

Chris Mays

Department of English
University of Nevada, Reno
Reno, NV 89557-0098

cmays@unr.edu
chrismmays@gmail.com
www.chrismmays.com

Academic Appointments

Associate Professor of English, 2021–Present
University of Nevada, Reno

Assistant Professor of English, 2015–2021
University of Nevada, Reno

Co-Director of the UNR Writing and Speaking in the Disciplines Program, Fall 2020–Spr. 2021
University of Nevada, Reno

Post-Doctoral Fellow, 2014–15
Illinois State University, Normal

Education

PhD in English Studies, 2014
Illinois State University, Normal

Dissertation: “Building Complexity, One Stability at a Time: Rethinking Stubbornness in Public Rhetorics and Writing Studies.” Julie Jung, Director

Committee: J. Scott Jordan, Patricia Roberts-Miller, Amy E. Robillard, and Kirstin Hotelling Zona

MA in English, 2008
Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio

Thesis: “The Failure to Meet ‘The Challenge of Our Time’: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Demise of Bill Clinton’s Plan For National Health Care.” Kimberly Emmons, Director

BA in English, 2000
University of Illinois at Chicago

Publications

Book

Invisible Effects: Rethinking Writing through Emergence. Peter Lang Publishing, Studies in Composition and Rhetoric series, 2021. Series Editor: Alice Horning.

Edited Collection

Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman. Ed. Chris Mays, Nathaniel A. Rivers, and Kellie Sharp-Hoskins. Penn State University Press, RSA Series in Transdisciplinary Rhetoric, 2017.

Reviews:

- Reviewed by C.V. Vitolo-Haddad in *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, vol. 105, no. 3, 2019, pp. 363-67.
- Reviewed by Jason Kalin, Diane Marie Keeling and Nathan Stormer in *Rhetoric Review*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2018, pp. 314-16.
- Reviewed by Emma Frances Bloomfield in *International Journal of Communication*, vol. 12, 2018, pp. 3343-48.
- Reviewed by David Measel in *K.B. Journal: The Journal of the Kenneth Burke Society*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2017: <http://kbjournal.org/measel-review>.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- “Learning from Interdisciplinary Interactions: An Argument for Rhetorical Deliberation as a Framework for WID Faculty.” Co-authored with Maureen McBride. *Composition Forum*, vol. 43, Spring 2020.
- “Ignorance As Adaptation to Epistemic Perturbations.” *Synthese* (Special Issue: “Knowing the Unknown”), Nov. 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-019-02471-8>
- “‘You Can’t Make This Stuff Up’: Complexity, Facts, and Creative Nonfiction.” *College English*, vol. 80, no. 4, 2018, pp. 319-41. [lead article]
- “Writing Complexity, One Stability at a Time: Teaching Writing as a Complex System.” *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 68, no. 3, 2017, pp. 559-85.
- Podcast/interview about this article posted February, 2017, as part of the “CCC Podcasts” Series: <http://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/ccc/podcasts/mays>
- “From ‘Flows’ to ‘Excess’: On Stability, Stubbornness, and Blockage in Rhetorical Ecologies.” *enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*, vol. 19, 2015.
- “Priming Terministic Inquiry: Toward a Methodology of Neurorhetoric.” Co-authored with Julie Jung. *Rhetoric Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2012, pp. 41–59.

Book Chapters

- “Articulating Ambiguous Compatibilities: An Introduction.” Co-authored with Nathaniel A. Rivers and Kellie Sharp-Hoskins. In *Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman*. Ed. Chris Mays, Nathaniel A. Rivers, and Kellie Sharp-Hoskins. Pennsylvania State University Press, RSA Series in Transdisciplinary Rhetoric, 2017, pp. 1-19.
- “Revision as Heresy: Writing Systems and Kenneth Burke’s ‘Piety.’” In *Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman*. Ed. Chris Mays, Nathaniel A. Rivers, and Kellie Sharp-Hoskins. Penn State University Press, RSA Series in Transdisciplinary Rhetoric, 2017, pp. 61-79.
- “Wild Meaning: The Intercorporeal Nature of Objects, Bodies, and Words.” Co-authored with J. Scott Jordan. In *Intercorporeality: Emerging Socialities in Interaction*. Ed. Christian Meyer, Jürgen Streeck, and J. Scott Jordan. Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 361-78.

