

**NCA Activism and Social Justice Division  
of the National Communication Association Bylaws**

**Article I. Name, Authority, and Purpose**

Section 1. The name of this division/interest group will be the Activism and Social Justice Division of the National Communication Association.

Section 2. The authority of this division/interest group will be derived from Article VII of the Constitution and Article VI of the Bylaws of the National Communication Association (NCA), and its powers and procedures are those prescribed therein.

Section 3. The primary purpose of the Activism and Social Justice Division is to promote scholarship (research and teaching) that explores relationships among communication, activism, and social justice.

Pursuant to that goal, the Division will plan programs at the annual NCA convention; conduct activities as determined by the Division's membership; and represent the interests of the Division's membership.

**Article II. Membership**

Section 1. Membership in this Division is open to any member of the Association.

Section 2. The full membership of the Division will be those individuals who are members in good standing of the Association and who are affiliated with the Division on their NCA membership application or renewal, and/or so advise the NCA's Executive Director.

**Article III. Meetings**

Section 1. An annual business meeting will be held at the time and place of the NCA's annual convention and/or virtually if needed. The Division's Executive Committee may schedule additional meetings.

Section 2. The Secretary will be responsible for circulating/publishing the minutes of all Division meetings.

**Article IV. Officers and Committees**

Section 1. The officers of the Division will be a Chair, Vice Chair, Vice Chair-Elect, Secretary, Immediate Past Chair, and Chair of the Graduate Student Council. These officers constitute the Division's Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will serve as the chief administrative authority of the Division between annual business meetings of the Association and the Division.

Section 2. The Chair will serve for 1 year, chair the Executive Committee, preside at business meetings of the Division, be responsible for membership records, prepare annual reports and budget requests in such form and manner as NCA's Legislative Assembly prescribes, chair the Nominating and Elections Committee, and serve as a representative of the Division on NCA's Legislative Assembly of the Association for 2 years—1 year as Chair and 1 year as Vice Chair.

Section 3. The Vice Chair will serve a 1-year term, and then succeed to the office of Chair. The Vice Chair, in cooperation with the officers and appropriate committees, will plan the Division's program for the annual NCA convention, administer the evaluation process for papers and panels submitted for competitive consideration, present competitive awards as authorized by the Division, and serve as a representative of the Division on NCA's Legislative Assembly.

Section 4. The Vice Chair-Elect will serve 1 year, and then succeed to the office of Vice Chair. The Vice Chair-Elect will assist the Vice Chair with coordinating the review of papers and other program submissions, will coordinate any membership drive, and assist with other activities assigned by the Executive Committee.

Section 5. The Secretary will serve a 2-year term, prepare minutes of the Division's business meetings, and coordinate and direct the publications of the Division.

Section 6. The Immediate Past Chair will serve as a representative of the Division as the Awards Committee Coordinator and on the NCA's Nominating Committee and assist the other officers of the Division as directed by the Chair.

Section 7: In the event that an officer is unable to fulfill her or his responsibilities for whatever reason, the remaining members of the Executive Committee will appoint a replacement until such time as a replacement can be duly elected.

Section 8. Special committees, with tenure limited ordinarily to 1 year and with specific duties appropriate to the needs of the Division, will be appointed by the Chair, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee.

## **Article V. Elections**

Section 1. Elections for officers of the Executive Committee will take place online at least ten business days (excluding holidays) before the annual convention of the National Communication Association each year. There will be a Nominating and Elections Committee of the Division chaired by the Division's Chair. Committee members will be solicited via email from the Division's membership and must include at least one graduate student. The committee will consist of no less than three, and no more than five, members.

Section 2. The Nominating and Elections Committee will submit a call to the membership for nominations (including self-nominations) no less than six weeks before the election date. Candidates must submit their name to the Nominating and Elections Committee, along with a brief statement regarding their interest in the position and related qualifications. A written slate of these nominations and statements will be provided to the Division membership via the listserv no less than ten business days (excluding holidays) before the election date.

Section 3. Balloting will be distributed by the Chair and conducted via NCA's online elections process, with ballots counted by the Nominating and Elections Committee. Results will be announced via the Division's listserv and at the annual business meeting. In the case of a tie, the Chair will withhold his or her ballot.

Section 4. A majority vote of the Division's members participating in the online voting process will be sufficient to elect officers for vacant positions. In the case of a vacancy in any office of the Executive Committee, the position will be filled by an automatic succession process, if appropriate. The Executive Committee will fill vacancies in other offices until the Division's next election, at which time a new election will take place. A person so elected will serve the remaining and successive full term for that office.

