

**APPROVED**

**NCA Executive Committee Meeting  
September 24-25, 2010  
Minutes**

**NCA National Office,  
Washington, DC**

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

Dawn O. Braithwaite, President; Lynn H. Turner, First Vice President; Richard West, Second Vice President; Steven Beebe, Incoming Second Vice President (non-voting); James Darsey, Research Board Director; Lynn M. Disbrow, Educational Policies Board Director; David Henry, Publications Board Director; Roseann Mandziuk, Finance Board Director; Ronald L. Jackson, Finance Board Member (non-voting); Ronald Shields, Finance Board Member (by phone, non-voting); Nancy Kidd, Executive Director (non-voting)

**Absent:** Judith Trent, Acting Immediate Past President

**National Office Staff:** Betsy Wackernagel Bach, Associate Director for Research Initiatives; Mark Fernando, Senior Manager, Communications; Heather Franklin, Executive Assistant; Bj Kang, Director of Finance and Administration; Brad Mello, Associate Director for Educational Initiatives; Michelle Randall, Senior Manager, Conventions and Meetings

**1. Call to Order**

President Braithwaite called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM Eastern time on Friday, September 24, 2010.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

President Braithwaite called for any additions or corrections to the agenda. One item was added regarding an administrative resolution about copyright fees. *A motion was made to accept the agenda with changes as presented. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

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

The consent agenda included the following items:

Approval of the June 11-12, 2010 EC Meeting Minutes

Approval of the updated NCA Three Year EC Meeting Calendar

There was discussion about how much information to provide in minutes. The group agreed that the distribution of votes should be recorded rather than just the outcome of a vote. In addition, the major points of debate for each issue should be addressed.

There was some discussion about the importance of EC members attending meeting, and the difficulty of scheduling in such a way as to accommodate everyone's schedules. While we schedule meetings three years in advance, the calendar is always included in the consent agenda so that EC members have an opportunity to raise potential conflicts and see if it is possible for others in the group to make changes.

*A motion was made to approve the consent agenda. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **4. FY09-10 Year-End Financial and Audit Reports**

Roseann Mandziuk provided a report on the close of FY09-10. The annual audit has been completed, and it is a clean audit. The auditor said that he is very satisfied with our controls, there are no material weaknesses, and we handled dual executive transitions of Executive Director and CFO well from a financial process perspective.

While our overall assets have increased, that is due almost entirely from unrealized gain. It is grounds for minor concern that once we take out investments from the equation we are at an even balanced level. We recognize that we need to think seriously about diversifying our revenue streams as we currently rely heavily on three interrelated areas: membership, journals, and convention. Our assets-to-liability ratio is very healthy, but again most of that is based on investments and not operating cash. The auditor suggested that we review our investment strategy, and our Investment Advisory Committee has already begun to do that.

We closed the year with \$135,000 surplus in the operating budget, and Mandziuk detailed the items that constituted the most significant variation from budget.

Mandziuk explained that the Finance Board recommends changing the fiscal year to a calendar year to facilitate easier alignment with various business processes. The EC did not raise any concerns with the proposed switch. A suggestion was made to consider a budget cycle that is longer than one year, and the Finance Board was asked to discuss this at a future meeting.

Mandziuk described two decisions the Finance Board made during its meeting the previous day. First, convention exhibitor and advertising rates for 2011 were approved. Prices were not increased from previous years, but we added a new non-profit category to the discount pricing structure. Second, the timing of all editor stipend payments will be aligned so that editors will begin to be paid one year before their official terms begin. That decision was driven by the reality that editors are starting their work that early and need to have resources at their disposal accordingly.

*A motion was made to accept the report of the independent auditor for FY09-10. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **5. Strategic Discussion: Funding Priorities/Cycle/Decision Making**

President Braithwaite explained that in June the EC had a discussion about identifying priorities for funding of external projects and events. In June the EC charged the Interboard with developing a plan that identifies our key annual funding priorities, funding cycle, and decision making process. James Darsey reported to the EC on the work the Interboard did in this regard.

The Interboard presented a draft plan that includes an approach for ongoing, institutionalized projects funded by NCA or to which NCA currently has funding commitments that should be funded for three year periods between review. There is also a draft plan for handling requests for one-time or first-time projects that will be considered several times throughout the year. The Interboard suggested that the National Office staff to develop a set of criteria, consistent with and reflecting the priorities in the association's mission statement, for judging these

proposals. Interboard also proposed some related financial policies and ideas for the proposal evaluation process.

