

Zane Austin Willard

Department of Communication
4202 E. Fowler Ave, CIS 3018
University of South Florida
Tampa, FL 33620
zawillard@usf.edu
Pronouns: he/him/his

Education

PhD, University of South Florida, College of Arts & Sciences, Communication, present
Major Area: Critical Cultural Studies
Minor Areas: Media & Technology Studies, Gender & Sexuality Studies
Advisor: Aisha Durham, Ph.D.

MA, University of South Florida, College of Arts & Sciences, Communication, 2023
Thesis: “Queen of the Mother-Tucking (Western) World”: Authenticity & Nationality on
Drag Race
Advisor: Rachel E. Dubrofsky, Ph.D.
Committee: Keith Berry, Ph.D. & Diana Leon-Boys, Ph.D.

BA, University of Tampa, College of Arts & Letters, Communication & Film, 2021
Minors: History & Cinema Studies
Thesis: The Strategic Rhetoric of Straightness and the Commodification of Queerness in
the Cinema of AIDS
Advisor: Alisha L. Menzies, Ph.D.

BA, University of Tampa, John H. Sykes College of Business, Economics, 2021
Thesis: Unlikely Heroes: Social Entrepreneurship During the AIDS Crisis in
San Francisco
Advisor: Abigail R. Hall, Ph.D.

Professional Positions

Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of Communication, University of South Florida,
2023-present

Graduate Research Associate, Department of Communication, University of South Florida,
2023-present

Graduate Assistant of Communication Education, College of Engineering, University of
South Florida, 2022-present

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Communication, University of South Florida,
2021-2023

Publications

Refereed Journal Articles

Willard, Zane Austin. & Alisha L. Menzies. (2024). Fashioning Zaya Wade in the Press: Authenticity, Black Femininity, and Transnormativity. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01968599241233735>

Willard, Zane Austin. (2024). Fostering Critical Consciousness: Critical Service-Learning and Intersectional Reflexivity in the First-Year Classroom. *Communication Teacher*, 38(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2023.2263533>.

Willard, Zane Austin. (2022). Reframing Performance's Ontology: Hybridity in Contemporary Performance Art's Ontology. *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*, 18(3), 390-402, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14794713.2022.2097982>.

Book Chapters

Regutti, Kailin, **Zane Austin Willard**, & Mahuya Pal. (Accepted, In Press). Regimes of Visibility in Disney's CSR: Corporate Wokeness, Neoliberalism, and Promotional Industries. In L. Edwards, J. V. Cabanes, and C. Bourne (Eds.) *Handbook of Promotional Culture and Society*. Sage.

Awards

James E. Popovich Award (for MA student success in Graduate Studies), Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023.

Elias J. & Vivian Zrake Nader Award (for MA student success in Critical Cultural Studies, Performance & Rhetoric), Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023.

Fellowships

Frederic Bastiat Research Intensive Fellowship, Mercatus Center at George Mason University, (\$5000), 2023-24

Frederic Bastiat Fellowship, Mercatus Center at George Mason University, (\$2500), 2022-23

Don Lavoie Fellowship, Mercatus Center at George Mason University, (\$1000), Fall 2021

President's Leadership Fellow, Office of Student Leadership & Engagement, The University of Tampa, (\$4000), 2016-2020

Grants

Recipient, National Communication Association Student Caucus Travel Grant, (\$200), 2023

Recipient, University of South Florida Student Government Travel Grant, (\$500),
Spring 2022, Fall 2023

Teaching

University of South Florida—Department of Communication

Instructor of Record

Public Speaking

***online, hybrid, and in-person

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Introduction to Communication

Communication & Cultural Diversity

University of South Florida—College of Engineering

Graduate Instructional Assistant

Globalization & Technology

Engineering Economics with Social and Global Implications

***Assists with Intercultural, Interpersonal, and Media Communication Components

University of Tampa—Office of First-Year Engagement

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant

First Year Seminar 1

First Year Seminar 2

Transfer Student Seminar

Invited Talks

"Tik Tok: Not Just for Kids Anymore," Co-Presenter with Alisha L. Menzies, Ph.D.,
Controversies in Communication Series, University of Tampa College of Arts and
Letters and University of South Florida Osher Life Long Learning Institute, virtual,
2021.

