Zoltan P. Majdik

North Dakota State University
Department of Communication
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ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3851-4694
RG: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Zoltan-Majdik

Current Position

2023-present Professor, Department of Communication, North Dakota State University

Past Positions

2014-2023 Associate Professor, North Dakota State University
2008-2014 Assistant Professor, North Dakota State University
2003-2008 Graduate Teaching/Research Assistant, University of Southern California

Areas of specialization

Computational Rhetoric • Language Modeling • Deep Learning & AI

Education

2008 Ph.D. in Communication, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California
DISSERTATION: The Gene is out of the Bottle: The Communication of Genetic Complexity in Direct-to-Consumer Genetics

2006 M.A. in Communication, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California

2003 B.A. in Communication and in English, University of Southern California

Publications & Talks

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

2025 Graham, S. S., Grundy, Q., Sharma, N., Edward, J. S., Barbour, J. B., Rousseau, J. F., Majdik, Z. P., & Bero, L. (2025). Research on policy mechanisms to address funding bias and conflicts of interest in biomedical research: A scoping review. *Research Integrity and Peer Review*, *10*(1), 6. https://doi.org/10.1186/s41073-025-00164-0

2024 Yang, M. H., & Majdik, Z. P. (2024). Pathological liars: Algorithmic knowing in the rhetorical ecosystem of Wallstreetbets. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, *54*(3). https://doi.org/10.1080/02773945.2024.2343616

2024 Majdik, Z. P., Graham, S. S., Shiva Edward, J. C., Rodriguez, S. N., Karnes, M. S., Jensen, J. T., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2024). Sample size considerations for fine-tuning large language

models for named entity recognition tasks: Methodological study. *JMIR AI*, *3*, e52095. https://doi.org/10.2196/52095

2024   Graham, S. S., Shiva, J., Sharma, N., Barbour, J. B., Majdik, Z. P., & Rousseau, J. F. (2024). Conflicts of interest publication disclosures: Descriptive study. *JMIR Data*, *5*(1), e57779. https://doi.org/10.2196/57779

2024   Graham, S. S., Harrison, K. R., Edward, J. C. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2024). Beyond bias: Aggregate approaches to conflicts of interest research and policy in biomedical research. *World Medical & Health Policy*, wmh3.608. https://doi.org/10.1002/wmh3.608

2023   Majdik, Z. P., & Wynn, J. (2023). Building better machine learning models for rhetorical analyses: The use of rhetorical feature sets for training artificial neural network models. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, *32*(1), 63–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2022.2077452

2023   Graham, S. S., Sharma, N., Karnes, M. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2023). A content analysis of self-reported financial relationships in biomedical research. *AJOB Empirical Bioethics*, *14*(2), 91–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/23294515.2022.2160509

2022   Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2022). Associations between aggregate NLP-extracted conflicts of interest and adverse events by drug product. *Studies in Health Technology and Informatics*, *290*, 405–409. https://doi.org/10.3233/SHTI220106

2022   Graham, S. S., Karnes, M. S., Jensen, J. T., Sharma, N., Barbour, J. B., Majdik, Z. P., & Rousseau, J. F. (2022). Evidence for stratified conflicts of interest in research contexts: A methodological review. *BMJ Open*, *12*, e063501. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-063501

2021   Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2021). A dashboard for exploring clinical trials sponsorship and potential virtual monopolies. *JAMIA Open*, *4*(4), ooab089. https://doi.org/10.1093/jamiaopen/ooab089

2020   Majdik, Z. P. (2021). Five considerations for engaging with big data from a rhetorical-humanistic perspective. *Poroi*, *16*(1)

2020   Duchsherer, A., Jason, M., Platt, C. A., & Majdik, Z. P. (2020). Immunized against science: Narrative community building among vaccine refusing/hesitant parents. *Public Understanding of Science*, *29*(4), 419–435. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662520921537

2020   Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., Clark, D., Kessler, M. M., & Hooker, T. B. (2020). Relationships Among Commercial Practices and Author Conflicts of Interest in Biomedical Publishing. *PLoS ONE*, *15*(7). https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236166

2020   Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., & Clark, D. (2020). Methods for Extracting Relational Data from Unstructured Texts Prior to Network Visualization in Humanities Research. *Journal of Open Humanities Data*, *6*(8). https://doi.org/10.5334/johd.21

