Carolinas Communication Association
Annual Conference
October 9 – 10, 2026
USC Sumter
Program

Friday, October 9

8 AM Registration
Room 134, Arts & Letters Building

9 – 10:15 AM Concurrent Panels

Room 143, Arts & Letters Building
Revolution(aries) in the Classroom: Oral Examination, Multimodal Pedagogy, and Authentic Intellectual Engagement in the AI Era
Sky Tilley, W. Russell Robinson, Andres Patterson-Masuka, Daniel Richardson - Winston-Salem State University; DaKysha Moore - NC A & T State University
This panel explores how communication educators are adapting assessment and classroom engagement practices during the ongoing AI revolution. Panelists examine oral examinations, multimodal storytelling, digital portfolios, video essays, and other performative assessment strategies designed to foster authentic intellectual engagement and higher-order thinking. The discussion considers how communication and media studies educators can move students from passive consumers of information toward active creators of public-facing analytical work while maintaining accountability, rhetorical agility, and critical inquiry in AI-mediated learning environments.

Room 144, Arts & Letters Building
Revolutionizing the Classroom: From Service-Oriented to Community-Engaged Ecosystems
Jenny Southard, Rohan Maythe, Whitney Reynolds, Kim Cuny
UNC Greensboro
This panel explores the "revolutionary" shift in pedagogical practice from traditional, transactional service-learning to a deeply integrated community-engaged ecosystem. In alignment with the theme of overcoming systemic obstacles to propel a "more perfect union," we examine how communicative labor—grounded in a "relationships first" philosophy—can dismantle the power imbalances often found in standard academic-community partnerships. By reworking the foundational structures of a required major communication studies course, this approach challenges the fundamental tenets of traditional instruction to center radical inclusion and mutual benefit. This panel includes students who will share their lived experiences within this reworked framework, discussing how their communication with community constituents moved beyond simple service and toward a collective, strategic effort to address modern struggles of belonging and civic engagement.

Room 145, Arts & Letters Building

Let's Start a Revolution!: Understanding and Motivating our Current Students

Jessica D. McCall, Chair; Jessica D. McCall, Ananya Dey Puja, Whitney Reynolds, Rohan Maythe, Mattie Beeson – UNC Greensboro

Flat affect and student silence can be draining; our social circumstances and current technologies may be causing a steady decline in college student motivation to learn. Join us and reflect on foundational communication education scholarship and contemplate how we can apply these behaviors, principles, and best practices to classrooms today.

9 AM – 12 NOON POSTER SESSION
LOBBY, ARTS & LETTERS BUILDING

Numb to Violence: How Repeated Media Exposures Shapes Adolescent Emotional Response (ages 14 – 20)

Amiyah Chavis

This study examines how repeated exposure to violent media influences emotional desensitization among adolescents ages 14–20. Using surveys and content analysis, findings suggest frequent exposure to violent content may reduce emotional responsiveness and empathy, though reactions vary by individual and context, particularly regarding real-world violence.

About Us but Not For Us: A Rhetorical Analysis of the "Embrace Justice" Mural at Queens University of Charlotte

Juan Jose Ramirez Estrada, Queens University of Charlotte

Using symbolic convergence, this project argues that Shepard Fairey's "Embrace Justice" mural constructs a civic engagement narrative that perpetuates the vision of Queens University of Charlotte as a city cornerstone. Yet its placement and association with Myers Park prestige suggest the message prioritizes prospective stakeholders over the current campus community.

Teacher Influencers: Rhetoric, Visibility, and Children's Online Privacy

Zoe Stewart, USC Aiken

This poster examines the rhetoric of privacy and consent in digitally interposed classrooms, focusing on teacher influencers who share their students' images, voices, and classroom interactions publicly on social media. This project aims to explore how influencer culture and education rhetoric complicate children's rights to online privacy potentially reshaping public understandings of consent.