Conference Proceedings

- “On Stubbornness and Cognitive Stability in Rhetoric Systems.” In *Cognition in 3E: Emergent, Embodied, Extended - Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Ed. Tommaso Bertolotti. Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

“CCID: Articulating a Design-Thinking Center for Multimodal Communication.” Co-authored with William Macauley and Katherine J. Hepworth. In *Proceedings of the 34th ACM International Conference on the Design of Communication*. Association for Computing Machinery, 2016.

Invited Response Essay

“Who’s Driving this Thing, Anyway?: Emotion and Language in Rhetoric and Neuroscience.” *JAC: A Journal of Rhetoric, Culture, and Politics*, vol. 33, no. 1–2, 2013, pp. 301-14.

Book Review

Review of *The Neuroscientific Turn: Transdisciplinarity in the Age of the Brain*.

Ed. Melissa Littlefield and Jenell Johnson. U of Michigan P, 2013. 268 pages.

In *IMPACT: The Journal of the Center for Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2014.

Internal Publication

JAC Training Manual for Editorial Assistants. Co-authored with Moria Torrington. August 19, 2013.

Presentations

Conference Seminar Leader

“Bodies, Boundaries, and Burke.” Invited (for July 2020; postponed due to Covid-19) Seminar
Co-leader at the 11th Triennial Conference of the Kenneth Burke Society 2020:
“Kenneth Burke in 20/20: Seeing the Past, Envisioning the Future.” University of Maryland.

Invited Presentations

“On Stubbornness and Cognitive Stability in Rhetoric Systems” Invited Speaker at the
Interdisciplinary Workshop: “Cognition in 3E: Emergent, Embodied, Extended.”
University of Pavia, Department of Humanities, Philosophy Section, Pavia, Italy, 2018.

Conference Presentations:

International

“Defining Public Engagement.” Panel: “Public Engagement and Graduate Education in Rhetoric.” Rhetoric in Society 7, Rhetoric Society of Europe, Ghent, Belgium, 2019.

“Rethinking Ignorance and Belief in Terms of Systems and Emergence.” Panel: “Systems and Symbols that Matter: Rhetorical Investigations of Data, Debt, and Ignorance.” Rhetoric in Society 7, Rhetoric Society of Europe, Ghent, Belgium, 2019.

“Rhetoric and Anticipation.” Panel: “The Distributed Work of Future Building: Bodies, Brains, Words, and Cultures as Embodiments of Possibility.” Anticipation Conference 2017, London.

“Stubbornness, ‘Facts,’ and Anticipation: Resilience of Belief as an Anticipatory Reaction within a ‘Rhetoric System.’” Anticipation Conference 2017, London.

“Complicating Writing through Design Thinking.” Panel: “CCID: Articulating a Design-Thinking Center for Multimodal Communication.” SIGDOC: International Conference on the Design of Communication, Association for Computer Machinery Special Interest Group on the Design of Communication. Silver Springs, MD, 2016.

