

FINAL – Approved June 8, 2012

**Minutes
NCA Executive Committee Meeting
January 27-28, 2012
Hyattsville, Maryland**

Participating in all or part of the Meeting

Richard West, President (presiding); Steven Beebe, First Vice President; Kathleen Turner, Second Vice President; Lynn Turner, Immediate Past President; Phil Backlund, Educational Policies Board Director; David Henry, Publications Board Director; Kristine Muñoz, Research Board Director; Ronald Shields, Finance Board Director; Kathleen Roberts, Finance Board Member (non-voting); Tina Harris, Finance Board Member (non-voting) Nancy Kidd, Executive Director (non-voting)

National Office Staff:

Joseph Burak, Director of Membership; Rebecca Davidson, Receptionist and Administrative Assistant; Mark Fernando, Chief of Staff; Brad Mello, Associate Director for Academic and Professional Affairs; Trevor Parry-Giles, Associate Director for Academic and Professional Affairs; Thomas Rhine, Interim Chief Financial Officer; Arlyn Riskind, Director of Public Affairs and Public Information; Rachel Shea, Director of Publications

1. Call to order

President West called the meeting to order at 1:10PM Eastern time on Friday, January 27, 2012.

2. Announcements, updates & reports

Given that there were several people in the room who were new to the group, introductions were made. West then announced one addition to the agenda and some changes to the order in which the agenda items would be considered. Announcements in the written binder materials included the following: deadline for EC reports for the June 2012 EC meetings, tentative LA meeting agenda, information about the members of the newly appointed taskforce on constitutional/bylaws revision, and reports from the Centennial Committee, Officers, Board Directors and the National Office.

Ron Shields reported that the Finance Board decided to engage a new auditor for our FY11-12 audit, and the Board reviewed responses to an RFP for services during its meeting. Shields indicated that the Board had narrowed the field down to two and requested that the National Office solicit some additional information that would allow the Finance Board to make a final decision in the next few weeks.

Tina Harris announced that she was resigning from the Finance Board and Executive Committee due to an ongoing scheduling conflict that cannot be resolved. The EC expressed great appreciation for Tina's good service to date and thanked her for being responsible in making this decision.

3. Consent agenda

The consent agenda included the following items: approval of the September 9-10, 2011 EC meeting minutes; approval of the November 16, 2011 EC meeting minutes; approval of the November 16 and 19, 2011 LA meeting minutes; approval of the updated NCA three year EC meeting calendar; approval of the Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Scholarly Research in Communication; approval of emeritus memberships; approval of division name change; approval of convention fees for 2012. The final two items were called out for separate discussion. A motion was made by K. Turner to approve the consent agenda without the final two items. Seconded by Backlund. Motion carried unanimously.

There was a discussion of a proposal to change the name of the “Theatre” Division to the “Theatre, Film and New Multi-Media” Division. A motion was made by L. Turner to approve the division’s request to change its name. Seconded by Muñoz. Motion carried with six for and two against.

4. Member working committee evaluation

The member working committees were slated for review three years after their inception, and the EC undertook that review. A motion was made by Beebe to continue convention and leadership development member working committees and to start a new membership member working committee. These committees will be retained until the constitutional revision is complete and will then be reevaluated. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The President will make decisions about the membership of the committees, and the National Office will provide appropriate coordination with the EC as well as staff liaisons for the committees.

5. NCA student organizations review

Kidd explained that the National Office has undertaken a routine review of our work with student organizations—LPH, SCH, and NCASC—to ensure that they are providing useful resources to members and that they are being managed effectively. A number of proposals for improvement or expansion were presented to the EC for consideration with an understanding that these proposals do not reflect the full range of activity that NCA might ultimately chose to do with respect to undergraduate students.

The EC unanimously endorsed the development of an annual electronic LPH journal that would be managed by an Associate Director with a board that will be responsible for reviewing submissions for publication from students. The EC unanimously endorsed a membership marketing effort for LPH, SCH, and student clubs. The EC unanimously endorsed a change in the branding of LPH and SCH to make the NCA tie more explicit. The EC unanimously supported creating new policies and procedures documents for LPH and SCH to replace the current constitutions in the interest of clarifying and updating information and consistent with legal advice. A formal proposal will be brought to the EC in June. The EC unanimously supported adding master’s students to LPH with the provision that they are not eligible for paper awards and there will be limits to the number of leadership roles that can be held by them. The EC unanimously supported eliminating NCASC student membership dues.

6. Unit numbers

There was some discussion about whether and how to help interest groups with numbers that are low and whose existence is therefore in jeopardy. There may be some interest groups that are especially valuable to the association as a whole because they represent a constituency that is central to disciplinary research and practice, and it may be that policy surrounding membership requirements for those groups could be different from that for others. This is something the EC would like the constitutional revision committee to consider.

7. Candidate advocacy

The EC discussed whether it is appropriate for EC members to advocate for particular candidates in the NCA election. While the group does not want a policy formally dictating parameters in this regard, the EC does want to remind itself on a regular basis to rise to good behavior in this context.

