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<tr>
<th>Florida Salon V</th>
<th>Registration</th>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Concurrent Session A</th>
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<tr>
<td>A1: Meeting Room 2</td>
<td>9:00-10:15am</td>
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**Valuing the Future: ATTW Graduate Student Research Winners**

**Chair** – Sam Dragga, Texas Tech University

**Mentoring as Relationship Building: Identity, Performance, and Value in Technical Communication**
Beth Keller
Michigan State University

This individual presentation responds to the ATTW call for presentations that address 1) the skills and approaches we value in our programs 2) explorations of value that transform our programs and teaching practices; and 3) academic and industry perspectives on and understandings of value within technical communication. In my presentation, I examine academic and non-academic writing, mentoring, and professionalism. I pay special attention to the ways in which professional development happens within workplaces, with emphases on feminist, queered, and de-centralized ideas, performances, and practices of mentoring.
First, I examine mentoring-oriented practices within a specific work site, a Midwest medical device manufacturing company, focusing on how soft and structural connections are made and navigated between/among employees at the company. Next, I discuss the findings from my ethnographic research, which assembles a methodology for other researchers and professionals to use in locating and inventing instances of mentoring in their workplaces, classrooms, and programs. I end my presentation by articulating ways audience members can interrogate and invent mentoring practices. I ask them to create new and build upon existing mentoring approaches we can use to better address transparency, accountability, and value within our programs and field today.

**Constructing Knowledge through the Mundane: The Role of Technical Communication in the Apollo Project**

Charlotte Hyde
Purdue University

This presentation considers the value of technical communication in the workplace through an examination of Dr. Warner von Braun’s weekly communications with his department heads during the Apollo project. Von Braun’s Monday Notes, thought lost until 2007, provide an extensive archive of more than 10,000 memos spanning almost a decade. NASA’s communicative artifacts have long been a source of scholarly interest among technical writing instructors, and these memos provide us with new and nuanced views into the organization as it worked to get man to the moon while also dealing with the cultural and political challenges of the 60s. The Monday Notes were used to present a variety of information from mundane concerns to technical specs to elaborate discussions of social justice concerns, such as racial integration and worker’s rights. Evidenced in these memos in von Braun’s deep and constant commitment to document design and clear, effective communication, of interest to technical communication instructors aiming to help students articulate the value effective documents have in shaping and legitimizing technical knowledge and organizational culture. In this presentation, I will demonstrate through a sample selection of the Monday Notes how von Braun’s weekly notes worked to construct and legitimize both knowledge and culture in a high stakes organization.

**A Rhetorical Model of Translation: A Methodological Proposal for Approaching Uncertainties in Climate and Environmental Risk**

Kenneth Walker
University of Arizona

Contemporary approaches to risk communication often discuss uncertainty negatively as a lack of knowledge, or as a
mechanism to manufacture doubt. Yet centuries of understanding in rhetorical theory, and decades of research on the precautionary principle, suggest that probabilistic reasoning through uncertainties can also facilitate political dialogue. Moving from the work in rhetoric of science and technical communication, this presentation offers a rhetorical model that explores the dynamics of how uncertainties foster modes of civic judgment in cases of climate and environmental risk such as hydraulic fracturing, ozone depletion, and climate adaptation. By applying this mixed-methods model to a variety of cases, I show how uncertainties can also be conceived productively as sites to facilitate rhetorical deliberation. I suggest that this approach can expand the scholarship in transcultural risk communication, and potentially make a rhetorical contribution to applied and transdisciplinary work in science and environmental communication.

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<tr>
<th>A2: Florida Salon I</th>
<th>The Value of Industry and Academy Connections</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chair</strong> — Susan Popham, University of Memphis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Creating a Value Triangle: Modeling and Evaluating Value Indicators for Instructors, Students, and Industry to Create a Symbiotic, Value-driven, Academic-Industry Relationship</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brittany McCrigler</td>
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<td>iFixit</td>
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Creating partnerships between industry and academia that bring value to instructors, students, and industry is challenging, to say the least. The values that yield a symbiotic relationship between these institutions are often qualitative and difficult to define. Applying a more quantitative, scientific approach to evaluating the values of key players in the partnership can inform decision-making and dictate the structure of the relationship. iFixit has begun collecting data from all three stakeholder groups and modeling the balance of these self-described values using a barycentric ternary plot, whereby each party’s self-described values are placed on corresponding sides of a triangle. Data is then graphed along its respective axis and the intersection of the three data points is plotted inside the triangle. This point of intersection gives a visual representation of the balance of the values graphed, showing to which axis, or in this case stakeholder group, the data tends. The model provides a visual representation of the balance of values in a given academic-industry partnership program.

In the presentation, we will share our findings from data collected and discuss the differences between preconceived value balance and the actual results achieved by the analysis of data. We will also discuss how to negotiate values between parties. Finally, we will address challenges faced in weighting various values, surrounding the following
questions: What if student values do not align with pedagogically supported methods? What if lack of context limits the value students place on the project? Finally, we will discuss how evaluating these values have guided modifications in our curricula to meet the needs of all three stakeholders: the academic institution, the industry partner, and the student.

How Applied Theory and Research Improved Two Content Management Projects in Industry
Rebekka Andersen
University of California, Davis

This case study tells the story of how theoretically grounded, applied research was used to improve two active content management (CM) projects in industry. Drawing on the results of my own empirical research and on Dayton’s hybrid-analytical model for studying IT adoption and use, I developed a comprehensive set of research questions designed to explore the cultural dynamics influencing the outcome of CM projects within large organizations. I intended for these questions to be used by project leaders to gather qualitative data that could help them better understand stakeholders’ attitudes and subsequent actions toward a CM project. CM projects are often plagued with problems (Kostur; Berg; Trotter), and “people factors” are often largely to blame (Andersen). Conducting internal research can help leaders assess the extent to which people factors are shaping or are likely to shape the outcome of a CM project.

Interested in the utility of these research questions, a prominent CM consultant developed a questionnaire that he could use to assess the cultural dynamics of two active CM projects, both of which were transitioning from the initial content strategy to the final implementation plan. The findings uncovered by the research helped executive management to understand the magnitude of the change being undertaken, and this led to improved implementation plans. In this presentation, I will share this case study with session attendees, focusing specifically on ways that applied theory and research directly benefited the projects and their stakeholders. I will then discuss more generally how applied theory and research establish value in the field. I will end by arguing for a more forgiving understanding of the term “applied”: that is, translating theory and research for practitioners is a rhetorical act, and some meaning must necessarily be lost in translation if theory and research are to add true value.

The Nature and Value of Technical Literacy for Technical Communicators: Preliminary Findings from an Observational Study
Marjorie Rush Hovde
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Technical communicators need to understand technology as both topic and tool in order to create, manage, and deliver effective technical communication (Hovde, 2002). In recent decades, the nature of the tools they use to create, manage, and deliver technical communication has changed dramatically (Andersen, 2014; Henschel, 2010), so it is important to understand those changes. In employing these tools, technical communicators need varying levels of technical literacy (Breuch, 2009; Brumberger, et al., 2013; Cook 2002) ranging from the “how-to” to the conceptual to the evaluative and beyond. In addition to the varying types of literacy the tools require, they have influenced how technical communicators conceive of technical communication (Clark, 2008; Hart-Davidson, et al. 2008). However, we understand little about the technical literacy they need to use these tools effectively and efficiently.

In this presentation, I will report preliminary findings from a recent observational study of technical communicators, exploring at least three levels of technical literacy (the functional, the conceptual, and the evaluative) that they employ in their daily work. In addition to exploring the nature and value of this technical literacy, I will also reflect on how this literacy and the uses of technical communication tools affect the intellectual activities and processes of the work of technical communicators. Insights gleaned from this study will be valuable to technical communication faculty as they design curricula to prepare students for workplace expectations and challenges in using technical communication tools. This presentation will also focus on the value of technical literacy for technical communicators, an area that technical communication faculty members are sometimes reluctant to explore or about which they hold impoverished understandings.

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<tr>
<th>A3: Florida Salon II</th>
<th>The Value of Medical Discourse: Three Perspectives</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chair</strong> – Liz Angeli, Towson University</td>
<td><strong>Examining Medical Discourse from the Elderly Patient Perspective</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yvonne Stephens</td>
<td>Hofstra University</td>
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In technical communication, we focus on professional discourse within a field to improve communication practices and to inform our teaching. When we turn our attention to the boundaries of professional discourse, where, for example, medical professionals interact with patients, what do we learn that can add value to our current understandings of medical discourse? In this talk, I present findings from a study on elderly patients’ conversations with medical professionals and discuss the value of studying the intersections of professional and lay discourses for
medical professionals looking to improve patient care.

Researchers in our field who study doctor-patient communication often find that inherent to these relationships is an uneven distribution of power. This study provides a fresh perspective to these conversations in two ways. First, the study looks at elderly patients’ representations of these conversations through a discourse analysis of patients’ talk about doctor’s appointments. Because of this focus, the study provides insight into patients’ perspectives on their interactions with doctors. Second, the study looks specifically at patients’ discussions of literacy practices – particularly their reading about medical conditions – in conversation with doctors and how they represent those literacy practices as a tool for managing their own care.

This presentation reports three main findings. First, elderly patients perceive these relationships to contain uneven distributions of power, with doctors holding more power. Second, patients use literacy practices to attempt to leverage power in these conversations. Third, patients perceive that their uses of literacy practices in conversations with doctors help them to gain a sense of control over their body management. In discussing these conclusions, I examine the value of studying the intersection of professional and lay discourses from the patient perspective for the field of technical and professional writing and discuss the implications of these findings for medical professionals.

Assuaging Anxieties: The value of audience alienation strategies in online Ebola education
Fallon Bubacy
University of Wisconsin Milwaukee

The field of technical communication has long acknowledged the importance of comprehensive audience awareness and analysis in the writing process (Spilka, 1989, 2013; Ede & Lunsford 1984; Goodwin, 1991; Porter, 1992; Geisler, 2013). Academics and practitioners alike have focused extensively on communication strategies meant to reach out to, accommodate, and include readers and users of diverse audiences. Recognizing this, teachers of technical writing appropriately focus considerable effort on identifying and employing strategies to establish effective audience analysis and optimize how successfully a document is received by the intended audience.

Recent headlines sensationalizing the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the perceived threat to public health in the United States, however, necessitate a novel approach to audience not yet examined by scholars of technical communication. National anxieties of the spread of Ebola are relentlessly echoed and amplified in current news media. Ebola-related online patient education articles offered by heavily frequented outlets such as the Centers for Disease Control, Web MD, and the Mayo Clinic Online employ unique strategies that, I argue, are intended to exclude rather than include readers; they primarily aim to minimize anxieties rather than to educate inclusively. Ultimately, in
this presentation I will outline specific audience alienation strategies used by the above health information portals. In so doing, I will argue that this deliberate audience distancing and alienation in these health communication documents represents an unusual and unique, although not inappropriate, rhetorical move that has seen little attention in the field of technical communication, but could be productively employed by practitioners in a wide variety of emergency communication contexts where the perceived threats have been overblown by the media.

Terminal Node Problems: An Actor-Network Theory Analysis of Prescription Drug Labels
Molly Kessler
University of Wisconsin Milwaukee

Scholars in disciplines ranging from public health and medicine, to sociology and psychology have raised significant concerns over prescription drug misuse resulting in adverse events and even death due to ineffectiveness of prescription drug labels (PDLs). This scholarship, largely focused on health literacy, casts PDL failure as a matter of patient error and ineptitude. Given the dense information and technical language on PDLs, it is perhaps not surprising that medical errors resulting from drug and label misuse are a prevailing issue for patients of all populations. Despite the extensive research on PDLs regarding health literacy, these documents continue to be futile, and drug misuse remains a growing concern. Conceivably then, PDL communication breakdown results not from patient inadequacy but rather deficient documentation. It is here that TC scholarship is uniquely situated to address the manifold issues of PDLs.

Acutely situated to address usability, functionality, and rhetorical nuances surrounding documents, TC has the methodological resources to offer new understanding into how PDLs works as a communication across their many audiences. A considerable amount of TC research has focused on medical documentation and communication (Batova, 2010; Teston, 2012; Tomlin, 2008; Fountain, 2014). Yet, little research in TC has focused specifically on PDLs, despite being one of the most commonly used medical documents. Subsequently, this presentation will build on TC’s appropriation of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) by 1) tracing PDLs across multiple articulations each comprised of differing audiences and competing goals, and 2) assessing the agentic and persuasive power of PDLs throughout the network in order to identify new points of intervention that have gone unnoticed in previous work outside of TC. In doing so, this presentation demonstrates the value of TC by moving inquiry into PDLs away from a presumption of patient deficit toward a problem of technical documentation.
Toward Global Usability and Accessibility: Students as Web Developers to Serve Diverse Users through Technical Writing Courses
Kefaya Diab
New Mexico State University

Responding to the Blakeslee’s (2004) call to bridge the gap between the classroom and the workplace, I propose in this paper a Technical Writing Course that integrates real workplace collaborative assignments to introduce students to the professional genre of web development. With the increase in the academic interest in global usability internationally and cross culturally (Douglas and Liu, 2011), I consider New Mexico State University (NMSU) where I teach, a diverse workplaces. Therefore, I require students to respond to real needs of this workplace by designing websites to serve diverse students clubs and organizations on campus.

In making global usability a core requirement for this course, I follow Redish’s (2004) model of designing and writing, where students produce websites that enable diverse users to “find what they need [,] understand what they find [,] and use what they understand appropriately” (p. 212). Thus, I require students to (1) critique and rhetorically analyze current students organizations’ websites, (2) design new website to replace the old ones, and (3) ask for users feedback to guarantee usability and accessibility to the diverse population of the students. Whereas, students during the planning, research and quality assurance stages, have to interview and survey students from a wide range of race, gender, culture, language of origin, and disability to better understand their needs. Furthermore, agreeing with Thrush (2004) in regard to the various traditions of reading and writing of multicultural students, I prompt the technical writing students, to recognize and reflect on themselves as writers and designers who might differ in cultural traditions from their clients. While I adopt a Constructionist pedagogy that encourages students to explore and construct meaning through communication, I also adopt a critical approach in recognizing marginalized audiences among university students. That is, I make ethics and privacy core topics to teach and to and discuss with students in this course.

