

PENNSYLVANIA
COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION

85th
Conference

September 26-27, 2025

Saint Francis University

THANK YOU FOR COMING!

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Conference

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Saint Francis University



Welcome to the PCA 2025 Annual Conference

On behalf of the planning committee, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2025 Pennsylvania Communication Association Conference, hosted this year on the beautiful campus of Saint Francis University in Loretto, PA.

As Vice President and planner for this year's conference, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for joining us for this important academic gathering.

Your presence reflects a shared commitment to advancing the field of communication through thoughtful scholarship, collaboration, and community.

Saint Francis University offers a scenic and inspiring backdrop for our time together, and I hope you find both the environment and the programming enriching. Whether you are presenting research, engaging in meaningful dialogue, or reconnecting with colleagues and friends, may this conference spark new ideas and strengthen the bonds that make our association so vibrant.

Thank you again for being part of this year's conference. We are truly glad you're here.

Warm regards,
Kim Flanders

Vice President & 2025 Conference Planner
Pennsylvania Communication Association

About the Pennsylvania Communication Association

The Pennsylvania Communication Association, originally called the Speech Communication Association of Pennsylvania, was founded in 1939 to promote teaching, research, service, and development of all areas of human communication. John Henry Frizzell of Pennsylvania State University was the first president. The state journal, the Pennsylvania Communication Annual, is now in its 85th year. We have recognized important Pennsylvanians such as Fred Rogers (Mr. Rogers), Governor William Scranton, Governor Edward G. Rendell, Lieutenant Governor Mark Schweiker, Dr. Sam Hazo (Poet Laureate of Pennsylvania), and others as outstanding speakers of the year. The association recognizes its own members for their contributions to the field, as well as students and the many educational institutions in the state of Pennsylvania and beyond for their efforts in communication



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4:30–5:45PM

Schwab 202

Concurrent Session: The Poetics of Rhetoric: Art Study as Persuasion Primer

Session 7.3

Sponsored by Communication Education Interest Council

Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University;

Samuel Edogbanya, Duquesne University;

Sarah Deiuliis, Duquesne University,

Joel Ward, Geneva College

Aristotle defines rhetoric as a faculty of observation. However, often in contemporary rhetorical education emphasis begins with grammar and logic rather than considering a student's observational faculties which are as Aristotle proposes, rhetorical. This panel discusses the potential implications of encouraging students to study the arts as a primer for a rhetorical education. As Ivan Illich suggests, one of the best ways to understand the nature of persuasion is to guard one's senses so that they retain their sensitivity when presented with bids for capturing attention. By studying art in the communication classroom, we can better equip students to develop their observational faculties which is in turn, the art of rhetoric. Such observation is not only visual but also includes the other senses. This panel proposes art study not just in the visual arts but also the way that art as a practice develops a student's faculties of observation in every sensory situation. Papers will also demonstrate how pedagogically such aesthetic conditions include a critical function for understanding the formal qualities of art in developing the scholastic bias of a given area of study.

6:00–7:30PM

JFK Lounge

PCA Awards Ceremony, Banquet, and Keynote Address

Sponsored by: Shields School of Business, Saint Francis University

Keynote Speaker: Nicholas Ruffner, Sheetz Public Affairs Manager

7:30–8:00PM

Vista Room- Schwab 302

Executive Council Meeting

2025 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, September 26, 2025

12:00–6:00PM

Registration - Schwab Hall 1st Floor Foyer

Refreshments & Work Area- Vista Room-Schwab 302

You're welcome to use the space to study, review your presentation, relax, or socialize. Snacks will be provided, so feel free to chat and connect with others while you're there!

