



Alumni *focus*

The TWU New Grad Connection talks with alumna Rochelle Denisha Gregory, PhD '09, Rhetoric, who shares a glimpse into her journey from PhD student to English Professor. For Dr. Gregory, it's all about knowing the right thing to say...

Why did you choose TWU?

I wanted to pursue a PhD in a program that would allow me to study a variety of texts as rhetorical artifacts that give us insights into our values. TWU's rhetoric program offers a unique opportunity to study classical texts, the literary canon, and cultural discourses that are often important but overlooked as relevant. TWU's graduates and faculty are doing really interesting and innovating research and scholarship. I wanted to be a part of that and the program's

scholastic diversity really interested me. I also wanted to attend a place that offered students, like me, who were single and working mothers, a flexible and supportive learning environment. So many of the program's graduate courses are offered online, which reflected to me the Rhetoric program's commitment to offering alternative learning opportunities and environments that support students who have different life experiences and circumstances.



Why did you choose your particular field of study?

I have always been interested in how language shapes our perceptions of society. That the words we use influence the way that we view and treat each other. I also tend to have a passion for advocacy work and my research in rhetoric, medical humanities, and autism studies has allowed me, I think, to contribute to the conversation about autism in a different way. Often, the ways in which we talk about people with cognitive impairments are negative, objective, or pandering.





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Any Memorable Experiences While at TWU?

However, by studying and identifying the rhetoric of representation, especially the representation of autism in the media, I feel like I can make a difference that impacts the lives of those with ASD and their families. I think my research offers a different perspective on how people with ASD ought to be viewed and treated.

I am also very proud of working with students daily to talk about the importance of writing, discourse, and composition.

Writing is such an important skill in our culture and I feel like I can improve my students' lives by teaching them to be more effective writers and inquisitive scholars.

I was proud to serve as President of the English Rhetoric Graduate Organization. During the year I served, we raised funds and erected the bench in front of the CFO building to honor a wonderful professor, Dr. Sandi Reynolds. I also was proud to serve as the co-chair of the Federation Rhetoric Symposium in Feb 2008. We brought in speakers and presenters from around the country and it was a fantastic opportunity to share our research.

Do you have any advice for new a graduate that is specific to your field of study?

Participate, participate, participate.

Get involved in your profession--read everything you can about your job, about the latest innovations and research.

Contribute at conferences, write about what you do. Share your research and insights with other professionals and the public.

Networking, reading, writing, and sharing have been the most rewarding parts of my job.



ROCHELLE GREGORY: Hobbies and Passions



Besides studying and writing about disability studies and composition theory, I love spending time with my two children, traveling with students and for leisure, reading, and watching movies and television. I look forward to spending my summer writing journal articles and finishing my book proposal on autism representations.

Where are you now?

My doctoral degree from TWU has led me to the North Central Texas College on the Corinth campus.

I am currently an English Instructor at North Central Texas College and the Professional Writing and Communications Specialist for the Honors program. I teach Composition I, Composition II, Technical Writing, and British Literature.