

Weathering Change: The Humanities in a Warming World.

Host and dates: The Department of Modern Languages, Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova. 22-24 October 2026.

Deadline for Submissions: 15 May 2026.

Institutional partners: Edinburgh Napier University and The Humanities and Arts Research Centre.

Event presentation:

**“When shall we three meet again?
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?”**

(Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 1.1: 1-2)

Human concerns with weather patterns can be traced back to Aristotle’s treatise *Meteorologica*, which shows that an active pursuit of truth about the physical world has existed since ancient times. Although people talk about the weather on a daily basis, the growing debates on environmental uncertainty, climate change, and new technological challenges have become more prominent in both the humanities and sciences.

Unlike contemporary scientific directions, classical to late Renaissance meteorology showed little interest in predicting future weather conditions. In the classical model, weather patterns fluctuated constantly and were regarded as nature’s accidents. In Europe, until the late seventeenth century, the weather was popularly understood as part of a broader heavenly design: in *Macbeth* the weather bends to the witches’ own will, echoing a similar disruption in natural order depicted in *Henry V*: “The day is hot, and the weather, and the wars, and the King, and the dukes” (3.2: 108-9). From the eighteenth century onward, constant attempts were made to domesticate weather patterns through systematic records, using more accurate meteorological instruments. This new approach turned the once unpredictable force of nature into a measurable natural phenomenon.

Today, weather conditions and especially extreme weather events are often seen as directly related to anthropogenic effects on Earth systems caused by human activities such as deforestation, urbanization, extensive livestock farming and global emissions coming from burning fossil fuels. In *Anthropocene Fictions. The Novel in a Time of Climate Change* (2015), Adam Trexler uses the geological framework of the newly identified Anthropocene era to explore how contemporary fiction reflects the cultural transformation shaped by the climate change rhetoric. The environmental humanities and life sciences work in tandem to respond to the unstable vulnerability of humanity when confronted with the consequences of extreme weather events.

Engaging with severe weather conditions and rising temperatures from a perspective that is both grounded in the humanities and humanitarian in focus can create a large-scale public awareness and understanding of climate change that will enable individuals and communities to meet the challenges of long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. As scholars in the humanities, our responsibility is to revise and reshuffle disciplinary fields, methods, and methodologies in order to adapt them to contemporary crises. Since environmental studies encompasses ecocriticism, eco theory, anthropology, literature, ecolinguistics, sustainability studies, queer theory, feminism and their epistemological kin, we invite

proposals that explore and reflect on new directions of the humanities, including recent theories and new challenges arising from weather and climate variability.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- climate change fiction (cli-fi) and drama
- eco-poetry and environmental degradation
- weather imagery/symbolism in literature
- environmental literature and ecocriticism
- extremes of weather and temperature in literature
- geological and climate hauntings in literature
- climate change and language diversity
- ecolinguistics and discourses of climate change
- environmental metaphors, framing, and rhetoric
- climate communication, terminology, and scientific discourse
- language policy, sustainability, and eco-communication
- climate change and environmental topics in foreign-language teaching
- ecopedagogy and sustainability-oriented curricula
- environmental literacy and multimodal learning
- digital tools and AI in language learning for sustainability

Keynote speakers:

Assoc. Prof. Emily Alder, Edinburgh Napier University

Assoc. Prof. Carmen Veronica Borbely, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj

The languages of the conference are English and German.

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