Faculty Ponder Future of Humanities PhD

In its April 4, 2010 issue, The Chronicle of Higher Education published an in-print discussion of the future of the humanities PhD. Scholars responded to the information that the 2009-2010 academic market for new PhDs showed a drastic drop in assistant professorships in history and literary study. “What should be done?” asked the Chronicle.

E. Gordon Gee, President of Ohio State University, wrote: “Simply put, too many doctorates are being produced for the available positions in certain fields.”

Jon Butler, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Yale University, asked, “Are students being admitted to satisfy institutional status aspirations—or a need for teaching, research, and laboratory assistants?”

Mark C. Taylor, Professor of Religion at Columbia University, observed that “Major cuts in graduate programs in the near future are inevitable.” He then went on to say, “But even if there were no financial pressures, graduate programs should be significantly cut. This can be done in two different ways: First, programs can be simply reduced in size or eliminated; second, different institutions can enter into collaborative and cooperative relationships that would enable them to continue to offer graduate programs on a more modest and efficient scale.”

In 2010, the University of Toronto and Louisiana State University made plans to cut comparative literature graduate programs; the University of Iowa put American studies, Asian civilizations, comparative literature, film studies, German, and linguistics on a list for elimination; and the State University of New York at Albany took steps to close programs—and dismiss faculty—in French, Italian, Russian, and Classics. The reason these institutions gave for their actions was financial exigency.

From a long-term perspective humanities faculty, and thoughtful individuals of all disciplines, can find many good reasons to support in-depth scholarly inquiry in the humanities, the kind of inquiry that requires graduate education. After all, the humanities have formed the basis of higher learning for a millennium. But from a short-term perspective, in the face of declining resources for public institutions, we find arguments of financial exigency difficult to refute.

So what is the future of the humanities PhD?

At 4:00 on Wednesday, February 2, in 148 Miller Learning Center, in a Willson Center Roundtable Discussion, UGA faculty in the humanities will address this question. Hugh Ruppersburg, Professor of English, will moderate a conversation with Ben Ehlers (History), Martin Kagel (Germanic and Slavic Studies), Nicolas Lucero (Romance Languages), Jed Rasula (English), and Susan Thomas (Musicology). Betty Jean Craige (Director of the Willson Center) will introduce the issue. The audience will be invited to participate in the conversation.
What do you suppose the University of Georgia will look like in twenty years? In thirty? Many of our young assistant professors will be here in 2031 and 2041. They will have been influential in shaping our curriculum over the next several decades. They may even have reconfigured the departmental and divisional structures in the College of Arts and Sciences that currently hold traditionally defined disciplines in place.

Do we need to remodel the humanities?

Most humanities departments—Philosophy, History, English, Classics, Romance Languages, for example—are rooted in the conception of those disciplines in the late nineteenth century when our great American universities took their present shape. At that time the disciplines reflected the assumption that a humanistic education meant an understanding of the history, ideas, and languages of Europe.

When I joined the Comparative Literature Department in 1973, I taught literature survey courses out of Masterworks of World Literature (volumes 1 and 2), edited by UGA’s very distinguished scholar Calvin S. Brown. “World literature” then meant what we would call “Western literature” now. The poetry, drama, and fiction contained in the anthologies, which began with excerpts from the Bible, included widely acclaimed “masterpieces” from Greek and Roman Antiquity, the European Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the nineteenth century, and the first half of the twentieth century in Europe and the United States.

Globalization has profoundly changed study in the humanities. Recent editions of The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces, which many Comparative Literature faculty use today, include texts from ancient Egypt, China, and India, as well as from ancient Greece and Rome; from the Koran, as well as from the Bible; from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Native America, as well as from Europe and the United States.

In 1973, the College of Arts and Sciences offered language instruction in Greek, Latin, German,
Announcements

Current Competitions

Deadlines January 20, February 1, and February 17

The Willson Center Research Fellowship Program supports University of Georgia faculty engaged in humanities research or artistic creation or performance by providing release time (two courses) from teaching. Priority may be given to applicants who have solicited external funding to support their research. Willson Center Research Fellowships may be awarded to individuals only once every five years. The top-ranked recipient will also receive the Virginia Mary Macagnoni Prize of $2,000 established by Dr. Virginia Macagnoni, Professor Emeritus in the College of Education. Applications will be judged in one of two categories: Tenured and Untenured. Deadline: January 20.

