LATONYA J. TAYLOR, PH.D.

Assistant Professor
The University of Georgia
Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Public Relations, Rhetoric, Public Relations History, The Civil Rights Movement, Public Memory, Higher Education, Crisis Communication, The Practitioner Experience

EDUCATION

Ph.D., The University of Alabama 2026
Communication & Information Sciences

Dissertation Title: "Universities as critical rhetorical arenas: Insights on multivocal storytelling from faculty and public relations staff at universities studying slavery"
Advisors: Dr. Laura L. Lemon, Dr. Damion M. Waymer

M.A., DePaul University 2013
Writing, Rhetoric & Discourse

B.A., Taylor University 2001
Mass Communication and English (Writing)

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor of Public Relations Fall 2026-present
Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication
The University of Georgia

Adjunct Instructor Spring 2026
The University of South Carolina School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Adjunct Instructor Fall 2025
The Culverhouse College of Business, The University of Alabama

Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant 2021-2025
The University of Alabama College of Communication & Information Sciences

Editorial Assistant, *Communication & Critical Cultural Studies* 2021-2023

PUBLICATIONS

Taylor, L.J., Edrington, C., & Waymer, D. (2026). Conceptualizing publics' negative affect via the exploration of African American practitioners' accounts of obstacles encountered in the industry. *Public Relations Review, 15(1)*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2025.102662

Edrington, C., Waymer, D., Goli, M., & **Taylor, L.J.** (2026). Appreciative but battered: The bittersweet experiences of former Black public relations graduate students. *Journal of Public Relations Education,* 12 (1), 97-134.

Waymer, D., **Taylor, L. J.**, & Edrington, C. (2025). Access matters: Leveraging organizational attractiveness frameworks to devise targeted recruitment strategies for Black public relations professionals. *Public Relations Journal*, *18*(4). https://instituteforpr.org/prj-vol-18-issue-4-article-2/

Taylor, L. J., Boman, C. D., & Lemon, L. L. (2025). Exploring post-crisis sensemaking among public relations professionals in higher education. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5973.70028

Boman, C. D., Lemon, L. L., **Taylor, L. J.**, & VanDyke, M. S. (2024). Identifying (mis/dis)information skills: The need for educating and training a holistic PR professional. *Journal of Public Relations Education*, *10*(3), 8–54.

Taylor, L. J., Bagley, M. M., & Stewart, L. (2024). Corporate responsibility to race as a lens for higher education public relations. *Howard Journal of Communications*. https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2024.2379543

Taylor, L. J. (2023). Introduction: Possibilities of collaboration between public memory scholars and higher education public relations professionals. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, *20*(2), 157–164. https://doi.org/10.1080/14791420.2023.2201335

Waymer, D., & **Taylor, L.J.** (2022). Exploring HBCU students' interests in pursuing graduate studies in public relations and communication programs. *Journal of Public Relations Education*, *8*(1), 43–75.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Ethics of care as a societal necessity to navigate disinformation: Examining the lived experiences of strategic communication professionals." Presentation of research with Dr. Courtney Boman and Dr. Laura L. Lemon.
2026 Bledcom Conference, 33rd International Public Relations Research Symposium

"Experiences of Black Public Relations Professionals." Presentation of research with Dr. Candice Edrington and Dr. Damion Waymer.
2025 International Public Relations Research Conference

"Considerations for Mental Health in Disaster Communications." Presentation with Dr. Suzanne Horsley.
2025 International Crisis and Risk Communication Association Conference

"The Role of Public Relations Professionals in Higher Education Crisis Leadership."
2025 International Crisis and Risk Communication Association Conference

"A Qualitative Study of Post-Crisis Sensemaking Among Public Relations Practitioners in Higher Education."
2024 Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

"A Redeemed Reputation? Dialectical Tensions in Public Memory of a Rhetorical Activist."
2023 Conference of the National Communication Association

"The Tensions between Countermemory Practice and Higher Education Public Relations."
2023 Southern States Communication Association Conference

"Diverse Voices of Graduate Students in Community-Engaged Scholarship."
2023 14th Annual Discerning Diverse Voices Symposium on Diversity, The University of Alabama College of Communication & Information Science

"A Contested Legacy at the Capstone: Campus Memory and Autherine Lucy Foster." Research in Progress Roundtable.
2022 Conference of the National Communication Association