National

- “Avoiding Superficiality in ‘Engagement.’” Panel: “Rhetorical Retrofit or Rhetorical Emergence? Rethinking the Burkean Parlor as a Metaphor for Intellectual Work.” Rhetoric Society of America Conference, Portland, 2020 (conference cancelled due to Covid-19).
- “Modal Transformations and Dormant Effects.” Panel: “Writing Transformations and Emergent Rhetorical Effects.” Computers and Writing Conference 2019, Michigan State University.
- “Writing Pasts, Writing Futures.” Panel: “Theorizing Effects and Interactions of Texts Across Time, Space, and Culture.” Twelfth Biennial Thomas Watson Conference on Rhetoric and Composition, University of Louisville, 2018.
- “Teaching the Inseparability of ‘Logic’ and ‘Emotion’ in an Age of Seeming Illogic.” Panel: “Teaching Argument for a Post-Truth, Anti-Deliberative Age: Resources from Rhetorical Theory.” Rhetoric Society of America Conference, Minneapolis, 2018.
- “Tracking the Circulation of Rhetorical Commonplaces.” Panel: “Tracing the Untraceable: Exploring Circulation’s Invisible Effects on Communities.” Conference on Community Writing, Boulder, 2017.
- “Crossings in Writing Pedagogy: Multimodal Composition, Circulation Studies, Printmaking.” Panel: “Power, Writing, Interdisciplinarity: Crossing Disciplines and Knowledges to Confront Diverse Power Structures.” Crossings Conference, Reno, 2017.
- “Cultivating Stability in Writing (Studies).” Panel: “Vital Concepts: Returning *Stability*, *Context*, and *Epistemology* to Posthumanist Writing and Rhetoric Studies.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, Portland, 2017.
- “Mobilizing Belief, Where No One Notices: The Invisible Effects of Textual Circulation.” Eleventh Biennial Thomas Watson Conference on Rhetoric and Composition, University of Louisville, 2016.
- “‘In Reality, *They Did It*, Not *the System*’: Resistance to Distributed Agency in the Rhetoric Classroom.” Panel: “Pedagogical Becomings: How Three Posthumanist Rhetoricians Teach Rhetoric.” Rhetoric Society of America Conference, Atlanta, 2016.
- “Revision as Heresy: Writing, Change, and Kenneth Burke’s ‘Piety.’” Panel: “Strategies for (Ambiguous) Writing Situations: Using Kenneth Burke as/in Posthuman Writing Studies.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, Houston, 2016.
- “In(ter)ventions in Digital Writing Spaces: Exploring the Boundaries Between Public & Private.” Computers and Writing Conference, University of Wisconsin, Stout, 2015.
- “Peer Groups and Classroom Dynamics: Reciprocal Effects and Complex Interaction.” Panel: “Peer Review(ing) Complexity: Emerging Innovations at Multiple Levels of Scale.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, Tampa, 2015.
- “Interaction and Intervention in ‘Stubborn’ Cultural Rhetorics: Stability and Change in Scientific Discourses.” Michigan State University Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures 2014 Cultural Rhetorics Conference, East Lansing, 2014.
- “‘It’s More Complicated Than That’: Non-Linear Causalities and *The Rhetoric of Religion*.” Panel: “He Has Always Been More than Modern: Burkean Rhetoric as Posthumanist Inquiry.” The Ninth Triennial Conference of the Kenneth Burke Society, St. Louis, 2014.
- “Rethinking Minds, Bodies, and Language: Relational Causality and/in Rhetoric Studies.” Panel/Preconference Theme: Science and Social Justice. Conference of the Association

- for the Rhetoric of Science and Technology (Preconference for the 2014 Rhetoric Society of America Conference), San Antonio, 2014.
- “Rhetoric, Systems Theory, and the Im/possibility of ‘Common’ Writing Standards.” Rhetoric Society of America Conference, San Antonio, 2014.
- “Reasserting Rhetoric: Theoretically, Pedagogically.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, Las Vegas, 2013.
- “Setting the Terms of Debate, Dynamically: The Convergence of Public Argumentation and Complex Systems Theory.” Rhetoric Society of America Conference. Philadelphia, 2012.
- “Rhetoric as/in a Complex System.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, 2012.
- “Metaphors We Live (Dangerously) By: Why Appropriating Lakoff and Johnson Isn’t That Simple.” Conference on College Composition and Communication, Atlanta, 2011.
- “Ancient Origins, Modern Applications: (Re)Incorporating Isocratean Pedagogical Thought.” Federation Rhetoric Symposium, Denton, 2010.

Regional

- “‘Passion’ as a Barrier to the Invention of Alternative Teaching Narratives.” Illinois State Symposium on Teaching and Learning, Normal, 2011.