2019   Majdik, Z. P. (2019). A Computational Approach to Assessing Rhetorical Effectiveness: Agentic Framing of Climate Change in the Congressional Record, 1994–2016. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, *28*(3), 207–222. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2019.1601774

2012   Platt, C. A., & Majdik, Z. P. (2012). The Place of Religion in Habermas's Transformed Public Sphere. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, *49*(2), 138–141

2012   Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2012). Selling Certainty: Genetic Complexity and Moral Urgency in Myriad Genetics' BRAC Analysis Campaign. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, *42*(2), 120–143

2011   Majdik, Z. P., & Keith, W. M. (2011). Expertise as argument: Authority, democracy, and problem-solving. *Argumentation*, *25*(3), 371–384

2011   Majdik, Z. P., & Keith, W. M. (2011). The problem of pluralistic expertise: A Wittgensteinian approach to the rhetorical basis of expertise. *Social Epistemology*, *25*(3), 275–290

2011   Majdik, Z. P., Platt, C. A., & Meister, M. (2011). Calculating the weather: Deductive reasoning and disciplinary telos in cleveland abbe's rhetorical transformation of meteorology. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *97*(1), 74–99

2011   Majdik, Z. P. (2011). On delimiting rhetorical invention in biopolitics: A rejoinder to lynch. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, *14*(2), 379–389

2009   Majdik, Z. P. (2009). Judging direct-to-consumer genetics: Negotiating expertise and agency in

public biotechnological practice. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, *12*(4), 571–605

2008   Majdik, Z. P., Kephart III, J. M., & Goodnight, G. T. (2008). The Presidential Debates of 2004: Contested Moments in the Democratic Experiment. *Controversia*, *6*(1)

Peer-Reviewed Chapters, Encyclopedia Entries, & Proceedings

2019   Majdik, Z. P. (2019). When expertises clash: (Topic) modeling stasis about complex issues across large discursive corpora. In *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Science* (1st ed., pp. 308–318). Routledge

2014   Majdik, Z. P. (2014). Biological citizenship. *Encyclopedia of Health Communication* (pp. 105–106). Sage

2009   Majdik, Z. P. (2009). Between morality and ethics: Risk and argument in direct-to-consumer genetics. S. Jacobs & M. Zarefsky (Eds.), *Concerning argument: Selected papers from the 15th Biennial Conference on Argumentation* (pp. 495–505). National Communication Association

2006   Majdik, Z. P. (2006). Quo vadis, political debate? Truth-telling through comedy in Jon Stewart's Crossfire appearance. P. Riley & M. Zarefsky (Eds.), *Engaging Argument: Proceedings of the NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation* (pp. 394–401). National Communication Association

Other Academic Publication Genres

2025   Graham, S. S., Grundy, Q., Sharma, N., Shiva, J., Barbour, J., Rousseau, J., Majdik, Z. P., & Bero, L. (2025). *COI policy scoping review data set* (Version 2). Texas Data Repository. https://doi.org/10.18738/T8/PICRQT

2024   Majdik, Z. P., & Graham, S. S. (2024). Rhetoric of/with AI: An introduction. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, *54*. https://doi.org/10.1080/02773945.2024.2343264

2016   Majdik, Z. (2016). Expertise as practice: A response to DeVasto. *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, *5*(11), 1–6

2016   Majdik, Z. P. (2016). On rhetoric between science and society [lead review essay]. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, *19*(1), 91–108

2012   Majdik, Z. (2012). Reply to Derek Ross' "Ambiguous Weighting and Nonsensical Sense". *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 1–5

2005   Majdik, Z. P. (2005). Power Without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action [book Review]. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, *8*(3), 532–534

Presentations

2025   Majdik, Z. P. (2025). *The rhetoric of science, technology, and medicine in the midst of mass censorship and disinformation* [Panel discussion]. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Denver, CO

2025   Dadzie, E. M., & Majdik, Z. P. (2025). *The AI race and Africa's future: Governance, integration, and the African Union's emerging framework* [Presentation]. @ National Communication Association, Denver, CO

2025   Poole, M., & Majdik, Z. P. (2025). *Verum factum and aesthetics of inquiry* [Presentation]. @ National Communication Association, Denver, CO

