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Food insecurity is a pressing issue among UNC students, and our group project for English 117 aimed to address this challenge by leveraging digital media and rhetorical strategies to raise awareness and inspire action. Throughout this project, I played a central role in both content creation and group collaboration, while also applying the rhetorical concepts we studied this semester. One of my main contributions was producing Instagram Reels that showcased a pantry tour and demonstrated how to prepare meals on a \$5 budget. These videos were designed to be practical and relatable, showing students that affordable, nutritious meals are possible even with limited resources. By using the visual and interactive features of Instagram, I aimed to engage viewers emotionally and make the issue of food insecurity more tangible. This approach drew on the rhetorical concept of pathos, as we sought to evoke empathy and solidarity among students who may be experiencing similar struggles.

In addition to creating video content, I developed Google Forms surveys to collect feedback from our audience. This allowed us to assess which types of content were most effective and to adapt our strategy accordingly. Gathering and responding to feedback demonstrated our commitment to audience-centered communication a key principle in both classical and digital rhetoric. It also helped us build ethos, as we showed that we valued the perspectives and experiences of our fellow students. I also contributed to the brainstorming process, helping to generate ideas for posts and Instagram usernames that would be memorable and reflective of our

mission. This early stage of the project was crucial for establishing our group's digital identity and ensuring our messaging was clear and consistent. Additionally, I created infographic posts that distilled important information about food insecurity into visually appealing and easily shareable formats. By combining concise text with compelling visuals, I used visual rhetoric to make complex issues more accessible. To further our advocacy efforts, I created a Change.org petition and helped set up our group's Instagram account. The petition was intended to mobilize our audience and encourage tangible action, such as advocating for increased campus resources or policy changes to address food insecurity. Setting up the Instagram account involved careful consideration of our branding and the rhetorical concept of kairos timing our posts to maximize visibility and engagement, especially around campus events or relevant news.

Our group's use of rhetorical concepts extended beyond individual posts. We worked to establish ethos by presenting ourselves as credible and relatable students helping other students. Pathos was central to our storytelling and visual content, aiming to create an emotional connection with our audience. Logos was present in our use of data from surveys and in the practical advice offered in our infographics and meal guides. We also considered the affordances of digital platforms, adapting classical rhetorical strategies for Instagram and Change.org, and using interactive features like polls and Q&A to foster community and dialogue. Collaboration was essential to our success. We communicated regularly through group chats and meetings, dividing tasks based on our strengths and interests. I found that our brainstorming sessions were especially productive, allowing us to combine diverse perspectives and develop creative solutions. Incorporating feedback from our audience and from each other helped us remain flexible and responsive throughout the project. Reflecting on my contributions, I am proud of the practical, visually engaging content I helped create and the advocacy tools I developed. I believe

these efforts made a meaningful impact by raising awareness about food insecurity and encouraging students to take action. This project allowed me to apply rhetorical concepts in a real-world digital context, deepening my understanding of how persuasion and community-building work online. In conclusion, our group's project on food insecurity among UNC students exemplified the application of rhetorical strategies in digital media. By combining practical content, interactive engagement, and advocacy, we not only informed our peers but also encouraged them to become more active and thoughtful citizens. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this important conversation and to develop skills that will serve me in future digital and rhetorical endeavors.

STRUGGLING TO AFFORD FOOD?

You're not alone: Nearly 1 in 4 UNC undergrads faces food insecurity.

What is food insecurity?

- Limited or uncertain access to safe, nutritious food.

Get support. No questions asked.



Where to get help:

- Carolina Cupboard: Avery Residence Hall
- CJ's Cupboard: Gillings School of Public Health
- Bondurant Hall Food Pantry: Room 1072
- Bynum Hall Food Pantry: Graduate School
- Kenan-Flagler Pantry: McColl Hall, 3rd floor

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