

breaking barriers through the art of connection

Ohio
Communication
Association

89th Annual
Conference

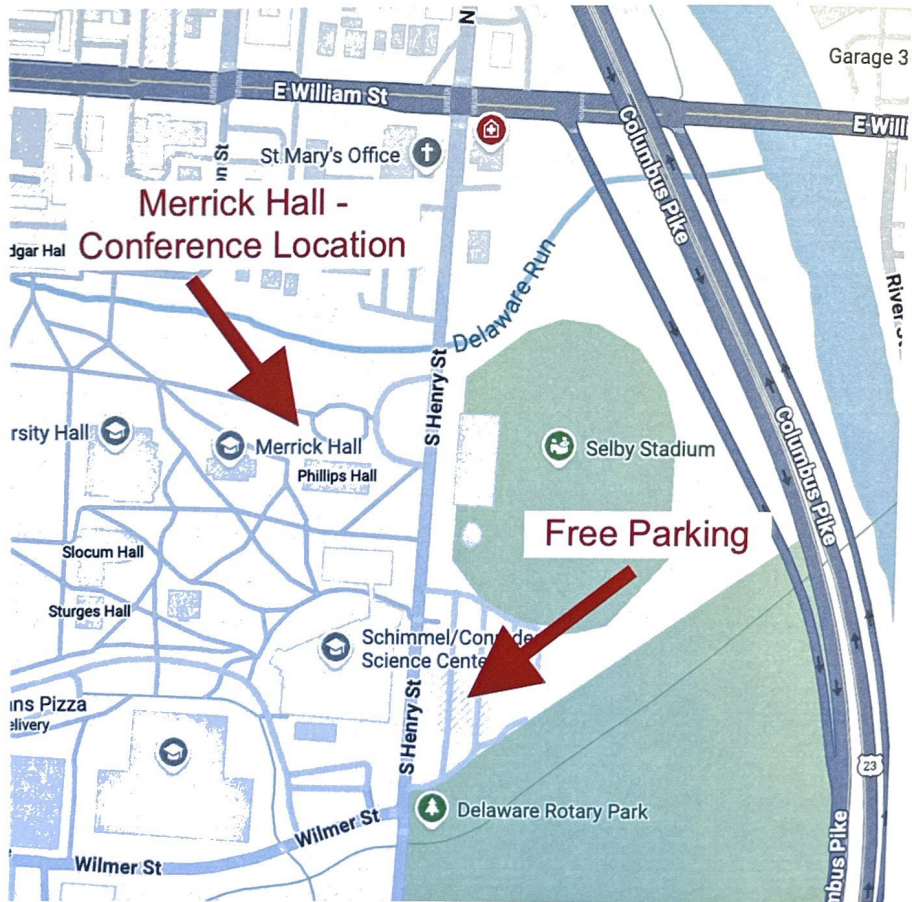
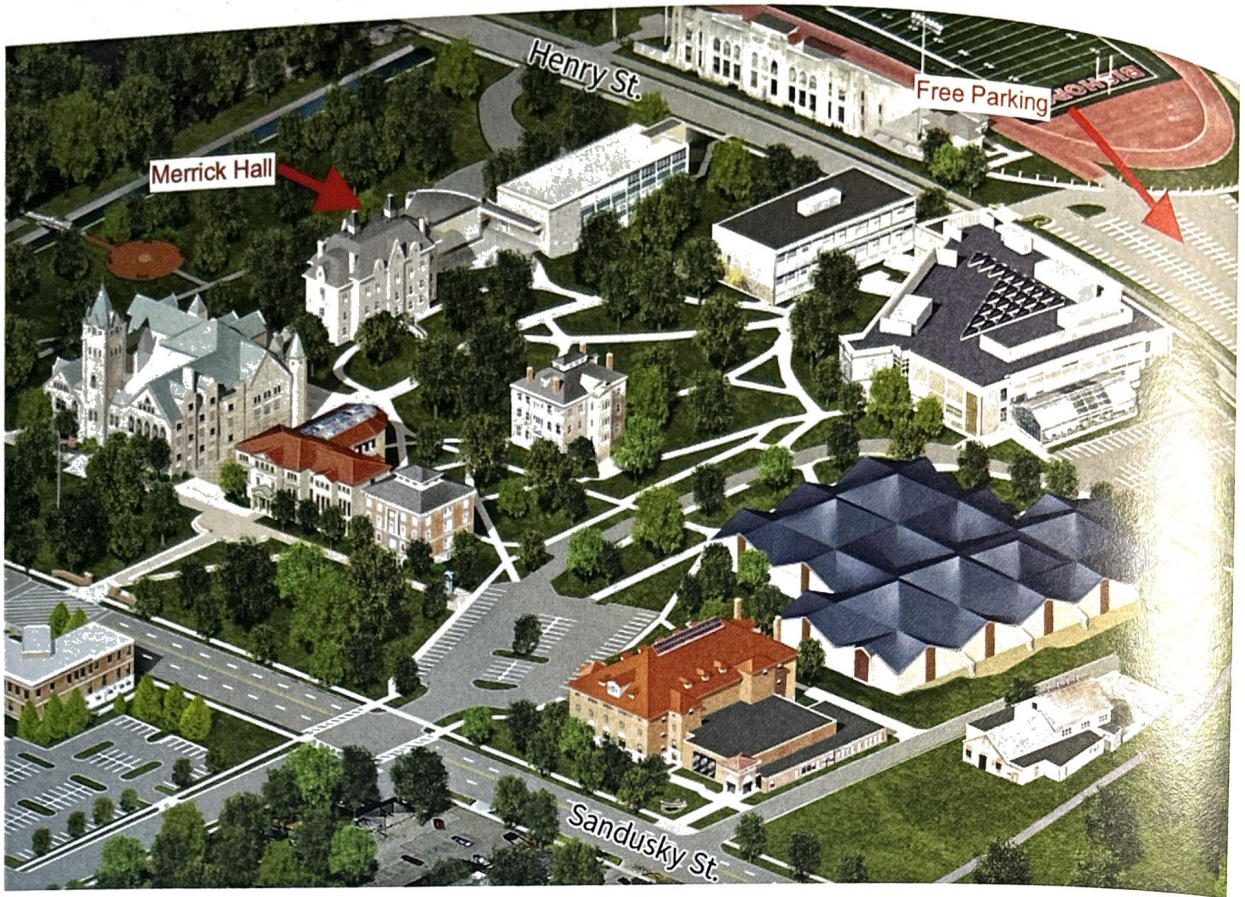
October
10 – 11, 2025

Delaware,
Ohio

 **OCA**
OHIO
COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION

Ohio
Wesleyan
University







Welcome to the **89th annual conference** for the Ohio Communication Association!

Our annual conference is a way that we can gather and foster a sense of community, and we're happy to have you join us at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio.

This year's conference theme, "Breaking Barriers through the Art of Connection" is a way to reflect upon how we break barriers and encourage positive change through our teaching, scholarship, and service.

If there are ways that the Ohio Communication Association can support you further, let us know.

Have a wonderful conference!

Sincerely,

The Ohio Communication Association Executive Board

JOIN US!



Executive Board Open Positions

4 - Member-at-Large Positions

2 - Graduate Student Representative Positions

If you have any questions about what each of the open positions requires, feel free to ask any current or former OCA Board Member or review our by-laws available at www.ohiocomm.org

Breaking Barriers through the Art of Connection

Thursday, October 9

5:00 pm-8:00 pm

Executive Board Meeting

Ohio Wesleyan University | MH 202

Friday, October 10

12:00 pm-1:00 pm

Conference Registration

Merrick Hall
First Floor

12:00 pm-4:00 pm

Opportunity Fair

Merrick Hall
First Floor

1:00 pm-5:00 pm

Conference Sessions

Merrick Hall
Second Floor

5:15 pm-6:45 pm

Awards Ceremony & Raffle

Merrick Hall
Banquet Hall 301

Saturday, October 11

8:00 am-9:00 am

Conference Registration

Merrick Hall
First Floor

8:00 am-9:00 am

Networking Breakfast

Merrick Hall
First Floor

8:00 am-11:00 am

Opportunity Fair

Merrick Hall
First Floor

11:00 am-12:15 pm

Keynote Speaker: Professor Dana Cloud
School of Communication, Film, and Media Studies
University of Cincinnati

Merrick Hall
Banquet Hall 301

12:30 pm-1:50 pm

Lunch, Business Meeting & Raffle

Merrick Hall
Banquet Hall 301

2 pm- 3:50 pm


Conference Sessions & Raffle at 3:50pm

Merrick Hall
Second Floor

Breaking Barriers through the Art of Connection

89th Annual Ohio Communication Association Conference

October 10-11, 2025 | Ohio Wesleyan University | Delaware, OH

  Stay in touch with OCA all year long!  

@OhioCommunicationAssoc

www.ohiocomm.org

Check back for pictures and news from the conference!

Friday, October 10

Friday | Conference Registration

12:00-1:00 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | First Floor

Friday | Opportunity Fair

12:00-4:00 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | First Floor

Please visit our sponsor tables to learn about them and say thanks
...they're a big part in making this conference happen!

Friday | Session 1

1:00-1:50 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Second Floor

Research Papers

Room: MH 203

Chair: Cody Clemens
(Ohio University)

Not enough, yet too much.

Donna Chang (Denison University)

The paper is an autoethnography, which breaks away from the traditional research paper that follows a clear and formal structure. It includes a narrative element, allowing room for evocative storytelling. I wrote about the experience of feeling displaced—culturally, emotionally, and linguistically—as I transitioned from a Taiwanese community to an American one at the age of nine. I explored how the drive for perfection has shaped my identity, especially in environments that place a high value on achievement. In crafting my autoethnography, I came face-to-face with the feelings of being “not enough” and “too much.” Through this confrontation, I began to take ownership of these feelings. After documenting and acknowledging the inadequacies, I was able to sit with them, embrace them with compassion, and gently ask: Why do I feel this way? In my autoethnography, I intervene in my own storytelling and choose to rewrite my cultural tapes. I turn the researcher’s lens onto myself as a cultural participant and examine the deepest layers of my identity. I learn to break through linguistic and cultural barriers surrounding internal conflict and feelings of inadequacy. This paper examines the development of the self and the relationship one has with the world and between two cultures.

