

FINAL – APPROVED by the Executive Committee on June 12, 2015

Minutes

National Communication Association
Executive Committee Meeting
February 6, 2015
Hyattsville, MD

Participating in the meeting

Carole Blair, President (presiding); Christina S. Beck, First Vice President; Stephen J. Hartnett, Second Vice President; Kathleen J. Turner, Immediate Past President; Joseph A. Bonito, Research Board Director; John O. Greene, Publications Board Director; Scott A. Myers, Educational Policies Board Director; Bobby Patton, Finance Board Director; Annette Madlock Gatison, Finance Board Member (non-voting); Orlando L. Taylor, Finance Board Member (non-voting); Nancy Kidd, Executive Director (non-voting)

National Office Staff: Mark Fernando, Chief of Staff; Wendy Fernando, Director of External Affairs and Publications; Kim Griffin, Chief Financial Officer; Trevor Parry-Giles, Director of Academic and Professional Affairs

1. Call to order

President Blair called the meeting to order at 12:58 p.m. Eastern time.

2. Announcements, updates, and reports

President Blair drew the EC's attention to a number of routine reports provided in the written meeting materials.

3. Consent agenda

The consent agenda included the following items: approval of September 19, 2014 EC meeting minutes; November 19, 2014 EC meeting minutes; October 10, 2014 Legislative Assembly report of ballot votes; November 19 and 22, 2014 Legislative Assembly meeting minutes; emeritus memberships, conflict of interest disclosures, convention fees, and strategic planning process. Publications Board Director Greene asked to add an item regarding changes to the management of *Communication Currents* designed to strengthen its outreach impact. The proposal was endorsed by the Publications Board. Finance Board Director Patton reported that the Finance Board endorsed the convention fees proposal as presented. There was some discussion about the convention fees proposal. *A motion was made by Beck to approve the consent agenda as presented with the addition of the Publications Board's item. Seconded by Patton. Motion carried unanimously.*

4. Academic/professional funding priorities

In order to allow all external multi-year funding requests to be considered from comparative perspective, NCA's policy is to review these requests every three years. This was the EC's second three-year review since this policy went into effect. NCA policy indicates that long-term support for projects/events cannot be committed for more than three years at a time. This EC review covered not only external requests, but all academic/professional activities with significant financial implications, including conferences and grants. This allowed the EC to

think about priorities for its full portfolio of activities in this area. Decisions made in this discussion will be incorporated into the FY15-16 budget. In most cases, they will ultimately be incorporated into the budgets for the subsequent two years as well. The external funding decisions are firm commitments for multiple years. The other decisions are meant to be fairly firm, but because they are budget line allocations without external commitment, the EC could later decide to make amendments if priorities or finances change in unanticipated ways.

Eight programs/events were initially presented for discussion, and Research Board Director Bonito introduced a ninth event for consideration for which a proposal was developed by the Research Board during its meeting the previous day. Three of these programs/events were proposed by external parties seeking funding. The Finance Board reported that the amount of money proposed for spending in this area is feasible from a budgetary perspective. However, the Finance Board issued a warning that without dues increases or other revenue enhancements, NCA cannot continue to support these activities indefinitely.

Discussion ensued about each of the proposed programs/events and their relative merits and alignment with the NCA strategic plan.

A motion was made by Bonito to continue support for the NCA Institute for Faculty Development (Hope) for another three years (FY15/16, FY16/17, and FY17/18) at \$15,000 per year; the Doctoral Honors Seminar for another three years (FY15/16, FY16/17, and FY17/18) at \$20,000 per year; and the Chairs' Institute for the next in an alternating years series (FY16/17) at \$15,000. Further, to increase support for Caucus Student Travel Grants from \$15,000 to \$30,000 per year for the next three years (2015, 2016, and 2017 conventions) with the caveat that no single grant can exceed \$500; for Advancing the Discipline grants from \$25,000 to \$30,000 per year for the next three years (FY15/16, FY16/17, FY18/19); and for the Alta Conference from \$1,000/year to \$5,000/year for the next four years (FY15/16-FY18/19- to align with the 2017 and 2019 conferences, and as an exception to our three year funding limit). Further, to begin support for an alternating years conference for associate professors at \$15,000 per year for FY15/16 and FY 17/18. Seconded by Hartnett. Motion carried unanimously.

The group adjourned for a break at 2:30 p.m. and reconvened at 2:40 p.m.

5. Convention requests from the Feminist and Women's Studies Division and the Women's Caucus

The EC considered four requests from the Feminist and Women's Studies Division (FWSD) and the Women's Caucus (WC). First, the FWSD/WC indicated that each year, they want to ensure that the Association ensures appropriate access to our convention facilities for people with disabilities. To clarify the association's commitment to such access, *a motion was made by Turner to endorse the following policy: NCA will meet only in hotels and convention centers that are ADA compliant. In addition, each year the Disabilities Issues Caucus will continue to be invited to send a representative on a site visit with NCA staff to assess whether there are additional accommodations that can be made to ensure maximum accessibility. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously.*

Second, the FWSD/WC expressed the importance of providing an all gender bathroom at the convention. Again, the EC agreed and voted to codify the association's current practice. Specifically, *a motion was made by Turner to endorse the following policy: NCA will designate an all gender bathroom at the Annual Convention. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously.*

