

COMMISSION II:

How can NCKP best assist collegiate pedagogy teachers in the work we do as teachers, performers and researchers?

Report prepared by: Midori Koga

This commission asked participants to evaluate the activities of NCKP from 2001 to the present. It sought suggestions for new activities, for improving or abandoning existing offerings, or any other such recommendations that are appropriate to the mission and goals of the conference. Comments were solicited regarding not only the conference itself, but also included thoughts about research projects, breakout meetings, online resources, websites, etc. Participants were asked to review projects, programs, events, and/or other services that the NCKP has provided over the past ten years, and to offer suggestions for ways to enhance the experience of collegiate pedagogy teachers during the coming decade.

53 college pedagogy faculty members from the US, Canada, Australia, Asia and Europe, gathered together on July 27th, 2011 to discuss the following questions within this commission.

QUESTION I: How are we doing? In the past few years we have had wonderful responses to the NCKP conference offerings. Why do you come to the NCKP? What draws you to the conference? What keeps bringing you back? What do you find exciting about the various presentations, workshops and activities? What do you HOPE to take away from each of the conferences? What DO you take away from each of the conferences?

The following responses were compiled by group facilitators: Nancy Bachus, Susanne Baker, Patricia Carter-Zagorski, Linda Christensen, Connie Anderson, and Elizabeth Gutierrez.

Why do you come to the NCKP?

- i) Quality, relevant and inspiring programming
- ii) Opportunity to meet other teachers from similar backgrounds in an intimate setting
- iii) Opportunity to interact with well-known pedagogues
- iv) To share ideas and hear other people's experiences
- v) Talk with other teachers who have the same problems and concerns
- vi) Gain new perspectives about teaching and performance
- vii) Publishers showcases

What brought you to the conference?

- i) Personal invitation from either Sam Holland or a friend/colleague
- ii) Outstanding (brilliant) speakers and presenters

- iii) Focus on the larger issues concerning piano pedagogy
- iv) Unique opportunity to stay current on the issues pertaining to pedagogy and performance
- v) Diverse community of academic faculty, independent teachers, researchers, performers, music publishers
- vi) Mixture of music levels and variety of activities

What keeps bringing you back?

- i) Good time of year
- ii) Good location, beautiful facility
- iii) Consistent, dependable quality
- iv) Exchange of new, fresh ideas
- v) Staying connected with colleagues; seeing friends
- vi) The sense that every voice is heard

What do you find exciting about the various presentations, workshops and activities?

- i) Focus on serious pedagogy
- ii) Research posters and paper presentations
- iii) Technological innovations to aid in our efforts to become even more effective teachers
- iv) Chance to learn about subjects that might not be familiar such as studies about the brain and music

What do you HOPE to take away from each of the conferences?

What DO you take away from each of the conferences?

- i) Continued excitement about the field; “re-charging” for the fall
- ii) Energizing ideas
- iii) Pride, hope, and optimism for the future of our profession
- iv) Summation of current research
- v) Learn how to be a better advocate for music teaching
- vi) Networking with other participants and leaders

QUESTION II: What could we be doing even more effectively? How could any of the seminars, presentations, lectures etc. that are being offered, work more efficiently and have greater impact upon your experience at NCKP, and in your lives beyond the conferences? How can we be more helpful to you, in your lives as musicians, teachers, and performers? How can we open up further communication with you, even between conferences so that our community remains continuously vibrant?

Since the responses for both Question II and III were so closely related, I have incorporated the responses for both questions at this point in the report.

QUESTION III: Let's dream beyond the immediate possibilities of the NCKP!

If we had no financial, institutional or time limitations, what changes could we make in the conference, and in the organization itself that could make an even bigger impact upon our field and the world? This is an opportunity for free brainstorming and dreaming with NO LIMITATIONS!

Contributions to this part of the report were made by the following group facilitators.

Question II: Kellie Cunningham, LeAnne House, Amy Johnson, Fred Karpoff, Midori Koga, and Mira Kruja.

Question III: Valerie Cisler, Camille Fu, Jessica Johnson, Andrea McAlister.

