

## **Disability and Neurodiversity Caucus Bylaws Central States Communication Association**

### **Article I: Name and History**

The following caucus shall henceforth be called the *Disability and Neurodiversity Caucus* (hereafter, “the Caucus”). It will be referred to as “Caucus” for the remainder of these bylaws.

**History:** The Disability and Neurodiversity Caucus was founded in 2025 after a petition with 72 signatures of support was submitted by Jimmie Manning (University of Nevada) and Michaela D. E. Meyer (Christopher Newport University). Signatures were collected digitally via petition by Jimmie Manning at the 2025 annual convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. Jimmie Manning, Michaela Meyer, Christina Ivey, and Sandra Pensoneau-Conway agreed to lead an organizational meeting at the 2026 convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Upon initiation of the Caucus, Michaela Meyer will serve as Organizing Chair and Jimmie Manning will serve as Vice-Chair until the first set of officers are elected at the Caucus organizational meeting.

These bylaws were authored by Jimmie Manning and will be presented for approval at the organizational meeting at the 2026 convention.

### **Article II: Purpose**

The purpose of the Caucus is to promote dialogue, scholarship, advocacy, accessibility, and community related to disability and neurodiversity within the communication discipline. Specifically, the Caucus seeks to accomplish the following:

1. **Community-Building:** Foster professional networks, mutual support, mentorship, and affirmation among disabled, neurodivergent, chronically ill, and other members experiencing embodied or cognitive difference, as well as allies.
2. **Visibility and Advocacy:** Advance disability and neurodiversity as central categories of analysis across communication scholarship, practice, pedagogy, and association governance; encourage accessible conference design and inclusive organizational culture.
3. **Scholarly Engagement:** Sponsor programming engaging disability studies, neurodiversity, crip theory, access, care, anti-ableism, and related critical/intersectional perspectives.

### **Article III: Membership**

Members of the Caucus must be members of CSCA and should identify their affiliation to the Caucus when paying CSCA dues. Membership is open to all who support the purpose of the Caucus, including scholars, teachers, practitioners, students, and allies.

## **Article IV: Definitions**

Unless otherwise specified, "majority of the Caucus" refers to a majority vote of those members present at the meeting in which the vote occurs.

- For any vote conducted electronically, notice shall be distributed via the Caucus listserv; a voting period of no fewer than seven (7) days shall be provided; and at least six (6) members must cast ballots for the results to be valid.
- "Officer" refers to any individual currently holding an office described in these bylaws.

## **Article V: Officers**

The Caucus shall have the following officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (who also serves as Vice Chair-Elect), and Immediate Past Chair.

1. The normal order of succession is as follows: Secretary (Vice Chair-Elect), then Vice Chair, followed by Chair, and finally Immediate Past Chair.
2. The Secretary/Vice Chair-Elect is elected by a majority vote of the Caucus at the Annual Business Meeting. After serving one year as Secretary, this officer automatically becomes Vice Chair; after one year as Vice Chair (serving as program planner), the officer becomes Chair; after one year as Chair, the officer becomes Immediate Past Chair.
3. All Officers must be Caucus members in good standing.
4. Officers serve from the beginning of the CSCA convention at which they assume their role until the beginning of the subsequent convention (except the Secretary's minute-distribution obligation, which continues until minutes are disseminated).
5. Additional Temporary Officers required for Caucus operation may be appointed by the Chair (in consultation with other Officers) and confirmed by majority vote at the next meeting.
6. Officers may resign or vacate office by incapacity or death; removal requires a 2/3 vote of the Caucus.

## **Article VI: Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (Vice Chair-Elect), and Immediate Past Chair. It shall coordinate ongoing business between Annual Business Meetings.

## **Article VII: Duties and Responsibilities of Officers**

### **Chair:**

1. Preside over meetings; set agendas.
2. Maintain oversight of the Caucus treasury and authorize expenditures.
3. Oversee committees and appoint Temporary Officers as necessary.
4. Report to CSCA as required.
5. Collaborate with the CSCA First Vice President in planning programming for the upcoming convention; attend required planning meetings.

### **Vice Chair:**

1. Assume the Office of Chair when the Chair's term expires or if the Chair vacates the office.
2. Assist with strategic planning, accessibility initiatives, and membership outreach.

### **Secretary (Vice Chair-Elect):**

1. Record and distribute minutes of the Annual Business Meeting (and any special meetings).
2. Assist with program planning.
3. Manage official communications/listserv announcements in coordination with the Chair.
4. Prepare to assume the Office of Vice Chair by becoming familiar with bylaws and procedures.
5. If the Secretary/Vice Chair-Elect vacates the office, the Chair (after consultation) shall appoint a Temporary Officer until an election can occur.