Wall-E and the Corporate Influence over the Environment
 Mandie Heil (University of Findlay)

This critical analysis of the 2008 Disney-Pixar film Wall-E evaluates the film's argument regarding the environmental impact of the interwoven dynamics of corporate power, government complicity, and societal consumerism. This film analyses the deep influence corporations have over society and how they utilize media and lobbying to gain power and profit without regard for the negative impact on waste, pollution, or the environment. The film's argument can be framed through Frances Willard's social theory as riding a bicycle. Once heading in the wrong direction, it is easy to continue that forward movement and requires perseverance and persistence to halt and turn in a new direction. The film ultimately challenges the audience to resist corporate narratives and commit to a sustainable future, arguing that, unless a systemic shift occurs to balance corporate power and influence and prioritize sustainability, we may find ourselves in the apocalyptic world portrayed in Wall-E.

Beyond Terminology: Coordinated Management of Meaning as a Framework for Inclusive LGBTQIA+ Pedagogy

Marianne Vanderbeke (Bowling Green State University) & Lara Lengel (Bowling Green State University)

Current LGBTQIA+ diversity training focuses on terminology memorization and cultural competency, inadvertently marginalizing students with less visible identities like asexual and aromantic orientations. As legal challenges to DEI programming restrict institutional approaches, educators need sophisticated frameworks that go beyond checklist diversity training. This paper demonstrates how Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM) provides essential tools for truly inclusive pedagogy. Rather than treating identity as categories, CMM recognizes meaning as coordinated through social interaction across multiple contexts. Students with less visible identities engage in strategic identity performance—sophisticated navigation of allnormative expectations that requires understanding, not correction. The paper offers practical pedagogical strategies including meaning coordination circles, cultural pattern mapping, and identity performance reflection. These CMM-based approaches develop transferable coordination skills that can address emerging identities and evolving terminology while supporting authentic student expression across diverse educational contexts.

*Discussion or
 Research Paper
 Panel*

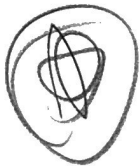
*Room: MH 204
 Chair: Mary Roberts
 (Ohio University)*

Transcending the Barriers of the College Classroom through Applied Communicative Coursework

Laura Russell (Denison University), Craig Pinkerton (Denison University), Jennifer Woody-Collins (Denison University), & Kimberly Jordan (Ohio University)

The Communication discipline is known for its applied nature, making it a robust field for students to go beyond the classroom and impact their surrounding relationships and communities. Communicative applied coursework can take shape in myriad ways, making it an inexhaustible topic for instructors to explore through discussion. This roundtable offers diverse frameworks for conceiving what applied communicative coursework can be, the kinds of goals and outcomes that may be imagined for such work, and the benefits and challenges that come with assignments that venture outside the classroom's walls. Furthermore, panelists engage questions concerning how such work can be assessed by offering new ways of thinking about evaluation and what constitutes "rigor" when applied work is involved. Those attending the panel will be encouraged to partake in the discussion to brainstorm ideas for developing applied assignments in their courses.

*Research
In-Progress
Room: MH 201
Chair: Gwen Hullman
(Cleveland State
University)*



Re-examining Women's Hysteria in the Context of Feminist Health Communication 5

Ava Dedio (Denison University)

This paper critically examines the historical and ongoing pathologization of women's emotional and psychological experiences through the lens of feminist health communication. It explores how the diagnosis of "hysteria" has been used as a tool of social control, silencing women's distress and reinforcing structural inequalities. Drawing on readings from Adebayo, The Yellow Wallpaper, Murphy, Ashcraft, and Timler, the paper reveals how race, gender, discourse, and systemic oppression shape women's health experiences. It argues for a shift away from biomedical models that individualize and decontextualize women's suffering toward a framework that recognizes emotional expression as valid, embodied, and socially situated. Through intersectionality, relational analysis, and critique of medical language, the paper calls for transformative approaches to health communication that resist objectivity and pathologization. Ultimately, it envisions a reimagined healthcare system that centers women's lived experiences and challenges dominant narratives within medical discourse and practice.

Carry This With Me: Research-Driven Theatre on the Su*cide Crisis in Cagayan de Oro, Philippines 6

Ikeria Olandesca (Denison University)

This discussion explores the research and development process behind a play-in-development, Carry This With Me, an experimental theatre piece responding to the su*cide crisis in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. Drawing from discursive analysis, communication and cultural theory, and theatre research, the piece explores the personal and systemic complexities of depression while offering potential pathways for healing.

The researcher will explain individual and institutional causes and contributors to depressive and su*cidal symptoms, including neocolonialism, Westernization, neoliberalism, and capitalist pathologization. Then, the capacity for theatre as a health intervention—through empathy, awareness, and action—in other contexts will be explored, as well as theatrical techniques—documentary, satirical, and revolutionary theatre—that can be used to approach this complex topic with sensitivity and nuance. Carry This With Me offers a case study in integrating critical research with theatre-making as a potential community intervention in mental health discourse and advocacy.

Beyond the Biomedical Body: Health as Social Liability 7

Emily Porter (Denison University)

This project explores how dominant understandings of health are shaped by biomedical and neoliberal discourses that marginalize non-normative bodies and reinforce systems of inequality. Drawing from feminist health communication, the project examines how public policy, media narratives, and social structures construct bodily norms that privilege thinness, whiteness, and productivity while framing fat, disabled, and mentally ill bodies as burdens. Using critical discourse analysis, the study connects scholarly texts exploring health apps, public health campaigns, and medical language to reveal how cultural narratives of personal responsibility obscure structural determinants of health. The project calls for a reimagining of health communication rooted in inclusivity, social justice, and collective care. Health is rhetorically constructed, and these constructions can (and should) be challenged to promote more equitable health outcomes for all.

Win an Amazon gift card!



**Give Session Feedback
for raffle entry!**



Raffle sponsored by **BCSU**

Friday | Session 2

2:00-2:50 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Second Floor

GIFTS

Room: MH 204

Chair: Andrea Meluch
(The University of Akron)

Fully Open Quizzes Benefit Student Learning

Wendy Maxian (Xavier University)

Depending on their parameters, open tests foster student interaction with the material and to make connections between the question and the material. They provide each student with the time they need to open the textbook, review notes, and process the material more deeply. By permitting students to collaborate on the tests, peer learning also occurs, and is an added benefit. Additionally, open, online tests allow tests to happen more frequently and cover less material, helping students process the material more often and in more manageable amounts.

Establishing Research Support Groups in an Undergraduate Math Class

Wendy Maxian (Xavier University)

Although Research Support Groups are not a specific assignment, they function as peer learning groups for most steps in a semester-long research project. Students individually analyze a communication problem and then collectively create an original class survey, collect and analyze data, and create individual communication collateral to help solve the problem. Anecdotally, the groups also lessen students' math anxiety and result in deeper learning of most research concepts.

Beyond the Numbers: Breaking Barriers in Business Communication through Storytelling

Mary Olivia Roberts, Cody M. Clemens, Mary Catherine Kennedy, & Samantha Roberts (Ohio University)

This activity offers a refreshing departure from traditional lecture-based instruction by engaging students through an interactive, media-rich experience centered on a culturally relevant and trendy subject: Nike's partnership with Michael Jordan, as portrayed in the AIR movie trailer. By using a high-energy and cinematic resource, the activity captures student interest and creates a shared entry point into deeper learning about storytelling in business communication. It meets students where they are, using popular culture as a bridge to more sophisticated communication analysis. The discussion-based format encourages peer interaction, critical thinking, and idea-sharing in a low-stakes environment. Rather than passively receiving information, students actively participate in small group conversations, reconstruct data-driven business pitches, and reflect on the emotional drivers of consumer behavior.

Television as an Engaging View into International Communication Practices

Nelson Rolon (Columbus State Community College)

For many students, engagement with other cultures and communication styles often takes the form of television programming. By using easily accessible foreign programming, we can challenge students to interrogate their own communication styles by observing similarities and differences presented in these shows. Unique body language, tone, setting, music, and even genre tropes resonate in some cultures more than others. How can we connect with these ideas and foster a global communications perspective?

*Research
In-Progress*

Room: MH 203

*Chair: Andrew Hunt
(University of Dayton)*

Navigating Identity Boundaries: Self-Disclosure and Privacy Management Among LGBTQAI+ International 12

Ahmed Aly (Ohio University)

This qualitative study explores how LGBTQAI+ international students in the U.S. manage self-disclosure and privacy on dating apps like Grindr and Tinder during their first year abroad. These students face layered vulnerabilities as both sexual and national minorities, particularly those from countries where LGBTQAI+ identities are criminalized. Using in-depth interviews and Communication Privacy Management theory, the research examines how participants negotiate identity visibility, cultural expectations, and digital safety. The study offers implications for universities, app developers, and advocacy organizations, urging safer digital spaces and culturally responsive student support. This work contributes to critical conversations on queer migration, digital intimacy, and the politics of technological vulnerability.

Homophily and Representation: Exploring Voter Perceptions of Vice-Presidential Candidates in Ghana's 13

Dominic Asitanga (Ohio University)

The scholarly discourse on the electoral impact of vice-presidential candidates in developing democracies remains limited. In Ghana, where identity politics and coalition-building are central to democratic practice, little is known about how voters engage with vice-presidential candidates beyond party lines. Recognizing this gap, I explore how homophily, specifically regional and ethnic/tribal affiliations, influences voter behavior in Ghana's 2024 presidential election. Homophily, which refers to the tendency of individuals to associate with those similar to themselves, is a powerful driver of social and political alignment. This study investigates whether perceived identity alignment between voters and vice-presidential candidates fostered a sense of reverence that ultimately swayed presidential vote choices. At this stage, the election has concluded, and I am analyzing post-election perceptions using survey data from 420 registered voters residing in Accra but originally from the Ashanti and Central regions. I examine how the two main vice presidential candidates' communication style, political experience, and symbolic representation interact with identity cues to shape voter decision-making in Ghana's evolving democracy.

