



INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATION
M.A. PROGRAM

Modern Languages, Linguistics and Intercultural Communication

PROGRAM

MLLI's 2025 Research Day

Join us for our annual MLLI Research Day, a showcase of virtual mini-presentations by our alumni, faculty, and students. See what ideas are shaping our fields!

OPENING - 9:50 AM - WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Panel 1:

10:00–10:10 — Landry Digeon (INCC alumnus).
"Digital Storytelling: A Tool for Engagement and Action in the Cyprus Context"

10:10–10:20 — Ramsha Chaudhary (MLLI alumna). "Assessing the Effect of Language Barriers on the Perception of Care Received by Spanish-speaking Patients in Baltimore, MD."

10:20–10:30 — Viridiana Colosio-Martínez (INCC alumna). "Familismo, Aguantarismo, and Celebrarismo: The Latinx Workers' Values and Collective Survival in Baltimore."

10:30–10:40 — Nathan Wooddell (UMBC faculty), Carter Lemen (MLLI alumnus) and Vira Zhdanovych (MLLI faculty).
"Undergraduate Research Embedded in an Interdisciplinary Language Course: Student Final Projects in Russian 470: Russian for Technology and Cybersecurity."

10:40–10:55 — Q&A (15 min)

QR – Webex Link

Email: Dr. Muñoz @ munozt@umbc.edu with any questions



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Panel 2

10:55–11:05 — Gemma Garcia Parellada (INCC alumna) 'La gang shit catalana': The Use of Translanguaging in the New era of Contemporary Catalan Urban Music."

11:05–11:15 — Kyung-Eun Yoon (MLLI faculty). "K-Pop, Memetic Practices, and Collective Identity in South Korea's Impeachment Protests"

11:15–11:25 — Meloddye Carpio-Ríos (MLLI faculty). "Teaching Through Excess: Queer Brown Bodies and the Pedagogies of Undocu-Desire."

11:25–11:35 — Tania Lizarazo (MLLI faculty). "Beyond Accommodations: A Latina Feminist Testimonio about Surviving Higher Education"

11:35–11:50 — Q&A (15 min)

12:00–1:00pm – INCC's 40th Anniversary. Alumni conversation. Where are they now?



UMBC

MODERN LANGUAGES, LINGUISTICS,
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Abstracts and Bios

Landry Digeon (INCC alumnus) "Digital Storytelling: A Tool for Engagement and Action in the Cyprus Context."

In Cyprus, temperatures continue to rise while water resources steadily decline, profoundly affecting agriculture, tourism, health, and biodiversity. Within this fragile context, students from the Department of French and European Studies (University of Cyprus) embarked on a digital storytelling project that turned learning into action. They identified local climate challenges and ventured into the field with cameras and microphones to investigate them. By interviewing scientists, workers, and environmental activists, they transformed complex realities into short, accessible documentaries. Their work reached beyond the classroom—showcased at the Festival Francophone du Reportage Court 2025 in Nicosia, developed further through a collaborative Erasmus digital storytelling workshop on climate change at Kiel University in Germany, and later featured at the Nicosia Book Fest. This journey led students from awareness to agency, helping them perceive climate change not as an abstract crisis but as a lived experience calling for creativity, dialogue, and collective responsibility.

Landry Digeon comes from France and holds a doctoral degree in Language Literacy and Culture (LLC) and a master's in Intercultural Communication (INCC) from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), USA. He is a Lecturer (UK rank) in the Department of French and European Studies at the University of Cyprus. His expertise lies at the intersection of French studies, digital humanities, intercultural communication, cinema, and digital storytelling. Focusing on international film remakes and transnational TV series adaptations, he employs deep learning and big data methodologies to reveal cultural patterns and trends in cinematographic traditions.

Ramsha Chaudhary (MLLI alumna). "Assessing the Effect of Language Barriers on the Perception of Care Received by Spanish-speaking Patients in Baltimore, MD."

The United States (U.S.) is home to an immensely diverse population, among which lies a large majority of Hispanic-Americans who speak Spanish as a first language. Despite this overwhelming presence of Spanish speakers in the U.S., the healthcare system is severely under equipped in providing adequate care to non-English speaking individuals. While similar studies have been previously conducted, this investigation hopes to address patient, physician, and interpreter perspectives in order to adequately assess current metrics for providing quality care in the presence of linguistic barriers. Data was collected from these three distinct populations through the use of survey questions addressing four core areas: comfort, use of resources, understanding, and satisfaction. Participants specifically included: Spanish-speaking patients, Spanish-speaking physicians, and English-speaking physicians. Results from the surveys were analyzed and interpreted using qualitative methods comparing participants at an individual level.

