

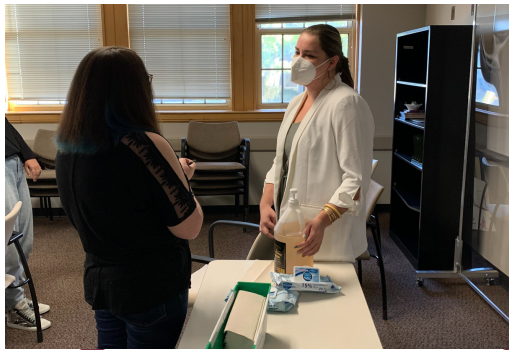
# Rhetoric and Composition

## Translation as a Technology of Survivance:

DR. LAURA GONZALES SHARES HER SCHOLARSHIP

Dr. Laura Gonzales began her workshop with a question: “When you hear, see, or think about the word ‘translation,’ what comes to mind?” Students gathered around a long table in the Common Room and wrote their answers on sticky notes. Moments later, the conference table was full of responses: “access,” “connection,” “challenge,” “transformation,” “loss.” Surveying the stickies, Dr. Gonzales noted, “there is trauma associated with translation.” Interactive and productive, the rest of the workshop explored translation as a technology, emphasizing the technical expertise, rhetorical decision-making, and communicative strategies of multilingual communicators.

After using her work to bookend the Digital Revolution and Convergence Culture course this semester, Michael Neal suggested the program invite Dr. Gonzales to share her provocative work with translation and multilingualism. In her 90-minute workshop and formal presentation, Dr. Gonzales presented work from *Sites of Translation: What Multilinguals Can Teach Us About Digital Writing and Rhetoric* (University of Michigan Press, 2018).



Later in the day, Dr. Gonzales presented her work on “Technologies of Survivance: Multilingual, Multimodal Writing Practices Across Contexts.” In her talk, she offered multilingualism “as an embodied experience” and framed language as “movement, community, and power.” She used her own mother as an example of language as embodied, describing ways her mom navigated various languages and contexts after their move from Bolivia to Florida during Dr. Gonzales’s childhood. By framing translation as technology, Dr. Gonzales invited attendees to identify the rhetorical expertise and communicative agility of our multilingual students. The talk concluded with all of us engaging in conversations about translation and techne, ableism in English classrooms, and the pedagogical implications of translation. In closing thoughts, Dr. Gonzales left us with this insight: “We have to think about who we are in relation to this translation work,” providing new ways to think about teaching and research.

## Face-to-Face with Dr. Gonzales

Given the emphasis Dr. Gonzales put on embodiment in translation, her visit ended aptly: with a program potluck hosted by Jacki Fiscus-Cannaday. After nearly two years of Zoom meetings, virtual happy hours, and outdoor socially distanced gatherings, attendees celebrated togetherness and community by brining a variety of dishes and desserts. Groups gathered around the kitchen table, lounged on the living room furniture, and chatted on the porch, engaging with Dr. Gonzales and swapping swapping graduate school survival stories. It was a gratifying way to conclude Dr. Gonzales’s visit and to reinitiate our in-person visiting speakers series.



## Returning to Campus

Fall 2021 marked the return to “in-person” teaching and learning as faculty and graduate students returned to FSU for the first campus-wide face-to-face instruction since spring 2020. Nearly two years after COVID-19 changed our realities, we are back. But what does it mean to be back? First and foremost, the return to campus brought an energy back to the Williams Building and the program. “It’s so good to see their [my students’] faces again,” Brittany Barron, a third-year PhD student marveled. At the same time, Brittany, like so many other students and faculty, has experienced exhaustion amidst the challenges of navigating a shared space.

Our graduate student spotlights provide some unique insights into the experience of returning to campus amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Their thoughtful responses demonstrate how the great return to campus has complicated how we think about access, mental health, labor, and participation in academics.

## Student Spotlights



DANIEL STEFANELLI

Daniel Stefanelli is a first-year PhD student with research interests in digital humanities, text technologies, and archival work. He applied on a whim to FSU, his top choice program. He was drawn to the diversity of experience and opportunities from WPA work to digital humanities. Next semester, he looks forward to working with the Museum of

Everyday Writing. He learned about FSU while working as a Research Assistant with Genevieve West, an alumna of FSU and the chair of the Department of Language, Culture, and Gender Studies at Texas Woman’s University. Daniel insightfully assesses the impact of COVID-19. As he observes, “we can’t just go back” because we’ve experienced collective trauma. He explained that there’s joy interacting with people again, but there’s also a very real sense of learning how to be on campus and with people again. “There is no ‘post-COVID,’” he says. “Normal didn’t work for a lot of people,” he continues. Now, “I’m learning the importance of being gracious with myself and my students.”



KELLY CHAMORRO

Kelly Chamorro is a first-year MA student who completed her undergraduate degree in Editing, Writing, and Media at FSU. As an undergrad, she took a Visual Rhetoric course with Kristie Fleckenstein that “changed [her] entire research trajectory” and solidified her decision to choose FSU for graduate school. In the next two years, she looks forward “to

learning how to conduct graduate-level research for publication” to help her explore and articulate her various interests. She is drawn to research on “rhetorics of identity and the self” and feminist pedagogies. Kelly finished her undergraduate degree and started her graduate career in the pandemic. She notes that “COVID has completely changed the way I am as a student. I feel that I value my time and my body so much more now.” In her work as a graduate student and Reading-Writing Center consultant, Kelly says she has “so much empathy for the students I consult on a daily basis... Things are very hard and very different now. I feel that COVID has impacted every single thing I do, think, and feel as a student, for better or for worse.”



"There's a lot of joy. We don't see or focus on it enough."

DR. LAURA GONZALES

After lunch and before her presentation, Dr. Gonzales and I [Amanda Ayers] sat down for a chat about pandemic teaching, surviving academia, and uncovering joy.

**A:** How do you feel about the transition back to campus?

**Dr. G:** I missed the human connection of face-to-face classes, especially sharing space with my students. But the push to "return to normal" really brought out the ableist practices of the university. I miss the accessibility of an online classroom.

**A:** How has the pandemic changed your teaching?

**Dr. G:** There's been a palpable shift. I'm not the same person. My students aren't the same people. We're grieving. I have to be honest and real about what I need in the classroom. I'm more flexible. And my classroom is more flexible.

**A:** At lunch, you shared how vital your grad school cohort was for surviving academia. Can you say more about your community and about surviving?

**Dr. G:** Those relationships extended beyond class. We established support systems and made space for each other. Now we share opportunities with each other. Surviving means making it through, but it also means bringing others along. There's a lot of joy. But we don't see or focus on it enough.