

# **SSCA Constitution**

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of the Association shall be the Southern States Communication Association.

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Association shall be to promote study, criticism, research, teaching, and application of the artistic, humanistic, and scientific principles of communication. The Association, a not-for-profit organization, exists for educational, scientific, and literary purposes only. No part of the net revenues of the Association, if any, may be used for the private benefit of any individual or group, except that the Executive Council may establish scholarships or research grants for projects or purposes appropriate to the Association.

## **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Individual Membership. Individual membership in the Association shall be open, upon application, to any interested person upon payment of the current annual dues. Regular membership, student membership, sustaining membership, patron membership, and lifetime membership are all individual memberships. Active individual membership is a requirement for all elected and appointed positions that support and represent the association. The Executive Council shall set services provided for the different categories of membership.

## **ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS**

Section 1. Officers. The officers of this Association shall be:

The Administrative Committee includes the President, the 1st Vice President, the 2nd Vice President, the Executive Director, the Journal Editor, the Strategic Communication Director, the Immediate Past President, and the Finance Committee Chair.

Section 2. Term of Office. The terms of office of the President, 1st Vice President, and 2nd Vice President shall be for one year; of the Journal Editor, the Strategic Communication Director, and representatives to the National Communication Association (NCA), three years; and of the Executive Director, six years (one year of shadowing, four years of service, one year of being shadowed).

Section 3. Succession.

1. The 1st Vice President shall automatically succeed to the office of the President upon the expiration of the President's term of office. The 1st Vice President shall succeed the President should the President's office become vacant through death, resignation, or disability.
2. The 2nd Vice President shall automatically succeed to the office of 1st Vice President upon expiration of the 1st Vice President's term of office. The 2nd Vice President shall serve as assistant to the 1st Vice President. The 2nd Vice President shall succeed the 1st Vice President should the 2nd Vice President's office become vacant through death, resignation, or disability except as specified in Section 5.

Section 4. Duties of Officers.

1. The President shall perform the following duties and such other related duties as shall arise:
  1. Preside at all business meetings of the Association and of the Executive Council.
  2. Appoint and notify all committees except those otherwise provided for.
  3. Provide oversight of divisions and interest groups.
  4. Serve as liaison officer between the Southern States Communication Association and all other national, regional, and associations with similar or related interests.
  5. See that members of the profession receive notice of meetings and activities of the Association and of the Executive Council, unless the transmission of such notices has been otherwise assigned.
  6. Facilitate the performance of the constitutional duties of all other officers and committees.
2. The 1st Vice President shall perform the following duties and such other related duties as shall arise:
  1. Prepare the program for the annual convention.
  2. Serve as program coordinator of the sectional programs arranged by the officers of the recognized Divisions of the Association. The 1st Vice President, as program chair, shall consider the recommendations of the Division Vice Chairs as to programs, but shall have final authority regarding the program and winner of the Robert Bostrom Award selection.
  3. Assist the President in promoting the activities and interests of the Association as needed or requested.
3. The 2nd Vice President shall perform the following duties and other such related duties as shall arise:
  1. Be responsible for the annual recruitment efforts of the Association.
  2. Assist the President and 1st Vice President in promoting the activities and interests of the Association as needed or requested.
  3. Plan the annual Theodore Clevenger, Jr. Undergraduate Honors Conference and determine the Franklin Shirley Award winner.
4. The Executive Director shall perform all ordinary duties of the Secretary and Treasurer of the Association and of the Executive Council.
  1. As Treasurer, the Executive Director shall furnish a financial report at each annual convention. The Executive Director shall incorporate into the report a financial accounting covering all publications and the results of the official independent accounting review.
  2. The Executive Director shall notify the National Communication Association Executive Offices of the names and addresses of the newly elected High School, College, and Community/Two Year College Representatives to Legislative Assembly immediately after the election results have been announced.
  3. The Executive Director shall appoint a newsletter editor and a Webpage Editor.
  4. The Executive Director shall publish the SSCA newsletter and conduct Association elections in accordance with procedures outlined elsewhere in the Constitution.
  5. The Executive Director shall negotiate and sign all contracts on behalf of the Association, subject to approval of the Association.

