

NeMLA Spring 2022 Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 10, 2022

In attendance

Past President, Brandi So

President, Bernadette Wegenstein

Second Past President, Modhumita Roy

British and Colonial/Postcolonial Studies Director, Thomas Lynn

Comparative Literature Director, Julia Titus

Creative Writing, Publishing, and Editing Director, Abby Bardi

French and Francophone Studies Director, Olivier Le Blond

Italian Studies Director, Tiziano Cherubini

Professionalization, Composition, and Pedagogy Director, Jina Lee

Spanish and Portuguese Studies Director, Victoria Ketz

US and Transnational/Diaspora Studies Director, Donovan Ramon

CAITY Caucus President and Representative, Francisco Delgado

Diversity Caucus President, Jennifer Mdurvwa

Graduate Student Caucus Representative, Dana Gavin

Women's and Gender Studies Caucus Representative, Justine Dymond

Editor of *Modern Language Studies*, Laurence Roth

Non-Board Members Present

Executive Director, Carine Mardorossian

Associate Executive Director, Ashley Byczkowski

Absent

Vice President, Joseph Valente

Cultural Studies and Media Studies Director, Kathleen Kasten-Mutkus

German Studies Director, Charles Vannette

The Fall 2021 Board Minutes were unanimously approved.

ED Mardorossian gave her Executive Director's Report and reviewed the events and offerings for the Baltimore conference. She discussed the next 3 upcoming conferences for which she has secured a contract with Whova, the NeMLA app, and she updated the board on the negotiations that led to the hotel bookings.

Dr. Mardorossian explained that the 2022 Convention in Baltimore was by far one of the largest NeMLA has ever had but also one of the most difficult ones to put together by virtue of the hybrid nature of the conference. Hybrid is like 3 conferences she explained. A/V alone entailed a whole summer of negotiating and consulting with companies, especially since the main events would involve costly live streaming for those who could not attend in person.

ED Mardorossian welcomed the new board members and reviewed staffing needs at NeMLA. She updated the Board about the long-range planning committee's deliberations the night before.

After the financial review, she discussed the plea by a Ukrainian member that the board provide a statement about the Russian War on Ukraine. The Board decided to develop a statement immediately following the board meeting. Several board members volunteered.

ED Mardorossian also reported on the outcome of the Marriott Copley/Local Union situation which was resolved to the satisfaction of all involved when NeMLA 2024 was moved to the Sheraton, a unionized Marriott property.

The Officers' reports followed:

- a. Past President, Brandi So explained that no book award in criticism would be bestowed due to the low quality of the submissions. She expressed gratitude for all her years on the Board and at NeMLA.
- b. President, Bernadette Wegenstein reviewed the extraordinary line up at NeMLA 2022 and thanked the keynote Judith Butler for her generosity with students and the organization.
- c. Second Vice President, Modhumita Roy discussed the Summer fellowships: 6 were granted in 2022.
- d. Editor of *Modern Language Studies*, Laurence Roth talked about the new *Modern Language Studies* website and the issue 51.1&2, available digitally through the site. The journal would now be distributed to members in digital form only, although printed copies of the journal will still be sent to contributors and institutional subscribers. Members can purchase a printed copy for \$15.00 each. He also recognized and thanked the MLS's new Creative Director, Amanda Lenig, for planning, leading, and executing the redesign, and the new Webmaster, Nick Stephenson, for making it all look so good.
- e. British and Colonial/Postcolonial Studies Director, Thomas Lynn discussed the strength of the area and the underrepresented fields for which board-sponsored sessions were added (African American literature, Canadian Literature, etc.)
- f. Comparative Literature Director, Julia Titus reviewed her area and decided to take over supervision and expansion of Russian, a field of interest to her specifically that had been previously combined with the German area.
- g. Creative Writing, Publishing, and Editing Director, Abby Bardi discussed the new Creative Writing book award whose winner was none other than Patrick Henry, after a blind evaluation of the manuscripts by Professor Jean McGarry, Elliott Coleman Professor at John Hopkins University
- h. Cultural Studies and Media Studies Director, Kathleen Kasten-Mutkus appeared on zoom to introduce herself and thank the Board
- i. French and Francophone Studies Director, Olivier Le Blond reviewed the growing strength of the French and Francophone area with the most sessions ever. He then discussed the fields he thought needed more support.

- j. Spanish and Portuguese Studies Director, Victoria Ketz will be beginning her new term as Second vice President on the Board
- k. Diversity Caucus President, Jennifer Mdurvwa shared the essay award winner and discussed the future of diversity and the Undergraduate Forum once she steps down
- l. Italian Studies Director, Tiziano Cherubini reviewed the sessions and the various fields represented.
- m. Professionalization, Composition, and Pedagogy Director, Jina Lee vetted the session with the help of the presidents of the GSC and CAITY
- n. US and Transnational/Diaspora Studies Director, Donavan Ramon is joining the board in this new capacity and is excited to work on underrepresented fields
- o. CAITY Caucus President and Representative, Francisco Delgado thanked ED Mardorossian for the increase in travel grant funding.
- p. Graduate Student Caucus Representative, Dana Gavin discussed the difficulties the GSC had encountered in terms of keeping abreast of the travel grants and the essay award.
- q. Women's and Gender Studies Caucus Representative, Justine Dymond announced the special event speaker in the area and updated the board on the offerings in Women's and Sexuality studies at the convention as well as on the Publishing mentorship.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15am.