

**NATIONAL COLLEGE TESTING ASSOCIATION**

**2016 ANNUAL REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

During 2016, the Governing Council of the National College Testing Association continued to work on the goals of the 2014 Strategic Planning Session held in Texas. These goals included providing the membership with additional opportunities for professional development, enhancing the annual conference with a conference app that allowed for interactive sessions, and increasing the number of sessions offered by the virtual conference. The Governing Council reorganized the division structure to more accurately reflect the work being done as well as better serve all members of NCTA. We have begun an update to the NCTA web page platform. The new platform will give us greater flexibility in the day to day running of the organization. We continue to make progress on our road to 2020 (NCTA 2020: Focusing on Our Future.)

**GOVERNING COUNCIL**

The Governing Council currently consists of fifteen persons whose primary goal is to continue providing the opportunities that will enable NCTA to move forward in its quest to serve as a leader in the area of test administration/proctoring whether online or in person, computer or paper/pencil, national or institutional-always keeping uppermost the need for security and integrity.

The Governing Council reorganized its divisional structure to more accurately reflect the work the Council is doing and what would fit in each division. This change will allow for greater efficiency and streamline the work flow of the Governing Council. In addition to the reorganization, a plan was developed for the chair of each division and the placement of new Council members into a division to work under the chair and then become chair when the current chair rotates off.

The divisions are Finance which focuses on the financial management and reporting for the organization; Growth and Outreach which focuses outside the organization with the purpose of recruiting new members and increasing industry awareness of NCTA; Membership Engagement which focuses on the current NCTA membership with the purpose of increasing networking opportunities, developing the talent and leadership pool, supporting NCTA initiatives, and promoting a sense of ownership and belonging within the organization; Partnerships and Collaborations which focuses on establishing, promoting, and enhancing our relationship with other testing related professional organizations for purposes of expanding the reach of NCTA, developing resources to assist NCTA members, and advancing the professional community; Professional Development which focuses on developing and expanding the knowledge, skills, and abilities of NCTA members through SIGs, webinars, the E-Journal, and numerous volunteer opportunities related to the annual conference and virtual conferences; Professional Services which focuses on the development of best practices in testing as well as the advancement and development of NCTA programs and services promoting those practices.

The Governing Council meets three times a year, and this year those meetings were held in April at the 2016 Seattle conference site, at the end of the 2016 conference, and in November at the 2019 conference site in New Orleans.

Four Governing Council members completed their terms at the end of the 2016 conference: Kay Alford with Coastal Carolina University, Sally Frazee with Temple University, Heidi Pettyjohn with the University of Cincinnati, and Duane Goupell with the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. Duane assumed the role of President of NCTA at the Governing Council meeting. Three new persons joined the Council: Alex Martinez with Texas A&M International University, Jamila Maxie with the University of Houston-Clear Lake, and Alice Mitchell with the University of Maryland.

The Governing Council continues to strive to make every effort to be good stewards of NCTA’s financial situation: we have reduced the size of the Council to reduce meeting costs; conference sites are chosen with the intent of providing attendees with an affordable professional development experience, and conference costs are closely monitored. In addition, we continue to fine-tune the virtual conference option to enable those whose schedules and departmental budgets preclude their in-person conference attendance with a reasonably priced way of participating in sessions; the multi-year purchase of the conference app provides NCTA’s membership with a connection to colleagues at a reduced rate.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Chairs**: Jim Wollack and Cindy James

NCTA offers a variety of professional development opportunities for all the members through the annual conference, the E-Journal, special interest groups and webinars.

**Annual Conference**: The annual conference was held in Seattle, Washington from August 3 – 6 at the Westin Hotel. There were 408 participants at the conference and another 96 who registered for the virtual conference.

