

Janell C. Walther, Ph.D.

University of Nebraska Public Policy Center
402.472.2762 / jwalther2@nebraska.edu

Education

Kansas State University	B.A., English	2003
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	M.A., Communication Studies	2013
	Thesis: <i>Transformative Engagement in Deliberative Democracies: Exploring a Framework for Engagement Using a Creative, Braided Approach</i>	
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Ph.D., Communication Studies	2018
	Research Focus: <i>Communication, civic & public engagement, research design, nonprofit organizing</i>	
	Dissertation Topic: <i>Creating Dialogic Moments in Municipal Deliberation: The Case of Recycling in Nebraska</i>	

Professional Experience

2006 - Present	University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, Lincoln, NE
	2023 – Present: Research Director
	2019 – 2023: Senior Research Manager
	2018 – 2019: Senior Research Specialist
	2014 – 2018: Research Specialist
	2011 – 2014: Research Coordinator
	2006 – 2011: Project Assistant
2004 - 2006	Project Administrator, Emerson Process Management, St. Louis, MO
2001 - 2004	Office Assistant, Division of Continuing Education PIO, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS

University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, August 2006 – Present

<http://ppc.unl.edu/>

- Coordinate and manage multiple projects at local, state, and federal levels through strategic planning, project management, program evaluation, research and evaluation design, community and stakeholder engagement, and facilitation.
- Provide coordinated and tailored program evaluation for multiple federal grants requiring Government & Performance Results Act data, specializing in youth and adult behavioral healthcare, particularly in school-based and integrated healthcare settings.
- Leading research for Learning Frontiers Study 1: a 50-school study examining how early childhood policy and context impacts academic outcomes through qualitative research and policy analysis.
- Developed and managed School Safety & Security Initiative in a 22-county region to build school and first responder relationships, develop all-hazards plans, and provide training and planning in over 50 school systems.
- Led the 2012 - 2017 Statewide Training, Exercise, & Planning Workshop for 18 regional and state agencies, and wrote the annual report on behalf of the State for submission to federal and regional authorities.
- Designed curriculum for public speaking and public meetings for technical professionals at the Department of Natural Resources.
- Lead qualitative data collection and analyses for a multi-university National Science Foundation grant examining public and scientist perceptions of drone technologies for atmospheric sciences.
- Advise and evaluate the Prosper Lincoln Community Agenda (2020-2025) through community engagement, data collection and analysis, strategy development, planning, and facilitation with a focus on housing, early childhood, neighborhood engagement, and workforce development.

Emerson Process Management, 2004 - 2006

- Managed budgets for multiple projects for accounts receivable, time management, and reporting.
- Coordinated the International Lean Manufacturing Committee to increase efficiency in both the manufacturing floor and offices of FABCON and Emerson Process Management.
- Revised the Quality Manual for FABCON, a Division of Emerson Process Management.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Houston, A. L., PytlikZillig, L. M., & Walther, J. C. (2021). National Weather Service data needs for short-term

forecasts and the role of unmanned aircraft in filling the gap: Results from a nationwide survey. *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, 102(11), E2106-E2120.

Houston, A.L., **Walther, J.C.**, PytlikZillig, L.M., & Kawamoto, J. (2020). Initial Assessment of Unmanned Aircraft System Characteristics Required to Fill Data Gaps for Short-term Forecasts: Results from Focus Groups and Interviews. *Journal of Operational Meteorology*, 8(9).

Iruka, I. U., DeKraai, M., **Walther, J.**, Sheridan, S. M., & Abdel-Monem, T. (2020). Examining how rural ecological contexts influence children's early learning opportunities. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 52, 15-29.

Walther, J.C., PytlikZillig, L.M., Detweiler, C., & Houston, A. (2019) How people make sense of drone technology used for atmospheric science (and other purposes). *Journal of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Systems*, 7(3), 219 - 234.
*Editor's Choice

Walther, J.C. (2016). Engaging jurors with technical information: Building trust and cognition without overload. *American Bar Association Expert Witness Newsletter*, 11:2.

Walther, J.C. (2016). Technically Speaking: Sharing complex information with juries. *American Bar Association Expert Witness Newsletter*, 11:1.

Conference Presentations & Other Papers

Sheridan, S.M., **Walther, J.C.**, Knoche, L.L., Witte, A.L., Koziol, N., & Meek Farley, J. (2024, June). *How do Rural Early Childhood Educators and Parents View Family Engagement? A Mixed Methods Analysis*. (Poster) National Research Center for Early Childhood Annual Conference, Arlington, VA.

