

**University of Connecticut, First-Year Writing  
Nineteenth Annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing  
Storrs, Connecticut  
April 20, 2024**

**Counterstories, Co-Conspirators, and Composition**

We invite conference proposals for the University of Connecticut First-Year Writing Program's Conference on the Teaching of Writing, taking place **in Storrs on Saturday, April 20th, 2024**. Proposal submissions are due **Monday, January 15th, 2024** and can be submitted through [this form](#). We are thrilled to be hosting Aja Y. Martinez as this year's keynote speaker.

We invite proposals that consider our conference theme "Counterstories, Co-Conspirators, and Composition." Drawing on the rich history of counterstories in Critical Race Theory we hope to make use of Aja Y. Martinez's understanding of counterstory in *Counterstory: The Rhetoric and Writing of Critical Race Theory*, as "methods that empower the minoritized through the formation of stories that disrupt the erasures embedded in standardized majoritarian methodologies." In other words, counterstories reveal the possibilities of the narratives that have been moved to the margins and make the stories we tell not only more complete, but also more abundant, complex, and worthy of exploration. Martinez reminds us of the ways that narrative and the theoretical have always been connected: "I believe that we've all been telling stories all along, but some stories are elevated to the status of theory, scholarship, and literature, while, too often, minoritized perspectives are relegated to marginalized or overlooked 'cultural rhetorics' methods or genres." Acknowledging counterstories as worthy of a place in our classrooms destabilizes the idea that only some stories belong in scholarship and requires all of us to engage in revisionist history.

As educators and scholars, it is our responsibility to make space for, respect, and promote counterstories of all kinds, both for our students and for ourselves. We believe in the richness of narrative and that to bring counterstories into our conversations is to create a more fruitful and interesting way of being and teaching. Our classrooms need counterstories to critically examine what we have been taught to think about writing and education, and how to develop our pedagogical practices to ensure that those stories that have been silenced or distorted are heard by us all.

**We seek proposals of 250 to 300 words** for accessible and active presentations. We strongly encourage proposals that describe how material will be interactive, participatory, and/or engaging for the audience. Sessions should be designed to be accessible from the outset. We invite proposals focused on any aspect of the topic as it pertains to the teaching of writing, but we will give preference to proposals that address one or more of the following questions or otherwise engage current scholarship on educational practices that focus on, incorporate, or explore *counterstories* in the writing classroom:

Questions to consider:

- How do counterstories shape our students, our classrooms, and our teaching?
- How does counterstory re-examine or challenge our theoretical histories of rhetoric, composition, or pedagogy?
- What are classroom activities, assignments, or practices that encourage or explicitly make space for counterstories?
- What are the political implications of counterstories in the classrooms?

- How are counterstories specifically intersectional, and how does this appear in our classrooms?
- How might we understand counterstory in conversation with accessibility?
- How could a pedagogy of counterstories go beyond the classroom to affect whole campuses, institutions, or communities?
- How can the work of counterstory make writing accessible for those outside the academy, especially those who have been minoritized by systems of higher education?
- What is the relationship between counterstories and technology? How have counterstories developed alongside or in reaction to evolving technology?
- How do counterstories challenge ideas of neutrality or objectivity within the writing classroom and the university more broadly?