5. The Journal Editor shall direct and supervise the publication of the *Southern Communication Journal* as authorized by the Executive Council.
6. The Strategic Communication Director shall be responsible for development, implementation, and evaluation of association marketing activities. These include, but are not limited to: strategic planning, preparing and implementing various marketing activities, membership development and maintenance, organizational branding, securing advertising, and expansion of state, regional, and national organizational awareness.
7. All SSCA representatives to NCA shall represent the interests of SSCA and its members at the national level, reporting to SSCA's president.
8. The Immediate Past President shall chair the Nominating Committee and other duties accepted in consultation with the President.
9. The Administrative Committee includes the President, the 1st Vice President, the 2nd Vice President, the Executive Director, the Journal Editor, the Strategic Communication Director, the Immediate Past President, and the Finance Committee Chair.

#### Section 5. Vacancies.

1. The Executive Council shall have authority to fill any vacancy, other than the Presidency, created by the death, resignation, or disability of an elected officer of the Association.
2. In the event of multiple officer vacancies and/or a vacancy at a point after submissions have been received for the annual convention or undergraduate honors conference, the Administrative Committee shall, at its discretion, select a replacement.
3. In the event of an Executive Director vacancy, the Executive Council shall put forward a replacement who would be ratified by the association membership.

### **ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

#### Section 1. Membership.

The membership to the Executive Council of the Association shall be:

1. President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Executive Director, Journal Editor, Strategic Communication Director, Chair and members of the Finance Committee.
2. The chairs of the established Divisions of the Association.
3. The Immediate Past President, retiring Executive Director, and retiring Journal Editor, each for one year following that person's term of office.
4. Three members elected at large by members of the Association for a three-year term to serve as representatives to the Legislative Assembly of the National Communication Association (NCA) as specified by the constitution of NCA. When possible and on a three-year rotating basis, they shall be elected to represent the interests of K-12, Four-Year College/University, and Community/Two-Year College members. Representatives to the Legislative Assembly of the National Communication Association shall present a report based on correspondence and notes from business meetings of the National Communication Association to the Executive Council at its first meeting at the annual convention.

Section 2. Terms of Office. Newly elected officers and Council members shall assume office at the close of the annual convention with the exception of the Executive Director, who shall take office as provided in Article VII, Section 4B and 4C.

Section 3. Meetings. The Executive Council shall normally meet at least three (3) times each year, twice at the annual convention prior to the Association business meetings, and once at the annual convention of the NCA.

Section 4. Duties and Responsibilities. The Executive Council shall receive reports, recommend budgets, initiate action, establish scholarships or research grants for projects or purposes appropriate to the Association, and oversee the long-range planning for the Association. In the period between annual conventions, the Executive Council shall act for the membership of the Association.

Section 5. Emergency Procedures. In case of an emergency that would make it either impossible or impractical for the president to convene the Executive Council, the President may empower an Emergency Council consisting of the President, the Immediate Past President, the 1st Vice President, the 2nd Vice President, and the Executive Director to act for the Executive Council. The President may consult each member to determine what action is to be taken on behalf of the Executive Council. Items not requiring an immediate decision are to be decided by polling the entire Executive Council.

Section 6. Quorum. Those members of the Executive Council present at a regularly scheduled and announced meeting of the Executive Council shall constitute a quorum.

## **ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS**

Section 1. Business Meetings. The Association shall hold at least two (2) business meetings at each annual convention.

Section 2.

