

November 15, 2010

Public Address Division business meeting

Mari Tonn called the meeting to order and amended the agenda to add awards after Angela Ray's report.

Following a motion to approve the minutes and a second, the minutes were approved by a voice vote.

Mari Tonn gave chair's report, which began by welcoming members of the division and introducing officers. She offered thanks to the nominating committee, award committees, paper submitters, paper reviewers, and Kirt Wilson, who served as program planner. Tonn also reported on the following:

- The public address division's membership has inched up to 672 from 663 after years of decline. Our NCA panels have been cut back to 29, which is concerning; our goal is to restore our previous numbers.
- Three significant conferences have taken place in the past year:
 - In March, Texas A&M University hosted a conference on the Obama Phenomenon
 - In July, the University of Puget Sound hosted a conference on critical pedagogy
 - In September, the University of Pittsburgh hosted the Public Address Conference
- The next Public Address Conference will take place at the University of Memphis in 2012
- We have a modest budget: \$550 this year. This money goes toward awards and plaques. The budget fluctuates every year, and even minor fluctuations can cause problems. For now, we are in the black because of some creative cost-saving measures. Trevor Parry-Giles moved our website to a University of Maryland blog, which saves the \$30/year we were spending on web hosting. Support staff at the University of Richmond helped save money by locating inexpensive awards plaques that could be purchased via the internet.
- A survey of the division membership has been taken. Last year, Chuck Morris appointed a task force consisting of Mary Stuckey, Brandon Inabinet, and Michele Ramsey, and charged them to investigate the division's declining membership. Later in the meeting, Inabinet reported on the survey's findings.

As Tonn introduced the nominating committee, there was some confusion about the composition of the Winans-Wichelns Award committee. It was the common understanding of the leadership that after Trevor Parry-Giles served a one-year appointed term, we are back to our regular rotation of elected leadership. Tonn concluded her report by encouraging members to submit papers to the public address division and to visit the division blog.

The Nominating Committee offered its report on a slate of candidates. Marty Medhurst thanked the members of the committee—Belinda Stillion Southard, Davis Houck, Paul Stob, and David Cisneros—for their service. The members in attendance voted on the slate of candidates presented.

The Vice-Chair, Kirt Wilson, offered his report. He explained the duties of the vice-chair and offered thanks to Mari Tonn who wrote an advisory email about program planning, which can

serve as a handbook for future vice-chairs. Wilson explained that he had used three reviewers for each submission, which helped resolve problems with split decisions. He also explained that, with 57 reviewers involved, most people only had to review 4-7 submissions. All those names appear in his report. He offered thanks to all reviewers, respondents, and chairs. Wilson also gave a summary of the number of paper and panel submissions:

105 total submissions (24 fewer than the previous year)

84 paper submissions (10 fewer)

21 session submissions (14 fewer)

He explained that he surveyed submissions over the past few years and discovered that we average about 107 per year. Thus, with the loss of three panel slots, our acceptance rates this year were lower than previous years:

panel proposals: 6.9% accepted

individual papers: 56% accepted

These acceptance rates were also impacted by Wilson's decision not to place more than four papers and one respondent on any panel. He also rejected paper and panel submissions that received only one "accept" rating. Once he had tabulated the ratings, he assigned the top student paper and the other two high scorers to a Top Papers panel.

Before presenting the division's two paper awards, Wilson recognized Jeff Drury, whose paper, "A Time for Judging: President Barack Obama and the Crisis in Cairo" was the third placed on the Top Papers panel. Wilson presented the Robert J. Gunderson Award to Sean Luechtefeld for his paper, "A Petition in Boots: Jacob Coxey's Constitution of Citizenship in 1894." Wilson presented the Wrage-Baskerville Award to Ronald and Mary Zboray for their paper, "I Have Said my Say: Ordinary Women and Partisan Speech Making in the Antebellum Era."

Wilson concluded his remarks by expressing that he is proud and humbled for the opportunity to put together these panel sessions. He stated that he believes that the quality of scholarship in the division has improved. He expressed his appreciation for the established and burgeoning scholarship in the division and the breadth of scholarship it represents. Again, he thanked all the reviewers.

On behalf of Chuck Morris, Mari Tonn presented the 2010 Marie Hochmuth Nichols Award to Robert Asen for his book, *Invoking the Invisible Hand: Social Security and the Privatization Debates*.

Tonn also offered a report from the NCA nominating committee.

On behalf of Chuck Morris, Tonn reported on the Legislative Assembly sessions. The audit of NCA has been completed and the organization is in good standing. Overall, NCA memberships have increased, but membership funds have decreased as the bulk of the increase has come from student memberships. The Legislative Assembly defeated a resolution that would have ended travel grants currently given to students of color. The Legislative Assembly passed a resolution restructuring copyright fees for reprints from NCA journals. The Legislative Assembly also heard a report from a Task Force on Units, which could dramatically change the structure of NCA. Currently, NCA has 51 non-caucus units, which include significant redundancy and lead

to some incoherence in convention programming, along with challenges to the size and effectiveness of the Legislative Assembly. The Task Force's objectives included,

- creating more inclusive organizational management, especially in light of increasing NCA membership
- allowing for collaboration and connection between units
- ensuring the quality of convention programming.

