

GEORGIA COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION



2025 CONFERENCE

The University of West Georgia
Carrollton, Georgia
Thursday 2/6 - Saturday 2/8

GACOMM.ORG



DRAFT

This is a draft version of the 2025 Program provided to help attendees make early plans and request institutional support for attendance.

The schedule of presentations may be reorganized over the next few weeks.

More information about the site, maps, parking, and other details will be added to this draft.

All presentation spaces *should* have access to typical classroom technology and a projector, but accidents happen, so please plan ahead.

Please contact Steve Stuglin ([sstuglin@highlands.edu](mailto:ssuglin@highlands.edu)) or Christian Norman (christian.norman@mga.edu) as soon as possible with any requested accommodations or if you are unable to present your work as scheduled.

Thursday 2/6

6:30-9pm Welcome Back Social

Friday 2/7

8:15am Registration Desk Open

9:00-9:50am Sessions A1, A2, A3
10:00-10:50am Sessions B1, B2, B3
11:00-11:50am Sessions C1, C2, C3

12:00-12:45pm Welcome, Social Lunch
12:45-1:15pm Keynote Address
1:15-1:50 Business Meeting

2:00-2:50pm Sessions D1, D2, D3
3:00-3:50pm Sessions E1, E2, E3
4:00-4:50pm Sessions F1, F2, F3

6:00-6:50pm Film Festival Screening
7:00-8:00pm Dinner, Film Festival Awards

Saturday 2/8

8:15am Registration Desk Open

9:00-9:50am Sessions G1, G2
10:00-10:50am Sessions H1, H2, H3
11:00-11:50am Sessions I1, I2, I3

12:00-12:30pm Reception, Conference Awards

Thursday 2/15

6:30-9pm Welcome Back Social

Start off the 2025 event with a no-host social at Brown Dog Eatery, just around the corner from the conference hotel. *You are welcome to stop in for any part of or the whole time.*

Friday 2/16

8:15am Registration Desk Open

Pick up your conference badge and enjoy a light continental breakfast while you mingle with colleagues.

Room 115- Selected Films submitted by the start of judging for the 2025 Film Festival will run on a continuous loop throughout the day. The top films will be screened at 6pm before the Awards Dinner.

9:00-9:50am Sessions A1, A2, A3

A1 - Room 110 - Thinking Through Games and Communication

- *Communication Through Visual Design and Interactivity in Video Games*; Rajwol Chapagain & Maret Mcwhorter, Mercer University
- *Vote Red, Vote Green: An Exercise in Power, Societal Psychology, and Groupthink*; Ryan J. Gautreaux, Georgia State University
- *Narrative Gameplay in On the Edge*; Lucy Roach & Katie Volz, Mercer University
 - *Respondent*: Steve Stuglin, Georgia Highlands College

A2 - Room 121 - Twice as Good: Black Women and the 2024 Election

- Laura Lane, Georgia State University
- Davia Rose Lassiter, Georgia State University

A3 - Room 122 - How to Use the Media and Media Training to Teach Public Speaking

- Melissa Jackson, Piedmont University

10:00-10:50am Sessions B1, B2, B3

B1 - Room 110 - It's the End of the World as We Know It (and I Feel Fine): Teaching During and In Crisis

- David Nelson, Valdosta State University
- Holly Buglewicz, Valdosta State University
- Danna Gibson, Columbus State University
- Arrington Stoll, Valdosta State University
- Steve Stuglin, Georgia Highlands College

B2 - Room 121 - Deliberations on Gender, Sexism, and Power

- *Marsyas, Figured*; Nathan Bedsole, Georgia College & State University
- *Lesbian Separatist TERFdom: A Look into Transgender and Transmisogynistic Discourses in Second-Wave Feminism*; Ophelia Jones, Mercer University
 - Moderator: Q. McElroy, University of Georgia

B3 - Room 122 - Public Speaking Primer for Public Relations Students

- Caitlin Wills, University of North Georgia

11:00-11:50am Sessions C1, C2, C3

C1 - Room 110 - Embracing Generative AI in the Classroom: Uses for Faculty and Students

- Andre Nicholson, Middle Georgia State University
- Sheree Keith, Middle Georgia State University
- Christian Norman, Middle Georgia State University
- Michael North, Middle Georgia State University

C2 - Room 121 - Beyond Traditional Media Writing: Integrating Social media Shows to Bridge Professional Writing Skills

- Angela Criscoe, Georgia College & State University
- Madelyn Agostini, Georgia College & State University
- Amy Bishop, Georgia College & State University
- Jailey Ferrer Negron, Georgia College & State University
- Liberty Klopp, Georgia College & State University

C3 - Room 122 - Transformative Tech Tools: Improving Student Engagement Through Industry-Relevant Assignments

- Sarah Johnson, Kennesaw State University

12:00-12:40 Social Lunch

Atrium - Please join us for a formal welcome to the event by GCA President Amy E. Mendes and representatives of the University of West Georgia, immediately after which you are welcome to enjoy an included lunch and socialize with friends and colleagues.