12:30–1:30PM

Executive Council Meeting - Schwab 214

1:45–2:45PM

Schwab 106

Salon Session: The Science of Authentic Influence: Mastering Body Language and Communication

Shelly O'Donovan, CEO, Authentic Influence Group

**Thank you to the
Saint Francis University
Chapter of AMA for
volunteering their time to
make this event a success!**

AM>
AMERICAN MARKETING
ASSOCIATION

3:00–4:15PM

Schwab 106

Concurrent Session: The Power of Strategic Intent

Session 1.1

Sponsored By Strategic Communication/IMC Interest Group

Chair: Laurie Lawrence, Florida State University

*Respondent: Darlene Natale, University of North Carolina at
Pembroke*

Presenting:

- The Evolution of Teaching Social Media Strategies and its Place
in a Business School Curriculum
Kelly Rhodes, Saint Francis University
- Harmonizing Voices: The Strategic Integration of
Communication Channels for Organizational Excellence
Tricia Giannone McFadden, Saint Francis University

3:00–4:15PM

Schwab 102

Concurrent Session: Top Papers in the Undergraduate Papers

Session 1.2

Sponsored by Undergraduate Writing Competition - Winners

Chair: Maryl McGinley, University of Pittsburgh - Johnstown

Respondent: Paul Lucas, University of Pittsburgh – Johnstown

Presenting:

- Bakhtin Walks into a Bar: The Author and Hero Relationship of
Billy Joel's "Piano Man"
Audrey Husted, Geneva College
- "You Can Be Anything": Highlighting Barbie's Hyperfemininity
and Hypermasculinity In The Animated Films
*Sanjana Vinjamuri, Immaculata University; Indiana Gallant,
Immaculata University*
- The Rhetorical Arrow of Storytelling in The Hunger Games
Rebecca Ribblett, University of Pittsburgh

4:30 – 5:45PM

Schwab 102

**Concurrent Session: Communication Perspectives in Media
Technology**

Session 7.2

Sponsored by Media, Society, and Technology Interest Council

Chair and Respondent: Kris Lowrey, Alvernia University

Presenting:

- Censorship, Polarization and the Demise of Satire
Darlene W. Natale, University of North Carolina Pembroke
- Navigating the Digital Landscape: Understanding Social Media's
Impact
Tiffany Bohner, Penn State Schuylkill
- Students and the Rise of AI: Perceptions, Practices, and Policy in
Higher Education
*Patty Wharton-Michael, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown;
Mark DiMauro, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown*

3:00–4:00PM

Meet at Schwab 1st Floor Foyer (Bring Walking Shoes!)

Walking Tour of Schwab Estates

Father Jason Wooleyhan, Saint Francis University

4:30 – 5:45PM

Schwab 106

Concurrent Session: Strategy and Communication: Undergraduate Student Research

Session 7.1

Sponsored by Communication Honor Society Undergraduate

Student Papers Interest Council

Chair: Sheryl Goodman

Respondent: Laurie Lawrence

Presenting:

- Analysis of Difficult Discussions: Strategies that Encourage and Discourage Dialogue

Kylie Ruggiero, Ursinus College

- Track and Field: An Ethnographic Study of Gender Dynamics

Lily Nagy, Ursinus College

- Preventing Drunk Driving Among Young Adults: Innovative Campaign Strategies for Safer Roads

Megan Marlin, Saint Francis University;

Kathryn Tanis, Saint Francis University;

Julia Givens, Saint Francis University

3:00–4:15PM

Schwab 202

Concurrent Session:

Session 1.3

Sponsored By Applied Communication Interest Council

Is DEI Dead?: Implications, Challenges, and Opportunities

Chair: Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University

Panelists: Valerie Lynn Schrader, Penn State Schuylkill; Fadoua

Loudiy, Slippery Rock University; Tatyana Dumova, Point Park

University

Political climate shifts have led to restriction or elimination of DEI programs in government, education, and businesses. There is a widespread claim in the media that DEI is “dead.” However, despite political backlash and corporate rollbacks, most of Americans continue to express support for the values of diversity (66%), equity (63%), and inclusion (60%). The commitment to fostering inclusive learning environments also remains strong. Faculty are adapting by integrating broader concepts such as socioeconomic diversity, asset-based teaching, holistic pedagogy, accessibility, and inclusive instructional methods. This panel will explore how instructors are responding to these changes by sharing practical strategies and experiences for sustaining the core values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the communication classroom. Participants will offer insights into the implications of the current DEI rhetorical interruption, the challenges of transition, and opportunities for supporting all students in today’s complex socio-political climate.