Usability and Value Proposition Design: Exploring the Nexus between Usability, Technology, and Aging
Keshab Acharya
Michigan Technological University

Technical communication has, as a discipline and a set of practices, always concerned itself with producing user-
centered documents/systems so that end-users can use these documents/systems without facing problems. Recent scholarship has examined the concept of user-centered technology as the most important aspect of documents and/or web designs for usability (Krug, 2014). Scholars from various fields define usability in a number of different ways. While Chapanis and his colleagues (1981) observe usability as a formative rather than summative activity, Jakob Nielsen (2012) looks at usability as “a quality that assesses how easy user interfaces are to use.” In Carol Barnum’s words, “user-centered design focuses on users, tasks, and environment” (9). Robert Johnson observes users not only as practitioners and producers but also as active, responsible members, or what he calls “participatory citizen[s]” of the technological community (61, emphasis original).

Interestingly, each definition echoes the emphasis on the value of user experience design. Are older adults as end-users of technical documents/systems currently considered as potential users in technical communication? In other words, are older adults taken into consideration in usability studies? Are traditional definitions of usability sufficient to assess product value for the rapidly growing population of older adults? In my presentation, I attempt to answer these inquiries because a sufficient discussion of usability in relation to product value for older adults is yet to be made in technical communication. I will argue that the exclusion of older adults from user experience design processes disadvantages them, depriving them of working toward social justice by producing not “useful” documents/systems (Mirel, 2002). Finally, drawing upon Jacob Nielsen, Donald Norman, Robert Johnson, and other usability scholars, I discuss why, in technical communication, usability, technology, and aging need to be integrated into documents/systems to promote what I call “value proposition design,” the design which has a promise of value to be delivered to its users.

How Do Users Value Information From Interactive Graphics?
Greg Wilson
Texas Tech University
Jacob D. Rawlins
University of Louisville
Kate Crane
Texas Tech University

Interactive data displays (IDD) shape the way Internet users see, interpret, act on, and value information. From simple news graphics to more complicated calculators, IDDs play a huge role in many users’ decisions and actions. However, there are many different levels of interactivity allowed by the designers of the graphics. “Levels of interactivity” are the degrees to which a user has agency in selecting or contributing data to visualize. In this presentation, we discuss
how different types of interaction in Internet graphics affect users’ perceptions of the value of the output generated by the IDDs.

Drawing from Rawlins and Wilson’s (2014) article on agency and IDDs, where they define different levels of interactivity in Internet graphics and examine the implications for rhetorical agency, we study users’ interactions with IDDs to determine how much they value the output. We employed usability testing methods and presented participants with graphics (on the cost of raising children) with three different levels of interactivity as defined by Rawlins and Wilson:

1. Static, with no opportunities for data choice
2. Zoom & Pan, with limited opportunities for selecting data to visualize
3. Constrained, with more substantial opportunities for data choice, including the input of personal data.

Participants were tasked with using the static graphic or IDD to generate customized information or output. Their interactions with graphics were recorded. Furthermore, participants were interviewed after completing the task to determine how the level of agency allowed by the designer of the IDD affected the users’ perceptions of information value (e.g., how much they trust the information output, or how they feel the information output strengthens or weakens their ethos in arguments to others.). Discovering how users value this information is an important step toward understanding how IDDs—and their designers—affect users’ beliefs and actions.

**Disambiguation of Infographics, Their Affordances, and Their Value**

**Chair:** Lisa Bailey, University of South Carolina

**Panel Overview:** The glut of media images masquerading as infographics and popular misapplication of the term lead professionals and scholars to dismiss the infographic as a fad rather than an essential technical communication form. Our panel’s four papers posit the necessity to value infographics as a key technical communication mode. The two most important strategies that infographics instill—visual literacy and information storytelling—have a historical precedence, yet are undervalued (although essential) 21st-century communication skills. The panelists will show how infographics can add value to communication strategies and practices by increasing critical literacies in the classroom, in the workplace, and in public life.

**The Historical Value of Infographics**

Liz Hutter
Georgia Institute of Technology
While the term infographic is a late 20th-century invention (The Oxford English Dictionary reports its first usage in 1979), the visualization of qualitative and quantitative data persists in forms as diverse as cave paintings, early modern cartography, industry manuals, statistical graphs, transportation networks, and business development plans. This paper examines two infographics that narrate political dissent, alliance, and consensus—an 1861 map of the slave population in the southern states and cartograms of the United States 2004 presidential election results—in order to emphasize constancy in the synergistic relationship between data, image, and text across more than 150 years of American civic life. Evolutions in data analytics and sophisticated developments in human-digital interactivity has spurred the prevalence of contemporary infographics saturated with aesthetic and quantitative value. The historical perspective explored in my paper, however, attests to the fact that the value of arranging text, image, and data to tell a compelling story that challenges public perceptions and expectations has always been a foundational technical communication practice.

**Information Storytelling: Blending Narrative and Data**  
Lisa Dusenberry  
Georgia Institute of Technology

The infographic is a compelling medium that technical communicators should devote more time to, both in research and teaching. Infographics provide a prime area for teaching data analysis and the connection between data and narrative—important transferable skills for technical communication. In “Infographics in Technical Writing and Communication” (2013), Lee Brasseur discusses infographics’ “ability to give us the complexity behind raw data.” Using a combination of theoretical framing and examples, my presentation shows the valuable ways infographics call on narrative to concretely engage with concerns about audience, research, design, and reception. As data stories, infographics take familiar skills like summarization and evidence identification, requiring composers to adapt these skills in new ways. Narrative is the bridge that allows infographics to make qualitative and quantitative data accessible and that shapes how viewers interpret visual elements. Infographics highlight the rhetorical complexity of working with data, the role and limitations of technology selection, and the dynamics among creator, artifact, and viewer.

**Seeing is Believing: Visual Literacy and the Story of Infographics**  
Joy Robinson  
Georgia Institute of Technology

The Infographic genre draws on problem solving and system thinking, which according to Johnson-Eilola and Selber (2013) are important to 21st century communicators. Cairo (2013) defines an infographic as a image that must present data organized in such a way as to permit an audience to easily view comparisons and correlations between
the information. In order to accomplish these calls, infographics draw heavily on visual literacies of the audience as they weave together images, color, text, and data into a cohesive whole. Visual literacy defined as “the ability to read, interpret, and create visual communication” (Brumberger, Lauer, & Northcut, 2013, p. 177) requires knowledge of heightened rhetorical strategies in comparison to writing. For example, visuospatial skills, metaphoric usage, and targeted appeals are not typically considered part of the rhetorical toolbox for technical communication; and, when these concepts are considered they are subservient to other written strategies (Lauer & Sanchez, 2011). While, scholars and practitioners alike acknowledge the importance of visual literacy (Lanier, 2009), the infographic genre remains undervalued in technical communication courses.

**Strategic Infographics in Health-related Technical Communication**
Ginnifer Mastarone
Portland State University

Health literacy is the cognitive and social skills that determine the motivation and ability of individuals to access, understand and use information for health management (World Health Organization, 1998). However, approximately 89% of adults in the United States have below basic - intermediate health literacy (NAAL, 2003). Infographics have emerged on social media as well as in written and multimodal texts as a way to simplify health information to reduce risk. Technical communicators currently add to this conversation through data visualization heuristics. This paper extends the value domain of technical communicators by positing that the use of infographics as a tool for health literacy is enhanced by introducing iterative user-centered design principles into their creation. Utilizing a combination of theoretical framing and examples of student work from a health communication course, this paper reports on the usefulness and utility of infographics through the lens of emotional benefit and heuristic appeals (Pfau, 1995). These appeals function on both information and emotional levels to inform, promote self-efficacy, and reduce uncertainty with health-related topics.
Globalization paradigms have lurked quietly behind much technical writing research during the last 30 years. Recently, for instance, authors have ascribed to globalization radical changes involving international audiences (Hendriks et al., 2012), technology uses (Longo, 2014), training competencies (Yu, 2012), distributed work (Paretti, McNair, & Holloway-Attaway, 2007), transcultural dynamics (Agboka, 2013; Ding, 2014; Ding & Savage, 2013; Fraiberg, 2013), and increasingly knowledge-based systems of value creation (St. Amant, 2001). Yet, only a few studies have addressed globalization directly, and none besides Choudry (2010) have questioned the underlying paradigms and value commitments with a reflexive, critical eye. These paradigms and value commitments, I argue, have significant implications for technical writing in global contexts, especially with respect to research, teaching, and ethical codes. Thus, this individual presentation reports on an ongoing meta-study of the field’s globalization paradigms, as exposed through tacit value commitments in the literature. The data consists of 821 articles collected from the field’s five major journals. Each of these articles invokes “globalization” or one of its fragments, such as “global” or “globality,” at some point, forming a representative corpus of technical writing scholarship since 1972. To extract value commitments, data analysis is following a modified grounded theory approach (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987) that deploys Atlas.ti coding software to assist in category generation. The exposed value commitments to business interests, environmental sustainability, humanitarian efforts, etc. have thus far suggested at least two competing globalization paradigms. One tends to valorize corporatization, technological determinism, and North American exceptionalism. The other tends to valorize resistance, restructuring, and decentering of current concentrations of world power. These paradigms blur and interpenetrate, and at this presentation’s end, I discuss their value-laden implications for the future of technical writing.

Re-e(value)ating Approaches to Teaching Intercultural Technical Communication
Jennifer Sano-Franchini
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Discussions of teaching intercultural communication have tended to focus on communication as it occurs across geographical—and particularly national—boundaries (Thrush, 1993; DeVoss, Jasken, Hayden, 2002; Hunsinger, 2006; Paretti, McNair, Burgoyne, 2006; Bracken Scott, 2010; Thatcher and St. Amant, 2011); however, while increased global flows of people, technologies, products, and ideas have undoubtedly affected the contexts in which and technologies with which we write, this presentation responds to Ding and Savage’s (2013) call for “alternative conceptualization[s] of cultures and the ‘intercultural’ that moves beyond the nation-centric mindset and to investigate alternative approaches to straightforward application of cultural heuristics and cultural dimensions” (p. 1). Specifically, I report on a two-part IRB-approved study including: 1) a survey of how technical communication programs engage issues of
culture within their curricula; and 2) a study of my experience deploying—as Haas (2012) suggests—a cultural studies approach to teaching intercultural communication.

In other words, this presentation dialogues with the scholarship on teaching intercultural communication, re-evaluating the approaches presented, by focusing on two key questions: 1) How are technical communication students being prepared to engage issues of cultural variation in the workplace? and 2) How might an intersectional cultural rhetorics approach to teaching intercultural communication help instructors reach their goal of encouraging in students an awareness of cultural differences in oral and written communication (Matveeva, 2008)? Based on the notion that “cultural awareness” is contingent on students’ understanding of how cultural difference is discursively constructed as well as their ability to assess the cultural implications of particular rhetorics, epistemologies, and representations, I show how cultural theory is helpful for shifting students’ frame of thinking about cultures from one of Othering to one that is cognizant of intercultural communication as taking place across a wide range of embodied, political, and epistemological difference and within a range of professional settings.

The Value of Social Media across Cultures: A Comparative Rhetorical Analysis of Starbucks’ Overpricing Case in China
Lin Dong
Georgia State University
Baotong Gu
Georgia State University

Social media result in multi-modal forms of communication and create new rhetorical situations. Instant publication characterizes Twitter and Weibo (also called “Chinese Twitter”) as the most popular written media in the United States and China, respectively, for interpersonal and mass communication. These two micro blogging tools share many features such as in format, function, and influence, and therefore invite cross-cultural comparisons. A recent controversy involving Starbucks’ overpricing in China offers an excellent site for investigation. Starbucks’ coffee is labeled as an “it” thing in this traditionally tea drinking nation, and especially popular among white-collars. Having a cup of Starbucks coffee is luxury and not affordable for most common people; thus, the conflict between a daily consumer product and its luxury price becomes the target for Price Control Administration’s investigation. About government intervention, common people have diverse opinions.

This study identifies rhetorical differences of the responses from three stockholders (government, company, consumers) across two cultures in cyberspace through such a case. I argue that this case represents more than an international business risk; rather it is a rhetorical conflict, ripe for comparative, cultural analysis. Moreover, using the
In the case of Starbucks’ overpricing in China, I analyze the rhetorical impact of conflicting cultural ideologies, different rhetorical situations, distinct communication patterns, and special cyber discourses that move underneath the surface of language communication. Applying the critical discourse analysis method to the rhetorical examination of the tweets collected from Twitter and Weibo about this case, and then comparing the data in discourse and ideology, I come to the conclusion that tweets do not only bear noticeable rhetorical differences of codes—two cyber languages—in sequence and structure, but they also imply various interfaces that cyber citizens constructed as a result of diverse communicative patterns in two cultures. These communicative patterns are fundamentally determined by different cultural ideologies and rhetorical traditions. Rhetorical risk of overpricing reveals that the colonial ideologies of fighting against imperialism, capitalism, and culture colonialism are so rooted in Chinese collective psychology that they are still evidently influential in intercultural communication of present postcolonial time. Besides, the rhetorical traditions of the West and China, along with the cultural ideologies, explained this particular business and rhetorical conflict in social media across cultures. Contributing to a burgeoning area of research within intercultural technical and professional communication (Thatcher, 2012; Ding & Savage, 2013) and comparative rhetorical studies of digital media (LuMing Mao, 2011), this presentation intends to offer a meaningful analysis of social media language and communication across cultures.

