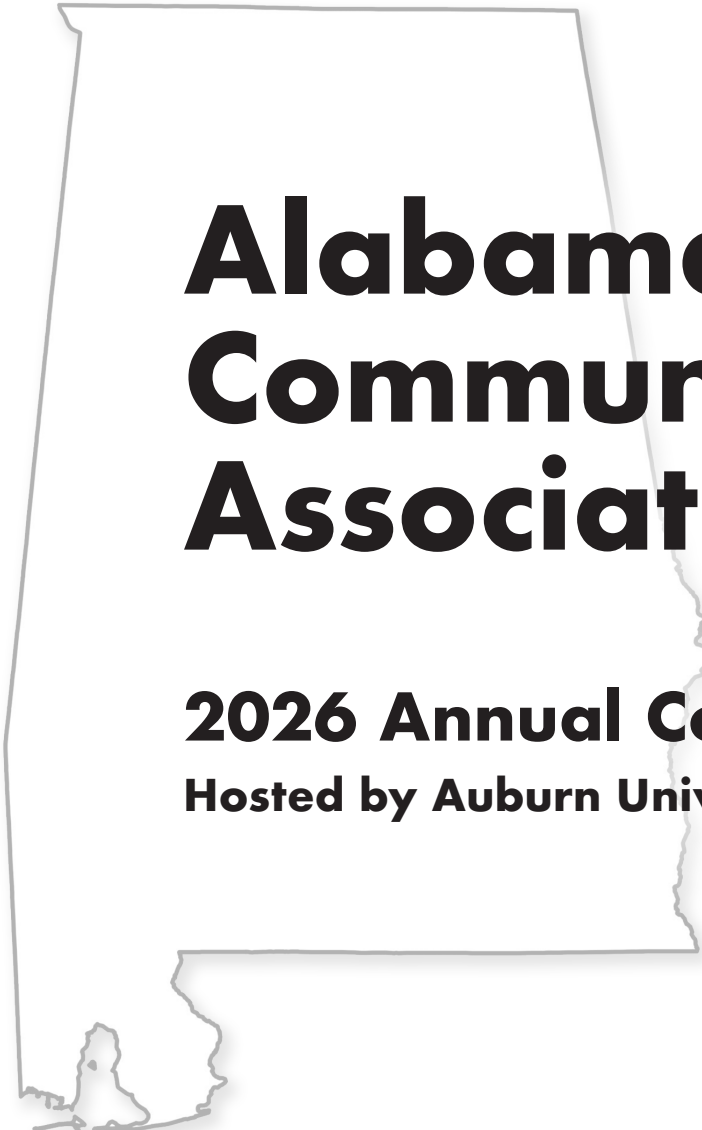




Alabama Communication Association

2026 Annual Conference
Hosted by Auburn University



Conference Program
July 25, 2026

July 25, 2026

Welcome to Auburn University!

As the Director of the School of Communication and Journalism, we are honored to host the 16th annual meeting of the Alabama Communication Association. We'd like to welcome each of you to the Auburn University campus and hope that the conference provides you with the opportunity to connect and reconnect with communication scholars from across the state.

Auburn University has a long history offering journalism and communication classes. Originally housed in the Department of English, the university began offering journalism courses in the 1920s, while speech communication courses were first offered in the 1940s. Communication became its own department in 1956, with journalism following in 1974. In 2000, the two departments, both significant in their own right, joined forces, with the school being established in 2013.

Today, students in the School of Communication and Journalism major in Communication, Public Relations, Journalism and Journalism-Sports Production, as well as Film and Media Studies. In addition to contributing to a range of interdisciplinary majors, such as Public and One Health, Law and Justice, and Agriculture Communication, the school also houses six minors and offers an MA and a graduate certificate in Communication.

Our programs are led by faculty who have been recognized regionally, nationally and internationally for their teaching, research, and service. Their expertise is evident in the classes they teach. The school prides itself on the many experiential opportunities available to students. Centering on theory and application, many courses incorporate service-learning opportunities, and all students participate in a required internship prior to graduation. Additional experiential opportunities include our international study abroad program and domestic study away program as well as our student run PR agency (The Oaks), Auburn Athletics' War Eagle Production, Auburn Film and the New Media Clubs, and AU's Student Media, which houses *The Plainsman*, WEGL, Eagle Eye, and *The Circle*. The school regularly partners with the university and college to provide our students with career treks exploring industries and employment opportunities within the state of Alabama (Birmingham, Montgomery, Mobile, Huntsville) and beyond (Atlanta, Chicago, NYC, LA, Washington, D.C.). The school offers small class sizes, with courses designed to prepare students for competitive, professional positions and post-graduate studies.

