

Cara Marta Messina

Assistant Professor of English
English Department
Marist College

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[number]
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EDUCATION

Northeastern University 2016–2021

Ph.D. in English, Writing and Rhetoric

Dissertation: “[The Critical Fan Toolkit: Fanfiction Genres, Ideologies, and Pedagogies](#)”

Received 2021 *Computers and Composition* Hugh Burns Distinguished Dissertation

Honorable Mention

Committee: Mya Poe (Chair), Ellen Cushman, Neal Lerner, Laura Nelson

Graduate Certificate: Digital Humanities

St. John’s University, 2010–2015

M.A. in English, 2015

B.A. with honors *summa cum laude* in English, Minor in Creative Writing, 2014

Honors: Sigma Tau Delta English Honors Society

Summa Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Society

RESEARCH & TEACHING EMPHASIS

Digital rhetoric; critical fan studies; antiracist & intersectional feminism; digital humanities; game studies; writing & rhetoric of coding and data; computational methods; technical communication.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Assistant Professor of English

Marist College, New York

September 2023–Present

Assistant Professor of English, Professional Writing

Jacksonville State University, Alabama

August 2021–May 2023

Adjunct Instructor for First Year Writing

St. John’s University, New York

2015–2016

PUBLICATIONS

Manuscripts

Writing Critical Fandoms: Tracing Representations of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Fanfiction. University of Iowa Press, Fandom & Culture. Advanced book contract, submission under review. Expected Spring 2026.

Rethinking Multilingual Writers in Higher Education Today: An Institutional Case Study. Qianqian Zhang-Wu, Mya Poe, Cherice Jones, **Cara Marta Messina**, & Neal Lerner. Routledge. Accepted, final copy edits, expected Fall 2025.

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Peer Reviewed Articles

“‘Missandei deserves better.’ A case study on loving blackness through critical fan fiction.” *Transformative Works and Cultures*, Special Issue on “Centering Blackness in Fan Studies.” December 2024. [Open-access article here](#).

Cara Marta Messina, Cherice Jones, and Mya Poe. “Prompting Reflection: Using Corpus Linguistics Methods to Improve the Teaching and Assessment of Reflections.” *Written Communication*. April 2023.

“rm monika.chr: Coding Rhetorics and Ephemeral Code in *Doki Doki Literature Club*.” *Computers and Composition Online*, “Making Games Matter” Special Issue. Fall 2022. [Open-access article here](#).

“Black Lives Matter Digital Activism: Writing for Social Media Course.” *Spark: A 4C4Equality Journal*, 3, 2021. [Open-access article here](#).

“Tracing Fan Uptakes: Tagging, Language, and Ideological Practices in The Legend of Korra Fanfictions.” *The Journal of Writing Analytics*, 3, 2019. [Open-access article here](#).

Special Issue Editor

Alanna Prince, **Cara Marta Messina**, and Izetta Autumn Mobley (Eds.). “Black Digital Humanities for the Rising Generation.” *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 16.3, Fall 2022. [Open-access special issue](#).

Edited Collection Chapters

“Fanfiction as Critical Composing.” *Becoming Writers: 21st-Century Ways of Composing*. Utah State University Press. Edited collection under advanced contract.

Cara Marta Messina, Nupoor Ranade, and Ashley Rea. “A Feminist Coding Heuristic.” *Feminist Design Rhetorics*. Edited collection under review.

Cara Marta Messina, Sarah Connell, Julia Flanders, Caroline Klibanoff, and Sarah Payne. “Social Knowledge Creation in the Digital Humanities: Case Studies.” *Social Knowledge Creation in the Humanities, Volume 2*, Iter Press, 2022.

Cara Marta Messina and Neal Lerner. “Mixed Methods Research in Writing Centers”. *Theories and Methods of Writing Center Studies*, 2019, 208–218.

Book Reviews

“These Violent Delights: A Review of Timothy J. Welsh’s *Mixed Realism: Videogames and the Violence of Fiction*.” *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 13.4, 2019.

Cara Marta Messina

Harry Denny, **Cara Messina**, and Michael Reich. "Embracing the Challenges of Conventional Practices, Program Inquiry, and New Media in Writing Center Theory and Research." *Composition Studies*, 43.2, 2015.

Other Publications

"Op-ed: Who is responsible for a COVID-19 outbreak at Northeastern?" *Huntington News*, August 30, 2020.