8. Special guest: Fundraising expert Tracy Christeson

Ms. Christeson gave a presentation to the EC about some of the primary issues to keep in mind as the group considers the possibility of engaging in fundraising efforts in the near future. Among the topics she addressed were: the current philanthropic landscape in the U.S.; the differences among individual gifts, major gift initiatives, and estate planning; differences between endowment building and soliciting outright gifts; and the structure of a development campaign.

*Meeting recessed at 4:55 PM, Eastern Time on January 27, 2012
Meeting reconvened at 8:05 AM, Eastern Time on January 28, 2012*

9. Financial policies

Shields introduced the new financial policies manual and explained that the Finance Board had spent a large portion of its retreat meeting time reviewing it carefully. A revised version was distributed to the EC and Ron explained the changes the Finance Board made to the original document. The EC discussed a few of the items in the manual and made one revision. *A motion was made by Beebe to adopt the financial policies manual as amended. Seconded by Muñoz. Motion carried unanimously.*

10. External funding requests & programmatic/spending priorities & fundraising

Kidd reminded the EC that we have new procedures for evaluating long term funding requests of up to three years. They will only be reviewed every three years and this was the first such review. Four proposals were presented for renewal of the funds to advance the discipline, the Summer Faculty Development Institute (Hope), the Doctoral Honors Seminar, and the NCA/AFA Summer Conference on Argumentation (Alta). There was positive discussion about the value of each of these endeavors as well as some of the challenges they have faced historically. The EC would like to frame the next request for proposals in such a way as to develop more inclusiveness in these activities across a range of dimensions. Part of that effort will involve developing a relationship between the Educational Policies Board and Hope and between the Research Board, DEC, and the Doctoral Honors Seminar.

The EC then turned to a broader discussion about programmatic and infrastructure development priorities for the next few years. Several ideas were discussed related to external representation of the discipline, teaching and learning, support for interest groups, administrator support, data about the discipline, technological advancement, and fundraising capacity. The group discussed guidelines for prioritizing among many interesting ideas including alignment with the strategic plan and something an individual department could not do independently, among others. These ideas will be infused into the FY12-13 budgeting process.

Finance Board Director Ron Shields explained to the EC that NCA is in the enviable position of having sufficient financial savings right now to reinvest some funds in programmatic and infrastructure development activities to evidence our continued compliance with the requirements of our nonprofit status. He was clear that does not mean that the association is rich, and the opportunity is not to be used for recurring spending increases. Shields presented a detailed financial proposal for expenditure from the association's net assets for programmatic and infrastructure development investment over the next three years. The proposal was based on conservative assumptions that will not put the association at risk. The EC endorsed the financial proposal of the Finance Board and authorized the National Office to develop the draft FY12-13 budget proposal accordingly.

In the context of thinking about a range of programmatic priorities, the EC discussed a proposal for a fundraising project brought to them for consideration. There was support for the spirit of the proposal to increase the visibility of the discipline publicly, but concern about some of its details. The EC decided not to do a full evaluation of the specific proposal at present because the group felt strongly that we are not prepared to endorse any major specific fundraising initiatives while we are in the midst of related broader strategic planning about a fundraising campaign and programmatic priorities. President West and Executive Director Kidd will be in touch with the proposal submitter and explain that we would like to infuse the proposal into these broader contextual conversations over a period of time before making a decision.

A motion was made by Beebe to support the funding proposals for the renewal of funds to advance the discipline, the Hope Conference, the Doctoral Honors Seminar, and the Alta Conference as presented. Seconded by K. Turner. Motion carried unanimously.

11. 2012 convention fees & short course fees review

Finance Board Director Ron Shields reported that the Finance Board made one change to the proposal for convention fees that was initially included in the EC's binder. The Finance Board's proposal was to maintain all 2011 fees except for modest increases in advance and on-site registration for regular and patron members. Provided that one registered by the early-bird deadline, everyone could enjoy the benefit of no increase in fees under this proposal, but the modest increase for later deadlines would serve to alleviate some financial concerns we anticipate facing in Orlando. *A motion was made by Shields to approve the convention fees proposal as amended by the Finance Board. Seconded by Roberts. Motion failed with three for and four against. A motion was made by L. Turner to retain all of the 2011 convention fees. Seconded by K. Turner. Motion carried unanimously.* The Finance Board explained that the financial consequences for this decision will have to be taken into consideration elsewhere.

The EC began a discussion about whether there should be fees for short courses in the future and, if so, how much they should be. There was some discussion of whether short courses are an “extra” or something that should be expected as one of many resources included in our annual convention. The financial model for short courses was also discussed. The EC decided to table the discussion about short course fees until June after more information can be collected.

12. Diversity of NCA award winners

An analysis of award winners over the past few years suggests that recipients are not highly diverse with respect to race or gender. The EC discussed how this is likely reflective of the broader issue of diversity in the membership. The National Office is charged with bringing this issue to the chair of the AAIC for discussion.

13. EC meeting minutes

The EC charged the National Office with investigating best practices with respect to the nature and use for meeting minutes and reporting back to the group in June.

14. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at noon Eastern time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Kidd, Executive Director