itinerary and to save a list of the exhibitors you want to remember to visit in the Exhibit Hall. Keep all of your sessions and events in one place! The [First Time Convention Attendee](#) webpage features several videos that go step-by-step through searching the online program and creating your personal schedule.

You can print your schedule or download it to your MS Outlook calendar. Just email your calendar to yourself, save the iCalendar file and then upload it to Outlook. Instructions are available on the "My Schedule" page. If you have any questions about these features, please contact the [NCA Convention Team](#).

Department Events

The NCA Annual Convention offers several opportunities to promote your department and celebrate its successes over the past year. NCA Department Members qualify for discounted registration for these department events.

- **[Advertising](#)**: Share your latest departmental news and achievements by advertising in the convention program. NCA is now accepting applications for its 108th Annual Convention print program. Advertisements and payment are due by **August 18**.
- **[Graduate School Open House](#)**: The Graduate School Open House is a great way for colleges and universities to interact with prospective graduate and doctoral students. The Open House will take place Thursday, November 17, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Every department that registers for the Graduate School Open House will be provided with a booth where faculty members and current students can speak with prospective students, as well as field general questions about admissions and their department. Due to the popularity of this event, space is sure to sell out, so register early!
- **[Job Fair](#)**: College and university departments that have open positions can reserve a booth to meet and interview individuals looking for their next career opportunity. Every department that registers for the Job Fair will be provided with a booth that allows them to showcase open positions and their college or university. The Job Fair will be held in conjunction with the NCA Career Center on Friday, November 18, 9:00 a.m.-noon. From 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., following a one-hour lunch break, employers may invite candidates back for an opportunity to speak one-on-one in their booth.
- **[Department Receptions](#)**: Department Receptions are a wonderful opportunity to bring together current and past colleagues. NCA offers meeting space for departments to host their own receptions. NCA will assign an event space, and then departments can work

directly with the catering manager to plan the perfect event. Registration for reception space will open in July.

- **Sponsorships:** Support the NCA Annual Convention and promote your department, college, or university. Sponsorships present a unique opportunity to connect with all attendees. NCA is open to new sponsorship ideas; each sponsorship is a collaboration.

Walid Afifi

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