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Participants:
Trevor Parry-Giles
Matthew Seeger
Jennifer Ho

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Trevor Parry-Giles:
Welcome to *Communication Matters, the NCA Podcast*. I'm Trevor Parry-Giles, the Executive Director of the National Communication Association. The National Communication Association is the preeminent scholarly association devoted to the study and teaching of communication. Founded in 1914, NCA is a thriving group of thousands from across the nation and around the world who are committed to a collective mission to advance communication as an academic discipline. In keeping with NCA's mission to advance the discipline of communication, NCA has developed this podcast series to expand the reach of our member scholars' work and perspectives.

Introduction:
This is *Communication Matters, the NCA Podcast*.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Listeners, today's episode will address the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In light of the outbreak, there's been widespread concern about public communication regarding the virus such as the accuracy of government information, the use of racist and xenophobic stereotypes and communication and media coverage. So, today's episode is going to address both of these issues. First, I'm going to chat with Professor Matthew Seeger, an expert in crisis and risk communication about best practices in crisis comm and how government communication about the COVID-19 virus could improve. I'm also going to be speaking with Professor Jennifer Ho, the president-elect of the Association for Asian-American Studies about xenophobic stereotypes and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, a bit of background about today's guests, Professor Seeger is a professor of communication and the dean of the College of Fine Performing and Communication Arts at Wayne State University. Professor Seeger has been studying crisis and disasters for more than 35 years and previously worked with the Centers for Disease Control during the 2001 anthrax attacks.

Professor Matt Seeger has also worked with the World Health Organization on crisis communication guidelines. Jennifer Ho is a professor of Asian-American studies and director of The Center for Humanities and the Arts at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dr. Ho is the author of three books: *Consumption and Identity in Asian-American Coming-of-Age Novels*, *Racial Ambiguity in Asian-American Culture* and *Understanding Gish Jen*. So, first we'll talk with Professor Seeger. Welcome to *Communication Matters*, Matt.

Matthew Seeger:
Thank you. I'm delighted to have a chance to talk to you.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
As I briefly mentioned I think in the introduction, you really have decades of experience with crises, crisis and risk communication including working with both the CDC and the WHO. Could you tell our listeners a little bit about some of those experiences and what you discovered working with CDC and WHO?

Matthew Seeger:
Absolutely. And I'm delighted to tell a little bit about this story. Having been in this field for over 35 years, I have a lot of stories. The project with the Centers for Disease Control projects really began following 9/11 when there was the anthrax letter issue. Some of you may recall that letters that were contaminated with anthrax spores were sent through the U.S. mail and created a number of very serious disruptions and several deaths. The CDC found itself in the position of being a principal response agency really for the first time around this particular episode and struggled to communicate effectively. And they had a variety of missteps over reassuring, not being as transparent and they called in a number of experts following that to work with them to develop resources on crisis communication, risk communication.

So, I worked with a number of colleagues in the field including Dr. Barbara Reynolds who was at the CDC at that particular time to begin to develop materials. Dr. Reynolds developed a manual called The Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Manual which is now in its, it's going into its third edition which really laid out I think the Bible of how to communicate around these particular issues. Those materials I will note are all available online at the Centers for Disease Control. I know there are a number of courses around the country that use those materials. In fact, some our courses here at Wayne State University use those materials in the classroom to help create greater competency in the area of crisis and risk communication. I really recommend that people check those out.

The project with the World Health Organization was quite similar. Several of my colleagues and I were called to Geneva to work with the World Health Organization to develop an evidence-based framework for crisis communication around emerging infectious disease issues and again, that

particular effort was driven a lot by the World Health Organization's missteps around the Ebola outbreak. So, a lot of these efforts are driven by events and the challenges of communicating around these events. The materials that have been developed I think are quite robust and provide a really excellent framework for how to communicate around these issues. Unfortunately, sometimes we don't follow the best advice and so I think we're seeing some of that clearly in this case.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Yeah. That may very well be. I'm curious about that best advice though. I noted that in an article for the conversation you recently wrote about five key principles of crisis communication. I'm wondering could you recap for us what some of those five key principles are and then maybe we can figure out where we've dropped the ball in this current situation?