1. Annual Convention. The Association shall hold a convention and the Theodore Clevenger, Jr. Undergraduate Honors Conference each year in the months of March or April, preferably during the first full week in April or as near thereto as feasible, at a time determined by the Executive Council upon recommendation by the Time and Place Committee as provided in Article IX, Section 1.
2. Regional Rotation. Whenever possible, the Time and Place Committee should seek to systematically rotate the Annual Convention site among the several geographical regions within the larger region covered by the Southern States Communication Association.
3. Local Arrangements. An SSCA member living in or near the host convention city shall chair a local committee to assist the Administrative Committee with convention arrangements.

Section 3. Strategic Planning Meeting. Upon the call of the President, the Administrative Committee, Immediate Past Executive Director, Finance Committee Chair, and other appropriate members as designated by the President, shall meet for the purpose of strategic planning. No more than five years shall elapse between such meetings. The president is responsible for providing a summary report of the meeting to be filed with the Executive Director and to be presented at the subsequent annual convention's business meeting.

Section 4. Quorum. Those members of the Association present at a regularly scheduled and announced meeting of the Association shall constitute a quorum.

## **ARTICLE VII: NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND APPOINTMENTS**

### Section 1. Nominating Committee.

1. Method of Selection.
  1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Immediate Past President of the Association, as chair, and the Immediate Past Chairs of all Divisions.
  2. All members shall serve for one year.
  3. The Committee Chair or designee shall give a report to the Executive Council at its annual meeting during the National Communication Association convention.
2. Restrictions. A member of the Nominating Committee shall not be eligible for any office to be considered by that committee.
3. Responsibilities.
  1. Nominations for the Slate of Officers may be made by the following methods:
    1. By the Nominating Committee
    2. Any SSCA member in good standing may make recommendations to the Nominating Committee.
    3. Nominators may submit materials supporting nominees.
    4. Other names may be added to the Slate of Officers by petition filed with the Nominating Committee at least six months before the annual convention. The petition shall state the names of the nominee and the office to which the person is being nominated and shall be signed by at least twenty-five (25) Association members in good standing at the time and who represent at least two states and five separate institutions.
  2. The Nominating Committee shall check with all possible nominees to make each one aware of the responsibilities of the office to which the person is being nominated and to determine that the nominee will accept and assume the responsibility if elected. Nominees must be members in good standing at the time of the nomination.
  3. The chair of the Nominating Committee shall submit to the Executive Director a list of nominees along with vita information on each candidate and platform statements from each candidate for the office of 2nd Vice President at least one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the annual convention.

### Section 2. Officers to be Elected.

1. Officers to be elected each year are the 2nd Vice President and one Member-at-Large to the Executive Council, who is also the representative to the Legislative Assembly of NCA (the High School, College, and Community/Two Year College Representative to the Legislative Assembly of the National Communication Association on a rotating basis).
2. Officers to be elected every three years are the representative to the NCA Nominating Committee.

### Section 3. Election.

#### 1. First Ballot.

1. At least seventy (70) days before each annual convention the Executive Director shall make available a ballot to each member of the Association who is in good standing at the time.
2. This ballot shall contain the names of the candidates for the various offices for which the Nominating Committee is charged to present candidates. The vita information for each candidate and the platform statements of no more than 300 words for all candidates shall be made available to all members.
3. A deadline of at least thirty-five (35) days prior to the annual convention shall be set for voting.
4. To be valid, each ballot must be submitted by an association member in good standing and verified by the Executive Director at the close of voting.

1.

2. Second Ballot. If a candidate does not receive a majority vote by the first ballot, a second ballot listing the two candidates who received the plurality of votes shall be taken in the same manner as the first ballot, except that the Executive Director shall open the voting at least thirty (30) days prior to the convention and close the voting at least fifteen (15) days prior to the convention.

Tie Between Two Candidates. If two candidates are the only ones on the ballot and receive exactly the same number of votes or a majority is not achieved, the Executive Director shall contact both candidates prior to conducting a second election. The second election shall open the voting at least thirty (30) days prior to the convention and close the voting at least fifteen (15) days prior to the convention. In the event that another tie or lack of majority ensues, the Executive Director shall conduct an election at the annual convention business meeting.