Specific to the Pre-Conference for Collegiate Piano Pedagogy Teachers:

- i) **Small group discussion sessions at future pre-conference seminars:**
Participants commented on the value of being together, having the opportunity to talk, trouble-shoot, problem-solve and commiserate on issues regarding our work as college piano pedagogy faculty. The following were suggestions of ways that this could be organized at future conferences:
 - a) Slightly longer discussion sessions of 40 – 45 minutes. Many felt that the allotted 30 minutes for each topic was too short, especially when discussing the more complex questions in Commission I. Having a boxed lunch/dinner event where the discussion could continue was also suggested.
 - b) Participants could be divided into specific groups, by the level of pedagogy course/degree offerings of the institutions at which they teach. For example:
 - Teachers of undergraduate required or non-required pedagogy courses (individual courses separate from a major emphasis or concentration).
 - Teachers/directors of undergraduate programs with pedagogy major emphasis or concentration.
 - Teachers/directors of Masters of Music in Piano Pedagogy and/or Performance programs.
 - Teachers/directors of DMA programs in Pedagogy and Performance.
 - Those interested in developing new programs in pedagogy.
 - Those interested in developing preparatory teaching programs.

- Those who teach primarily college-level group piano. Prior to the conference, participants could request the specific groups they would want to join (as some may have multiple responsibilities within their job descriptions).
- c) If grouped as suggested above, topics could be either pre-determined by request (suggestions sent in by participants prior to the pre-conference), or could revolve around pedagogy departmental offerings (coursework, research, performance, teaching internships etc.).
 - d) Discussion groups should not be too large (6-8) so that there is enough time for all to share on the topic comfortably.
 - e) Fewer questions to resolve during the limited time period so that the participants don't feel rushed. To avoid confusion, it might not be necessary to move the entire group from table to table, but to have the leaders move instead.
- ii) **Possible topics for future Pre-conference seminars for College Faculty:**
 - a) More 'creativity themes', especially regarding the challenge of being creative within the confines of academia, NASM, etc.
 - b) More topics to do with the synthesis of piano technique and music.
 - c) Topics could be more in-depth, i.e., one larger, more philosophical question to consider at the end of the day.
 - iii) **Avoid having conflicting sessions during the pre-conferences:** Many participants commented that they would have been interested in participating in, for example, the Wellness or the Technology pre-conference seminars. It would be helpful if the pre-conference seminars were geared towards specific groups of our cohort (Independent Teacher, Students, Young Teachers, Collegiate Faculty etc.) and avoid topic related seminars, which might be of interest to any of the groups. The Wellness, Technology (and any other topic related) sessions could be included in the main part of the conference.

Pertaining to the NCKP conference as a whole:

- i) **Provide offerings throughout the conference that would bridge performance with pedagogy:** One participant remarked how interesting and inspiring it was to have Alan Walker, Ann Schein and other scholars/performers involved with this conference to encourage more of our "performance" colleagues to attend. These types of presentations could be explored even further. Another remarked how the conference could include even more performances of our collegiate

peers – perhaps a “call for performance proposals” could be considered for future conferences.

- ii) **“Open up the Box” and look outside of the specific field of pedagogy to expand the offerings at NCKP:** Many of the participants were interested in creating stronger links between teaching, performance and research within our field, and looking “outwards” to the fields of education, dance, movement (Alexander, Feldenkrais, Dalcroze) music education, conducting, psychology, kinesiology, medicine, anatomy, and neuroscience etc. to bring in perspectives that challenge and expand our views of our field.

- iii) **Encourage even greater participation and involvement from the younger generation of teachers (college students, graduate students, and new teachers).**
 - a) Offer even more sessions with practical, “fundamentals of teaching” advice pertaining specifically to this community.
 - b) During the conference, set-up a mentorship program in which a young teacher may be partnered with a more experienced teacher to meet and chat over lunch.
 - c) Consider setting up a panel discussion period specifically for young teachers to share their questions and concerns. At this point, we offer sessions FOR young teachers, but could do more to involve them directly in the conference.
 - d) Research poster sessions are an excellent way for graduate students and young teachers to present their own work. However, consider devoting a specific time for research posters (without conflicting sessions), so that the presenters have the time and the audience to discuss their work in more depth.
 - e) Provide opportunities for young teachers to bring their own teaching videotapes for constructive feedback from a master teacher (this could be set-up as private or small group sessions rather than in a large public forum).
 - f) Offer financial assistance through scholarship for teachers in their first years of teaching.
 - g) Explore ways of cutting further conference-attending costs such as accommodations by partnering with a nearby university/college dormitory for more affordable lodging.