No Clear Beginning, No Clear End: Storytelling as a Response to Uncertainty in Times of Crisis 14

Carolina Herrera (Ohio University)

When certainty falls away, people turn to stories. This project explores how university students made sense of health-related uncertainty during the COVID-19 pandemic through the stories they told about risk, responsibility, and what counted as safe. Using narrative inquiry, the study examines how these stories reflected institutional trust, cultural tensions, and the emotional labor of navigating ambiguity. Through interviews and narrative journals, it traces how students negotiated conflicting information and built meaning in real time. The project invites conversation about what stories reveal, what they carry, and how they connect us when clarity is out of reach.

Discursive Tensions in Dating and Marriage: A Relational Dialectics Study of Parent-Daughter Communication 15

Peace Nwachukwu (Ohio University)

This presentation explores how young African women in collectivist family systems navigate conversations about dating and marriage with their parents. Drawing on Relational Dialectics Theory, the study examines the discursive tensions that emerge when daughters are discouraged from dating but pressured to marry by a certain age. Through semi-structured interviews with women aged 18-30, this research reveals how cultural norms, gendered expectations, and family roles shape what is said, silenced, or implied in such conversations. The findings highlight the emotional and relational work young women perform to balance personal autonomy with family obligation, often through strategic silencing, selective disclosure, and indirect communication. I intend to discuss how these tensions play out in parent-daughter dynamics and propose culturally responsive ways to support more open conversations about love and marriage in collectivist households.



Workshop
Room: MH 201

Chair: Ryan Eisenhuth
(Ohio University)

Tips & Tricks for a TA teaching the Basic Course: Intro to Public Speaking

Jaclyn Marsh (Bowling Green State University)

This workshop will focus on mentoring GTAs and new instructors who are teaching at the University/College level. It will provide tips and tricks to help answer some common questions surrounding teaching for the first time (or even the second or more time). Some handouts and articles will also be shared to act as a guide once you return home. This workshop is meant to be a space where GTAs/Instructors can come together in a safe space to ask their questions, get some answers, and connect with a community to help break down any barriers to teaching in person or online.

Friday | Opportunity Fair

12:00-4:00 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | First Floor

Please visit our sponsor tables to learn about them and say thanks
...they're a big part in making this conference happen!



Kendall Hunt
publishing company

**YOUR COURSE
REIMAGINED**

Kendall Hunt provides affordable, course-specific content and technology solutions that empower you to meet the needs of your students, wherever they may be.



Scan the QR code to explore all of our communication titles in one place!

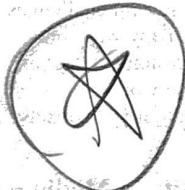
You're Invited!



PERSPECTIVES COUNCIL

Tuesday October 14
10-11am

Email Dr. Ashley Kennard at arkennar@owu.edu for the meeting link!

Friday Session 3 3:00-3:50 p.m. Location: Merrick Hall Second Floor	
<p><i>Discussion or Research Paper Panel</i></p> <p>Room: MH 202</p> <p>Chair: Rhiannon Kallis (The University of Akron)</p> 	<p>Breaking Barriers with a Name Change: Discussing the Contested Name of Ohio's Only National Forest</p> <p>Ryan Eisenhuth (Ohio University), Asitanga Dominic Awini (Ohio University), Elina Nikolskaya (Ohio University), & Dolapo M. Oyedokun (Ohio University)</p> <p>In this panel, we discuss the contested name of the Wayne National Forest and assert that changing its name has the power to break barriers for Indigenous peoples throughout the United States. We will begin by reviewing the historical controversy surrounding the landscape of the Wayne National Forest and its namesake, General "Mad" Anthony Wayne. Next, each panelist will present their engagement with public responses to the proposed name change from several rhetorical perspectives, including postcolonial critique, the tension between recognition and acknowledgement, Burke's dramatic pentad, narrative analysis, engagement with political economies, and more. We will conclude by suggesting practical implications for the Wayne National Forest and theoretical implications for rhetorical and communication studies. Ultimately, we contend that renaming the Wayne National Forest serves as a rhetorical intervention, presenting an opportunity to break barriers by better honoring Indigenous voices and histories.</p>
<p><i>Workshop</i></p> <p>Room: MH 201</p> <p>Chair: Mary Catherine Kennedy (Ohio University)</p>	<p>Use of a Communication Center to Assist the Faculty, Staff, & Students</p> <p>Chris Ross (Columbus State Community College)</p> <p>To have a place on campus that can assist your faculty, staff, and students achieve better outcomes and advance their careers is an amazing tool. Some might even argue with today's funding, it is an amazing asset if you can afford it. Students can be tutored in their various communication courses. All parties can get help developing their presentations, visual aids, or working through their ideas for conferences/development. If you tap deeper into those in the Center, you might just be able to accomplish even more than what you first thought. Can your adjuncts and other faculty members be able to get assistance from the tutors and employees? Does the Center keep an archive of what other instructors have done in their courses? Are the staff able to help knock down silos and foster new partnerships through the community.</p>

*Research
Papers
Room: MH 204
Chair: Bill Jennings
(University of
Cincinnati - Blue Ash)*

Measuring Trust in Local News Sources: Examining Economic, Production, Circulation Predictors

Azade Asadi Damavandi (Bowling Green State University)

This study builds on Moran and Nechushtai's model to examine trust in local news by integrating predictors related to news production, economic support, and distribution. Drawing on a national survey of 1,008 U.S. adults, the analysis explores how different elements and actors involved in creating and disseminating news influence public trust. Results show that perceptions of philanthropic funding modestly increase trust, while perceived quality and depth of coverage are the strongest positive factors. In contrast, exposure to news via social media does not significantly affect trust. In contrast, sources. The findings highlight the critical role of transparent funding and high-quality journalism in strengthening audience trust. This study offers empirical support for a multifaceted framework of media trust, emphasizing the combined influence of institutional practices, funding models, and distribution channels on audience perceptions.

Rage with a Smile: How Bakhtin's Carnival and Digital Satire Turn Patriarchy into a Punchline

Shobha Pai (University of Cincinnati)

This paper analyzes All India Bakchod's (AIB) viral sketch Rape - It's Your Fault through Mikhail Bakhtin's carnivalesque lens, examining how satire challenges patriarchal narratives in post-2012 Delhi gang rape India. The sketch employs inversion, grotesque realism, and parody to subvert victim-blaming, framing humor as feminist resistance. Digital platforms like YouTube amplify this dissent, enabling widespread engagement while navigating India's restrictive socio-political landscape. However, online performance risks commodifying its radical edge. The study argues that AIB's work demonstrates laughter's power to disrupt patriarchal norms, foster dialogue, and reimagine justice digitally.

Seeing Music: A Metaphorical Approach to Music

Stephen Pastor (Tiffin University)

This research paper is an autoethnography which includes several personal experiences and interactions with music. This paper attempts to identify the uses of music using an enhanced formalistic approach to music. This paper acknowledges the several challenges to understanding music, and some of its faults. However, there remain many ways one can connect to music. All in All, this paper expresses music as an algorithmic metaphor, which can be characterized through many modes of connection. Thus, how one makes their connection to music is key to understanding how one might use it to help themselves or help others.

Left Unsaid: The Implicit Portrayal of Neurodiversity in Media Translated to Online Spaces

Jo Withrow (University of Cincinnati)

This paper, initially completed for a special topics course in disability justice, touches on the phenomenon of fictional characters being "autistic coded", in which a character displays traits associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These portrayals are often discussed in online spaces such as Tumblr and X, while mainstream media and autistic advocacy platforms concern themselves more with explicit representation. Many autistic individuals see themselves reflected more in the implicit and metaphorical as opposed to the often inaccurate or even offensive explicit portrayals in certain media. This work's autoethnographical perspective creates a unique picture of the state of ASD representation from the 2010s onward, specifically on Tumblr and blogs dedicated to theories on if certain characters are autistic. Through the analysis of this online sphere, there are a large number of conclusions drawn about representation affecting reality, the growing and often conflicting rhetoric around ASD, and the state of ASD representation in a volatile political climate.



Stay in touch with OCA all year long!



@OhioCommunicationAssoc

www.ohiocomm.org

Check back for pictures and news from the conference!

Friday | Poster Judging | Q&A

3:00-3:50 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | First Floor

*Competitive
Posters*

*Judges: Phokeng Dailey
(Ohio Wesleyan
University), Seth Smith
(Columbus State
Community College), Man
Luo (Bowling Green State
University)*

1 Communication Privacy in Vietnamese Culture: Confucian and Collectivist Influences on Young Women's Gynecological Care

Trang Bui & Jennifer Woody Collins (Denison University)
Undergraduate Poster

2 Breaking Barriers Through the Art of Connection: A Feminist Health Communication Reflection

Pepper deTuro (Denison University)
Undergraduate Poster

3 Political Linguistics: A Comparative Analysis of Semantics within the 2024 Presidential Debate

Alfie Harris & Audrey Wagstaff (Wilmington College)
Undergraduate Poster

4 Speaking Across the Divide: An Autoethnography of Disconnection and Survival

Elina Nikolskaya (Ohio University)
Graduate Poster

5 Gen Z Students' Challenges and Strategies for Initiating Communication and Relationships on Campus

Nichole Egbert & Saumi Chatterjee (Kent State University)
Educator/Professional Poster

6 Unprecedented Times: An Overview

William Jennings (University of Cincinnati - Blue Ash)
Educator/Professional Poster

*Communication
Application & Impact
Poster*

7 Addressing Message Fatigue: Rethinking Risk Messaging in Recurrent Epidemics

Carolina Herrera (Ohio University)

8 Making an Impact Through Informal Educational Spaces for Children

Nancy Jennings, Laura Dell, & Sarah Schroeder (University of Cincinnati)

9 Strengthening Protective Factors: The Power of Art and Adult Support in Tobacco Prevention

Katlin Medjesky (Wood County Health Department)

Social Media & Session Evaluation Raffle!