### Section 4. Officers to be Appointed.

1. The Executive Director and the Strategic Communication Director shall be appointed by the Executive Council upon recommendation of a sub-committee appointed by the President and ratified by the membership at the convention.
2. The Journal Editor shall be appointed by the Executive Council, upon the recommendation of the Publications Committee, and ratification by the membership at the convention.
3. The Executive Director and Journal Editor shall be appointed one year prior to taking office.
4. The term of the Executive Director shall correspond to the fiscal year of the Association, August 1 to July 31, and continue for five (5) consecutive fiscal years.

## **ARTICLE VIII: DUES AND FEES**

### Section 1. Categories.

1. Dues and fees of the Association shall be established for the following categories:

1. Regular Membership
  2. Student Membership
  3. Sustaining Membership
  4. Patron Membership
  5. Institutional Membership
  6. Life Membership
  7. Convention Fees
  8. Undergraduate Honors Conference Fee
2. Establishment of Rates: The rates for the dues and fees in each of the categories shall be established by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership voting at an annual convention business meeting.

Section 2. The Executive Director and Strategic Communication Director, in consultation with the Administrative Committee, shall set fees for the following: exhibitor fees, advertising fees for the convention program, and ads for job postings.

## **ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES**

### Section 1. Standing Committees.

1. Committee and Purposes. The standing committees and their purposes shall be:
  1. Committee on Committees, whose purpose shall be to make committee appointments at each convention, and to review assignments in the fall, filling committee vacancies as needed. While any committee may recommend new members, the power of appointment shall reside in the Committee on Committees.
  2. Constitution Committee, whose purpose shall be to review the Constitution periodically and to recommend such amendments as may seem necessary to provide for new developments within the Association and in its relationship with the National Communication Association.
  3. Finance Committee, whose purpose shall be to prepare an annual budget, present it to the Executive Council for approval, maintain a balanced budget, and supervise its use. The Executive Director shall be an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee must approve payment for non-budgeted items in excess of \$1,000. The Finance Committee shall make recommendations on the investment of money raised through the payment of Life Membership dues.
  4. Nominating Committee, whose purpose shall be to nominate yearly a slate of one or more candidates for 2nd Vice President, candidates for the other elected offices that may be vacant, and perform such duties as prescribed in Article VII, Section 1C.
  5. Publications Committee, whose purpose shall be to monitor and make recommendations concerning the publication needs of the Association, to develop and approve policies related to the appearance, frequency, and graphic layout of the publications, and to recommend to the Executive Council editors of SSCA publications (other than the newsletter editor).
  6. Resolutions Committee, whose purpose shall be to draft and present the standard and any special resolutions at the annual convention.

7. Time and Place Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit and receive competitive bids from cities for the annual convention.
8. Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee, whose purpose is to recruit and retain underrepresented populations as members and determine the recipient of the Minority Recruitment/Retention Award.
9. Resource and Membership Development Committee, whose purpose is to oversee all aspects of the association's resource development, fundraising, member benefits and development, and strategic communication. The Executive Director and the Strategic Communication Director shall serve as ex-officio members of this committee.
10. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, whose purpose shall be to promote the diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives for the association, including soliciting committee and leadership nominees, and advising the organization on diversity, equity, and inclusion interests.
11. T. Earle Johnson-Edwin Paget Distinguished Service Award Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on criteria established by the Association in the "Guidelines for Awards," and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria.
12. Janice Hocker Rushing Early Career Research Award Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on criteria established by the Association in the "Guidelines for Awards," and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria.
13. John I. Sisco Excellence in Teaching Award Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on the criteria established in the "Guidelines for Awards," and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria.
14. Shawn Long Outreach Award Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on the criteria established in the "Guidelines for Awards," and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria.
15. Dwight L. Freshley Outstanding New Teacher Award Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on the criteria established in the "Guidelines for Awards," and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria.
16. Rose B. Johnson SCJ Article Award Committee, whose purpose is to determine the recipient or recipients based on criteria established by the Association in the "Guidelines for Awards."
17. Michael M. Osborn Teacher-Scholar Award Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on the criteria established in the "Guidelines for Awards" and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria.
18. Suzanne Osborn Community College Outstanding Educator Award Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on the criteria established in the "Awards Guideline" and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria
19. J. Donald Ragsdale Award for Mentoring Committee, whose purpose shall be to solicit nominees for the award, evaluate them based on the criteria established in the "Awards Guideline" and designate a recipient or recipients, unless none of the nominees meets the criteria