4:30–5:45PM

Schwab 106

Concurrent Session: Debate Coaches Roundtable: Tracking the Changing World of Debate and Forensics

Session 2.1

Chair and Respondent: Tim Michaels, Penn State University

Panelists: Sarah M. Deluliis, Duquesne University; Courtney Wright, Penn State University; Heather Frederick, Slippery Rock University; Alvin J. Primack, University of Pittsburgh; Molly Martin, University of Pittsburgh; Arie Likhtman, University of Pittsburgh

Competitive debate and forensics at the collegiate level has a long history, and despite its entrenchment in tradition, the activity is also facing a time of transformation. Some change has been the deliberate response to changes in pedagogical philosophy, such as the push for restoring the civic roots of debate, while many other changes have been thrust upon the community, emanating from budget cuts across the higher education to the adaptations to emergent technologies for competitions. Tracking such wide-ranging and fast-paced changes, however, is a necessary but challenging task for current debate educators and presents an overwhelming barrier for those interested in first exploring debate as a classroom activity or co-curricular organization. The divergent trajectories of these issues warrants discussion for those that represent debate's past, present, and future.

To facilitate a conversation regarding the transformations within debate—and in response to this year's conference theme—we propose a roundtable session probing questions of the changes to tournament practices, pedagogical approaches, budgetary concerns, and technological logistics. This roundtable will consist of both faculty and graduate students who currently serve or previously served as coaches and directors of debate and forensics programs, representing programs from across the commonwealth and from a multitude of different types of debate circuits. Rather than presenting individual papers, the participants will draw on debate's tradition of deliberative approaches to inquiry, guided by a series of collaboratively-sourced questions to further a discussion that will offer insights to current debate scholars and those interested in the pedagogical value of debate practices as well.

3:00 – 4:30PM

Vista Room- Schwab 302

Boxcars of Thought: Rolling Research Forward

PCA Poster Session and Graduate Fair:

- **Kenneth Burke, Identification, and the Case of Campus Closures**

Haley Seedor, Penn State Schuylkill

- **Burkean Identification and 'The Odyssey'**

Jenalise Muir, Penn State Schuylkill

- **Parenting "For Real Life": Teachable Moments and Burkean Identification for Adult Viewers of the Television Program Bluey**

Janelle L.H. Gruber, Penn State Schuylkill

- **"This is Bigger Than the Music:" Kendrick Lamar, Hegemony, and the 2025 Superbowl Halftime Show**

Lily Kreiser, Penn State Schuylkill

- **Sound & Screen: Student Voices Through Podcasts & Trailers**

Karen C. Theveny, Penn State Brandywine

- **Promising Young Woman: An Exploration of Hyperfemininity and Power**

Indiana Gallant, Immaculata University

- **"You're On Your Own Kid": The Communication Impact of Taylor Swift's Evolving Lyrics**

Kacey M Harper, Penn State Schuylkill

- **Will the real Slim Shady please stand up?: A Rhetorical Analysis of facework in 8 Mile**

Madisyn Billingsley, Penn State Schuylkill

- **Coverage of News Stories by Mainstream and Non-Traditional News Organizations and Journalists on TikTok**

Kirsten Johnson, Elizabethtown College;

Madilyn Fratis, Elizabethtown College

- **Google Notebook LM and the Transformation of Undergraduate Research Practices**

Joe Downing, Penn State York

- **Laser Engraving Consumer Preferences: A Quantitative Study**

Elijah Villarrial, Saint Francis University;