Use #OCA2025 to tag your posts & pictures on Instagram, Facebook, or X during the conference (remember to make your posts public). **Each post = 1 raffle ticket!**

Give Session Feedback
for raffle entry!



We will raffle \$50 - \$100 Amazon gift cards at the Awards Ceremony, Business Meeting, & end of the conference.

THANK YOU to **BGSU** for sponsoring \$250 worth of raffle prizes!
Come to the registration desk after the last session for a chance to win \$100!

Friday Session 4 4:00-4:50 p.m. Location: Merrick Hall Second Floor	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Workshop</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Room: MH 203</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Nancy Jennings (University of Cincinnati)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Bridging the Gap with Distance Learning 23</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chris Ross (Columbus State Community College)</p> <p>Online learning can make education more accessible for students who may not have the ability to attend in the traditional method. Specific courses could only be offered in-person on days/times that do not work with their schedule; they have personal situations that do not make it possible to attend in-person. Most educators will agree, no matter how a student takes a course, they should perform and be held to the same standards. However, do we as educators perform or hold ourselves to the same standards? During this time, some research and advice will be provided to ensure that the instructor is seen as the same caring professional in a classroom and in the virtual world. We will focus on how to make students feel engaged, ensure that the instructor is seen as an educator (and person!), and how to not fall into some pitfalls that can happen with online learning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Discussion or Research Paper Panel</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Room: MH 202</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Ashley Kennard (Ohio Wesleyan University)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Meet OCA's Perspectives Council—An Interactive Discussion on Current Work and Next Steps 24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ashley Kennard (Ohio Wesleyan University), Melissa Cumberbatch (Columbus State Community College), Rhiannon Kallis (The University of Akron), Seth Smith (Columbus State Community College), Cody Clemens (Ohio University), & Man Luo (Bowling Green State University)</p> <p>The Ohio Communication Association's Perspectives Council works hard behind the scenes to further the organization's work related to their commitment to matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly as it relates to gender and gender identity/expression, race, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, and socioeconomic status. This panel will provide a public forum for all members of the organization to come and learn about the work that the council is already doing, as well as provide input and feedback on the work that they would like to see done in the future. For the panel, members of the Perspectives Council will engage in an open dialogue with audience members and the exploration of new ideas will be encouraged.</p>

*Research
In-Progress*

Room: MH 201

*Chair: Chris Ross
(Columbus State
Community College)*

Media Literacy in Elementary Education: A Survey Analysis of Teachers' Self-Perceptions 25

D.J. Fezler & Toqa Hassan (Purdue University Northwest)

In today's digital world, students are often exposed to media in the classroom, making media literacy education (MLE) more important than ever. Support for MLE is evidenced by research and educational standards, but a gap remains in understanding how elementary-level teachers implement it. As young students engage with digital media, elementary teachers model interaction with media and use critical thinking skills. This study examines elementary school teachers' knowledge of media literacy, their confidence teaching it, and how often they implement it into their classrooms. Past studies show that educators value media literacy, but they may lack the training, curriculum guidelines, and resources necessary to fully integrate it into pedagogy. To better understand some of these challenges, this study surveys elementary school teachers to highlight where teachers feel confident and where they struggle as a way to assess what support is needed to bring media literacy to elementary classrooms more effectively.

Digital Ghosting in Close Relationships: A Narrative Approach to Relational Loss in Emerging Adulthood 26

Namra Nadeem (Ohio University)

This study examines the emotional and relational consequences of digital ghosting in long-term romantic relationships among vicenarian adults (ages 20–29). Grounded in the Narrative Paradigm and Sensemaking Theory, it explores how individuals construct meaning after being ghosted following relationships of at least 12 months. Using semi-structured interviews, the research delves into emotional responses such as loneliness and helplessness, and identifies coping strategies including meaning-making and cognitive reframing. Unlike previous studies that primarily explore ghosting in casual dating or from the ghoster's perspective, this project focuses on the ghostee's narrative to reveal the complexities of ambiguous loss and the emotional toll of sudden digital silence. Thematic and narrative analyses will uncover how participants rebuild their sense of self, relational trust, and emotional resilience in the aftermath. The findings offer valuable insights for counseling, relationship education, and digital intimacy research, contributing to a deeper understanding of relational loss in the context of emerging adulthood.

Public Perception on Methane Gas Emissions in the Cincinnati Gaslight Region 27

Usman Bah, Leah Haye, Fuseini Tia Iddrisu, & Nancy Jennings (University of Cincinnati)

The rapid increase in industrial and domestic energy consumption has led to a corresponding rise in greenhouse gas emissions, particularly methane. Methane (CH₄) is a potent greenhouse gas that contributes significantly to global warming. This study aims to assess the current communication strategies regarding methane emissions and identify an effective framework to increase public awareness and engagement in mitigation efforts in Cincinnati's gaslight region. Specifically, the research examines the extent of public knowledge regarding methane emissions, their perception of the environmental consequences, and their level of support for policy measures aimed at reducing methane emissions. The study employs a quantitative survey-based approach using a cross-sectional design to evaluate residents' knowledge and attitudes toward methane emissions. Surveys will be distributed via Qualtrics, targeting 150 adult residents from selected neighborhoods (Clifton and Pleasant Ridge) in Cincinnati.

Friday | Ohio Communication Association 2025 Awards Ceremony

5:15pm - 6:45 p.m.

Merrick Hall - Banquet Hall Room 301

Master of Ceremonies:

Phokeng Dailey, OCA Vice President (Ohio Wesleyan University)

Please come and enjoy some appetizers and the cash bar.

**Nominate a Colleague, Student, or Organization for
2026's Ohio Communication Association Awards!**

You are invited to nominate outstanding communicators in the state of Ohio for recognition.

Visit www.ohiocomm.org/awards for more information.



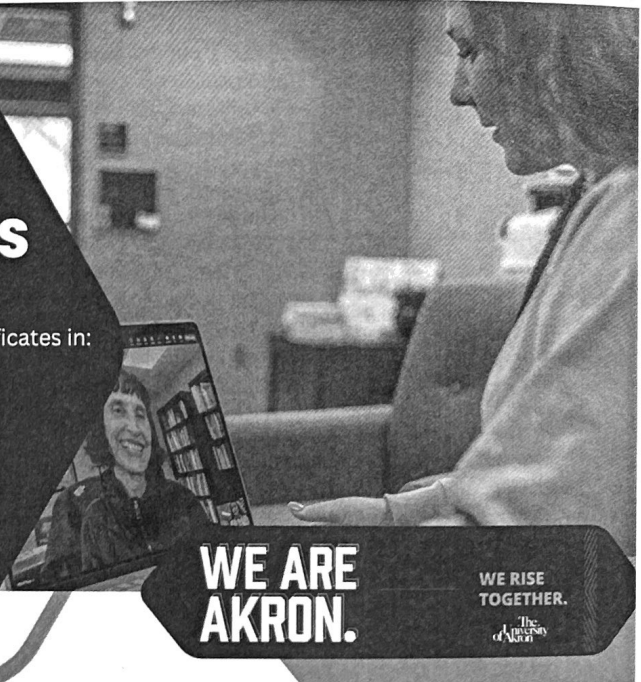
visit www.uakron.edu/schlcomm/masters-program/

Learn More About Our
**100 % ONLINE MA &
GRAD CERTIFICATES**

Reach new heights earning an M.A. in Strategic Communication and/or one of our graduate certificates in:

- Strategic Social Media
- Health & Crisis Communication
- Instructional Communication for Educators
- Applied Political Communication

For additional information, please contact Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Andrea Meluch at alm133@uakron.edu or visit our website.



**WE ARE
AKRON.**

WE RISE
TOGETHER.
The
University
of Akron

Saturday, October 11

Saturday | Session 1

9:00-9:50 a.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Second Floor

*Discussion or
Research
Paper Panel*

Room: MH 202

Chair: Ashley
Kennard (Ohio
Wesleyan
University)

Moderator:
Dawn Chisebe
(Ohio Wesleyan
University)

Navigating SB1 & Other Legislation: A Moderated Panel with OCA's Perspectives Council & OWU's CDO 28

Ashley Kennard (Ohio Wesleyan University), Dawn Chisebe (Ohio Wesleyan University), Melissa Cumberbatch (Columbus State Community College), Amber Ferris (The University of Akron), Rhiannon Kallis (The University of Akron), Seth Smith (Columbus State Community College), & Cody Clemens (Ohio University)

The Ohio Communication Association's Perspectives Council will engage in a panel discussion moderated by Ohio Wesleyan University's Chief Diversity Officer that aims to discuss, explain, and clarify some of the most recent state and national legislation impacting institutions of higher learning in Ohio. For the panel, members of the Perspectives Council will engage in an open dialogue with each other about their personal experiences at both public and private institutions. The panel will be moderated by Chief Diversity Officer, Dawn Chisebe, who is especially well-versed and knowledgeable about the legislation. Participation from audience members will be encouraged.

Workshop

Room: MH 201

Chair: Ryan
Eisenhuth (Ohio
University)

Social Media Analytics for Communication Scholars: Tools, Techniques, and Tactics 29

Dolapo Oyedokun (Ohio University)

As communication advances beyond human-to-human and through mediated means, social media offers a combined approach whereby people can interact with one another privately and publicly. As people connect and relate online through posts, comments, likes, shares, photos, videos, GIFs, texts, memes, emojis, etc., we leave footprints (data) behind. This information results in a growing need for communication scholars and educators to leverage the dynamic world of social media data. As digital communication continues to shape education, public discourse, civic engagement, branding, advertisement, and health information, the need to analyze social media interactions becomes crucial. The participants of this workshop will acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical experience in social media analytics, including data scraping, visualization, and interpretation. Attendees will learn how to use freely available tools and platforms to extract insights from real-time social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and Reddit to understand people's opinions towards different social phenomena.