Meek Farley, J., **Walther, J.C.**, Resendiz-Alvarado, M., & Hartsock, M. (2024, May). *The State of Mental Health in Nebraska: Meeting Community Needs through the School Mental Health Project*. Nebraska School Mental Health Conference, Omaha, NE.

Meek Farley, J., **Walther, J.C.**, Resendiz-Alvarado, M., & Hartsock, M. (2024, May). *CLAS Participation: Engaging the school community to ensure culturally and linguistically appropriate school-based mental health services*. Project AWARE Grantee Meeting, Bethesda, MD.

Meek Farley, J., **Walther, J.C.**, Resendiz-Alvarado, M., & Hartsock, M. (2024, April). *Unlocking Minds, Building Futures: Insights from School Mental Health Implementation*. 2024 NDE Data Conference, Kearney, Nebraska.

Walther, J., Saunders, D., Gleason, E., Farley, J., Hartsock, A., Resendiz Alvarado, M., & Erdmann, S. (2023, December). *All Systems Go: Educator experiences launching school mental health systems in Nebraska*. 2023 Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health, New Orleans, LA.

Farley, J., Stamadianos, V., Allen, M., **Walther, J.**, & Hartsock, A. (2023, December). *Advancing CLAS Standards in School-Based Mental Health Services*. 2023 Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health, New Orleans, LA.

Ahmed, S., Gelman, A., Abdel-Monem, T., Cutler, W., Engel, R. **Walther, J.C.**, & Wyler, T. (2020). *U.S. Foreign Policy for the middle class: Perspectives from Nebraska*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/05/21/u.s.-foreign-policy-for-middle-class-perspectives-from-nebraska-pub-81767>

Houston, A.L., PytlikZillig, L.M., **Walther, J.C.**, & Detweiler, C. National Weather Service Data Needs for Short-Term Forecasts and the Role of Unmanned Aircraft in Filling the Gap: Results from a Nationwide Survey. *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, In preparation.

PytlikZillig, L.M., **Walther J.C.**, Detweiler, C., Elbaum, S., & Houston. A. (2020) *Public opinions of unmanned aerial technologies in 2014 -2019: A technical and descriptive report*. University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, Lincoln, NE. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/lpz/1/>