## **Article VI. Convention Programming**

Section 1. Individuals may submit competitive papers and paper/discussion panels to the Vice Chair/Program Planner for presentation at the NCA convention. Competitive papers will be selected through a blind review process. The Vice Chair will administer the evaluation process. Convention program evaluators will read the submissions and assign ratings and rankings according to a format as directed by the Vice Chair. The Division supports standardized evaluation procedures across all submissions to determine the top-rated papers and sessions. The Vice Chair will report on the number of submissions, rate of acceptance and rejection, and any other matters related to the submission review process at the Division's annual business meeting.

Section 2. Competitive papers and paper/discussion panels will be rated separately. Overall quality and interest to Division members will guide the evaluation of work submitted.

Section 3. On the basis of the evaluations received, the Vice Chair will select the Division's convention programming and work with NCA's First Vice President to schedule Division programs at the annual convention.

Section 4. On the basis of the evaluations received for competitively submitted papers, the Vice Chair will determine the Annual Top Paper Award (to the paper that receives the highest overall rating by reviewers) and the Annual Top Student or Debut Paper Award (to a student author or an author submitting to a convention for the first time). An annual Top Four Activism and Social Justice Papers Panel will spotlight the Top Paper and Top Student/Debut Paper, and the two competitive papers that received the next highest

overall rating by reviewers. The Vice Chair will present those two awards at either the panel or at the Division's annual meeting. Authors of submitted works for these two awards are not required to be Division members.

Section 5. The Vice Chair may propose one "spotlight" panel for NCA's annual convention without seeking reviews from outside evaluators. A spotlight panel may feature a particular scholar, local community member, a single piece (or body) of work, or a topic of interest.

## **Article VII. Parliamentary Authority**

Section 1. All meetings of the Division, its committees or other subsidiary bodies, will be governed by the Parliamentary rules and usages contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article VIII. Amendments**

Section 1. Amendments to these bylaws may be initiated by a majority of the Division's Executive Committee, by a majority of the Division's membership at the Division's annual meeting, or by a petition addressed to the Division's Chair and signed by 25 Division members.

Section 2. Proposed amendments to these bylaws are to be published/distributed by email to all Division members at least ten business days (excluding holidays) prior to any voting on the bylaws. The adoption of a proposed amendment requires a majority vote of the membership and can be conducted online.

## **Article IX. Awards**

Section 1: The Vice Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Division, will be responsible for determining the recipients of the Top Paper and Top Student Paper Awards based on reviewer scores and division ratings, which occur during the submission/review process for each annual Association meeting.

Section 2: The Immediate Past Chair of the Division will serve as the coordinator for the Awards Committee. The Awards Committee Coordinator will oversee the review of nominated works by Division members and does not vote except in the case of a tie. Other members of the committee will include three to four past award winners and/or other current ASJ Division members.

The Awards Committee Coordinator may appoint committee members if enough past winners are unavailable to serve. ASJ Division officers are not eligible for awards while in service to the Division.

Section 3: Each year, the ASJ Division will offer four awards that celebrate Division members' activism, pedagogy, and scholarly contributions to the Division as well as the discipline.

All award nominees must be current members of the National Communication Association and the Activism and Social Justice Division. Nominating materials for each award category should be sent by email to the Immediate Past Chair/Awards Committee Chair for distribution to the Awards Committee. Distribution of the awards call and committee review of nominations will be completed in conversation with the Vice Chair (program planner), and the slate of winners submitted to the Vice Chair prior to the final program scheduling so that winners may be included and recognized at the Division's Business Meeting. Nominations will be accepted for awards in the following categories:

### **Graduate Student Activist Award**

The Activism and Social Justice Division's Graduate Student Activist Award is designed to honor a graduate student or group of graduate students in recognition of their engagement with activism and social justice. Examples may include but are not limited to engagement with activism and social justice, based on demonstrated graduate student contributions within a variety of settings (e.g., campus activism, teaching, community partnerships, and/or scholarly work, among other possibilities).

**Eligibility Requirements:** To be eligible, the recipient(s) must be graduate student(s) at the time of nomination who are current member(s) of the Activism and Social Justice Division. Both self-nominations and nominations of others are encouraged. ASJ Division officers are not eligible for awards while in service to the Division. Awards recipients are ineligible for re-applying for the same award they have received for a three-year period after receiving the award.

**Criteria:** The awards committee will assess the nominees' engagement with activism and social justice, based on their demonstrated contributions within a variety of settings (e.g., campus activism, teaching, community partnerships, and/or scholarly work, among other possibilities).

**Submissions should include:** A letter of nomination (self or other), which outlines the nominees' contributions to the activist movements/activities they engage with, pedagogical efforts aimed at activism and social justice, and/or scholarship focused on activism and social justice; the nominees' current CV; and one to two examples of relevant documentation of the nominees' engagement with activism and social justice (e.g., scholarly paper, report, presentation; memoranda of understanding with community partners; teaching materials that focus on activism and social justice; or other documentation demonstrating activism and social justice work).

