Table of Contents

- General Information
- Convention Registration
- Presenting/Participating
- At Convention

General Information

Q. When and where is NCA’s annual convention held?
NCA will celebrate its 95th Annual Convention this year in Chicago, IL on November 12-15, 2009. Faculty Development Preconferences and Scholars Seminars will take place on Wednesday, November 11, 2009.

Q. What property is hosting the NCA Convention?
Both the Hilton Chicago (720 S. Michigan Avenue) and the Palmer House Hilton (17 E. Monroe Avenue) will be hosting sessions. The exhibit hall, general sessions and the registration area will be located in the Hilton Chicago. The hotels are located approximately a 15-minute walk from one another. A shuttle between hotels will be available during select times.

Q. What do I need to do before the convention?
Please visit the Hotel and Travel Information page on the NCA website for detailed information on travel and making your hotel reservation.

When considering your registration options, check out the Registration Information page on the NCA website. Take advantage of substantial discounts and register early! Convention program participants (chairs, respondents, presenting authors, etc...) need to register by September 17, 2009 to guarantee inclusion in the printed convention program and online program.

Q. Can my partner, child, or family member accompany me at convention?
Absolutely! NCA’s annual convention, for many members, is a family affair. The NCA convention has many social aspects in addition to its fine intellectual tradition. Your family members or friends do not need to pay the membership fees if they do not plan on attending programs, convention receptions or visiting the exhibit area. For a $50 registration fee, they are welcome at all sessions, events and receptions.
Q. Where can I find more information regarding transportation, restaurants and activities in Chicago?
There are many great websites for visitors to Chicago. A couple of recommended sites are below:
www.choosechicago.com
www.chicagotraveler.com
www.meetinchicago.com
www.frommers.com/destinations/chicago

Q. What is the best way to get from the airport to the convention hotel?
Both Chicago O’Hare International Airport (ORD) and Midway Airport (MDW) are served by a variety of convenient modes of transportation. Please visit the Hotel and Travel Information page on the NCA website for detailed information on getting from the airport to your hotel.

Q. Where can I find more information regarding a specific Panel, Paper, Short Course, Faculty Development Preconference, or Scholars Seminar?
The convention program is available online and can be viewed on All Academic. Sessions can be searched by title, presenter name, keyword, or by NCA unit and division. You may view the abstracts (if provided) for sessions and papers. You may also peruse a daily grid of sessions. Information on Short Courses, Faculty Development Preconferences, and Scholars Seminars is also available on the NCA Convention Program Information webpage.

Q. How can I get a copy of the 2009 Annual Convention program book?
All registered attendees may pick up a program book along with other convention materials onsite in the convention registration area located in the Hilton Chicago. There is a fee to replace lost or misplaced program books. The convention program is available online to search, browse on All Academic or you can download a pdf copy from the NCA website (available by October 15, 2009).

Convention Registration

Q. Do I have to be an NCA member to attend the convention?
You do not have to become a member of NCA to attend the convention, however, we hope you decide that an NCA membership is valuable to you. NCA is the largest and most active national association for people in the communication discipline and members of NCA pay considerably less to attend the convention than non-members. Please visit the Members Area for information about NCA membership.
Q. I am presenting a paper and/or participating in a panel at the convention, do I still have to register to attend the convention?
All individuals planning to attend the NCA Annual Convention must register.

Q. How do I register for the convention?
You can register online (available May 1, 2009) or you can return a completed registration form via mail or fax to the National Office (available May 1, 2009). Those who pre-register will receive a confirmation letter as well as your convention badge in the mail.

Q. I want to attend the Job Fair/Graduate School Open House. Do I still need to register for the convention?
To enter the Job Fair or the Graduate School Open House you must register for the convention. These are benefits of a convention registration.

Q. I am a Life Member/Emeritus Member. Do I still have to register for the Convention?
Emeritus and Life members must still register for the convention by registering online or returning a completed registration form via mail or fax. These membership types include the convention fees, but do not automatically register you for the convention.

Q. My school has a departmental membership. Do I qualify to register for the convention at a discounted rate?
Rates for convention are based on individual membership. Institutional/Departmental membership is not related to individuals or individual membership. Please visit the Members Area for information about NCA membership.

Q. How do I register for Short Courses and Faculty Development Preconferences?
Many convention attendees take advantage of the expertise of their peers by participating in Short Courses and Faculty Development Preconferences. A full listing of all Faculty Development Preconferences and Short Courses is available to view on the Program Information page of the NCA Convention website.