- PytlikZillig, L.M., **Walther, J.C.**, and Hoppe, R. (2019, July). *Working with the public on budgeting: Improving fiscal transparency to increase public confidence*. Presentation at the Nebraska Association of County Officials Budget Workshop, York, Nebraska and North Platte, Nebraska.
- DeKraai, M., Sheridan, S., Knocke, L., Iruka Thompson, I., & **Walther, J.** (2018, April). *Understanding policy and contextual factors in 12 Nebraska school districts*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Conference, New York City, NY.
- Walther, J.C.**, PytlikZillig, L.M., Houston, A.L., Detweiler, C., & Kawamoto, J. (2018). *Using public & stakeholder perceptions of drone technology to influence design and implementation of drones for atmospheric data collection*. Paper presented at American Meteorological Society 98th Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas, January 2018.
- PytlikZillig, L.M., Houston, A.L., **Walther, J.C.**, Kawamoto, J., & Detweiler, C. (2018). *Understanding the role of trust in public support for weather (and other) drones: Results of a nationally representative U.S. survey*. Paper presented at American Meteorological Society 98th Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas, January 2018.
- Walther, J.C.**, & PytlikZillig, L.M. (2017, April). *Taking Charge: Nine years of engaging the public in municipal budgeting priorities*. Paper presented at Consortium of University Public Service Organizations Annual Conference in Newark, Delaware.
- Houston, A. L. PytlikZillig, L. M., **Walther, J.**, & Kawamoto, J. (2017, January 26). *NWS Data Needs for Short-term Forecasts and the Role of Unmanned Aircraft in Filling the Gap*. Paper presented at the 97th annual meeting of the American Meteorological Society. <https://ams.confex.com/ams/97Annual/webprogram/Paper315880.html>
- PytlikZillig, L. M., **Walther, J.**, Houston, A., Detweiler, C. & Kawamoto, J. (2017, January 26). *Public Opinions and Recommendations Regarding Drones: Potential Policy Implications*. Paper presented at the 97th annual meeting of the American Meteorological Society. <https://ams.confex.com/ams/97Annual/webprogram/Paper315760.html>
- Walther, J.C.** (2016, September). *Tell me a science story: Transforming engagement with science through creative nonfiction*. Paper presented at the SciCOMM conference in Lincoln, NE.
- PytlikZillig, L.M., **Walther, J.C.**, Detweiler, C., Houston, A.L. (2016, September). *Public perceptions of drones used for weather-related purposes*. Paper presented at the SciCOMM conference in Lincoln, NE.
- PytlikZillig, L. M., Detweiler, C., Elbaum, S., Houston, A., & **Walther, J.** (2016, June 24-26). *In drones we trust? A trust-centered model of responsible innovation*. Paper presented at the Giving Psychology Away: Sharing Research through teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration, and public engagement (The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, SPSSI 2016), Minneapolis, MN.
- Walther, J.C.**, & PytlikZillig, L.M. (2015, November). *City and academic collaboration: Fostering opportunities for public and research-based decision-making*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV.
- Hutchens, M.J., PytlikZillig, L.M., Muhlberger, P., Tomkins, A.J., Anderson, R.P., **Walther, J.C.**, & Gonzalez, F.J. (2014, May). *Message or process? Learning about nanotechnology through engaged deliberation*. Paper presented at International Communication Association Annual Conference, Seattle, WA.
- PytlikZillig, L., Anderson, R., Phear, N., & **Walther, J.C.** (2013, May). *Using creative non-fiction to communicate about climate change*. Poster presented at the Water for Food Conference, Lincoln, NE.
- Krone, K.J., Ewalt, J., Utah, C.I., & **Walther, J.C.** (2013, November). *Organizing on behalf of refugee resettlement: Rethinking inter-organizational collaboration and conflict as organizing struggle*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Garner, J., Kramer, M., Meisenbach, R.J., Mize Smith, J., Nichols, Z., & **Walther, J.C.** (2013, November). *Connections through current theoretical approaches and interdisciplinary perspectives of volunteer research*. Panel presented at the National Communication Association Annual Conference, Washington, DC.

Teaching at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Guest Lecturer: NRES 475/875: Water Quality Strategy (Spring 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023)
Lecturer, COMM 398: Nonprofit Organizing and Communication (Fall 2019)
Instructor: COMM 286: Business and Professional Communication (Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2018)
Guest Lecturer: COMM 465: Communication & Social Identity (Spring 2017)
Guest Lecturer: COMM 220: Public Advocacy & Civic Engagement (Spring 2017)
Guest Lecturer: Civic Engagement Certificate Lecture Series (Fall 2015)
Guest Lecturer: POLS 400: Democracy & Citizenship (Fall 2015)
Guest Lecturer: COMM 210: Communication in Small Groups (Summer 2014)

Speaking Activities

Guest Speaker, "Using Data Walks to Shape Data: Lincoln Vital Signs Race Equity Issue," UNL Community Roundtable, 2023
Guest Speaker, "Civic Leadership & Research," Civic Leaders Honors Track Program, UNL, 2021
Guest Speaker, "Social Organizing," Organizational Communication & Social Change, Eastern Illinois University, 2021
Trainer, "Effective facilitation," Community Action of Lancaster and Saunders County, 2020
Trainer, "How to run and participate in effective meetings," Community Action of Lancaster and Saunders County, 2019
Trainer, "A Guide to Effective Meetings & Group Facilitation," Region V Behavioral Health Authority, 2019
Speaker / Panelist, "Speak Easy: Building Civil Discourse and Bridging Ideological Divides," Lincoln Calling Festival, 2019
Speaker, "Project Management, Monitoring, & Evaluation," Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, Leadership in Civic Engagement Institute, 2019
Speaker, "Running Effective Meetings," Leadership Lincoln Service Training, 2019
Speaker/ Facilitator, "Early Childhood Policies & Practices," Consortium of University Public Services Organizations, 2018
Speaker/ Trainer, "Strategic Planning 101," Get on Board, 2018
Speaker, "Careers with an English Degree," Alumni Connections 2009, Kansas State University, 2009

Academic Service

Advisory Board, Nebraska Statewide School Mental Health Advisory Committee, 2023 - Present
Council on Inclusive Excellence & Diversity, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2020 – Present
Advisory Board, Civic Health Index, Civic Nebraska, 2020
Selected Participant, UNL Office of Research & Economic Development, NIH Jumpstart Workshop on Pathogen-Host Interactions, 2018
Awards & Honors Committee, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Dept. of Communication Studies, 2015-16