Grayden Lewis, Saint Francis University;

Miles Webb, Saint Francis University

1:30–2:45PM

Schwab 102

Concurrent Session: Intercultural Communication Perspectives

Session 5.2

Sponsored by Intercultural Communication Interest Council

Chair and Respondent: Natalya Vodopyanova, Penn State Wilkes-Barre

Presenting:

- The African American Jeremiad and the Social Gospel: A Reflection on the Foundational Thought of Mordecai Johnson

Diana L. Nogay, Old Dominion University

- Cultural Intelligence, Cultural Sensitivity, and Cultural Competence in a Social Media World

Richard L. Talbert, Heidelberg University

- Same Country, Different Signals: Nonverbal Communication in Urban Traffic

Natalya Vodopyanova, Penn State Wilkes-Barre

1:30–2:45PM

Schwab 202

Concurrent Session:

Session 5.3

Sponsored by Health Communication Interest Council

Chair and Respondent: Özüm Üçok-Sayrak, Duquesne University

Presenting:

- Health and Wellness Advocacy: Consequences of Health Disparities on Impoverished Populations, Underserved Communities, and Marginalized Groups

Victor Grigsby, Duquesne University

- “The Grace to Welcome Those who Suffer”: The Art of Care in Medical Communication.

Özüm Üçok-Sayrak, Duquesne University;

Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University

- Interpersonal Encouragement as a Propelling Force in Healthy Behaviors: A Case Study.

Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University;

Sandra L. Stonge, Independent Scholar;

Narice May, Independent Scholar

4:30–5:45PM

Schwab 102

Concurrent Session: Assignment Design in the Age of AI

Session 2.2

Sponsored by Communication Education Panel

Chair: Maryl McGinley, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown

Respondent: Joel Ward, Geneva College

Panelists: Maryl McGinley, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown; Paul Lucas, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown; Sheryl Goodman, Ursinus College; Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne; Jill Burk, Penn State Berks

This panel offers a pedagogical entrance into conversations about assignment design with an eye toward mitigating AI use. The panelists posit: as AI use increases, so does the significance of the Humanities classroom. Current research echoes this sentiment, noting that dependence on AI can create deficiencies for college students. A recently published piece alerts us to the trend of over-reliance, warning, “This appears as a major issue considering the aim of higher education is to enhance cognitive abilities, which could be compromised by excessive dependency on technological tools including the AI-based tools” (Abdajaleel et. al., 2024). The following presentations will detail ways in which panelists are creating assignments to assist students in understanding the implications of AI use and encourage critical thinking, conversation, and connection.

4:30–5:45PM

Schwab 202

Concurrent Session:

Session 2.3

Graduate Writing Competition Top Papers

Chair and Respondent: Richard Talbert, Heidelberg University

Presenting:

- Breaking the Silence: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Bell Let’s Talk Campaign

Tiffany Bohner, Penn State Schuylkill

- Allegoria: Rhetoric and Revelation in St. Augustine

Keili Darius Branche, Duquesne University

- When a Bite is More Than a Mouthful: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Apple Logo

Samuel Edogbanya, Duquesne University



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Walking the Humanities into the Marketplace *The Ethical Difference*

1:30–2:45PM

Schwab 106

Concurrent Session: Pedagogy for the Turbulent Times: Strategies, Practices, and Ideas

Session 5.1

Co-Sponsored by Communication Education & Past Presidents Interest Council

Chair: Sheryl Goodman, Ursinus College

Participants: Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University; Valerie Lynn Schrader, Penn State Schuylkill; Sheryl Goodman, Ursinus College; Kimberly Flanders, Saint Francis University; Cem Zeytinoglu, East Stroudsburg University; Paul A. Lucas, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown; Tatyana Dumova, Point Park University

On the eve of America's Sestercentennial, there is a growing societal feeling that the nation entered into complex, volatile, and tumultuous times. Among the signs are extreme political polarization, a sense of economic instability, financial turbulence, distrust of the mainstream media, and a distant threat of domestic chaos. As Americans grapple with economic, social, political, and mental health-related stressors, college educators continue their mission of preparing the next generation to enter the workforce and contribute to society as citizens. Even most challenging turbulence creates an opportunity for growth through developing resilience. This panel will facilitate a constructive conversation about how to embrace complexity by sharing experiences and ideas. In short, how do we prepare students for a future that feels more uncertain than ever?