Third, the FWSD/WC requested a convention lactation room, which would include a sink and comfortable seating. This would typically require that the association rent a hotel room, though some convention properties may provide an alternative, and the cost would vary from location to location. One of the questions the EC had regarded how many women would choose to use the space. *A motion was made by Turner to offer a lactation room at the NCA Annual Convention in 2015 as an experiment. After the 2015 convention, the EC will address usage and determine whether to continue offering this resource. Seconded by Beck.* Discussion ensued. Patton reported that the Finance Board supports this proposal. *A motion was made by Patton to amend the main motion to also offer a lactation room in 2016. Seconded by Bonito.* Discussion ensued. There was consensus that a two year experiment would allow for better assessment of the amount of usage of the room. *Motion carried unanimously.* Discussion returned to the main motion. *Motion carried unanimously to provide a lactation room for the next two years, in Las Vegas and Philadelphia, as an experiment. At the end of the two-year period, the EC will assess usage and determine whether to continue offering this resource.*

Finally, the FWSD/WC asked the EC to consider offering childcare at the annual convention. Patton indicated that the Finance Board does not support this request at present. The cost is high and in the past usage has been very low. Discussion ensued. *A motion was made by Patton to table this issue. Seconded by Greene.* Motion carried unanimously.

6. NCA Grants eligibility

In recent years, NCA has begun to increase its grant-making activity, most notably through the Advancing the Discipline grants program, and through others as well. In light of this activity, a question was raised by members about whether people in the association's leadership should be ineligible for such grants, and the EC was in unanimous agreement that indeed such ineligibility criteria should be developed. In order to identify a logical threshold defining "leadership" for the purposes of this policy, the EC turned to the Form 990, which provides guidance on what is considered best practice in nonprofit governance. Based on the relevant 990 question, *a motion was made by Turner to approve the following policy: "Officers, directors, trustees, key employees, substantial contributors, or employees thereof, and grant selection committee members are not eligible to apply for grants from NCA."* *Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously.* For NCA, "officers, directors, and trustees" translates into the members of NCA's Legislative Assembly and its Executive Committee.

7. Distinguished Scholars

In an attempt to consider ways to diversify the Distinguished Scholar program, in the fall the EC asked the Distinguished Scholars for feedback on two proposals. Proposal 1: The current nominating procedures indicate that "[n]ominations can only be made by existing Distinguished Scholars." Instead there should be an open call for nominations. Proposal 2: The current selection procedures indicate that "[n]ormally, no more than four awards will be given in any

year. However, if a deceased nominee is among the top four in the rankings, then an additional award may be made, provided that the fifth-ranked nominee is ranked by enough Distinguished Scholars to qualify.” Instead, increase the normal number of annual awards to no more than five and allow for a sixth in the case of a deceased nominee being among the top five in the rankings, provided that the sixth-ranked nominee is ranked by enough Distinguished Scholars to qualify.

The EC reviewed the Scholars’ qualitative comments on these issues. With that feedback in mind, the EC continues to think these changes could be productive. *As such, a motion was made by Turner to ask the Distinguished Scholars to do an advisory vote on the two proposed changes to the award policies. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously*

The group adjourned for a break at 4:29 p.m. and reconvened at 4:40 p.m.

8. Constitution/bylaws revision

The EC reviewed the feedback received from members through a variety of channels at the 2014 convention and beyond to decide whether to make any additional changes to the draft revised bylaws document. *A motion was made by Beck to make two changes to the current draft. First, add approval of affiliates to the list of LA responsibilities. Second, reverse the change we made in the last iteration to remove the requirement for regional association representatives that each region has at least one elementary or secondary school teacher and at least one teacher from a two-year institution of post-secondary education. Seconded by Turner. Motion carried unanimously.*

The EC also discussed how best to ensure that the Legislative Assembly and membership are fully informed about this proposal.

The group adjourned for a break at 6:00 p.m. and reconvened at 6:07 p.m.

9. Endowment policy

Given that there have been several instances in which the possibility of a membership-based fundraising effort for an endowment has been raised, the EC discussed ways to amend our policies to allow more flexibility in this regard while being mindful of the laws governing endowments and the management issues for the association over a long period of time. *A motion was made by Turner to amend our policy requiring all endowments to be closed to permit open endowments with the provision that donors be informed that the Trustee for an open endowment will be the NCA Awards Trustee Committee. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously.*

10. Orlando L. Taylor Distinguished Scholarship Award in Africana Communication

A proposal was submitted by the Black Caucus and the African American Communication and Culture Division to start an NCA-level award called the Orlando L. Taylor Distinguished Scholarship Award in Africana Communication. Given the naming of the award, and given Madlock Gatison’s role in developing the proposal, Finance Board members Taylor and Madlock Gatison recused themselves from this discussion.

A motion was made by Patton to endorse the proposal to start an NCA-level award called the Orlando L. Taylor Distinguished Scholarship Award in Africana Communication. Seconded by Beck. Discussion ensued. There was great enthusiasm for this award.

Two practical considerations were discussed. First, the proposal requested a waiver of the \$25,000 minimum requirement for an endowed fund with a request to be grandfathered under the previous policy of a \$10,000 minimum. *A motion was made by Bonito to retain the \$25,000 minimum requirement stated in NCA policy. Seconded by Patton.* Discussion ensued, including consensus that, given the importance of this award and the five year window for raising funds, there was great confidence the money could be raised. *Motion carried unanimously.* Second, the EC specified that the proposal submitters should be asked to refine the award description to clarify some ambiguous language. A subcommittee of the EC was appointed to quickly review a revision without having to wait for the EC to reconvene in June. The fundraising effort would not be permitted to begin until the award description language was finalized. *A motion was made by Hartnett to revise the language in the award description to address ambiguities. Seconded by Beck. Motion carried unanimously.*

Discussion returned to the main motion. *Motion carried unanimously.*

11. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. Eastern time.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Kidd
Executive Director