

Brenna Tellames Williams

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DOB: 09/23/1998

Research Interests

Cultural rhetorics: Hawaiian and African American rhetoric, rhetorics of kinky hair, embodied rhetoric.

Cultural-based education, intercultural communication, indigenous studies, translingualism, decolonial and anti-racist pedagogical praxis

Education

Doctor of Philosophy: Composition & Cultural Rhetoric, Syracuse University

2023-Present

Master of Arts in English: Rhetoric and Composition, North Carolina State University

2020-2022

- Capstone: “Cultural Rhetoric: Hawaiian Culture and its Significance in the Rhetorical Field”
 - Directed by Dr. Ronisha Browdy

Bachelor of Arts in English: Writing and Composition, North Carolina Central University

2017-2020

General Studies: East Carolina University

2016-2017

Certified Nursing Assistant I & II: Fayetteville Technical Community College

2015-2016

Courses Instructed

WRT 105: Practices of Academic Writing, Syracuse University, Fall 2024

WRT 205: Critical Research and Writing: Writing and Technology Inquiry, Syracuse University, Spring 2025

Relevant Coursework

Contemporary Rhetorics, Dr. Kevin Browne, 2025

Ancient Rhetorics, Dr. Alicia Hatcher, 2024

Papa ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i, Kauwila Mahi, 2024

Translingual Theories, Dr. Joseph Wilson, 2024

Rhetorics of the Anthropocene, Dr. Kevin Browne, 2024

Rhetorical Criticisms, Dr. Charles E. Morris III, 2023

Rhet/Com and Digital Humanities, Dr. Alicia K. Hatcher, 2023

History of Rhetoric, Dr. Victoria Gallagher, 2021

Professional Experience

7th Grade ELA Teacher
Southern Middle School

Aug 2022-Jun 2023
Roxboro, NC

- Develop lesson plans that align with grade level standards
- Differentiate material to suit student needs (low level, on grade level, and higher level)
- Begin every class with a word of the day to expand student vocabulary
- Reflect on teaching style to accommodate different learning styles of students
- Conduct small groups in class to assist students that are below grade level
- Assess students to determine growth/what needs reiteration
- Undergo required trainings and developments
- Attend weekly 7th grade team meetings, ELA meetings, monthly staff meetings, and other various meetings to ensure accurate communication between colleagues
- Attend after school fundraising events
- Provide after school tutoring for students in need of extra support
- Present quarterly awards for A, A/B honor roll, etc.

English Tutor
The Creative Teacher

Feb 2022-May 2022
Raleigh, NC

- Assist K-12 students with homework assignments, projects, and practice tests
- Coach students on proper reading, writing, and speaking techniques
- Grade homework and practice tests

Guest Teacher
NC State University

April 18, 2022
Raleigh, NC

- Develop teaching plan about Southern Literature characteristics in *A Land More Kind Than Home* by Wiley Cash
- Help undergraduate students understand Southern Gothic in literature
- Provide definitions and characteristics of Southern literature
- Help students think critically about theories in the novel

Intern
North Carolina A&T University

Jan 2021-Apr 2021
Remote

Supervised by Dr. Kimberly Harper, Director of Technical Communication

- Assisted with Black History Month webinars via zoom.
- Helped brainstorm questions for panelists in webinars, making sure the questions are specifically relevant to the panelists and their careers.
- Posted flyers for the webinars on social media to create awareness.
- Welcome panelists and attendees to the webinars.
- Moderated and watched the Q&A for questions from the audience, frequently bringing the questions to the panelists attention.

Intern

North Carolina Central University School of Law,

Supervised by Dr. Karuna Rekhraj, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations

Jan 2020-Mar 2020

Durham, NC

- Conducted research on recent alumni to see their progression after graduation.
- Used research to help create a magazine for NCCU School of Law Alumni.
- Interviewed a small local business to be incorporated in the magazine for NCCU School of Law Alumni.
- Distinguish between active and non-active email addresses so that the magazines can be sent to alumni.

Intern

North Carolina Central University

Supervised by Dr. Susan Hester, Vice Chancellor of Institutional Advancement

Jan 2019-Apr 2019

Durham, NC

- Created an e-newsletter for NCCU's College of Arts and Science.
- Interviewed faculty, staff, and students in NCCU's music, theater, and dance departments.
- Participated in current events hosted by departments to gain more content for the e-newsletter.
- Used information from interviews and events to create articles discussing each department.