They have proposed a new system wherein members would sign up with a primary unit, and the unit would get one head count for that person; each member could also sign up for a secondary unit, which would get a half of a head count. In this system, every unit would need to have at least 100 members to remain viable. Every unit would have at least two representatives to the Legislative Assembly. This Task Force also proposed a new track structure, where NCA programming would be divided into three tracks—research, pedagogy, and professionalism. All papers would be sent to the track, to be sent to the appropriate reviewers (based on submitted keywords). In this system, each unit would have to identify with one of the three tracks. After extensive discussion, the Legislative Assembly took a straw vote about this model. Although the straw vote charged NCA to consider this model further, there was a general consensus that the notion of tracks was problematic and there were particular concerns about implementation.

Following her presentation, Tonn opened up discussion on these proposals. Lester Olson, James Darsey, and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell offered comments.

On behalf of the nominating committee, Marty Medhurst announced the winners of the division election:

Vice-Chair: Mary Stuckey

Marie Hochmuth Nichols Award Committee: Robert Asen and Jason Black

Winans-Wichels Award Committee: Denise Bostdorff

Nominating Committee: Robert Terrill (chair), Ned O’Gorman, Brandon Inabinet, Anne Demo, Jeff Bennett

James Darsey provided a report from the NCA Research Board. Their work to make connections with the NEH is proving successful as the NEH now seems to understand the nature of our work. The new problem is that Communication scholars are not applying for grants in sufficient numbers. We're applying more than previously, but we need even more applications to warrant a review panel of our own. Darsey also encouraged us to cite work within our field in order to boost ISI and other measurement numbers. He also encouraged people to get involved in NCA leadership.

Angela Ray reported on her work as incoming vice-chair and program planner. The next NCA convention will be held November 17-20, 2011, in New Orleans. Richard West of Emerson College is first vice-president and NCA program planner. He has chosen the theme of "Voice" and is implementing a few changes:

- Wednesday November 16 will be devoted to community service projects around New Orleans; all NCA members are encouraged to participate
- The submission deadline will be later than usual this year: March 16, 2011
- NCA has ended its contract with allacademic and will use Attendee Interactive instead.

- Each unit will be guaranteed 85% of its 2010 slots (which means 25 for Public Address); the remaining 15% will be devoted to the convention theme.

Ray shared that she anticipates adopting Wilson's reviewer/ranking system. She will submit some thematic panels to West's central committee, and she'll hear the results on those before she has to make final decisions about the division's panels. She is currently looking for reviewers, chairs, and respondents.

Old Business

Marty Medhurst reported that little progress has been made on the Benson-Campbell Award. A sub-committee will try to move forward with this award.

Brandon Inabinet offered a report on behalf of the Task Force appointed by Chuck Morris to survey the division's membership. He and Mary Stuckey and Michele Ramsey conducted the survey, and he offered the following information:

- Public Address is the 10th largest division in NCA
- Many members are happy
- Some perceive the division to be cliquish
- People choose their divisions early in their career and rarely deviate
- People may be choosing other conferences
- The public address division is too research-focused (too rock star focused), and other scholars feel neglected

They also offered the following reflections and recommendations:

- We are not in a membership crisis. Many members said they are not going anywhere.
- Members want more opportunities to get together and additional ways to communicate (such as a newsletter or listserv).
- The division should discuss whether we want to stay focused on public address or broaden ourselves. We should consider whether we want to add "rhetoric" to our title (such as "Public address and rhetorical criticism" or "Public address and rhetoric"). There may be a tension between broadening our scope and losing focus.
- We should attend to the role of teaching, so as to be more inclusive.
- We should host a pre-conference.
- We should make outreach efforts, especially to younger scholars.
- We should offer leadership opportunities to junior scholars.
- We should encourage interaction between junior and senior scholars.
- Members distrust NCA, so associations may want to work proactively to encourage associational change.

Lester Olson moved an expression of appreciation for the Public Address executive committee; that motion carried.

He also announced that information about the next Public Address conference is available on the University of Memphis Department of Communication website. The conference theme is "Civic Learning."

Jim Jasinski announced the results of the survey taken after the pedagogy conference at the University of Puget Sound. In response to a question about what they want, participants said that this division should become more involved with criticism pedagogy. In response, Tonn recollected that for a while, the division offered a short course every year. That ended because it became a planning burden. She suggested that maybe a committee could handle that responsibility.

James Darsey announced the Southern Colloquium on Rhetoric. They met at Furman this fall and will have a panel at SSCA in the spring.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Maddux