

Proposal: PESA ESSAY Competition

Proposal 1:

That PESA establish an annual “PESA essay competition” as per the attached conditions.

Proposal 2:

That the competition be known as the “PESA Essay Competition” and the award known as “The Les Brown Philosophy Of Education Essay Prize”.

Some considerations as information (not a formal part of the proposal)

Naming:

Suggested by some current execkers “to honour Les Brown for instigating PESA and as originator of EPAT. No other person has such unequivocal or significant qualifications for official recognition by PESA”

Word length:

For our own accountability, I think we need to refuse word lengths of 2,999 or less and 4,001 or more. I’m open to debate on the most appropriate length, as it probably should match what students are being asked to do in class.

Electronic submission:

By the time the essay competition is published, PESA can arrange for such a posting via our website. If this is not done, submission can be by email attachment to the PESA secretary (secretary@pesa.org.au) using the coversheet posted on the PESA website. Either way, to manage the judging process, we need electronic versions, not paper ones. RTF are MSWord friendly but less likely to transmit viruses.

Endorsement by a member:

This serves (at least) three purposes: first, it limits the number of entries to a maximum of the number of PESA members; second, it stops philosophy of education lecturers using the essay competition as a class exercise and submitting all the results (as if they would do such a thing!); and third, it acts as an initial vetting process, so that presumably PESA will receive the best of the essays that member has considered. The method for managing the ‘endorsing’ process depends on whether entries are submitted as an email attachment or posted via the website.

Judging

The process envisaged here is based on a ‘heats’ model in sporting races. Entries are distributed equally among members of the Executive (except the EPAT Editor) to pick a winner from each bunch. The 4-5 winners are then passed on to the EPAT Editor to select an overall winner. Not perfect, but it distributes the load, will probably work, and leaves the EPAT Editor with some small say about what goes in the journal. The final ‘winner takes all’ judgment serves as a kind of moderation.

As with the scholarship, this whole venture is only partly about supporting students. It is only partly about honouring Les Brown. It is also an unashamed and unexpurgated attempt at self-promotion for PESA as a society to take note of and worth participating in.

PESA Essay Competition

Draft 4

Aim

The aim of the PESA essay competition is to encourage the advancement of, and research and teaching in, the Philosophy of Education. This competition is designed to further the interests of the Society by encouraging Masters students to engage with philosophical issues in education, and to recognise and support philosophical research in the wider field of education.

Eligibility

The competition is open to students resident in either Australia or New Zealand who are: (a) enrolled in a recognised Masters level programme in education in either country; (b) who have not previously attained a degree at Masters level or higher; and (c) who have not previously won a PESA essay competition.

The Essay

Essays will be considered from students in the various sub-disciplines in education, from the arts, and sciences, as well as from professional educators, as long as the essay content is germane to the ongoing conversations and dialogues of educational philosophy. Essays must be typed in English, at an acceptable academic standard, and between 3000 and 4000 words in length (not counting references). All quotations must be acknowledged with a formal reference list and footnotes where appropriate.

Closing date

Entries must be received by the PESA Secretary before 5pm on 30 June.

Submission process

Entries must be emailed to the PESA Secretary as a MSWord or RTF document. Each entry must be endorsed by a current member of PESA, to verify that the essay falls within the realm of philosophy of education and that the standard of writing is at an acceptable Masters level. A member of PESA may endorse only one entry in the competition each year. The PESA secretary can advise how to contact a member.

Copyright

Any essay submitted must be the original, unpublished work of the entrant. The winning writer will retain copyright ownership of the essay, but will assign exclusive licence to Blackwell Publishing for the purposes of inclusion in the society's journal *Educational Philosophy and Theory*.

Prizes

The winning prize, known as *The Les Brown Philosophy Of Education Essay Prize*, consists of:

- A cheque for \$AUS1,000
- Honorary membership of PESA for one year
- Travel, accommodation and conference fees paid to attend the next annual PESA conference
- Publication of the winning essay in the society's journal: *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. Such publication may be identified as a 'competition winner' and as having not been through a peer review process.

The winner's name and essay title will be posted on the PESA website. Such publication will be deemed as notification to all entrants in the competition.

Judging

Entries will be judged by an Executive sub-committee, based on the quality of research and writing, demonstrated understanding of the topic, and strength of the arguments made. Decisions are final and not subject to appeal. In the event of a tie, and subject to approval by the PESA Executive Committee, more than one award may be made in any year. In the event of entries not reaching a sufficient standard in any year, no award will be made.