

# March 2022 Newsletter



Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

## Graduate Student Spotlight: Laura Díaz Pérez

### ***How did you hear about the WGSS MA program?***

I learned about the program online, and when I did, I knew that I wanted to be part of the WGSS community at UC.

### ***What has been your experience as a graduate assistant?***

I really value getting experience in the classroom environment as a TA. I try to be resourceful, supportive, and to learn as much as I can from the students.

### ***Who are your favorite theorists?***

Gloria Anzaldúa's work was new to me, and I found it very impactful.

### ***What excites you about the field of WGSS?***

I consider myself new to the field of WGSS, so all the strong connections I have made with the field feel very rewarding. It really excites me to apply all of what I learn to future experiences.

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# WGSS Affiliate Faculty: Dr. Lora Arduser Anderson



I'm an Associate Professor in the English Department where I direct the Professional Writing graduate and undergraduate areas. I also co-direct our undergraduate certificate in Copyediting and Publishing.

## **What classes do you enjoy teaching and why?**

I teach a variety of classes, but my favorites are Creating Accessible Content and Science and Health Writing.

Creating Accessible Content introduces students to disability studies, document/technology accessibility, and universal design. I ground the assignments in principles of feminist disability studies, which we discuss in the class. We also discuss eugenics, identity politics, deaf studies, blind studies and visual culture, accessibility testing, and accessibility laws.

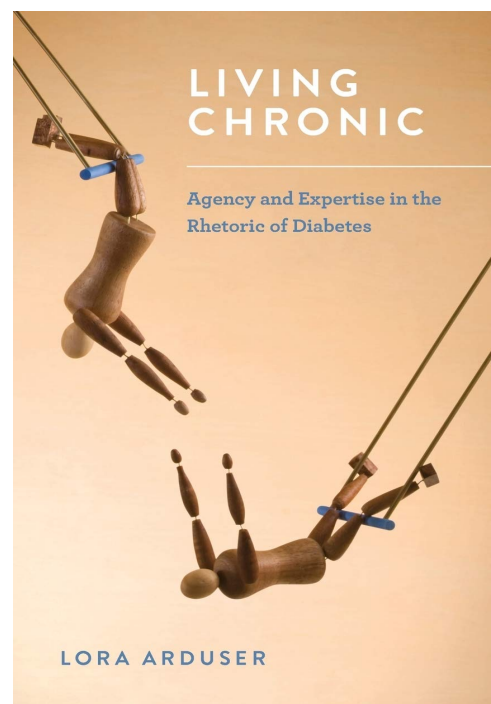
In Science and Health Writing students learn a range of writing and communication strategies used in science and health settings. Students also critically examine how popular discourse changes our understanding of the practices of science, medicine, health, and the social consequences of this discourse.

I particularly enjoy these classes because it's rewarding to see students become empowered through their efforts to empower audiences that are often marginalized – whether these audiences are living with disability or people trying to navigate powerful systems like science and medicine.

## **What is your most recent publication?**

My research is situated in the rhetoric of health and medicine, an interdisciplinary field in which technical and professional writing, disability studies, and other humanities-oriented disciplines intersect with the medical sciences. I'm particularly interested in the phenomenology of the lived body, issues of representation and subjectivity, and agency.

Much of my research focuses on these topics in the context of chronic illness. For example, my first book, *Living Chronic: Agency and Expertise in the Rhetoric of Diabetes* (2017) undertakes a rhetorical examination of the discourses both of people with diabetes and health care providers in order to theorize a multidimensional model of patient agency. My chapter "What's in a Name? The Diabetic Civil War" in *Diabetes on Display: Complicating Social, Political and Cultural Representations of Diabetes* (2020) builds on this work and investigates issues of identity and representation through a disability studies lens.



## **What research project are you currently working on?**

Currently I'm working on a book project and an article that analyze discourses and practices of death care in the United States. The article focuses on gendered expertise and technology in an examination of how women reclaimed agency in the death care field. The book, tentatively titled *The Rhetorical Life of Corpses*, explores the concept of personhood. Through an examination of how we treat human remains, I argue that personhood, similar to agency, is not located within a single individual but the effect of a material-discursive network.