The details in the Interboard's proposal are suggestive and thus the National Office has been charged with developing a more detailed proposal that aligns with what the Interboard has developed conceptually and bringing it back to the EC for final approval.

Kidd asked whether she and the Associate Directors are expected to serve as program officers do by providing advice to members regarding whether their inquiries fall within our purview since often ideas are brought to the National Office that are very different from the kinds of things we fund. The EC said that National Office staff should refer all people with inquiries to our RFP.

**Meeting recessed at 10:01 AM**  
**Meeting reconvened at 10:15 AM**

**Meeting went into Executive Session at 10:15 AM**  
**Meeting reconvened at 12:58PM**

#### **6. Strategic Discussion: Representing NCA and/or the Discipline Publicly**

Kidd introduced the discussion by explaining that over time several specific issues have arisen which have ultimately led the EC to consider the development of policy about the question of how the association should be representing NCA and the discipline publicly. The questions at hand have to do with how to identify the issues that are appropriate for NCA to address publicly as well as associated implementation strategies.

There are two types of issues for which we might want to represent NCA and/or the discipline publicly: public issues and issues related to management of the association. Public issues can range from policy topics that are not directly related to communication scholarship (e.g., tax cuts) to policy topics that are related to communication scholarship (e.g., free speech) to issues related to the academy and/or the discipline (e.g., general education requirements). We can rely on connecting our subject matter experts to the media and public policy makers to share research findings and their implications for public issues or we can take a position or make a statement on a particular issue on behalf of the association.

The EC began to talk through some of the mechanisms we already have in place for dealing with some of these things, though it seems clear they are not working perfectly, and recognized that we do not currently have mechanisms in place for a variety of likely scenarios, especially those requiring very quick response. Kidd shared several examples of issues that have arisen in multiple months for which she has not had a protocol to follow. As a result, we often miss potentially important opportunities.

*A motion was made to appoint a task force to address the question of how to represent NCA and/or the discipline publicly. The task force shall be given the document that was in the EC meeting binder to help frame the problem. Seconded. Motion carried by unanimous consent.*

Kidd asked the EC to provide her with some guidance to use during the time before the task force reports in the event that something arises that requires quick turnaround for which it seems important that we respond. The group agreed that Kidd would go to the officers first since they should be positioned to respond quickly. If there is sufficient time for the officers

to direct Kidd to an appropriate board or committee given the substance of the issue, they will do that.

### **7. Proposed Process for Increasing Journal Pages or Issues**

David Henry explained that there is not currently a standard process for considering requests for additional pages in journals or additional journal issues. The Publications Board proposes adoption of such a process. In summary, the process involves editors preparing proposals that are submitted to the Publications Board in writing with one annual submission deadline. Proposals must provide a clearly articulated and persuasively argued rationale for the requested increase, and the full policy describes how an editor can best do that.

*A motion was made to accept the proposal brought forward by the Publications Board with the amendment that upon the recommendation of the Publications Board the request comes to the EC for consideration. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **8. Consideration of Future NCA Publications: Alta, Pathways, Free Speech Yearbook**

Kidd explained that in June the EC decided to dissolve the NCA non-serial publications program with all current and in-process publications to be phased out according to conditions prescribed by the Publications Board. The EC agreed in June that the future of three particular publications should be discussed further—Alta Conference volume, Pathways to Communication Careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and Free Speech Yearbook.

#### *Alta Conference Volume*

Kidd explained that the NCA/AFA Summer Conference on Argumentation has been meeting in odd numbered years since 1979, and a conference volume is produced in conjunction with each meeting. In recent years it has become a peer-reviewed, professional printed volume of selected papers from the conference. The Alta organizers produce the volume independently. In the original agreement between NCA, AFA, and the University of Utah, NCA agreed to provide copyright management and fulfillment services for the conference volume. The Alta steering committee asked the EC to consider whether it will honor this agreement in future years. The EC agreed that this is an issue of collaboration and goodwill that is tied to a historical relationship with a conference that has produced good scholarship.

*A motion was made that NCA continues its arrangement with AFA and the University of Utah regarding the publication of the biennial Alta proceedings for the 2011 and 2013 volumes. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

The EC is amenable to considering a continued arrangement after 2013, but thought it best to delay a decision as we will be negotiating a new journal publishing agreement soon and this could be part of those discussions. The EC also noted that when it made a decision to provide funding for the 2011 Alta conference in June 2010, it indicated that NCA's relationship to and funding arrangements with Alta (including the handling of the Alta proceedings) be reviewed prior to the 2013 Alta conference. The EC remains committed to reviewing the broader funding relationship prior to the 2013 Alta conference but decided to postpone the date for further review of the publishing agreement until after 2013.