It is an honor to host our first ACA conference, and we encourage you to follow us on our social media platforms: Instagram (@com/au_cmjn/) and Facebook (AuburnCMJN). Prospective students are invited to visit our website to learn more about our programs, course offerings, outstanding faculty, and student opportunities: <https://cla.auburn.edu/cmjn/>

War Eagle!



Debra L. Worthington, Ph.D.
Professor & School Director



Dr. Lindsey A. Sherrill

Associate Professor, Business Communication

Sanders College of Business and Technology

Department of Management and Marketing

UNA Box 5205 | 140 Keller Hall | Florence, AL 35632-0001

lsherrill2@una.edu p: [256.765.5609](tel:256.765.5609)

Dear ACA Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome to the Loveliest Village on the Plains and our 16th Annual Convention! We are so thrilled to be hosted by Auburn University this year. Thank you to our planner and ACA Vice President Dr. Ed Youngblood. We'd also like to thank the School of Communication & Journalism and Auburn University's administration for their support in welcoming us.

I'd also like to thank the other folks who helped make this year's convention possible. These include Dr. Jeff Walker (University of Montevallo), ACA's Executive Director; Dr. John H. Saunders (The University of Alabama in Huntsville), Editor of ACA's journal, *The Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric*; the members of our nominations and award committees; and all of our conference paper reviewers and volunteers. None of this would be possible without all of their hard work.

We'll be honoring several award recipients at the convention, including our 2026 ACA Teaching and John H. Saunders Service Award winners. This year's honorees are Dr. George Daniels (The University of Alabama) for service and Dr. John H. Saunders (The University of Alabama in Huntsville) for teaching. We'll also honor our research award winners in the faculty and student categories. Our student awards have a special tie to our location this year, as the Bradley in the Bradley-Bryant Top Undergraduate Student Paper Awards is Auburn's own renowned researcher, Professor Emeritus Bert E. Bradley. It's an honor to recognize our outstanding student researchers in the school Professor Bradley helped establish.

Finally, thank you to all of our loyal ACA members and convention attendees. We love seeing old friends and new every year. If this is your first ACA conference, we hope you find a home here. I can't wait to get to know you.

Thank you for spending your weekend with us!

Sincerely,

Dr. Lindsey A. Sherrill

Alabama Communication Association President

University of North Alabama

Associate Professor of Business Communication, Sanders College of Business & Technology

Alabama Communication Association Conference 2026
Lowder Hall, Auburn University
Program at a Glance

Session	Time	Room	Session Title
A	7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Upstairs Lobby	Registration
B	8:00 a.m. to 8:40 a.m.	124	ACA Business Meeting and Breakfast
C1	8:50 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.	124	Great Ideas in Teaching (GIFT)
C2	8:50 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.	154	Panel: Streaming Media in a Divergent Global Ecosystem
C3	8:50 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.	152	Panel: The Primordial Pathway of a Polymath
D1	9:50 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.	154	Great Ideas in Teaching (GIFT) and Teaching Research
D2	9:50 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.	152	Panel: Surviving and Thriving in the Academy as Communication Faculty Members
E1	10:50 a.m. to 11:55 a.m.	154	Graduate Papers
E2	10:50 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	124	Faculty Papers
F	12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.	124	Luncheon and Awards
G1	1:20 p.m. to 2:10 p.m.	154	Panel: The State of Student Media in Alabama
G2	1:20 p.m. to 2:10 p.m.	124	Panel: The New Legal Landscape of AL: Addressing New AL Bills
H1	2:20 p.m. to 3:35 p.m.	124	Graduate Papers
H2	2:20 p.m. to 3:35 p.m.	154	Graduate Papers
I	3:35 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.	Upstairs Lobby	Cookie Break
J1	3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	124	Top Papers

Session A - 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Registration, Lowder Upstairs Lobby

Session B - 8:00 a.m. to 8:40 a.m.

ACA Business Meeting* and Continental Breakfast, Lowder 124

Officers

Jeff Walker, Executive Director, University of Montevallo

Tiffany R. Wang, Executive Director-Elect & Immediate Past President, University of Montevallo

Lindsey A. Sherrill, President, University of North Alabama

Ed Youngblood, Vice President, Auburn University

Joseph Honeycutt, Vice President-Elect, The University of Alabama

Caroline Parsons, Secretary, The University of Alabama

***Everyone is welcome to attend.**

Continental Breakfast Sponsor: Auburn University, School of Communication and Journalism

Session C1 - 8:50 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.