The conference program committee received a total of 84 proposals (an increase of 20% from the 70 received in 2015), 58 of which were accepted (seven proposals were combined and accepted as three presentations), resulting in a total of 54 breakout presentations. Twelve of the submitted proposals were for presenter travel awards, of which we awarded 3. A new addition to the program this year was PODs, which invite conference attendees to meet to discuss a host of ideas around a central theme. The program featured three of these innovative and interactive sessions, and results from member surveys suggested that they were well received. The program also featured a keynote address from Rhonda Blackburn and a closing panel highlighting current topics in testing.

Planning is well underway for the 2017 conference that will be held at the historic Hilton Netherland Plaza in Cincinnati, Ohio, from September 13 – 15.

**E-Journal**: There were no submissions to the *Journal of the National College Testing Association (JNCTA)* this year. The journal continues to solicit manuscripts that focus on the trends, practices, research, programs, policies, and activities related to examination development and administration. Prospective authors will find the call for journal submissions on the NCTA website under the Resources tab/E-Journal link.

**Special Interest Groups (SIGS)**: The first SIG, Universal Access in Testing (UAT), was established in 2015. This group provides targeted professional development and resources related to ideas of non-standard or accommodated testing for students with disabilities with a focus on creating accessible testing experiences for these students. The UAT has a separate electronic mailing list to which there are 206 subscribers. The establishment of at least one other SIG is a high priority for the coming year.

**Webinars:** NCTA members have access to the virtual conference and a recorded archive of the key conference sessions, plus on-demand webinars that are available year-round.For the 2016 virtual conference, there were 96 virtual conference registrations which allowed 214 members to participate in the conference remotely. Also, in late January/early February, the Webinar Committee presented a two-part webinar series entitled *Placement Testing Implementation Success: What You Need to Know*. Part 1 was the College Testing Administrators’ Panel and provided a forum for testing center directors to share their experiences with placement testing on their respective campuses. Part 2 was the Test Developers’ Panel and provided test developers an opportunity to discuss considerations in choosing and implementing a placement testing program on your campus. Both webinars were free to NCTA members and were very well attended, with 198 and 132 attendees, respectively.

**FINANCE**

**Chair: Jarret Dyer, Treasurer**

In mid-2016, the NCTA Governing Council approved transitioning the organization’s fiscal year reporting period in an effort to best align with that of most post-secondary institutions. NCTA’s new fiscal year will be July 1- June 30. During this transition period, we are providing a Calendar Year 2016 Annual Report, and will provide another Annual Report for our new Fiscal Year 2017 in July.

The annual conference continues to be a success in registration numbers. Due to the added expenses of hosting a conference in Seattle, expenses exceeded revenue with revenue $189,620 based on conference registrations, sponsorship, and other contributions; conference expenses totaled $197,270. Membership continues to be a solid source of revenue with $128737 received. Governing Council expenses to conduct the business of the association this year amounted to $62,003, and expenses for various initiatives by NCTA committees included $13,365 for Grants, $990 for webinars, $3,723 for Test Center Certification, and $1593 for conference travel assistance grants for presenters. For a more complete review of the profit/loss statement for 2016, please refer to the 2016 Financial Reports located under the Resources tab/Annual Reports link on the NCTA website.

As part of the Finance Division, the annual Grants program offers opportunities for professional development and strives to promote the development of resources for NCTA members, to encourage professional support activities, and to support the formation of state testing organizations among the members of NCTA. In 2016, the Grants program funded a total of five applications with a total of $12,437 distributed to applicants. This was less than the 2015-2016 grant cycle when ten applications were funded for a total distribution of $21,974. The 2016-2017 grant funds were used to support several projects including regional professional development conferences, staff training, and the creation of state organizations. The Grants Committee follows a very specific set of guidelines regarding how funds can be used. These guidelines can be found on the NCTA website under the Resources tab/Grants Program link.