The Frequency of Freedom: Bob Marley and the Emancipation of Post-Colonial Mindsets

Boris Williams, USC Columbia

This research poster explores the intersection of music, media ethics, and political mobilization through the eyes of celebrated Jamaican singer-songwriter Bob Marley's life and career, showing how popular music can play a significant role in social change.

10:30 – 11:45 AM CONCURRENT PANELS

Room 145, Arts & Letters Building
Speak Easy Society Organization Roundtable
Prof. Sacay-Bagwell, Camille English, Martyna Chiara Lechna, Jamaya Morris, Shine Kim, Kristin Cave – Lander University
A communication, speech, and debate club empowers students to build confidence, improve public speaking, and develop critical thinking skills. Members practice organizing ideas, presenting arguments, and responding to others effectively. These experiences prepare students for academic success, leadership opportunities, and real-world situations that require clear, confident, and respectful communication skills daily.

Room 144, Arts & Letters Building
Undergraduate Paper Panel
Chair/Respondent John Edwards, Fayetteville Technical Community College

Stifling Echoes and Student Voices: Analyzing Furman University's 1955 Student Newspaper Scandal
Anna Bailey, Furman University
In 1955, several Furman University students went to collect their student newspaper release, only to find university administration destroyed the copies. The edition discussed touchy topics for the university, including desegregation and the Southern Baptist Convention–the university's founder. This paper seeks to understand the destruction through a cluster analysis.

Strengthening Communities Through School Support
Quintero Taylor, USC Sumter
Imagine two students who have completely different futures all because of their zip code, racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic background. Sadly, this is the reality for so many across the range of both educational sectors. Improving educational quality across both public and private sectors requires effort that focuses on tailored instruction for students, current modernized curriculum development, and strong community engagement.

Operated, Ordered, and Given: How Furman Students viewed the Greenville Woman's College
Philip Temple, Furman University
From 1916-1961, students from both Greenville Woman's College (GWC) and Furman University wrote articles for Furman's student newspaper, *The Hornet*. By examining Furman students' rhetoric when speaking about women and GWC, we can unravel Furman's true sentiments about women. This paper will use a cluster analysis to analyze *Hornet* articles and find how Furman felt about GWC through the words they used.

Room 143, Arts & Letters Building
Teaching Panel: Beginning Teachers Find Inspiration and Guidance in Culture
Jacqueline Keisler, Ralph Dinko, Deontré McCray, Nikita Sharma, Tabitha Oyewole
University of South Carolina, Columbia

Doctoral students from various international backgrounds and cultures will share their anxieties, inspiration and hopes for teaching Gen Z and future students as the college student landscape changes and challenges. Similarities from their diverse cultures guide and sustain them.

12 NOON LUNCH – FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY on your own

1:15 – 2:30 PM CONCURRENT PANELS

Room 143, Arts & Letters Building
Revolutionary Networking and Mentorship of Early-Career Mass Communication Professors
Keisa Gunby, Benedict College – Chair; Odera Ezenna, Claflin University; Keisa Gunby, Benedict College; Carmen Landy, Benedict College; Christina Myers, Michigan State University; Denetra Walker, University of Georgia
This panel highlights five early-career Black female professors as they navigate onboarding, mentorship, and workplace diversity while seeking belonging in their first positions as professors. They examine the impact of their experiences of moving from an R2 institution to those with varying levels of focus in teaching and research. The panel discusses their efforts to expand a supportive network fostering collaboration, mentorship, research opportunities, and career guidance across diverse environments.

Room 144, Arts & Letters Building
Great Ideas for Teaching (GIFTs)
Chair: Jason Munsell, University of South Carolina – Aiken

Your Soundtrack of Social Change
Kenneth Campbell, USC Columbia
This project is designed to help students realize that entertainment media, such as popular songs they listen to everyday, can play a significant role in influencing their social consciousness and promoting social change. Students have found the assignment challenging, fun and enlightening.