### **Activism and Social Justice Pedagogy Award**

This award honors a significant pedagogical contribution in the realm of activism and social justice by a current member of the ASJ Division. Examples of one's pedagogical contribution to the discipline and the Division may include but are not limited to innovative assignments, activities, or pedagogical approaches; letters of support from peer teaching evaluators (up to five accepted); scholarship of teaching and learning focused on activism and social justice (within a five-year period of the date of nomination); and/or other documentation that illustrates the impact of the nominees' pedagogical contribution.

**Eligibility Requirements:** To be eligible, the recipient must be a current member of the Activism and Social Justice Division. ASJ Division officers are not eligible for awards while in service to the Division. Awards recipients are ineligible for re-applying for the same award they have received for a three-year period after receiving the award.

**Criteria:** The awards committee will assess the nominees' pedagogical contributions to communication, activism, and social justice, based on demonstrated excellence in teaching.

**Submissions should include:** A letter of nomination (self or other), which outlines the nominee's teaching philosophy and pedagogical contributions focused on activism and social justice; the nominee's current CV; and relevant support materials (e.g., a selection of representative teaching materials; one or two representative publications within a five-year period of the award deadline; or peer reviews of teaching (up to five accepted)).

### **Activism and Social Justice Community Engagement Award**

This award honors a division member who has engaged in collective action aimed at community engagement that furthers the mission of the ASJ Division. The purpose of this award is to recognize activism and social justice work that transcends the academy, going above and beyond research and teaching to impact communities in need. Examples of one's community engagement work may include but are not limited to partnering with community organizations to create policy changes; organizing collective action events; working with communities, organizations, groups, movements, or individuals in need of further support (e.g., prison education, community organizing, activist workshops, campaign strategizing, movement building, media work, etc.); and/or creating a nonprofit organization that addresses injustices.

**Eligibility Requirements:** To be eligible, the recipient must be a current member of the Activism and Social Justice Division. ASJ Division officers are not eligible for awards while in service to the Division. Awards recipients are ineligible for re-applying for the same award they have received for a three-year period after receiving the award.

**Criteria:** The awards committee will assess the nominee's activism and social justice work focused on community engagement, based on their overall contribution to communities in need.

**Submissions should include:** A letter of nomination (self or other) that outlines the significance of the nominee's activism and social justice work focused on community engagement; the nominee's current CV; and any additional information that will help to contextualize the nominee's engagement (e.g., one representative writing example or additional letters of support from community partners – up to five letters of support accepted).

### **Activism and Social Justice Scholarly Influence Award**

This award honors someone whose scholarship and mentorship have significantly impacted the Activism and Social Justice Division at NCA by recognizing (1) scholarly work that inspires greater understanding of communication, activism, and social justice; (2) scholarly work that attempts to intervene into and reconstruct unjust discourses with more just solutions for action; and (3) mentorship with demonstrated scholarly impact (e.g., advising relevant theses, dissertations, and/or student research groups; editorial duties of collected volumes, book series, journals, and/or journal special issues; creating a new book series or journal that advances the mission of the ASJ Division).

**Eligibility Requirements:** To be eligible, the recipient must be a current member of the Activism and Social Justice Division. ASJ Division officers are not eligible for awards while in service to the Division. Awards recipients are ineligible for re-applying for the same award they have received for a three-year period after receiving the award.

**Criteria:** The awards committee will assess the nominee's activism and social justice influence on the ASJ Division and the discipline of communication as a whole.

**Submissions should include:** A letter of nomination (self or other) that outlines the nominee's scholarly influence related to activism and social justice; the nominee's current CV; and at least three but no more than five letters of support. These letters must address the intellectual contribution of the nominee's scholarly influence in communication, activism, and social justice.

Section 4. The Awards Committee Members may exercise their judgment on the application of these criteria during their review of the materials. Generally, at least one award is to be made for each category; however, the committee members are given the right to determine exceptional circumstances based on the annual nominations. This may include not making an award during a given year or providing additional awards in one or more of the award categories when the review of nominated works suggests the necessity of these considerations.

Section 5. Awards recipients are ineligible for re-applying for the same award they have received for a three-year period after receiving the award. They may, however, apply for a different award category during this time period.

Section 6. Should ASJ Division members wish to sponsor a "named award," the Executive Committee of the ASJ Division will work with the sponsor to establish new

awards categories. Should these awards require changes to the awards procedures outlined in the ASJ Division bylaws, then these awards will be brought before the Division membership for a vote; otherwise, the Executive Committee of the ASJ Division may exercise their judgment when establishing named awards.

#### **Article IX. Ratification of Bylaws**

Section 1. These bylaws shall become effective after ratification by a majority vote of Division members.