Memberships & Honors

Selected Member, E.N. Thompson Forum on World Issues Program Committee, 2022 - Present
Awardee, Outstanding Civic Health Partner, Civic Nebraska Strengthening Democracy Awards, 2021
Member, American Evaluation Association, 2015 - Present
Member, National Communication Association, 2012 - Present
Awardee, Honorable Mention 13th Symposium on Societal Applications: Policy, Research and Practice Student Competition for: "Using Public and Stakeholder Perceptions of Drone Technology to Influence Design and Implementation of Drones for Atmospheric Data Collection" at the American Meteorological Society's 98th Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas, 2018
Awardee, Diana Carlin Research Fellowship, 2018
Board of Directors, Junior League of Lincoln, 2013 - 2017 (President, 2015-2016)
Fellow, Leadership Lincoln, Class XXX, 2014 -2015
Member, International Communication Association, 2014 - 2017
Member, Lincoln Young Professionals Group, 2013 - 2014
Member, Central States Communication Association, 2013 - 2015
Volunteer, American Red Cross, Cornhusker Chapter, 2008 - 2010
Member, Sigma Tau Delta English Honors Fraternity, 2000 - 2003
Member, Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Fraternity, 1999 – 2003

Selected Grants & Contracts

- PI, 2024 – 2026, Stakeholder & Community Feedback to Create an Age-Friendly Community, City of Lincoln, Aging Partners.
- PI, 2024, Community Survey for Woods Park Master Plan Amendment, City of Lincoln Parks & Recreation.
- PI, 2023 – 2024, Community and Partner Engagement for the Nebraska Climate Pollution Reduction Priority Plan. Nebraska Department of Energy & Environment.
- PI, 2023-2024, Evaluation of the Afghan Refugee School Impact Grant, Nebraska Department of Education & Office of Refugee Resettlement
- PI, 2022 – 2026, Evaluation of Lutheran Family Services Community Behavioral Health Center Expansion Grant, (Infrastructure and Advancement Grantee (Lincoln) & Planning, Development, & Implementation Grantee (Fremont)), SAMHSA
- PI, 2022 – 2026, Evaluation of Lincoln Workforce Development Initiatives, City of Lincoln / ARPA, Department of Treasury.
- PI, 2021-2024, Evaluation of Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems in Nebraska, Nebraska Department of Education & Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, Dept. of Education / ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER).
- PI, 2021 – 2025, Evaluation of 2021 Nebraska Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education (AWARE) 2 Project, Nebraska Department of Education & Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, SAMHSA.
- PI, 2021 – 2025, Evaluation of Region 6 System of Care Project, SAMHSA.
- PI, 2021 – 2023, Evaluation of Nebraska Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education (AWARE) 1 Project with Nebraska Department of Education & Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, SAMHSA.
- PI, 2020 – 2022, Evaluation of Nebraska Lutheran Family Services Community Behavioral Health Center Expansion Grant, SAMHSA.
- PI, 2021, Pandemic After Action Reporting, Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services Public Health.
- PI, 2019, Financial Literacy Curriculum Feedback, Mercy Housing.
- PI, 2019, Bicentennial Cascade Fountain Public Feedback, Lincoln Parks Foundation.
- Investigator, 2018 – 2020, 2017 Nebraska AWARE Initiative, 2018 – 2020, SAMHSA.
- PI, 2018-2019, Youth Crisis Response Coalition, Cooper Foundation.
- Co-PI, 2019, Nebraskans' Perceptions of Foreign Policy, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Investigator, 2017 – 2021, Nebraska Systems of Care Initiative, SAMHSA.
- Investigator, 2016 – 2026, Early Learning Frontiers Project, Department of Education (EIR).

Other Skills

Proficient in the following software / applications: Adobe InDesign, SPSS, AcrobatPro, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneDrive, SharePoint, Teams, Qualtrics, SurveyMonkey, EndNote, Atlas.ti, Constant Contact, SquareSpace, Zoom, Box, Dropbox, Quickbooks, Slack, Trello, and the Google Suite.

Experience with MS Access, LIWC, Adobe Photoshop, SAS, SAP, Oracle, Unanet, Wix, and Wordpress.