Great Ideas in Teaching (GIFT), Lowder 124

Moderator: Jennifer Johnson, Auburn University

Hybrid by Design: Reframing the Asynchronous Visual Communication Classroom Experience (GIFT)

J. Caleb Walters, The University of West Alabama

Teaching Semantic Markup in Professional Communication Classes: Accessibility, User Experience, and Document Management (GIFT)

Lynn Strong, Auburn University

Susan A. Youngblood, Auburn University

Audio or Video Podcasting as a Communication Vehicle that Transforms Theoretical Concepts into Practical Application (GIFT)

Stephen Earl White, Albany State University

Teaching Teamwork Tactics Across Disciplines, Across Semesters, and Across Borders (GIFT)

George L. Daniels, The University of Alabama

Session C2 - 8:50 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.

Panel: Streaming Media in a Divergent Global Ecosystem, Lowder 154

Brian Bentley, Clark Atlanta University

Andrew Will, University of West Georgia

Vernon Clarke, Clark Atlanta University

Session C3 - 8:50 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.

Panel: The Primordial Pathway of a Polymath: Constructing and Reconstructing Sidney Lanier's Early Literary Legacy and Public Memory in Alabama, *Lowder 152*

Moderator: John H. Saunders, The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Presenters:

S. Brad Bailey, Delta State University

Mandy Lanier Bailey, Forrest County School District

Hayden Lanier Bailey, The University of Southern Mississippi

Brett Richman Bailey, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College

Session D1 - 9:50 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.

Great Ideas in Teaching (GIFT) and Teaching Research, *Lowder 154*

Moderator: Lynn Strong, Auburn University

AI as Coach, Not Author: Integrating Artificial Intelligence Across the Speech Preparation Cycle in COMM 1110 (Faculty Paper)

Amy Mendes, University of West Georgia

Why Strengthening Critical Thinking Foundations is Needed Before a Student Uses an AI LLM in Analysis of Texts (Faculty Paper)

Ewa McGrail, Georgia State University

J. Patrick McGrail, Jacksonville State University

Alicja Rieger, Valdosta State University

Daniel Rieger, Broward College

Internship Access in U.S. Higher Education: Communicating Effectively to Structure Programs that Support Inclusivity (GIFT)

Ashla Hill Roseboro, Alabama State University

Brenda Gill, Alabama State University

Slippery Slopes and South Park: Using Pop Culture to Teach Logical Fallacies in Persuasion (GIFT)

Brian Hamilton, Walters State Community College

Session D2 - 9:50 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.

Panel: Surviving and Thriving in the Academy as Communication Faculty Members, *Lowder 152*

Shari Hoppin, Troy University

Jessy Ohl, The University of Alabama

Raymond R. Ozley, University of Montevallo

Caroline S. Parsons, The University of Alabama

Jeff Walker, University of Montevallo

Tiffany R. Wang, University of Montevallo

Session E1 - 10:50 a.m. to 11:55 a.m.

Graduate Papers, Lowder 154

Moderator: Samantha James, Auburn University

Making Sense of SAP: Heuristic Analysis of Federal Aid Communication at Public Universities
Jasey Herrington, Auburn University & Southern Union State CC

Something Close to Community: Online Archival Ambience
Kate Inman, The University of Alabama

Framing in Higher Education Contexts: News Coverage Framing of Anti-DEI Legislation in Southeastern Higher Education Institutions
Allison Killingsworth, Auburn University
Maggie Rendleman, Auburn University

The Algorithmic Mirror: A Co-Construction Theory of Media and Self
Charlyse Skipwith, The University of Alabama

Feeling Power: Intimacy, War, and Rhetorical Impact in Alchemised by SenLinYu
Vivian C. Brock, The University of Alabama

Session E2 - 10:50 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Faculty Papers, Lowder 124

Moderator: Lindsey A. Sherrill, University of North Alabama

Performing Exemption: Asshole Style and the Comparative Activation of Entitled Transgression
Amy Mendes, University of West Georgia

Rhetoric and Gender in Jessica Mendoza's work with Major League Baseball (MLB)
Edwin S. Lee, University of Louisville

Telling the Tribal Story: Narrative Strategy in an Award-Winning Indigenous Public Relations Campaign
Shari Hoppin, Troy University

Living with Not Knowing: Visualization Features and Cancer-Related Uncertainty Management
Fan Yang, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Session F - 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Presidential Luncheon and Awards, Lowder 124

Welcome:

Dr. Debra Worthington, Director, Auburn University School of Communication and Journalism

President:

Lindsey A. Sherrill

Awards:

ACA Award for Outstanding Teaching
John H. Saunders, University of Alabama in Huntsville

John H. Saunders Service Award
George Daniels, The University of Alabama

Session G1 - 1:20 p.m. to 2:10 p.m.