#### **Article X: Graduate Student Committee Name, Authority, and Purpose**

Section 1: The name of the graduate student committee will be the Graduate Student Committee of the Activism and Social Justice Division of the National Communication Association.

Section 2: The authority of this committee will be derived from the Bylaws of the Activism and Social Justice Division of the National Communication Association.

Section 3: The primary purposes of the Graduate Student Committee are

- To serve as a network for graduate students to discuss interests and affairs
- To build a collaborative research support network for graduate students
- To support graduate students in advocacy for social justice through teaching, research, and service
- To connect graduate students to practitioners in their associated fields of study
- To facilitate mentor-mentee relationships among graduate students and faculty within the Division

Pursuant to this goal, the Graduate Student Committee will collaborate with the Executive Committee of the Activism and Social Justice Division, assist with activities related to the annual National Communication Association convention, Division membership, and other interests related to the Division. The Chair of the Graduate Student Committee will serve on the Executive Committee.

#### **Article XI: Graduate Student Committee Membership**

Section 1: Membership in the Graduate Student Committee is open to any graduate student who is a current member of the Activism and Social Justice Division of the National Communication Association.

#### **Article XII: Graduate Student Committee Meetings**

Section 1: An annual meeting of the Graduate Student Committee will be held at the time and place of the National Communication Association's annual convention and/or virtually as determined by the Committee.



Section 2: The officers of the Graduate Student Committee will coordinate the annual meeting and plan the agenda in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Division.

### **Article XIII: Graduate Student Committee Officers, Duties, and Terms**

Section 1: The officers of the Graduate Student Committee will be the Chair, Vice Chair, and Communication Coordinator. These officers constitute the leadership of the Graduate Student Committee, which will serve as the administrative authority of the Graduate Student Committee between annual meetings of the Association and Division.

Section 2: Any student who is a current member of the Activism and Social Justice Division and the National Communication Association in pursuit of a graduate degree is eligible to run for office. To be eligible to run for the Vice Chair position, the student must be in pursuit of a graduate degree at the time they are elected.

Section 3: The Chair will serve for one year and will ensure that the work of the Graduate Student Committee is in alignment with its purposes, as well as the focus of the Activism and Social Justice Division. The Chair will also assist with graduate student membership recruitment and planning and presiding over the Graduate Student Committee meetings. The Chair will also serve as the graduate student liaison on the Executive Committee of the Division, presenting a report at the business meeting of the Division.

Section 4: The Vice Chair will serve for one year and will transition to the role of Chair. The Vice Chair will assist the Chair with all matters required of the Graduate Student Committee and serve as a liaison between the Chair and the Communication Coordinator. The Vice Chair will also assist in coordinating the membership roster and recruiting new members.

Section 5: The Communication Coordinator will serve for one year and will be eligible for re-election for up to three terms. The Communication Coordinator will serve as the recorder and historian for the Graduate Student Committee, in addition to assisting with social media outreach and minute-taking at the meetings of the Graduate Student Committee.

Section 6: The officers of the Graduate Student Committee will work with the Division's Vice Chair (program planner), in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Division, to plan the annual meeting related to the current work of the Graduate Student Committee.

Section 7: In the event that an officer is unable to fulfill the responsibilities for whatever reason, the remaining officers, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Division will appoint a replacement until such time as a replacement can be duly elected.

### **Article XIV: Graduate Student Committee Elections**

Section 1: Elections for officers of the Graduate Student Committee will take place online after the annual convention of the National Communication Association.

Section 2: Nominations (including self-nominations) for officers must take place prior to the meeting of the annual convention of the National Communication Association. Candidates must submit their name to the officers of the Graduate Student Committee, along with a brief statement regarding their interest in the position and related qualifications. A written slate of nominations and statements will be provided to the graduate student membership via email or listserv 30 days prior to the annual convention of the National Communication Association.

Section 3: During the Graduate Student Committee meeting or discussion panel, a slate of candidates and their brief statements will be presented by the officers of the Graduate Student Committee. These statements will also be presented online as part of the election process.

Section 4: Any current officer of the Graduate Student Committee running for reelection cannot assist in the online election process. In the case that all three current officers of the Graduate Student Committee run for reelection, the Immediate Past Chair and Vice Chair Elect of the Division will oversee the online voting process.

Section 5: Any graduate student member of the Graduate Student Committee is eligible to vote for Graduate Student Committee officers' in the annual, online election.

## **Article XV: Graduate Student Committee Convention Programming**

Section 1: The officers of the Graduate Student Committee will work with the Division's Vice Chair (program planner), in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Division, to plan the annual meeting related to the current work of the Graduate Student Committee.

Bylaws drafted May 20, 2015. Ratified by the Division Membership June 15, 2015. Updated December 28, 2018. Updated May 1, 2020. Updated March 25, 2022.