Crossing Borders, Crossing Frameworks: A Global Business Immersion Activity for Developing Intercultural Communication Competency
Nivia Escobar Salazar, Indiana University
This GIFTS submission presents a pre-departure and in-class activity designed for undergraduate students enrolled in global business immersion courses. Students complete a structured country analysis framework examining Brazil's culture, communication norms, political economy, and business environment. Through guided research, peer discussion, and reflective writing, students develop the intercultural communication competencies necessary for meaningful engagement abroad. Aligned with the conference theme of REVOLUTION(ARIES), the activity encourages students to examine how societies navigate transformation—political, economic, and cultural and how communication shapes these processes across borders.

Evaluating Ethics: Critical thinking exercises to reinforce teaching the Belmont Report
Beth Ann Labadorf, Bob Jones University
This 20-minute activity helps students remember and apply the Belmont Report principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice to research scenarios. Ideally conducted after an introduction to

research ethics, students work in small groups to analyze short case studies and discuss guided reflection questions. Each group evaluates everyday ethical issues, considers additional implications, and shares insights with the class. A brief debrief reinforces key concepts, followed by an individual recall exercise to solidify understanding. The activity promotes critical thinking, connects ethical principles to real-world research practices, and helps students move beyond mere memorization to practical application.

Teaching Critical Media Literacy through Women's Sports: Analyzing Representation and Power
Nivia Escobar Salazar, Indiana University
This teaching activity engages students in critically analyzing media representations of women athletes across traditional and social media platforms. Students compare coverage, evaluate framing strategies, and reflect on how communication shapes perceptions of gender, credibility, and authority. Through guided discussion and applied analysis, students examine how media both reinforces and challenges inequalities in sport and society. Aligned with the theme of revolution(aries), the activity encourages students to think of themselves as critical media consumers and communicators who can recognize and challenge dominant narratives. The activity is designed for implementation in undergraduate business communication and media courses.

Room 145, Arts & Letters Building
Curated Resistance: Artivism as Scholarly Practice
Shakoya Brown, Jasmine M. Corbett, Rhunette Diggs, Tamill Harris
Johnson C. Smith University
What does pedagogy look like when it refuses to be quiet? This panel chronicles the Artivism Fair, an interdisciplinary, student-centered initiative where art, civic literacy, and academic inquiry converge. From sexual violence awareness to democratic engagement, presenters explore how creative space becomes transformative classroom.

2:45 – 4:00 PM Concurrent Panels

Room 145, Arts & Letters Building
Spilling the "T": Revolutionary Communication Across Contexts
Kim Cuny, UNC Greensboro; Camille Lewis, Furman University; Jason Peterson, USC Beaufort; Jayne L. Violette, USC Beaufort; Larry Webster, USC Beaufort
Inspired by the revolutionaries of the December 3, 1773 Charleston Tea Party, this panel will also spill the "T" on events and activities from past and present representing vibrant, defiant communication resulting in significant societal advancement. Contexts for discussion include revolution through the arts, women's speech, disruptive media, and adventurous pedagogy. Both "T" and tea (from the historic Charleston Tea Garden) will be served with aplomb…and *no* apologies.

Room 144, Arts & Letters Building
Media and Revolution(aries) Around the World
Deontre' McCray, Moderator; Ralph Dinko, Maryam Goli, Tabitha Oyewole, Nikita Sharma
USC Columbia
Consistent with the spirit of the conference theme – "Revolution(aries)," this panel presents the role of media in relatively recent revolutionary social and political activities in different parts of the world -- India, Ghana, Nigeria, and Iran. Each presenter is a native of the country where the revolutionary activity he/she will talk about is taking place.