1. The Committee on Committees shall consist of the Administrative Committee.
  2. Standing Committees should consist of three to five members in good standing.
  3. Members of the Standing Committees, except the Nominating Committee, the Committee on Committees, and the Rose B. Johnson Award Committee, the Resource and Membership Development Committee, and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, shall be appointed for a term of three years, with staggered terms, shall be eligible for reappointment, and shall have the retiring member serve as chair.
  4. Members of the Rose B. Johnson SCJ Article Award Committee shall consist of the SCJ Editor and the Editorial Board.
3. Reports. Each committee shall present its reports to the Executive Council in session at the convention as requested by the President, and the President is empowered to require reports of progress during the year.

Section 2. Special Ad Hoc Committees. The President may appoint special committees as deemed necessary and desirable to assist in carrying out the program for the year. Such appointments will expire with the end of the President's term in office. The Executive Council may authorize the appointment of special committees to serve longer than one year.

## **ARTICLE X: DIVISIONS**

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of the Division structure of the Association shall be to recognize and to encourage the spheres of interest and activities of the specialties of communication.

Section 2. Division Names. Each Division will represent a major specialization of communication. In order to be an officially recognized Division of the Southern States Communication Association, at least 5% of the Association's membership shall have indicated membership in the Division. Any Division failing to attract 5% of the membership (determined 60 days prior to the meeting of the Administrative Committee at the annual convention) shall be placed on a one-year probationary status during which time it has the opportunity to achieve the minimum. The Executive Director shall notify divisions of probationary status when membership falls below 5%. Failing to achieve the minimum or failing to elect officers shall result in the Divisional status being revoked and the division becoming an Interest Group. The following Divisions are recognized and shall be guaranteed space on the convention program, which will be allocated based on division size:

1. Communication Theory
2. Freedom of Speech
3. Intercultural Communication
4. Performance Studies
5. Mass Communication
6. Rhetoric and Public Address
7. Argumentation and Forensics
8. Language and Social Interaction
9. Instructional Development
10. Applied Communication
11. Gender Studies
12. Popular Communication
13. Interpersonal Communication
14. Public Relations
15. Community College

## 16. Political Communication

Section 3. Each member of the Association shall be an official member of up to two (2) Divisions and may affiliate with additional divisions for a fee set by the Finance Committee.

Section 4. Meetings. At each annual convention there will be a designated time in the program for a business meeting of each Division.

Section 5. Officers. Members of each Division shall elect the officers for the Division.

1. The officers and their responsibilities shall be:
  1. The Chair, who shall be the chief officer of a Division and shall be responsible to the President of the Association.
  2. The Vice Chair, who shall serve as program chair for the section programs at the annual convention and shall be responsible to the 1st Vice President of the Association and ascends to the office of Chair.
  3. The Vice Chair-Elect, who ascends to the office of Vice Chair and assists the Chair with divisional responsibilities.
  4. The Secretary, who shall take minutes and publicize activities of the Division and shall be responsible to the Executive Director of the Association.
2. Activities and specialty interests within each Division shall be directed by the officers of that Division.

