

26TH ANNUAL

**MCA CONFERENCE**

**Let's Chat:**

**Negotiating Communication Today**

**Maryland  
Communication  
Association**



# Maryland Communication Association



Dear MCA Members and Colleagues:

Welcome to MCA's 1020 conference, "Let's Chat: Negotiating Communication Today." As our means of communication, formal and casual, change at such a lightning speed, our everyday lives as well as our activities in the classroom are greatly impacted. The presentations at this year's conference speak to the variety of research topics in our challenging and dynamic field of study. We hope you will be as excited about these as we are.

We thank those who have volunteered their expertise, time and efforts to make the conference a success: the conference planners, presenters, liaisons and sponsors. And finally, we offer much appreciation to our members who continually support these efforts.

Sincerely,

**2009-2010 MCA Executive Board**

Donna Rongione, President

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Sheri Whalen, Second Vice President

Linda DeDesidero, Secretary

Sheri Trivane, Treasurer

Rose Piskapas, Immediate Past President

# Welcome

I am pleased to welcome the members of the Maryland Communication Association to Frostburg State University for your 26th annual conference. Preparing students to communicate effectively in today's world is one of our core institutional learning goals. The dialogue that you will be having today is an important one, as new means of communication are developing so rapidly in our society. We are happy to support this event, as a key component of our University mission is to provide outreach and professional development opportunities for the region and the state. On behalf of the University, I welcome your organization to our campus and hope you have a productive and informative day.

## Joseph Hoffman, Ph.D

Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Frostburg State University



## MCA's Mission

We are a group of communication educators, students and professionals throughout the state of Maryland. Many of our members are active researchers and authors in the field as well as past officers of regional and national communication associations.



Our roots are in the Maryland Communication Cooperative, formed in 1973. From 1986 to 1997, a state association ceased to function, but in September 1997, the Maryland Communication Association formally reorganized. Among our most notable accomplishments since then is the pivotal role we took in the shaping and adoption of statewide competency standards for communication courses in general education programs and our current participation to facilitate articulation agreements in communication in the State of Maryland.

## MCA Executive Board

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### Webmaster

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# Schedule Overview

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## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22

7 PM

MCA "Let's Chat" Preconference Celebration at Mountain City Traditional Arts (MCTA), 25 E. Main St., Frostburg, MD, sponsored in part by MCTA, Baltimore Street Grill and FSU's Department of Communication Studies

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

8:30 - 9 AM

**Registration and Breakfast Welcome Reception**  
COMPTON SECOND FLOOR ATRIUM

9 AM-4 PM

**Book Exhibit,** COMPTON THIRD FLOOR ATRIUM

9-10 AM

**Panel Options:**

**A. "The Art of Conversation: Social Media Marketing and Communications in a University Setting,"** COMPTON 226

**B. "Teaching Communication Concepts Through Film,"** COMPTON 224

10:15 - 11:15 AM

**Panel Options:**

**A. "Two G.I.F.T.S. – Generating Ideas for Teaching Students,"**  
COMPTON 224

**B. "Chatting About Student Leadership and Communication in Campus Organizations: Frostburg State University Student Perspectives,"**  
COMPTON 226

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM **KEYNOTE ADDRESS:**

**"Negotiating Communication Technologies: Technology as a Tool"**

Dr. David Westerman, Department of Communication Studies,  
West Virginia University, COMPTON 226

12:30 - 1:30 PM

**Lunch and MCA Business Meeting,** COMPTON SECOND FLOOR ATRIUM  
*sponsored by McGraw Hill*

1:45 - 2:45 PM

**Panel Options:**

**A. "Creating Culture Through Chatting: Ethnographic Perspectives,"**  
COMPTON 224

**B. "Negotiating the *Social* of Social Media,"** COMPTON 226

3 - 4 PM

**Panel Options:**

**A. "Negotiating Meanings and Interpretations of Whiteness and Blackness"**  
COMPTON 226

**B. "Hip-Hop and Islam: A Different History,"** COMPTON 224

Consider attending the Cumberland Arts Walk on Saturday evening after the conference from 5 - 8 PM:  
[www.alleganyartscouncil.org/event.php?eventid=1654](http://www.alleganyartscouncil.org/event.php?eventid=1654)