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<tr>
<th>A7: Florida Salon VI</th>
<th>Roundtable Discussion</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enacting Social Justice, Finding Value in Technical Communication</strong></td>
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**Chair** – Kristen Moore, Texas Tech University

**Participants**
- Kristin Moore, Texas Tech University
- Godwin Agboka, University of Houston Downtown
- Jared Colton, Utah State University
- Marcos Del Hierro, University of New Hampshire
- Julie Gerdes, Texas Tech University
- Lucia Dura, University of Texas at El Paso
- Michael Faris, Texas Tech University
- Sarah Beth Hopton, University of South Florida
- Natasha Jones, University of New Mexico
- Dawn Opel, Arizona State University
- Gerald Savage, Illinois State University
Rebecca Walton, Utah State University

In locating the value of technical communication, it might be tempting to rely on the “usual suspect” topics and sites. But the predominantly narrow context of technical communication—Western business environments—is insufficient for framing the value and influence of our work (Agboka, 2013; Blyler, 2004; Ding & Savage, 2013; Durão, 2013; Jones, Savage, & Yu, 2014; Moore, 2013; Rude, 2004; Walton, 2013). To limit the legitimate sites of technical communication research and practice to for-profit industry is to disregard much of our heritage, to overlook relevant work occurring in a wide range of contexts, and to dismiss important opportunities to more fully understand and convey the value of our field. This proposed roundtable brings together scholars from eight universities around the nation to articulate the value of technical communication as a site of social justice. In doing so, this roundtable contends that social justice scholars, in working towards inclusive approaches to technical communication, demonstrate a central value of technical communication: to bring about social and/or institutional change.

As Rude (2008) asserted, technical communicators are already aware that “the field’s knowledge gives it potential to contribute to social justice” (p. 267). Indeed, one of the four categories of technical communication research that Rude (2009) identified is social change (p. 176). Technical communication research committed to social change includes a range of approaches: for example, action research, which supports positive impacts for nonacademic communities or groups (Blythe et al., 2008; Clark, 2004); civic engagement, which aims to improve public understanding of policies and issues that affect those publics (Bowdon, 2004; Moore, 2013); service learning, in which nonprofit and community organizations serve as clients for student work (Crabtree & Sapp, 2005; Youngblood & Mackiewicz, 2013); information and communication technology for development, in which technology is a central component of efforts to improve lives in resource-constrained environments (Dysart-Gale et al., 2011; Walton, 2013); and community-based research, in which scholars and community groups collaboratively investigate matters of mutual interest (Fabret, 2002; Walton, Zraly, Mugengana, in press). As suggested by the descriptions above, many of these approaches connect or overlap: action research and community-based research (Blythe et al., 2008), civic engagement and service learning (Moore, 2013), activist research and community-based research (Fabret, 2002). These broad categories of approaches focus on issues of diversity, inclusion, and sociopolitical critique and can be encompassed under the umbrella term of social justice. Considering social justice broadly and using this term as a touchstone for the range of scholarship concerned with social critique and social action provides scholars in TPC with a common starting point and shared vocabulary for research and pedagogy.

We propose a roundtable session that will create a shared space for discussion among scholars in our field who are working in or interested in social justice. We see a need to collaboratively set an agenda for social justice research and pedagogy in our field and believe that a structured conversation is the ideal way to start. The value of our roundtable
session for attendees and for the field is twofold: 1) Sharing a broad range of perspectives on what it looks like to enact social justice in TC and 2) Identifying specific courses of action for enacting social justice as individuals, as scholars, and, especially, as a field. We follow Institutional Critique (Porter et. al 2000) in believing that critique needs a plan, and we echo Rude’s (2004) concern about “critique without action [being] a kind of self-satisfied ivory tower or armchair critique that never moves toward influencing practice” (p. 124).

The roundtable will begin with brief framing statements from the facilitators on 1) The Value of Social Justice in TC and 2) Defining Social Justice Research in TC. Roundtable participants will offer 2-3 minute position statements in response to the question: “How can TCers enact social justice, broadly conceived?” These participants have a range of specializations, university positions, and working environments, and their responses will provide useful prompts for audience discussion. Discussion will be structured according to three categories:

1. Sites of social justice (research, teaching, service, but also organizational and geographical sites): 4-6 position statements followed by audience discussion
   Position Statement Titles:
   - What Social Justice Means to Workplace Culture Scholarship
   - Valuing the Social Justice Scholar: Developing Doctoral Program Infrastructure and Support
   - International health communication: Intervening at the margins of language, literacy, and globalization
   - Forgotten Zones: Technical Communicators as Change Agents in Marginalized Contexts

2. Problems/Opportunities for social justice: 4-6 position statements followed by audience discussion
   Position Statement Titles:
   - Social Justice through Passive and Active Equality
   - Locating Agency in the Midst of Structural and Systemic Issues: Tools for Facilitation and Inquiry
   - Poverty is not a “Blight” : Metaphorical Framing Techniques as Tools for Social Change
   - Addressing Normativity in Technical Communication: Putting Technical Communication in Conversation with Queer Theory

3. Action Items and Future Plans

Audience members and participants will leave with 1) a concrete understanding of a range of approaches to social justice within technical communication and 2) collaboratively developed first steps toward a field-specific agenda for social justice research and pedagogy.
<table>
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<th>10:15-10:45am</th>
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| **The Value of Nonprofit Genres to Technical Writing**  
Tana M. Schiewer  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University |
| **The Value(s) of Silence: Implications for the U.S. Résumé and Cover Letter**  
Chalice Randazzo  
Texas Tech University |
| **Metrics in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Theory: The Intrinsic Value of Understanding How Search Engines Rank Your Website**  
Anthony T. Atkins  
University of North Carolina, Wilmington |
| **Mobile Student Work Practices in the Study Abroad Class**  
Adam Strantz  
Purdue University |
| **Visually Communicating Programmatic Value**  
Jeremy Tirrell  
University of North Carolina, Wilmington |
| **Technical Communication as User Experience in a Broadening Industry Landscape**  
Eva Brumberger  
Arizona State University  
Claire Lauer  
Arizona State University |

<p>| Break |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>B1 Meeting Room 2</td>
<td>11:00-12:15am</td>
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**Writing in the Disciplines and Technical Communication**

**Chair:** Jennifer Mallette, University of Arkansas

**Finding Our Place in Space: Comparing the Values of Design in Technical Communication and Urban Design**
Fernando Sánchez
Purdue University

In “Queering the Map,” Michael Brown and Larry Knopp discuss the epistemic collisions that occur when the two practitioners from seemingly related fields (GIS and geography) collaborate on a mapping project. Although from an outsider’s perspective Brown and Knopp’s fields share a spatial emphasis, their methodological values clash due to the differing traditions from which each field stems. With that in mind, this presentation discusses the collisions that can occur when technical communicators engage in conversations about design with experts in visuospatial design fields such as architecture, urban design, and civil engineering. In other words, I explore how we interpret and how we could reassess our values in terms of spatiality.

I begin with a brief analysis of how design is discussed in technical communication—in terms of not just what items are the focus of design in the extant literature (documents, webpages, systems, objects), but also of how best practices for design have been conceptualized and theorized by technical communicators more generally. I then examine how the topic of design circulates in spatially centered fields via their scholarship and through interviews with practitioners and experts. I end with a discussion of how the differing tenets within technical communication and design studies (for example, user-experience design and new urbanism, respectively) can be brought into conversation with each other. Given that our work continues to expand into multimodal forms of communication, this presentation may be of interest to practitioners and faculty who work in Communicating Across the Curriculum initiatives as it provides approaches for discussing issues related to access and usability in spatial design with faculty.
whose fields may hold different (or even antithetical) epistemic approaches to these topics from our own. More broadly, it may appeal to technical communicators who wish to learn more about design from a number of perspectives.

**Students’ Perception of Value vs. Self-assessment of Communication Skills**

Suguru Ishizaki  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Stacie Rohrbach  
Carnegie Mellon University

Our research examines the relationship between students’ perception of the value of technical communication skills and their motivation to improve these skills. We will begin our presentation by briefly introducing our NSF funded project that aims to investigate how an integrated system of learning resources—consisting of a writing center, online learning tutorials, peers, and writing instructors—would help engineering students improve their writing skills while they are taking an engineering course that involves writing assignments. We will then focus on a preliminary finding that suggests students’ clear recognition of the value of technical communication skills did not lead to their motivation to improve their communication skills. Through survey responses, usage data from the online learning tutorial, and interview data, which were collected during the spring of 2014, we conjecture that while most of the students recognize the importance of writing skills, many of them do not make significant effort to improve their skills because of their general tendency to over-estimate their writing ability. In other words, engineering students who participated believed that their skills were adequate to be successful in the workplace.

We will then discuss the research gap regarding the influence of students’ assessment of their own communication skills on their motivation to improve their skills. We will first present a brief overview of research literature in self-assessment and motivation from learning sciences, and discuss possible approaches to helping engineering students accurately assess how well they can communicate in the future workplace. We will conclude our presentation by presenting our preliminary plan for the next phase of this research.

**Exploring How Students Attribute Value to Technical Writing Instruction in the Disciplines**

Daniel Kenzie  
Purdue University

Program administrators and instructors must often articulate the value of writing instruction to a range of
stakeholders within and beyond the university. One of the most immediate stakeholders, whose attributions of value are vital to successful education, is student writers themselves. Students’ value attributions and perceptions of future relevance affect their present learning, though that connect is not yet fully understood. As students assign their own value to writing assignments, these assignments in turn help inculcate students in the values of their future professions. In this talk, I will first draw on research in technical communication, composition, and psychology to explore the question of how undergraduates attribute value to written assignments and how those value attributions affect present learning, motivation, and engagement. Second, I will report the results of a pilot study that used focus groups to collect students’ perceptions of a cattle breeding simulation and accompanying technical report in an animal breeding and genetics class with a substantial writing curriculum. These students valued or did not value the project based on how they perceived its relevance to their intended careers, how they expected genres to transfer, and how they identified with quantitative analysis. The writing curriculum’s embeddedness in a non-writing course also affected their understanding of its value. Third, I will briefly share early development of a larger study and pose the question of how to make the value of writing assignments, including workplace relevance, tangible to students. I will argue for taking students perceptions of value and relevance seriously, offer initial findings that respond to that need, and ask attendees to consider how their programs and classrooms invite students to understand the value of technical writing instruction for their professional futures.

B2:
Florida Salon I

Gaming and Technical Communication

Chair: Jennifer deWinter, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Measuring fun: A heuristic for evaluating game enjoyability in usability testing
Jeremy Huston
Texas Tech University

Thanks to the work of Barnum, Hackos, Johnson, Redish, and many others, usability is recognized as a valuable methodological tool for understanding user experience in technical communication (Redish & Barnum 2011). It provides a crucial tool in researchers’ toolbox for evaluating complex systems and how users interact with them. Unfortunately, usability is notorious for being unable to evaluate a user’s emotional engagement when using a system. This shortcoming is particularly apparent when employing usability to evaluate enjoyability in gaming. When trying to apply enjoyability heuristics to gaming usability studies, a number of problems crop up: the measures are too complex or too specific to the study that produced them (Pinelle, Wong, & Stach 2008) or the time cost is prohibitive (Barnum & Palmer 2011). In other cases, some available metrics (such as SUS) are simply too generalized to useful in a
gaming context. Usability needs a simpler way to measure enjoyability, one that is understandable to users, easy to deploy, and quick to prepare and collect. This presentation will explore the rationale and creation of a 100-point enjoyability heuristic to evaluate enjoyability in usability studies involving gaming that meets the aforementioned criteria. I will also delineate what value the heuristic adds to the field of usability and technical communication as a whole, particularly as this heuristic compares to the SUS, Nielsen’s MEELS criteria, Barnum and Palmer's desirability index, and a number of gaming heuristics from UX and HCI. I will also discuss how the heuristic was refined across five different applications, receiving responses from over 1000 users. Furthermore, the presentation will also discuss how to apply the enjoyability heuristic to usability and explore how it can facilitate more research in our field, following Eyeman’s (2008) call to explore games through the lens of technical communication.

Player-as-Developer: An Analysis of User-Producer Relations for Blizzard Entertainment
Eric Walsh
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

In this presentation, I establish the value of technical communication scholarship for game studies through a case study of the often-contradictory player-developer interactions found in games created by Blizzard Entertainment. As a media form, video games are both increasingly pervasive (Entertainment Software Association, 2013) and rhetorically complex (Eyman, 2008). These two qualities make them perfect sites for technical communication scholarship. On the one hand, the gaming industry can benefit from the expertise of technical communicators in seeking to understand the plethora of texts in and surrounding games (Schmid, 2008). On the other hand, such opportunities allow technical communicators to translate their skills into new jobs (Williams, 2008), and help unlock increased understanding of common topics applicable to traditional work within the field (Mason, 2013). One particularly salient topic in need of exploration is the complex relationship between game players and game developers (Araki & Carliner, 2008), which is the focus of this study.

My presentation begins with a brief overview of previous scholarship on games, centered on the evolution of users into “new media participants” (Park, 2007). I elaborate on the evolving role of users by examining three forms of user production directly impacting the the design of games published by Blizzard Entertainment: player feedback for the Diablo III auction house, player modifications via add-ons and maps in World of Warcraft and Starcraft II, and the act of play itself in all three games. I then utilize an adjusted form of de Certeau’s strategies and tactics (Kimball, 2009; Sherlock, 2009) to address the dissonance that arises between players and developers as a result of their conflicting goals. I end my presentation by discussing the value of this case study for technical communication scholarship and reiterating the benefits of a symbiotic relationship between technical communication and game studies, before opening the floor to questions.
In recent years, scholars have discussed the cultural, social, educational, and rhetorical significance of video games as artifacts worthy of further study—and perhaps more importantly have formed an academic basis for legitimizing the field of studying games (see, for example, Bogost, 2007; Holmevik, 2011). However, games studies is still a relatively new endeavor, especially within the field of technical communication. As such, technical communication educators and scholars who research games are often asked to articulate the value of studying games within our field—in short, to prove that studying games has meaningful value.

According to the Entertainment Software Association (2013), consumer spending on video games in 2012 was $20.77 billion—and as Eyman (2008) and Mason (2013) each point out, there is significant room for technical communicators to apply their expertise about games and create further value in this growing, popular field. Examples include applied skills in usability, interface design, instructional design, and technical writing, as well as soft skills in communication, collaboration, and problem solving. That is, technical communicators have much value to contribute to the field of game studies, if only we can develop a toolkit to successfully market our strengths. This presentation argues that to successfully study, teach, and design games and games-based artifacts, technical communicators need to develop interdisciplinary relationships that encourage collaborative research, cross-listed teaching opportunities, and industry connections to demonstrate the value that our field can add to studying games. From providing instruction on games documentation to conducting research on the usability of games, our field has much to offer the games industry—if only we can learn to articulate our value.

