



**Idaho State
University**

CFP ARCONEXIONES 2027

Graduate conference of the Spanish Master's students of the Department
of Anthropology and Languages at ISU

Cartographies, Spaces and Borders: Exploring Limits and Possibilities

"Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants"

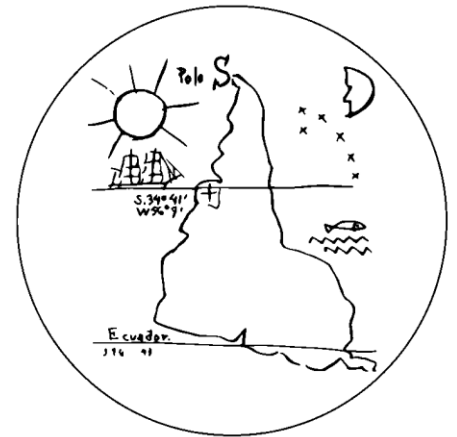
-Gloria Anzaldúa

"Nothing suggests the feeling of boundless spaces quite like silence"

-Gastón Bachelard



**Virtual
Idaho State University
Saturday, February 20, 2027
9am-4pm Mountain Time (GMT-7)**



Keynotes:

**Dr. Abel Arango
Skidmore College**

**Luis Benavides
Idaho State University**



In considering this year's theme, the conference organizers propose an exploration of spaces and borders—both in their physical and conceptual dimensions.

Maps, as a starting point, offer us not only a visual version of the world we inhabit but also reflect our perspectives, what we value, and how humans seek to control, separate, and name these spaces. They contain clues regarding political and military history, conflicts, and abuses of power. To take possession of these territories, the Europeans who arrived in the Americas often described these lands in great detail—creating, in effect, maps made of words. For their part, the Indigenous peoples of these lands possess their own ways of understanding their spaces, which are deeply rooted in their cultural values. We see spaces under control, spaces that bear different names depending on the culture or language, spaces that are private, public, or shared—and an endless variety of ways to conceive of them. The work "América Invertida" ("Inverted America")—an ink drawing by the Uruguayan artist Joaquín Torres García—offers an inspiring perspective, presenting the South American continent as viewed from the south. Another significant contemporary map is the "Equal Earth" projection, adopted by the United Nations in September 2026, which provides a more accurate representation of the actual size of the continents. Maps have long been a fixture on the walls and in the textbooks of our schools; they shape the initial concept of the nation for young citizens.

We invite you to explore the idea of space in all its forms — beyond both the geographical and the physical — and to enter into the realm of liminality, the transitional states between two places, the boundaries between disciplines or genres, and the marginality of certain groups or individuals. Can one feel, through cultural productions, a sense of belonging — or not belonging — to certain spaces? Do these cultural productions create new spaces for their readers, even though those spaces are fictional?

Literary spaces are often reflections of our desires or fears, or our imaginations grappling with oppressive reality as a form of escape. Consider the famous, and sometimes magical, settings of Hispanic literature, such as Macondo, Comala, José Martí's "Our America," Al-Ándalus, or La Mancha. They linger in the mind long after we finish reading, and we continue to explore them.

In this sense, for the fourth edition of the *Arconexiones* conference, we invite graduate and advanced undergraduate students from ISU and other universities to present work in fields such as film, literature, cultural studies, theater, pedagogy, critical theory, social studies, visual arts, music, and performance. We seek submissions that reflect on the concepts of cartographies, spaces, and borders within the context of Peninsular, Latin American, and Latinx cultural production. The goal of this gathering is to analyze how literary narratives, artistic productions, and diverse cultural expressions contribute to the construction or destruction of new borders.



Suggested thematic areas include, but are not limited to:

- **Critical cartographies and counter-cartographies:** History of cartography; colonial and post-colonial maps; participatory mapping; community and Indigenous mapping; social, queer, and feminist cartographies.
- **Social production of space:** Territories, places, and landscapes; contested territories; urban and rural spaces; geographies of memory and extractivism.
- **Borders, boundaries, and contact zones:** National, internal, and symbolic borders; border regions; migration, displacement, and mobility; walls, checkpoints, and crossings; hybrid and liminal spaces (e.g. Nepantla).
- **Cultural representations of space:** Literature, film, art, and photography; imaginary maps and narratives of territory (e.g., Macondo, Comala, or La Mancha); ekphrastic descriptions of maps in literature; toponymy and soundscapes.
- **Spatial technologies and digital humanities:** Geographic Information Systems (GIS); remote sensing; digital cartography; open data; artificial intelligence and surveillance; ethics of geographic data.
- **Construction of national identities and nations:** such as Benedict Anderson's concept of "Imagined Communities," nation-building following independence, and also in Doris Sommer's "Foundational Fictions."
- **Spaces, environment, and futures:** the climate crisis; watersheds; oceans, and amphibious territories; transboundary spaces and governance; cartographies of the Anthropocene.
- **Innovations in pedagogy and linguistics:** Spanglish as a tool for identity; borders and contact zones between languages (code-switching, translanguaging); barriers to acquisition and/or learning; new linguistic spaces created on social media and the Internet that challenge geographic boundaries; taking language learning beyond the classroom walls (experiential learning or virtual learning).

Interested applicants can submit a 200-250 word abstract of their original research work (or proposal) and with a title using the [following form](#). Presentations will be accepted in English or Spanish, lasting 15 minutes (approximately 8 pages double-spaced), with additional time for questions and comments. The deadline for submissions is **Monday, December 7th, 2026**.

For more information, contact us at marinlaufenberg@isu.edu or visit the conference website: [Arconexiones: conference by and for ISU's Spanish Graduate students in the Department of Anthropology and Languages](#)

Send your proposals using [this link](#) before **Monday, December 7th, 2026**.