"We Are What We Say: Celebrity and Communication Mistakes," Co-Presenter with Alisha
L. Menzies, Ph.D., *Controversies in Communication Series*, University of Tampa
College of Arts and Letters and University of South Florida Osher Life Long Learning
Institute, Crescent Club, The University of Tampa, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2020.

Conference Presentations

Paper (part of a competitive panel) (co-authored with Rachel E. Dubrofsky), "*RuPaul's Drag
Race: Queer Authenticity vs. Western Whiteness*," *Liberating Queerness: Queer
Theory's Radical Potential for Making Sense of the Past, Critiquing the Present, and
Imagining the Future*, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, Caucus on LGBTQ
Concerns, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor,
Maryland, USA, 2023.

Discussant (part of a competitive panel), *Existing & Resisting Anti-Woke: Graduate Student
Perspectives*, Activism and Social Justice Division, National Communication
Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.

- Discussant (invited and part of a competitive panel), *Permission to Scream: From Frustration and Futility to Boundary Pushing and Academic Freedom in Teaching Communication Across Disciplines*, Instructional Development Division, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.
- Competitive Paper, “The Life and Death of Gay Promiscuity in *When We Rise*,” *Top Papers in Gender Studies*, Gender Studies Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023. *****Runner-Up for Top Student Paper**
- Competitive Paper, “Melancholia in the Chicana Art of AIDS: Tracing *Memento Mori* in the *Rasquache* Aesthetic,” *Bodies and Agency, Identity, Inclusion, and Social Justice* Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023.
- Competitive Paper, “Are you ready for Thai Tea?: Performing-not-performing Queer Asia on *RuPaul’s Drag Race UK vs The World*”, *Things You Say You Love: The Examination of Culture, Youth, and Gender Perspectives*, Popular Communication Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023.
- Competitive Paper, “Exhibiting Performance Art: An Ontological Debate,” *Contributed Papers in Performance Studies*, Performance Studies Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Greenville, South Carolina, USA, 2022.
- Competitive Paper, “The Strategic Rhetoric of Straightness and the Commodification of Queerness in the Cinema of AIDS,” *Queer and Trans Media Studies*, Society for Cinema and Media Studies convention, virtual, 2022.
- Competitive GIFTS Presentation, “Enhancing the First Year Experience: The Community as an Agent for Connection,” *Great Ideas for Teaching Students*, Florida Communication Association convention, virtual, 2021.

Additional Conference Participation

- Paper Panel Chair & Session Organizer, *Liberating Queerness: Queer Theory’s Radical Potential for Making Sense of the Past, Critiquing the Present, and Imagining the Future*, Critical and Cultural Studies Division, Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.
- Panel Discussion Chair & Session Organizer, *Existing & Resisting Anti-Woke: Graduate Student Perspectives*, Activism and Social Justice Division, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.
- Panel Discussion Co-Chair & Session Organizer (co-chair with Alisha L. Menzies), *Critical Pedagogies in the Times of Anti-Woke: Existing and Resisting in the Classroom*, Scholarship on Teaching and Learning, National Communication Association convention, National Harbor, Maryland, USA, 2023.

Paper Panel Chair, *Sexuality and Gender in Communication*, Gender Studies Division, Southern States Communication Association convention, Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA, 2023.

Undergraduate Poster Judge, Florida Communication Association convention, virtual, 2021

Invited Class Lectures

“Beyond the Numbers: The Realities of Economic Decision-Making for Engineers,” Guest Lecture for *Engineering Economics with Social and Global Implications*, University of South Florida College of Engineering, virtual, 2023.

“Going Global: The Politics of Global Drag Identity on *Drag Race*,” Guest Lecture for *Global Communication*, University of Tampa Master of Arts in Professional Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2023.

“Textual Analysis & Critical Media Studies: Interrogating Popular Culture,” Guest Lecture for *Popular Communication*, University of Tampa Master of Arts in Professional Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2023.

“Critical Media Studies in Intercultural Communication,” Guest Lecture for *Intercultural Communication*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

“Media as Public Pedagogy,” Guest Lecture for *Media & Society*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

“Media Analysis: Masculinity in HBO’s *Chernobyl*,” Guest Lecture for *Globalization & Technology*, University of South Florida College of Engineering, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

“Intersectionality and The Reality of Demographics in Decision-Making,” Guest Lecture for *Engineering Economics with Social and Global Implications*, University of South Florida College of Engineering, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

“Masculinity as Performance in Popular Media,” 3-Class Lecture Series for *Media & Society*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

“Movie Posters: Iconography and Visual Rhetoric in Practice,” Guest Lecture for *Visual Literacy*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

“The Sanctuary: Museums and Galleries as Sacred Places,” Guest Lecture for *History of Video Art*, University of South Florida Department of Humanities, virtual, 2021.