Local

- “Self-Organization and the Trouble(s) with Empirical Evidence: Articulating Posthumanist Rhetoric and Writing Studies as ‘Context Studies.’” Inhuman, Posthuman, Nonhuman: A One-Day Symposium at the University of Nevada, Reno, 2015.

Other Presentations

- “‘Stubbornness’ or ‘Stability’?: Re-Thinking Interaction and Intervention in Public Rhetorics.” Invited Speaker, English 590: *Doctoral Seminar in Rhetoric and Composition*, September 2014.
- “CHAT [Cultural-Historical Activity Theory] and Genre Studies: More than Just a Map.” Co-presented with Kellie Sharp-Hoskins. Illinois State Graduate Writing Program Bi-Annual Symposium, August 2012.
- “Adapting Your Teaching Internship Project for an IRB Application.” Illinois State English Graduate Forum on the IRB [Institutional Review Board]: *Preparation for Projects Involving Human Subjects*, March 2012.
- “Notes toward an Infinite Other; Or, Levinas Enmeshed.” Co-presented with Julie Jung. Invited Speaker, English 384: *Theory for Sustainable Cultures*. October 2011.
- “Imag(in)ing the Brain: Representations of Our ‘Most Elusive’ Organ.” Invited Speaker, English 495: *Cultural Studies in Technical Communication*. March 2011.
- “Priming Terministic Inquiry: Toward a Neurorhetorical Theory and Methodology.” Co-Presented with Julie Jung. Illinois State English Department Faculty Lecture Series, November 2010.

Honors and Awards

- Nominee, University of Nevada, Reno, Paul and Judy Bible University Teaching Excellence Award (only students can nominate for this award), 2020
- Recipient, College of Liberal Arts Faculty Fellowship, University of Nevada, Reno, Fall 2019

Nominee (Twice), Taimi Ranta Award for Outstanding Teaching by a PhD Candidate
Illinois State University English Department, 2013 and 2014
Recipient, Award of Distinction on All Comprehensive Exams
Pedagogy, Specialization, and English Studies Exams, May 2011–May 2012
Winner, Best Graduate Paper
“Ancient Origins, Modern Applications: (Re)Incorporating Isocratean Pedagogical
Thought.” Federation Rhetoric Symposium, February 2010

Teaching

University of Nevada, Reno

Posthumanist Rhetorics, Posthumanist Writing Studies (ENG 735, Graduate Seminar)
History of Rhetoric from Renaissance to Present (ENG 739, Graduate Seminar)
Introduction to Graduate Study in Rhetoric and Composition (ENG 730, Graduate
Seminar)
Teaching College Composition (ENG 737, Graduate Seminar)
Multimodal Writing: Text, Image, Culture (ENG 400A/600A)
Media Theory (ENG 332)
Topics in Professional Writing (ENG 400B/600B)
Advanced Nonfiction Writing (ENG 401B/601B [Capstone Course])
Editing and Publishing (ENG 405/605)
Literary Nonfiction (ENG 475B/675B)
Understanding Arguments (ENG 301)
Professional Communications (ENG 333)
English 101: Composition I
English 102: Composition II
Cultural Rhetorics and Identity (ENG 350) (to be taught Spring 2021)

Illinois State University

Texts and Contexts (interdisciplinary course) (IDS 121.19)
Version 1: *Rhetorical Histories of Scientific Communication: Theories of
Sustainability and Ecology*
Version 2: *Persuasion, Propaganda, and the Rhetoric of American Social Policy*
Rhetorical Theory and Applications (ENG 283)
Advanced Composition (ENG 246)
Version 1: *Rhetoric and Professional Writing*
Version 2: *Theorizing Rhetorical Invention in ‘Mass’ Media*
Composition for ISU Presidential Scholars (ENG 145.12)
Writing in the Academic Disciplines (ENG 145)
Composition as Critical Inquiry (ENG 101)

University of Texas at Austin

Rhetoric and Writing (RHE 306)