Win an Amazon gift card!

**Give Session Feedback
for raffle entry!**



SCAN HERE

Raffle sponsored by **BGSU**

**Research
Papers**

Room: MH 203

Chair:
Peace Nwachukwa
(Ohio University)

**Exploring Kashmiriness through Kashmiri Cultural Markers: A Burkean
Analysis of Agha Shahid Ali Poetry**
Rayna Batool (Ohio University)

The set goal of this paper is to develop a rhetorically based understanding of the effects of the identification process between a poet and his audience. I bring to bear Burke's theory of identification to provide a finely nuanced and deeply rooted conceptualization of national poet identification that I perceive as a persuasive act to help understand his audience the importance of culture and the agony of cultural trauma through cultural markers. A secondary goal is to perpetuate national poet identification motives to reveal the potential of identity construction through 'textual substance'. Burke's notion of identification is used to highlight substance as a means of oneness, cooperation and transcendence that has produced an overarching concept of holistic Kashmir—sans borders. Agha Shahid Ali a Kashmiri American poet intervened into the poetic scholarship by bringing far-fetched space Kashmir cultural markers. Ali used stylistic identification to build a relationship with his audience by narrating the lived experiences of the audience in meticulous detail from a distance space. Ali, through his poetic vignettes, brought the misery of Kashmir into the centre of literary scholarship.

Emigration and Identity: Breaking Barriers Through Stories of Displacement
Elina Nikolskaya (Ohio University)

In this project, I explore how emigration reshapes identity, memory, and belonging through autoethnography and oral history. After leaving Russia following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, I began to document not only my own displacement but also the stories of others who left under similar conditions. Drawing on six interviews and personal narrative, I examine how individuals make sense of rupture and reconstruct a sense of self in exile. Grounded in critical ethnography and informed by theories of affect, narrative, and liminality (Turner, Frank, Das, Butler), this work shows how storytelling becomes both therapeutic and political. My participants express anger, longing, and disorientation as they navigate the cultural terrain of becoming. In line with the conference theme, I argue that narrative bridges distances between past and present, homeland and hostland, trauma and healing. Through these stories, I seek to create space for connection where there was disconnection — and voice where there was silence.

**Walk a Mile in Her Shoes: Priming Narrative Involvement to Reduce Rape
Myth Acceptance**

Rikki Price (University of Mount Union) & Michael Beam (Kent State University)

Sexual assault persists as a critical issue on college campuses, with rape myth acceptance (RMA) posing a barrier to prevention and justice. This study investigates whether empathy priming and vivid messaging—two low-cost, accessible strategies—can enhance narrative involvement, a key mechanism in persuasive communication. Grounded in the Extended Elaboration Likelihood Model, a 2x2 experimental design with a control group (N = 284) tested the effects of empathy or objective priming paired with vivid or non-vivid messages. Results showed that both empathy priming and vivid messaging significantly increased narrative involvement. While these strategies did not directly reduce RMA, they improved audience engagement with the messages. These findings suggest that even in the absence of quality production resources, message designers can leverage priming and vividness to foster meaningful engagement. This research informs the design of cost-effective interventions aimed at shifting attitudes through narrative-based persuasion.

Misogynoir in the Media: A qualitative framing analysis of Angel Reese

Monique Wingard (Kent State University), Cheryl Ann Lambert (Kent State University), &
Felicia McGhee-Hilt (Florida A&M University)

Using framing and the circuit of culture as theoretical frameworks, the authors conducted a qualitative media framing analysis of articles published in the Associated Press, The New York Times, and the Washington Post over a one-year period. In systematically examining the framing of Reese's athletic performance and public persona, they uncovered four frames: symbolic rivalry, racialized diminishment; historical context, and capabilities. The media continue to spin a narrative about Angel Reese that seems incomplete. In positioning her in comparison to a rival, Reese has been symbolically pushed from the center of the frame. This move subtly diminishes her. By not painting a fuller picture of Reese, journalists are making a conscious choice to elevate others instead. Journalists must reckon with their own views to uncover why they have chosen to perpetuate a particular story about Angel Reese.



PH.D. CONCENTRATION AREAS:

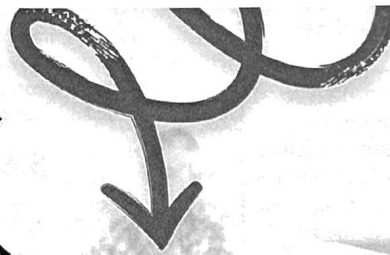
Health Communication
Interpersonal & Organizational Communication
Rhetoric & Culture



RESOURCES AVAILABLE:

Teaching, Research, & Forensics Assistantships
Travel Funding Opportunities
Interdisciplinary Collaborations
House in State-of-the-Art Schoonover Center for
Communication

DO YOU THINK
BEYOND
THE BOOK?



Saturday | Session 2

10:00-10:50 a.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Second Floor

*Research
In-Progress*

Room: MH 203

*Chair: Chris Ross
(Columbus State
Community College)*

Techniques and Best Practices for Enhancing Communication between Faculty & Autistic Undergraduates 34

Ashley Kennard (Ohio Wesleyan University)

Research suggests that when faculty employ neurodiversity-friendly teaching methods, such as multimodal instruction, structured flexibility, and clear communication strategies, neurodivergent students shown marked improvement in academic performance and engagement (Gurbuz, Hanley, & Riby, 2019). Utilizing semi-structured interviews and a phenomenological approach, this ongoing body of work is exploring the nature of communication between autistic students and university faculty. Guided by lived experience, this research aims to determine best practice and ultimately aid in the creation of professional development programming which will uniquely prepare faculty to adequately support autistic students in the higher ed classroom.

Examining How A Minecraft Movie Breaks Barriers & Builds Connections Using the Narrative Paradigm 35

Christopher Medjesky (University of Findlay)

Over the last forty years, Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm has been widely used and taught in rhetorical studies, yet the theory behind it has faced scrutiny since Fisher first proposed it. Such criticism has evolved the theory and refined it, and this presentation argues that the film A Minecraft Movie offers a new opportunity to refine the theory once again thanks to its reliance on characteristics of Gen Z media— particularly its humor and reliance on in-group references, non-linear storytelling, meme culture, and absurdism. Using the free build mode of the Minecraft video game as inspiration, the film offers enough challenges to prevailing notions of what makes a coherent story (narrative probability) or ring true (narrative fidelity) to warrant this study. This research applies the narrative paradigm to critically analyze A Minecraft Movie and argues for the theory's needed adjustments relevant to Gen Z media based on this criticism.

Storytelling in the Public Speaking Course 36

Craig Pinkerton (Denison University)

Textbooks on public speaking say very little about storytelling (usually a blurb or a few pages) while trade books cannot shut up about it. Storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to break barriers through the art of connection, and therefore, it deserves serious attention in the basic course. Using rhetorical criticism of exemplary TED talks, this study addresses this question: How do effective public speakers who use storytelling structure their speeches? Many TED talks do not follow the essayistic structure taught in public speaking textbooks. This study offers a theoretical framework and practical advice for instructors and students of public speaking for structuring speeches that use storytelling along a continuum of emphasis with argument at one end and pure story at the other.

Implementing Confidence-First Assessment in the Basic Communication Course: A Mixed-Methods Invest 37

Marianne Vanderbeke & Jaclyn S. Marsh (Bowling Green State University)

This Work in Progress investigates the empirical implementation of the Confidence-First Assessment (CFA) model in basic communication courses through collaborative research between the basic course director and assistant director at a mid-sized state university. Responding to Morreale et al.'s (2023) findings that the basic course has remained unchanged for over 40 years despite failing to meet student and employer needs, this mixed-methods study examines whether the CFA's Anticipatory Achievement framework can reduce grade anxiety and increase student engagement. The research employs a quasi-experimental design comparing CFA implementation with traditional assessment approaches across multiple course sections. Data collection includes validated anxiety measures, engagement metrics, qualitative analysis of student journals, and semi-structured interviews. Pending IRB approval, the study will span fall and spring semesters to provide robust findings. Expected outcomes include empirical validation of the CFA model's effectiveness, development of implementation resources for other institutions, and expansion to additional universities. This research addresses the critical need for evidence-based alternatives to traditional assessment practices that create more equitable learning environments.

Research Papers

*Chair: Cody Clemens
(Ohio University)*

Room: MH 201

Just What the Agentic AI Ordered: Connections to a Health Communication Future 38

Daniel Dieter (Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania)
This article explores critical questions regarding agentic AI in health communication ecosystems. Unlike traditional AI, agentic AI systems act autonomously toward long-term goals, initiating adaptive communication without human prompting while connecting with other AI agents. Drawing from communication theories and employing a critical speculative methodology, the author imagines these systems as communicative actors capable of influencing health behaviors, relationships, and trust, not simply as tools to carry out orders. The paper contributes a conceptual framework for understanding AI as an autonomous agent within communicative ecologies with encouragement to scholars and designers for anticipatory, interdisciplinary dialogue to shape the ethical integration of agentic AI into healthcare systems and communication flows. Four narrative vignettes illustrate plausible, near-future scenarios in which AI agents engage in personal health advising, institutional mental health, community messaging, and clinical care. These scenarios illuminate the ethical and relational tensions between traditional models of health communication and agentic AI.

Effects of Mediation Self-efficacy and Communication Skill on Likelihood to Use Mediation 39

Gwen Hullman (Cleveland State University) & Andrew Crell
Although many people benefit from participating in mediation programs, levels of participation typically do not meet program administrators' goals. This study investigates the effect of self-efficacy, communication skills, and conflict style on peoples' likelihood to try mediation. Regression analysis suggests that people high in self-efficacy, low in avoidance, and high in collaboration are most likely to try mediation. Implications for self-efficacy theory, mediation participation, and avoidant communicators are discussed.