6:00–8:00PM

JFK Lounge

Campfire on the Caboose: A Song Circle Supper

Sponsored by The Executive Ed.D. Program in Organizational Leadership and Innovation

Join us for a relaxed evening of dinner and conversation, followed by a renewed PCA tradition: the song circle. It's a chance to unwind, connect with colleagues, and share in the joy of music and community. Come for the food, stay for the harmony.

Introduction: Kim Flanders, Saint Francis University

Welcome: Randy L. Frye, Dean, Shields School of Business and Professor of Business, Saint Francis University

Opening Remarks: Tricia Giannone McFadden, Director, Executive Doctor of Education Program

Dinner Prayer: Father Jason Wooleyhan

Song Circle Co-chairs: Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University; Valerie Lynn Schrader, Penn State Schuylkill; Kim Flanders, Saint Francis University

Saturday, September 27, 2025

8:00 AM – 4:00PM

Registration - Schwab Hall 1st Floor Foyer

8:00 – 9:00 AM

Sponsored by: McGraw Hill Education

Breakfast - Vista Room: Schwab 302

Past Presidents Breakfast - Schwab 312

9:00–10:15 AM

Schwab 102

Concurrent Session: From Theory to Practice; Communication

Assessment, Integration, and Resolution

Session 3.1

Sponsored by Communication Education Interest Council

*Chair and Respondent: Paul Lucas, University of Pittsburgh
Johnstown*

Presenting:

- One Size Does NOT Fit All: Integrating Employee Preferences
into Workplace Bereavement Leave and Communications
Policies

Kent Tonkin, Saint Francis University

- Crisis, Trust, and Transformation: A Case Study of the Red Cross
Society of China

Ying Zhao, Duquesne University

- Story “Time”: Resolution, The Endless, and Character
Accessibility

*Paul Lucas, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown;
Rebecca Ribblett, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown*

10:30–11:45 AM

Schwab 202

Concurrent Session: Ctrl+Alt+Reimagine: Rebooting the University for a Digital Age
Session 4.3

Sponsored by Communication Education Interest Council

*Panelists: Caroline Fitzpatrick, Alvernia University; Ryan Lange, Alvernia
University; Kris Lowrey, Alvernia University; Jodi Radosh, Alvernia University*

This panel examines how colleges and universities can respond to rapid technological and demographic change through intentional institutional adaptation. Rebooting a university for the digital age isn’t just about adopting tools, but reimagining power, participation, and voice in learning. As artificial intelligence (AI) transforms scholarly practices and challenges long-held notions of authorship and ownership, educators must rethink pedagogy and policy. Simultaneously, digital media reshape how students perceive identity and authority in the classroom, requiring new approaches to teaching perspective and critical engagement. Against the backdrop of the demographic cliff, an exploration of how gray decision intelligence (gray DI) can help institutions reconceptualize enrollment strategies and resource management. Furthermore, service learning offers a concrete model for reimagining the role of universities — not as ivory towers, but as networked hubs of civic innovation and reciprocal partnerships. Together, these conversations offer a forward-looking vision of how technology can drive not just operational efficiency but meaningful transformation in higher education.

Each panelist will share expertise and experiences related to intellectual property and AI, gray decision intelligence, media representation and identity, and community engagement before responding to comments and posing questions for audience interaction. Physical and/or digital handouts of resources will be provided.