Panel: The State of Student Media in Alabama, Lowder 154

Moderator: Will Heath, Samford University

Presenters:

Billy Ferris, Auburn University

Katherine Irwin, Auburn University, Montgomery

Jackie Alexander, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Session G2 - 1:20 p.m. to 2:10 p.m.

Panel: The New Legal Landscape of AL: Addressing New AL Bills, Lowder 124

Moderator: Vivian Brock, The University of Alabama

Presenters:

David Nelson, Valdosta State University

Gyromas Newman, University of Mobile

Jessy Ohl, The University of Alabama

Raymond R. Ozley, University of Montevallo

John H. Saunders, University of Alabama in Huntsville

Jeff Walker, University of Montevallo

Session H1 - 2:20 p.m. to 3:35 p.m.

Graduate Papers, Lowder 124

Moderator: Eliana DuBosar, Auburn University

Editorial Judgment in the Algorithmic Newsroom: How Alabama Television Journalists Negotiate Artificial Intelligence

Wynter Rudolph, Liberty University

Accessibility in Wildfire-Related Social Media Communication

Jasey Herrington, Auburn University & Southern Union State CC

Who Can Care Less: How TikTok Creators Define and Describe Situationships

Kristie Lance, The University of Alabama

Lisa Clary-Galibert, The University of Alabama

Elizabeth Blair, The University of Alabama

Survival as Monstrosity: Abjection, Gender, Feminism and Power in the Throne of Glass Series by Sarah J. Maas

Vivian C. Brock, The University of Alabama

Women Empowerment: Systemic or Individual Responsibility? A Study of Influencer Messaging Using Critical Media Effects Framework

Fatima Rehaab Sikandar, Auburn University

Session H2 - 2:20 p.m. to 3:35 p.m.

Graduate Papers, Lowder 154

Moderator: John H. Saunders, The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Rhetoric of Self-Identity: Viewing Self Identity and Its Development through the Eyes of Rhetoric and Literacy

Jalynn Whitfield, University of Alabama in Huntsville

The Defense Zone Pledge: Understanding the Decolonial Multitude of the Rhode Island's Immigration Defense Zones

Kate Inman, The University of Alabama

"Just Wait": Exploring How Marital Myths Relate to Newlyweds' Expectations of Marriage

Haleigh Skelton, Auburn University

Performing Unity, Producing Division: The Rhetorical Oxymoron of the 2026 State of the Union Address

Charlyse Skipwith, The University of Alabama

College Football Stadiums in the South: Ideological Rhetorical Objects

Jeremy Rogerson, The University of Alabama

Session I - 3:35 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Cookie Break, Lowder Upstairs Lobby

Sponsored by Auburn University's School of Communication and Journalism

Session J1 - 3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Top Papers, Lowder 124

Moderator: Ed Youngblood, Auburn University

Respondent: Myoung-Gi Chon, Auburn University

Bradley-Bryant Top Undergraduate Paper Award:

The Impact of Framing and Sentiment of the Media on the 2016 Election Polling Outcomes

Grace Miles, Auburn University

Bradley-Bryant Top Undergraduate Paper Award:

Silence and Isolation: The Rhetoric of Authoritative Language as a Tool of Power in the Treatment of Women Diagnosed with Hysteria in the 19th Century

Melanie Key Wilson, University of North Alabama

Top Graduate Paper Award:

Evaluating Generative AI for Digital Accessibility

Allison Killingsworth, Auburn University

Top Faculty Paper:

Rationalizing Race in Redistricting Reporting: A Four-State Television News Analysis

George L. Daniels, The University of Alabama

Alabama Communication Association

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Annual Convention July 31, 2027

University of Alabama

The Alabama Communication Association invites submissions of scholarly papers, practitioner and student projects, and panel presentations for its Annual Convention, hosted at The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama on Saturday, July 31, 2027.

