

# Constitutional and Bylaws Amendments to create flexibility in Student Congress Dates.

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## Background

Since 1994, the competition has been hosted at the Arkansas State Capitol Building over the Veterans' Day Holiday at the request of the Secretary of State's Office to minimize disruption to the day-to-day operations of the government offices.

Last year, with a change in the administrative leadership of the Arkansas House of Representatives, ACTAA was informed that the Arkansas State Capitol Building would no longer be available to host the Arkansas Student Congress over the Veterans' Day Holiday.

As a result, the prescriptive language in ACTAA's Constitution and Bylaws must be amended to allow the association to host the Arkansas Student Congress on a different week.

The Board of Directors proposes that the language in the ACTAA Constitution outlining the ACTAA Calendar, specifically regarding the timing of the Arkansas Student Congress, be amended to create more flexibility in scheduling. Replacing "in November on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday over the officially scheduled Veterans Day Holiday" with "over three days in November."

Additionally, the Board of Directors has amended the ACTAA Bylaws to remove language regarding the timing of the Arkansas Student Congress and the Arkansas State Championship from the committees' descriptions, leaving these references to appear only in the ACTAA Calendar section of the ACTAA Constitution, as referenced above. The Board of Directors is seeking endorsement of this change from the membership.

## Proposed Amendment

Language ~~stricken~~ is proposed to be removed, and underlined language is proposed to be added.

# **The Constitution of the Arkansas Communication & Theatre Arts Association.**

The following amendment to the Bylaws was proposed by the Board of Directors at its Summer Workshop meeting on July 22, 2025. In compliance with ACTAA Constitution, Article IX, section 1, before the amendment can be ratified and engrossed, the language was published via email to the membership on July 30 for a thirty (30) day period for members' review. The Board of Directors is seeking membership approval at the General Membership Business Meeting at Fall Conference on July 30, 2025.

## **ARTICLE VI: Meetings and Annual ACTAA Events**

Section 2. ACTAA Event Dates include the following:

(1) **Student Congress** will be held **over three days** in November ~~on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday over the officially scheduled Veterans Day Holiday.~~

(2) The **Arkansas Forensics and Debate State Championship (ASC)** will be held on a multi-day period during the Spring Semester. Dates to be determined by the ASC committee and approved by the Board of Directors. ASC dates must be placed on the calendar by Summer Workshop.

Section 3. The Board of Directors shall meet as specified by the President or at the request of a majority of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Special meetings of the Association may be called by the President or at the request of one-third (1/3) of those members in good standing.

## **The Bylaws of the Arkansas Communication & Theatre Arts Association.**

The following amendment to the Bylaws was adopted by the Board of Directors at its Summer Workshop meeting on July 22, 2025. In compliance with ACTAA By-laws, Article VII, section 2, before the amendment can be ratified and engrossed, the Board-approved language was published via email to the membership on July 30 for a thirty (30) day period for members to submit comments on the amendment. The Board of Directors is seeking membership endorsement at the General Membership Business Meeting before voting to ratify and engross the amendment at its Fall Conference Board Meeting on July 30, 2025.

### **ARTICLE I: Committee Structure and Duties**

#### **Section 6. Standing Committees**

(1) In most cases (unless otherwise stated in the by-laws), standing committees will consist of a chair and three members. The outgoing chair will serve as an ex-officio member for one year. Members of the committee will rotate each year to the next member position to eventually chair the committee. After a member has chaired the committee, he/she will rotate off the committee. Unofficial observer positions can be added to the committee at the discretion of the chair.

(2) The following standing committees are standing committees that serve the Board of Directors and the membership: Advocacy and Public Engagement, Arkansas Forensics and Debate State Championship, Arkansas Student Congress, Belonging and Inclusion Advocacy, Ethical Practices Committee, Lifetime Member Committee, New Member Support, Publicity and Promotion Committee, Scholarship Committee, Tournament Advisory Committees.

(a) The **Advocacy and Public Engagement Committee** shall keep the Association informed of the needs of the profession in the area of certification, licensure and academic standards. The chairman of the committee shall be appointed by the President for a three-year term. The four discipline-specific representatives will serve as committee members. Other members of the committee are appointed by the President with recommendations from the chair for a three-year term.

