

Southern States Communication Association  
97th Annual Convention  
“Curiosity”  
April 7-11, 2027 | Mobile, Alabama

**Instructional Development Division**

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The Instructional Development Division invites submissions for competitive selection for the SSCA 2027 Conference that address the convention theme “Curiosity.” The varied paths that brought us to teaching are underpinned by curiosity, that desire to learn more, to understand better, to know in a different way than we did before. Curiosity comes from the Latin *cūriōsus* which means “full of care, inquisitive.” Beyond asking questions, curiosity takes care and attention. How can we instigate the full range of curiosity? What assignments have you found to inspire this in students? How do you maintain an interest in the world around us when it can be so easy to burn out or become jaded? How would an orientation toward curiosity shift the current direction of our classrooms and our institutions?

The Division welcomes **competitive papers, panels, round tables, and posters**. A best practice for all divisions is to submit proposals with diverse participants composed of individuals representing different institutions, and where possible and relevant, potential new members. The deadline for all submissions is **September 15, 2026** at 11:59pm, Pacific Time. All submissions must be electronically submitted to [the SSCA convention site](#).

**Competitive Paper Submissions** are completed research projects dealing with a substantive critical, methodological, or theoretical contribution. All papers should be **prepared for anonymous review** by removing identifying information (including metadata) and by creating a separate document with the paper title, author(s)’ names, institutional affiliation(s), contact information, and an abstract of no more than 200 words. If this is the first time an author is presenting at SSCA, they should indicate this is a “debut paper” during the submission process. All papers submitted will be considered for the Division’s Top Paper Award.

For **student papers**, indicate “STUDENT” on the first page of the manuscript, and indicate “Student Paper” during the submission process. The Division’s Top Student Paper will be submitted for consideration for the SSCA Bostrom Young Scholar Award. In order for a submission to be considered a student paper and to be eligible for student awards or recognition, all authors of the paper must be students at the time the paper is submitted. A paper co-authored by a student and a faculty member, for instance, will not be classified as a student paper.

**Panel and Roundtable Submissions** respectively comprise proposals for a slate of papers focused on a central topic or theme and proposals bringing together a group of scholars to discuss a topic or theme. Submissions must include a **title**; an overall **rationale** of no more than 200 words; a list of **participants’ names** with their institutional affiliations and contact information; and if applicable the following **information about each presentation** on the panel: the presentation title; the presentation author(s), with their institutional affiliation(s) and contact information; and the presentation abstract of no more than 200 words.

**Poster Submissions** can take one of two forms: Extended Abstracts and Great Ideas For Teaching (GIFTs). Both kinds of submissions should be **prepared for anonymous review**.

**Extended Abstract Poster Submissions** are designed for projects that are fully conceptualized but prior to, or in the early stages, of analysis, interpretation, data collection, and critique/review at the time of submission. For accepted abstracts, it is expected that the completed project will be presented as a poster at the conference. These submissions should include a **title page** with a “Poster” indication provided; a **detailed summary** of 500-700 words that provides evidence of a fully rationalized research area and a description of methods and data to be analyzed; and the **reference pages**.

**Great Ideas for Teaching (GIFTs) Poster Submissions** are intended to showcase class activities and innovative pedagogy in a practical and accessible format. These submissions should include a **title page** with “GIFTs” indicated; a detailed summary with **clear instructions of the assignment**; a brief **discussion of its efficacy**; and a **reference page** (if applicable).

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**Division Awards** are based on Competitive Paper submissions and will recognize the Top Student Paper and the Top Paper.

**The Katherine Grace Hendrix Article of the Year Award** recognizes articles that herald significant contributions in communication theory, research, and/or practice in the Instructional Communication area of the discipline. In honor of Dr. Katherine Grace Hendrix, this award celebrates works advancing underserved population research and communication scholarship addressing inequities in learning sectors.

Peer reviewed articles emerging from communication and related disciplines within a two-year period of the annual conference meeting cycle, based on copyright date, are eligible. The article author must be a current member of the Southern States Communication Association. For articles with multiple authors, at least one author must be a current SSCA member.

To apply, send a letter of nomination, including a brief rationale and an explanation of the work’s significance. Please include a PDF of the article nominated. Self-nominations are encouraged.

Nominations and materials must be received by **December 4, 2026 at 11:59 PM EST**. Only electronic submissions of nomination letters and articles will be accepted. Please email nominations and materials to Instructional Development Division Chair, Elizabeth Hanson Smith, [ehansonsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:ehansonsmith@yahoo.com).

Submissions will be reviewed by a committee of SSCA Instructional Development Division members. The winner will be announced at the annual IDD Business Meeting, and the winner will present as part of an SSCA IDD spotlight panel the following year.