

National Communication Association
Indigenous Caucus
Information bundle “minutes” for 2021

Hello all,

For those who could not attend NCA or the Indigenous Caucus business meeting this past week/weekend please see the following “minutes” which I (Eean Grimshaw) did my best to take note of while also being present and active in our circle gathering. If I have missed anything or if anything needs to be appended or adjusted regarding these minutes please let me know and I will update them accordingly. In speaking with Michael Lechuga about the need for a digital platform for the Indigenous Caucus to engage in dialogue with one another I have gone ahead and made a discord server where we might also be able to connect and grow in a digital place. The link to that discord is as follows: <https://discord.gg/5N3KGrQgRD>. I plan to work with Michael and the other members of the Circle Council to make that space as safe and inclusive a gathering space as possible in the coming weeks.

- 1) Sunrise smudge every morning 7-7:45 am.
- 2) Annual Gathering (Business meeting) at 11 am Saturday.
- 3) Gathering agenda
 - a. Eean Grimshaw volunteered to take minutes (information bundle)
 - b. Teachings from knowledge keeper La Royce Batchelor
Prairie Paper:
Always offer a gift with a goal to leave empty handed, plant seeds and change the world together
What we bring together and see this space as doing for the future generations, and in honor of those generations behind us
 - c. Slate of Circle Council for approval
Each of the proposed members for the council briefly introduced themselves and what they believe this space should be used for and pertinent issues to address
 1. Michael Lechuga
There is a lack of representation for Indigenous voices and mentorship at NCA. He brings lots of institutional knowledge and plans to serve temporarily as a steward between larger organizations like NCA and with those here
 2. Danielle Endres
Watching with great interest and a desire to support Indigenous sovereignty self-determination. She is stepping up and to stand with and alongside Indigenous voices
 3. Eean Grimshaw
Wants to support and create a place to develop and foster inclusion, to support Indigenous scholars and support Indigenous research and scholarship

4. La Royce Batchelor

She is standing up and standing alongside. Sharing a word we might use to recognize the purpose of those serving on the Circle Council, Ogimaa, to temporarily step up because I am needed and also groom others to take my place, to pave the way for those coming after me, as I step down I will stand beside. To use this understanding as a guiding principle for those involved here and that we might all find our time to temporarily stand up when we are needed.

5. Liahna Stanley (introduced via La Royce as they could not attend the business meeting)

Liahna is two spirit, and they will help us navigate this process forward. Important to have perspectives and voices from all areas across this continent, to ensure that Indigenous people have a voice here in this circle

(As noted later in the minutes Sarah Amira de la Garza stepped up to serve on the Circle Council)

Continuing, we discuss the bylaws going over the skeleton we currently have, making one adjustment at this time, and discussing the purpose of how the bylaws are structured and the language used in this document.

d. Bylaws draft for approval

i. Skeleton of bylaws (see by-laws for the Indigenous Caucus of the National Communication Association)

1. There will be no formal chair, we have a circle council to share the load and decide the responsibilities in the moment.

2. Purpose: The purpose of the Indigenous Caucus is primarily agency and to create a safe space for Indigenous scholars and scholarship, but also an ally to bridge the division

a. To make space in the academy (broaden our presence and press on the boundaries of agency, might include learning language or the language of those Indigenous people nearby

b. To increase agency outside the academy, to take our Indigeneity outside of the academy and NCA

3. Membership: Voting members are those that are present, the Indigenous Caucus will be guided by a leadership team, the role of Ogimaa on the Circle Council, to make sure that everyone has a voice

Ogimaa will serve as long as needed but in the last year will put forward a name and train that individual to step up so you can step down and alongside them (the selection of new Ogimaa is not an individual choice but one that we will make together)

This First year we will have a slate of individuals (co-membership), the ones who stepped up, who will work to prepare the next generation to prepare the next generation, thinking ahead seven generations (not only 2-3 years ahead) In the spring we will need to plant those seeds and also to decide what we want to do with our 4 slots for NCA 2022.

One thing mentioned was potentially a panel on Indigenous methodologies, another option was a panel on place and no place, seeking co-sponsorship for other divisions so we might be able to get more programs offered than our 4 slots allow.

It was noted how great it would be to have a sweat in the future and/or circle dance

We will always begin in a circle, Everyone is welcome (inclusive) and no one is late (you arrive when you are meant to)

It was mentioned to add something to the by-laws to prevent conflict, addressing how we will do the program planning in a collective manner that we agree upon (I believe we adjusted this in the by-laws on the fly)

It was also mentioned how important the language that we use in the by-laws is going forward.

The Indigenous Caucus gets 1 vote in Legislative Assembly which the Ogimaa will attend together. It was noted that our program planning can be fluid

We want to encourage more people to come to program planning

It was mentioned by multiple attendees that if we can get cosponsors for slots for 2022 it will help to get the name of the Indigenous Caucus out there and it won't count against our 4 slots

Rhetorical Theory and Women's Caucus have offered to support two slots (Danielle Endres can likely do something with EC year after next 2023 when she takes up a leadership role in that division)

We discussed how to gather resources to support whoever needs to go to DC for IDEA* council, Michael Lechuga mentioned that this is the best way to speak directly to NCA leadership comes from those meetings. It will also assist the Indigenous Caucus to get greater visibility like the other caucuses, to have ongoing communication with Circle Council. While at the retreat for two days there is active collaboration on planning and other NCA initiatives

As mentioned above, at this time we added Sarah Amira de la Garza (ASU) to the Circle Council. She also shared with us the word Korima (that you do not ask for or offer more or less than is needed)

Ultimately, 6 Ogimma will guide the Indigenous Caucus and form the Circle Council at this time

e. Consider motions for bylaws for 2022

In discussing future plans for 2022, La Royce suggested that we ask if Liahna will serve for IDEA council, otherwise we have a replacement volunteer Karla Hunter (SDSU)

Smudge will continue and is outside of slots (which means no funding but will not count against our four slots). The business meeting currently occupies one slot but it could also be done outside of conference.

A desire to have a Potlatch feast at some point in the future

The budget is \$1,300 for Indigenous Caucus and we will reserve that for elder honorarium or a drum group

By December 22nd, the Ogimma will decide on the call for our slots (Karla Hunter (SDSU) and Colby Miyose (U Hawaii Hilo) also volunteered to assist)

Larissa Durkin (ASU) volunteered as a graduate student representative to engage with the younger generations in the planning for 2022

Additional thoughts and points shared towards the end of our meeting:

Morning Smudge

People are medicine, we seek out certain people based on how we feel. Seattle being an ideal place for this to happen alongside the formation of the Indigenous Caucus and the weather being perfect for morning smudge, couldn't have happened anywhere else. Actions for the next convention, we need to ensure there is a space to begin our days in a good way La Royce will carry that burden to ensure that there is that space for us in 2022 convention.

Often people are denied the ability to smudge in their own place

Water as medicine, wash off those burdens, grateful for ancestors, visions, what we have.

To help others, strength to carry ourselves, to put the right foot forward, start your day that way with other medicines to help us start our day in a good way