Matthew Seeger:
Sure. Happy to do so and part of this comes out of some work we did many years ago with the National Centers for Food Protection and Defense to develop a best practices model for crisis and emergency risk communication. And what we really wanted to try to do in that project was take this very large and robust and diverse body of literature which exists in multiple disciplines and cook it down into a set of principles that could be used by the practitioner and that article was published in the Journal of Applied Communication Research and I think has had a lot of good utility over the years. In that, article we developed ten best practices but for the purposes of talking about this issue, I sort of again tried to compress that into five issues. So, most of the communication folks will recognize these. Credibility is an absolute must in these circumstances. We need to be honest is our second principle and honesty will help address some of the uncertainty and some of the concern and certainly some of the rumors. We need to communicate to people meaningful things to do, action steps that they can take so that they feel some control over what they're experiencing in these circumstances. We need to listen to the subject matter experts. We need to privilege those messages. We need to work with subject matter experts to make sure that their messages can be translated to the individual person and we need to be consistent. That's the last principle. We need to have message consistency to the degree of possible across all the spokespersons regarding an event.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Going to that third one I think that you mentioned about telling people, giving very concrete examples of what to do, I'm wondering if you have any thoughts on why people are ignoring that advice as it's coming from the health professionals in this COVID-19 pandemic? I'm thinking here of all those folks in Chicago attending St. Patrick's Day celebrations—and it's not just Chicago, it's everywhere else—the beach goers in Florida, the Millennials who are looking for cheap tickets because they're not worried about the threat of COVID-19. Why are people ignoring these very clear instructions about social distancing?

Matthew Seeger:
So, this is a really typical problem in crisis and emergency risk communication. It's really the problem of getting people's attention and helping them understand that this is a serious issue. Often, we worry about people panicking if we give them too much information. Panic is generally recognized as a myth in the crisis literature. People don't panic. They take reasonable action based on the information that they have. There may be some extremes but people don't panic. One of the things that we've been very successful at over the years is discounting or undermining the credibility of subject matter experts. So, we've done that pretty systematically around climate change. We've described a lot of risks as hoaxes. We've created a condition where the public, part of the public at least is often unwilling to accept the advice from subject matter experts. So, I think we've taken a common problem, an ongoing problem of getting the public's attention around these issues and we've made it much worse by undermining the credibility of subject matter experts. So, we need to continue to message around this. We need the message on multiple platforms. We need to be willing to engage with audiences when they say oh, I heard this was a hoax. One of the things that always sort of sets me on edges when I'm on Facebook and I see a high school friend who says I heard and followed by some ridiculous rumor. And so, we need to be willing to engage in those conversations and I think the communication function really has a critical role to play in pointing to the subject matter experts and giving advice, pointing back to credible sources to ensure that there is consistency of message.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
That's obviously good advice. I think so many of us have gotten so frustrated with these folks who are just ignoring this important subject matter as you say, subject matter experts and the advice of the professionals. I'm wondering where the federal government's communication strategy fits in with that whole dynamic? Obviously, I don't think Vice President Pence or President Trump are subject matter experts but I'm wondering what you think has worked, what hasn't worked with the federal government's response to COVID-19?

Matthew Seeger:
So, one of the really difficult moments is when a risk is politicized and there are always political ramifications for risk but there are cases where we can take that to a very different level. And obviously in this circumstance, risk has been politicized and that makes it very, very difficult for us to create a consensual conversation around what's happening. The federal government has had just a wide variety of very serious missteps around this in terms of their early communication and there was a really interesting article published in The Washington Post I think last week where I was quoted. The article talked about the crisis and emergency risk communication material which is a 450-page manual and how the Trump administration has violated pretty much every principle in that manual. So, it's been very, very problematic and I think it's created a lot of uncertainty. It slowed our response very significantly. It's created just a really not effective

response in the short term and that's going to create much more harm and much more disruption and much more chaos. I do think there is one person who has done an excellent job and that's Dr. Fauci. Dr. Fauci is a very credible source. He's been around and in this business for many, many years. He studied crisis and emergency risk communication. He knows what he's doing. I would prefer that he be out front and nobody else speak because he's very good.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Yeah, I agree with that. I also wonder about the tensions with state and local governments. It seems to me a lot of those have also been politicized and yet many of the really effective responses have come at the state and local level. I'm wondering if any have stood out to you as more or less effective.