Student Perceptions of AI Tool Use Policy in First-Year Public Speaking Classes: A Qualitative Study 40

Rhiannon Kallis & Yang Lin (The University of Akron)
This qualitative study examines first-year public speaking students' perceptions of their university's AI tool use policy. While many students viewed the policy as straightforward, others found it unclear due to vague language, undefined terms, and a lack of illustrative examples. Under the current policy, students expressed concern about potential penalties for AI misuse. While they recognized the practical benefits of using AI for speech preparation, they also acknowledged risks such as academic dishonesty and the generation of low-quality output. Students provided suggestions for improving the policy. This study supports a two-tiered approach: a revised university-wide policy supplemented by a course-specific policy tailored to public speaking classes. Involving students in AI policy development may improve clarity and compliance.

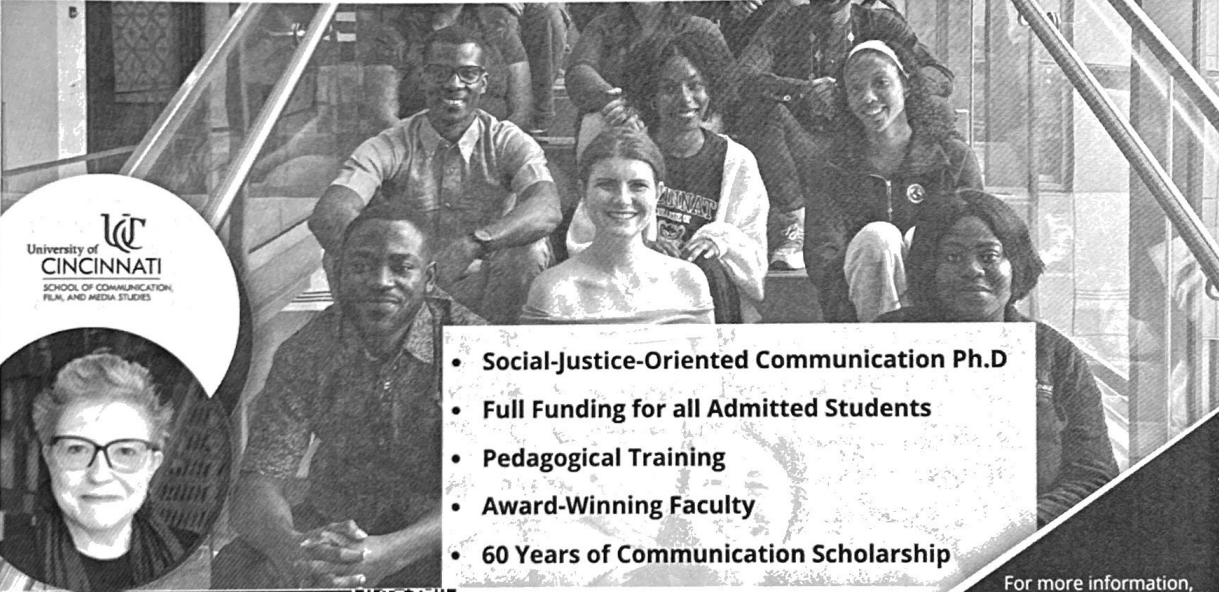
Student Affairs Professionals' Sensemaking Following Student Disclosures of Mental Health Concerns 41


Andrea Meluch (The University of Akron), Alison Doehring (The University of Akron), & Maria Hannah (Augustana College)
Based on semi-structured interviews with 23 participants, this study explores how student affairs professionals in higher education make sense of role-related and communication-related challenges that they face when students disclose mental health concerns. Study results indicated that participants construct their role as student affairs professionals as advocates and sources of support for students struggling with mental health. However, despite framing their role as "helpers" to students, participants noted that they must navigate mental health resources within and beyond their institution, manage constraints on their role, and grapple with external factors that inhibit students' ability to receive mental health support. Additionally, participants face communication challenges around destigmatizing mental health, responding effectively to student disclosures of mental health concerns, and reaching out to students who are unwilling to seek mental health support. The implications of the findings on communication between student affairs professionals and students struggling with mental health concerns are discussed.



<p><i>Workshop</i> <i>Room: MH 202</i> <i>Chair: Seth Smith</i> <i>(Columbus State Community College)</i></p>	<p>Teaching and Connecting from a Framework of Kindness and Care Alison Doehring & Amber Farris (The University of Akron) Guided by Catherine Denial's text, 'A Pedagogy of Kindness', this workshop will highlight real-life examples of how intentional conversation and demonstrated kindness in the classroom can foster deeper connections. In response to leading research that emphasizes mental health, student-centered classroom environments, and inclusivity, this session will highlight how educators can approach the development of their syllabus and learning assessments from a lens of support, care, and kindness. This session will explore how to find balance between academic rigor and accountability while simultaneously creating learning cultures that support belonging through an appreciation of student mental health and well-being. This interactive, group conversation will be guided by session attendees, allowing for deep conversations within the facilitated session. Attendees will learn new approaches to instilling kindness in the classroom and a deepened appreciation of partnerships between academic and student affairs.</p>
--	--

Join us at Cincinnati for an M.A. or Ph.D!










Director: Dr. Dana Cloud
 National Communication Association
 Distinguished Scholar

- **Social-Justice-Oriented Communication Ph.D**
- **Full Funding for all Admitted Students**
- **Pedagogical Training**
- **Award-Winning Faculty**
- **60 Years of Communication Scholarship**

For more information,
 Contact **Dr. Zhuo Ban**,
 Graduate Director
banzu@ucmail.uc.edu


 UC SCFMS
  @ucscfms
  @CommUC
  @uccomm

Saturday | Keynote Speaker | Session 3

11:00-12:15 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Banquet Hall Room 301

**Keynote Event Sponsored by: The University of Cincinnati,
School of Communication, Film, and Media Studies**

43

Chair: Rhiannon Kallis (The University of Akron)

Breaking Barriers to Academic Freedom

Professor Dana L. Cloud (pronouns: she/her) The University of Cincinnati



Dana L. Cloud is Professor in and Director of the School of Communication, Film, and Media Studies at the University of Cincinnati. After receiving her PhD in rhetorical and media studies from the University of Iowa in 1993, Professor Cloud served as professor and director of graduate studies at the University of Texas at Austin and Syracuse University before joining the faculty at Cincinnati. Professor Cloud is the author of many journal articles and four scholarly books, most recently *Reality Bites: Rhetoric and the Circulation of Truth Claims in U.S. Political Culture* (Ohio State University Press, 2018). She is also the author and co-author of two textbooks on the rhetoric of social movements. Her work includes the development of critical Marxist, feminist, and queer theory; the critique of race, gender, and class in popular culture; and the history and rhetoric of movements for social change. Professor Cloud is also a longtime activist for social justice. The recipient of many awards for research and social engagement, Professor Cloud is a Distinguished Scholar of the National Communication Association.

Keynote Address

This talk explores the definition and history of academic freedom in the United States. What is academic freedom and whom does it protect? After answering this question, the presentation surveys contemporary threats to academic freedom in Ohio and across the nation and the impact of those threats on our work as scholars and teachers of communication. Finally, the talk describes potential strategies of overcoming these barriers including institutional action and collective mutual support and organizing. Even in the face of barriers to academic freedom, we are obligated to carry on the field's missions of studying and teaching communication for democratic agency and communal transformation on an ethical and inclusive basis.

Saturday | Session 4 | Business Lunch | 12:30-1:50 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Banquet Hall Room 301

Lunch & OCA Business Meeting

Win an Amazon gift card!

Give Session Feedback
for raffle entry!



Raffle sponsored by **BGSU**

Master of Arts in Professional Communication

Designed
to be:

- flexible
- career-focused
- tailored to your goals

Choose from a wide range of emphasis areas
that align with the industries, causes, and
communities you care about most such as:

- Applied Linguistics
- Environmental, Safety & Occupational Health Management Communication
- Human Resource Management
- Leadership
- Marketing
- Media and Communication
- Persuasive Communication
- Technical Communication



Fully Online
Complete in
2 years

Want to
know more?



Scan the QR code
or go to

[https://online.findlay.edu/
programs/professional-
communication/](https://online.findlay.edu/programs/professional-communication/)

For questions, contact Dr. Megan Adams, Director of the MAPC, adamsme@findlay.edu

Saturday | Session 5 | Top Paper Presentation | 2:00-2:50 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Banquet Hall Room 301

Chair: Phokeng Dailey (Ohio Wesleyan University) | **Respondent:** Dana L Cloud (University of Cincinnati)

Not Like Us: The Far-Right Reaction to the Super Bowl LIX Halftime Show 94

Victoria Hansen (The University of Findlay) | **Top Undergraduate Student Paper**

One week after receiving five Grammys for his single "Not Like Us", Kendrick Lamar headlined the Super Bowl LIX Halftime Show for an audience of over 133.5 million people. In his show, Lamar delivered critiques of American culture, the expectations placed on Super Bowl performers, and the treatment of Black Americans. Due to the wide reach of the Halftime Show, it sparked controversy within far-right media circles. This paper discusses the far-right reaction to the halftime show through the critical perspectives of the third persona (groups not addressed by a message) and polysemy caused by tension in the racial contract. Lamar's performance acknowledged the racial contract, a set of expectations Black people are held to but are not allowed to publicly acknowledge. Lamar's acknowledgment of the racial contract caused discomfort for the far-right, prompting these media sources to create negotiated and oppositional readings of Lamar's performance.

Confidence-First Assessment: An Anticipatory Achievement Model for Transforming Student Engagement 95





Marianne Vanderbeke (Bowling Green State University) | **Top Graduate Student Paper**

This work introduces the Confidence-First Assessment (CFA) model, a theoretically-grounded pedagogical innovation designed to address the "early semester grade anxiety spiral" in communication courses. Drawing from the author's personal experience with severe grade anxiety and observations of student disengagement patterns, the CFA model integrates Communicated Narrative Sense-Making Theory, bell hooks' engaged pedagogy, and inclusive pedagogy principles to create an Anticipatory Achievement framework. Rather than requiring students to earn their way to success, the CFA approach begins by anticipating achievement through semester-long reflective journal assignments where students receive full points at the semester's beginning and maintain them through consistent engagement. This paradigm shift transforms assessment from a source of anxiety to an opportunity for agency development while maintaining academic rigor. The model details theoretical foundations, implementation framework, and practical applications across various educational contexts. The work represents a complete theoretical contribution ready for empirical validation and offers immediately implementable strategies for addressing grade anxiety in higher education.