(b) The **Arkansas Forensics and Debate State Championship (ASC)**. The ASC Committee shall organize and host the annual ACTAA Arkansas Forensics and Debate State Championship. This committee will be headed by a Permanent Director appointed by the Board of Directors for a term of five years. The Permanent Tabulator will be appointed by the Board of Directors for a term of 5 years. This committee shall consist of the Permanent Director, Chair, three members, and a Permanent Tabulator. The next ranking member of the

committee who has served at least two years on the committee will assume the duties of the chair immediately following the Spring ASC. Another member will be appointed to the committee by the President, following a recommendation by remaining ASC committee members, at the next summer meeting. The duties of the outgoing chair are finished when all pending business (financial or otherwise) has been completed and the ASC report has been delivered at the Fall Convention. However, the chair will retain ex-officio status to aid the next ASC director, if needed. The incoming chair's duties for the next ASC begin immediately following the spring ASC. Time and place will be decided by the ASC Committee with the Board of Directors' approval. ~~It will be held on a multi-day period during the Spring Semester.~~ ASC dates must be placed on the calendar by Summer Workshop. After all costs of ASC have been paid, any money remaining will be applied to the ACTAA scholarship fund.

(c) **Arkansas Student Congress.** The Congress Committee shall organize and host the annual Arkansas Student Congress. This committee will be headed by a Permanent Director appointed by the Board of Directors for a term of five years. This committee shall consist of a chair and three members appointed by the President. The next ranking member who has served at least two years on the committee will assume the duties of the chair immediately following Student Congress. Another member will be appointed to the committee by the President, following a recommendation made by the remaining members of the committee. The duties of the outgoing chair are finished when all pending business (financial or otherwise) has been completed and the Student Congress report has been delivered at the Summer Workshop. The incoming chair's duties for the next Student Congress begin immediately following Student Congress. After all costs of Student Congress have been paid, any money remaining will be applied to the ACTAA scholarship fund. ~~Student Congress will be held in November on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday over the officially scheduled Veterans Day Holiday.~~

(d) The **Belonging and Inclusion Advocacy (BIA) Committee** will consist of a chair and other interested members appointed by the President. Their charge is to assist the Association in supporting inclusion, engagement, and diversity through resources, discussions, and other activities as deemed appropriate by the committee.

(e) The **Ethical Practices Committee** will consist of a chair and three members. This committee will promote ethical and professional practices within the Association and, hear formal grievances of violations of the ACTAA Professional & Ethical Standards of Conduct in all of the activities sponsored by the Association.

(f) The **Lifetime Member Committee** is made up of honorary lifetime members of ACTAA who support the mission and vision of ACTAA. Duties include

recruitment of new members, supporting existing members, and being active in the ACTAA mission.

(g) The **New Member Support Committee** will disseminate information about ACTAA to speech and theater teachers of all grades across Arkansas. The purpose of this committee is to add and retain members. This committee will coordinate new member activities such as, but not limited to, the mentor program, workshops at meetings, and resource contacts. The committee will also develop retention plans to keep current members active, coordinate activities at Summer Workshop and Fall Conference, and build resource contacts. The chairman of the committee shall be appointed by the President for at least a three-year term. Other members of the committee are appointed by the committee chairman for a three-year term. The Executive Secretary and the Second Vice-President are ex-officio members working closely with the chairman. The chair serves on the Fall Conference and Summer Workshop Committees.

(h) The **Publicity and Promotion Committee** shall disseminate information about ACTAA and the field of speech and theater. The chairman of the committee shall be appointed by the President for a three-year term. Other members of the committee are appointed by the committee Chairman for a three-year term. Second Vice President shall serve as an ex-officio member. Serve on the Fall Conference Committee.

(i) The **Scholarship Committee** will consist of the Executive Treasurer as chair and three committee members. This committee will publicize the existence of the scholarship, coordinate the collection of applications, and choose the scholarship winner(s).

(j) The **Tournament Advisory Committee (TAC)** is charged with aiding tournament directors and coaches who implement and attend tournaments when questions, problems, and issues exist. Additionally, the committee should focus on providing a public forum for discussion about competition and aiding new coaches who might need guidance before, during, and after a tournament. The committee shall consist of seven members, with the President, the Permanent Director of the Arkansas Forensics and Debate State Championship (ASC), and the Permanent Director of the Arkansas Student Congress serving ex-officio and four general members appointed by the President to be confirmed by the Board of Directors at its Fall Conference meeting. When appointing members, the President should consider the geography, discipline, and background representation of the members. Complaints and/or concerns about speech & debate tournament or competition procedures should be directed to the three ex-officio members. All concerns submitted should be shared with the committee to confer and issue action. Action may include responding to the complainant,

issuing a statement or guidance to a coach, tournament director, or the membership-at-large, etc., and/or a recommendation to the Board of Directors, ASC Committee, or Student Congress committee for potential sanctioning.