

**Bylaws of the  
Feminist & Gender Studies Division  
of the National Communication Association**

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

**Section 1.** The name of this division shall be the Feminist & Gender Studies Division (Formerly the Feminist & Women Studies Division) of the National Communication Association.

**Section 2.** The purpose of the Feminist & Gender Studies Division is to promote scholarship, pedagogy, and activism related to feminist studies in communication. The Division encourages and supports research, action, and understandings of the profession that address intersections of power, such as race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, ability, technology, nationality, and transnationalism, and challenge existing theoretical paradigms that have excluded the voices of marginalized groups, especially women.

**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. The Division's Executive Committee may schedule additional meetings as necessary.

**Section 2.** The Division may elect to convene their annual meeting in conjunction with the Association's Women's Caucus.

**Section 2.** The Secretary (or proxy) 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, and Secretary. These officers constitute the Division's Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will serve as the Division membership's representatives between annual business meetings of the Association and the Division. All officers are expected to attend the Division's joint meeting with officers of the Women's Caucus and the annual Division/Caucus Business Meeting.

**Section 2.** The Chair will serve for 1 year, 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, and serve as a representative of the

Division on NCA's Legislative Assembly. The Chair also coordinates the Awards Committee, including soliciting nominations, appointing outside review committees, and manages final award selections in concert with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair, and Immediate Past Chair. The Chair works with the Chair of the Women's Caucus to coordinate the annual awards reception at the annual meeting. The Chair will serve on the Division's Nominating and Elections Committee.

**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 chair the Top Paper Session for the Division. The Vice Chair serves as a representative of the Division on NCA's Legislative Assembly. The Vice Chair will serve on the Division's Nominating and Elections Committee.

**Section 4.** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair will serve a 1-year term, and then succeed to the office of Vice Chair. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair will serve as a paper/panel reviewer for the Division and will serve as the Respondent for the Top Paper Session for the Division. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair also serves on the Division's Awards Committee. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair will serve on the Division's Nominating and Elections Committee.

**Section 5.** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair will serve a 1-year term, and then succeed to the office of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair will serve as a paper/panel reviewer for the Division and serve on the Division's Awards Committee. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair will serve on the Division's Nominating and Elections Committee.

**Section 6.** The Immediate Past Chair will serve a 1-year term, serve a representative of the Division on NCA's Legislative Assembly, and serve on NCA's Nominating Committee. In addition, the Immediate Past Chair will chair the Nominating and Elections Committee of the Division and serve on the Division's Awards Review Committee.

**Section 7.** 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. The Secretary distributes minutes to the Executive Committee before the subsequent Association meeting and works to maintain ongoing communication with the Division's membership through social media accounts, online newsletters, and community outreach. The Secretary will serve on the Division's Nominating and Elections Committee.

**Section 8:** In the event that an officer is unable to fulfill their 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 9.** 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 Division's officers.

## **Article V. Elections**

**Section 1.** There will be a Nominating and Elections Committee of the Division chaired by the Division's Immediate Past Chair and consisting of all officers of the Division.

**Section 2.** Prior to the annual convention, the Nominating and Elections Committee will solicit nominations (including self-nominations) for each vacancy to be filled. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at the annual business meeting.

**Section 3.** Balloting will be conducted at the Division's annual meeting, with ballots counted by the Nominating and Elections Committee, and results will be announced at that time. In the case of a tie, the Chair will withhold their ballot.

**Section 4.** A majority vote of those members attending the Division's annual business meeting at the NCA convention will be sufficient to elect officers for vacant positions. In the case of a vacancy in any office of the Division, 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 annual business meeting at the NCA convention, 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 through the mechanism required by the Association. 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.

**Section 2.** Individuals should not submit more than one competitively selected paper or panel to the Division (with the exception of serving as a session Chair or Respondent). Individuals should not submit the same paper/panel proposal to more than one division during the annual NCA convention review process.

**Section 3.** Prior to the submission deadline announced by NCA, the Vice Chair should solicit volunteers to serve as reviewers, panel respondents, and panel chairs. In soliciting availability of reviewers, the Vice Chair will also solicit potential reviewers' areas of scholarly expertise and position in the academy (graduate student, lecturer, adjunct faculty, tenure-track/ tenured faculty, administrator, etc.). In soliciting available reviewers, the Vice Chair should be especially attuned to cultivating a diverse pool of reviewers capable of speaking to the research interests, scholarly backgrounds, and identity positions of scholars often systemically excluded from the Association.

**Section 3.** Competitive papers and paper/discussion panels will be rated separately. Overall quality and interest to Division members will guide the evaluation of work submitted. The Vice Chair will determine the exact evaluative questions to help reviewers guide their feedback. Based on the principles of the Division, reviewers should be encouraged to review work in the spirit of love, while offering generative feedback aimed at helping authors improve their work in the future. Reviewers should be made aware of the Division's deep investments in highlighting intersectional work based in feminist epistemologies and frameworks dedicated to the study of issues of power and advocacy of social justice.

