Talk #1: "Disability and Access: Unflattening Multimodal Composition"
Presenter: Micah Savaglio
Respondent: Katherine Henry

My talk pulls from the fourth chapter of my dissertation, “Disability and Access: Unflattening Multimodal Composition.” In it, I will explore normative assumptions regarding presence and absence in college writing classrooms, focusing especially on how mandatory attendance policies collide with the embodied experience of disability. In doing so, I will consider Tara Wood’s application of crip time in the writing classroom, Melissa Nicolas’ recent critique of mandatory attendance policies, and Margaret Price’s analysis of academic discourses of presence. The talk will draw heavily upon my interviews with disabled students, arguing that theoretical perspectives from disabilities studies, namely Universal Design and crip time, offer alternative channels for creating flexible and non-normative attendance policies. I will conclude by calling for an application of the principles of crip time in policy-making.

Talk #2: “Determined Women: M. E. Braddon’s Social Ecology of Character in The Golden Calf"
Presenter: Scott Thompson
Respondent: Carissa Harris

My talk derives from a portion of the fourth chapter of my dissertation, “The Social Ecology of Character: British Naturalism and the Mid-Victorian Sensation Novel.” I will be using a little-read novel titled The Golden Calf by sensation novelist Mary Elizabeth Braddon to demonstrate my theory of social ecology and character in action. I will show how Braddon deploys her own version of literary determinism that draws from French naturalism and is set within an ecological understanding of the relationship between the individual and their social environment in order to bring into focus the ways in which individual subjectivity collides with restrictive social forces, especially in regards to women and their available avenues of agency in the nineteenth century.