- iv) **Continued online dialogue between conferences (via facebook, skype, website or other online discussion groups):**
 - a) Participants suggested that we consider the model of “Pno-Ped-L” (a piano pedagogy web discussion group) set up by Steve Clark from Columbus University. Discussion groups for the NCKP could be organized in a similar format with general groups, or specific

- membership such as for young teachers, graduate students, independent teachers, researchers, collegiate faculty etc.
- b) Members of the list could send in questions or concerns to be answered by any of our colleagues. The website could pose a “Question of the Month” similar to Clavier Companion, with videotaped primary responses from a number of teachers, followed by a chat room/blog discussion by the membership at large.
 - c) Create an online video library (perhaps on the NCKP website) with examples of outstanding teaching samples (of varying levels and environments), teacher interviews, lectures on various topics, and new technology demonstrations.
 - d) Create a reading list of useful pedagogical resources to which members could add suggestions.
 - e) Create an “oral history of pedagogy” video-blog on the website in which students may talk about their teachers. Through this project our field may find some “unknown gems” of teaching in our community.
 - f) Consider publishing highlight sessions of the NCKP conference on the website to draw in possible future attendees. This would also entice younger teachers to view sessions online. Consider “video-streaming” parts of the conference “iConference” in real-time for a reduced fee, again to encourage younger teachers, and those who are unable to afford the costs for registration, travel and lodging, to participate.
 - g) Provide opportunities for online collaborative research discussions in “virtual mini-retreats”; NCKP or members could propose research areas or topics.
 - h) Create a directory of pedagogy programs in North America on the NCKP website for easy access.
- v) **Avoid having too many conflicting sessions at one time, or of over-scheduling the program:** There was some comment that a little more “free time” during the schedule to allow for socializing on a general level could allow for more opportunities in creative discourse and networking. Conflicting sessions during the pre-conference seminars as well as the conference itself became somewhat frustrating for some participants.
- vi) **Conference Proceedings:** Participants would welcome a summary and synopsis of each of the sessions to be made available after the conference (in book form, and on the website) so that they could remain updated with information they may have missed during the conference. It is very exciting that this will be available!
- vi) **Longer sessions:** Longer workshops and lectures that allow the clinicians to delve more deeply into each topic, and leave some time for question/answer periods following each session, was a strong preference for many participants. One participant suggested that perhaps one day of

the entire conference be designated “workshop” day, which would allow for these longer, more interactive sessions.

- vii) **Request for more demonstration teaching segments of all levels:** Participants remembered past conferences of the NCPP, which had student teachers working with children, followed by master teacher commentary. One particular group suggested that it may be particularly interesting if a panel of specialists outside of our field (psychologist, specialist in learning styles etc.) commented on the teaching events.
- viii) **Request to keep the conference at the END OF JULY as it has been for the past few conferences.** Many participants commented that the time for this conference is ideal, and that every two years is just about right!
- ix) **Request for sessions that call for peer-reviewed submissions of:**
 - a) Scholarly research
 - b) Performance proposals
 - c) Workshops
 - d) Teaching demonstrations

The peer-review process would allow the community at-large to have the opportunity to be able to present their ongoing research and performance projects. This would also bring in new membership to the conference, as young faculty members throughout North America are always looking for opportunities to develop their portfolio of scholarly and creative work through the peer-review process.

- x) **Coalition for the Arts:** As the arts in general are continually faced with financial cut backs and other challenges, it was suggested that the NCKP bring in leaders from varying arts organizations and institutions to discuss the state and future of music and the arts. Members could include NEA, MTNA, MENC, University Faculty and Administration organizations, NASM, P-12 Teachers, Independent Music Teachers, Music Therapists, Composers, Performing Arts organizations, NAMM, and music business leaders among others. Some examples of how this group may work, were also offered:
 - a) Panel discussions during the NCKP conference
 - b) A full-day retreat small group discussions
 - c) Ongoing communication through online discussion groups

Many thanks to the 53 musicians/teachers/performers who participated in the pre-conference seminar for Collegiate Faculty. At the end of the day, it was agreed unanimously that the small group discussions were extremely valuable and exciting, and the hope is that we would be able to continue this type of interaction at future NCKP conferences.