We especially welcome original research by undergraduate and graduate students, as well as faculty/professional members and practitioners from Alabama and the surrounding area. Individuals may submit a variety of projects from Communication centered disciplines such as communication studies, journalism, media studies, advertising, public relations, mass communication, etc. Disciplines intersecting with Communication (such as sociology, marketing, English, etc.) are also welcome.

Submission deadline: May 1, 2027 (11:59 pm CDT)

This conference is committed to focusing on the following submission types:

Completed Papers: Submit research papers of no more than 25 pages including tables, figures, and other material, but not including references. Papers exceeding this page limit will not be reviewed. We will recognize the top faculty/professional paper, top graduate student paper, and two top undergraduate papers.

Research-in-Progress: Faculty and student authors should submit 500 to 700-word abstracts of research that will not be completed before the conference. Research-in-Progress abstracts should include a clear purpose statement, an overview of the literature driving the research, and the method or approach. Research-in-Progress submissions are not eligible for ACA Awards. Participants in Research-in-Progress panels will present an overview of the work in progress and receive feedback from attendees.

Great Ideas for Teaching Students (G.I.F.T.S): Instructors may submit teacher and student-tested ideas for effectively teaching a wide variety of communication concepts and contexts (e.g., health communication, research methods, theory, gender, organizational communication, PR). We encourage presenters to bring handouts of the activity for the audience.

Project Panels: Panel ideas that explore applied and scholarly experiences from multiple perspectives are encouraged. Topical roundtable discussions from scholars and/or practitioners or

applied communication practices in communities or the classroom are ideal. Individuals from a variety of institutions and backgrounds may submit ideas. We also encourage students to submit capstone course work and other class projects. Creative projects are also welcome.

Submission Guidelines: Paper submissions should be prepared for anonymous review; please remove all identifying information from the body of the paper and file information. **Paper submissions including identifying information will be rejected.** Put title, author name(s), and complete contact information in a separate title page file. Panel and G.I.F.T.S. submissions may include identifying information.

All submissions should include a separate title page file indicating whether the author(s) is FACULTY, GRADUATE STUDENT, or UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT. Papers including faculty co-authors are not eligible for student paper awards.

Panel and GIFTS submissions should include a brief abstract of the activity and up to two pages of supporting materials articulating the goal, rationale, directions, and explanation of how the activity connects to/with communication concepts, theories, and/or various skills.

Please limit paper submissions to two per individual.

Submission questions may be directed to Joseph Honeycutt, ACA Vice President and 2027 conference planner at josephehoneycutt@gmail.com.

All submissions are due by **11:59 pm CDT, May 1, 2027.**

Index of Participants

Name	Sessions	Rooms	Affiliation
Alexander, Jackie	G1	154	Univ of Alabama at Birmingham
Bailey, Brett Richman	C3	152	Miss. Gulf Coast Comm. College
Bailey, Hayden Lanier	C3	152	Univ of Southern Mississippi
Bailey, Mandy Lanier	C3	152	Forrest County School District
Bailey, S. Brad	C3	152	Delta State Univ
Bentley, Brian	C2	154	Clark Atlanta Univ
Blair, Elizabeth	H1	124	Univ of Alabama
Brock, Vivian C.	E1, G2, H1	154/124/124	Univ of Alabama
Chon, Myoung-Gi	J1	124	Auburn Univ
Clarke, Vernon	C2	154	Clark Atlanta Univ
Clary-Galibert, Lisa	H1	124	Univ of Alabama
Daniels, George L.	C1, F, J1	124/124/124	Univ of Alabama
DuBosar, Eliana	H1	124	Auburn Univ
Ferris, Billy	G1	154	Auburn Univ
Gill, Brenda	D1	154	Alabama State Univ
Hamilton, Brian	D1	154	Walters State Community College
Heath, Will	G1	154	Samford Univ
Herrington, Jasey	E1, H1	154/124	Auburn Univ, Southern Union
Honeycutt, Joseph	B	124	Univ of Alabama
Hoppin, Shari	D2, E2	152/124	Troy Univ
Inman, Kate	E1, H2	154/154	Univ of Alabama
Irwin, Katherine	G1	154	Auburn Univ, Montgomery
James, Samantha	E1	154	Auburn Univ
Johnson, Jennifer	C1	124	Auburn Univ
Wilson, Melanie Key	J1	124	Univ of North Alabama
Killingsworth, Allison	E1, J1	154/124	Auburn Univ
Lance, Kristie	H1	124	Univ of Alabama
Lee, Edwin S.	E2	124	Univ of Louisville
McGrail, Ewa	D1	154	Georgia State Univ
McGrail, J. Patrick	D1	154	Jacksonville State Univ
Mendes, Amy	D1, E2	154/124	Univ of West Georgia
Miles, Grace	J1	124	Auburn Univ
Nelson, David	G2	124	Valdosta State Univ
Newman, Gyromas	G2	124	Univ of Mobile