Matthew Seeger:
So, one of the things we know is that during a crisis situation, we often have emergent organization and emergent responses which sometimes are the most effective responses and these are very much grounded in the local communities and what the communities are doing. In the absence of a really well-thought-out national strategy, indeed state governments in particular but also municipal governments have really stepped up to provide support and fill the gap, fill the informational gap, fill the communication gap and fill the response gap. So, I would point to probably because I'm biased my governor here in Michigan, Governor Whitmer who I think has been very aggressive in trying to get out in front of this issue. I also note that the Governor DeWine in Ohio has also been very aggressive. So, they're taking the kinds of action and they're providing the kinds of information that are really helping at least our communities address these particular issues. That being said, this is a long term very, very serious threat. I've seen some of the predictions of the impact and the scope and the mortality and morbidity associated with this disease. This is not an insignificant event. This will change our country in profound ways and this is not going to end in the short term. We will be facing these circumstances of social distancing, significant reduction in services and increasing rates of disease, we will be facing these conditions for months, not for weeks, for months.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
It seems to me that some of the state and local leaders have said just those very warnings and to their credit, they've been more or less effective. And again, it's interesting to me that it's in many instances depoliticized because it really doesn't matter which party they're from. It's a dynamic that extends overseas as well. I'm wondering if there are any lessons that the United States can learn from some of the ways that this has been handled and communicated in other countries. So, I'm wondering if you have any thoughts on the international response.

Matthew Seeger:
So, China has a history of not being transparent and open with regard to these issues and we saw that in the SARS episode which was a really good precursor to this where they really delayed reporting that particular episode and tried to limit the amount of press coverage. We're seeing some of that now with this particular episode. The reporting was slowed initially and there are also now reports that all U.S. reporters, all American reporters are being expelled from China. So, I think we have to be very cautious about what data we are relying on from China in particular. I do believe that the very aggressive social distancing strategies that have been imposed in various countries are what we absolutely need to be doing. So, I'm hopeful that people in the U.S. will get that message and again, I think our colleagues in communication have a really important responsibility to be out there and carry that message forward. I know that I'm working at home, my entire staff is working at home, all of our courses at Wayne State have been moved online and we're really trying to aggressively get the message out that people need to social distance. So, that really is the key strategy. I think there are other really aggressive approaches that have been taken in some other countries which appeared to be limiting the amount of disease. There is a great deal of concern with what happens when those social distancing strategies are lifted. Will the disease reemerge and reemerge in a very aggressive way? It's something we don't know. As an emerging infectious disease, there are so many uncertainties associated with this. Part of our effort here is to delay the onset of significant numbers of disease. Sometimes that's referred to as flattening the curve so that our scientists and our scientific community can learn more and get caught up with this.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
And so that our healthcare system can handle the influx. As I understand Dr. Fauci, that's a real concern is that if we ignore this social distancing, it's just going to overwhelm the healthcare system and I think we're seeing some of that in New York if Governor Cuomo's to be believed.

Matthew Seeger:
That's absolutely the case and we often talk in the crisis communication literature about surge capacity on a variety of different levels. So, certainly the healthcare needs to be able to surge at a different level. We will be talking about creating essentially pop-up facilities to help care for people. We are moving to find more ventilators. I see reports that Ford Motor Company and General Motors are both talking about shifting production to create ventilators. I know that some universities and some other providers are producing masks. They are actually using 3D printers to print masks in some cases. So, there's a lot of again what I would call emergent responses to these events, emergent organization. People step up and do the right thing around crises and disasters. They really do and thank God they do but we need to assume that they're going to do those things and we need to help them do those things.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
I appreciate all of that and I think you're absolutely right. And it speaks to what communication scholars and teachers can do and the ways in which they can support good communication surrounding this pandemic. I'm wondering if you have any thoughts on communication that people should avoid?

Matthew Seeger:
So, my particular view as a communication person and someone who also has another foot in the free-speech world is that more communication is always better. So, I think one key message I would say for communication colleagues is please engage in the conversation, please have these conversations, please find a way to connect whether it's social media or other ways and have these conversations and pass on the CDC messages and make sure that you're addressing misinformation. The two things that really trouble me right now are first of all, these rumors that are going around, we have some projects we're looking at right now where we're collecting rumors about this particular virus. And rumors, of course, develop in an information vacuum. So, when there's inadequate information, rumors propagate and we certainly are seeing that very robust rumor development around this particular episode and those rumors can be very damaging. They can create more confusion. Again, my high school Facebook friend who's posted I heard that and then that was followed by this is a lot less dangerous than the regular flu. I get the flu every year. This isn't a big problem. It's a hoax. It's being blown out of proportion. So, I immediately engaged in that conversation in a respectful way, provided evidence-based responses to try to address that particular rumor. So, I think we have a responsibility to do those kinds of things. The other thing that's very problematic for me is when I hear people talk about panic and when I hear federal officials in particulars say oh, we don't want people to panic. Again, panic is a myth. People generally do the right thing during a crisis. The people who were buying additional foodstuffs two weeks ago were accused of panic. Well, now that seems like a pretty good thing to have done, to have a little extra canned tuna under your bed and maybe a couple of extra bottles of water. So, there's a real wisdom in how the public responds to these events. And again, we need to assume the public is going to do the right thing and we need to work with them, provide them the information and the support to help them do the right thing.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
That's really a nice, hopeful and optimistic way to conclude this conversation. Thank you, Matt, so much for joining me today and for helping us all recognize the value and importance of strong, good, ethical communication in the midst of these types of situations, crises or pandemics. So, thanks so much for joining us.