A number of additional weekend and restaurant options in Frostburg and Cumberland are available on the MCA website: [www.marylandcomm.org/weekendideas.html](http://www.marylandcomm.org/weekendideas.html)

26TH ANNUAL

# MCA CONFERENCE

# Let's Chat: Negotiating Communication Today

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 7 PM

## Preconference Celebration

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MOUNTAIN CITY TRADITIONAL ARTS (MCTA) • 25 E. MAIN ST. • FROSTBURG, MD  
*sponsored in part by MCTA, Baltimore Street Grill and FSU's Department of Communication Studies*

Hopefully you joined us for a social networking opportunity featuring live Appalachian music and refreshments from Baltimore Street Grill. Kathleen and Ed Myers performed at this event. This dynamic daughter-father duo from Keyser, WV, brings the strong ties of family tradition to the festival stage. Playing since she was a 5-year-old, Kathleen has developed a strong regional reputation as a fiddler. For many years, she placed in the Junior Fiddle Contest at Friendsville, MD, and the Maryland State Championship, where she has captured third, second and first places. Happy to let his daughter enjoy the limelight, Ed plays guitar and banjo while letting Kathleen take the fiddle lead.

Mountain City Traditional Arts is dedicated to the education, sales, documentation and perpetuation of regional art and cultural heritage. It features a diverse display of local artwork, handcrafted items and Appalachian-based products. Mountain City Traditional Arts also hosts a variety of classes and workshops that showcase the traditional art forms and help to preserve the unique heritage of the mountain region. Mountain City Traditional Arts is a partnership of the Allegany Arts Council, Folklore and Folklife Programming at Frostburg State University and the FrostburgFirst Main Street Program.

The venue is open Wednesday and Thursday from 11 AM - 7 PM, Friday from 10 AM - 7 PM, Saturday from 11 AM - 7 PM, and Sunday from Noon - 5 PM (hours subject to change to accommodate evening sessions and workshops). For more information about Mountain City Traditional Arts, please call 301.687.8040.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

# MCA's "Let's Chat" Conference

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8:30 - 9 AM

## Registration and Breakfast Welcome Reception

COMPTON SECOND FLOOR ATRIUM

9 AM - 4 PM

## Book Exhibit

COMPTON THIRD FLOOR ATRIUM

9 - 10 AM

### A. "The Art of Conversation: Social Media Marketing and Communications in a University Setting"

**Becca Ramspott, M.A.**, Public Information Specialist: Technology and New Media, Frostburg State University

COMPTON 226

Colleges and universities are increasingly colonizing the social media landscape with select communities in which they build and maintain relationships, disseminate key messages to the media and the public at large and seek feedback on their marketing efforts. This ever-changing social media landscape is anything but predictable, and to inhabit it effectively, it is helpful to establish smart marketing strategies that, like a good conversation, are creative, spontaneous and authentic in their responses to viewers' needs, ideas and interests. Many colleges and universities are seeing the need to create social media guidelines and policies, to empower their communities to use social media in a professional and marketing-savvy manner. This presentation will examine how approaching social media as a conversation leads to positive and powerful connections and brand-building among key constituents by highlighting select social media marketing strategies that have been successfully used by Frostburg State University. This discussion will summarize FSU's specific approach to developing social media guidelines, a process that delineated from traditional policy-making and instead focused on empowering campus community members to become good "conversationalists" with the right resources in place to discuss the University's accomplishments and brand identity in a social media setting.

### B. "Teaching Communication Concepts Through Film"

COMPTON 224

*"Understanding Feminist Media Theories Through Film"*

**Moderator: Gregory Adamo, Ph.D.**, Morgan State University

*"Teaching Small Group Communication Concepts Through Film"*

**Fran Mindel, Ph.D.**, Morgan State University

*"Using Film Based on True Events to Encourage Communication Activism Among University Students,"* Patrick L. Stearns, Ph.D., Morgan State University

With young people so immersed in almost continuous media consumption, film can be a valuable pedagogical tool to help college students understand and explore communication concepts and theories. Panelists will discuss and give examples of how they use *Apollo 13*, *Nothing But a Man*, *Smoke Signals* and other films to help students explore small group communication, communication activism, issues of diversity and feminist media theories.