Room 143, Arts & Letters Building
Revolutionaries of the Introductory Course: Applying Critical Communication Pedagogy to our Classrooms in 2026
Jessica D. Mcall, Chair; Jessica D. McCall, Jenny Southard, Jana Shaw, Mike Ketner, Kathryn Gregory – UNC Greensboro
The introductory course is often a space that encourages democratic voice and empowerment through ethical, dialogic, and empathetic communication. We invite you to become an introductory course revolutionary as we apply a critical pedagogy lens to analyze instructor identity, pedagogical choices, and community development.

4:15 PM Reception
Pavilion

5 PM Keynote Speaker - Penry Gustafson
"Courage in Communication"
Lecture Hall, Arts & Letters Building



"Sister Senator" Penry Gustafson, 56, has enjoyed leading community through business, church, and charitable organizations, ultimately serving as SC State Senator 2020-2024. Dissatisfied with state representation and tired of toxic politics, she provided a fresh voice and a new choice when she first ran for the SC house in 2018. In 2020 she unseated an established incumbent who had run for governor twice, flipping the seat from blue to red for the first time in over a hundred years. After taking a stand against a proposed total abortion ban, Sen. Gustafson received the JFK Profile in Courage Award in 2023, and all the Senate Republican women lost their seats in the 2024 Republican Primary. Sen. Gustafson uses her voice to make a joyful noise in church, in community theatre, and on the national political stage. She can be found testifying in legislative committee meetings, advocating for good legislation, and creating opportunities for local civics education. Her support for women in leadership was sparked by her own experience, and she appreciates every invitation to speak. She and her husband Todd have three grown children and live in Camden, SC with their mini goldendoodle, Jack.

Dinner on your own

Saturday, October 10

8 AM Registration
Room 134, Arts & Letters Building

9:00 – 10:15 AM Concurrent Panels

Room 143, Arts & Letters Building
Higher Education Faculty and Students as Co-Learners: Evolving Developmental Interactions Toward Concerned Citizenship
Sandra Rogers, Moderator – North Carolina Central University; Rhunette Diggs, Ty Ammons, Jaslynn Vorachith, Jared Davis, Sh'mya Scott – Johnson C. Smith University
Grounded in an Evolving Developmental Interaction (EDI) perspective, this presentation examines teaching toward concerned citizenship at an HBCU. Through dialogue, reflection, and active engagement, faculty and students explore identity, dignity, and responsibility while developing communicative practices that encourage thoughtful participation, self-awareness, and contributions toward creating a more just and caring world.

Room 144, Arts & Letters Building
Undergraduate papers
Chair/Respondent: Deborah Breede, Coastal Carolina University

Reassuring Inequality: Rhetoric, Protection, and the Limits of Equality in the Equal Rights Amendment Debate
Mary Ho, Furman University
This paper argues that the opposition between equality and protection in Equal Rights Amendment debates is not a fixed legal reality but a constructed rhetorical framework. By analyzing texts from pro- and anti-ERA advocates, the paper shows how protection was used to naturalize women's vulnerability, silence dissent, and restrict equality — and how feminist voices challenged and transformed that framework.

Paternalism, Scare Tactics, and the Political Gold of Misogyny: A Rhetorical Analysis of Phyllis Schlafly's Populist Rhetoric
Audrey Enghauser, Furman University
This paper explores how conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly contributed to a shift within the Republican Party toward more traditional values in the 1960s-80s. It analyzes the populist qualities of her rhetoric, and how they helped her halt the progress of the Equal Rights Amendment and secure Barry Goldwater's GOP nomination.

Mental Health Care for You and Others
Caitlin Dail, USC Sumter
Nearly 1 in 5 adults live with a mental health condition which is roughly 23% of the population, according to a study by CDC and SAMHSA. Our mental health is important as it shapes how we think, feel, and handle things that come our way, yet it's often overlooked by our physical health and misunderstood.

We need to do all we can to support ourselves and each other to overcome the difficulties and trials it brings.