Mandy Olejnik and **Cara Marta Messina**. "On the Front Lines: Graduate Student Roles in Shaping Discourse in Digital Spaces." *Xchanges*. issue 15.1, 2020.

Members of the WPA-L Reimagining Working Group and nextGEN. "Where We Are: Dialogue and Disciplinary Space." *Composition Studies*, 47.2, 2019, 203–210.

Press

"[JSU's new game studies minor](#)." *The Chanticleer*. November 7, 2022.

Interviewed for "Jax State to get new Game Studies Minor." *Anniston Star*. February 16, 2022.

Cara Marta Messina, Dan Dissinger & Katie Robison. "[76. Celebrating Critical Fan Studies w/ Cara Marta Messina](#)." *Writing Remix Podcast*.. December 2021.

Cara Marta Messina & Charles Woods. "[Episode 70: Dr. Cara Messina \(Emerging Scholar Series\)](#)." *The Big Rhetorical Podcast*. April 27, 2021.

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

<i>Computers and Composition</i> Hugh Burns Distinguished Dissertation Award, Honorable Mention	2022
Outstanding Graduate Student Award in Humanics. <i>Northeastern University</i>	2021
College of Social Sciences and Humanities Teaching Award. <i>Northeastern University</i>	2021
Kairos Teaching Award. <i>Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy</i>	2019
College of Social Sciences and Humanities Teaching Award Finalist. <i>Northeastern University</i>	2019
Student Organization Leader of the Year Finalist. <i>Northeastern University Student Life Award</i>	2019
Graduate Essay Contest Winner for Writing and Rhetoric. <i>Northeastern University English Department</i>	2018 & 2019

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College of Social Sciences and Humanities Scholar Fellowship. <i>CSSH at Northeastern University</i>	2016-2021
Stipend Graduate Assistantship. <i>Northeastern University English Department</i> , 2016-2021	2016-2021
Graduate Fellowship. <i>St. John's University English Department</i>	2014-2015
NEWCA Connors Memorial Scholarship Award. <i>Northeast Writing Center Association</i>	2013

GRANTS

Teaching Circle "Engaging Students Through Game-Based Learning." <i>Jacksonville State University</i> .	2021
CCCCs Research Grant. "Super-Diversity in Context: A Corpus-Based Study of Multilingual Writing Outcomes with Attention to Disparate Impact." <i>Conference on College Composition and Communication</i> .	2019-2020
NULab Seedling Grant. "The Critical Fan Toolkit." <i>NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks</i> , Northeastern University.	2020
Travel Grant. <i>NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks</i> , Northeastern University.	2019
Registration and Grub Grant. <i>International Writing Center Association and National Conference on Peer Tutoring Joint Conference</i> .	2014

UNIVERSITY TEACHING

Marist College, English Department (ENG)

ENG 120: Writing for College	Fall 2023
ENG 222: Professional Writing	Fall 2023-Present
ENG 313: Writing for the Digital Age	Spring 2024
ENG 392: Special Topics, "Fan Studies Research"	Spring 2025
FYS 101: First Year Seminar, "Fans and Fandoms"	Fall 2024
HONR 420: Honors Thesis Project	Spring 2024

Jacksonville State University, English Department (EH)

	My Student Eval Mean	University Eval Mean	
EH 252: Introduction to Game Studies	4.94	4.64	Fall 2022
EH 330: Writing for the Web	4.93	4.64	Spring 2022
EH 332: Writing for Podcasts	4.82	4.62	Fall 2021
EH 141: Speech & Oral Communication	4.86	4.64	Fall 2022
	4.90	4.64	Fall 2022
	4.92	4.74	Summer 2022
	4.69	4.64	Spring 2022
	4.79	4.62	Fall 2021

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EH 322: Technical Writing (online)	4.84	4.62	Fall 2021
	4.96	4.64	Fall 2022
	4.79	4.64	Spring 2022
	4.84	4.62	Fall 2021

Northeastern University, English Department

WMNS 4992: Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Independent Study on Critical Fan Studies ([final project by Emma Reed](#)) Spring 2021

ENGL 2850: Writing in/for Social Media (online course) Summer 2020

ENGW 1111: First Year Writing 2017-2018

ENGW 3315: Advanced Writing in the Discipline Summer 2018

St. John's University, First Year Writing Program

ENG 1000: First Year Writing 2015-2016

SKILLS & PROFICIENCIES

Programming

Python (Pandas, NLTK, Plotly, NumPy, Gensim, NetworkX, Matplotlib, Flask); HTML; CSS; XML (RelaxNG, TEI, XSLT); Git.