2025   Poole, M., & Majdik, Z. P. (2025). *Finding the new in Vico's* New Science*: Toward a networked aesthetics of inquiry* [Non-presenting author]. @ International Society of the History of Rhetoric, Copenhagen, Denmark

2025   Colombini, C. L., & Majdik, Z. P. (2025). *Linguistic invention and the commonplaces of 'nature' in environmental advocacy* [Presentation]. @ Western Communication Association, Albuquerque, NM

2024   Majdik, Z. P. (2024). *Rhetorical alignment of AI systems* [Featured talk]. @ Max Planck Institute/University of Tübingen/Rhet AI Center's Persuasive Algorithms: The Rhetorics of Generative AI, Tübingen, Germany

2024   Dadzie, E. M., & Majdik, Z. P. (2024). *Fact-check or play? Rhetorical strategies for intervening in medical conspiracy theories.* @ National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA

2024   Majdik, Z. P., & Dadzie, E. M. (2024). *Inverting language models as method for rhetorical analysis* [Panel presentation]. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA

2024   Majdik, Z. P. (2024). *Distant reading through the looking glass: Language modeling as a mode of rhetorical analysis.* @ Rhetoric Society of America, Denver, CO

2023   Majdik, Z. P., & Dadzie, E. (2023). *The meteoric (but maybe not metaphoric) rise of ChatGPT: An experimental approach to testing RLHF-based llms' ability to persuade with metaphors* [Panel presentation]. @ National Communication Association, National Harbor, MD

2023   Majdik, Z. P. (2023). *Adaptability in rhetorical ecologies.* @ Rhetoric Society of Europe, Tübingen, Germany

2022   Yang, M., & Majdik, Z. P. (2022). *Pathological buyers: Algorithmic knowing and sense-making in the rhetorical ecology of wallstreetbets.* @ National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA

2022   Majdik, Z. P. (2022). *Panel: Re-parsing public address: Computational objects, methods, and ethics in rhetorical studies* [Panel discussion]. @ National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA

2022   Majdik, Z. P. (2022). *Rhetorical patterns of global health crises.* @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Baltimore, MD

2021   Majdik, Z. P. (2021). *Metaphor progression in public discourses about COVID-19.* @ National Communication Association, Seattle, WA

2020   Majdik, Z. P., & Wynn, J. (2020). *Machine/deep learning of complex rhetorical structures in scientific discourses: Is it doable?* @ National Communication Association, Baltimore, MD

2019   Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Replication in the humanities. (More why than how.)* [Panel presentation]. @ Central States Communication Association, Omaha, NE

2019   Graham, S. S., Clark, D., & Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Transparency to visibility (T2V): Digital resistance and the medical-industrial complex* [Non-presenting author]. @ Digital Frontiers, Austin, TX

2019   Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Computing the grotesque.* @ Rhetoric Society of Europe, Gent, Belgium

2019   Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Computational approaches to rhetoric: What are they good for?* @ National Communication Association, Baltimore, MD

2017   Majdik, Z. P. (2017). *Summary remarks: On trust in science.* @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Dallas, TX

2015   Majdik, Z. P. (2015). *Rhetorical dynamics of framing agency and choice in climate change policy discourse.* @ National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV

2015   Majdik, Z. P. (2015). *Distributed agency and disembedded expertise in an age of applied genetics* [Competitive paper]. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV

2014   Majdik, Z. P. (2014). *How to make rhetorical analyses salient to practicing scientists: A few suggestions.* @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL

2013   Platt, C. A., & Majdik, Z. P. (2013). *Digital voices in an age of artificial intelligence: IBM's Watson and the disturbance of traditional apodictic/phronetic sources of argument* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT

2011   Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2011). *Fight or flight: X-ray backscatter scanning and the question of expertise* [Competitive paper]. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA

2011   Majdik, Z. P., & Waisanen, D. (2011). *The challenge of institutional incoherence to the idea of reasoned argument: Argumentation as and in institutional contexts* [Competitive paper]. NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT

2010   Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2010). *Selling certainty: Genetic complexity, moral urgency, and the gendered body in Myriad Genetics' BRACAnalysis campaign* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA

2010   Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2010). *Rhizomic rhetoric in the key of Aristotle and Vico: Moral argument*

in the institutional domains of science and technology [Panel presentation]. @ National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA

2010   Majdik, Z. P. (2010). *'Broken heart' models and Gaussian copulas: Implications of Vico's view of mathematics for rhetorical criticism* [Competitive paper]. @ Rhetoric Society of America, Minneapolis, MN