#### *Pathways to Communication Careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Kidd explained that writing and production of Pathways have historically been done by the National Office staff. The last edition was produced in 2006, so if we decide to continue publishing Pathways we may want to consider developing a new edition. Pathways has been

a very popular publication and has generated substantial revenue over time. The EC discussed the fact that this publication is important because it directly affects students, and it has historical legacy. There was general agreement that we should continue to produce Pathways and develop a new edition. Several ideas for innovation were proposed, including considering multi-media approaches.

A motion was made that NCA produce a new edition of Pathways in consultation with the Educational Policies Board. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

#### *Free Speech Yearbook*

Kidd explained that production of Free Speech Yearbook is coordinated by the National Office. The current editor was approved by the LA and is in the second of a three year term. There was a problem with significant publication delays under the direction of a previous editor, and submissions have been low recently.

A motion was made to fulfill our publishing obligation to Free Speech Yearbook through Volume 46. Prior to subsequent renewal of the Yearbook, the Publications Board and then the EC must review evidence of quality and impact of the scholarship provided by the Freedom of Expression Division. Seconded. Motion carried with five for and one abstention.

**Meeting recessed at 3:10 PM**  
**Meeting reconvened at 3:22 PM**

#### **9. Discussion of Administrative Resolution Regarding Copyright/Permission Fees**

Mandziuk described to the EC a resolution that will be brought to the LA in November which was submitted by Charles Morris regarding copyright fees. The Finance Board has discussed this resolution as there could be financial implications, and wanted to broaden the discussion to the whole EC. Mandziuk reported that the FB appreciates the spirit behind the resolution, which is to ensure finances do not interfere with the dissemination of knowledge about communication. However, from a practical perspective, there are some concerns with this particular solution. The main issue is that the resolution proposer does not have full information about NCA's contractual obligations and the range of implications of making a change to the fee structure of the sort proposed. There are several important pieces of information missing from the resolution as well as some inaccuracy.

The broader issue was raised that bringing administrative resolutions to the LA through the resolutions committee is not a good way to vet these complicated issues that require substantial research and background knowledge. This is an issue that should be brought to the constitutional revision task force the EC has discussed appointing next year.

The group agreed that Rich West, David Henry, and Nancy Kidd would call Professor Morris to ensure that he has all of the relevant background information that the EC has so that the discussion at the LA meeting can be as productive as possible.

#### **10. Strategic Discussion: Conflict of Interest Policy**

NCA's current conflict of interest policy is fairly generic, and the Executive Committee has not previously had an opportunity to discuss whether it would like to make any amendments to the policy. The group agreed that the current policy suits our needs and no changes should be made at present.

**Meeting recessed at 5:03 PM, Eastern Time on September 24, 2010.  
Meeting reconvened at 8:17 AM, Eastern Time on September 25, 2010.**

Braithwaite announced that the agenda item on internationalization would be postponed until a future meeting to ensure adequate time for other conversations.

### **11. Pre-registration Policy for Convention**

Dawn Braithwaite reminded the EC that after the Legislative Assembly provided feedback to the EC regarding the pre-registration policy for NCA's convention last fall, the EC decided to suspend the policy effective immediately. The Member Working Committee on the convention was asked to consider the future of the policy, and their report was discussed by the EC.

The group agreed to accept the report of the Member Working Committee and thanked the committee for its hard work. The MWC shared the EC's concern about the underlying issues that had been the original motivation for developing the policy, and therefore recommended continuation of the policy with some revisions to the structure and implementation. The EC discussed the amount of National Office resources involved in implementation of the original policy and the suggested revised versions and was concerned that we don't have sufficient data about the scope of the problem to justify such a big expenditure.

Discussion then turned to alternative approaches that would still address the spirit underlying the policy, and the group agreed that a less punitive approach characterized by a serious educational campaign on the importance of professional standards would be worth trying. If we assume that much of the "bad" behavior is driven by a lack of understanding about the implications for other convention attendees, then an educational campaign should serve to reduce the scope of the problem. The EC decided to postpone discussion about the details of such an educational campaign until later in the day as it might be related to the planned discussion on ethical guidelines for convention submission.

There was agreement that it is important to continue to evaluate the problem quantitatively over the next few years, regardless of whether the pre-registration policy is in place. This will allow us to evaluate the scope of the problem with the policy in place, without the policy in place and prior to the development of an educational campaign, and then after the implementation of an educational campaign.