“Interpreting Oppression Through Storytelling,” Guest Lecture for *Introduction to Gender Studies*, University of Tampa College of Arts & Letters, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2021.

“Sorry, Not Sorry: Race and Gender in Cancel Culture,” Guest Lecture for *Popular Communication*, University of Tampa Master of Arts in Professional Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2021.

“Blurring Lines: Authenticity, Friendship, and Peer Mentoring,” Guest Lecture for *Peer Mentoring*, University of Tampa First Year Peer Mentorship Program, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2020.

“Cancel Culture & Communication Mistakes,” Guest Lecture for *Mass Media & Society*, University of Tampa Department of Communication, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2020.

Group Art Exhibitions—Juried

The University of Tampa’s Alumni Photography Showcase
Ferman Center for the Arts, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2023
Fleur de Nuit, No. 1, 2021

#visibleUSF: Queering the Art Narrative through Curatorial Activism
Carolyn M. Wilson Gallery, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022
Oil Spill, No. 1, 2021
Sunspot Triptych, 2021
4 Paintings 1 Drawing, 2020

Convergence: A Contemporary Photography Exhibition
Indianapolis Art Center, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 2022
Oil Spill, No. 1, 2021
Fleur de Nuit, 2021

The 2021 Contemporary Art Survey
The Lincoln Center, For Collins, Colorado, USA, 2021
Sunspot Triptych, 2021

May 2021 Group Art Show
Jones Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri, USA, 2021
Oil Spill, No. 1, 2021

A Certain Kind of Blue
Analog Forever, Virtual, 2021
Cosmic Self-Portrait Diptych, 2021

Film Festivals—Juried

Solo Projects

Lift-Off Filmmaker Session
Lift-Off Global Network, London, UK, 2019

Gendered Fitness (2019)
Switzerland (2018)

Tampa International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival
Tampa Theatre, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2018
Switzerland (2018)
Official Short-Film Selection

Toronto Alternative Film Festival
EVN Film Studios, Toronto, Ontario, CAN, 2018
Switzerland (2018)
Semifinalist, Short Documentary

The University of Tampa's Black Box Film Festival
Reeves Theatre, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2018
Switzerland (2018)

Collaborative Projects

IMPACT Doc Awards
Virtual Exhibition, 2018
Wolfpack Squad (2018)
Role: Lead Editor
Award of Merit

One-Reeler Short Film Competition
Virtual Exhibition
Wolfpack Squad (2018)
Role: Lead Editor
Honorable Mention

Group Exhibitions—Non-Juried

Recycling is Art Gala
Henry B. Plant Park, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2021
Penetration (2021)

The University of Tampa's NASAD Exhibition
The University of Tampa's Black Box Theatre, Tampa, Florida, USA
Switzerland (2018)
Big Creek (2017)

Professional Service

Vice Chair, Graduate Student Committee, Activism and Social Justice Division, National Communication Association, 2024.

Editorial Assistant, *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 2023-24

Moderator for Alisha L. Menzies, "Between the Lines: Creating and Understanding Social Media Identities," *Controversies in Communication Series*, University of Tampa College of Arts and Letters and University of South Florida Osher Life Long Learning Institute, Charlene Gordon Theater, The University of Tampa, Tampa, Florida, USA, 2022.

Member, Constitutional Convention Committee, Florida Communication Association, 2021-22

University Service

Session Leader with Bianca Siegenthaler, "Navigating the 2nd Year of Your M.A.," Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023.

Peer Mentor for 1st Year MA Students, Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2022-23, 2023-24

Media

Interviewed for my work with The OUT Foundation and CrossFit Big Guava for *UT Life*, "UT Senior Promotes Inclusive Wellness with The OUT Foundation," February 24, 2021, <https://www.ut.edu/news-and-ut-life/ut-senior-promotes-inclusive-wellness-with-the-out-foundation>.

Professional Development

Graduate Student Curriculum Collaborator (invited), Wrote Case Studies for K. Berry & J. L. Hocker. (2025) *Interpersonal Conflict* (11th edition). McGraw-Hill.