2010   Platt, C. A., Majdik, Z. P., & Meister, M. (2010). *Spending for a rainy day: Latent polysemy and the rhetoric of consumerism in contemporary weathercasting* [Competitive paper]. @ Rhetoric Society of America, Minneapolis, MN

2019   Majdik, Z. P. (2009). *The myriad problem(s) of genetic biotechnology: Problematizing 'expertise' in commercial genetic biotechnology* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT

2009   Majdik, Z. P. (2009). *Looking for legitimacy: Deficiencies of justification in direct-to-consumer genetics* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL

2008   Majdik, Z. P. (2008). *Shaking the genetic foundation: Translating complex genetic science into everyday biotechnological practice* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San Diego, CA

2007   Majdik, Z. P. (2007). *Fortuna's threat: Machiavellian virtù vs. the recalcitrance of an external reality* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL

2007   Majdik, Z. P. (2007). *Between morality and ethics: Argument in direct-to-consumer genetics* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT

2007   Goodnight, G. T., Majdik, Z. P., & Kephart III, J. M. (2007). *Presidential debates as public argument* [Competitive paper]. NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT

2006   Majdik, Z. P. (2006). *The virtue of argument: Discourse ethics as an axiological foundation of informed consent for genetic services* [Competitive paper]. @ International Society for the Study of Argumentation (ISSA), Amsterdam, Netherlands

2006   Majdik, Z. P. (2006). *Mystification v. mystery: Burke's poetic rationalization as a rhetorical mode of ethical action* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San Antonio, TX

2006   Majdik, Z. P. (2006). *From abstraction to application: On the deliberate controlling of controversy in the human genome project* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San Antonio, TX

2005   Majdik, Z. P. (2005). *Some serious fun: Truth-telling and comedy in jon stewart's 'crossfire' appearance* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Boston, MA

2005   Majdik, Z. P. (2005). *Quo vadis, political debate? Truth-telling through comedy in Jon Stewart's Crossfire appearance* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT

2005   Majdik, Z. P. (2005). *Powerful publics: Public discourse and direct democracy in Switzerland's 'Yes to Europe!' referendum* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Boston, MA

2004   Majdik, Z. P. (2004). *Cross-cultural comparison of speech communication studies in Europe and the United States* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL

Grants

2023   **Co-PI**, with Shuning Lu (PI)
Summer Institute in Computational Social Science – NDSU
Amount awarded to grant: $10,700

2022   **Co-PI**, with Shuning Lu (PI)
Summer Institute in Computational Social Science – NDSU
Funded by SICSS (with core sponsors: Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Russell Sage Foundation, Facebook, and SSRC (Social Science Research Council))
Amount awarded to grant: $15,000

2020-2024 **MPI (NDSU)**, with S. Scott Graham (Contact MPI, UT-Austin), Justin F. Rousseau (MPI, UT-Austin), & Joshua Barbour (MPI, UT-Austin)
A Network Science Approach to Conflicts of Interest: Metrics, Policies, and Communication Design
Funded by National Institute of General Medical Sciences/National Institutes of Health (NIH)
Award No. R01 GM141476
Amount awarded to grant: $832,304

2020-2022 **Senior personnel/Lead, Communication & Dissemination Group**
NDSU EPSCoR Track-1 (ND-ACES)
National Science Foundation (NSF EPSCoR Research Infrastructure)
Amount awarded to grant: $20,000,000

2016-2019 **Senior personnel/Lead, Communication & Dissemination Group**
NDSU EPSCoR Track-1 (INSPIRE-ND)
National Science Foundation (NSF EPSCoR Research Infrastructure)
Amount awarded to grant: $20,000,000

Consulting

2024-present **Consultant | Center for Public Health Research @ Temple University School of Law.**
Primary consulting responsibility: advice and implementation assistance for development of AI/LLM-driven tool in the Monqcle legal research platform.