10:15 - 11:15 AM

### A. "Two G.I.F.T.S. – Generating Ideas For Teaching Students"

COMPTON 224

*"Teaching Students to Monitor, Analyze and Interpret Media Coverage for Clients"*

**Moderator: Dionne C. Clemons, Ph.D.**, Towson University

This issues management assignment is designed to strengthen students' research skills and their knowledge of computerized databases. This assignment also enables students to clearly delineate between different forms of media, as many millennial students do not know the difference between traditional and new media. Ultimately, students learn to analyze the media's coverage of a particular issue and how it's framed by the media. Next, students learn how to present their analysis, along with their recommendation to the client, for how best to manage media and public opinion surrounding the issue.

*"Group Dynamics Experience: Real-Life Skills for Workplace Communication"*

**Lakeisha Moore Mathews, M.S.**, Community College of Baltimore County – Catonsville Campus

This assignment is designed to describe and identify the characteristics and development of small groups; identify and describe group roles, including leadership, group-centered behavior and self-centered behavior; and explain how to solve problems in groups using a problem-solving agenda.

### B. "Chatting About Student Leadership and Communication in Campus Organizations: Frostburg State University Student Perspectives"

COMPTON 226

**Faculty Advisor: Elesha L. Ruminski, Ph.D.**, Frostburg State University

**Moderator: Madison Martin**, Treasurer, Student Communication Studies Association (SCSA)

Heather Beard, President, SCSA

Bryan Rice, Vice President, SCSA

Anastasia Otranto, Department Assistant and Member, SCSA

Ashley Phillips, Public Relations Officer, SCSA

Vincent Dicarolo, Phi Mu Delta (PMD)

Jasmine Clark, Student Government Association (SGA)

Kwaku Bentil, African Student Association (ASA)

Scholastique Koolimo, Maryland Student Legislature - Frostburg Delegation (MSL)

Max Green, Honors Program, MSL, College of Young Democrats

In this roundtable, students who have been involved in the leadership of student organizations and their undergraduate major will discuss missions, roles and strategies for organizing clubs and fraternities, relevant to any student group trying to organize because the emphasis is on communication strategies.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

## Keynote Address

COMPTON 226

### Introduction of Dean Hoffman by Eric Chaney

FSU Communication Studies Alumnus and Assistant to the First Vice President of MCA

### Welcome Remarks by Joseph Hoffman, Ph.D.

Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Frostburg State University

### Welcome From MCA President, Donna Rongione, M.A.

### Introduction of Keynote Speaker by MCA First Vice President, Elesha L. Ruminski, Ph.D.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS: David Westerman, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, West Virginia University

### “Negotiating Communication Technologies: Technology as a Tool”

Many communication scholars and practitioners consider face-to-face communication as the gold standard for interacting with other people and that technologies should be designed to replicate the face-to-face experience. However, as Hollan and Stornetta (1992) pointed out nearly 20 years ago, considering technology in this way limits our understanding of communication, and hinders us from considering and utilizing the advantages that using technology to communicate can provide. Beginning with the notion that communication technologies are tools that allow us to accomplish our goals, this presentation will touch upon several concepts that can help guide the consideration of both the limitations and affordances of technology (i.e., social information processing theory, Walther, 1992; presence, Westerman & Skalski, 2010; and masspersonal communication, O’Sullivan, 2008). These ideas, as well as others, will be used to argue for the central thesis of the presentation: when considering technology and communication, it is more useful to think about how and why we use the tools available to us, rather than categorizing certain ones as the overall gold standard.

Dr. David Westerman is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies at West Virginia University. Born and raised in Niagra Falls, NY, he received his B.A. in communication studies and English from Niagra University. He completed both his M.A. and Ph.D. in the Department of Communication at Michigan State University, where he specialized in communication technology. His recent work has appeared in the *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *Human Communication Research* and *Communication Studies*. He has also co-authored a chapter entitled “Presence and Computers: A Ghost in the Machine?” from the 2010 book *Immersed in Media: Telepresence in Everyday Life*. In his free time he enjoys reading and watching sports, especially hockey, and longs for the day when the Buffalo Sabres finally hoist Lord Stanley’s Cup.



