

Getting Ready for CCCC 2024

SOME TIPS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

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This document is an evolving resource, meant to provide graduate students with some helpful information, tips, and suggestions as they prepare for the upcoming 2024 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Annual Convention in Spokane, Washington. We've created this resource in response to a meeting with the CCCC Graduate Student Standing Group's leadership team, which brought attention to some of the complexities and challenges for graduate students who are navigating large academic conferences like CCCC in current times. We plan to develop a second, follow-up document on attending CCCC 2024 as a graduate student in the months to come.

Please don't hesitate to email us at ra00060@mix.wvu.edu and jennifer.sano-franchini@mail.wvu.edu if you have any questions or suggestions for improving this resource.

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What is CCCC?

Since 1949, CCCC has provided a forum for all those responsible for teaching composition and communication skills at the college level, both in undergraduate and graduate programs. For 75 years, CCCC members have charted new courses in the teaching and scholarship of composition and rhetoric, helping to shape our academic community and professional practices. As members, through the College Forum of the [National Council of Teachers of English](#) (NCTE), and of the [American Council of Learned Societies](#), CCCC is the professional voice of composition and rhetoric studies.

When you join CCCC, you will be welcomed into a community of scholars and teachers who share your concerns about important issues influencing the teaching of composition and rhetoric. You will be connected to current trends in scholarship and research, developments in teaching, national trends in higher education, and much more.

What are academic conferences?

Academic conferences are scholarly events that are typically organized by academic institutions, professional associations, or similar groups with the purpose of convening scholars, researchers, graduate students, educators, and experts from diverse fields of study. They are usually held over a couple of days and can take place either in a physical, face-to-face format or in a virtual, online setting. Conferences provide platforms for presenting, discussing, and sharing academic papers and scholarly work. Additionally, they offer opportunities for attendees to network, establish connections with fellow professionals in their respective fields, and foster relationships for future academic collaborations.

What are the benefits of participating in academic conferences?

There are many benefits that come with participating in academic conferences. Academic conferences are not only a place where you can share work-in-progress, request and receive feedback on your work, and add a line to your CV, but you can also:

- Get the most up-to-date sense of where the discipline is;
- Learn from cutting edge research, often by graduate students and early career faculty;
- Get ideas to refresh your teaching;
- Expand your professional network;
- Gain experience talking about your work with others; and
- Be in community with others who have shared professional interests.

Here is what some leaders of the CCCC Graduate Student Standing Group had to say about what they've gained from participating in CCCC:



“Having started my graduate experience in the middle of the pandemic, CCCC was important for helping me feel connected to people in our profession. I had so many invaluable conversations with fellow graduate students, established scholars, local activists, and leaders. The most meaningful moments of the conference were not actually in any of the sessions; they were walking with new friends from one session to the other, skipping an event to continue a meaningful conversation, being invited to lunch or dinner by a senior scholar who wanted to buy a struggling graduate student a meal. While the prestige and size of CCCC are intimidating, I quickly felt that it was made up of people who cared deeply about their work and their students, and when I sought out people who aligned with my interests and values—whether at standing group or interest group meetings or on Whova—folks were excited to sit down with me.”

— Charles McMartin, PhD Student, University of Arizona



“As an international student with very few connections to real human beings in the American discipline of rhetoric and composition, my understanding of what the “field” was used to be limited to what I saw only at my university. After attending CCCC though, it felt like my 2-D mental map of writing studies became a high-definition, 3-D, multi-colored, multimodal, million mega-pixel model of the field. As I absorbed conversations in the sessions, bumped into scholars whose works I admired in the hallways, participated in chats on the Whova app, and went to impromptu dinners with many scholars who were kind enough to buy grad students free food (Yes as a grad student that really matters!), I started to reimagine the field as a forest with lots of trees, groves, and rivers flowing through it. Since CCCC, I’ve connected with many of the people I met there on Twitter, and the conversations have continued. Attending CCCC played a huge role in increasing my sense of belonging to the field.”

— Anuj Gupta, PhD Student, University of Arizona

Paying for CCCC

Attending academic conferences can be quite an expensive activity, and it is highly recommended that you apply for all of the travel grants and funding opportunities available to you. There are two types of funding sources that may be available to you: (1) internal institutional funding from your university, and (2) CCCC Travel Awards. These are described in further detail below.

[Registration](#) for CCCC 2024 will open by late October 2023. Registration for students is \$70. You will need to upload an image of your student ID during the registration process.

Institutional Funding

Here is a list of potential sources within your institution through which funding opportunities may be available:

- University-level travel grants, which may be offered through the Provost's office;
- Travel funding from the graduate school or graduate office;
- College-level travel grants;
- Departmental travel funding; and
- Some programs may also offer travel funding opportunities.

See your graduate handbook or consult your graduate program director for more information about internal funding opportunities at your institution.

CCCC Travel Awards

Below is a list of [CCCC travel awards](#) that you may be eligible to apply for as a graduate student. Note that these awards come with different amounts and due dates, so be sure to plan ahead to maximize your chances of securing them.