Ramsha Chaudhary is a UMBC alumna, with degrees in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Modern Languages and Linguistics with a concentration in Spanish. During her time at UMBC, Ramsha was a Merit Scholar, recipient of the Alumni Award, and an MLLI Honors Student. Ramsha is currently pursuing an accelerated Master's degree in Cellular and Molecular Biomedical Sciences at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Upon completion of her Master's, Ramsha hopes to pursue a career in healthcare and apply the findings of her research in a real-life setting in order to provide more tailored care to individuals across the U.S.

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Viridiana Colosio-Martínez (MLLI INCC alumna). "Familismo, Aguantarismo, and Celebrarismo: The Latinx Workers' Values and Collective Survival in Baltimore."

Latinx families across cities in the US face significant challenges in their pursuit of a better future. They are driven by the desire to meet the needs of their families, and the values of "familismo" within their community encourage them to establish social networks to help navigate the complexities of moving to a new place and understanding the systems. However, Latinx workers often encounter discrimination and must rely on "aguantarismo" to secure employment and endure accidents, chronic illnesses, and pandemics. Unfortunately, the socioeconomic systems in place typically favor elite groups that oppress Latinx workers, leaving them with little recourse but to accept injustices without complaint. In Baltimore, celebrating the Latinx culture through "celebrarismo" not only fosters pride but also strengthens social networks that help Latinx people support each other and survive in unfamiliar surroundings.

Viridiana Colosio-Martínez is an alumna of MLLI and the INCC. She is a mother of two, a storyteller, an adjunct instructor in the Spanish program at the MLLI Department, and a PhD student in the Language, Literacy, and Culture Doctoral program at UMBC. Originally from Caborca, Sonora, Mexico, her research interests focus on storytelling, bilingualism, and cultural identity within the Latine/x communities in the U.S. Currently, she collaborates with the Latine/x community in Highlandtown, Baltimore, to explore how culture serves as a vital coping strategy and a source of social support for the survival of identity, language, and culture, as well as a form of resistance.

Nathan Wooddell (UMBC alumnus), Carter Lemen (UMBC alumnus, May 2025 with a BS in Computer Science and a Minor in Russian), and Vira Zhdanovych (MLLI faculty). "Undergraduate Research Embedded in an Interdisciplinary Language Course: Student Final Projects in Russian 470: Russian for Technology and Cybersecurity."

Nathan Wooddell is an adjunct instructor with UMBC, teaching courses related to Cybersecurity and the Russian Language. He formerly worked as a Graduate Cybersecurity Researcher with the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), where he served Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's (LLNL) Global Security Directorate. Additionally, Nathan is a former graduate student at UMBC, completing a M.S. in Cybersecurity, a B.S. in Computer Science, and a Russian Language certificate. During his time as a student at UMBC he conducted research on the impact of the Russian Federation on global cybersecurity and was a member of UMBC's Cybercorps: Scholarship for Service (SFS) cohort.

Vira Zhdanovych. M.F.A., Russian Area Coordinator; Associate Teaching Professor.

Gemma Garcia Parellada (INCC alumna) 'La gang shit catalana': The Use of Translanguaging in the New era of Contemporary Catalan Urban Music."

In this presentation, I will examine the use of translanguaging in the lyrics of a new generation of Catalan urban music artists. Drawing on content analysis and multilingual discourse analysis of ten songs by artists such as Mushkaa, Julieta, The Tyets, and 31 Fam, I will explore how these artists strategically employ Catalan alongside varieties of Spanish, particularly Caribbean, English, and Caribbean Creoles. I identify four main functions of translanguaging: (1) to qualify or address the addressee, (2) to index participation in global urban music culture, (3) to facilitate rhyming, and (4) to assert authorship and territoriality. Findings reveal that translanguaging is not a random outcome of linguistic contact but a deliberate, creative, and pragmatic resource through which artists negotiate their identities and locate themselves within both global and local frameworks. Finally, I will discuss some ongoing research about the circulation of Afro-Caribbean cultural manifestations in global contexts.