Case Western Reserve University

Introductory Composition (ENG 150)
Academic Writing Studio (ENG 183)

Pedagogical Research

“The Wiki as Virtual Learning Space.” IRB-approved research study conducted within the ISU Writing Program. Co-primary investigator with Julie Bates (Fall 2014)

Writing Center Experience

Writing Consultant, Undergraduate Writing Center: University of Texas at Austin (2008–2009)

Undergraduate Writing Tutor, The Writing Center: Case Western Reserve University (2006–2008)

Writing Lab Tutor: Clackamas Community College (2005–2006)

Writing Lab Tutor: Clackamas Community College (2005–2006)

Service

Department

Curriculum Co-designer (with Dr. Elisabeth Miller), English 101 (101 curriculum template adopted department-wide in Fall 2019)

Course Co-designer (with Dr. Daniel Ryan Morse), English 332: Media Theory

Course designer: English 406B: Electronic Documents and Publications (adapted from UNLV’s ENG 406B: Electronic Documents and Publications)

Chair, Composition and Communication in the Disciplines Program Committee, Spring 2018

Member, Rhetoric and Composition Committee

Member, Graduate Committee

Member, Undergraduate Committee

Member, Cinema and Media Studies Committee

Member, Core Writing Committee

Member, Composition and Communication in the Disciplines Program Committee

Member, Writing Committee

Graduate Student Theses and Dissertations Committee Member

Graduate Student Adviser

Graduate Student Internship Adviser

Co-Coordinator, Communication and Composition in the Disciplines Assessment Project, Fall 2016–Spring 2017

Assessor, English 102 Program Assessment, Spring 2016

Panelist, “Personal Website Workshop for English Graduate Students,” Spring 2017

(Illinois State University): Course and Curriculum Development Assistant, Spring 2013:

“ENG 483: *Studies in Cultural Rhetorics*” (Course title, description, and curriculum template adopted by Illinois State English Department and ISU College of Arts and Sciences, Fall 2013)

College

Member, Course and Curriculum Committee

Member, College of Liberal Arts Committee on the UNR Writing Initiative

Panel Respondent, UNR Gender, Race, and Identity’s Peace and Conflict Film Series (film discussed: *Welcome to Leith*)

Volunteer, 2017 Crossings Conference

Panel Moderator, 6th annual College of Liberal Arts Graduate Symposium, Spring 2016

University

- Co-Director (with Dr. Elisabeth Miller), UNR Writing and Speaking in the Disciplines Program, Spring 2020–Present
- University-wide Assessment Co-designer: UNR CO1 (Effective composition and communication), Spring 2020
- University-wide Assessment Co-designer: UNR CO3 (Critical analysis and use of information), Summer 2020
- Director Pro Tem, Composition and Communication in the Disciplines program, Spring 2018
- Member (ex-officio), UNR Core Curriculum Board, Spring 2018

Profession/Discipline

- Proposal Reviewer, 2020 Computers and Writing Conference
- Adviser/Participant, 2019 Graduate Research Network at the 2019 Computers and Writing Conference
- Working Group Liaison, Rhetoric Society of America Institute 2019
- Member of the Peer Review Board, *Rhetoric Review*
- Reviewer, *Synthese*
- Reviewer, *College Composition and Communication*
- Reviewer, *enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*
- Proposal Reviewer, 2016 Cultural Rhetorics Conference
- Editorial Assistant, Fall 2010–Spring 2014: *JAC: A Journal of Rhetoric, Culture, and Politics*
- Manuscript Reviewer of *The Bedford Book of Genres*, by Amy Braziller and Elizabeth Kleinfeld, Bedford-St. Martin's, Summer 2010 (text published in 2014)
- Co-Founder and Co-President, Fall 2010–Spring 2012: RSISU: Rhetoric Society of Illinois State University (student chapter of the Rhetoric Society of America)
- Editorial Board Member and Digital/Online Editor at *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal*, Fall 2008–Spring 2009

Professional Memberships

- National Council of Teachers of English
- Rhetoric Society of America