B3: Florida Salon II

Lightning Talks with a Respondent
The (New) Material of Technical Communication: Method, Practice, Pedagogy

Chair: Rachel Wolford, Texas Tech University

Panel Overview: Attention to materiality is nothing new in technical communication—we’ve been consistently concerned with interactions among people, tools, and environments. Technical communication resonates, therefore, with developments of what is commonly, but not uncontroversially, called new materialisms. Indeed, our field’s invocations of Latour—from whom much new materialist thought has emerged—speaks to this affinity (Winsor 1998,
New materialisms and technical communication, however, are not seamlessly congruent. New materialisms view nonhumans not simply as artifacts of rhetorical production or as containers for rhetorical action, as they are frequently and not unproductively treated as in technical communication, but rather as active participants in what Latour (2005) calls an object-oriented democracy. This panel, consisting of six lightning talks and a response that considers the value of such approaches for scholarship and teaching, explores new materialisms in technical communication through case studies, methodological and practice-based approaches, and pedagogies.

**Material Agency, Perilous Farming**  
Rachel Wolford, Texas Tech University

This presentation investigates a fatal tractor accident on an Iowa farm through Bennett’s theory of distributive agency to examine the diverse “assemblage of vital materials”—soil, steep hills, crops, tractor, farmer, gravity, and erosion—that interacted in various modes and capacities to create a consequential event that had little to do with traditional conceptions of human agency. The talk also examines Coole and Frost’s concept of “critical materialism” to account for contradictory material and discursive accounts of how this accident happened. This analysis offers a broader approach for communicating risk and conservation’s critical importance in agriculture.

**The Value of Disaster**  
Dan Richards  
Old Dominion University

Building from presentation’s case study, ”The Value of Disaster” argues, using the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, that accidents are rhetorical exigencies that reveal the ethical value of materialist theories of distributed agency. In grounding this value in the Gorgian tradition of offering culturally-resistant models of blame (epideixis) and Sullivan’s work on analyzing the epideictic functions of scientific discourse, it becomes clear that new materialist frameworks for understanding accidents productively delimit the role of human intentionality and offer distinct methods for thinking about blame in ways more reflective of the material realities precipitating the unfortunate events.

**Systemic Contexts, Visual Ontography**  
Brian McNely  
University of Kentucky
"Systemic Contexts, Visual Ontography" turns to research methods: Coincident with new materialisms are visual methods in technical communication (Evia & Patriarca, 2012; McNely, 2013; Varpio et al., 2007, Walton & Zraly, 2015). This presentation details one emerging method: visual ontography. Ontography documents assemblages in order to explore ontological relationships among actors (human and nonhuman). As method, visual ontography catalogues assemblages through systematic photography of communicative contexts, achieving complementary aims: richly detailed object arrangements—in the ideographic sense common to qualitative research—and affordances for cross-case comparisons and nomothetic (generalizable) claims about human–nonhuman relations in technical communication.

**Speculative Usability I: Inventional Capacity**
Lars Soderlund
Wright State University

"Speculative Usability I" introduces Speculative Usability. Whereas traditional models of usability rely on the salient features of an object-user relationship to focus on the uses for which the object was designed, the goal of Speculative Usability is to notice an object as it interacts with other objects (in addition to human users) and to be vulnerable to an objects’ unintended effects. Speculative Usability begins with two key aspects of Latour’s (2005) formulation of ANT: the agency of objects and action as overtaken. The payoff of this speculative approach is an increased inventional capacity for usability testing

**Speculative Usability II: Inventional Activity**
Nathaniel Rivers
St. Louis University

"Speculative Usability II" articulates the practices of Speculative Usability, which emerges from the work technical communication researchers already do: attending to the complex ecologies of technologies and organizations. Attending more rigorously to object agency, it becomes possible and productive for technical communication to reimagine the usability lab founded upon attending to the formation of use, ratcheting up the unpredictability of use, tracing the agency of objects in the composition of use, and composing accounts of use that create a desire for even more uses.

**Material Approaches in the Tech Comm Classroom**
Amy Clark
"Material Approaches in the Tech Comm Classroom" discusses the value of object-oriented ontology for science-writing students. She employs Rickert’s metaphor of “terroir” to help her students emphasize the ambient environs of “things” they are researching. This presentation asks students to generate this saliency by using the tools of narrative nonfiction (e.g., sensory detail, analogy, framing, figurative language) to write, for example, about a possible vaccine against prostate cancer. Students describe the genesis, form, function, and actant relationships branching across the cancerous cell and vaccine to provide a more comprehensive, accessible account of these concepts for a public audience.

**Respondent**

Carl Herndl
University of South Florida

The respondent will briefly discuss potential directions that researchers might pursue in studies of materiality in our field, and initiate a robust discussion of these ideas among attendees.

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**B4: Florida Salon III**

**Attention to Language and its Value in Technical Communication**

**Chair:** Tammy Rice-Bailey, Milwaukee School of Engineering

**Army Flash! Narrating a Civil Defense Procedure**

Kaye Adkins
Missouri Western University

In a country preparing for war, the value of civilian defense readiness would seem obvious, but this was not the case in the United States in 1940. Even after the attack on Pearl Harbor, many parts of the country did not believe the immediacy of the situation. Perhaps the most important system developed by the Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) and the War Department was the “Army Flash,” with its observation posts along the Atlantic and Pacific. An understanding of the value of this system could convince citizens of the value of other OCD initiatives. The Army Flash process was explained in a simple step-by-step single page of text, but the process was also presented as a narrative in a variety of publications and media—In the *Handbook for Air Raid Wardens*, in a June 1942 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*, in
a series of NBC radio dramas under the series name *Eyes Aloft*, and even as television productions that were sent to training sessions in the New York area.

Why use narratives to illustrate a process that can be presented on a single sheet of paper? Simply put, because narrative is a powerful tool. In the June 2014 issue of *Intercom*, Steve Lemanski argues for “Technical Storytelling,” and in a 2014 *TCQ* article Derek Van Ittersum explores “Craft and Narrative in DIY Instructions.” These are the most recent of a handful of articles that have explored narrative in technical documents. This presentation will use this specific set of narratives—storytelling versions of the Army Flash process—to discuss the ways that narrative can be used to explain and teach technical concepts and procedures. By examining multiple narratives that illustrate the same process—each a different story—we can gain insights into how communicators can use narrative to add value to documents.

**From Frustration to Valuable Intervention? Technical communication as a language for science studies in emerging interdisciplinary research centers**

Kate Maddalena  
University of North Carolina Wilmington

Science and Technology Studies (STS) is a field perennially vexed by the problem of how to convert cultural critique into substantive and constructive contributions to real technoscientific endeavours (Latour 2004, Rabinow 2014). Technical communication has long seen itself as a field in which critique can convert into applied practice (e.g. Longo & Willis, 2006; Miller, 1979; Meyers, 1990; Rude, 2009; Scott, Longo & Willis, 2007). This presentation argues that recently emerging interdisciplinary research centers like Berkeley’s Synthetic Biology Engineering Research Center (SYNBERC) and NCSU’s Center for Genetic Engineering and Society (GES) are contexts with exceptional opportunity and exigence for technical communicators. Starting from the frustrations outlined in Rabinow’s (2014) account of his anthropological project at SYNBERC, I compare my own experiences as a participant observer at the inception of NCSU’s GES center. I ultimately propose several ways in which I see technical communication as a “humanities voice” that is uniquely equipped to make a real difference in these contexts. My proposed interventions fall into the two larger categories of methods and relationships. They offer potential for facilitate the participation of previously powerless (human) stakeholders as well as (nonhuman) actors in larger ecologies.

**“Explain Like I’m Five”: reddit as a Site of Technical Communication**

Ehren Pflugfelder  
Oregon State University
Recent studies have explored the relationships between technical communication and social media, including the use of actor-network theory to re-think how Websites present information (Potts, 2009, 2013, 2014), how technical communicators make use of social media to support knowledge work (Ferro & Zachry, 2014), and how social media can aid student ethos and promote critical analysis in the classroom (Bowdon, 2014; Verzosa Hurley & Kimme Hea, 2014). Much of this scholarship attends to how technical communication methods can assist users or how students can employ these sites for professional gain, though there is also opportunity to showcase technical communication in action. This presentation builds from studies that integrate social media in the classroom while also showing how reddit is a site for public technical communication work. I show how reddit can be integrated into a technical communication course in two ways – with a focus on plain style and the public face of that style.

Reddit’s subreddit /r/explainlikeimfive, or eli5, is where complex technical or scientific questions are answered by a larger community, with the goal of avoiding jargon and personal speculation, and striving for coherent explanations presented for a lay audience. Questions posted to eli5, and the resultant explanations, showcase both the importance of plain writing and how plain style functions in a social context. This presentation shows how both successful and unsuccessful eli5 explanations can be used in the classroom to demonstrate effective plain writing. Further, I show how the analysis of plain writing can scaffold projects where students explain recent technical or scientific news. Reddit’s “This Week in Science” and “This Week in Technology” are brief summaries of notable breakthroughs, paired with images and references. Working on similar projects, helps students identify the value of plain writing in the public sphere and highlights the public reception of technical writing.

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<th><strong>B5: Meeting Room 1</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Should we? A panel exploring ethics of astonishment, care, and common practice</strong></td>
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**Chair**: Michael Trice, MIT

**Panel Overview**: Technical communicators add value not only in terms of effectively communicating information, but also in terms of communicating in an ethical manner that meets the needs of organizations, the public, and the profession. This is seldom easy. Technical communicators often must navigate a tenuous relationship between accurate, effective, and appropriate communication with organizational protocols, goals and objectives as well as genre expectations. This panel dives into the murky waters of this triangle and explores ethics in current events from several perspectives, including the ethics of astonishment, the ethics of care, and the ethics of common practice. True to the ATTW Code of Ethics, this panel will further equip teachers of technical communication with additional insight to foster a sense of ethical responsibility among students and to prepare them for technical communication careers with the appropriate theories, knowledge, and skills.
Visualizing Atrocities: Images of Human Suffering in Websites Dedicated to Education and Remembrance
Emil Towner
St. Cloud State University

How does one visually represent facts and statistics of atrocities? The Kigali Memorial Centre in Rwanda displays gruesome photographs of genocide victims sprawled across city streets. The image of a young Vietnamese girl running naked, severely burned, and terrified is awarded a Pulitzer Prize. Civil War documentaries zoom in to show the shattered limbs and lifeless eyes of fallen soldiers. Dragga and Voss argued against using inhumane graphics that are “insensitive or indifferent” to the human conditions they represent. However, they also cautioned against the opposite extreme—that is, “using grisly photographs of dead, dying, and disfigured human beings”. Similarly, Susan Sontag argued that images of violence and suffering operate as visual spectacles that objectify subjects more than they instruct viewers about humanity, morality, or history. This presentation explores the ethics of gruesome images in websites dedicated to the education and remembrance of atrocities. Those sites are compared to the visuals displayed on user-generated informational websites. Ethical theories and policies for displaying offending or gruesome images will be discussed. While websites dedicated to education and remembrance may only be able to convey the horrific facts by displaying more explicit images of human suffering, in such cases, visuals should follow the principle of least astonishment.

Framing food issues as ethics of care arguments: The communication cycle of the Kraft yellow dye controversy
Joy Cooney
Dixie State University

On October 31, 2013, Kraft Food Group announced it would remove synthetic dyes Yellow 5 and Yellow 6 from its character-shaped Macaroni & Cheese products. This presentation organizes the Kraft food dye case according to Crable & Vibbert’s (1985) five statuses of issue management, examining the phases of discourse among Kraft, food blogger advocates, the public, and conventional. I argue that social agents can effect change by framing food issues as ethics of care arguments. In the spring of 2011, a children’s health advocacy group attached significance to the issue of synthetic dyes in Kraft’s American versions of Mac & Cheese, noting that Kraft’s United Kingdom versions only contain natural dyes. The advocacy group emphasized ethics of justice, but their change.org petition received little attention, ultimately closing with fewer than 3,000 signatures. However, two years later, two food bloggers took on the same issue, noting ethics of justice, but emphasizing ethics of care. Their change.org petition garnered 30,000
signatures in just two days and now has more than 360,000 signatures. Moreover, the issue reached critical status when conventional media covered the story. Kraft eventually removed synthetic dyes from several products targeted to kids. In an effort to influence corporate standards, which may eventually influence public policy, social agents are pursuing social and ethical ideals. Social agents and communicators would do well to consider framing food issues as ethics of care arguments, calling on the able to support the vulnerable.

**ESOP’s Fable: A clashing of culture, common practice, power, and choice**
Heidi Everett
Texas Tech University

It’s legal, but is it ethical? That’s the question at the heart of this discussion. This presentation situates itself at the intersection of legal versus ethical technical communication as it relates to common practice, the axis of power, and informed choice. Following an ongoing 2009 lawsuit that hinges on the design and content of a 189-page legal document, we’ll specifically explore ethics of legal documentation from four theoretical perspectives: Arthur Walzer’s (1989) discussion of common practice, Tyanna Herrington’s (2003) Axis of Power test, Sam Dragg’a (1996) discussion of intent in document design, and Thomas Nilsen’s (1958) discussion of freedom of choice. Through the unfolding of this particular case, we’ll examine the wider implications that are pertinent to the lives of clients, students, professional practices and educators and our obligations to:

- Think critically about simple acceptance of common practice, particularly in highly-regulated documentation,
- Teach beyond what is accepted as common practice, and
- Challenge common practice in our professional work and as informed citizens to be both legal and ethical.