#### **Section 4.**

In assigning reviewers to any paper or panel, the Vice Chair shall work to ensure that each submission is evaluated by reviewers representing a variety of expertise and experience (e.g., not assigning a paper to all graduate student reviewers; working to ensure that submissions are all read by at least one person who has similar research background). Individual papers and panel sessions should each have at least two reviewers assigned to score them. In cases where only two reviewers were assigned and their rankings were markedly split, the Vice Chair should seek a third ad hoc reviewer or perform a review themselves.

**Section 5.** On the basis of the evaluations received, the Vice Chair will select the Division's convention programming and schedule Division programs at the annual convention.

**Section 6.** 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 Paper Award (to the highest overall rated paper submitted by an author self-identifying as a student author). If the highest overall rated paper is submitted by a student author, that paper will receive the Top Paper Award and there will be no distinction between Top Paper and Top Student Paper. An annual Top Papers in Feminist & Gender Studies Panel will spotlight the Top Paper and Top Student Paper (if different), and three additional competitive papers that received the next highest overall ratings by reviewers. The Vice Chair will present the Top Paper awards at either the Top Papers panel or at the Division's annual meeting. Authors of submitted works for these two awards are not required to be Division members.

**Section 7.** The Vice Chair shall seek opportunities to co-sponsor panels with other Association divisions, caucuses, and sections, paying particular attention to maximizing co-sponsorship opportunities with programming groups attuned to the intersectional interests related to race, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, class, and nationality.

**Section 8.** The Vice Chair shall work in coordination with the Vice Chair of the Women's Caucus to schedule the joint Division/Caucus business meeting, Executive Committee meeting, and awards reception. In some instances, the Vice Chair may, in coordination with the Women's Caucus Chair, seek opportunities to re-assign some highly ranked discussion panels over to the Women's Caucus programming sessions.

**Section 9.** 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.

### **Article VII. Awards Review Committee**

#### **Section 1. Commitments of Division**

To fight systemic exclusion in the field of feminist studies, we must all be conscious of how the awards process functions to include/reward primarily white, Western feminists and exclude non-Western, queer, trans, feminists of color. This exclusion occurs through the naming of awards, the writing of calls, the criteria for selection, and the homogeneity of the awards committees. Using intersectional methodologies and theories should be a requirement for the work and scholars we reward/honor.

In line with these commitments, the Division coordinates the following awards honoring scholarship and activism committed to feminist work that is grounded in intersectional frameworks of studying gender and works to promote social justice, inclusion, and the centering of marginalized perspectives. In addition to the Top Paper awards (described above), the Division coordinates the Bonnie Ritter Book Award, an Outstanding Article Award, and a Scholar-Activist Award.

## **Section 2. Awards Review Committee Composition**

The Division Chair will serve as the Chair for this Awards Review Committee and work in collaboration with the Immediate Past Chair, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair in selecting award recipients. The Chair may also seek external reviewers, as needed, to assist in the review process.

## **Section 3. Descriptions of Awards and Evaluation Processes**

### **Bonnie Ritter Book Award**

**Background:** Bonnie Ritter did most of the groundwork and was the primary organizer for the group of women scholars who formed NCA's Women's Caucus in 1971. The caucus's success led, more than a decade later, to establishing NCA's Feminist and Women Studies Division so that feminist scholarship would have a formal and recognized home within NCA. This award is a testament to the courage, tenacity, and intellectual imagination of Professor Ritter and her colleagues. The first Bonnie Ritter Book Award was presented at the NCA annual convention in 2008.

**Eligibility:** Authors working within all methodological perspectives are encouraged to apply. Submissions must be scholarly books, both monographs and edited collections are accepted. Any book published between January in the year of the prior NCA conference and May of the year of the upcoming NCA conference is eligible. Self-nominations are encouraged. Nominees from previous years who were not selected previously may resubmit their books for consideration as long as they are still within the eligible publication time frame.

**Submission:** Authors are responsible for ensuring that their books are submitted to the four members of the Awards Review Committee in time for the deadline. Books may be submitted in either a print copy of the book or as an electronic-book.

**Evaluation Criteria:** The Division Chair will coordinate the review process with all members of the Awards Review Committee, determining a rating and ranking system that takes into account key criteria to be applied fairly and uniformly to each book (Relevance to feminism, gender, and/or sexuality in Communication Studies; Social Justice aims at critical engagement with oppressive social structures; Methodology that demonstrates a commitment to feminist methodologies of learning/knowledge that ensures that the book is contextual, inclusive, experiential, and socially relevant; Intersectional attention that engages in thoughtful analysis of the ways gender intersects with race, class, ability, nationality, and/or sexuality while avoiding claims that universalize and homogenize the experiences of gendered subjects; Overall quality/contribution which values books that contribute to feminist research and/or build theory in a significant way).