To register, mark the Short Courses and/or Faculty Development Preconferences you are interested in during online registration or on the printed registration form. To add a Short Course and/or Faculty Development Preconference after you have already registered for the convention, please complete a convention registration form with your short course or preconference selection and return it to the National Office. At this time you are unable to add a short course or preconference registration to an existing convention registration order online.

Still have questions? Contact the National Office by calling (202) 464-4622.
Q. What’s the difference between a Short Course, a Faculty Development Preconference and a Scholars Seminar?

A Short Course session is two hours and forty-five minutes long. It is an educational or “how-to” course designed to give attendees skills or knowledge to take back to their institution and implement. There is an additional registration fee to attend a Short Course and Short Courses are conducted throughout the convention schedule.

A Faculty Development Preconferences are half-day or day-long sessions held on Wednesday, November 11. At Faculty Development Preconferences, attendees explore an applied research theme, topic, or methodological approach; or an applied pedagogical issue related to teaching, classroom management, and/or course construction. There is an additional registration fee to attend a Faculty Development Preconference.

The Scholar’s Seminars are half-day or full-day sessions held on Wednesday, November 11 that bring together individuals from a variety of interest areas for the purpose of studying a particular theoretical topic, perspective, question, controversy, and/or scholarly contribution. Scholar’s Seminar organizers have issued a separate/additional call for participation in the seminar. Those wishing to respond to the Scholar’s Seminar call will then prepare an abstract to submit to the seminar organizers who will review and select seminar participants. There is no additional fee to participate in a Scholar’s Seminar.

A full listing of all Faculty Development Preconferences and Short Courses is available to view on the Program Information page of the NCA Convention website.

Q. What is your refund policy?
Refunds are available until November 1, 2009 (less a $25 handling fee.). NO REFUNDS will be given after this date. Short Courses and Faculty Development Preconferences are non-refundable unless cancelled by NCA.

Presenting/Participating

Q. What is NCA’s convention participant registration policy?
All designated presenters, panelists, chairs, and respondents must register for the conference by September 17, 2009 to guarantee inclusion in the printed convention program and the online program. For multiple-authored papers, a minimum of one author, must register by September 17, 2009 or the paper may be removed.

Q. I am presenting my first paper. Do you have any advice?
The NCA leadership and National Office have placed increasing importance on strengthening the quality of conference presentations and enhancing participant engagement. Prepare a presentation that follows all of the rules of good speech making. Be sure you have planned on an introduction and conclusion. Organize the body of your talk...
and provide internal organizing mechanisms so people can easily follow along. Do not speak beyond the allotted time and do not read your paper or outline—speak extemporaneously. Summarize your study or report, but do so briefly. In this instance, less is clearly more!

**Q. Should I bring multiple copies of my paper?**

If you are presenting, you have several options for distributing your paper.

1. Presenters will often bring extra copies of their paper to give to those who request them at the presentation.
2. If you do not bring extra copies, or run out of the extra copies you brought, it is acceptable to send someone a copy via mail or through e-mail.
3. Those who chose to do so may have their paper included on the Convention Proceedings CD which is a collection of papers presented at the convention. The CD will be available for purchase in the registration area. *(Please note that participation of presenters on the Convention Proceedings CD does NOT constitute publication)*

**Q. How can I best secure copies of others’ papers?**

If you are attending a panel and would like a copy of a paper, ask the presenter directly. Another option is to purchase the CD on sale in the registration area. Be sure that the paper you are looking for is listed in the CD’s table of contents as some presenters choose not to have their paper included on the CD.

**Q. I am doing a Scholar to Scholar presentation. How can I make my presentation most effective?**

Scholar to Scholar presentations create a unique opportunity for questions and exchanges not available in more formal sessions. Presenters should take advantage of the opportunity to have an exchange with those who choose to come to the session. Presenters have a 4’ by 6’ bulletin board on which they can pin their presentation (presenters should bring their own pins). While audio-visual equipment will not be available, a table and electrical outlets will be provided for presenters to use their laptops. Presenters should make their posters as visually appealing and easy to read as possible. Click here for more Scholar to Scholar FAQs and tips!