**B6: Florida Salon IV**

**Visualization and Value in Technical Communication**

**Chair**: Melanie Salome, University of Texas, El Paso

**The Invisible Men: Tracing the Visual Representation of Native Americans and Their Lands in the Historical Statistical Atlases of the United States**
Li Li
Elon University

Although it may have already been a scholarly agreement that data displays are rhetorically and socially constructed, we still approach and teach data displays as being transparent, neutral and objective. My study challenges the valued
neutrality of data displays by analyzing the visual rhetoric of a prominent piece of data visualization in American history: the *Statistical Atlases* issued by the congress. Created in the golden age of data visualization in the late 19th century and early 20th century, the six volumes of *Statistical Atlases* were rigorous pieces of scientific work, marvelous aesthetic artifacts, and significant pieces of technical communication produced by the federal government that characterized Americans and their lands. Although the graphic features and statistical innovations of the *Atlases* have long been acknowledged, the rhetorical effects and ideological implications of the *Atlases* have not received sufficient critical attention. As Benedict Anderson points out that the nation is an imagined political community, I argue that as a power tool, the *Atlases* offer a particular way to imagine the nation.

My study traces the representation of Native Americans and their lands in the six *Statistical Atlases*. Through the visual language of maps and data displays, I will show how a narrative was constructed promoting the westward expansion while effacing the Native Americans and their culture. I will also show how the construction of Native Americans in the *Atlases* reflected and reshaped the historical context. My intention is to shed light on the fabrications of politics and ideologies that played out behind the visual language of data displays. The study also contributes case study materials to the discussion of ethics in the technical communication classroom.

**The Rhetoric of Distress: The Existential Value of Visualizing Risk**
Charles Kostelnick
Iowa State University

Technical communicators provide value by enabling people around the globe to live, work, and travel safely and avoid bodily harm or even death posed by a wide array of threats, ranging from natural disasters and infectious diseases to hazardous equipment, technology, and materials. For all of these threats to human safety, visual language (both digital and print) is playing an increasingly significant role in risk prevention for public, professional, and consumer audiences. Risk is visualized in many forms (Sauer, 2002; Tebeaux, 2010; Dragga and Gong, 2014), both graphical and pictorial, most of which succeed by engendering emotional appeals that impel users to pay attention and act. For example, graphical forms like government maps of natural disasters (NOAA, U.S. Geological Survey) and epidemics (Centers for Disease Control) create powerful pathos appeals by deploying color, affording micro-level interactivity, and invoking kairos. These risk visualizations perform deliberative functions by enabling stakeholders to prepare for potential trauma. On the other hand, pictorial visualizations of risk in safety signs used in labs and industry and in warnings in instructional materials often have even more immediate impact. These risk visualizations deploy pathos appeals through:

- **Representations of people**, which humanize potential trauma by creating identification, agency, and empathy.
- **Hyperbole**, which heightens the distress through the grotesque (e.g., bodies caught in machinery), arousing
emotions such as fear, revulsion, and pity.

- Abstraction, which depersonalizes the trauma, fosters cross-cultural identification, and embodies the minimalist design principles of modernism.

Drawing on approximating 25 artifacts (maps, warnings, safety signs) from around the world, I will quantify and analyze design conventions that evoke pathos appeals. The rhetorical strategies deployed in these risk visualizations create value by protecting audiences from danger and empowering them to take preventative measures.

**Seeing Red: California’s Drought and Cartographic Clarity**  
Daniel Liddle  
Purdue University

The state of California is currently suffering from a major drought, one of potentially unprecedented scope. Though the drought is often discussed by a number of different stakeholders (scientists, politicians, farmers) and through a number of different topics (infrastructural, agricultural, environmental, economic), it is almost always represented visually by a single map produced by the United States Drought Monitor (USDM).

In this presentation, I will discuss the visual rhetoric of the USDM map, pointing to the map’s ability to call attention to the threat of drought while simultaneously obscuring the drought’s specific causes and effects. By putting the map in conversation with the history of water politics in California, this talk identifies the way the USDM map conceals long-standing conflicts between the state’s agricultural and metropolitan stakeholders, conflicts which often stymie attempts to enact substantial water conservation policies. In this light, the USDM map exists at the center of what Charles Kostelnick terms the “conundrum of clarity” in the visual rhetoric of data displays. On the one hand the map does not specify a clear set of causes or effects of the drought. On the other hand, understanding the drought as a generalized, statewide problem may lead to substantive political change. Interestingly, the effectiveness of the USDM map lies in the very lack of empirical clarity it ultimately employs. By focusing on this specific case, I hope to provide a complementary extension to the existing work on the visual rhetoric of maps in technical communication that seeks to complicate the appeal to cartographic clarity (Barton and Barton, Kress and van Leeuwen, Propen).

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<th><strong>B7:</strong> Florida Salon VI</th>
<th><strong>Roundtable Discussion of What We Value as a Field</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Chair</strong> – Lisa Meloncon, University of Cincinnati</td>
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## Participants
Carolyn Miller, North Carolina State University  
Kelli Cargile Cook, Texas Tech University  
Bruce Maylath, North Dakota State University  
Jeff Grabill, Michigan State University  
Jim Porter, Miami University

### Lunch on Your Own
12:15-2:00

**Florida Salon V**  
**3rd Annual Women in Tech Comm Luncheon**

| Location | Concurrent Session C  
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### In the Classroom, In the Field, and Outside the Mosque: Valuing Transnational Connections

**Chair:** Natalia Matveeva, University of Houston Downtown

**Panel Overview:** This proposed panel examines the value of a strengthened focus on transnational research in technical communication in multiple areas of the field. The first presenter argues that technical communication research and teaching situated beyond borders should be enriched through stronger interdisciplinary ties and through the use of transnational feminist and indigenous research methodologies. The second presenter provides an example of the value of preparing technical communication students to work in an increasingly globalized field of transnational corporations working in developing nations. Finally, the third presenter argues for the value of researching the technical communication produced by amateur technical content generators online for use by peers in a socio-religious context.
Towards the Transnational Study and Teaching of Technical Communication
Nancy Small
Texas A&M University Quatar

Rude (2009) proposes that the central research question in technical communication scholarship is “How do texts (print, digital, multimedia; visual, verbal) and related communication practices mediate knowledge, values, and action in a variety of social and professional contexts?” Considering the ongoing effects of globalization, such “variety” of contexts increasingly includes complex cross-cultural spaces and places. This presentation argues that technical communication scholarship and teaching situated across and beyond borders should be informed by broader interdisciplinary scholarship in organizational studies, in indigenous and decolonizing methodologies, and in transnational feminist praxis. For example, research in organizational studies focused on expatriates and multinational corporations can enrich our understanding of internationally mobile professionals as cross-cultural knowledge articulators. Transnational feminist and indigenous research methodologies (e.g., Swarr & Nagar, S. Wilson, Tuhiwai Smith) can help technical communication scholarship foreground questions of authority, (re)presentation, contextualization, positionality, relationality, and reciprocity. After proposing a paradigm for transnational work in technical communication, the speaker, who has almost five years experience teaching and researching at an international branch campus in the Middle East, offers illustrations of how the approach can be applied in both research and the classroom.

Communication Across Boundaries: Examining One Company's Annual General Meeting in Papua New Guinea
Bea Amaya
Texas A&M University Quatar

This presentation is an examination of the preparation and delivery of a shareholder report, during the annual general meeting (AGM), for a transportation and logistics firm in a developing country. The delivery of the shareholder report, stock certificates, and dividend checks takes place over a period of four days in a trek across the Southern Highlands Province, with meeting stops at a number of villages along the way. Delivery of this level of relatively technical company and financial information to the thousands of shareholders, many of whom have low or no levels of literacy, demonstrates the complexities involved in preparing technical information for delivery across boundaries of national/transnational, literate/illiterate, vertical/lateral, oral/written and more. By situating the AGM as a genre of organizational communication (Yates), a social institution that can both shape and be shaped by individuals’ communicative actions, we can examine the genre more closely focusing on the social rules (Giddens) that influence
While no amount of technical communication classroom instruction could prepare a tech writer for such a challenging and amazing experience, preparing students to produce convincing texts that become important discourses in the field can.

**Volumizing Scrunchies and Liquid Eyeliner As Work-Arounds: Examining the Technical Communication in the Scarf-Tying Tutorials of Transnational Muslim Women**
Danielle Saad
Alvernia University

This talk addresses Carolyn Rude’s (2009) proposed central research question in technical communication scholarship from a socio-religious angle. Muslim women from locations around the globe have created an online community of women who wear the veil and share their experience and knowledge through make-up and scarf-tying tutorials. Unlike the atmosphere of multinational corporations where technical communicators are responsible to shareholders and consumers, YouTube has become a platform for amateur technical communicators to form a community of equals sharing knowledge and “hacks” outside of sanctioned religious discourse about the veil. This presentation examines how YouTube Scarf-Tying tutorials mediate knowledge, values, and actions of Muslim women who participate as technical content generators and recipients in a cross-cultural online setting. It explores a research situation focused outside of profit-generation centers or higher education but that is still valuable for its insight into producing user-centered content shared by a diverse group of women who make up a transnational community of users.

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<th>C2: Florida Salon I</th>
<th><strong>Online Teaching as Value in Technical Communication</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chair:</strong> Robin Evans, Case Western Reserve University</td>
<td><strong>Using a community of inquiry framework to show the value of online graduate education in technical and professional communication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Julie Watts</td>
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<td>University of Wisconsin, Stout</td>
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Directors of technical and professional communication (TPC) programs realize the importance of rigorous, ongoing program assessment that measures student performance (Allen, 2004), investigates how well outcomes and...
curriculum speak to industry needs and trends (Thomas & McShane, 2007), and shows the importance of our discipline and program to the institution and region (Carnegie, 2007; Philbin & Hawthorne, 2007). For directors of online TPC programs, assessment is particularly critical. Notions of online programs as “inferior to face-to-face” still pervade in the minds of some administrators (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 10), prospective students (Parker, Lenhart & Moore, 2011) and employers (Fogle & Elliot, 2013). Moreover, the online learning environment, its best practices, and pedagogies differ from those of the face-to-face classroom (Diaz, Swan, Ice & Kupczynski, 2010). Thus, an assessment of student learning that is tailored to speak to the characteristics of online TPC learning is vital.

In this presentation, I show how the community of inquiry (COI) framework considers the distinctive social, interactive and technological dynamics of the online learning environment, and the ways I use COI to show the value of my online TPC master’s program by assessing student learning, student interaction, and instructor presence. The COI model indicates that “deep learning” is only possible when students are cognitively and socially present and when instructors design and facilitate learning in ways that help students to achieve these presences. Using COI, my program assessment not only indicates how well students are achieving program outcomes but also theorizes why. That is, are students sufficiently cognitively engaged? Are students socially present and interacting with their peers? Do students perceive an acceptable level of instructor presence? Answers to these questions, coupled with data about student outcomes, helps program faculty and I to best determine how to continue to improve students’ online TPC learning.

**Multimodal Technical Communication in the Online Classroom**
Andrew Bourelle
University of New Mexico

I will describe a pilot program created to convert a face-to-face introductory technical communication course to an online format with an emphasis on multimodal and digital literacies. The program, dubbed eTC (short for Electronic Technical Communication), was developed in response to the growing demand for online education (Allen & Seaman, 2014) and the increasing importance of multimodal-literacy education (Takayoshi & Selfe, 2007; NCTE, 2005; Palmeri, 2014; Shipka, 2011, etc.). Besides technical communication’s longstanding emphasis on designing documents, the term “multimodal” remains relatively new within technical communication courses (Lauer, 2009), especially regarding video or sound projects, websites, or other compositions that deviate significantly from traditional text-based work. In other words, while technical communication classes have long been offered online and have traditionally included design considerations as part of the writing process, eTC is unusual in its use of embedded tutors and its heavy emphasis on multimodal literacy.

My colleagues and I previously developed an online first-year composition curriculum, called eComp, that focused on
multimodality, included embedded online writing tutors, and emphasized student reflections as part of the learning process. Adapted from a model used at Arizona State University (see T. Bourelle, Rankins-Robertson, A. Bourelle, & Roen, 2013), the FYC program was meant to attend to 21st-century literacies. In the fall of 2013, we expanded the eComp program to include a sophomore-level professional and technical communication course, dubbed eTC. Valuing the same learning goals behind eComp, our team built the eTC curriculum with a heavy-process model aided by online tutors as well as an emphasis on digital, multimodal literacies. I will describe the development of the eTC program, emphasizing the pedagogical goals we hoped to achieve, the practical nuts and bolts of putting the program into effect, and the challenges we have faced in developing a pedagogically sound online technical communication curriculum.

Tech Writer as Web Design SME: Adding Value to Online Course Development
Meredith Singleton
Northern Kentucky University

According to the 2012 Department of Education’s Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) report, 26% of all college students have taken at least one online course. Additionally, in less than a decade, online enrollment has nearly tripled (Allen and Seaman, 2013). To meet demand while maintaining rigor, online education programs have feverishly implemented course development criteria and adopted versions of the Quality Matters™ rubric. Yet, there currently exists a gap between many online course interfaces and best practices in website design. How can institutions improve online coursework usability and accessibility? This presentation proposes that the answer lies in including the technical writer’s expertise in the course design process. Typically, at institutions with developed online initiatives, course development involves instructional designers (IDs) working with faculty to build courses that meet student learning outcomes. Even so, key elements to effective course design—intuitive navigation, few clicks to information, and disability accessible content—often become process afterthoughts, while they remain key factors for online student success (Swan, 2001; Mupinga, Nora and Yaw, 2006; Song, Singleton, Hill and Koh, 2004; Huss and Eastep, 2013).

While technical writers can improve the course design process through testing and review (Blythe, 2001), this paper suggests technical writers take an active role from the beginning of the online course development process including interface design, navigation, and structure. This presentation will overview a pilot study using online courses from across four disciplines, and then highlight common weaknesses in course design, illustrating how these weaknesses could be overcome by integrating a tech writer in the process. As evidenced, this presentation calls institutional technical writers to become active participants in course development as web design SMEs. Further, this presentation proposes additional research be conducted in this area to continue exploring the importance of technical writers in
high-quality online course design.

C3: Florida Salon II

Presidential Executive Orders: Coordinating Value and Rhetorical Action

Chair: Donnie Sackey, Wayne State University

Panel Overview: Presidential executive orders are strange legal documents. While they have the distinction among government texts of being “uniquely personal utterances of the President” guiding the policy of a specific administration, they are often taken up and adapted by various governmental entities to guide larger trajectories of action. While they could be considered examples of epideictic rhetoric intended to state values, they are also deliberative in their capacity to inflect debates around ongoing policy directions. This panel will discuss three case studies of executive orders as examples of rhetorical coordination of values, actions, and infrastructures: one around developing and adopting electronic health records, another around responding to environmental justice concerns, and a third around promoting linguistic access to health care systems.

