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**Title of Presentation:** “Social Media/Microblogging: Identity in Digital Spaces”

**Conference:** Cultural Rhetorics

**Dates:** 9/30/2016 – 10/3/2016

**Location:** East Lansing, MI
 **Final Conference Report:**
From October 1st to October 2nd, I attened the Cultural Rhetorics Conference in East Lansing, Michigan. I attended presentations addressing a wide variety of topics ranging from meaning making in/around/against pop culture, women making in digital environments, the benefits of hip-hop pedagogies in first year composition classrooms.

The panel addressing the rhetorics of hip hop was incredibly interesting. The presentation given by Dr. Jill McKay Chrobak titled “The Struggle is Real: Whitness Studies, Hip Hop Pedagogies and the Rhetorics of White Privilege” addressed several advantages to including hip hop lyrics as part of rhetorical analysis assignments in the composition classroom. Her paper explained the benefits of bringing in lyrics from this specific music genre as a means to discuss marginalized voices, privilege, and encourage academic civic engagement. Personally, I enjoy pedagogies that include popular culture, but I am always concerned about how to include them in the classroom in a way that makes sense, or feels appropriate for what it is I am trying to teach students based on the curriculum. Dr. McKay Chrobak’s classes focus heavily on using hip hop pedagogies, and while I wouldn’t theme my courses around these hip hop pedagogies I do see where they can be part of smaller assignments when introducing certain assignments or topics. This is mostly due to the fact that I believe incorporating some elements of popular culture may result in students becoming more engaged with concepts if they are presented with material students relate or understand easier.

On October 2nd, Jasmine Villa, also a PhD student at UTEP, and I were part of a panel titled “Exploring the Rhetoricity of Personal Identities on Social Networking Sites (SNS).” We presented for about twenty minutes, and answered questions from the audience. The feedback to our presentation was positive, and some questions really helped us to think about what we may need to do in the future as we work towards publication.

We were able to address how a social networking website, situates texts where students must communicate in a rhetorically effective manner in order to create a virtual presence and digital body that is on the margins of academia. This communication includes, but is not limited to, the amount of text, audio, and visuals within the post. The questions we were asked also gave us the opportunity to discuss in more detail how we view meaning-making practices in digital spaces. We also received a few recommendations on how to move forward so that we can work towards publishing this in the future. We were encouraged to consider pursuing publication in Kairos. The Kairos Topoi is a peer-reviewed analysis of pedagogy, technology, and rhetoric, which we feel would be the most appropriate section to submit our paper.

Overall, it was a wonderful conference to attend, and allowed for me to sit in on presentations that address a wide variety of topics from scholars of all different backgrounds. It is a conference that is attended by scholars willing to provide feedback and support for all projects. The environment was incredibly welcoming, and the conference lives up to its goal of being a celebration of new ideas about cultural rhetorics.

**Final Travel Costs**

I received additional travel funding from Baker-Hernandez through the English Department that paid the full cost of the airfare and hotel. Dodson travel funds will be used for my per diem.

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| Item | Cost | Notes | Total Requested |
| Flight | $595.96  | Depart September 30th: El Paso, TX to Phoenix, AZPhoenix, AZto Detroit, MIReturn October 3rd:  Detroit, MI to  Dallas, TX  Dallas, TX to El  Paso, TX | $595.96 (covered by Baker-Hernandez travel grant) |
| Hotel | $10.14/night | Quality Inn UniversityI was able to find a cheaper rate than the one offered to those attending the conference.  | $342.87(covered by Baker-Hernandez travel grant) |
| Per Diem | $59/day | 2 days at $44.25 2 days at $59.00 | $206.50 |
| Total  |  |  | $ 1145.33 |