

## **Research Question**

How do political creators on Instagram Reels use rhetoric to discuss the information surrounding the ICE controversy?

## **Coding and Analysis Plans**

To answer this research question, I will analyze each Instagram Reel and its associated comments for rhetorical strategies and discourse patterns related to the ICE controversy. I will code each post and comment for rhetorical appeals, political framing strategies, and discourse features that show how creators and commenters present arguments about immigration enforcement.

Since Instagram Reels combine video, captions, and audience interaction, I will analyze both content made by creators (Reels) and audience responses (comments). I will count the rhetorical strategies used and categorize them into broader groups to identify patterns across the discourse community. I will also assign multiple codes to Reels and comments when they apply to more than just one category.

## **Coding**

1. Topics and Issues Discussed
  - a. ICE raids or enforcement actions
  - b. Deportation policies
  - c. Border security
  - d. Human rights
  - e. Government accountability
2. Emotional Appeals (pathos)
  - a. Emotions portrayed
    - i. Fear and threat
    - ii. Anger and outrage
    - iii. Sympathy and compassion
    - iv. Patriotism
  - b. Emotionally charged language
    - i. Injustice or oppression
    - ii. Danger/crime
    - iii. Struggle and hardship
3. Credibility and Authority (ethos)
  - a. Personal Experience
    - i. First-hand experience
    - ii. Second-hand experience (family/friends)
  - b. References to professional or institutional authority
    - i. Government officials/agencies
    - ii. Experts, journalists, researchers
  - c. Moral or ethical arguments

- i. Justice or fairness
    - ii. Law/constitutional values
- 4. Logical Appeals (logos)
  - a. Claims
    - i. Immigration enforcement is necessary/beneficial
    - ii. Immigration enforcement is harmful
    - iii. Government policies should change
    - iv. Government policies shouldn't change
  - b. Evidence
    - i. Statistical data
    - ii. Laws or policies
    - iii. News reports/external sources
    - iv. No clear evidence cited
- 5. Multimodal Presentation
  - a. Audio
    - i. Emotional background music
    - ii. Dramatic background music
    - iii. Neutral background music
    - iv. No music
  - b. Visual
    - i. Footage of ICE raids or enforcement
    - ii. Footage of protests
    - iii. News clips
    - iv. Screenshots of social media posts
    - v. Text overlays with claims or stats
    - vi. Government documents/policies
    - vii. Charts/infographics
- 6. Content Format
  - a. Original commentary
  - b. Reaction to news or media content
  - c. Reaction to other political creators
  - d. Compilation (multiple clips, images, or pieces of evidence)
- 7. Political Framing
  - a. pro-ICE
  - b. anti-ICE
  - c. Right (politically conservative)
  - d. Left (politically liberal)
  - e. Center (unbiased/nonpartisan)

I will code comments with an additional category on whether they agree or disagree with the creator.

## **Final Thesis**

To discover how political creators use rhetoric to discuss the ICE controversy on Instagram Reels, I will analyze 30 Instagram Reels and 300 associated comments for patterns in emotional appeals, credibility strategies, logical arguments, multimodal presentation, political framing, and audience responses within this discourse community.