Digital Software

GitHub, WordPress, Wix, Google Suite, Tableau, Microsoft Suite, Audacity (podcast editing software), Zotero, NVivo, Canva (open-source design software), Twine.

Research Methods

User experience research; qualitative coding; interviews; computational text analysis (word embedding models, natural language processing); network analysis; data analytics; writing analytics.

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

Assistant Director. Writing Program, Northeastern University 2020-2021

Assistant Director. Digital Integration Teaching Initiative, Northeastern University. 2019-2020

Research Associate. Writing Program Committee Reflection Study, Northeastern University. 2019-2021

Coordinator. NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks, Northeastern University. 2018-2019

Pedagogy and Infrastructure Team Member. Women Writers' Vector Toolkit, Northeastern University. 2018-2019

Research Associate. Design for Diversity, Northeastern University 2017-2018

Cara Marta Messina

Director of Research. Writing Center, Northeastern University 2016-2017

Research Assistant. The Meaningful Writing Project, Anne Ellen Geller, St. John's University 2015

PRESENTATIONS, POSTERS, & WORKSHOPS

Invited Presentations and Workshops

Co-Chair and Presenter. "Making Space for AI Refusal." MLA Executive Committee on History and Theory of Composition Forum. *Modern Language Association*. Forthcoming January 2026.

"Fix-It Fics: Bad Reading to Rectify Bad Writing." Reading Lab Symposium: Bad Readers! *University of Virginia Reading Lab*. May 2024.

"Introduction to GitHub, GitHub Desktop, and Pages Workshop." *Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Postdoctoral Fellowship*. 2023. Received honorarium.

"Coding Rhetorics: Engaging Students with the Back-End." SUNY Westchester Community College, 3rd Annual Composition Summit. Virtual. February 2023.

"Feminism in *Doki Doki Literature Club*?" Game Studies Panel, English Department Reading Series, Jacksonville State University, 2022.

"Tracing Critical Fan Composing Practices." Speed Data-ing, *Northeastern University NULab*, 2020.

"Digital Humanities in the Dissertation." *Digital Humanities Open Office Hours, Northeastern University*, 2020.

"Ways of Reading." Panel with Hillary Chute, Laura Green, and William Quinn. *Barrs Criticism Slam, Northeastern University English Department*, 2018.

"Queering Fanfiction: The Intersection of Imagination and Identity." Panel. *Gender and Sexuality Studies Club, Marymount Manhattan College*, 2017. Received honorarium.

"Reading as Writers: Marking up and Writing Fan Fiction in the Composition Classroom." Panel. *Barrs Criticism Slam, Northeastern University*, 2016.

Selected Conference Presentations

"Narrating Generative AI Refusal." *Computers and Writing*. Athens, GA and Virtual. Forthcoming May 2025.

"Resisting AI Hype and Remixing Critical and Creative Resistances to GenAI in Writing Classrooms and Programs." *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Baltimore, MD. Forthcoming April 2025.

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“Fan Scholars’ Responsibilities Towards Fans: A Case Study of Trans Representation in *Our Flag Means Death*.” *DH 2024* (international conference). Arlington, VA. August 2024.

“Writing Abundance as Intersectional: Critical Strategies for Archival & Digital Methodologies.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Spokane, WA. April 2024. Missed due to flight issues.

“UX for Us: UX Methods to Promote Inclusion and Equity.” *Special Interest Group on Design of Communication*. Orlando, FL. October 2023.

“Code-Sharing and Documentation as Digital Feminist Praxis.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Chicago, IL. February 2023.

“Excluding Crossovers: Loving Blackness in the *Black Panther* Fandom.” *DH 2022 Tokyo*. Virtual. July 2022. Could not present due to contracting COVID.

“Fan Composing as Digital Activism: Representations of Gender, Sexuality, and Race in Fanfiction.” *Computers and Writing*. Greenville, NC. May 2022.

“Designing a Justice-Centered Oral Communication Curriculum.” *College English Association*. Birmingham, AL. April 2022.

“I Am Not Functional, I Am Not A Function: Enacting Feminist Coding Rhetorics Through Disruptions.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Virtual. March 2022.