Executive Orders as Rhetorical Infrastructure
J. Blake Scott
University of Central Florida

Presidential executive orders have served important agenda setting and coordinating roles in the U.S. government’s efforts to promote electronic health records (ehrs). This presentation will trace how two of President George W. Bush’s executive orders (13335 and 13410) have been adapted by the Obama administration’s policies, including HHS regulations, to incentivize adoption and meaningful use by hospitals and physicians. I will propose an understanding of these orders and related texts as a rhetorical infrastructure, particularly in their embodiment of standards that attempt to coordinate the values of other (potential) users. Of course, ehrs can also be conceptualized as a technical infrastructure and, when we imagine their contexts of use, as embedded in larger sociocultural infrastructures that include provider and patient values, relationships, and histories. In reading the relationships among the rhetorical, technical, and sociocultural infrastructures supporting ehrs, I will argue that the first two types should be overlooked or flattened, particularly in terms of patient use. Even as ehrs policy arguments have shifted to address concerns about patient literacy, access, and privacy, they have largely ignored the sociocultural infrastructures shaping or limiting patients’ potential participation.
Executive Orders as Rhetorical Actors
Donnie Sackey
Wayne State University

This presentation reports on a quasi-autonomous actor’s creation and maintenance of rhetorical space needed for public deliberation of complex environmental problems. I argue that writing devices act in rhetorical ways within networks. Here my concern is twofold: 1) when it comes to collective action within networks, what is the relationship of a writing device as an individual to the larger coordinated actions of other actors? and 2) if a writing device is said to act rhetorically, then what considerations are necessary before dissemination? As a site for analysis, I focus on the case of President Clinton’s E.O. 12898 and its relation to environmental groups’ efforts to create similar bureaucratic action within the state of Michigan. E.O. 12898 recognized the efforts of the environmental justice (EJ) movement and created the foundation by which federal agencies are to address EJ concerns. There has been much debate as to what effect this executive action has had on addressing issues that are seen and experienced as local at several scales of complexity. This presentation serves as a space to consider the type of rhetorical actions Michigan policymakers should take into account as they design for environmental justice.

Executive Orders as Rhetorical Resource
Scott Wible
University of Maryland

Since the Civil Rights Act of 1964, federal and federally supported agencies have been required to ensure that language minority groups can access their services. The subsequent 35 years, however, saw little effort to implement or enforce this multilingual language policy. Finally, in 2000 President Bill Clinton prompted action toward that end with Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency. This text reemphasized federal agencies’ obligations to language minorities, and it established an infrastructure to ensure that all agencies “develop and implement a system” that provides “meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.” This presentation traces federal and local responses to this Executive Order, with particular attention to how the Department of Health and Human Services composed its own language policy that integrated the order’s rhetorical vision of “meaningful access” and, in turn, how the HHS language policy reshaped the research and communication practices of hospitals and clinics that work most directly with language minorities. This presentation, then, analyzes this particular case of E.O. 13166 in order to help scholars better understand how executive orders articulate values that, through their rhetorical integration into other policies, guide day-to-day activities in local organizations.
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<th>C4: Florida Salon III</th>
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<td><strong>Chair:</strong> Miriam Williams, Texas State University</td>
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| **Writing to Wider Public Audiences on Topics That Matter: Social Justice in a Very Small Place**  
Robert Johnson  
Michigan Technological University |  |
| In Mike Rose’s CCCC Exemplar Award acceptance speech, he urged his colleagues in composition studies to take on the task of writing for wider public audiences on issues that matter. I could not agree more, and I argue that we should heed this call in technical and scientific communication. His call for action through writing that is published in forums we in academe usually ignore, or find difficult to imagine, is a challenge worth the effort, especially when such writing works toward social justice or other communal goals. Nowhere can this be done better than in technical and scientific communication contexts. In my presentation, I will share my own experiences over the past five years writing about nuclear development issues to a variety of public and popular audiences. My aim has been to demonstrate through venues as wide ranging as national newspaper editorials, literary and environmental magazines, public policy journals and a book publisher how communities around the world confront nuclear development and the waste (physical and psychological) it leaves in its wake. In particular, I will focus on one case that involved a small southern Ohio town in the 1950s where the presence of a top-secret uranium milling facility—operated for five years in a residential area of a bucolic university town—was unknown for over three decades by residents who literally lived next door. The existence of the facility was revealed in 1993 and eventually cleaned up, but only after monumental effort by members of the local community who battled the EPA, DOE, and other governmental agencies and private interests. |  |
| **High-Impact Civic Engagement: The Value of Community-Based Research in Technical Communication**  
Allen Brizee  
Loyola University Maryland |  |
| This paper presents findings from a four-year community-based research study and details the mixed-methods model used for the project, a partnership between an urban university and an at-risk neighborhood. The project incorporated direct service, such as neighborhood beautification, and collaborative deliverables, such as community |  |
websites, following Bowden and Scott’s model (2003). Extending this model, I developed an approach I call “data weaving” to integrate IRB-approved empirical methods into the initiative. Informed by Simmons and Grabill (2007), Getto, Cushman, and Ghosh (2011), and Bergmann, Brizee, and Wells (2012), data weaving uses an iterative model of mixed-methods research for its process and pedagogy to assess outcomes. "High-Impact Civic Engagement" argues that data weaving is an effective model for developing high-impact civic engagement in technical communication. To help attendees develop similar community initiatives, I cover three aspects of the engagement project: stakeholder information, research methods and findings, and applicable project strategies. The talk begins by outlining stakeholders’ missions, which primarily focus on improving education and boosting civic capacity. I argue that collaboration is most successful when stakeholders work toward common goals, echoing findings from other scholars (Blythe, Grabill, and Riley 2008). I use examples from my engagement project to support this assertion. Next, I present findings from the community-based study by discussing the results of a mixed-methods survey, as well as results from student and community partner interviews. The presentation explains how the project’s methodology helped foster high-impact results trending toward transformational experiences on the Relationship Continuum (Bringle, Clayton, and Price 2009). Lastly, I provide detailed resources to support attendees’ efforts in similar work at their institutions and in their local communities. In this way, I hope to answer Rude’s call for overcoming the challenges of community-based work and finding “ways to make a difference” (2008).

C5: Meeting Room 1

The Value of Innovative Pedagogies in Technical Communication

Chair: Xiaobo Wang, Georgia State University

Case Pedagogy 2.0: Pushing Past the 20th Century
Jonathan Maricle
University of South Carolina

In economic theory, value is a negotiation of transaction or exchange that can only be assessed after the transaction – regardless of the prospective value we assign before the exchange. Using this concept as a starting point, this presentation examines one site of historical exchange as a key determinant of technical writing’s value over the last 90 years: case study pedagogy. More specifically, this presentation argues that, by incorporating other fields’ use of case pedagogy, technical writing can greatly broaden its institutional significance for the 21st century demands of both students and labor. The use of case study pedagogy in technical writing dates back to the 1920s, as Teresa Kynell’s work shows, and is a direct response to industry’s need for more hands-on training in the classroom. However, despite its popularity over the last 90 years (both in the academy and in industry), little has been done to
change the way that our field conceptualizes and practices case studies. As a result, our field’s approach to case pedagogy has become quite rote even while, across the academy, teaching case studies has flourished in a number of innovative ways.

To better match industry demands in the 21st century, this presentation recommends that we revamp our case pedagogy in three crucial ways: by embracing multimodal, non-linear case dissemination (as used in the medical fields); by utilizing fantastical black swan scenarios to respond to an unknown future (as used in economics and disaster preparedness); and by reconceiving what types of “deliverables” our students produce (as used in complex systems computing and data analysis). When reimagined in these ways, case pedagogy can accommodate industry and academy desires for utility and skills assessment while also radically altering Aristotle’s and Toulmin’s methods of casuistic decision making.

The Value of Sequential Rhetoric: Teaching Comics Production to Promote Visual Literacy
Robert Watkins
Idaho State University

With the demand for data visualization and technical visuals perpetually growing in value in both higher education and the workplace, creating effective visuals in the classroom has become a need more than a luxury. However, when we ask students to use images they often turn to generic Google image searches or tired clipart without doing any original design. Additionally, too often the focus in the classroom remains in analysis; while this is a good start, engaging in production of images is vital. Diana George addresses professional communication’s reluctance to make students producers. She writes that we rarely encourage students to move from visual critics to being visual producers (213). She worries that while the profession would be comfortable with students studying visuals, producing them takes it too far (216). But teaching visual literacy production through comics can address both of these concerns.

I argue that teaching students to design comics in the professional communication classroom teaches valuable visual literacy skills. The data stems from an empirical classroom study I orchestrated that incorporated progymnasmata (Quintilian, D’Angelo) to enable students to create and analyze instructional comics in a step-by-step process. My presentation will place comics among visual rhetoric theories such as design demystification, the use of gestalt principles, and technology as tools (as championed by Northcut, Brumberger, Bernhardt, Kostelnick). My pedagogical approach will rely on multimodal design principles (from New London Group, Ball, Bezemer, Kress) and focus on production-centric pedagogies like those championed by Rice and others. I will discuss the classroom study by addressing the results from students that suggest that comics effectively teach juxtaposition, core writing skills, and
hierarchy in an intuitive fashion that may be unique to the medium.

**A Hedonist’s Guide To Technical Writing: Atechne and the Limits of Writing Skillfully**

Jimmy Butts

Wake Forest University

This presentation explores two avenues that are conceptual stop-gaps for technical writing in the workplace and the college classroom. Valuing fun alongside, and sometimes counter to, accuracy prevents technical writing from being successful by more conventional definitions of technical writing. In *The Republic*, Plato himself suggested that education, particularly in writing, should intrinsically be made fun. Nevertheless, viewing the practice of any skilled *techne*, or ability to write for a technical aim, is also, always a limitation. A few places, such as Carolyn Miller’s “A Humanistic Rationale for Technical Writing” and Lex Runciman’s spirited little essay “Fun?” from *College English*, have explored the matter of fun and interestingness in the teaching of more utilitarian modes of written communication. In addition, several major companies, such as Google and IKEA are now known for playfulness in their technical documentation.

The presenter then shares a few practices that have been used in a professional technical writing position and courses to counter what is normally considered rote writing. This analysis of the issue, then, explores three main tactics for valuing fun, embracing a hedonistic lens, in technical writing. Certain unchecked values within technical writing—such as clarity, comprehension, and simplicity—are challenged here as both skills, *techne*, and limitations, *atechne*—a term modified form Aristotle and brought into contemporary thought by Vitanza, Hauser, Crowley, and others. The perspective then, asks us to review the practices of technical writing in the real world and in the classroom in light of our often-unchallenged assumptions about its values. In short, technical writing can be fun; we just have to find the right examples of teaching and practice that can be aligned with more sybaritic values.

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**C6: Florida Salon IV**

**Undervalued Concepts in Technical Communication Pedagogy**

**Chair:** Joanna Wolfe, Carnegie Mellon University

**Panel Overview:** The four presentations in this panel present research on concepts that have been undervalued in technical communication classrooms.

**Teaching interpersonal communication strategies for troubleshooting team problem**
Elizabeth Powell  
Tennessee Technological University

Teaching teamwork has become a routine part of technical communication pedagogy. However, even the best designed projects will still run into trouble if one of the team members is domineering or is a “slacker.” But how should students handle such teammates? What interpersonal communication skills do they need? To find out the answers to these questions, we conducted discourse completion interviews with 23 engineering professionals and 19 students. We found that students tended to either avoid confronting problematic teammates or else use accusatory language focused on correcting behaviors. By contrast, professionals focused on moving the project forward rather than dwelling on the past. They used a team infrastructure to reassign roles and set earlier deadlines for slackers, and they used semi-formal team procedures (such as pro/cons lists) to address domineering teammates. Professionals were also careful to establish shared team goals and criteria that they used to ground any criticism and to provide a basis for their recommendations. We end by suggesting a “formula” students can use to confront problematic teammates.

“hey professor!”: Valuing politeness and formality conventions in informal communication
Joanna Wolfe  
Carnegie Mellon University

Despite spending a semester in a technical/professional communication course, my students will often send me emails that seem oblivious to professional norms: they fail to use my name; request that I respond “ASAP;” ask me information that can easily be looked up; and neglect to thank me for my time. Such lack of politeness carries over into the workplace: employers who hire our graduates tell us of unprofessional communication once they are on the job. It is disturbing that students who have taken a professional communication course can nonetheless exhibit such breeches of basic courtesy. This presentation discusses how I use the results of a survey of 172 HR professionals who routinely hire our institution’s graduates to teach students the importance of valuing politeness in all contexts. The survey finds that professionals perceive politeness errors in emails as even more bothersome than grammatical errors and provides context for what types of behaviors and requests professionals deem as impolite. I then present a class activity that is effective in fostering more polite and professional email behavior.

Narrative as an invention tool for teaching technical writing students to accommodate complex information
Necia Werner
When I ask students in my introductory technical writing courses to differentiate technical from other form of writing, they frequently cite “less creative,” “less personal,” or “boring” as its defining features. In contrast, when I ask technical writing alumni to talk about the role of creativity in industry, they are quick to cite “clear and compelling storytelling” as critical for accommodating complex information from a Subject Matter Expert (SME), creating meaningful user assistance in software, or serving effectively as a user advocate in Scrum teams. This presentation describes results from incorporating more explicit narrative theory, strategies, and writing activities into five sections of an introductory TPC course. In three sections, students wrote a research-based article based on interviews with a SME, practicing strategies for accommodating technical concepts for non-experts. In the remaining two sections, students wrote an “observer portrait” feature story prior to the research-based news article, in which they explored narrative strategies and style choices for writing clear and compelling stories about people. Results suggest that students who practiced observer portraiture first made more connections in the draft and peer review stages of the research accommodation to the ways that narrative—as an accommodation strategy—can facilitate both reader comprehension and enjoyment.