**Process:** The Chair of the Division shall solicit nominees for the Division-level awards during the Spring semester (in anticipation of the following annual convention in

November). The Division Chair is responsible for ensuring that each book is read and ranked by at least 2 members of the committee before a list of 5-6 finalists is produced. The entire Awards Review Committee will then read all the book finalists and submit their ratings and ranks to the Division Chair by a predetermined deadline. The top evaluated book will earn the Bonnie Ritter Book Award at the upcoming NCA annual convention.

### **Outstanding Article Award**

**Background & Description:** The Outstanding Article Award was initiated at the NCA FWSD/WC business meeting in 2017, seeking to honor an author (or authors) of an outstanding scholarly article or book chapter published in the field of Communication Studies that interrogates questions related to feminism, gender, sexuality, and/or women studies in a manner that demonstrates a strong commitment to intersectional analysis. The Division's first Outstanding Article Award was presented at the NCA annual convention in 2018.

**Eligibility:** Authors working within all methodological perspectives are encouraged to apply. Any article or chapter published between January in the year of the prior NCA conference and May of the year of the upcoming NCA conference is eligible. Nominees from previous years who were not selected previously may resubmit their books for consideration as long as they are still within the eligible publication timeframe.

**Submission:** Nominations should include a copy of the article and a 1-2 page letter of nomination outlining the significance of the article for the study of feminism, gender, and/or sexuality in communication, paying particular attention to the article's attentiveness to intersectionality.

**Evaluation Criteria:** The Division Chair will coordinate the review process with all members of the Awards Review Committee, determining a rating and ranking system that takes into account key criteria to be applied fairly and uniformly to each book (Relevance to feminism, gender, and/or sexuality in Communication Studies; Originality/Significance of article/chapter in contributing uniquely and significantly to the study of feminism, gender, and/or sexuality in Communication Studies; Quality of arguments, research methods, depth of analysis, and writing; Intersectional attention that engages in thoughtful analysis of the ways gender intersects with race, class, ability, nationality, and/or sexuality while avoiding claims that universalize and homogenize the experiences of gendered subjects).

**Process:** The Chair of the Division shall solicit nominees for the Division-level awards during the Spring semester (in anticipation of the following annual convention in November). The Division Chair is responsible for ensuring that each article/chapter receives reviews from multiple reviewers, with final rankings decided by the members of the Division's Awards Review Committee, who will submit their ratings and ranks to the Division Chair by a predetermined deadline. The top evaluated article/chapter will earn the Division's Outstanding Article Award at the upcoming NCA annual convention.

### **Scholar-Activist Award**

**Background & Description:** The Scholar-Activist Award was initiated at the NCA FWSD/WC business meeting in 2017, seeking to honor a division member who has taken action in communities and/or on their campuses to challenge, resist, or make progress in solving social injustice(s) that concerns scholars of feminism, gender,

sexuality and/or women studies. This award seeks to honor scholar-activists who address how multiple systems of oppression/exploitation interlock in their work/activism and who integrate the scholarly insights in their research and/or teaching with activist interventions. The Division's first Scholar-Activist Award was presented at the NCA annual convention in 2018.

**Eligibility:** All Division members are eligible for nomination for this award.

**Submission:** Nominations should include the nominee's vita and a letter of nomination and letter of support that narrates the significance of the scholar's activism and how it may inform their own or other scholars' work. Nominees from previous years who were not selected may resubmit their nomination packets for consideration for up to three years by contacting the Division Chair.

**Evaluation Criteria:** The Division Chair will coordinate the review process with all members of the Awards Review Committee, determining a rating and ranking system that takes into account key criteria to be applied fairly and uniformly to each book (Significance/Impact of the nominee's actions in communities and/or campuses toward social justice aims relevant to feminism, gender, sexuality, and/or women's studies; Activist Interventions evidenced by the nominee's record research and/or teaching; Intersectional attention in activist interventions to how gender intersects with race, class, ability, nationality, and/or sexuality while avoiding claims that universalize and homogenize the experiences of gendered subjects).

**Process:** The Chair of the Division shall solicit nominees for the Division-level awards during the Spring semester (in anticipation of the following annual convention in November). The Division Chair is responsible for ensuring that each nominee's materials are reviewed by the Division's Awards Review Committee, who will submit their ratings and ranks to the Division Chair by a predetermined deadline. The top evaluated nominee will earn the Division's Scholar-Activist Award at the upcoming NCA annual convention.

## **Article VIII. 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 IX. 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 at least 25 Division members.

**Section 2.** Proposed amendments to these bylaws are to be published/distributed by email to all Division members at least 60 days prior to the Division's annual business meeting. The adoption of a proposed amendment requires a two-thirds majority vote of those present at the Division's annual business meeting.

## **Article X. Ratification of Bylaws**

**Section 1.** These bylaws will become effective after ratification by a majority vote of Division members during an online voting process, after discussion at NCA's 2019 annual convention.