Call for Papers:

REIMAGINING RELATIONALITY

A GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE PRESENTED BY THE ALLIANCE FOR SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ETHICAL AND CULTURAL THOUGHT

March 21 – 22, 2024
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia

**The Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought,
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA**

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The 2024 ASPECT graduate conference invites graduate students across disciplinary boundaries in the humanities, social sciences, and related fields to present research on the conference theme or subthemes. Through Reimagining Relationality, we offer graduate students the opportunity to grapple with compelling and urgent questions addressing how relationships shape our world, ourselves, and our knowledges. We approach knowledge as a relational phenomenon, and as such, we question how it is produced, legitimated, translated and reified across disciplines. The conference intends to facilitate innovative discussion around relationality as a structure and practice in social, political, and cultural ecologies. While also being inclusive of ontological inquiries, the emphasis on relationality is meant to scratch up the intersectional, interactional, and inter-relational aspects of our contemporary lives. Relationality is shaped by power, persuasion, and coercion that inform various imaginations of community in the context of gender, race, caste, class, and religion. Thus, the problem of relationality as an interdisciplinary postulation offers us a broader framework to think about contemporary problems. We welcome submissions that contribute to this conversation from various innovative angles in methodology, theory, and case study.

Graduate students at any level and irrespective of disciplinary affiliation are encouraged to submit abstracts of approximately 300 words by **Tuesday, December 31st, 2023**, based on papers that engage topics related to artistic, aesthetic, social, political, philosophical, cultural, theoretical, ethical, educational, and critical concerns. The conference will primarily be held in person on the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg. The first day of the conference consists of entirely-virtual panels held over Zoom, with an opening plenary lecture and reception in the evening for in-person attendees. The second day of the conference will exclusively host in-person panels and events. There will be no hybrid panels. Please specify your preferred modality in the submission. There are limited virtual spots available and will be allocated on a per need basis.

We welcome contributions that span the wide variety of interests that intersect with or are adjacent to the ASPECT program. As an interdisciplinary and theory-oriented program, the ASPECT PhD program at Virginia Tech features scholarship that engages a variety of disciplines and encourages research that uses

critical theoretical methodologies across fields of study in the humanities, the social sciences, and the arts primarily. As a result, we will accept a broad range of papers from across these areas to host diverse panels and workshops. Possible paper topics may include, but are not limited to:

- food studies
- secularism and statehood
- epistemological debates across the social sciences
- critiques of empire/imperialism
- critical approaches to technology
- racial and ethnic studies
- gender and sexuality/sexualities
- critical security studies
- ecocriticism/environmental thought
- critical pedagogy
- native/Indigenous studies
- violence and representation
- postcolonialism/decolonialism

- disabilities studies
- self, selfhood, and embodiment
- pluralisms and world-making
- new materialism/materialities
- critical ethnographies
- political economy/ecology
- critical geographies
- Black feminisms
- Women of Color feminisms
- queer theory and LGBTQ+ studies
- biopolitics/necropolitics
- critical folklore and regional studies

Paper Submissions: Submit a 300-word abstract by **5 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31st, 2023,** to the Google Form linked here. Please provide the following:
1. Paper title, abstract, and five keywords that best describe your paper.
2. Names, institutional affiliation, and presentation modality.

If accepted, full drafts of seminar-style conference papers must be submitted to the conference organizers via aspectconferencevt@gmail.com by no later than **5pm on Friday, February 22nd, 2024.** Papers typically range from 3000 to 6000 words (12-24 double-spaced pages). Papers will be distributed to discussants prior to the conference. Only submissions by current graduate students (Master's or PhD levels) will be considered. Papers presented at the conference may be solicited for peer review and possible publication in an upcoming issue of *SPECTRA: The ASPECT Journal* (spectrajournal.org) (@SPECTRA_VT). Please forward questions concerning *SPECTRA* submissions to journalspectra@gmail.com

About the ASPECT doctoral program at Virginia Tech: ASPECT is a signature interdisciplinary and theoretically oriented doctoral program located in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at Virginia Tech. Doctoral Students in ASPECT conduct research at the intersection of the humanities, the social sciences, and the arts, with an emphasis on social thought, political thought, ethical thought, and cultural thought. ASPECT works closely with four core departments (History, Philosophy, Political Science, and Religion and Culture) at Virginia Tech.

The ASPECT Conference does not discriminate against applicants on the basis of age, color, disability, sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or military status. Dis/abilities: Virginia Tech is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in employment and education and complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Amendment Act of 2008, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. If individuals need special accommodations to attend, please inform the conference organizers.