English Professor, Associate Dean, and Director of the USU Latinx Cultural Center Chris González has participated in several speaking events this past month. In the first week of October, he gave a talk called “Latinx Precarity, Permissibility, and Persistence” at Virginia Commonwealth University. He focused on the growing demographic of the Latinx community, and his talk provided an overview of the current state of being Latinx in the U.S. as well as a call-to-action strategy for how you can engage positively with these issues and peoples in your own spheres of influence.

A few weeks later, Chris participated in the 2021-2022 webinar series “Humanities in Class” presented by the National Humanities Center. His talk titled “Problems in Latinx Representation and Storytelling,” and it examined the complicated issue of Latinx representation in speculative cinema. Chris asks, “While we ought to recognize the problems inherent when a non-Latinx actor plays a Latinx character—should Latinx actors only be relegated to Latinx roles? And how does one determine Latinx identity on film? How is Latinx identity expressed in a speculative film? Here I explore the dynamics of this vexed issue and consider how narrative permissibility factors not only into the stories that are told, but also in how characters are brought to the screen in speculative cinema.” Nearly 500 participants from 21 different states attended the webinar, an impressive outreach and impact for USU’s Chris González.