**At the Convention**

**Q. What should I wear?**

In addition to your professional materials, you might want to know that the dress at the convention is business casual for presenters. If you are not presenting, you can be more casual. Depending on your evening plans, you might want to pack jeans or a more formal outfit. **Don’t forget your name badge!** Also, be sure to check the weather forecast in Chicago online before you leave. Temperatures can vary widely in November.
Q. This is my first NCA Convention. Does NCA offer any special events for newcomers?
Yes! You are central to the growth and development of NCA, and we extend ourselves to you. Beginning at 8:00am on Thursday, November 12, 2009, we offer a special Newcomer’s Orientation and Reception just for you. You will meet leaders in the discipline, learn about the structure of the organization, and have time to network with others who are new to NCA.

Q. Should I attend the division/caucus/section business meetings that are listed in the program?
Yes! Business Meetings are optional, but offer many advantages. One advantage is the input you will have in disciplinary issues and directions. You will have the opportunity to elect leaders and discuss new directions in your research area. Business meetings offer both leadership and networking opportunities. If you would like to become active in NCA, volunteering to serve your unit can help you in that direction. You will be able to meet other scholars and teachers who share your research interests and gain opportunities to work with them. Finally, these meetings offer you the chance to meet people on a social level.
Yes! NCA is composed of over 60 member interest groups and each has a business meeting. You will have input about the direction of the interest group, vote for group leadership and hear about new directions. If you would like to become active in NCA, volunteering to serve your unit can help you in that direction. You will be able to meet other scholars, teachers and practitioners who share your interests and develop opportunities to work with them. These meetings offer you the chance to network.

Q. Why are the university parties not included in the program? Am I invited?
Many schools will host parties at the convention on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday evening. The parties are not NCA-sponsored events (and therefore not listed in the convention program book); however, NCA does “sublet” space for them. The parties began many years ago as “invitation only,” but the rules have relaxed and today many people go to multiple parties—with or without an invitation.

Q. How should I organize my time at the convention?
With over 1200 scheduled sessions, you have many choices. Veterans of the NCA convention maximize their conference experience by using a personal schedule which can be created on the All Academic website. By using keywords, unit names, and individual’s names, you can find presentations and business meetings you would like to attend and save them to “Your Calendar”. It’s simple! You can access All Academic by using the Quick Link on the NCA Convention homepage. You may browse the program without logging-in by clicking on the Search the 2009 Program link on the upper left hand corner but you can’t create your own schedule without logging-in. To create your personalized schedule, log-in to All Academic and click on the Search the 2009 Program link. You may search by presenter, session or individual paper. You can also add additional search fields by clicking...
on the Advanced Options link. You can search for all papers or sessions sponsored by a unit, an author’s name or a keyword in a session or paper title just to name a few options. When you see a result that you want to learn more about, click on View to see an expanded summary. Click Add to My Schedule if this is a session or paper you want to save. Sessions/papers on which you play a role will automatically be added to your schedule. You can view your entire schedule by clicking on the My Schedule icon/link at the top of and page.

Here are some other helpful hints.

- **First priority: Know when you are scheduled to present.** You should find out this event as soon as possible, as your trip planning may be scheduled around your presentation.
- **Review the Events of General Interest.** These are spotlighted or convention-wide programs that will appeal to a large cross-section of convention attendees. These are great networking and educational opportunities.
- **Choose the presentations you would like to attend.** These choices can be based on topics of interest to you, friends or faculty who are presenting, or even presenters you would like to meet (a presentation provides a great opportunity to begin a conversation with them). Many presenters will also have papers you might like to receive.
- **Choose the business meetings you would like to attend.** Meetings of the commissions, divisions, sections, caucuses and other units are open for any NCA member to attend. If you are registered for these units or caucuses, you can become an active participant in these meetings, which is a perfect way to experience NCA membership, as well as a valuable opportunity to meet people and create professional relationships.
- **Remember that some sessions are in the Hilton Chicago and some are at the Palmer House Hilton.** Plan accordingly if you need to travel between hotels.
- **Don’t forget to save some time for fun!** NCA offers several social events as part of the overall convention experience. An “Early Bird” Welcome Reception is scheduled on Wednesday, November 11 and a larger Welcome Reception is featured on Thursday, November 12. About 1,500 people typically attend the Welcome Reception, making it a good place to meet with friends or to make new ones.
- **Have fun outside the convention as well!** Set aside some time to explore the year’s conference location. Many attractions, regional cuisine (you might want to schedule some time to eat), historical tours, shopping, and other events will compete for your time.