



# Fluid Frontiers: Explorations of Water in the Humanities and Beyond

*an interdisciplinary graduate conference*

“...our human bodies are at least two-thirds water, but more interesting than these ontological facts is what this water does—where it comes from, where it goes, and what it means along the way.” –Astrida Neimanis

Seventy-one percent of the planet is covered in water — **an element that is fluid, ever-changing, and essential to life on Earth.** We live in

a time where melting glaciers and rising water levels are reshaping landscapes, and physical and social boundaries are becoming increasingly fluid. This fluidity is written into our bodies at the cellular level. It welcomes us to think critically about **ways of knowing both human and nonhuman worlds** and creates a much-needed space for less-privileged narratives in academia and society. The graduate students in the University of Idaho Department of English invite you to consider how literature, creative writing, pedagogy, linguistics, and the humanities at large engage with water as both a physical substance and concept. This might range from ecocritical analyses, to fluid interpretations of language and literature, to creative works on the fluidity of relationships, ontologies, and experiences. We welcome projects that will open a discussion on ever-shifting creative, pedagogical, rhetorical, and theoretical boundaries, as well as explorations of how academic disciplines might **harness the fluctuation of belief and knowledge to push these boundaries even further** in ways that reflect the increasing interdisciplinarity of the watery world that we inhabit and embody.

## Possible areas of interest:

- Environmental humanities work
- Pop-culture or film studies
- Digital humanities projects
- Interdisciplinary literary scholarship
- Linguistics scholarship
- Work in animal studies
- Creative and/or speculative nonfiction
- Science communication

## Possible questions to consider:

- How can the mechanics of water help us conceptualize and understand the dynamics of our world?
- **How are genre and form changing** to accommodate a fluid perception of experience?
- How can art, literature, and/or other interdisciplinary work **challenge traditional ways of understanding the world?**
- In what ways can the humanities address the **shifting boundaries** between Nature and Culture?
- How does water function as a transcultural space?

University of Idaho, English Graduate Program | **Moscow, Idaho** | April 27, 2019

Keynote: **Dr. Richard Watts** | “Reclaimed Waters: The Arts of Elemental Justice in the Anthropocene”

We encourage paper/project proposals submitted by graduate students from all disciplines, as well as dance, theatrical, literary, and cinematic contributions. Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words, for 15-20 minute presentations to [uigec@uidaho.edu](mailto:uigec@uidaho.edu) by March 1st, 2019. Please include a paper/project title, presenter's name, email, academic affiliation, and a 100-150 word biography. Direct questions and concerns to [uigec@uidaho.edu](mailto:uigec@uidaho.edu).