Extra(-Textual) Value: Doing More with Captions in Our TPC Journal Articles
Jo Mackiewicz
Iowa State University
Shannon N. Fanning
Iowa State University
Derek Hanson
Iowa State University
Jordan Smith
Iowa State University
Sara Doan
Iowa State University

According to Kostelnick (1989), as extra-textual elements, captions operate independently of a document’s main text in the same way that data plotted on x- and y-axes in a graph or details in a photograph do, but unlike plotted data or picture details, they encode meaning through a symbol (alphabetic) system (p. 79). Research strongly supports the value of using captions to describe, explain, and ruminate on visual elements. However, the articles we publish in our TPC journals often fail to take advantage of captions. Even a cursory glance through the five major TPC journals
reveals captions largely limited to short, descriptive phrases and sentences. I draw upon research from educational psychology to describe how captions can facilitate users’ comprehension and recall. I delineate strategies for developing captions that further the purposes of visual elements and improve readers’ understanding of research questions and findings: explaining how to use the visual, describing the visual, directing attention to some aspect of the visual, and raising questions about the visual’s content. We in TPC can employ these strategies ourselves and teach them to our students.

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“The Big Chill” Online: A Technical Communication Program Reflects After a Decade Online
Jennifer Veltsos
Minnesota State University, Mankato

What’s the Value of the Technical Writing Internship Class?: A Study Across the Field
Joseph Bartolotta
University of New Mexico

Managing Value: A Framework for Negotiating the Systems that Define Technical Communication
Joanna Schreiber
Georgia Southern University

Building Value into Poster Presentations: A Best-Practices Approach to Designing Print Posters for Academic and Professional Contexts
Brian Blackburne
Sam Houston State University
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<td><strong>Explo... TC and First-Year Writing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chair:</strong> Diane Martinez</td>
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<td><strong>Valuing the Praxis of Technical Writing and Occupational Therapy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Randall Monty</strong></td>
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<td><strong>University of Texas-Pan American</strong></td>
<td><strong>At the contact zone of Technical Writing and Occupational Therapy value is created, in the words of Meloncon (2013), through “a social constructionist view of science and technology that demands detailed and theoretically grounded analyses of the ethical, social, cultural, and political effects of discourse.” However, lacking an appropriate tracking mechanism, stakeholders in these disciplines have been thus far unable to consistently measure the contribution that</strong></td>
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undergraduate writing instruction has specifically had on graduate students and professionals. As a direct response to this need, an interdisciplinary project, consisting of course redesign and study of knowledge transfer, was collaboratively initiated at an institution where Technical Writing is a prerequisite course for application to the Occupational Therapy graduate program.

This project was designed to provide better understandings what students had learned in undergraduate writing courses, gauge whether those skills transferred to graduate and professional contexts, and inform writing pedagogies in both disciplines. The redesigned course incorporated interdisciplinary scholarship from the areas of medical rhetoric (most notably, Teston & Graham, 2012; and Scott, Segaly, & Keranen, 2013), writing as a physical activity (Owens & Ittersum, 2013), remix composition (Delagrange, 2009; Webb, 2010), as well as how writing is already used in OT practice and pedagogy (Buchanan, Moore, & van Niekerk, 1998; Chippendale & Bear-Lehman 2013). To demonstrate the synthesis of these concepts, students composed formal, disciplinary instructions documents, and a collaborative, interdisciplinary remix project - the latter of which took forms as diverse as an individualized raspberry pi with a Minecraft tutorial designed to isolate fine motor skills, to a combination board game/elementary lesson plan for teaching about germs, sanitation, and color recognition. In the proposed presentation, results from the piloted redesigned course, including examples of student work, and preliminary data from the mixed methodological study will be presented and discussed.

The “common” core: Using tech writing’s competencies to teach valuable lessons in FYW
Michael Tardiff
Kennebec Valley Community College
Mihn-Tam Nguyjen
Michigan State University

This presentation will place technical communication’s core competencies—as expressed in Hart-Davidson (2001)—into conversation with the new WPA Learning Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (2014). Ultimately, we argue that the foundations of technical communication via Hart-Davidson—abstraction, experimentation, collaboration, and system thinking—are not only germane to FYC but also fundamental to the types of knowledge transfer coveted by writing teachers. In this way, technical writing has value beyond technology-rich or technical environments; it has value to students across disciplines.

To illustrate this value, we’ll not only describe how technical writing’s core competencies articulate well with the Outcomes statement, we’ll also demonstrate how these core competencies can help teachers promote the ever-valuable and often-mythical idea of transfer. Here, we take a three-part approach to understanding transfer in FYC
(task-based, individual-based and context-based) as offered by Wardle (2007). This conversation is timely not only because of the impending release of the Outcomes statement this fall, but because, as Brent (2011) states: the field writ large is unsure how to promote the types of metacognition/metalinguistic awareness known to facilitate the transfer of knowledge.

According to Brent (2011), the primary goal of first-year writing is to “prepare students for the writing they will do later—in the university and beyond it,” a sentiment echoed in the Outcomes statement. But, recent studies have questioned “whether learning transfer is accomplished as easily as we once assumed—or indeed, whether it happens at all” (Brent 558). Despite the optimism of existing transfer studies, it is “difficult to glean a larger set of principles for designing pedagogical environments encouraging students to transfer knowledge to, or for, other contexts” (405). We believe that looking at key tenets, or values, of technical communication, alongside the Outcomes statement, can point to a set of principles necessary for productive transfer of knowledge across contexts.

**The Value of Technical Communication in First-Year Writing**

David Lipscomb

Georgetown University

While Redish (1995), Mead (1998), and others have asked how technical communication adds value to a company, I will explore how an authentic technical communication challenge can add value in a first-year writing (FYW) class at a liberal arts college. FYW classes, such as I’ve been teaching at Georgetown University, usually incorporate traditional liberal arts writing challenges (think literary analyses and cultural interpretations). But such assignments usually position the instructor as the primary reader, prompting the game of “writing to please the teacher.” That game has diminishing value, especially in an increasingly global, social world with flattened organizational hierarchies.

Consequently much work in composition studies has focused on ways to “decenter” the classroom using “public rhetoric” assignments, such as letters to the editor and op-eds, which call for circulation beyond the classroom. One challenge of public circulation assignments, however, is how not just to expand readership but also to focus on specific readers and contexts. This is where technical communication challenges can add value – since they demand immersion in the world of specific readers. Recently, I have been incorporating into my FYW classes writing challenges facing the Red Cross and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. In this paper I will focus especially on one assignment: revising an Online Donation Processing Guide for local Red Cross chapters transitioning to a national donor data center. It was an authentic challenge (a revision urgently needed by the Red Cross) that involved briefings from Red Cross representatives on the Guide’s aims, audience, and usability requirements.
I will discuss the value of the assignment for both students and my own pedagogy, drawing largely from student reflections on class blogs and their final portfolios. Finally, I will discuss how and why I incorporated a different Red Cross technical writing challenge into this year’s course, drawing on lessons from last year.

D2: Florida Salon I

The Value of Theory in Technical Communication Research and Practice

Chair: Nathan Johnson, Purdue University

Adding Value During Times of Change: Project Management in the Third Space
Ben Lauren
Michigan State University

Professional and technical communicators are uniquely positioned and skilled to add value to organizations by managing projects in a variety of contexts. Yet, adding value consistently during times of change can be challenging because of unforeseen circumstances such as layoffs, unit reorganization, or the adoption of unfamiliar work processes. As Lev Manovich (2013) argues, the world can now be defined by software that is always changing (p. 1-2). Such constant development also changes how project managers approach projects, processes, information, teams, and environments (see Harrison, Wheeler, and Whitehead, 2004; Spinuzzi, 2008; Spilka, 2011; Henry, 2013; Blythe, Lauer, and Curran, 2014). This presentation responds to ATTW’s “questions of value” theme by focusing on how technical communicators working as project managers can add value during times of change.

To discuss adding value during times of change pragmatically, the presentation reports on a case study of a team of information experience designers undergoing reorganization, highlighting the disruptions and contradictions that influenced productivity. Further, the presentation explains how some members of the team embraced serendipity to add value to projects during the reorganization. To illustrate project management during times of change and reorganization, the presentation extends third space theory to emphasize the importance of improvisational skills. “In its broadest sense, Thirdspace is a purposefully tentative and flexible term that attempts to capture what is actually a constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings” (Soja, 1996, p. 2). Project managers, as well, can draw from user experience design to structure serendipitous workplace experiences for teams during times of change. Ultimately, the presentation ends by explaining how the curriculum of a project management course at Michigan State University specifically addresses adding value to projects during times of workplace change.

Disability and the Rhetoric of Space: Understanding the ADA as a Call for Reconfiguration of Space toward
**Egalitarian Ends**
Charley Silvio
Louisiana State University

Since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the shifts in disability’s role in the workplace have been complicated. The legislation has undoubtedly raised broader cultural awareness about treatment of employees with disabilities. At the same time, though, much of the political rhetoric surrounding the law manipulatively frames the regulations as overly burdensome to employers and damaging to the very workers it attempts to protect. Additionally, measuring the impact of the law has been notoriously difficult, prompting the ADA Knowledge Translation Center at the University of Washington to embark on a five year systematic review of ADA research; their scoping review was recently published in *Disability Studies Quarterly*.

While such efforts are of obvious importance from a quantitative standpoint, it is also valuable to consider the issue from other, more theoretical perspectives in order to motivate progress. What I propose in my paper is utilizing a close reading of the spirit of ADA legislation in order to liberate the existing rhetoric from its current fixation with economic concerns. Instead, by formulating a rhetoric of space, I show that it is possible to conceive of the physical world around us as a medium of communication. By finding discourse present in the our constructed environments, it becomes possible to envision the ADA as more than a regulatory device to correct economic injustice and workplace discrimination; the law grows to encompass a move to reconfigure space in order to refashion the physical world into a more egalitarian environment. I also briefly touch on movements in corporate culture and architecture that signal a wider cultural drive to reimagine the function of workspace, a movement that provides a pre-existing model for spatial reconfiguration in terms of communicative value.

**Questioning the value of democracy in science and technology policy**
S. Scott Graham
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
Danielle DeVasto
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Technical communicators and rhetoricians are very familiar with the long-standing problem of inclusion in science-policy deliberation (Blythe, Grabill & Riley, Koerber, Peterson & Horton, Schwarze, Wynne). Traditionally, the issue has been framed in terms of the manifest value of democratic access and how best to include the marginalized voices of non-expert classes. Indeed, science-policy scholars have documented a systematic marginalization of these voices in
issues of public health, toxic waste storage, nuclear contaminants, and climate change. A long history of governmental agencies, in concert with technical experts, making policy decisions without public input strongly suggests the need for an increasingly democratic approach. However, recent scholarship citing the dangers of universal inclusion for policy outcomes has strongly questioned the value of democratic access as the primary criterion for the constitution of science-policy decision-making bodies, pointing to the manifold problems that have risen from climate change denialism, creationist curricula, and pro-tobacco health science (Ceccarelli, Collins & Evans, Latour).

The divergent approaches of these two scholarly agendas to valuing democratic inclusion in science-policy decision making highlights a significant problem for both inquiry into science-policy deliberation and those who argue that technical communicators may make ideal science-policy mediators (Blythe, Grabill & Riley; Callon, Lascoumes, and Barthe). Directly addressing and potentially resolving these outstanding questions over the value of democratic access is an essential component of both scholarly and interventional efforts. Subsequently, this presentation will explore conflicting views regarding the value of democratic access in technical communication, rhetorical, and related scholarship. Building on this discussion, the presentation will further explore approaches to investigating the benefits of competing normative models (Graham et al.) and potential lines of demarcation for identifying when democratic access should be understood to be the higher value.

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**D3: Florida Salon I**

**Not Normally Valued: Queering Methodologies, Risky Research, and Institutional Review Board**

**Chair:** Meredith Johnson, University of South Florida

**Panel Overview:** The everyday documents of a profession provide insight into that profession’s values. This panel interrogates how Institutional Review Board (IRB) documentation and practices reflect and shape the values of technical communication teachers and researchers. Technical communicators are often able to disrupt hegemonic discourse such as laws, regulations, and policies that position specific people and bodies in ways that take away agency. We propose a queer methodological framework for valuing knowledge about research ethics and practices in the field of technical communication. We mean queering as troubling, disrupting, at odds with the dominant (Ahmed). Our framework asserts that good research designers should “interrogate the extent to which all designers imagine users that mirror themselves—and calls into question the extent to which designers are capable of imagining users different from themselves” (Haas 304). We suggest that dominant notions of what it means to be, and who gets to be considered “at risk” or “normal” or “regular” can be ruptured. This panel will offer suggestions to those who want to do risky (non-normative, non-regular) research for designing studies, interacting with IRBs, and participating in queer
**A Queer Question: LGBT Risk and IRBs**
Matt Cox  
East Carolina University  

This talk discusses researching LGBT identity in a Fortune 500 workspace, identifying IRB reactions to issues, values, approaches, and participants that might be risky to certain groups of people (in doing research in technical communication) and highlights stories where risk and normativity have been at the center of both content and methodology. For example, this talk examines the relationship between shame, fear, and passing (Butler) and LGBT participants in workplace-based research and how this relates to the risk of losing one’s job or suffering professionally. I also ask where agency should lie in the relationship between participant, researcher, and IRB. How can an IRB minimize risk while preserving participant agency? Is risk always a negative thing? What can queer theory, queer rhetorics, and the LGBT movement and LGBT identity teach the IRB about the importance of and affordances of risk as related to potential benefit? What can a queered methodology teach us about looking at things that are often held as risky, and thus to be avoided (Halberstam), as things that can instead be confronted, embraced, and used to further both LGBT issues and individual LGBT workplace identity?