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Gemma Garcia Parellada. She graduated from the INCC in summer 2025. She was born and raised in a small city near Barcelona, Spain. She pursued a BA in English Studies at the University of Barcelona and her BA thesis analyzed the work of two Caribbean authors from a queer perspective. Her research interests are Caribbean literature, queer theory, ecocriticism, and decolonial feminisms and she is also interested in the political economy of the publishing industry. In 2023, she earned a Fulbright scholarship to study an MA in Intercultural Communication at UMBC. She speaks Catalan, Spanish, English and a bit of French and she is currently learning Haitian Creole.

Kyung-Eun Yoon (MLLI faculty). "K-Pop, Memetic Practices, and Collective Identity in South Korea's Impeachment Protests."

This study examines the dynamic protest culture of the 2024–2025 South Korean impeachment protests, focusing on how younger generations integrated K-pop and memetic practices into activism. Protesters incorporated singing and dancing with fandom lightsticks, emulating K-pop concert rituals, and transformed online memes into physical protest artifacts. These practices illustrate the intersection of popular and political culture and the blending of online and offline activism. Yoon analyzes textual, visual, and material elements in protest artifacts and online posts in order to investigate how participants construct and negotiate individual and collective identities. She also explores how younger generations reshape traditional protest norms and foster participatory culture. Findings show that participants combined humor, cultural references, and political critique to assert individuality while building collective identity. Yoon will provide insight into innovative participatory culture and its applicability for democratic movements worldwide.

Kyung-Eun Yoon is an associate professor and coordinator of Korean language and culture in MLLI. Her research focuses on discourse analysis, conversation analysis, interactional linguistics, and Korean language pedagogy.

Meloddye Carpio-Ríos (MLLI faculty). "Teaching Through Excess: Queer Brown Bodies and the Pedagogies of Undocu-Desire."

The figure of the bad hombre has long served as a racialized fiction used to discipline and control Latino masculinity, reducing brown men to symbols of danger, hypersexuality, and moral excess. Challenging this colonial imaginary, Latine artists Rommy Torrico, Julio Slagado, and Yosimar Reyes reclaim this figure through unapologetically undocu-queer and jotería aesthetics that challenge dominant narratives of Latinidad and masculinity. Their works transform stigmatized representations into spaces of joy, tenderness, and collective care, revealing how queer brown bodies generate new ways of knowing and being. I propose that their artistic practices operate as a queer/jotería decolonial pedagogy, one that moves beyond galleries and social media into classrooms and communities, fostering critical reflection, kinship, and hope. By queering the bad hombre, these artists imagine a future where brownness, queerness, and vulnerability become sources of knowledge, pleasure, and resistance.

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Meloddye Carpio-Ríos (MLLI faculty) research explores critical heritage language pedagogy, decolonial and queer/transfeminist approaches, and cultural production in Latin America and U.S. Latine communities. She coordinates the Spanish Heritage Pathway and, as a first-generation college graduate, advocates for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.

Tania Lizarazo (MLLI faculty). "Beyond Accommodations: A Latina Feminist Testimonio about Surviving Higher Education"

This is an autoethnographic exploration of disability in higher education in the context of climate catastrophe, late-stage capitalism and the global rise of fascism. While I understand that the "the rhetorical performance of disability disclosure is never without consequence," as a disabled researcher, I follow a tradition of disabled scholars using autoethnography to research issues related to disability or illness. More specifically, I follow what Latinx Studies Scholar María Elena Cepeda calls "Latina Feminist Testimonio," where "politicized notions of self and community" and methodological approaches" collide. Beyond Accommodations uses Critical Disability Studies as a method and theoretical framework rather than the study of disabled people. I explore access in relation to power in the context of mass disabling events where most have chosen "normality" over public health. I use crip time, multimodality, and interdependence as part of an autoethnographic testimonio that reminds us that disability is part of everyone's experience if we live long enough.

Dr. Tania Lizarazo is an Associate Professor at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) contributing to the Global Studies Program, the Spanish Area, and the MA in Intercultural Communication. She is Affiliate Faculty of Gender, Women's + Sexuality Studies, and Language, Literacy & Culture. Her research interests include Latin American cultural studies, transnational feminisms, digital storytelling, and performance studies.

Questions? Email Dr. Thania Muñoz, munozt@umbc.edu
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