**GROWTH AND OUTREACH**

**Chair: Amystique Harris Church**

For the Growth &Outreach (G&O) committee, this year has been about restructuring and establishing foundations for future outreach initiatives. Due to new division restructuring, the editing committee and mailing list are no longer under this division. Our restructuring process required collecting past data initiatives from marketing and recruitment departments, establishing the G&O Division Head job description and creating new committee volunteer expectations. A division action plan was also developed. The plan contains a preliminary timetable detailing initiative delivery over a five year timeframe. The division co-chairs have already started working on key action items such as recruiting new members, building partnerships with other organizations/vendors and promoting an awareness of NCTA overall. G&O is also in the process of building a strong committee divided into the following subgroups: recruitment, retention and outreach (external marketing). The committee will start with a core group of five areas and create additional taskforces as the initiative requires more support.

We are continually promoting the NCTA brand through the use of Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter social media platforms and consistently add new members monthly. Our NCTA Facebook and LinkedIn pages provide a platform for members to comment on industry trends. While the NCTA Twitter account is solely used to distribute information to followers, future initiatives include using Twitter to obtain industry followers, brand ourselves as industry leaders and promote NCTA awareness. Our webmaster has added the social media links to the NCTA website creating cross-promotional opportunities that encourage member participation.

Our social media accounts proved particularly useful during NCTA conference activities. Our Facebook account was used to share photos of NCTA conference activities. Throughout the duration of NCTA conference sessions, Twitter also proved to be a useful tool, facilitating constructive dialogue and robust activity from virtual conference attendees.

The conference app functions were critical to organizational assessment of conference attendance and member satisfaction. The app’s built-in features track data as well as the increase in membership social media presence. While the app has many additional features, each year the NCTA conference app team will expand these offerings. Currently, over 85% of conference attendees used the mobile app to complete survey sessions while 90% of the in-person/virtual attendees utilized the mobile app. The conference app team intends to continue its current partnership with Gather Digital, extending its service agreement through 2018.

**MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT**

**Chair: Theresa Scott**

The Membership Engagement Division focuses on the current NCTA membership with the purpose of increasing networking opportunities, developing the talent and leadership pool, supporting NCTA initiatives, and promoting a sense of ownership and belonging within the organization. It encompasses Technical Services (websites and mailing lists), Merchandise, Volunteers, New Member Orientation, and Awards and Recognition.

During this year of NCTA organizational restricting, the Membership Engagement Division utilized this past year as a foundation time to transition and ensure all committee leadership positions were filled. Moving forward, Membership Engagement seeks to not only retain a greater percent of the membership base but also engage members, promote the priorities of NCTA, and increase participation in important organization activities. Member engagement is an ongoing initiative that will take consistent effort from NCTA to deliver value to our members.

**PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS**

**Chair: Kristen Vickery**

The Partnerships and Collaboration Division focuses on establishing, promoting, and enhancing our relationship with other testing related professional organizations for purposes of expanding the reach of NCTA, developing resources to assist NCTA members, and advancing the professional community. Current examples include the ATP Proctoring committee, the AHEAD liaison, and the State and Regional Organizations (SRO) liaison. This division also identifies additional collaborations with other groups that will benefit the profession and determines how best to grow these partnerships.

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

**Chair: Yvette Leverett**

The Professional Services Division focuses on the development of best practices in testing as well as the advancement and development of NCTA programs and services promoting these practices. This division oversees committees on Test Center Certification, the Consortium of College Testing Centers (CCTC), and CAS Standards implementation.

**CAS**

According to the CAS website, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education promotes intra-campus collaboration and reflects good practices agreed upon by the profession-at-large through the CAS Standards. Comprised of 43 collaborating professional associations representing over 115,000 professionals in higher education, CAS has developed 45 sets of standards and guidelines within diverse areas of the college student experiences. During 2016, CAS added an alternate NCTA representative. This appointment will be reviewed on a yearly basis for reappointment. The creation of CAS standards for testing has also begun. This process should be completed within a year. Three members were identified as area experts and asked to join NCTA's CAS representative and the alternate during the development of standards. Contact has been made with the NCTA web master to make changes to the NCTA website regarding the Professional Services section. These changes will include the name, office number, and email contact of the committee chair.