The Willson Center Faculty Seminar Program provides $2,000 to faculty organizing interdisciplinary discussion groups on particular research topics. The funds are to be used to bring to campus scholars from other institutions. Proposals for the following academic year, which may be submitted by email to the Willson Center (ctrha@uga.edu), will be considered on February 17.

The Willson Center Distinguished Lecturer Program brings to campus in the following academic year distinguished scholars and artists, nominated by faculty and selected by the Advisory Board, whose appeal transcends disciplinary boundaries. Deadline: February 17.

The Willson Center Publication Subvention Program supports scholarship in the humanities and the arts at the University of Georgia by providing subvention when necessary to ensure the publication of excellent research that brings credit to the author and to the University of Georgia. Deadlines: September 3 and January 20.

The OVPR Junior Faculty Research Grants in the Humanities and Arts Program awards grants to assistant professors for research projects in the humanities and arts. The Program is funded by the University of Georgia Research Foundation and administered by the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts. Deadline: February 1.

The OVPR Senior Faculty Research Grants in the Humanities and Arts Program awards grants to associate and full professors for research projects in the humanities and arts. The Program is funded by the University of Georgia Research Foundation and administered by the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts. Deadline: February 1.

The Willson Center receives nominations on a continuous basis for the Delta Prize for Global Understanding. Since its creation in 1999, the Prize has been awarded to President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter and The Carter Center, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President Mikhail Gorbachev, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, President Václav Havel, Ambassador Gertrude Mongella, Mr. Ted Turner, President Nelson Mandela, President Martti Ahtisaari, and Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei. Faculty, staff and students are invited to submit nominations for the Delta Prize. Nomination details can be found at www.uga.edu/news/deltaprize.

Willson Center Awards Ten Graduate Student Research and Performance Grants

Daleah B. Goodwin (History)
Sarah Hranac (Hugh Hodgson School of Music)
Kathleen Gillespie Jackson (Lamar Dodd School of Art)
Jason Manthorne (History)
Kathleen Nehls (History)
Justin Plakas and Michael Prault, a collaborative project (Lamar Dodd School of Art)
C. Marie Porterfield (Lamar Dodd School of Art)
Nancy Park Riley (Lamar Dodd School of Art)
Vanessa Tome (Hugh Hodgson School of Music)
Jennifer Marie Wunn (History)
* Sarah Hranac also won the Janelle Padgett Knight Award.
Announcements

Faculty Publications - 2010


Call for Information about External Grants

The Willson Center will publish in its fall newsletter a list of external grants obtained by scholars in the humanities and the arts for the 2010-2011 academic year. Faculty are encouraged to send grant information (source of grant and amount) to jdingus@uga.edu by May 1.
**Programs**

**Willson Center TV Roundtable: “The I Love Lucy Show”**

On Friday, January 28, at 4 p.m. in 148 Miller Learning Center, the spring semester Willson Center TV Roundtable will examine the I Love Lucy show.

With I Love Lucy, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz helped launch American television comedy. They also helped shape television’s business model by forming Desilu Productions.

Panelists will investigate I Love Lucy’s unique place in TV history and within American culture. Panelists include Horace Newcomb (Grady College), Carolina Acosta-Alzuru (Grady College), Freda Scott Giles (Theatre and Film Studies, Institute for African American Studies), Hugh Ruppersburg (English), and Christine Becker (Notre Dame). Richard Neupert (Film Studies) will moderate the discussion. The event is free and open to the public.

**Willson Center Cinema Roundtable: “Stieg Larsson’s Girl with the Dragon Tattoo Cycle”**

On Friday, February 18, at 4 p.m. in 148 Miller Learning Center, the Willson Center Cinema Roundtable will examine Stieg Larsson’s trilogy of books and movie adaptations.