Name	Sessions	Rooms	Affiliation
Ohl, Jessy	D2, G2	152/124	Univ of Alabama
Ozley, Raymond R.	D2, G2	152/124	Univ of Montevallo
Parsons, Caroline S.	D2	152	Univ of Alabama
Rendleman, Maggie	E1	154	Auburn Univ
Rieger, Alicja	D1	154	Valdosta State Univ
Rieger, Daniel	D1	154	Broward College
Rogerson, Jeremy	H2	154	Univ of Alabama
Roseboro, Ashla Hill	D1	154	Alabama State Univ
Rudolph, Wynter	H1	124	Liberty Univ
Saunders, John H.	C3, F, G2, H2	152/124 124/154	Univ of Alabama in Huntsville
Sherril, Lindsey A.	B, F, E2	124/124/124	Alabama State Univ
Sikandar, Fatima Rehaab	H1	124	Auburn Univ
Skelton, Haleigh	H2	154	Auburn Univ
Skipwith, Charlyse	E1, H2	154/154	Univ of Alabama
Strong, Lynn	C1, D1	124/154	Auburn Univ
Walker, Jeff	B, D2, G2	124/152/124	Univ of Montevallo
Walters, J. Caleb	C1	124	Univ of West Alabama
Wang, Tiffany R.	B, D2	124/152	Univ of Montevallo
White, Stephen Earl	C1	124	Samford Univ
Whitfield, Jalynn	H2	154	Univ of Alabama in Huntsville
Will, Andrew	C2	154	Univ of West Georiga
Worthington, Debra	F	124	Auburn Univ
Yang, Fan	E2	124	Univ of Alabama
Youngblood, Ed	B, J1	124/124	Auburn Univ
Youngblood, Susan A.	C1	124	Auburn Univ

Wifi Access

If your university uses eduroam, you should automatically have internet access at Auburn. We will also have guest account codes in the printed version of the program and at the registration desk.

Guest Code:

Username: au078927

Password: 8711

Presenter Information

You are welcome to connect your own computer in the presentation room. If you plan to use the provided room computers, please make sure your presentation is saved online so you can access it easily. There are issues moving files from a USB drive. You can log into your own cloud storage (Dropbox, Box, Google Drive, etc.) or email during your session. You can use our shared read-only Google Drive folder. You will need a Gmail account to use the shared folder.

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Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric

The Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric is the official journal of the Alabama Communication Association.

The *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric (JCR)* is a peer-reviewed publication that publishes original scholarship that promotes critical engagement with rhetorical dimensions of current events (those of the past 18 months or so). In promoting the practice of public intellectualism, *JCR* offers an outlet for scholarship that is both intellectually rigorous and accessible to lay audiences. To this end, *JCR* specifically seeks to publish scholarship that evidences how rhetorical criticism and theory can help promote a more informed public that is better able to take part in a democratic society. Essays in *JCR* add to public discussions of current events and help the general public understand more fully the critical and theoretical underpinnings of public debates and controversies, political discourse, social movements, and media events.

JCR is primarily an outlet for works of rhetorical criticism and theory. We are open to other related methodologies and perspectives under the broad purview of rhetoric.

All manuscripts submitted for publication consideration must be original work that has not been published previously and is not currently under review by any other publication outlet.

Please send an electronic copy to editor@contemporaryrhetoric.com in Microsoft Word format with all identifying information removed to facilitate blind review. Please provide a brief biography with credentials and professional contact information that will be included in the publication.

While we are not subject to the page limit constraints of print journals, authors should provide a rationale for considering manuscripts that exceed 12,000 words. Writing style should be accessible to a general audience and free of unexplained jargon.

Our house style is Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition. Use footnotes rather than endnotes.

On the first page, provide a descriptive title for the essay that would make sense to a lay audience, an abstract of 100-200 words and a list of at least five keywords that describe your essay, both for purposes of sending to reviewers and for searching.

Articles accepted for publication will not be published without a signed Copyright Agreement on file.

You can find all published issues of JCR at <http://contemporaryrhetoric.com/>.