"'The Voice of the Black Students Here': *The Black Chronicle* as a Window into a Transitional Period at The University of Alabama." Research in Progress Presentation.
2022 Conference of the American Journalism Historians Association

"Rhetoric Around the Edges." Panel Chair.
2022 Conference of the Rhetoric Society of America

"Exploring HBCU Students' Interests in Pursuing Graduate Studies in Public Relations and Communication Programs."
2022 Southern States Communication Association Conference

"Lethe and the Tallahatchie: Multidirectional Memory, Dwayne Carter, and Emmett Till."
2014 Joint Conference of the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association

"'Now You Has Jazz': Jazz Quilts as Listening Images."
2013 Joint Conference of the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association

"'Let the Spirit Move You': Gospel Music, Honest Contrivance, and Performance of The Shout in Contemporary Film."
2011 Joint Conference of the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association

"Constructing the Individual Collective: Negotiated Identities in African American Praise and Worship Music."
2010 Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Popular & American Culture Association

"New Media, New Problems: The Disoriented Self in Countercultural Community."
2010 Joint Conference of the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association

TEACHING

Media & Society, The University of South Carolina, Spring 2026.

Writing for Mass Communication, The University of South Carolina, Spring 2026.

Business Communication, Culverhouse School of Business, The University of Alabama, Fall 2025.

Crisis & Emergency Management, The University of Alabama, Fall 2023.

Public Relations Writing, The University of Alabama, Spring 2023, 2024, 2025; Fall 2024.

Advertising Strategy, The University of Alabama, Spring 2023.

Crisis & Reputation Management, Wheaton College, Fall 2018.

Rhetoric & Composition, DePaul University, Fall 2012.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

2026 Joffre and Zade Whisenton Award, The University of Alabama Black Faculty & Staff Association.

2025 Inez Kaiser Graduate Student of Color Award, The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

2025 Outstanding Teaching by a Doctoral Student Award, The University of Alabama College of Communication & Information Sciences.

Page Legacy Scholar Grant from the Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication, 2024. **Category:** Ethics Training in Public Relations, Journalism, Advertising & Strategic Communication. **Project:** "A Caring Compass: Developing Ethical Guidelines for Navigating (Mis/dis)information." With Dr. Courtney Boman and Dr. Laura Lemon.

Page Legacy Scholar Grant from the Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication, 2024. **Category:** Expanding Theory for Integrity in Public Communication. **Project:** "A Model for Disaster Mental Health Communication: Testing a

Three-pronged Approach to Support Communicators and Affected Publics." With Dr. Suzanne Horsley and Dr. Daphne Cain.

SEC Emerging Scholars Program Fellowship, 2023-2024.

Michael S. Sweeney Graduate Student Travel Stipend, American Journalism Historians Association, 2022.

Best Oral Presentation, Tide Together End of Year Symposium, 2022.

Teaching Apprenticeship Practicum, DePaul University, 2012.

SERVICE

Assessor for Crisis Communication Course, Hubbard School of Journalism & Mass Communication, the University of Minnesota. 2023.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

International Crisis and Risk Communication Association

National Communication Association

Rhetoric Society of America

Southern States Communication Association

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Director of Media Relations, Wheaton College 2009-2020

Led strategic media, public relations, issues management, crisis communication, reputation recovery, community engagement and proactive media outreach functions.

Provided executive-level consulting to senior administrators and college board; created messaging and trained college faculty and staff on media interviews and sensitive constituent communications.

Developed communication strategies for litigation, presidential transitions, marketing, new program rollouts, confidential matters, and personnel issues; wrote and rolled out comprehensive crisis communication plan that incorporated digital and social media.

Managed end-to-end lifecycle of projects including national public television broadcasts, a faculty experts initiative, and a TED-style video series highlighting faculty scholarship.

Presented on crisis communication in higher education at local industry events.

Earned Certificate in Crisis Leadership in Higher Education, Harvard University, Kennedy School of Executive Education.

Recognized with Top Women in PR, 2019 award by *PR News*.

Served on Commission for Strategic Communications & Public Affairs, Council for Christian Colleges & Universities

Magazine Editor, Various Publications 2001-2009

Held 3 positions of increasing responsibility and scope for several publications.

Wrote news articles, feature stories, and reviews that have been cited in scholarly treatments of topics including the religious background of Oprah Winfrey, womanist and Black feminist critiques of popular culture, and the evolution of praise & worship music in the African American church.