10:30–11:45 AM

Schwab 102

Concurrent Session: Perspectives on Communication

Session 4.2

Sponsored by Communication Ethics Interest Council

Chair: Richard Talbert, Heidelberg University

Presenting:

- A Communication Ethics Literacy Perspective on Public Speaking
Janie Harden Fritz, Duquesne University;
Michael R. Kearney, Dordt University
- The Duquesne School of Communication Ethics: Towards an Inside View
Chr. Michael Graham, Jr., Duquesne University
- Applying McLuhan's "Medium Is the Message" to Ethics in the Digital Age
Yaroub Al Obaidi, Duquesne University
- Modern Marketing and the Crisis of Consumer Loss of Agency & Critical Thought
Andrea DiBernardo, Duquesne University

9:00–10:15 AM

Schwab 106

Concurrent Session: Communicating Crisis in Higher Education

Session 3.2

Sponsored by Applied Communication Interest Council

Chair: Kim Flanders, Saint Francis University

Panelists: Kim Flanders, Saint Francis University; Valerie Lynn Schrader, Penn State Schuylkill; Laurie Lawrence, Florida State University; Janelle Gruber, Penn State Schuylkill; Natalya Vodopyanova, Penn State Wilkes-Barre

This panel examines how universities communicate when big, often difficult changes happen. Whether it is a long-anticipated shift or a crisis, institutions must find ways to communicate clearly, responsibly, and with empathy. Panelists will examine four varied cases: St. Francis University's transition from Division I to Division III athletics, Penn State's announcement of multiple campus closures, Florida State University's response to a campus shooting, and PASSHE's merging of six universities into two. Drawing on firsthand research, media analysis, and institutional messaging, the discussion will consider the balance between strategic communication and ethical responsibility. The panel will also reflect on how the words universities choose, and when and how they use them, can build trust, cause confusion, or even deepen harm. These case studies offer a chance to think about how communication is not just a response to change, but a powerful tool that can shape how a community understands and moves through it.

9:00–10:15 AM

Schwab 202

Concurrent Session: Rhetoric in Transition

Session 3.3

Sponsored by Philosophies of Communication and Rhetoric and Public Address Interest Councils

Chair and Respondent: Richard Talbert, Heidelberg University

Presenting:

- From Rhetoric to Praxis: Aristotelian Foundations and the Philosophical Evolution of Communication as a Discipline

Tricia Giannone McFadden, Saint Francis University

- Navigating Rhetoric and Culture in Kashmir: A Burkean Analysis of Agha Shahid Ali Poetry.

Rayna Batool, Ohio University

- Toward a Portrait of Paine the Persuader: An Introduction to the Rhetoric of *The Age of Reason*

David Hoffman, Baruch College

- The Enola Gay: An Ideological Rhetoric Criticism

Robert Kinitz, East Stroudsburg University

10:30–11:45 AM

Schwab 106

Pedagogical Strategies to Address Challenging Communication Environment: Digital

Introspection, Confronting Different Cultural Viewpoints, and Using Generative AI

Session 4.1

Sponsored by Communication Education Interest Council

Chair: Laurie Lawrence, Florida State University

Respondent: Tatyana Dumova, Point Park University

Presenting:

- Logging Off to Look Closer: Teaching Digital Detox to Confront Surveillance and Social Media Overuse

Patty Wharton-Michael, University of Pittsburgh Johnstown

- From Rhetoric to Robots: Integrating Generative AI into the Communication Classroom Without Losing the Human Touch

Laurie Lawrence, Florida State University

- Adopting Cultures to Navigate Communication Among Cultures: A Semester-Long Assignment

Rayna Batool, Ohio University

- Teresa de Ávila and Henri Nouwen: Mystical Pedagogy and Vulnerability in Teaching Digital Selfhood

Andri Kosasih, Duquesne University

Welcome PCA Attendees!

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