

## ZACH THORNHILL

### EDUCATION

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
**Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Studies** **Anticipated Graduation: 2026**  
Advisor: Casey Kelly  
Area of Concentration: Rhetoric and Public Culture

Illinois State University  
**Master of Science in Communication Studies** **2022**  
Advisor: Joseph Zompetti  
Thesis: "Make America Kill Again: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's Necropolitical Representations Through Conjunctural Use of Twitter During his Presidency"

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
**Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice (Distinction)** **2020**  
Area of Concentration: Criminal Law  
Minors: Communication Studies, Political Science, National Security Studies

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
**Supplemental Instructor** **2019**  
Led discussions and activities to encourage increased educational outcomes for disenfranchised students.

Illinois State University  
**Graduate Teaching Assistant** **2020-2022**  
Served as the single instructor for the basic communication course including "Success 101" courses.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
**Graduate Teaching Assistant** **2022-Present**  
Served as instructor of record and Teaching assistant for a multitude of classes

#### **COURSES TAUGHT (When – Modalities)**

Communication 110: Communication and Inquiry (Fall 2020 – Online Asynchronous, Spring 2021 – Online Synchronous, Fall 2021 – In person, Spring 2022 – Hybrid)  
Communication Studies 101: Communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Fall 2022 – In person, Spring 2023 – In person, Summer 2023 – Online Asynchronous, Spring 2024 – In person)  
Communication Studies 212: Debate (Fall 2023 – In person)  
Communication Studies 215: Visual Communication (Winter 2024 – Online Asynchronous)  
Communication Studies 286: Business and Professional Communication (Summer 2024 – Online Asynchronous)  
Communication Studies 250: Rhetoric, Media, and Civic Life (Fall 2024 – In Person)

### COACHING EXPERIENCE

Justice Debate League  
**Debate Coach at the Lincoln Correctional Center** **2018-2019**  
Taught argumentation and debate classes to incarcerated individuals while also having in-house debate tournaments.

Lincoln Southwest High School  
**Head Lincoln Douglas Debate Coach** **2019-2023**  
Instructed high school students about argument development and created the most nationally competitive team in school history.

- Coached 5 national qualifiers over 4 years
- Coached a sophomore to the top 90 in the country at the National Speech and Debate Association National Tournament
- During career, amassed over 600 wins
- In addition to coaching Lincoln Douglas, also coached World Schools Debate, Public Forum, Policy Debate, and Extemporaneous Debate
- Selected as the 2023 NSDA Nebraska District Assistant Coach of the Year

Illinois State University

**Assistant Debate Coach**

**2020-2022**

Coached undergraduate students in NFA Lincoln Douglas style debate and generated the most competitive team ISU has ever had at the national level.

- Was appointed interim Director of Debate in the Spring of 2021, taking on all responsibilities related to managing the team
- Qualified every debater to Nationals that I coached
- Coached each debater competing at nationals to elimination rounds including a freshman to the top 16 in the nation

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Assistant Debate Coach**

**2022-present**

Coached undergraduate students in NFA Lincoln Douglas style debate

- Coached an individual and team national championship in 2023
- Spearheaded the development of younger team members to ensure each one qualified to the national tournament
- Set and then reset the record for most national qualifiers for a single team (15 in 2023, 18 in 2024)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Thornhill, Zach (2021) "Competitive Debate in a Pandemic World: Analyzing the Effects of COVID-19 on Collegiate Debate" Graduate student presenter for Illinois State University School of Communication Fall Research Colloquium

Thornhill, Zach (2022) "Make America Kill Again: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's Necropolitical Representations Through Conjunctural Use of Twitter During his Presidency" Three Minute Thesis competitor

Thornhill, Zach (2022) "*They're Not Sending Their Best': A Conjunctural Analysis of Necropolitical Power Established Through Donald Trump's Presidential Campaign Announcement Speech*" Competitive Paper presented at the Central States Communication Association Annual convention held in Madison Wisconsin

Thornhill, Zach (2022) "*Flipping the Script: Intersectional Representations of the Religious Other in Hacksaw Ridge*" Paper presented as part of the panel "Re-connecting Identity to Popular Media" at the Central States Communication Association Annual convention held in Madison Wisconsin

Thornhill, Zach (2022) "Re-connecting to the Classroom: Experiences of Basic Course Directors and GTAs Transitioning From Online to Teaching Face-to-Face for the First Time" Panel member at at the Central States Communication Association Annual convention held in Madison Wisconsin

Thornhill, Zach and Joseph Zompetti. (2023). "The 'Twitter President': Trump's Necropolitical Representations of Immigrants" Competitive paper accepted at the National Communication Association's annual convention held in National Harbor, Maryland in 2023. Political Communication Division.

Thornhill, Zach. (2023). "Restorative Rhetoric of Destruction: Ron DeSantis' Commitments to Law and Order following Hurricane Ian" Competitive paper accepted at the National Communication Association's annual convention held in National Harbor, Maryland in 2023. Public Address Division.

Thornhill, Zach (2024) "Hegemonic Juxtaposition: The Right's Attempt to Create a Counterpublic Following January 6<sup>th</sup>" Top Student Paper accepted at the National Communication Association's annual convention held in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2024. Public Address Division.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Thornhill, Zach "The Unsettled Settler: *Yellowstone* and Colonialist Image Vernaculars" (Paper in Progress, planning to submit to Southern Journal of Communication).

Thornhill, Zach "Hegemonic Juxtaposition: The Right's Attempt to Create a Counterpublic Following January 6<sup>th</sup>" (Paper in Progress)

Thornhill, Zach and Joseph Zompetti "Rhetorical Neo-Authoritarianism: Common Sense in the Age of Donald Trump and Viktor Orbán" (Paper in progress)

## SERVICE

National Forensics Journal

**Junior Editor**

**2021 – Present**

Used debate and writing experience to review submitted papers and determine whether to publish them.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Communication Studies Undergraduate Committee member**

**2023 – Present**

Collaborated with committee members to reconstruct department expectations, major requirements, and emphasis areas

## AWARDS

Top Student Paper – Public Address Division, National Communication Association 2024 Conference

2024

National Speech and Debate Association's Nebraska District Assistant Coach of the Year

2023

Illinois State University Peer Mentor

2021 – 2022

Illinois State University Graduate Student Association Social Chair

2021 – 2022

Illinois State University Student Ambassador

2021 – 2022

Illinois State University Graduate Teaching Assistantship

2020 – 2022

National Forensics Association Debater of Distinction

2020

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Communication Studies Undergraduate Community Impact award

2019