*A motion was made to suspend the pre-registration policy and continue to monitor and collect related data on registration for three years. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.* In addition to collecting data about the number of people who would have been taken out of the program according to the pre-registration policy in the future, the National Office is also asked to evaluate the characteristics of the population, such as unit sponsor and membership status, as much as possible given data that are already being collected.

### **12. Review of Policy Regarding Preconference & Short Course Instructors**

Kidd explained that in 2005 a policy regarding short course and preconference panelists was passed by the EC after development by a taskforce on NCA preconferences. As the National Office has attempted to implement this policy in recent years, a number of practical

ambiguities have emerged and the EC is asked to approve suggested revisions which clarify key points while retaining the spirit of the original policy.

*A suggestion was made to use the term “presenters” instead of “instructors.” A motion was made to accept the revised policy as amended. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

There was some discussion about the fact that our convention terminology can be confusing for members and the idea was raised to develop a small table that explains what preconferences, seminars, and short courses are and post it on our web site.

### **13. Strategic Discussion: Task Force Proposal on Revised Ethical Guidelines for Convention Submission**

At the June 2010 EC meeting, an ad hoc committee composed of Richard West, Kathy Adams, and Michelle Randall was appointed to examine the existing ethical guidelines for convention submissions and bring proposed revisions back to the EC in September. Richard West reported to the EC on the work of the ad hoc committee.

The committee suggested that what we really need is explicit professional standards rather than ethical guidelines. There was some debate about how specific the professional standards should be, and the EC decided that answering that question would require more serious thought than was feasible during the EC meeting. There was also recognition that this discussion ties back to the discussion earlier in the day about developing an educational campaign related to the issues underlying the pre-registration policy. Some preliminary thoughts about an educational campaign were shared. Many agreed that it should address multiple audiences including division chairs, department chairs, and unit planners, for example.

*A motion was made to appoint a task force to develop professional standards concerning convention submission and presentation and a corresponding educational campaign. Seconded. Motion carries unanimously.*

**Meeting recessed at 10:25 AM**  
**Meeting reconvened at 10:40 AM**

### **14. Strategic Discussion: Meeting at Convention Center**

Braithwaite explained that several years ago the EC dissuaded the National Office from considering convention center locations for future conventions. There was never a vote on this issue, but the National Office has abided by the spirit of that discussion since then. The National Office is now asking the EC to reconsider that position as there may be some benefit to enlarging the number of possible cities in which we can meet. NCA’s convention manager explained some of the pros and cons of convention center meetings as well as the ways in which the business model for convention center meetings differs from that used for hotel meetings. The convention manager also indicated that the convention member working committee requested that the EC consider this issue.

The EC agreed that there are many compelling reasons to expand our options for convention center siting with convention centers. Some discussion ensued about whether this is an issue that should go to the LA.

A motion was made that the National Office be authorized to negotiate for future convention contracts with convention centers. Seconded. Motion fails with two for and three against.

A motion was made to recommend to the LA that the National Office be authorized to negotiate for future convention contracts with convention centers. Seconded. Motion carries with three for, one against, and one abstention.

#### **15. Strategic Discussion: Review of CRTNET**

Braithwaite provided some background about NCA's history with CRTNET and some of the issues that have arisen over time with it. There was some discussion about whether we could move some of the key functionality of CRTNET onto our own web site as it is redesigned over the next several months, and there was general agreement that we can and should. The idea is to shift much of what CRTNET does in-house and take advantage of advances in technology that have developed since the start of CRTNET twenty-five years ago.

A motion was made that the National Office should discontinue the management of CRTNET in 2011 to coincide with the rollout of the new NCA website. Seconded. Motion carries with four for and one abstention.

The National Office is charged with thinking through how, to whom, and when we should announce and make the shift. It should be done in conjunction with our transition to a new web site and broader communications and technology strategy.

#### **16. Morris Resolution**

West, Henry, and Kidd spoke to Professor Morris earlier in the morning and reported back to the EC that they had a productive conversation and were able to share relevant information regarding the proposed resolution on copyright fees, including the fact that this may not be permissible contractually. Morris asked if the EC had alternate solutions in mind, and the group explained that the best thing to do would be to include this issue as part of our negotiations for a new publishing contract which will take place in the coming year. The concerns with the proposal are not so much about the specific fee amounts as with the implications for broader elements of the publishing arrangement, so the best solutions would probably be more complex than just changing the fee prices. In the meantime, the EC members agreed to think through some more tangible alternatives and Henry is going to have a follow-up conversation with Morris later in the week.

#### **17. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15PM Eastern time.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Kidd  
Executive Director