Tastes of Home: Cultural Food, Identity, and the Diasporic Experience of African Undergraduates at Ohio University 96

Dolapo Oyedokun (Ohio University) | **Top Professional/Educator Paper**

In this essay, I positioned food as a communicatively symbolic material, serving as a constant reminder of home among African undergraduates at Ohio University. I employed an ethnographic approach, attending religious gatherings, students' social events, visiting the university cafeterias, and conducting interviews. This essay is grounded in theoretical frameworks that conceptualize home as both a physical space and an affective representative site of identity. The students narrate losing the "taste of home," having to constantly substitute home food for unfamiliar meals that are often served at the dining halls, leading to forced dietary acculturation. Nevertheless, these students find a "new home" in students' organizations, religious gatherings, and other social groups where they share home food, reinforcing the communal nature of cooking and eating habits practiced uniquely in our various African countries. These experiences show that having a community for members of diasporic cultural groups helps them to "re-home" in spaces far away from home.

  Stay in touch with OCA all year long!  

@OhioCommunicationAssoc

www.ohiocomm.org

Check back for pictures and news from the conference!

Saturday | Session 6

3:00-3:50 p.m.

Location: Merrick Hall | Second Floor

*Research
In-Progress*

Room: MH 201

*Chair: Jeff Tyus
(Youngstown State
University)*

Exploring Rhetorical and Emotional Connections in Tchaikovsky's Ballets 47

Tabitha Bartoe (Regent University)

This study examines the three Tchaikovsky's ballets: Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty and The Nutcracker. This research discusses the ability of these three ballets to provoke emotions nonverbally. Through music, movement and symbolism, these ballets connect with audiences, no matter their age or background. Interviews were conducted with audience members, musicians and dancers from various ballet companies. Additionally, observation and content analysis of the performances were a part of the study as well. Four main themes had emerged: music is universally emotional, movement is a display of music, audiences consider it an emotional experience and the role of leitmotifs aids in the storytelling. This study is based on ideas of identification, emotion and symbolism and how music and dance communicate meaning without the use of words.

The Interactive Social Media Soap Opera: The Dark World of Followers' Comments on Romance, Deceit and Abuse 48

Grace Canfield, Derek Williams, Abigail Saplak, Sage Colon, Grace Salter, Alex Skocic, Molle Denholm, Ava Freese, & Richard Perloff (Cleveland State University)

One of the most interesting, yet understudied, aspects of adolescents' use of social media is the dynamic drama that occurs between followers of social media influencers in the wake of controversial actions performed by social media influencers themselves. What research has neglected, however, are the dramatic emotion-filled comments that influencers' sometimes-edgy behaviors spawn, setting up a multitude of comments, replies to comments, and videos that offer a window on the time-honored question of how social media insinuates itself into adolescents' lives. This dual quantitative and qualitative study -- already in progress and implicitly linked with the conference emphasis on connections -- seeks to extend the literature by examining followers' comments about influencers' and social media personalities' scandalous romantic entanglements. The quantitative analysis numerically coded the nature of followers' emotional comments, while the qualitative analysis sought to illuminate the dynamics of the issues that animated followers, who could number in the hundreds of thousands.

Lonely Abroad: Connection, Culture, and the Expat Experience 49

Anita Gregory (Tiffin University)

As global mobility increases, many Americans living and working abroad find themselves grappling with unexpected feelings of loneliness and disconnection. This in-progress qualitative study investigates the emotional and relational experiences of American expatriates, exploring how communication, culture, and expectations shape their ability to connect across borders. Drawing on Kim's Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation, Weiss's Typology of Loneliness, Social Support Theory, and Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory, the research examines the challenges and coping strategies of expatriates navigating new environments. Through interviews with American expats, the study seeks to illuminate the hidden emotional barriers to belonging in intercultural contexts. Ultimately, this project aims to offer deeper insights into the human side of global transitions and contribute to future practices that foster meaningful connection and support. This session invites feedback on refining the study's theoretical lens and methodology as the project progresses toward completion.

Doom Scrolling over the Life Course building from the Cognitive Needs Theory 50

Kelsey Zook (Bowling Green State University)

This research paper explores "doom scrolling" behavior across different life stages using the Life Course Model combined with Uses and Gratification Theory and Cognitive Needs Theory. The author defines doom scrolling as compulsive social media engagement driven by psychological needs for information, certainty, and closure rather than just negative content consumption. The study examines how doom scrolling manifests differently across emerging adulthood (18-29), midlife (40-65), and late adulthood (65+), with each stage presenting unique vulnerabilities and triggers. Using mixed-methods research including surveys and interviews, the paper aims to understand how cognitive needs and developmental transitions influence problematic social media behaviors, ultimately seeking to inform targeted interventions for healthier digital engagement across the lifespan.

GIFTS

Room: MH 202

Chair: Mary Roberts (Ohio University)

The Trust Challenge: A Theory-Based Roleplay for Teaching Empathy & Strategy

Daniel Dieter (Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania)

This G.I.F.T.S. activity, "The Trust Challenge," engages students in immersive roleplay simulations that model trust-building in health communication using core interpersonal theories. Developed in a Strategic Health Communication course, students are tasked with managing a complex patient-provider scenario using one of four guiding theories: Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), Face Negotiation Theory (FNT), Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT), or Social Exchange Theory (SET). Each roleplay emphasizes empathy, message clarity, and theory-based trust strategies while classmates use a structured rubric to evaluate interaction outcomes. Students then reflect on how theory, culture, and emotion shape trust. This adaptable and low-tech activity breaks down communication barriers and challenges students to form authentic connections in high-stakes settings. Ideal for health communication, interpersonal, or applied communication courses, the session includes instructions, theory summaries, scenarios, and rubrics for immediate classroom use. It is also a Just-In-Time (JIT) activity that helps students learn while demonstrating theory in practice.

51

Using a Paper Onion Activity to Explore Self-Disclosure through Social Penetration Theory

Azmat Khan (Ohio University)

This single assignment proposes a paper-onion activity to help students experientially engage with the concept of self-disclosure through Social Penetration Theory (SPT). Students write personal information on a four-layered onion, pair with a lesser-known classmate to peel back the layers, and then reflect on the experience to connect theory with practice.

52

Global Healing Traditions: Conversations about Health and Healing

Kujang Laki (Ohio University)

The field of health communication has recently seen a growing interest in the concept of culture, with the idea that culturally based theories of health communication should guide effective health communication applications for positive health outcomes (Dutta, 2007; Lupton, 1994, Airhihenbuwa, 1995). Therefore, identifying and addressing cultural factors is vital for promoting health equity and improving overall well-being. The purpose of this GIFTS is to (a) explore and recognize diverse cultural perspectives of health through interviewing and (b) understand how these perspectives influence communication about health and healing. This assignment is designed for a global health or health communication course and should be preceded by a lecture on cultural conceptions of health and illness. The assignment will be a semester-long project with conversations about health with various individuals. This assignment's purpose is to get students talking and thinking about how individuals think about health and healing.

53

Teaching Conflict, Dialogic Theory, Facilitation, and Context in Group Communication with the movie

Jennifer Woody Collins (Denison University)

Dialogic theory, as conceived by David Bohm, Martin Buber, and others, comprises concepts integral to many interpersonal communication courses. I screen the film Oslo in group communication classes as an endcap to a longer unit on conflict. Viewing the 2021 film Oslo, which relays the secret back-channel negotiations between Israelis and the PLO, conveys a fuller sense of the significance and power of dialogic theory than only engaging readings or discussions. In my personal and teaching experiences, I have observed a significant difference between intellectual and experiential understanding of dialogic principles. This G.I.F.T. offers a rationale for teaching dialogic theory through a historical view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how communication theory is applied to work through this long-standing conflict.

