Since the introduction of large-scale quarantine and social distancing measures in March 2020, literature conferences have increasingly turned toward examining themes of "emergency" and "crisis." In the midst of this proliferating focus on conditions of catastrophe, however, we might also ask what modes of life, affect, and community formation persist even beyond, alongside, or within crisis. Can we conceive of crisis not as a totalizing event that defines all forms of vitality that exist within its purview, but as a lived environment in which we can discover and facilitate forms of ongoingness that resist the surrounding catastrophes? That is, how might literature and other cultural forms (from any period) help us describe, theorize, or approach that which is para-critical?

For MadLit 2022 – the University of Wisconsin-Madison's English graduate conference – we invite abstracts of no more than 250 words for 15-minute conference presentations that engage how literature (including film and television, music, video games, drama, digital and visual culture, composition, rhetoric, and more) can help provide insight into the possibility of reclaiming space for joy, community, and new forms of life even while confronting larger forces of systemic turmoil. We welcome projects that attend to para-crisis from any period, literary tradition, genre, or context. Submissions can contend with the Covid-19 pandemic or venture beyond.

Some potential paper topics considering para-crisis might include but are not limited to:
- Environmental thinking
- Community and kinship formation
- Teaching and pedagogy
- Postcolonial studies
- Intersections of race, sexuality, gender, and class
- Media and digital forms
- Interdisciplinary approaches
- Fantasies of apocalypse
- Reading as a mode of being
- How to learn and live within the increasingly precarious humanities (e.g., responses to limited funding and career opportunities in literary studies and related fields)

The MadLit conference is tentatively scheduled to be held in-person on UW-Madison’s campus, conditions permitting. If participants would prefer a virtual format or we need to shift to a contingency plan for the entire event, we will create and offer remote opportunities for presenting. Please indicate your preference for in-person or virtual engagement in the submission form! While we are unable to offer funding for travel, we are pleased to share that the conference registration is free for all participants and attendees.

Submit abstracts to [this Google Form](https://form.com) by Friday, February 25, 2022.

For questions, comments, concerns, or accessibility needs, please email the conference organizers at uwmadlit@gmail.com.