12:30 - 1:30 PM

## Lunch and MCA Business Meeting

COMPTON SECOND FLOOR ATRIUM

*Sponsored by McGraw Hill*

1:45 - 2:45 PM

### A. “Creating Culture Through Chatting: Ethnographic Perspectives”

COMPTON 224

*“An Organizational Culture Study: A Chat With the Members of Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity”*

**Bridget Bernard**, Towson University (Student)

**Moderator and Faculty Advisor: Audra McMullen**, Ph.D., Towson University

This essay examines the process of assimilation in efforts to maintain an organization’s unique culture. The study is based on the three levels in Schein’s (1993) model of organization culture: artifacts, values and assumptions. It is conducted through qualitative research such as observations, notes and interviews. The study explores how new members are assimilated to further the artifacts, values and mission of their chosen organization through the communication process. The essay concludes with the implications this research will have and how these findings will affect future members of fraternal organizations.

*“Alcoholics Anonymous: The Co-Creation of Culture Through Chatting”*

**Megan Brown and Heather Hoersting**, Towson University (Students)

**Faculty Advisor: Audra McMullen**, Ph.D., Towson University

This ethnography explores how sobriety is obtained by members of Alcoholics Anonymous, through the use of sponsor and sponsored relationships. Edgar Schein’s Model (2004) of Organizational Culture illuminates how important artifacts, basic assumptions and values, such as trust and honesty, create a safe environment in which members can negotiate and form valuable relationships through “chatting.” These relationships formed in AA can only be understood by taking into account the phases of mentor relationships and how AA meetings are conducted.

### B. “Negotiating the Social of Social Media”

COMPTON 226

*“Computer-Mediated Communication and Utilizing Social Media for Health Information”*

**Christine Yurko**, M.A., from West Virginia University (FSU Communication Studies Alumna)

**Faculty Advisor: David Westerman**, Ph.D.

Marketing campaigns have succeeded in branding and advertisement; conversely, social marketing campaigns also exist for the common good of public health. Social marketing campaigns, such as Scoop Your Poop, Click It or Ticket, Are You Positive You’re Negative?, Save the Crabs Then Eat ‘Em and Rock the Vote, exist to promote healthy lifestyles, common decency and public health (Kotler & Lee, 2008). By taking into account the various factors in implementing CMC channels to health social media markets, a wider array of audiences can be reached, which can potentially expand social capital. Due to the archival nature of the Internet and the great amount of users online, and

how the Internet is a key tool in maintaining relationships, information about healthful behaviors targeted specifically to relevant CMC channels has great potential. Investing in the public good or to the overall social capita is manifested in social marketing. Social marketing takes place through a variety of mediums, such as billboards, word of mouth, brochures, but a growing amount is done through computer-mediated communication. The advantages of creating public awareness and social marketing are numerous; however, there is conflicting evidence as to its effectiveness.

### ***“Social Movements vs. Social Media: The Internet Myth and Our Newton’s Laws”***

**Moderator: Jared A. Ball, Ph.D.,** Morgan State University

We often hear today of the value brought to social movements, artists and journalists by the Internet. However, emergent research matched with simple observation raises serious questions about these claims and questions of “advancing” technology. This paper, in part using the analysis of technology and society developed by Huey Newton, challenges the conventional or popular notion that:

(A) new technologies positively impact existing social relationships, and (B) that the internet has an equivalently positive impact on popularity or the potential to radically alter national media agenda or audience frames of interpretation.

3 - 4 PM

### **A. “Negotiating Meanings and Interpretations of Whiteness and Blackness,”**

COMPTON 226

#### ***“Sassy Spokespersons: Stereotypical Depictions of African-Americans in Fast Food”***

**Moderator: Shavonne Shorter, M.A., Ph.D. candidate** at Purdue University  
(FSU Communication Studies Alumna)

**Faculty Advisor: Stacey L. Connaughton, Ph.D.,** Purdue University

This study seeks to uncover whether major fast food corporations are depicting African-Americans stereotypically within their television advertisements. The discourse from selected corporations’ websites is perused to see if the companies provide statements about their views on diversity. Depictions of African-Americans in the commercials are then compared with the discourse that is found on the website to assess whether or not these depictions are an accurate reflection of the companies’ stances on diversity.

