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Via: Email

**LACK OF DIVERSITY in NCA's JOURNAL EDITORSHIPS AND EDITORIAL
BOARDS**

Dear NCA Presidents and Officers:

Collectively we write to share our extreme frustration with the consistent lack of diversity in journal editorships of the National Communication Association (NCA) journals. Given that NCA explicitly states on its website that as an organization it, "Supports and promotes policies that fairly encourage this diversity and inclusion," we believe our concern is necessary and timely. The lack of representation from historically marginalized groups both as editors and on the editorial board ensure that Communication Studies will remain a largely white discipline. Furthermore, each year despite nominations of senior scholars of color, NCA's Distinguished Scholars remains an overwhelmingly white institution. This concern was raised at the Committee on Committees meeting at last year's convention. Most recently, Chakravarty, Kuo, Grubbs and McIlwain's essay (2018) published in the ICA's (International Communication Association) flagship Journal, *Journal of Communication*, "#communicationsowhite" provides empirical evidence of the field's largely white representation in our communication journals, including NCA's such as *Communication Monographs*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, and *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*. Apparently, it is evident that NCA continues to have a diversity problem, specifically including people of color.

Our response is exacerbated by the fact that we know minority (people of color) scholars who have put their names forth (and in some cases were recruited) for editorships of these journals yet were not chosen. The paucity of scholars of color who have served as editors of NCA journals and are editorial boards is not coincidental at this point. We recognize the intensive amount of labor that goes into these positions and know that some scholars of color may say no to nominations especially because of how they are often stretched thin by other service obligations because of the lack of representation on campus. As a result, it often falls on a small group of scholars of color to shoulder this work; however, we know of several recent

instances of scholars of color at the full and associate levels who have not served in editor positions who were invited to apply or applied and were turned down for reasons such as “you are too junior” or “they are too mean.” Uncritical statements like these need to be problematized. They reflect a paternalism and a commitment to white civility, as the assumptions of those making these statements go unproblematized.

For instance, we want to raise critical questions such as these followings; What does “junior” mean? How is that determined particularly when we know faculty of color are often not afforded positions of power or always hired and welcomed at Research I universities that afford them high visibility? What does it mean when a white male who is an Associate Professor is not “junior” but a scholar of color at the same level is? How do narratives about “meanness” simply reify assumptions about white middle class civility and discipline faculty of color who speak out against white supremacy, homophobia, classism, ableism, and patriarchy? Does the Publications Council consider issues of power and historical discrepancies in their deliberations and recruitment?

Whatever structures the organization currently has in place are not yielding productive results in helping NCA achieve its commitment to diversity and inclusion. Therefore, we collectively propose NCA commit to and create an initiative and working group to address this problem composed of members of color from the Asian Pacific American Caucus, Black Caucus, La Raza Caucus, queer and trans scholars of color from the Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns, people of color from the Women’s Caucus, and people of color from the Disability Issues Caucus. This group will create recommendations for inclusion which will be forwarded to NCA leadership and the Publications Council. Additionally, this group will have a representative on the Council. Furthermore, the Publications Council will report to the Legislative Assembly the steps they have taken toward the recruitment of journal editors and editorial board members of color. Several of us will be attending Legislative Assembly and intend to raise this as an issue. We look forward to working with you to address and fix these inequities.

Sincerely,

Collectively Signed by

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