For Graduate Students Only

[Chairs' Memorial Scholarship](#) (\$750; due Oct. 10)

Up to four awards to help cover the costs of four graduate students who are presenting at the conference.

For First Time Presenters & Emerging Scholars (Preferred Or Required)

[Disability in College Composition Travel Awards](#) (\$750; due Oct. 10)

Six travel awards for graduate students and faculty doing scholarship dedicated to improving knowledge about the intersections of disability with composition and rhetoric; the value of disability as a source of diversity; inclusive practices and the promotion of access; and the value of disability as a critical lens. Preference is given to first-time attendees and untenured faculty.

[Gloria Anzaldúa Rhetorician Award](#) (\$750; due Oct. 10)

Up to three awards for graduate students or first-time presenters whose work participates in the making of meaning out of sexual and gender minority experiences.

[Scholars for the Dream Travel Award](#) (\$1,000; due Oct. 10)

For first-time BIPOC presenters and emerging BIPOC presenters who've attended CCCC fewer than three times. Twenty awards are available.

For Contingent Faculty & Independent Scholars

[Assistance Fund for Contingent Faculty](#) (\$500; due Dec. 31)

For contingent faculty who live more than 300 miles from the conference site.

[Professional Equity Project](#) (\$330; due Nov 1)

For part-time or adjunct faculty or independent scholars, including community partners and scholars outside of the discipline, to attend CCCC. Priority is given to teachers of writing with part-time or adjunct status; however, all are able to apply.

What can you get reimbursed?

What you are able to get reimbursed will depend on the organization or institution that is providing the funding, but potentially reimbursable items may include:

- Transportation—airfare, ground transportation (e.g., shuttle, cab, or rideshare like Uber and Lyft), car rental, bus, and train;
- Lodging/hotel;
- Conference registration fee;
- Mileage (if you use your own car—including for your drive to the airport);
- Airport parking; and
- Meals (oftentimes at a [per diem](#) rate)

Consult your university's travel policy for more information including requirements, restrictions and processes for reimbursement by your institution. University policies vary regarding eligible expenses, as well as flight and lodging booking guidelines (as an example, some institutions will reimburse the costs for AirBnBs while others won't). In addition, some universities require the use of dedicated travel booking programs, and booking outside of these programs may lead to non-reimbursement.

Depending on your institution, it may be possible to work with your department's fiscal person, who may be able to put expenses on the department credit card, to make airline and hotel reservations.

Other Ways to Manage Costs

In addition to applying for funds and awards from both your institution and CCCC, here are some practical suggestions for managing the cost of conferences while maximizing your conference experience on a budget.

Travel Planning

When arranging your travel to the conference, try using various websites and platforms for booking flight tickets, as some websites offer more competitive prices and better deals than others. Compare options and consider flexible travel dates if your schedule allows.

Look into nearby hotels that may offer more budget-friendly rates compared to the conference hotel.

Carpooling and Hotel Sharing

Organize carpooling arrangements to and from the airport. The CCCC Graduate Student Standing Group Discord may be used to make such arrangements.

If you're comfortable doing so, consider sharing a hotel room with fellow graduate student attendees. It may be helpful to know that the main conference hotel for 2024, The Davenport Grand, has all king doubles, and may be more comfortable for four people sharing a room.

Dining Choices

Dining at downtown establishments can sometimes be on the expensive side. Here are some cost-effective approaches to consider:

- Bring easily consumable and transportable bars, snacks, or meals with you.
- Visit a nearby grocery store. At CCCC 2024, [Main Market Co-op](#) (44 W. Main Ave.) is about two blocks from the Spokane Convention Center, Davenport Grand, and DoubleTree Hotel. It has a hot food bar, a salad bar, a deli, and a bakery.
- Consider hotels that offer complimentary dinner or other meals.
- Use an app like Yelp, Google, or TripAdvisor to search restaurants based on price.
- Check the conference schedule, as some events may offer complimentary food options.

“Conferences are expensive. I am fortunate to have had three cohort members willing to rent a room with me and an institution that provided opportunities to apply for travel grants. At the conference, our cohort let each other know about events with free food. We also unashamedly asked folks on Whova to buy us a meal or a coffee. The food that we did buy was from a local grocery store. Join [The Graduate Student Standing Group's Discord page](#) to stay updated on where to find free food at the conference.”

— Charles McMartin, PhD Student, University of Arizona

“I shamelessly posted on Twitter to all the academics I followed that I was new to the conference and would love to meet people over coffee, chat, and connect. This led to an entire group of scholars inviting me and my companion to one of the nicest restaurants in the city where they offered to pay for our meals as they knew we were graduate students.

I also opted to pick a hotel that was near the conference center but offered complimentary dinner. Though that took some digging on my end, I saved a good amount of money on food and met other scholars that already figured out that simple trick throughout the years. Many "tips" came from the veterans I spoke to prior to making all my arrangements. Many of those conversations happened on Discord, Twitter, or simply through faculty that wanted us to truly have the best experience we could at CCCC.”