Participant, Communication Careers Beyond the Academy, Workshop Led by Krystal Bresnahan (Independent Scholar & Communication Consultant), Graduate Communication Association, University of South Florida, 2023

Participant, Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education, Workshop Led by Tim Henkel, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, University of South Florida, 2023

Online Instructor Re-Certification, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, University of South Florida, 2023

Participant, Microaggressions in the Academy, Workshop Led by Lisa Hanasono, (Bowling Green State University), Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2023

Participant, First-Year Public Speaking Instructor Workshop Series Led by Aubrey A. Huber and David Dooling, Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2022-2023

Participant, Teaching with HB7, Workshop Led by Rachel E. Dubrofsky, Department of Communication, University of South Florida, 2022

Online Instructor Certification, Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning, University of South Florida, 2022

Reviewer

Journals

International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media

Conference Submissions

International Communication Association

Popular Media & Culture Division—2024

LGBTQ Studies Interest Group—2024

Global Communication and Social Change Division—2024

National Communication Association

Critical and Cultural Studies Division—2023

Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns—2023

GLBTQ Communication Studies Division—2023

Student Section—2022, 2023

Southern States Communication Association

Identity, Inclusion, and Social Justice Division—2024

Gender Studies Division—2023, 2024

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Commission on Graduate Education—2023

Memberships

International Communication Association

Activism, Communication, and Social Justice Interest Group—2023-present

Feminist Scholarship Division—2023-present

LGBTQ Studies Interest Group—2023-present

Organizational Communication Division—2023-present

Popular Media & Culture Division—2023-present

National Communication Association

International and Intercultural Division—2023-present

Activism and Social Justice Division—2023-present

Caucus on LGBTQ Concerns—2022-present

Critical and Cultural Studies Division—2021-present

GLBTQ Communication Studies Division—2021-present

Student Section—2021-present

Southern States Communication Association

Identity, Inclusion, and Social Justice—2023-present

Gender Studies Division—2022-Present

Philosophy & Ethics Interest Group—2021-present

Society of Cinema and Media Studies

Media, Science, and Technology SIG—2022-present

Gender and Feminisms Caucus—2021-present

Queer and Trans Caucus—2021-present

Critical Media Pedagogies SIG—2021-present

Television Studies SIG—2021-present

American Studies Association—2024-present

Surveillance Studies Network—2023-present

Cultural Studies Association—2021-present

Florida Communication Association—2021-present

Non-Academic Professional Positions

Director of Operations & Finance, XO Productions, Tampa, Florida, 2023-present

Head Coach, CrossFit Big Guava, Tampa, Florida, 2020-present

Director of Fundamental Programs, 2020-2022

Assistant Coach, 2019-2020

Audio/Visual Editor and Producer, The OUT Foundation, Remote, 2019-2021

Peer Mentor, Office of First-Year Experience, University of Tampa, Tampa, Florida,
2019-2021

Site Leader of Alternative Breaks, PEACE Volunteer Center, University of Tampa, Tampa,
Florida, 2017, 2018, 2020

Volunteer & Sponsorship Coordinator, Florida GRID League, Tampa, Florida, 2018-2019

Student Advisor, National Student Leadership Conference, Washington D.C., 2018

Director of Public Relations, PEACE Volunteer Center, University of Tampa, Tampa,
Florida, 2017-2018

Director of Marketing, Control The Room, Remote, 2017-2018

Social Media Intern, 2016-2017

Office Assistant, Forsyth Insurance Services, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 2017

Lead Merchandiser, American Eagle Outfitters, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 2017-2018

Sales Associate, 2015-2016

Technical Skills

Adobe Creative Cloud

Photoshop, Illustrator, Lightroom, InDesign, Premiere Pro, AfterEffects

Office Software

Microsoft Office, G-Suite, Apple Products, Canva

Filmmaking Software

Final Draft (Screenwriting), ProTools (Audio), Maya (3D Animation),
ToonBoom Harmony (2D Animation), MadMapper (Projection Mapping)

Film and Photography Hardware

DSLR, Blackmagic 4D, RED, Studio Lighting, On Set & Studio Recorded Audio

Analog Photography Skills

Cyanotype Printing, Salt Printing, Lumen Printing, Transfer Film, Tea & Wine Staining