

**Association of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
2018 Annual Conference Call for Proposals
October 11-12 in Austin, Texas**

Sponsored by the [Association for Rhetoric and Writing Studies](#), this conference will provide a space for scholarship, conversation, and collaboration related to all facets of undergraduate programs in rhetoric and writing studies (RWS). As such, we invite proposals on any issue related to RWS undergraduate programs, whether existing, planned, or aspirational. Further, we invite undergraduate and graduate students to submit proposals on any question or issue related to rhetoric and writing studies. We intend the CFP below to cast a broad, ecumenical orientation to the discipline and its current and future pragmatic possibilities.

**Inventing Pathways and Possibilities:
Enacting the Promise of Rhetoric and Writing Studies Undergraduate Programs**

As troubling as these times are, this is also an especially invigorating moment for the discipline as rhetoric and writing studies is in many ways uniquely positioned to take up precarity, indeterminacy, and complexity—characteristics especially palpable in our times (Dingo & Strickland, 2012). After all, this is our wheelhouse. This is what we do. **We invent pathways and possibilities** (Atwill, 2010; Dryer, 2008). **We transform words and materials and technologies** (Baca, 2008; Boyle, 2016; Cushman, 2006; Gilyard, 2011; Gonzales, 2018; Gries, 2015; Martínez, 2015; Potts, 2013). **We invent ideas and institutions** (Grabill, Porter, Blythe & Miles, 2003; Lauer, 2003; Porter, Sullivan, Blythe, Grabill & Miles, 2000; Long, forthcoming). **We play and perform and problem-solve** (Blythe, Grabill & Riley 2008; Flower, 2008; Higgins and Brush, 2006; Higgins, Long, and Flower, 2006; Pough, Richardson, Raimist & Durham 2007; Simmons, 2007). **We salvage and scrap, mix and re-mix** (Banks, 2006; Gries, 2015; Medina, 2015; Palmeri, 2012). **And all with no guarantees** as we remain attuned to “what is” and “what could be” in real time as they dynamically unfold (Branch, 2007; Clifton, 2013). This dynamic unfolding points to a key promise of rhetoric and writing: that the means matter as much as the ends, that how we will be together matters as much as what we aim to bring about (Crick, 2010; Danisch, 2007).

We invite you to think with us about the rough ground of inquiry and invention in your undergraduate programs, whether they are existing, planned, or aspirational. What do precarity, indeterminacy, and complexity look like and how do you navigate them down on the ground where you are as you imagine, plan, sustain, re-vamp, and assess RWS undergraduate programs?

Although we imagine lots of directions you might take up, we offer the following both as possibilities and as points of departure:

Complexity and Difference

- How do theories of knowledge work frame and take up complexity in your program?
- What does your program make of rhetorical traditions and inheritances? Of comparative rhetorics? Of contemporary rhetorical theories?
- How does your program cultivate an expansive critical humanities and/or posthumanities?
- How does your programmatic decision-making navigate these complexities?

- In what ways do undergraduates encounter complexities of knowledge building in your undergraduate curriculum?
- How do you engage complexities in the classroom in light of institutional discourses or constraints?
- Where does your program aim to reduce complexity, and toward what end?

Precarity of Institutional Discourses and Constraints

- What prevailing institutional discourses inform curricular design, co-curricular activities, and programmatic infrastructure?
- What institutional discourses or practices limit rhetorical possibilities with students?
- How does decision-making about how to navigate institutional discourses play out at your institution?
- How does your program approach market logics? What other logics are valued in your program?
- In what ways are tensions across different logics and different stakeholders taken up? Under what conditions do they become sites of inquiry and invention?
- How does your institution's mission and/or branding impact your program's vision?
- How is your program situated in your institution, and how does that impact what is possible with students?
- In what ways are the complexities of your program, your institution, or your local communities sites of inquiry and invention with students?

Rhetoric as Productive Arts

- In what ways do undergraduate projects take up the indeterminacy of rhetoric?
- How does your program help students experience rhetoric as a productive art in, across, and beyond the curriculum?
- In what ways does your program support undergraduates in situated, timely, provocative innovations?
- How does your program support cultivating strategic arguments or engaging in episodic, relational argumentation across deep differences?
- How does your curricula theorize and embody the potentiality of difference?
- How are undergraduates involved in world-making across deep differences?
- How does your program support the meta-disciplinary work and boundary negotiation necessary for transdisciplinary knowledge-building?
- How does your program help students to translate technical information and specialized knowledges in complex environments?

Key Promises of Rhetoric and Writing Studies Undergraduate Programs

- How does your program frame what rhetoric and writing are good for?
- How do key promises of rhetoric and writing studies show up in your program's vision, curriculum, or assessments?
- Within your frame of reference, what student work or experiences most point to key promises of rhetoric and writing studies programs?
- How does your program frame the promise of rhetoric and writing for public life? For students' cultural sustenance? For re-making institutions and professions?
- How do your students articulate the promise of rhetoric and writing studies—either as something they've experienced or something they hope is possible?

PROPOSALS

The conference welcomes proposals for **individual presentations** as well as **proposals for panels, roundtables, and posters**. **Presenters are limited to two (2) submissions. Proposals will be accepted until June 30, 2018.**

Individual Proposals: If you submit individually, you will be placed on a 3- or 4-person panel by the Conference Planning Committee. Individual proposals are limited to 300 words. [Submit a proposal for an individual presentation](#)

Panel Proposals: Conference panel sessions will be concurrent, lasting 90 minutes per session. Individual proposals will be grouped into conference sessions by topic. Presenters may propose panels of 3 to 4 presenters and/or poster presentations. [Submit a panel proposal](#)

Roundtable Proposals: Roundtable sessions will be concurrent, lasting 90 minutes per session. Presenters may propose roundtables of 5 to 7 presenters/facilitators. [Submit a roundtable proposal](#)

Poster Proposals: Posters will be featured throughout the conference. We will also hold one session on Thursday and one on Friday for poster presenters to further discuss their work with interested colleagues. **Faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students are all encouraged to submit poster proposals.** [Submit a poster proposal](#)

We are very interested in **poster proposals** that take up either of these purposes:

1) to showcase, theorize, and commend undergraduate research, rhetoric, and writing. We especially encourage undergraduate students to participate and share their work with us.

2) to depict, theorize, historicize, narrate, dramatize, interrogate, or commend programmatic designs and decision-making regarding curriculum and/or infrastructure related to undergraduate programs.

If you have questions, [check out the ARWS website](#), or email us at rhetwriting@gmail.com or jlclifton@utep.edu

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