

**APPROVED**

**NCA Executive Committee Meeting  
January 28-29, 2011 Minutes  
UMUC Conference Center  
Hyattsville, MD**

**Participating in all or part of the Meeting**

Lynn H. Turner, President; Richard West, First Vice President; Steven Beebe, Second Vice President; Dawn O. Braithwaite, Immediate Past President; Lynn M. Disbrow, Educational Policies Board Director; David Henry, Publications Board Director; Kristine Muñoz, Research Board Director; Ronald L. Jackson, Finance Board Director; Ronald Shields, Finance Board Member (non-voting); Tina Harris, Finance Board Member (non-voting); Nancy Kidd, Executive Director (non-voting)

**National Office Staff:** Betsy Wackernagel Bach, Associate Director for Research Initiatives; Mark Fernando, Senior Manager, Communications; Heather Franklin, Executive Assistant; Brad Mello, Associate Director for Educational Initiatives; Thomas Rhine, Interim Chief Financial Officer; Terry Wilson, Senior Manager, Information Technology

**1. Call to Order**

President Turner called the meeting to order at 1:17 PM Eastern time on Friday, January 28, 2011.

**2. Announcements, Updates & Reports and Consent Agenda**

Kidd explained that each year the EC is asked to sign a conflict of interest statement and distributed the forms for signature.

The consent agenda included the following items:

Approval of the September 24-25, 2010 EC Meeting Minutes  
Approval of the November 13, 2010 EC Meeting Minutes  
Approval of the December 13, 2010 EC Conference Call Minutes  
Approval of the October 22, 2010 LA Online Business Minutes  
Approval of the November 13-16, 2010 LA Meeting Minutes  
Approval of the updated NCA Three Year EC Meeting Calendar  
EPB Nominations for Ecroyd and Bacon Award Committees

President Turner asked if there were any requests for revision to the draft minutes, and none were made. There was some discussion about amending the retreat schedules for the future in a variety of ways, but ultimately the group decided not to make changes at this time. The National Office was asked to start including the convention dates on the three year calendar in the future. *A motion was made to approve the consent agenda. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

**3. CRTNET Transition**

At the September 2010 EC meeting a motion passed that the National Office should discontinue the management of CRTNET in 2011 to coincide with the rollout of the NCA web site. The National Office was then charged with thinking through how, to whom, and when we should announce and make the shift. Kidd reported that as the National Office team focused on developing a transition plan, several concerns arose about the advisability of this change. As such, the National Office

recommended that NCA continue to manage CRTNET, but with some revision of its content and structure.

The National Office proposal included the following provisions: There will be only one stream of email messages coming from CRTNET in the future, Announcements, Queries, and Discussions. Obituaries will move to the NCA Member News and Notes. Conferences and Calls will move to a new public discussion forum on NCA's web site. Position announcements will move into NCA's career center. Some substantial discounting and other related advantages for department members on the career center will be offered to mitigate the loss of free CRTNET posts.

The kinds of discussions that currently take place on Announcements, Queries, and Discussions are still best done using listerv technology since it has the lowest barrier to entry. Therefore, this component of CRTNET should retain its current form rather than moving to a different technology on our web site. The current policy of having open, unedited content will be maintained, but NCA will develop a list of guiding parameters we will ask posters to follow (e.g., germane to the discipline, civil).

*A motion was made to accept the recommendation of the National Office with the exception of including obituaries in the announcements, queries, and discussions section of CRTNET in addition to placing them in NCA Member News and Notes to ensure timely dissemination of that information. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **4. Funding Priorities/Cycle/Decision Making**

In June 2010 the EC had a discussion about identifying priorities for funding of external projects and events. The EC charged the Interboard with developing a plan that identifies our key annual funding priorities, funding cycle, and decision making process. In September 2010 the Interboard presented a draft plan. The details in the Interboard's proposal were suggestive and the National Office was charged with developing a more detailed proposal that aligns with what the Interboard developed conceptually.

Kidd described the details of the National Office's proposal. NCA funds projects and events that will enhance the discipline of communication. While there are many funding outlets for communication scholars to seek support for academic disciplinary research, NCA is uniquely positioned to support work that is focused on the discipline itself. All funded activities should align with the goals of NCA's strategic plan and should have widespread impact.

All funding requests will be reviewed annually so that proposals can be viewed in comparative perspective. Funding opportunities will be advertised to the membership to ensure broad awareness. Funding for all projects and events will be contingent upon agreement by the PI to perform an assessment of the activity that will ultimately help NCA to make thoughtful decisions about future funding priorities.