2018-2019 **Consultant | Contract paid from National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Grant HAA-261070-18**
Transparency to Visibility (T2V): Network Visualization in Humanities Research
PD: Scott Graham, & co-PD: Dave Clark
Primary consulting responsibility: build computational framework for automated relationship extraction from unstructured text data.
Amount awarded to grant: $80,649

Teaching

Undergraduate Courses:

- Rhetoric (various foci)
- Persuasion
- Public Speaking
- Data Visualization Across Communication Industries
- Communication Ethics & Law
- Argumentation & Advocacy
- Rhetoric of Ideas, Ideology, & Propaganda
- Communication Criticism

Graduate Courses:

- Rhetoric (various foci)
- Communication Theory

Graduate Advising

Thesis: The Use of Rhetorical Frames to Create Hope during Wars and Genocides: The case of the Yezidi Women

Thesis: A Rhetorical Consideration of Christian Nationalism, Secular Society, and the Need for a Civic Religious Pluralism

Thesis: Pentadic Analysis of a Wyoming TV Show: The Rhetoric of Scene and Agency and Its Impact on Native American Communities.

Thesis: A Historical Perspective Framed Content Analysis Investigation of Persuasive Shifts Present in Interstate Oratorical Association Final Round Speeches.

Thesis: Rhetorical Agency in the Baghavad Gita

Thesis: The Hindutva Movement: A Burkean Analysis of Violence as Retributive Justice

Thesis: Communication Technology and the Changing Face of Rhetorical Persuasion in Emerging Democratic Systems: The Case of Georgia.

As committee member:

Note: may be incomplete

Administrative Responsibilities

2022-present   Public Speaking Course Director,
NDSU Department of Communication

2017-2023   Director of Graduate Studies,
NDSU Department of Communication

Service to the University

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

2024-present   AI research group, co-chair
2023-present   I.T. council, member
2018-present   Institutional Review Board, vice chair and member
2023-2024   Task force on Graduate Health Insurance, co-chair
2021-2024   Graduate Council, member
2017   Provost Ad-Hoc Committee on Academic Misconduct, member
2016   Special Grievance Committee, chair
2014-2018   Institutional Review Board, member
2013-2014   Institutional Review Board, alternate
2013-2014   Diversity Committee, member
2011, 2012   NDSU Graduate Methods Conference, co-organizer

NDSU COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

2023   Task force on Graduate Tuition Waivers, chair

NDSU COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

2019-2022   Promotion and Tenure Committee, member
2016-2017   Budget Advisory Group, member
2015-2016   Promotion and Tenure Committee, member
2014   Search Committee (Director for International Studies), member
2012-2013   Curriculum Committee, member

NDSU DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

2025   Search Committee (tenure-line), chair
2022   Search Committee, member
2017-2018   Promotion and Tenure Committee, member
2016-2017   Promotion and Tenure Committee, chair
2012-present   Graduate Committee, member and chair (since 2017)
2015   Search Committee (tenure-line), chair
2014-present   Curriculum Committee, member
2013-2014   Scholarship and Awards Committee
2011-2012   Curriculum Committee, chair
2011-2012   Search Committee (tenure-line), member
2010-2011   Assessment Committee, co-chair
2010-2011   DCE Committee, member
2009-2016   Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honors Society, advisor
2009-2010   Graduate Committee, member
2009-2010   Scholarship and Awards Committee, member
2008-2009   Search Committee (tenure-line), member

Service to the profession

Editorial Work

2025-present	Editorial board member, *Review of Communication*
2024	Guest editor (with S. Scott Graham), *RSQ Special Issue on Rhetoric & AI*
2016-2017	Editorial board member, *CSTAND*
2012-2013	Editorial consultant, *Communication Studies*
est. 2007	Editorial graduate assistant, *Argumentation & Advocacy*

Reviewing, ad hoc

Argumentation & Advocacy
Behavior Research Methods
Communication Studies
Communication Theory
CSTAND
European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology
Informal Logic
Journfal of Computational Social Science
National Science Foundation (STS program)
Social Epistemology
Rhetoric & Public Affairs
Rhetoric of Health & Medicine
Rhetoric Society Quarterly
Technical Communication Quarterly
World Medical & Health Policy
Written Communication

Reviewing, Conferences

NCA, Association for the Rhetoric of Science, Technology, and Medicine (ARSTM)
ARSTM, Preconferences at NCA, RSA

Other

2025-present	Steering committee | RhetAI coalition
2024-present	Co-Director | NDSU Center for the Study of Digital Society
2020-2022	NCA Doctoral Education Committee
2018	President | Association for the Rhetoric of Science, Technology, & Medicine (ARSTM)