12:45-1:15 Keynote Address (Room 120)

Shavonne Reed, Wellness Champion & Author, a UWG alumnus, is a highly acclaimed internationally traveled speaker and award-winning entrepreneur and marketing executive.



She is a trained journalist and has published many thought-leadership articles and hosts the Future Health NOW podcast. She has expertise across eCommerce, health maintenance organizations, mass media, digital media, government agency program implementation, communications, dental and medical device manufacturing, employee engagement, and marketing and sales.

Shavonne is the founder & CEO of OPUA, a GENZ targeted health and wellness company focused on chronic disease prevention and health promotion. Shavonne is passionate about spreading the importance of healthier lifestyles and generational health.

1:15-1:50 Business Meeting

Room 120 - GCA Business Meetings are open to all attendees. Voting rights come with membership (paid at registration).

Tentative Agenda

- Approval of Minutes
- Officer Reports
- Old Business
 - Changes to Conference Format
 - Strategic Goals
- New Business
 - GCA 2026
- Officer Elections
 - Vice President Elect, Secretary, Administrative Director, Private Member at Large, 1st Public Member at Large

2:00-2:50pm Sessions D1, D2, D3

D1 - Atrium - Networking and Grad Fair

- Details TBA. This place is held for any institution that wants to host applicants for positions or programs. Please contact GCA and let us know to save space for you!

D2 - Room 121 - Reflections on the First Semester of Core IMPACTS Implementation

- Meredith Ginn, Kennesaw State University
- Emily Holler, Kennesaw State University

D3 - Room 122 - Building Value for Members: Ideas for Moving Beyond the Conference

- Steve Stuglin, Georgia Highlands College

3:00-3:50pm Sessions E1, E2, E3

E1 - Room 110 - Understanding Destabilizing Discourses

- *Uncertain World: Definitions of Antisemitism Across Time*; Emma Page, Mercer University
- *QAnon on the Public Screen: Image-Text Mediation of Civic Spectatorship*; John Hendry, Georgia State University
- *Illuminati Influence and the Fallout: Analyzing Kanye West's Anti-Semitic Remarks and the Conspiracy Connections*; Kennedy Jenkins, Mercer University
 - Respondent: David Nelson, Valdosta State University

E2 - Room 121 - Implementing and Managing AI in the Public Speaking classroom: A Roundtable Discussion

- Amy E. Mendes, The University of West Georgia
- Melanie S. Conrad, The University of West Georgia

E3 - Room 122 - When "One Size Doesn't Fit All:" Rethinking Communication Research, Practice and Theory

- Davia Lassiter, Georgia State University
- Akansha Sirohi, Georgia State University
- Jasmine Hope Jackson, Georgia State University
- Salome Apkhazishvili, Georgia State University
- Funmilayo Ogunsanwo, Georgia State University
 - *This immersive experience will run as a 90 minute session in Room 122 for the E3 and F3 session blocks.*

4:00-4:50pm Sessions F1, F2, F3

F1 - Room 110 - Generative AI In Practice

- *Professional Communication Students' Responses Toward using Generative AI for a Writing Assignment: A Preliminary Qualitative Study*; Barbara Tucker, Dalton State University
- *For better or worse: Examining AI Companions' impact to build healthy communication skills and shape identity for married couples*; Nicci Wooley, Georgia State University
- *Integrating AI to Enhance Public Speaking Courses*; Niaz Khan, Georgia Gwinnett College
 - Moderator: _____

F2 - Room 121 - Lessons I'd Teach My Younger (Educator) Self: What I Wish I Knew When My Journey in Academia Began

- Meredith Ginn, Kennesaw State University
- Anna Deeb, Brenau University

F3 - Room 122 - When "One Size Doesn't Fit All:" Rethinking Communication Research, Practice and Theory (continued)

- Davia Lassiter, Georgia State University
- Akansha Sirohi, Georgia State University
- Jasmine Hope Jackson, Georgia State University
- Salome Apkhazishvili, Georgia State University
- Funmilayo Ogunsanwo, Georgia State University
 - *This immersive experience will run as a 90 minute session in Room 122 for the E3 and F3 session blocks.*

FRIDAY

5:00-5:50pm Rest and Refresh

6:00-6:50pm Film Festival Screening

Room 120 - Open Screening and Q&A with filmmakers

The Georgia Communication Association Film Festival showcases outstanding films and videos made by students at GCA member institutions in Georgia. We seek to highlight students' inspiring work that reflects their creative voices and unique talents.