**Interfacing with IRBs: Disrupting Notions of “Risky” Research**
Michelle Eble  
East Carolina University  

This presentation will examine Institutional Review Boards’ (IRBs) responsibility for determining risk and ensuring that researchers have a plan for minimizing (or mediating) risk(s) to participants during the research. Additional protections must be taken for those defined as vulnerable populations. Federal regulations address risk directly, but very little specific guidance has been provided to IRBs in order to discuss and interpret the “risky” potential of any study on participants, whether protected or not. In the section on Criteria for IRB approval of research, the IRB should determine that “1. Risks to subjects are minimized and 2. Risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to subjects, and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result” [45 CFR 46.111: (a) 1-2]. This talk will discuss risk as it is rhetorically constructed and valued given the federal government definitions and research review practices of IRBs and asks how researchers can interface with and educate IRBs about what they perceive as “risky” research.

**Vulnerable Subjects: The Pregnant-But-Informed Body**
IRB protocols (drawing on federal regulations) typically describe “subjects likely to be vulnerable to coercion or undue influence” as including “children, prisoners, pregnant women, mentally disabled persons.” While some of the populations described are certainly inhibited from giving informed consent, the cause(s) of perceived vulnerability of other “subjects” is less clear. Specifically, this presentation takes issue with the notion that pregnancy impairs a person’s agency, and she uses this claim to frame questions relevant to value in technical communication:

- How do IRBs determine who is “vulnerable,” who is excluded from particular studies, who is capable of informed consent?
- How are technical communicators complicit in upholding such judgments, and how does our field (not) value non-normative/queer bodies?
- What implications does the inclusion/exclusion of queer bodies have for our research and teaching?

This presentation combines knowledge about value, power, and legitimacy in our field (Kynell-Hunt & Savage, Meloncon) with queer and feminist understandings of agency, embodiment, and justice (Halberstam, Mohanty) to frame responses to the questions above. Ultimately, this presentation argues that a queer understanding of pregnant bodies—and many other sorts of bodies, as well—is one that ascribes them agency.

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**The Influence of the Values of Accreditation Bodies on Technical and Professional Writing Pedagogies**

Dirk Remley
Kent State University

Many institutions house technical and/or professional communication courses in a college of business or a college of engineering or have linkages between those colleges and a department of English that provides the communication course. Accreditation bodies specific to these colleges have a great influence on course content and approaches to teaching. This presentation considers how the values of these accreditation bodies affect pedagogies in technical and professional communication courses and implications for graduate students preparing to teach these courses in such settings. Recently, job postings for scholars trained in technical and professional communication have increased. Some of these postings are for positions within a school or college of business or engineering. For example, Sharp and Blumberger (2013) found that 75% of the top 50 business schools house business communication courses in their
college or school of business. They also found that many institutions where business writing courses are housed in English have some link with a college of business.

Colleges of business that wish to be accredited by the Association for the Advancement of Colleges and Schools of Business (AACSB) and colleges of engineering that wish to be accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) emphasize certain kinds of content and pedagogies through their criteria and standards. These pedagogies reflect the values of those accreditation bodies. I will report on a recent experience I had in designing a business writing course with considerable input from a college of business. In addition to discussing AACSB criteria involved and ABET standards that apply to technical writing courses, I provide suggestions relative to implementing professional development to prepare graduate students in rhetoric and composition to teach courses affected by the values of these accreditation bodies.

**Values in a Professional and Technical Writing Minor: Use-Value Above and Beyond Service**

Lindsay Steiner  
University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse  
Marie Moeller  
University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse

The value of technical communication is often articulated and illustrated via terms such as market value, institutional value, organization-based value, economic value, and practically as use-value (Slaughter, 2009). For teachers and practitioners who locate themselves within English departments with inquiry based in humanities fields, this kind of use-value can be particularly profitable and persuasive to students, colleagues, administrators and industry alike. However, notions of use-value are complicated, as they are often read solely as a service-orientation; in other words, use-value is more complicated than it first appears—it needs not mean that the value of technical communication comes only insofar as it serves needs and disciplines outside of technical communication. This presentation offers a values analysis, in particular of a professional and technical writing (PTW) minor at a regional institution, to illustrate that use-value does not only come in the form of service to another discipline or to the workplace alone. Instead, through a stakeholder analysis of the PTW minor at this particular institution, this presentation complicates the conceptualization of use-value as solely a service-oriented enterprise; instead, we forward a logic wherein use-value can be understood and articulated as a both-and concept that can benefit multiple stakeholders, including the field of technical communication.

To make this argument, the presenters offer a heuristic for analyzing stakeholder investments in particular definitions of the use-value of PTW. They will discuss the process by which they analyzed and tracked stakeholder’s needs- and
values-based understandings of the field of technical communication, and how they worked to re-frame the use-value of technical communication away from a solely service-oriented relationship. In particular, attendees will learn how varying definitions of use-value in and outside of the university inform/shape curriculum decisions, and how a PTW minor can be a strong and values-driven field location for student professionalization.

**How Not to Do "Less With Less": Professional Writing Programs and First-Generation Student Workforce Preparation in HBCU and Military Contexts**

Nicole Ashanti McFarlane  
Fayetteville State University

*Can you imagine what it’s like to make it all the way to a college-level writing course without knowing about the “undo” button in Microsoft Word? Believe it or not, this is the problem faced by far too many traditional students from underserved urban and rural school districts as well as those transitioning from military service to meaningful civilian employment as continuing education enrollees at one Historically Black College University (HBCU). The overarching focus of this digital presentation details several strategic responses aimed at meeting students where they are in order to help get them where they need to go and suggests how Professional Writing programs may assist variously prepared students in this regard. Moreover, this presentation asks how cash-strapped regional institutions can continue “doing less with more,” and not resign to “doing less with less” in spite of the continued devaluation of higher education at increased financial costs to students. This presentation explores programmatic efforts used in an HBCU setting to improve new media fluency and demonstrates effective circumventions aimed at addressing student struggles with professional writing and technical communication. In so doing, this presentation builds on the works of Devah Pager (2003), Teresa Redd (2003), Heidi McKee (2008), and others regarding job prospects for minority job-seekers facing employment barriers – whether problems stem from social discrimination or personal trauma from war. This discussion is about the challenges encountered by minority students as they deal with chronic underemployment and looks at how faculty administrators and first-generation students may work in concert to overcome institutional and historical inequities in technological access. Finally, this presentation seeks to help teachers and researchers redefine the intrinsic value of teaching with less through the deployment of pragmatic measures that help students right/write their way in the world.*

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<th>Beyond Value: Evaluating Augmented Reality and Technical Writing</th>
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<td>Chair: Jacob Greene, University of Florida</td>
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Panel Overview: The rise of augmented reality (AR) technologies, set to peak with emerging technologies such as Google Glass, foretells the erosion of several borders that have oriented rhetorical activity since the onset of personal computing. For instance, whereas the desktop metaphor founded a global village of remote communications, mobile and wearable devices establish “hybrid spaces” in which digital media circulate “on location” throughout the physical world. Following cellphones, a multitude of everyday objects (watches, glasses, etc.) are becoming smart objects—even printed documents such as books, manuals, or instructions. Increasingly, the page and the screen now operate in conjunction with one another, inciting new challenges for technical communication and pedagogical opportunities. This panel examines those opportunities by looking at the ways that AR might be valued as a tool that pushes the boundaries of the writing classroom, how AR is more than just the latest gimmick, and why adopting AR is worth the risk.

AR: Beyond Classrooms
John Jay Jacobs
Clemson University

This presentation will argue that AR and Mobile Interface Technologies (MIT) allow educators to engage students beyond the constraints of the typical classroom. Traditionally, technical communication for educational and training purposes has involved written, aural, and visual media used or encountered separately from the events, locations, and objects the technical writer may be communicating about. This can create a cognitive disconnect between the information provided and the encounter with the actual objects with which that technical writing engages. With today’s MIT, such as smart phones and tablets, teachers can bring the information to the situation in real time. With the use of AR applications, teachers and students can situate the technical communication in the moment, allowing for interactions that bring cognition and experience together. Ultimately, this talk will offer that MIT and AR are undervalued and underutilized pedagogical tools for hands on, experiential learning. Through creative utilization of MIT and AR, teachers should provide students with learning moments that not only convey knowledge, but capture imagination and offers opportunities for deeper learning. "AR: Beyond the Classroom" will demonstrate the potential value of MIT and AR in education by presenting examples of these technologies used for student safety and equipment training in university labs.

AR: Beyond Gimmick
Jacob Greene
University of Florida

This presentation explores how the cultural perception of AR as “gimmick” can be used to bolster student agency in
multimedia technical writing courses. In Understanding Augmented Reality: Concepts and Applications, Alan B. Craig argues that a new technology breaks free from derisive labels (gimmick, novelty, etc.) “only by exploiting the affordances” of which it is uniquely capable. As an emerging technology, AR has yet to fully reveal its unique rhetorical capacities. Thus, its value as a legitimate medium for producing meaning is often rendered in terms of the specific application at hand. Because compelling AR content increases the cultural value of AR as a medium, students who work with AR are not merely producing content within an unalterable medium but rather participating in the rhetorical invention of the medium itself. As such, students not only create technical documents in AR, but create new technical genres through AR, helping to invent what AR is capable of for technical writing. To illustrate this point, "AR: Beyond Gimmick" will showcase a selection of student work from an AR themed writing course in which students were asked to conceptualize and produce an example AR application for their specific discipline/major.

**AR: Beyond Risk**  
Sean Morey  
Clemson University

This presentation will evaluate the risks involved when researching and teaching AR as a form of technical writing. In terms of monetary value, AR is projected to become a $1.06 Billion industry by 2018. Still, for all this progress and promise, mobile AR apps have yet to prove their use value to a mass audience, and their functionality remains well short of famous depictions of the medium in movies like Minority Report and novels like Rainbows End. Thus, there’s always the risk that such a technology will fail, or quickly be replaced by something else before its true value is realized. However, AR has long co-existed as a kind of technical writing; for example, Boeing began developing AR-enhanced repair manuals in the 1990s. Still, given that AR has changed much since Ronald T. Azuma’s foundational article “A Survey of Augmented Reality” (1997), technical communicators now have new opportunities to reconsider AR for technical writing given the proliferation of technical platforms that allow anyone to write with this medium, such as Layar, Vuforia, Aurasma, and others. By examining the past and potential value of AR as technical writing, “AR: Beyond Risk” will assess the risks of researching, creating, and teaching AR, and ultimately conclude that the academic and pedagogical value of using such technologies is worth the risks.

**D6: Florida Salon IV**  
**Exploring Technical Communication Value through Strategic Research Partnerships: The Open Notes Project**  
**Chair:** Lee-Ann Breuch, University of Minnesota
Panel Overview: At our institution we have begun to explore the “value” of technical communication by creating key research partnerships that allow us to apply principles of rhetoric and technical communication to real-world settings. Specifically, we seek partnerships with experiential learning opportunities that allow students and faculty to practice technical communication in problem-solving situations. We find that these partnerships allow us to not simply articulate, but also demonstrate the value of technical communication. This panel highlights one such partnership between our academic technical communication programs and our university medical school. A group of 10 students and faculty in our department collaborated with a physician in our medical school to conduct interviews with patients on a project called OpenNotes, an initiative in which doctors’ progress notes are openly shared with patients during their hospital stays. The project extends research conducted on OpenNotes at other institutions, where notes were shared in clinical settings.

Designing Interview Questions to address “Rhetoric” and “Interpretation” in Patient Experience
Lee-Ann Breuch
University of Minnesota

This presentation shares how technical communication adds value by investigating questions about “interpretation” and “rhetoric” in doctor-patient communication. The OpenNotes project involved patients in a hospital setting, where patients were very sick and often were treated by multiple physician specialists. Hospitalized patients received a summary “doctor’s note” every day during their hospital stay. The physician in this project was very interested to learn how patients interpreted the notes, especially since the notes were not written directly for the patients. Ultimately, questions focused on three aspects: comprehension of medical information, affect and patient response to notes, and patient experience. Did patients ask for help understanding the medical information? How did they feel reading about themselves as patients? What was their patient experience like? Perspectives on these and other interview questions will be shared.

IRB Training, Ethics, and Interviewing Hospital Patients
Shuween Li
University of Minnesota

This presentation shares experiences interviewing hospital patients and discusses how technical communication adds value by conducting human subjects research about communication. At the beginning of this project, interviewers (undergraduate and graduate students in Writing Studies department) completed the CITI and HIPAA training and got themselves familiarized with the consent form, the interview form, and the research protocol. The physician in this project also reminded the interviewers of some ethical issues such as dressing appropriately, protecting patient
privacy, and collecting information without pressuring patients. This panelist will elaborate on how the interviewers communicated the consent information to different types of patients, how patients responded to the interviewers, and how the interviewers proceeded. The ethical question for researchers to consider is how to respect the dignity and agency of the research participants.

**Coding Interview Data to Uncover what Patients Value in Doctors’ Notes**
Abigail Bakke
University of Minnesota
Elizabeth Mackey
University of Minnesota

After the interview phase was complete, our research team compiled the interview notes and analyzed them using an iterative process guided by the three focuses of the project-- patients’ comprehension of medical information, affect/emotional response, and patient experience. In this presentation, we will discuss our method for coding interview data. Specifically, we will discuss our use of technology to aid the data management and collaborative coding process. We will further discuss the limitations from the data collection method, such as handling differences in the transcribed handwritten notes from several interviewers, and how we adjusted our coding process to account for those limitations. Based on these experiences, we will offer practical suggestions for how other technical and professional writing researchers can credibly and ethically analyze data from similar sites.

**The Medical Rhetoric of Patient Notes: Constructing a Language of Meaning across Contexts of Patient Care**
Kim Thomas-Pollei
University of Minnesota

The OpenNotes research project provides a unique opportunity to examine technical communication in a health-sensitive context and has particular value for the field of medical rhetoric. Physicians write patient notes to four primary audiences and purposes: (1) to demonstrate knowledge for medical supervisors/mentors, (2) to inform other doctors about patient care, (3) to document a patient’s hospital stay for medical and legal reasons, and (4) to justify a patient’s hospital stay for insurance purposes. This project adds a fifth audience by rhetorically framing doctors’ notes from patients’ perspectives and identifies communication strategies within the critical context of patient care. Because medical rhetoric is concerned with the centrality of meaning in medical discourse, our research offers an important contribution to a more robust understanding of patients’ communicative needs during hospital stays.
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| **Florida Salon V** | **Reception and Awards**  
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