Matthew Seeger:
Thank you very much. Be safe. Stay home. We will get through this. Thank you.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Now we turn to our discussion with Dr. Jennifer Ho from the University of Colorado. Welcome to the podcast, Jennifer. Thanks for joining us.

Jennifer Ho:
Great to be here.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Now as our listeners may know, on March 12th, NCA released a statement about the COVID-19 pandemic and as part of that statement and at the urging of many of our officers, NCA quoted a statement from the Association of Asian-American Studies about racial and ethnic stereotyping and COVID-19. And the statement read in part, “We want to be very clear that xenophobia has no place in our communities or workplaces and that harassment of Asians due to fears of the coronavirus are not only unwarranted but sadly, part of a longer history of stereotypes associating Asians, especially Chinese, with disease.” So, Jennifer my sense is that you helped craft the AAAS statement with board members at the association and I was wondering how it came to be and it was based on a statement that you wrote for the Department of Ethnic Studies at Colorado. Could you tell our listeners a little bit about the process of developing this statement and why those of you at AAAS felt that there was a need to put out a statement of this kind in this context?

Jennifer Ho:
Sure. So, I think to back up a little bit, in terms of my own thinking about why it's important for organizations to make these kinds of statements, I felt this way ever since I was at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill which I was there for 16 years, just most recently moved to Boulder and for listeners who may or may not be familiar, UNC Chapel Hill had a series of let's just call them ongoing issues that I thought really required the attention of educators to come out and do what we're supposed to do which is inform the public based on our area of expertise and also based on our mission to educate people especially the public which both Colorado where I'm currently at and UNC are public institutions. So, I had been used I guess we could say to departments drafting various statements in support or condemning various things like white supremacists coming on campus to protest, the Confederate statue that was on campus and the infamous bathroom bill that the North Carolina legislature passed. In December or maybe it was early January—everything is blurring—a friend and colleague of mine Jason Oliver Chang posted to Facebook and Twitter a shared Google document which is linked to both the ethnic studies statement and the AAAS statement if you find a copy online. And he felt that in light of what we were seeing emerging out of Wuhan, China with the coronavirus that there was going to be global anti-Chinese, anti-Asian harassment and he wanted to get ahead of the curve.

And so, he asked those of us who were Asian-American studies scholars to share resources about how to combat anti-Asian racism and to really link it to a history of Yellow Peril that is

certainly not unique to the United States—again, I think this is global—but that has taken on a particular history in the U.S. And so, when I started to see cases emerge in the United States, I knew it was only a matter of time that we would see a real spike in harassment and violence. And sadly, I think we are seeing that happen nationwide. And look, I'm not naïve. I know that ethnic studies or the Association of Asian American Studies or your organization coming out with a statement saying we condemn this is not going to stop people from being racist or harassing people or being violent. But I'm hoping that it helps to educate a few people who then educate more people and more people will speak up and if more people speak up and don't remain silent, I think that could have a real difference.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
I obviously share your hope and your optimism there. I also believe that in the face of a national federal administration that engages in this type of communication that our responsibility to respond increases, right? I'm wondering if you have any thoughts of how that xenophobic Yellow Peril reaction has looked like historically. I think this is a form of stereotyping that many of our listeners are not going to be as familiar with as we might like. So, I'm wondering if you could sketch that out ever so briefly if you have any thoughts on that.

