

## The U and SLCC Partner to Host MLA Institute

In June, the Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies at the University of Utah and Salt Lake Community College's Department of English, Linguistics, and Writing Studies successfully co-hosted the first-ever Salt Lake [Modern Language Association](#) Summer Institute on Reading and Writing Pedagogies at Access-Oriented Institutions. The U was invited by MLA to host the weeklong institute because of their nationally recognized partnerships in preparing graduate students for teaching and learning at access-oriented institutions – which are colleges or universities that prioritize educational access for students from a wide range of backgrounds and identities. Salt Lake was one of four sites selected to host these institutes this year, and they were the only site west of the Mississippi. The MLA awarded the U and SLCC a \$20,000 start-up grant for the institute with encouragement to continue offering the program in future summers with the support of the U's College of Humanities.

The institute attracted 34 MLA fellows – 20 who joined in-person in Salt Lake and 14 who joined remotely. They were the only institute to offer a remote option, and they had attendees joining from 16 states and from Palestine. The institute featured extensive readings on two-year college literacy studies and daily panels of guest speakers from SLCC, the U, and teacher-scholar-activists in the Two-Year College English Association from across the country. A central focus of the institute was anti-racist and culturally sustaining literacy pedagogies.



20 MLA fellows at the SLCC campus.

“All participants spent the week developing Pedagogical Inquiry Projects that they shared with each other and a panel of Salt Lake Community College transfer students on the final day of the institute,” said Christie Toth, associate professor of writing and rhetoric studies at the U. “Twelve participants opted to continue developing their projects for the classroom or publication for graduate course credit offered through the U – an opportunity available only to participants in the Salt Lake MLA institute.”

Attendees included graduate and doctoral students in writing & rhetoric studies and English at the U, as well as from Weber State, Idaho State, SUNY Binghamton, Texas Christian University, the University of Cincinnati, the University of Michigan, the University of Nebraska, and the University of Bristol.

Faculty attendees hailed from Salt Lake Community College, Mesa Community College, Kirkland Community College, Community College of Aurora, Des Moines Area Community College, Southwestern Illinois College, Norco College, Belmont Abbey College, Eastern Oregon University, Tennessee State University, San Jose State University, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, St. John's University, and the University of San Diego. The range of institutes represented included community colleges, rural and urban universities with an access mission, HBCUs, HSIs, and instructors teaching in college access programs for first-generation college students and Native American students.

*Founded in 1883, the Modern Language Association of America has worked for more than a century to strengthen the study and teaching of languages and literatures. In addition to hosting an annual convention and sustaining one of the finest publishing programs in the humanities, the MLA is a leading advocate for the study and teaching of languages and literatures and serves as a clearinghouse for professional resources for teachers and scholars.*

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