**CCTC**

The Consortium of College Testing Centers (CCTC) currently has 355 members. There were 33 new listings approved in 2016. A recommendation was made by the CCTC manager to update the approval process from a single person approval process to a committee approval process. This recommendation is currently under review. Currently, the ADHOC Distance Learning Committee- CCTC Taskforce is completing a comparison review of current NCTA members vs. CCTC listed members. This research will allow the taskforce to determine the CCTC’s target market and provide useful insight for future CCTC growth campaigns.

**Test Center Certification**

The Test Center Certification Committee was very active during 2016. Committee members volunteered and presented at the 2016 Annual Conference and conducted three open enrollment periods that allowed schools to begin the certification process. Forty-five schools applied during the open enrollments, fifteen in each cycle. During the year, 35 test centers were granted NCTA Test Center Certification bringing the total number of certified centers, since the project began in 2010, to 154. At the end of 2016, 63 schools were in various stages of the certification process. Test Center Re-certification process continued as three schools certified in 2011 completed the required re-certification process which occurs five years after the original certification date. There will be more re-certifications in 2017 as the schools that were awarded Test Center Certification in 2012 will complete the five year renewal process. The certification process for institutions changed this year, moving from 5 stages to 4.The review stage was eliminated. The decision to reduce the number of stages was done to allow Advisors more time to screen materials more thoroughly. Training materials are being tweaked and developed as roles of service for the volunteers are being better defined. The NCTA Test Center Application and forms are becoming more encompassing, requiring more specific information so that the creation and review of school documents is more comprehensive when being released from the school Advisor.

The next Pre-Application period for test center certification, Cycle 16, is targeted to be announced mid-February on the NCTA website. As the number of schools seeking certification increases, additional volunteers will be solicited for the TCC committee. A pilot program was launched in 2016 for NCTA non-collegiate centers indicating an interest in becoming certified test centers. Several businesses have inquired about certification for 2017. Brainseed has committed to officially submit an application during the next Pre-Application Cycle. This will be ground breaking and will determine differences in the certification process for schools versus businesses.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE**

During 2016 the Governing Council formed a committee to evaluate where we are on our journey to 2020. The plan is to relook at the original plan and identify the areas that are moving forward as planned, the areas that need to move forward, and the areas that may need to be evaluated for revision or to dropped from the plan. The committee met during the year and hopes to wrap up the work by summer 2017.

**CONCLUSION**

Since the beginning of NCTA in 2000, the association continues to offer its members professional development activities and professional support services while also supporting collaborative efforts among testing professionals, testing companies, and other policy-making agencies. Membership is at an all-time high, finances are stable, opportunities are available for member involvement, and we are moving forward with plans to be stronger in the future.

Appendix A

Governing Council Members

as of December 31, 2016

Officers

Duane Goupell, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

2016-2018 NCTA President

Jarret Dyer, College of DuPage (IL)

Treasurer

C. Criss Gilbert, University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse

Secretary

Francesca B. Taylor, University of West Georgia

Past President

Amystique Harris Church, Delaware State University

Tammy Roach, university of Louisville

Jim Wollack, University of Wisconsin Madison

Theresa Scott, Middle Georgia State University

Kristen Vickery, Anne Arundel Community College

Cindy James, Thompson Rivers University, (British Columbia, Canada)

Yvette Leverett, University of Georgia

Tabatha Phillips, Western Kentucky University

Alex Martinez, Texas A&M International University

Jamila Maxie, University of Houston-Clear Lake

Alice Mitchell, University of Maryland

The following Governing Council members served until the expiration of their terms at the

conclusion of the 2016 conference (August 2016):

Kay Alford, Coastal Carolina University (SC)

Sally Frazee, Temple University

Heidi Pettyjohn, University of Cincinnati