Jennifer Ho:
Sure. So, I think the idea of Yellow Peril, we can see—and I'll maybe just stick to the United States for the explanation. When waves of Chinese immigrants came over in the 19th century and they first came along with every other wave of person entering to the U.S. and that was to try and search for gold in the hills of California, people were like okay, people are coming from all over the world to search for gold and many Chinese ended up staying. So, they may have not struck it rich the way that most people who came to strike it rich didn't actually find nuggets of gold on the streets. But they did start to make routes and open up businesses and shops and that was increased further with the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. So, I really want to start there because it starts with sort of waves of immigration that happened worldwide coming into California for the gold rush and then it continued for the Chinese on the west coast with respect to the building of the Transcontinental Railroad which they were recruited to come to the U.S. to build because they had seen engineers in China build railroads across their continent and they figured okay, Chinese know how to build railroads. They know how to blast through mountains with dynamite. Let's get them to do this really dangerous, hard work. They were stranded after the building of the railroad. They weren't even given a ticket to go back to California. So, again a lot of them fanned out into the mountain communities of the American West and set up shops.

And then in California, a man named Carney started to foment racial discord by saying that Chinese were taking the labor of good white Americans. So, this is also the first time that you start to see the language of whiteness being applied to certain groups and not to others. And so, Irish are really an interesting and complicated case when it comes to racialization. Carney himself was

Irish and he was basically making the case for Irish to be white which I think most listeners nowadays would assume well, that's natural. But whiteness was never a given for Irish people actually. But this was one way, right? One way to make sure that you're white is to basically announce that another group is definitely not white and that they are stealing your jobs. And so, that is one of the ways that Yellow Peril rhetoric came into the U.S. and this got played out in various propaganda movements and newspapers in illustrations that depicted the Chinese as less than human, as rat-eating, as people who were tiny and small and yellow and inhuman, And so, the Yellow Peril rhetoric is really tied specifically to Chinese but then it gets transferred to other Asian countries.

So, again moving through the centuries, this got put on the Japanese during WWII, this got put on Koreans during the Korean War, this got put on Vietnamese. And it's really used anytime you want to say that you think that people from an Asian nation pose a threat. And in this case, the Republican administration has been really dog whistling. I mean they're consistent, right? They're consistent in calling it the Chinese virus and claiming that they're just being accurate because it emerged out of China and they're just trying to defend themselves because the Chinese are now saying that it was a conspiracy by the U.S. military. But I made myself watch ten minutes of Sean Hannity last week because I was curious to see what Fox News was saying to their listeners and the ten minutes that I caught were really interesting because he immediately started talking about how he didn't say that coronavirus is a hoax, he didn't think that it was as pervasive as the Democrats were saying it was. He did say that the real culprit to blame was China and that every American death is at the hands of the Chinese and that the Chinese should pay for the deaths of every American. And I think that if you're listening to Sean Hannity talk about China and Chinese people and saying they should pay, then I think that it doesn't surprise me that you're seeing people being attacked physically.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Right, right. And we've seen or at least I see in my Facebook feed numerous reports of very material negative effects of this stereotyping and this type of rhetoric coming from Hannity and others, Asian businesses being affected, students being beaten up and bullied and all sorts of things. I'm wondering if I don't know what concretely we can do besides making statements in this context. I'm wondering what advice you might have for what we can do.

Jennifer Ho:
That's a great question. Sadly here at CU-Boulder, I've been hearing anecdotally about Chinese international students even before we went on kind of self-quarantines, self-distancing. They had already been practicing this for a while because they were realizing that they were making people nervous and they didn't want people to feel uncomfortable around them and they didn't want to have to face discrimination. So, I guess one thing would be if people can reach out to their Asian and Asian-American neighbors and friends just to sort of check in on them and say hey, how are

you doing? I just want you to know I'm thinking about you. Have you experienced any discrimination or harassment? I think just letting people know that you recognize that this is real because so often one of the things that happens is people don't except that racisms against Asians in particular are real. And this is something that I definitely face in the U.S. South where I would literally have people tell me Asians are no real minority, Asians are a version of whites, Asians have not suffered historic discrimination the way that African-Americans have. And I really think it doesn't do us any good to start playing the oppression Olympics and I certainly think that being able to talk about anti-Asian racism related to COVID-19 does not take away from any other forms of institutional racism that any other groups in the United States have faced. So, just being able to talk about it and say yes, this is happening, this is real, this is going on and to educate people and to really validate Asian-American friends and especially Asian international students and Asian international scholars who are here who are really probably facing this kind of racism for the first time. Because if you grew up here, you kind of know what it's like. If you visit from another country, you may think that that's overblown because you haven't had to deal with the schoolyard taunts and other things that people like me who grew up with had to.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
I'm wondering if there's any other advice or insights that you might have for those of us in the communication discipline and those of us in higher education more generally about what we can do.