“Multilingual Students’ Linguistic Identities and Linguaging Practices: A Mixed Methods Exploration.” With Qianqian Zhang-Wu, Cherice Jones, and Mya Poe. *TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo*. Virtual. March 2022.

“Centering Feminist and Queer Pleasures: Tracing Fan Community Writing Practices using Network Analysis” *Conference on Community Writing*. Virtual. October 2021.

“Making Multilingual Writers Matter in Program Assessment: What Do You Do When There Is No Institutional Data for Disaggregation?” Panel with Mya Poe, Qianqian Zhang-Wu, Cherice Jones, and Devon Regan. *Journal of Writing Analytics Conference*. Virtual. 2021.

“Critical Fan Pedagogy: Teaching Critical Digital Literacies with Fanfiction Data” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Virtual. 2021.

“(mis)Representation in Large Corpus Analysis.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Milwaukee, WI. 2020. Canceled in 2020 due to COVID-19.

“Tracing Fan Uptakes with Computational Text Analysis.” *Computers and Writing*. Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI. 2019.

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“Fans as Stakeholders: Legitimizing Fan Uptakes and Genres.” *International Conference on Writing Analytics*. University of South Florida, St. Petersburg, FL. 2019.

“Incorporating XML in the First Year Writing Course: An Ongoing Case Study.” *UConn Conference on the Teaching of Writing*. University of Connecticut. Storrs, CT. 2018.

“The Spaces of Possibilities: Fan Communities, Representation, and the Writing Classroom.” *Conference on Community Writing*. Boulder, CO. 2017.

“Fan Fiction Ecologies and the Writing Classroom.” *English Graduate Student Association Conference*. Northeastern University. Boston, MA. 2017.

Selected Roundtable Presentations

“Hell Is Other People: Looking at the Political Rage Machine in Tolkien Fan Spaces and Media.” *Mythopoeic Society Online Midsummer Seminar*. Virtual. August 2023.

“Designing Inclusive Information Systems: From Theory to Change.” Chair of roundtable discussion. *Association for Computers and Humanities*. Pittsburgh, PA. 2019.

“Continuing the Conversation: Navigating Inclusivity and Vulnerability in Online Listservs and Digital Spaces.” Presented with Ashanka Kumari, Emily LaPadura, Katelyn Lusher, Mandy Olejnik, and Kyllikki Rytov. *Computers and Writing*. Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI. 2019.

“Theory on the Ground: Building Writing Center Research Groups.” Presented with Abbie Levesque and Kyle Oddis. *Northeastern Writing Center Association*. College of Holy Cross. Worcester, MA. 2018.

“Process Over Product: Challenging Institutional Pressures and Discrimination Through Ongoing Consultant Training.” Lead Presenter, presented with Abbie Levesque, Zachary Shaw, and Matthew Hitchcock. *Northeastern Writing Center Association*. Pace University. Pleasantville, NY. 2017

“Initial Impressions: How Heuristics Shape Writing Center Consultations.” Co-presented with Alison Perry, Mairead Carr, and Jack Wells. *Northeast Writing Center Association*. Centenary College. Hackettstown, NJ. 2015.

“Creating a Freshman Writing Journal: A Collaboration Between a First-Year Writing Program and a Writing Center.” Co-presented with Derek Owens, Tom Philipose, Alison Perry, Anna Sicari, Tara Roeder, and Bailey Robertson. *International Writing Center Association and National Conference on Peer Tutoring Joint Conference*. Orlando, FL. 2015.

“Consulting with Gendered Bodies: An Inquiry into Gender Performance in Sessions and Interactions at the Writing Center.” Co-presented with Donya Nassar, Bailey Robertson, Alison Perry, and Anne Geller. *Northeast Writing Center Association*. Bryant University. Smithfield, RI. 2014.

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“The Writing Fellows Program: Modeling Partners for Change.” Lead Presenter, presented with Eleadah Clack, Alyssa-Rae Hug, Carolyn Wargula, and Anne Geller. *Northeast Writing Center Association*. University of New Hampshire. Durham, NH. 2013.

Workshops

“Early Technology Rejectors: Ethics of AI Writing and Surveillance.” Marist College, Center for Teaching and Learning. October 2024 and March 2025.

“[Combatting Anti-Carceral Pedagogies](#).” Jacksonville State University, Online@JSU. January 2022.

“Introduction to GitHub.” Workshop creator & leader. Northeastern University. 2018 & 2018.