A funding committee will be formed that is composed of the two Associate Directors, the Second Vice President, the second year Finance Board representative, and the Immediate Past President. This group will meet each fall to review proposals. The Associate Directors will prescreen submissions and bring those proposals to the full committee that are deemed potentially fundable. The Associate Directors, in consultation with the Executive Director, will also have the authority to discuss funding ideas with potential grantees and provide guidance about whether the ideas fit

within the parameters of our RFP. All funding requests will initially go through the funding committee.

To start, the funding committee will receive a pool of \$25,000 annually to distribute for projects and events that advance the discipline in amounts no greater than \$5,000. Every three years the Executive Committee will reevaluate whether to continue funding this pool and, if so, for what amount. The decisions of the funding committee for one time projects that are less than \$5,000 are final and do not require further approval by other bodies.

The funding committee also reviews requests for one time projects that exceed \$5,000 and decides whether to recommend that the EC decide to fund those requests. In order to make a positive funding request to the EC, the funding committee must agree to allocate the first \$5,000 of the request from its \$25,000 pool. The Finance Board then reviews the request to ensure that there are sufficient funds available if the EC deems the activities meritorious.

NCA will not approve any funding requests for longer than three years at a time. All requests for multi-year funding will also begin with the funding committee and then move through the Finance Board to the Executive Committee for review. Requests for multi-year funding, as well as extension of the \$25,000 pool, will only be reviewed every three years starting in 2012.

*A motion was made to accept the National Office proposal for managing funding requests. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

*A motion was made to approve funding for FY11-12 of \$25,000 for the RFP to advance the discipline, \$10,000 for the 2012 Hope Conference, and \$14,500 for the 2012 Doctoral Honors Seminar. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

The new funding review committee will begin its work with review of proposals from the FY2010-11 RFP this spring.

**Meeting recessed at 3:18 PM**  
**Meeting reconvened at 3:46 PM**

## **5. Strategic Discussion: Internationalization**

At the June 2010 EC meeting the group began briefly to discuss ways of expanding our international reach. This discussion was introduced as an opportunity to elaborate on that conversation and think about whether this should be a key area of focus for the association at the moment and, if so, to what ends and in what ways.

Several reasons for considering expanding our reach were articulated by members of the EC including generating conversation with international communication associations to foster collaboration, encouraging a broader potential pool of NCA members who could benefit from our resources, allowing for additional support for our international graduate students who are in the U.S., and maintaining an appropriate level of international contribution to our published scholarship to ensure diversity of perspectives.

The EC asked President Turner to send a letter to the unit heads asking them about the extent to which their activities and active memberships are currently international and whether they have

thoughts about whether and how the association as a whole should enhance its commitment to international work and participation.

## **6. Unit Structures Task Force Update**

In February 2009 a task force was created to examine the current NCA member unit structure and the interconnection with the annual convention and organizational governance. With encouragement of the EC, the ideas of the task force was reported to the LA in November 2010 for discussion, and the task force has been revising its proposal in light of feedback from the LA. Task force chairperson Lynn Disbrow reported that the group proposes to take the next steps described below, and the EC supported that approach. In addition, it was reported that Michelle Randall will take Brad Mello's place on the committee now that the work is turning toward more detailed issues related to convention planning.

Next steps include: further elucidating the rank-ordered member affiliation section of the proposal, including a clear explanation of the ramifications of unit dissolution; work toward formalization of this portion of the proposal in order to make some tangible progress on unit structures; develop a more refined and somewhat simplified convention track structure as well as alternative convention programming structures; and incorporate those LA members who expresses interested in working with the task force and possibly seek other individuals who may be willing to work on either the member affiliation or convention portions of the proposal.

## **7. Dues Increase**

Finance Board Director Jackson asked to add this item to the agenda. He told the EC that the Finance Board has agreed to propose a modest dues increase at the Legislative Assembly meeting in November provided that we can make a compelling case for new and improved member services. After careful analysis of the data, the group is tentatively suggesting a \$15 increase for regular membership and a \$50 increase for departmental membership with no increases in other categories. Jackson requested that the other Boards and the National Office make a case to the Finance Board for the value of increased membership dues before a final decision will be made to move forward with this proposal.

**Meeting recessed at 5:09 PM, Eastern Time on January 28, 2011.**

**Meeting reconvened at 8:43 AM, Eastern Time on January 29, 2011.**

## **8. Free Speech Yearbook**

In June 2010 the EC decided to dissolve the NCA non-serial publication program, but agreed to consider publishing a few items in the future. In September the EC discussed the possibility of continuing to publish Free Speech Yearbook. A decision was made to continue publishing the Yearbook through Volume 46. Prior to subsequent renewal, the Publications Board and then the EC were asked to review evidence of quality and impact of the scholarship provided by the Freedom of Expression Division.