— Kayla Urban Fettig, PhD Student, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Booking Your Flight and Hotel Reservations

Information about lodging at CCCC 2024 is available on the CCCC website:

<https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/conv/registration-housing>

When you choose to arrive in and depart Spokane will most likely depend on when any panels or meetings you're planning to attend are scheduled, as well as your preferences and priorities.

Here's the general convention schedule to help you make your reservations accordingly:

[2024 Convention Schedule](#)

Wednesday, April 3

8:00 AM–5:00 PM	TYCA (Two-Year College English Association) Conference
8:30 AM–5:00 PM	Research Network Forum
9:00 AM–5:00 PM	CCCC Half-Day and Full-Day Workshops (registration required)
5:15 PM–6:15 PM	Newcomer's Orientation

Thursday, April 4

7:00 AM–5:00 PM	Action Hub
7:30 AM–8:15 AM	Newcomers' Coffee Hour
8:30 AM–10:15 AM	Opening General Session with Chair's Address
10:15 AM–6:00 PM	Exhibit Hall
10:30 AM–6:00 PM	CCCC Concurrent Sessions
6:00 PM–8:00 PM	Scholars for the Dream and Anzalduá Awards Receptions
6:30 PM–7:30 PM	Special Interest and Standing Group Meetings

Friday, April 5

8:00 AM–3:15 PM	CCCC Concurrent Sessions
8:00 AM–5:00 PM	Action Hub & Exhibit Hall
3:30 PM–4:30 PM	Special Interest and Standing Group Meetings
4:45 PM–7:15 PM	Annual Business Meeting and Awards Presentation
7:15 PM–9:30 PM	Evening All-Attendee Event

Saturday, April 6

8:00 AM–1:45 PM	CCCC Concurrent Sessions
8:00 AM–2:00 PM	Action Hub
10:00 AM–1:00 PM	Exhibit Hall
2:00 PM–5:00 PM	CCCC Afternoon Workshops (registration required, no fee)

Please note that the CCCC Access Guide is forthcoming and will include a lot of helpful information related to accessibility at the Convention. For now, it may be helpful to note that the Doubletree hotel may be more accessible for those who have mobility issues.

The full program will be available around six weeks before the convention, in early 2024.

About the CCCC Graduate Student Standing Group

Officers: Kayla Fettig, Anuj Gupta, Charlie McMartin, Holly Anderson

“The Graduate Student Standing Group is a student-led collective that holds space at CCCC for graduate students to share research and experiences that address the intersectional problems jeopardizing their working conditions and overall standing in higher education. Our mission is to build an intersectional, trans-institutional, and trans-generational coalition dedicated to empowering all graduate students across institutions, positionalities, and disciplines. While our embodied experiences as graduate students require that we dedicate our research, teaching, service, administration, and leadership to addressing our own unique challenges within our institutions, CCCC provides us space to come together and share the abundant tactics and strategies (Mathieu) we enact in response to those challenges.” (CCCC Graduate Student Standing Group Mission Statement)

Join the Graduate Student Standing Group's Discord: <https://discord.gg/WqZsmKcJ>

Follow the Graduate Student Standing Group on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CcccGradGroup>



Last year was the first year I attended the CCCC convention, and Charlie and Millie warmly welcomed me at the Graduate Student Standing Group. The Grad Standing Group is motivated to help graduate students not only have a voice in CCCC but to warmly welcome graduate students in a space specifically for them. We met with the program chair and other leaders within the conference to keep lines of communication open, voice our positive and negative experiences, and make suggestions. After that meeting, we felt that the program chair and committee members were very open to how to best be more inclusive to graduate students along their journey at a CCCC conference as a newcomer or veteran.

While this year will open a new chapter for graduate students to apply for specific positions they are interested in, we hope they continue to challenge the status quo of the conference, reach out to those with more power, and request changes that are needed to not only support graduate research but to specifically be involved in those sessions. We have worked to keep those connections and networks open (which we are greatly proud of) and know that future, strong, motivated, and out-of-the-box grad students can do the same.

— Kayla Urban Fettig, PhD Student, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Other Helpful Links and Contacts

[WPA-GO](#)

[CCCC Newcomers' Welcoming Committee](#)

[CCCC Social Justice at the Convention \(SJAC\) Committee](#)

[CCCC Officers and Executive Committee](#)

Acronyms

AAAC: Asian/Asian American Caucus

ATTW: Association of Teachers of Technical Writing

CCC: *College Composition and Communication*

CCCC: Conference on College Composition and Communication

CDICC: Committee on Disability Issues in College Composition

CFSHRC: Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition

EC: Executive Committee

FYC: First-year Composition

FYW: First-year Writing

IWCA: International Writing Centers Association

NCTE: National Council of Teachers of English

RNF: Research Network Forum

SIG: Special Interest Group

SG: Standing Group

SJAC: Social Justice at the Convention Committee

SWR: Studies in Writing and Rhetoric Book Series

TPC: technical and professional communication

TYCA: Two-Year College Association

WC: Writing Center

WPA: Writing Program Administrator; Writing Program Administration

WPA-GO: Writing Program Administrators—Graduate Organization