#### ***“Deploying a Rhetoric of Whiteness”***

**Jennifer Struve, Ph.D.,** Towson University

As a White woman who earned a Ph.D. at Howard University, a historically Black university, my identity was constantly a sight of contestation. I learned to explore, accept, and piece together a White racial identity that I could never separate from the structure of Whiteness. Today, I claim a racial identity of an anti-racist White woman, but I recognize that the “White” part of that is always most important for social, political, economic, and even personal reasons. Despite my identity as an anti-racist White woman, I have found myself using my Whiteness in ways that I did not even recognize. In this autoethnographic presentation, I seek to concretely demonstrate how whiteness is deployed rhetorically. Prior to starting my coursework at Howard, I read an extensive amount of literature on intercultural communication, African American communication, and Whiteness. None of this literature prepared me for one of my earliest experiences in the classroom, though, and it is this experience that is the focus of this paper. Ultimately, I argue that while Nakayama and Krizek

(1995) produced an important theoretical contribution to the study of Whiteness, their essay fails to acknowledge the ways in which Whiteness is actually deployed in rhetorical and symbolic forms. It is only through self-reflection and careful analysis that White individuals can understand the way in which they deploy Whiteness and thus reinforce the structure that pervades U.S. culture. I conclude by offering suggestions for White individuals and scholars to reassess the way in which Whiteness “gets used.”

### **B. “Hip-Hop and Islam: A Different History,”**

COMPTON 224

**Erika Walther, Towson University (Student)**

**Faculty Advisor: Jennifer Struve, Ph.D.,** Towson University

In a post 9/11 U.S., we have witnessed the polarization of two cultural and economic systems against one another like never before. Anthropological views of culture claim that “Muslims” explain their world in terms of “Islam” and “U.S. Americans” in terms of “Freedom.” These polarizations of culture, once accepted into the minds of society, cause misconceptions that fuel the various conflicts between Islamic and Western nations. Hip-hop music plays an interesting role in the development of this global state of affairs. Often regarded as a mode of rebellion, it finds its way into the hands of disempowered youth looking for change. However, hip-hop’s roots in Islamic culture are rarely acknowledged, mainly due to the lack of comprehensive historical data on the relationship. Over-generalizations of Muslim culture have caused us to forget that Islam has existed in the U.S. since the 1600s. My research serves as a historical analysis of the formation of Muslim identities and hip-hop cultural identities by highlighting where the two intersect historically. I begin with the U.S. slave trade and the formation of African-American musical styles, proceeding through the post-slavery era and the introduction of hip-hop music in our modern age as a tool for Black youth empowerment. I analyze in workshop format the implications of each stage of development of both Islam and hip-hop music for U.S. youth cultures. Hip-hop’s global appeal, especially in countries struggling with internal conflicts, is also examined.

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Kara Rogers Thomas, Ph.D., Director of MCTA

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Come out and enjoy the

**ARTS** on

**SATURDAY**

October 23 from 5 - 8 PM, as the  
Downtown Cumberland Arts &

Entertainment District hosts its final Arts Walk of the 2010 season. The Arts Walks are self-guided walking tours that feature opening receptions and exhibitions at downtown art galleries, theatre performances, live music at several downtown locations, hands-on art projects on the Arts Bus, shopping at a variety of retail destinations and dining at some of the area's finest restaurants. While some of the evening performances may require the purchase of tickets, most activities are free, and many participating venues offer special discounts to Arts Walk participants. Brochures for the October 23rd Arts Walk will be available from the Allegany Arts Council (at 9 N. Centre St. in Downtown Cumberland) and from each of the more than 30 participating Arts Walk destinations. You may also download a copy of the Arts Walk brochure from [www.alleganyartscouncil.org](http://www.alleganyartscouncil.org). For more information, call the Allegany Arts Council at 301-777-ARTS (2787).

**SATURDAY**

**ARTS WALK**



Save the date:

27TH ANNUAL

## MCA CONFERENCE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14 - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

The theme and location for the conference are to be announced. Check in on [www.marylandcomm.org](http://www.marylandcomm.org) and the Maryland Communication Association Facebook group for more information.

 *Join our Facebook group today!*

**M**aryland  
Communication  
Association