Section 6. Establishment of New Divisions. New Divisions of the Association may be arranged by concerned individuals petitioning the Executive Council for such recognition, detailing the academic rationale for such status, and indicating specifically the membership of the proposed division. A new Division cannot be recognized until 5% of the membership of the Association has indicated their desire to join such a division.

## **ARTICLE XI: INTEREST GROUPS**

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of the Interest Group structure of the Association shall be to recognize and to encourage the spheres of interest and activities of the expanding specialties of communication.

Section 2. Interest Group Names. Each Interest Group will represent a major or emerging specialization of communication. In order to be an officially recognized Interest Group of the Southern States Communication Association, at least 2% of the Association's membership shall have indicated membership in the Interest Group. Any Interest Group failing to attract 2% of the membership (as determined 60 days prior to the meeting of the Administrative Committee at the time of the annual convention) shall be placed on a one-year probationary status during which time it has the opportunity to achieve the minimum. Any Interest Group failing to achieve the minimum a second year or failing to elect officers or failing to submit a program will have its status as an Interest Group revoked. The list of recognized Interest Groups will be kept by the Executive Director. Recognized Interest Groups will be guaranteed one program slot and one business meeting at the annual convention. Additional time slots may be allocated if available, based on the size of the membership in the Interest Group.

Section 3. Membership. Each member of the association may be an official member of up to 2 Interest Groups and may affiliate with other Interest Groups for an additional fee set by the Finance Committee.

Section 4. Meetings. At each annual convention there will be a designated time in the program for either a program or a business meeting of each Interest Group (see Section 2 above).

Section 5. Officers. Members of each Interest Group shall elect the officers for the Interest Group.

1. The officers and their responsibilities shall be:
  1. The Chair, who shall be the chief officer of an Interest Group and shall be responsible to the President of the Association.
  2. The Vice-Chair, who shall serve as program chair for the Interest Group program(s) at the annual convention and shall be responsible to the 1st Vice President of the Association.
  3. The Interest Group shall take minutes and publicize activities of the Interest Group and shall be responsible to the Executive Director of the Association.
2. Activities and specialty interests within each Interest Group shall be directed by the officers of that Interest Group.

Section 6. Establishment of New Interest Groups. New Interest Groups of the Association may be arranged by concerned individuals petitioning the Executive Council for such recognition, detailing the academic rationale for such status, and indicating specifically the membership of the proposed Interest Group. A new Interest Group cannot be recognized until 2% of the membership of the Association has indicated the desire to join such an Interest Group.

## **ARTICLE XII: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Section 1. The *American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*, most recent edition, shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered in this Constitution.

Section 2. Parliamentarian. The President may appoint a parliamentarian to serve at the President's pleasure.

## **ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENT**

This Constitution may be amended:

1. By majority approval of the Executive Council and two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast at an annual convention business meeting, or
2. By a majority vote at two consecutive annual convention business meetings, or
3. By two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Executive Council and a majority of the votes cast at the annual convention business meeting, or
4. By majority approval of the Executive Council and a majority of the votes cast at an annual convention business meeting provided the Amendment had prior approval of the

Constitution Committee and was circulated among the membership at least thirty (30) days before the date of the annual convention.

#### **ARTICLE XIV: DISSOLUTION**

Section 1. Dissolution by Vote. The Association may be dissolved only at a special meeting called for that purpose, and in the manner prescribed by the relevant state laws, by vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present. Subject to compliance with the applicable provisions of such laws, upon any such dissolution of the Association all its property remaining after satisfaction of all its obligations shall be distributed to one or more corporations, funds, foundations, or learned societies such as the Executive Council may select, organized or operated exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder, member or individual, and which does not carry on propaganda or participate or intervene in any political campaign.

Section 2. Dissolution by Inaction. If for any reason the Association shall be unable to elect officers and conduct business in the manner prescribed by its Constitution, including Section 1 above, all property remaining after satisfaction of all its obligations shall be turned over to the National Communication Association, the national organization with which this regional association is affiliated.

Revised April, 2021