### **Immediate Past Chair:**

1. Serve as parliamentarian, advising on procedure and bylaw interpretation.
2. Chair and coordinate the Awards Committee (see Article XIII) and manage the annual awards process (call, review timeline, notifications).
3. Provide continuity and mentorship to newer officers.

## **Article VIII: Meetings**

The Caucus shall hold its Annual Business Meeting at each CSCA annual convention (except under extraordinary circumstances). Additional business meetings or virtual consultations may be scheduled by the Executive Committee as needed. Members are encouraged but not required to attend.

## **Article IX: Elections**

1. Offices not filled by succession (i.e., the annual election of the Secretary/Vice Chair-Elect or any vacated position) shall be filled at the Annual Business Meeting.
2. Nominations may be made from the floor; self-nominations are permitted. Consent of nominees should be confirmed (in person or previously).
3. Elections require a majority of votes cast by members present.
4. The Chair votes only in the event of a tie and announces results before adjournment.

## **Article X: Committees**

- **Awards Committee** (standing committee – see Article XIII): Chaired by the Immediate Past Chair, who appoints two (2) additional members (normally past Chairs or experienced Caucus members). If the Immediate Past Chair cannot serve, the Chair appoints a replacement committee chair (subject to majority approval).
- **Ad Hoc Committees:** May be formed by the Chair (with consultation) and dissolved upon completion of charge or by majority vote.

## **Article XI: Parliamentary Authority**

1. The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall guide procedure where applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws or adopted special rules.
2. A quorum for in-person meetings shall consist of those members present (unless the Caucus adopts a specific numeric threshold in a future amendment).
3. The parliamentary function is fulfilled by the Immediate Past Chair.

## **Article XII: Voting**

1. Except where otherwise stated, actions are decided by simple majority of those voting.
2. Elections are conducted by voice, show of hands, or written/electronic ballot at the Chair's discretion; a secret ballot shall be used if requested by any two members.
3. Electronic votes must follow the process defined in Article IV (notice and minimum participation).

## **Article XIII: Awards**

All awards will be presented at the Annual Business Meeting unless otherwise necessitated. No individual may receive more than two awards in a single year.

The Caucus may confer awards in the following categories (as resources permit):

1. **Top Paper Award** – Selected by the program planner from accepted competitive papers submitted to the Caucus for the annual convention.
2. **Innovator Award** – Honors outstanding scholarly innovation in a book (single- or co-authored, or edited collection) or special journal issue from the previous five years. Up to three recognitions (one single/co-authored book, one edited collection, one special issue) may be made. At least one author/editor must be a Caucus member at nomination.
3. **Outstanding Scholarship Award** – Honors up to three published articles, book chapters, or peer-reviewed creative/professional works from the prior calendar year that significantly advance disability and/or neurodiversity perspectives in communication. At least one author/creator must be a Caucus member.
4. **Distinguished Contribution to Disability & Neurodiversity Studies Award** – Recognizes a sustained and notable scholarly contribution advancing disability and/or neurodiversity within communication. Recipient must be a CSCA member at nomination.
5. **Teaching Excellence Awards (Graduate/Early Career/Established Scholar)** – Up to one award may be given in each of three career categories for demonstrated excellence and innovation in teaching, mentoring, and/or accessible pedagogical design related to disability and neurodiversity. Nominees must be CSCA members; Graduate status is defined by current enrollment; Early Career typically within first ten years post-degree; Established Scholar typically past ten years post-degree.

**General Criteria:**

- Nominations (self or peer) must include a rationale and relevant supporting materials.
- The Awards Committee establishes timelines and evaluation rubrics, and may decline to confer an award if no submissions meet standards.
- All awardees receive a certificate (and any additional recognition as approved by the Executive Committee).

**Article XIV: Finances**

1. The CSCA Executive Committee allocates funds annually to the Caucus. These funds shall primarily support award recognition (certificates, accessibility supports, modest reception costs, or related initiatives).
2. If allocated funds are less than \$100, they shall be divided proportionally among required award or operational expenses.
3. If funds exceed award needs, remaining balances may be used to support accessibility initiatives, recruitment, community-building, or other mission-aligned activities at the discretion of the Chair (in consultation with the Executive Committee).

4. The Chair (or designee) shall maintain transparent records of expenditures for annual reporting.

**Article XV: Amendments**

1. Any member may propose an amendment by submitting its text to the Chair and Executive Committee. A second from another member is required to advance it.
2. Proposed amendments must be circulated to the membership at least 30 days prior to the Annual Business Meeting (or electronic vote window).
3. Amendments require approval by three-fourths (3/4) of voting members present (or of valid electronic ballots cast).
4. Unless otherwise specified, amendments take effect immediately upon approval. The Chair (or designee) will distribute a revised copy of the bylaws in a timely manner.