“Introduction to Python.” Teaching assistant. Northeastern University. 2019.

“Women Writers’ Vector Toolkit Workshop.” Co-creator & leader. Northeastern University, 2018.

Posters

“Critical Fan Toolkit: Building a Digital, Public Rhetoric and Composition Dissertation.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Milwaukee, WI. 2020. Canceled due to COVID-19

“Reimagining Romance: *The Legend of Korra* Critical Fandom Practices.” *Association for Computers and Humanities*. Pittsburgh, PA. July 2019.

“Positions and Power: How the Writing Center is Viewed in the Institution.” *Northeastern Writing Center Association*. College of Holy Cross. Worcester, MA. March 2018.

“Information and System Design for Diversity: Can We Do Better?” Co-created with Amanda Rust and Julia Flanders. *Digital Humanities*. Montreal, Canada. August 2017.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Peer Review

Editorial Board Member. *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*. 2021-Present

Reviewer. *Journal of Cultural Analytics* 2023

Reviewer. *Journal of Fan Studies* 2022-Present

Reviewer. *Digital Humanities Quarterly*. 2018-Present

College and University Service

Cara Marta Messina

Member. Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Committee. Marist College.	2024-Present
Member. Marist+AI Academic Working Group. Marist College.	2024-Present
Member. Assistant Professor of English, Writing Center Director Hiring Committee. Marist College.	2022-2023
Member. College of Arts and Humanities Strategic Plan Committee, Jacksonville State University.	2022-2023
Member. English Department Reading Series Committee, Jacksonville State University.	2022-2023
Digital Lab Advisor. English Department, Jacksonville State University.	2021-2022
Member. Speech Redesign Committee, Jacksonville State University.	2021-2022

Disciplinary Service

Co-Creator and Moderator. <i>Alliance for Refusing Generative AI</i> , Discord Server with 100+ members from Humanities and Writing Studies.	2024-Present
Creator. " Academic Job Market Template " Folder.	2024-Present
Interim Co-Chair. Academic Freedom, Tenure/Renewal/Reappointment, and Employment Security, <i>College Composition and Communication</i> .	2023-Present
Committee Member. Taskforce on Assessing Whiteness for Equity, Understanding, and Change, <i>College Composition and Communication</i> .	2022-2023
Committee Member. College of Arts and Humanities Strategic Plan Committee, Jacksonville State University.	2022-2023
Communications Officer. Special Interest Group on the Writing and Rhetorics of Code, <i>College Composition and Communication</i> .	2021-2023
Editor-in-Chief. <i>NU Writing</i> , Northeastern University	2020-2021
Founder and Chair. Graduate Student Welfare Advocacy Group, Northeastern University	2019-2020
Member. Writing Program Administration Listserv Reimaging Working Group	2019-2020
Organizer. Feminist Coding Collective, Northeastern University	2016-2020
President. English Graduate Student Association, Northeastern University	2018-2019

Cara Marta Messina

Notetaker. "Shared Realities: A Workshop on Disability, Technology, and Inclusion." Microsoft Research New England.	2016
Co-Editor & Website Creator. <i>First Year Writing Journal</i> , St. John's University	2014
Editor-in-Chief. <i>Sequoia Literary and Arts Magazine</i> , St. John's University	2013-2014
Secretary. Sigma Tau Delta English Honors Society, St. John's University	2013-2014
Co-Creator. Creative Writing Group, St. John's University	2011-2013

Conference and Panel Organization

Lead Organizer and Presenter. Game Studies Panel. English Department Reading Series Jacksonville State University, 2022.	2022
Lead Organizer. English Graduate Student Association Graduate Conference, "Centering the Margins," Northeastern University	2019
Co-Organizer. NULab Spring Conference, "Digital Storytelling," Northeastern University.	2018
Co-Organizer. Climate Change/Crisis/Creativity Conference. Northeastern University.	2018
Co-Organizer. Design for Diversity Opening & Closing Forum, Northeastern University.	2018

WRITING CENTER WORK

Writing Center Consultant. Columbia University School of Social Work Writing Center.	2015–2016
Writing Coach. SUNY Empire State College Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies Academic Support.	2014–2015
Tutor and Workshop Facilitator. Queensborough Community College Writing Center.	2014–2015
Writing Fellow. St. John's University Writing Across the Curriculum	2013–2014
Writing Consultant. St. John's University Writing Center	2011–2015