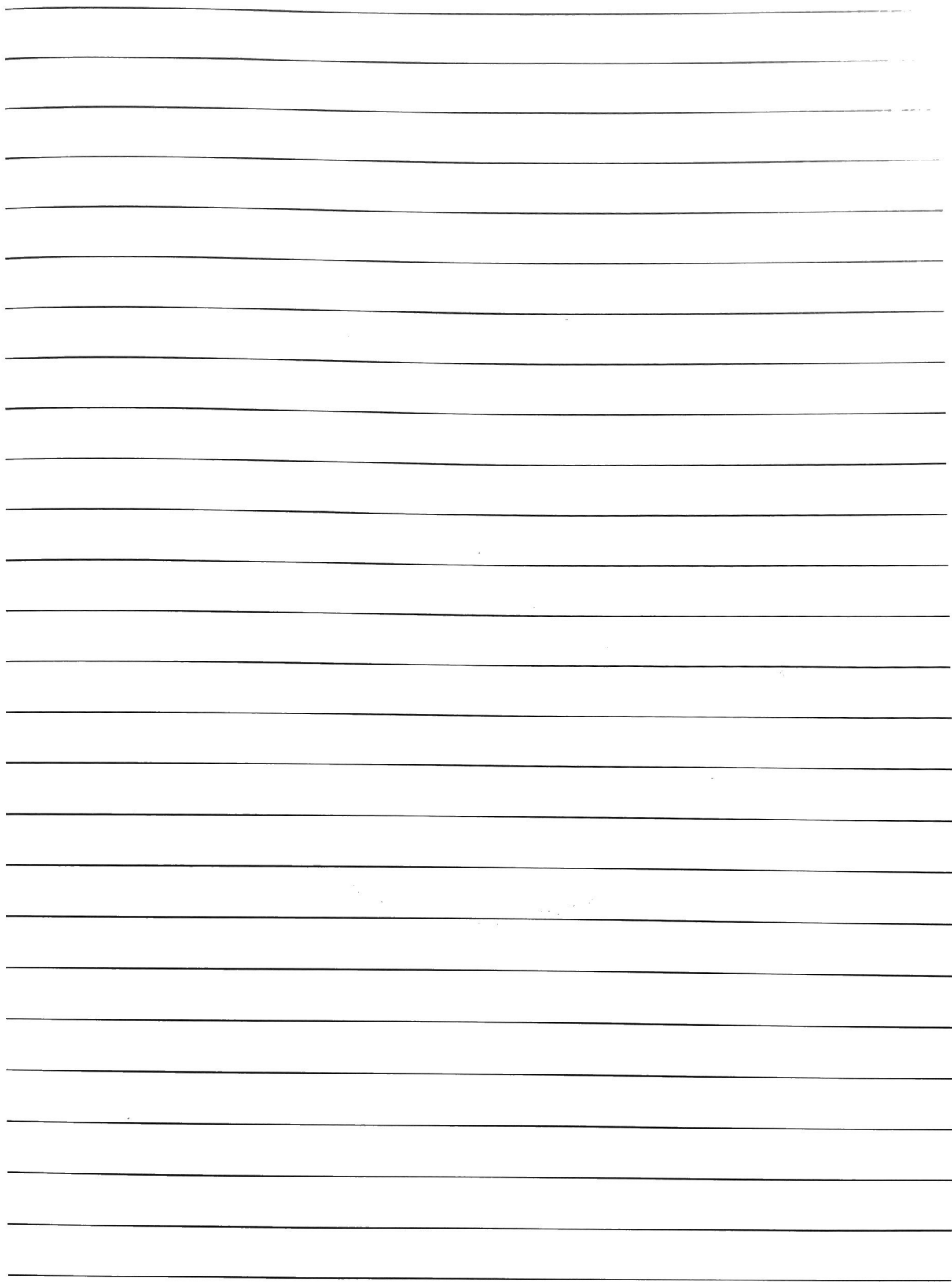
54

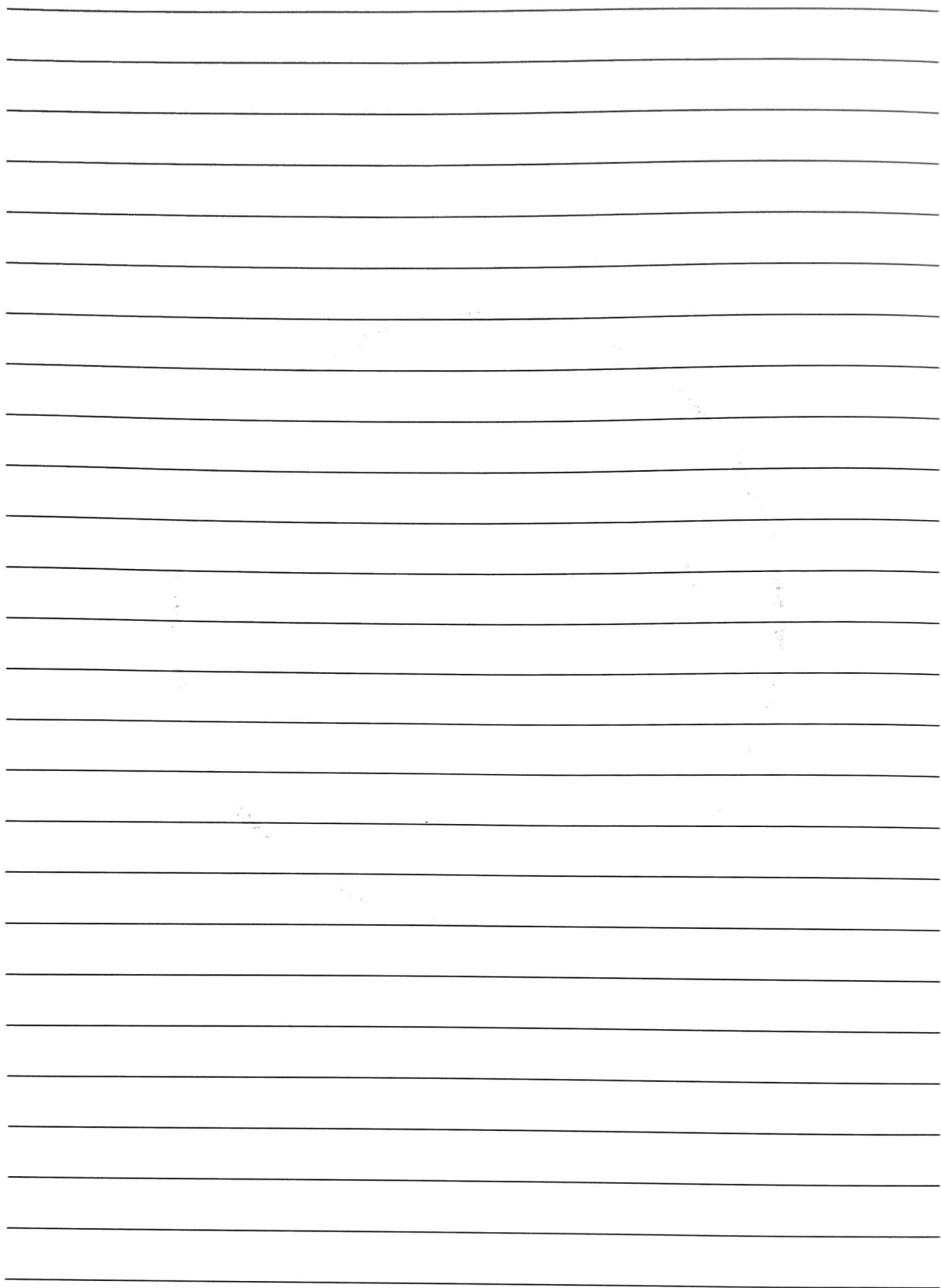
THANK YOU!

A special thank you to the following groups and individuals who made the conference possible.

- Our hosts, the terrific Ohio Wesleyan University.
- Special thanks to the faculty, staff, and students at Ohio Wesleyan University.
- Our partners and sponsors whose contributions help keep registration costs low.
- All conference submission reviewers, session chairs, respondents, and poster judges.
 - Dr. Dana Cloud for sharing her time, talent, and treasures with us.

The 2025 Ohio Communication Association Executive Board thanks you for attending!	
Executive Director Elycia Taylor	President Rhiannon B. Kallis
Vice President Phokeng M. Dailey	Immediate Past President Cody M. Clemens
Ohio Communication Journal Editor Andrea Meluch	Ohio Communication Journal Associate Editor Gwen A. Hullman
Communication Coordinator Ryan Eisenhuth	Conference Coordinators Melissa Cumberbatch & Seth M. Smith
Awards Coordinator Jeff L. Tyus	Sponsorship Coordinator Nancy Jennings
Archivist Bill Jennings	Member-at-Large Ashley Kennard
Member-at-Large Andrew K. Hunt	Member-at-Large Mary Catherine Kennedy
Member-at-Large Mary Olivia Roberts	Perspectives Council Chair Ashley Kennard
Graduate Student Representative Man Luo	Graduate Student Representative Peace Chinenye Nwachukwu





THANK YOU to our Partners for their generous support
of the Ohio Communication Association!



OHIO
UNIVERSITY

SCRIPPS COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

The
University
of Akron



Interested in partnering your organization with OCA?
Contact Nancy Jennings, Sponsorship Coordinator at jenninna@ucmail.uc.edu.

SPECIAL THANKS

to the talented Clark State College students of the GPH 2085 Service Learning Capstone, under the instruction of Scott Dawson, Professor and Coordinator of Graphic Design and New Media.

The Ohio Communication Association conference program cover and postcard were created by

CASSIE LOVELOCK

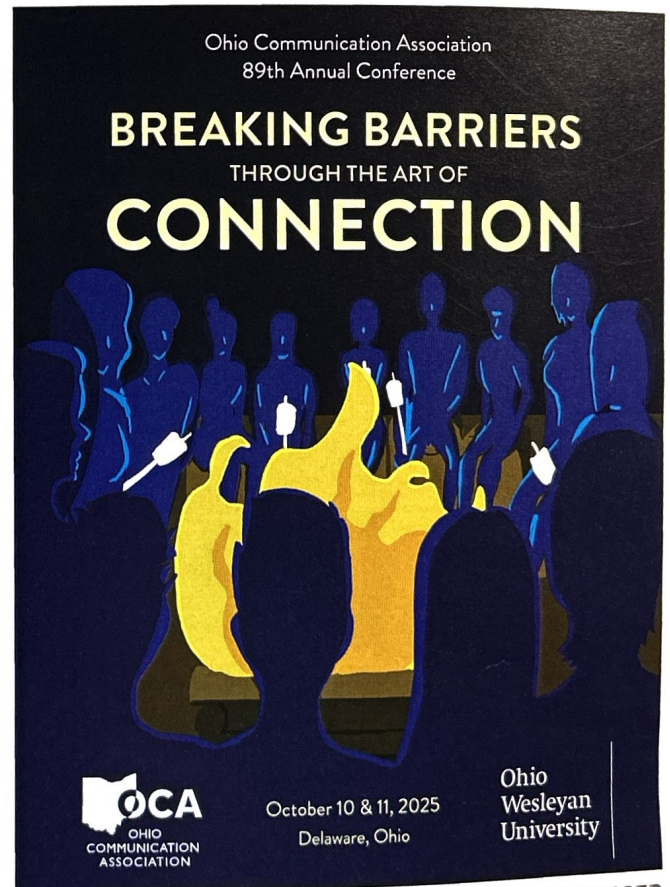
In addition to Cassie's excellent work, the final submissions were so strong that we included the additional designs on this page as a thank you for the hard work of all the students involved.

The GPH 2085 Service Learning Capstone students also included the following:

**BAILEY MASSEY
TIMOTHY PONCER**



design by BAILEY MASSEY



design by TIMOTHY PONCER