Jennifer Ho:
I think that we can try and be really kind to one another.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Yeah.

Jennifer Ho:
And I think that we can try and be extra kind to people that you think really need it. And so, one of the things that's happening is I'm encountering—we're all so suspicious and paranoid right now because we have to keep our distance and we're not sure if somebody has the disease and we could be living with people who are immune compromised or we have to take care of our elderly relatives. So, I understand that. But when I'm walking around and I'm trying to keep up a routine and walk every day, when I see people give me weird looks, I'm not sure how to interpret that. Are they giving me weird looks just because we're in a really weird time right now? Or are they giving me where it looks because they are racially profiling me and they somehow think that because of my East Asian face, I am a carrier of coronavirus? And then that in turn makes me feel weird and it makes me weary. It makes me feel like do I have to be extra vigilant and be prepared to defend myself which is not a great feeling and certainly is the opposite of the reason why I'm out taking a walk in nature which is to try and relax.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Right.

Jennifer Ho:
So, this might sound like a very strange thing but I would say smiling, right? Especially smiling at an Asian person to say I recognize you as a human being and I'm going to smile at you and not be fearful around you while still maintaining good social distance because I think that's just something that we should all do. I think smiling in general is not a bad idea in this day and age. But I think especially when we're in moments where we think that there are people who are vulnerable and I would say that any Asian person walking around right now is a little bit more vulnerable because of the rhetoric coming out of certain quarters. And so, I think just being a little bit extra friendly is helpful. And then certainly as educators to help your students understand. I would imagine that in every university and school hopefully there's someone who specializes in Chinese history or Asian history who could also provide some additional resources. The Association for Asian-American Studies is definitely interested in partnering with people on this. I'm the incoming president and I'd be happy to help direct resources once we get that up on our website.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
That all sounds fantastic and I know that all of our listeners will appreciate the calls for greater kindness and greater empathy as we all endure the pandemic and its impact. So, thank you so much for joining me today, Jennifer. I really appreciate everything that AAAS is doing in this regard and that you've taken the time to discuss these stereotypes and the xenophobia and the possible resources that people can use. I really appreciate your time.

Jennifer Ho:
I appreciate you having me on to talk about all of this.

Trevor Parry-Giles:
Thanks again to both of my guests for joining me today on this special episode of *Communication Matters*, the NCA podcast dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope it's been informative for you and as always, we hope everybody stays well, safe and healthy.

In NCA news, NCA recently released a statement about the COVID-19 pandemic. NCA continues to monitor guidance on the virus and remains committed to taking actions commensurate with the maximum health and safety of its members. Submissions remain open for the NCA's 106th annual convention that is scheduled for November 19th through the 22nd, 2020 in Indianapolis, Indiana. In order to accommodate those submitters who now face the prospect of adjusting their class protocols and designs to an online platform and just about anyone else who is having some

difficulty balancing all of the needs and demands of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have extended the submission deadline for the convention to Wednesday, April 8th, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time. That's Wednesday April 8th, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time. NCA, as we've just discussed, condemns racial and ethnic stereotyping evident in some coverage and communication about COVID-19. We hope you'll read the full statement that we put out on NCA's website at natcom.org/COVID19. That's natcom.org/COVID19.

Also in NCA news, NCA regrets that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Institute for Faculty Development also known as The Hope Conference will not be held this year. NCA's mid-career scholars' writing workshop will be postponed. That workshop was to be held in the summer months this year but will be held instead in July of 2021 at the University of South Florida. NCA's Spring Public Program on Battleground States and the Contemporary Presidential Campaign will be also postponed as is the NCA Doctoral Honor Seminar. Details are to follow and we anticipate that both the public program and the Doctoral Honor Seminar will be rescheduled for some time later this year. So, please stay tuned for more information about these important events.

Be sure to engage with us on social media by liking us on Facebook, following NCA on Twitter and Instagram and watching us on YouTube. And before you go, hit subscribe wherever you get your podcasts to listen in as we discuss emerging scholarship, establish theory and new applications, all exploring just how much communication matters in our classrooms, in our communities and in our world. See you next time.

Conclusion:
Communication Matters is hosted by NCA Executive Director Trevor Parry-Giles and is recorded in our national office in downtown Washington DC. The podcast is recorded and produced by Assistant Director for Digital Strategies Chelsea Bowes with writing support from Director of External Affairs and Publications Wendy Fernando and Content Development Specialist Grace Hébert. Thank you for listening.

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