The Tale of Trophies and Tools
Cathryn Beeson, Furman University
Greenville Woman's College (GWC) was a private Baptist institution made up of white, female students in Greenville, South Carolina. In 1906, GWC created a literary magazine entitled *The Isaqueena*, named after the legend of a Choctaw slave, who warned her lover of an attack planned against his community. This paper will dissect how using an Indigenous woman for the cover and inspiration of their magazine, enabled GWC to reinforce cultural appropriation, power imbalances, and the concept of an 'ideal woman.'

10:30 AM – 12 NOON FACULTY AND GRADUATE PAPERS
SCIENCE BUILDING, ROOM 118

Chair/Respondent: Camille K. Lewis, Furman University

Civilizing Mission or Political Suppression? The Rhetoric of Order in the Aba Women's War
Bolanle Fasaanu, University of Georgia and Olurotimi Israel Agbeja, Kings University
This essay examines British colonial rhetoric surrounding the 1929 Ogu Umunwanyi (Aba Women's War), arguing, the label "riot" was an act of political suppression, not neutral description. Using ideological critique and Foucauldian analysis, it shows how colonial naming erased Igbo women's political subjectivity while exposing the Britain's false civilizing mission.

Sounding Resistance: Postcolonial Memory and Diasporic Identity in Bad Bunny's *Debi Tirar Más Fotos*
Mikey Rodgers, USC Columbia
This paper reads Bad Bunny's *Debí Tirar Más Fotos* (2025) as a postcolonial counter-archive. Three anchor tracks—LA MuDANZA, NUEVAYoL, and CAFé CON RON—mobilize salsa dura, sampled Nuyorican salsa, and plena among other sonic conventions to recover suppressed political memory, stage diasporic dual location, and foreground working-class Puerto Rican musical tradition.

Commenting on Transformation: Social Comparison and User Discourse in Facebook Reels Weight-Loss Videos
Kimberly Kristufek, Wingate University
This study examines how users respond to weight-loss transformation videos on Facebook Reels. A qualitative content analysis of 800 comments across 52 videos reveals patterns of social comparison, motivational discourse, and metrics-based evaluation. Findings suggest comment sections function as interactive spaces where viewers interpret transformation narratives and evaluate their own health progress.

Play-by-Play: Branding Process Insights from a Content Analysis of Sports-Related Logo News Releases
Robert A. Wertz, USC Columbia