David Henry reported to the EC that, based on the requested report from the Freedom of Expression Division, the Publications Board recommends continued publication through the tenure of the next editor. At that time there will be further review. *A motion was made to accept the Publications Board's recommendation to continue publishing Free Speech Yearbook through the term of the next editor's tenure. Seconded. Motion carried with six for and one abstention.*

## **9. Publications Board Member Appointment**

David Henry requested that an item be added to the agenda regarding an appointment to the Publications Board. President Turner added the item to the agenda. Henry informed the group that after one year on the board Patricia Kearney had to resign her position. Paul Schrodt has been recommended to replace Professor Kearney for the duration of her term. According to our constitution, approval of this replacement must be made by the officers of the association. A motion was made to accept the recommendation of Paul Schrodt to replace Patricia Kearney on the Publications Board. Motion carried unanimously among the officers.

## **10. Strategic Discussion: NCA Awards**

Kidd provided background to this issue indicating that the association currently offers twenty-four association-wide awards for which the vast majority have endowed funds. These have been set up one at a time over a period of over forty years without a clear and systematic plan for expansion and management of the whole package. As such, the National Office asked for permission to streamline these awards and enhance our management practices accordingly.

The Executive Committee endorsed this project and encouraged the pursuit of information regarding the historical inception of each of the awards. In the event that some information is missing, the group will discuss how best to identify trustee proxies.

**Meeting recessed at 10:00 AM**  
**Meeting reconvened at 10:15 AM**

## **11. Strategic Discussion: Policy for Convention Controversies**

Turner introduced this discussion by reminding the EC that NCA is increasingly facing concern from some members about our convention sites for a variety of reasons. The risk of our convention success being derailed by a member-driven effort is serious and consequential. At the same time, we want to be as responsive as possible to our members' interests. Now that we are between conventions and not facing an imminent specific challenge, it seems a good time to take a step back and think about whether we want to develop general policy for handling these situations that could then be tailored as necessary to the specifics of a given site.

There was discussion about this issue including which elements of a situation would be unchanged from year-to-year regardless of the particular substantive issues at hand and which issues would be tied to a particular context. The group agreed that, regardless of the particular context, NCA should not cancel or move its convention. Other issues will need to be addressed on an ad hoc basis as they arise.

A motion was made to honor all contractual obligations regarding our convention. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The group agreed that this decision should be disseminated to the membership through a document on our web site that explains the logic behind the decision as well as the process and criteria we use for making thoughtful choices about our convention sites in the first place.

The National Office was also charged with keeping a repository of materials we have created to manage these situations starting with the 2010 labor situation in San Francisco.

## **12. Strategic Discussion: NCA Archives Protocol**

Kidd reminded the EC that we have a formal written agreement between NCA and the Marriott library at the University of Utah that has been in place since 1985 for archival services. In recent years there has not been a coordinated effort to send materials to the archives, and there has not been a recent assessment of archival procedures. The National Office is in the process of making minor updates to the agreement with Utah to reflect changes in technology and the like, and is also developing formal procedures regarding information to be archived and circulation of archival material. The goal is to begin doing this collection work in the coming year and to reinvigorate our archives in terms of a new infusion of information as well as organization of existing materials in time for our centennial celebration.

The National Office staff shared with the EC the list of items that are scheduled for collection each year and asked the EC to provide feedback on those items. In addition, the National Office staff explained some of the issues surrounding circulation protocol related to sensitive issues and got feedback from the EC regarding their preferences in this regard to the degree we have policy flexibility within the law. EC members were also asked to contact the National Office if they have documents that might be appropriate for the archive.

**Meeting recessed at 11:42 AM**  
**Meeting reconvened at 12:15 PM**

### **13. Web Site Update**

National Office staff provided the EC with an overview of development of the new web site to date. First, the EC was shown a draft of the new visual design. The fundamental goal was to make the site not only aesthetically pleasing but also to allow for easy navigation of content. The National Office collected feedback on the draft design from a variety of different kinds of potential site users, and that feedback was incorporated into the design shown to the EC. The EC was positive in its response. A few constructive suggestions were made which the National Office will address in the next round of revision with the web site designer.

The EC also talked about the navigation structure for the site, and Kidd raised a few questions for consideration that had been left unresolved during an earlier EC discussion about this topic. The EC was satisfied with the changes that had been made since the last discussion of this topic. Finally, there was discussion about the development of micro-sites for units. Suggestions were sought from EC members regarding the structure of these sites as well as the degree of access that should be restricted to unit members only. This aligns with some of the earlier conversations the EC has had about restricted content for NCA members v. non-members and for members of certain governance committees. Overall, the EC was supportive of the National Office's work on the web site and encouraged continued development.

### **14. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:26PM Eastern time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Kidd  
Executive Director