Honors and Awards

- The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, Syracuse University 2025-Present
- CCR Fellowship, Syracuse University 2023-2024, 2025-2026
- Beginning Teacher of Excellence, Southern Middle School 2022-2023
- Outstanding Young Educator, Southern Middle School 2022-2023
- *Magna Cum Laude*, North Carolina Central University, 2020
- Miss Tau Sigma National Honor Society, North Carolina Central University, 2019-2020
- Tau Sigma National Honor Society for Transfer Students, North Carolina Central University, 2018-2020
- Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society, North Carolina Central University, 2018-2020
- Golden Key National Honor Society, North Carolina Central University 2018-2020

Presentations

“Rhetorics of Kinky Hair”

Oral Presentation, Conference on College Composition and Communication, Baltimore, Maryland Apr 2025

“Hawaiian/Polynesian Rhetoric”

Seminar Presentation, Ancient Rhetorics, Syracuse University, Oct 2024

“Hula Kū‘ē: Survivance Rhetoric of Hawai’i”

Oral Presentation, CNY Conference on Environmental Science and Studies, SUNY ESF, Mar 2024

“Black and Indigenous Solidarities: Afro-Indigenous Identity”

Group Presentation, CNY Conference on Environmental Science and Studies, SUNY ESF, Mar 2024

“Aging in Hawai’i”

Seminar Presentation, Aging in Society, Syracuse University, Dec 2023

“Resistance in the Information Age: Hawai’i”

Multimodal Seminar Presentation, Digital Humanities, Syracuse University, Dec 2023

“Cultural Rhetoric: Hawaiian Culture and its Significance in the Rhetorical Field”

Capstone Presentation, NCSU, May 2022

“Kinky Hair Title”

Senior Seminar Presentation, NCCU, May 2019

Community Engagement

President, Rhetoric Society of America at Syracuse

Aug 2024-May 2025

- Organize meetings with officers to organize upcoming events
- Attend and host 1-2 events per semester to establish a community of rhetorical scholars

Graduate Research Assistant, Southside Connections, Engaged Humanities Network (EHN)

Jun 2024-Aug 2024

- Attend monthly meetings establishing community amongst organizations on the Southside of Syracuse
- Conduct interviews with sponsors, acquiring information in relation to their organization
- Attend events from various organizations to understand their daily activities and ways that Southside Connections can better support them

Academic Program Senator, Graduate Student Organization

Aug 2023-May 2024

- Attend monthly meetings that establish belonging and community for graduate students
- Vote on significant social and financial matters within the organization

Committee Member, DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility)

Aug 2023-May 2024

- Attend bi-weekly meetings to discuss ways to improve DEIA on campus
- Collaborate in creating a graduate student survey to get feedback from current graduate students about their experiences on campus
 - Use feedback to help advocate for meaningful changes that benefit all students

Vice President, Rhetoric Society of America at Syracuse

Aug 2023-May 2024

- Attend bi-weekly officer meetings to organize upcoming events
- Attend monthly RSA events to engage in community with fellow rhetoricians

Member, Indigenous and Black Solidarities

Feb 2024-Present

- Attend bi-weekly meetings to discuss ways to create solidarities between black and indigenous people
- Create a community of people in support of Black and Indigenous solidarities
- Presented as a group at the 2024 CNY Conference on Environmental Science and Studies

Member, Syracuse Graduate Employee Union

Aug 2023-Present

- Attended various meetings to advocate for better pay for Syracuse employees

Member, Black Graduate Student Association

Aug 2023-Present

- Attended various meetings to create community with fellow Black graduate students

Alto, NCCU Choir

Aug 2018-May 2020

- Attended practices and performances around the Durham community

Additional Experience

Server, First Watch

Jul 2021-Jul 2023

- Ensure that customers have a great dining experience.
- Work as a team with co-workers to ensure the restaurant runs smoothly.
- Pre-buss tables, complete side work, roll silverware.
- Greet and provide excellent customer service to the guests.
- Take togo and online orders, bag and label each bag for the guests.

Server, IHOP

Jun 2017-Jun 2021

- Ensure that customers have a great dining experience.
- Work as a team with co-workers to ensure the restaurant runs smoothly.
- Pre-buss tables, complete side work, roll silverware.
- Greet and provide excellent customer service to the guests.
- Take togo and online orders, bag and label each bag for the guests.

References

- Alicia K. Hatcher, Assistant Professor, Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, 919-285-6829, akhatche@syr.edu
- Kevin Adonis Browne, Associate Professor, Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, 868-737-8934, browne@syr.edu
- Patrick Holmes, Principal, Southern Middle School, 336-504-2419, holmesp@person.k12.nc.us
- Bradley Porrin, Assistant Principal, Southern Middle School, 336-599-6995 porrinb@person.k12.nc.us
- Julie Nelson, Associate Professor, English & Writing Department, University of Tampa 612-701-5542, jnelson@ut.edu
- Ronisha Browdy, Assistant Professor, English and Writing Department, Florida State University, 352-232-3059, rbrowdy@fsu.edu