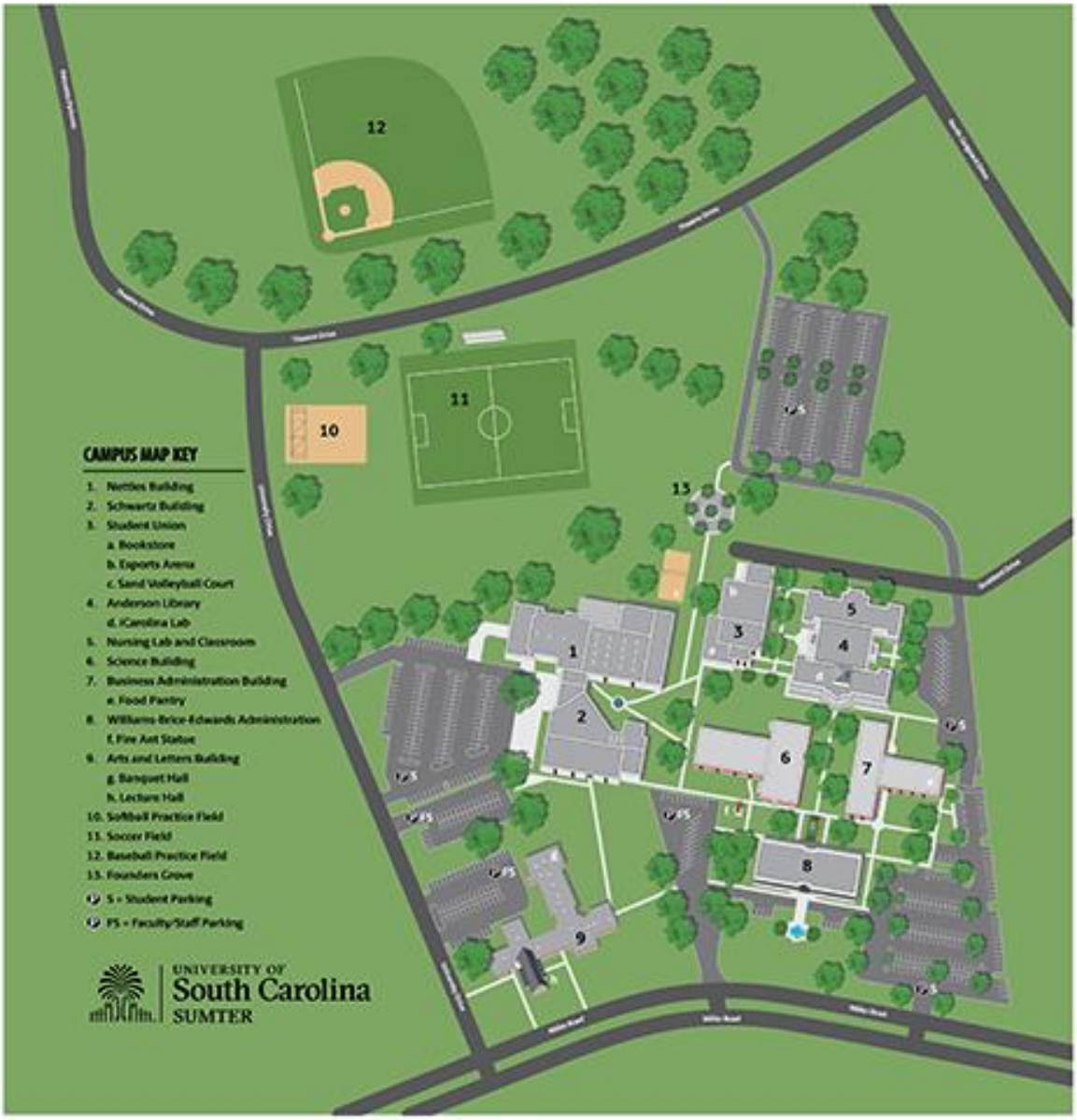
The rebranding process for sports teams is often done in secret, keeping the new identity hidden until the team is prepared to unveil it. This study conducts a content analysis of 80 sport logo news releases to better understand the process of building a new visual identity in sports.

Plain Folk as Revolutionaries: Average Joes, Worker Bees, and Unsung Heroes

Deborah Cunningham Breede, Coastal Carolina University

This autoethnographic rhetorical ethnography uses interviews, observation/participation, and document analysis to suggest that the most revolutionary among us are regular human beings grappling with often insurmountable odds, yet they keep speaking, working, protesting, singing, dancing, drawing, and yes, even presenting at academic conferences. They make hard choices every day demonstrating virtues such as faith, hope, love, justice, patience, kindness, and courage. Applying theoretical perspectives from bell hooks, Voltaire, and others, the author presents case studies from interviews conducted with a diverse range of human beings who continue the revolutionary traditions of freedom, equity, and tolerance found within virtuous giving of self.

12:15 – 1:30 PM Lunch and Business Meeting
Room 118, Science Building



Local Happenings and Places

Sumter Oktoberfest October 10
https://sumteroktoberfest.com/

Porches of Sumter
https://www.porchesofsumter.com/

Palmetto Tennis Center

https://www.sumtersc.gov/tennis

Shot Pouch Greenway (nature trail)
https://www.sumtersc.gov/tourism/things-do/parks-trails/prisma-health-shot-pouch-greenway

Swan Lake Iris Gardens (no animals or bikes allowed)
https://www.sumtersc.gov/tourism/things-do/parks-trails/swan-lake-iris-gardens

Temple Sinai Jewish History Center
https://www.templesinaisumter.org/about-temple-sinai