- Film Fest Director: Sangsun Choi, Kennesaw State University

7:00-8:00pm Dinner & Film Festival Awards

Atrium - Ticketed Dinner

Dinner is reserved for those that purchased a dinner ticket at time of registration. Midway through the meal, our Film Festival Director will deliver awards to the filmmakers that won this year.

Film Festival Awards for 2025...

FRIDAY

Saturday 2/8

8:15am Registration Desk Open

9:00-9:50am Sessions G1, G2

G1 - Room 110 - Journalism in the Past, Present, and Future

- *1964 Marietta Daily Journal Coverage of Marietta High School Integration*; Jasmine Hope Jackson, Georgia State University
- *Stories of Helene: Feature Writing in the Wake of a Storm*; Chaz Lilly, Dalton State College
- *The Ethics and Responsibilities of Social Media Platforms as News Sources*; Sydney Hencil, Brenau University
 - Respondent: Christopher Thompson, Kennesaw State University

G2 - Room 121 - Workshop Your Worst; Interactive Experience

- Kelly Williams, The University of West Georgia
- Taylor Bryant, The University of West Georgia
- Tiffany McBride, Columbus State University

G3 - Room 122 - Balancing Creativity with Standardization: Perspectives on the Basic Courses

- Brian Kline, University of North Georgia
- C Thomas Preston, Jr., University of North Georgia
- Kevin Cummings, Mercer University
- Roxanne Larkins, Gwinnett Technical College

10:00-10:50am Sessions H1, H2, H3

H1 - Room 110 - Understanding Cultural Moments

- *Intergenerational Vulnerability to Political Misinformation in the Digital Age*; Cassie Cain-Alston, The University of West Georgia
- *The Bird Must Fly : The Resilience of the Coconut Head Generation to the 2021 Twitter Ban in Nigeria*; Funmilayo Ogunsanwo, Georgia State University
- *Examining Framing and Discourse of the Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting*; Nicole Nelson, Mercer University
 - Moderator: Davia Rose Lassiter. Georgia State University

SATURDAY

H2 - Room 106 - Improv in the Classroom Part 2: Linking Improv to Class Projects

- Matthew Terrell, Kennesaw State University

H3 - Room 122 - A Dynamic Teaching Approach to Introducing Complexity Theory in Communication Studies

- Butch Cross, Augusta University

11:00-11:50am Sessions 11, 12, 13

I1 - Room 110 - Focus on Marginalized Discourses

- *Strong Black Woman & Legacies of Loss: Mamie Till, Sybrina Fulton, and Public Displays of Black Maternal Grief*; Davia Rose Lassiter, Georgia State University
- *Analysis of Community Empowerment and Transformation: A Study of Minority Social Movements and Media Influence with a Focus on the Black Panther Party*; Alisha Mitchell, Mercer University
- *Weight Stigma for Black Women in TV: An Analysis of Kim Parker*; Lauren Lane, Georgia State University
 - Respondent: Anna Deeb, Brenau University

I2 - Room 121 - Great Ideas for Teaching Speech (GIFTS)

- *Conflict Management: Negotiating for a Better Assignment*; Michael North, Middle Georgia State University
- *Beyond Social Media: Creating Student Interaction*; Melissa Jackson, Piedmont University
- *Why Would The Readers Care? A Hands-On Approach to Earned Media*; Mikkel Soelberg Christensen, Georgia College and State University
- *The Ups and Downs of Uncertainty Reduction Theory: An Activity for the Communication Theory Course*; Pamela Hayward, Augusta University
- *Media Production Pedagogy for Non-Major Students*; Sangsun Choi, Kennesaw State University
 - Moderator: Caitlin Wills, University of North Georgia

I3 - Room 122 - Workshop Your Worst; Interactive Experience

- *Loki The Trickster and Plato's Allegory of The Cave*; Jina Athakhanh, Mercer University
- *Grave of the Fireflies: An Elegiac Masterpiece*; Sara Fletcher Rivera, Brenau University
 - Moderator: Cameron Kunzelman, Mercer University

12:00-12:30pm Awards Reception

Atrium - Closing Remarks and Awards

Please join us for some brief closing remarks, dessert, and the announcement of the winners of our conference awards: Top Paper and Top Presentation. Presentation will be made by GCA 2025 planners:

Amy Mendes, The University of West Georgia

Steve Stuglin, Georgia Highlands College

Christian Norman, Middle Georgia State University

12:30pm Conference Adjourns

SATURDAY