Panelists will discuss Larsson’s intricate plot structures, gender politics, and thriller aesthetics. Panelists include Doris Kadish (French, Women’s Studies, and LACSI), Nate Kohn (Grady College), Antje Ascheid (Film Studies), Susan Rosenbaum (English), and Michele Schreiber (Film Studies, Emory). Richard Neupert (Film Studies) will moderate the discussion. The event is free and open to the public.


**Willson Center Screening and Discussion: 2001: A Space Odyssey**

On Wednesday, April 20, at 7 p.m. in 101 Miller Learning Center, the Willson Center, in conjunction with the Division of Biological Sciences and Film Studies, will host a screening of Stanley Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey. Kubrick’s film explores the nature of mankind’s evolution from our earliest days on the plains of Africa to our exploration of the outer reaches of the solar system, and beyond. Faculty from various departments will be on hand to comment on everything from social structure in Australopithecines to artificial intelligence and the meaning of consciousness. The event is free and open to the public.
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*Deadline for Willson Center Research Fellowship and Publication Subvention Grant applications*
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| 14   | Science for Humanists Lecture  
Rob Phillips, Chemistry  
Tryptophan: The Chemical Behind Your Turkey-Induced Nap and Human History  
4 pm, 248 Miller Learning Center |
| 21   | Spring Break |
| 22   |  
Ignacio López-Calvo, Visiting Lecturer  
The Nearest East: Imaging Asian Migration in Latin American Cultural Production  
4 pm, 213 Miller Learning Center |
| 23   |  
Michael Gray, Visiting Lecturer  
Bob Dylan and the Poetry of the Blues  
4 pm, 101 Miller Learning Center |
| 28   | Paula Massood  
Visiting Lecturer  
The Gangster Genre and Harlem's Mythic Past, Present and Future  
12:20 pm, 148 Miller Learning Center |
| 18   | Barry Lopez, Visiting Lecturer  
7 pm, Conservatory Great Room  
Botanical Garden |
| 19   |  
Wilson Center Screening and Discussion  
2001: A Space Odyssey  
7 pm, 101 Miller Learning Center |
| 20   | Peter Godfrey-Smith, Visiting Lecturer  
The Evolution of Meaning  
3:30 pm, 205S Peabody Hall |
| 25   | Delta Prize for Global Understanding Award Ceremony  
Public interview with the 2011 Delta Prize Recipient  
3 pm, Masters Hall, Georgia Center for Continuing Education |
| 26   |  
Barry Lopez, Visiting Lecturer  
7 pm, Conservatory Great Room  
Botanical Garden |
| 27   |  
Wilson Center Screening and Discussion  
2001: A Space Odyssey  
7 pm, 101 Miller Learning Center |
| 28   |  
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2001: A Space Odyssey  
7 pm, 101 Miller Learning Center |
Visiting Artists

Every year the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts brings to campus for five-day or nine-day periods eminent scholars and artists from the United States and elsewhere in the world. While on campus they engage in a range of activities, delivering public lectures, speaking to graduate and undergraduate classes, giving workshops and performances, and meeting faculty and students. Those who stay in residence halls also spend an evening with students, introducing students to their field of expertise through scholarly presentations or demonstrations.

During spring semester of 2011, the Willson Center Visiting Artists are Rick and Laura Brown hosted by R. G. Brown (Lamar Dodd School of Art).

Artists Rick and Laura Brown will be in residence at UGA during the week of March 7-11 leading the Bimah Project, a multi-disciplinary, interdepartmental, hands-on learning workshop. The Browns and members of Handshouse Studio of Norwell, Massachusetts will work with UGA faculty and students from Sculpture, Interior Design, Art History and Painting.

The Bimah Project will include lectures, demonstrations, traditional woodworking and painting techniques and methods. Faculty and students will create wooden components and paint the wooden bimah elements using traditional animal hide glue, natural pigments and original painting style and techniques.

From the sixteenth-century until the Holocaust, synagogue architecture developed in the predominantly Jewish market towns in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The wooden synagogues, with their elaborately painted interiors, included a bimah (central reader’s desk for the public reading from the Torah scroll), and an intricately carved Torah ark on the eastern wall.

Faculty and students will examine a rare 1918 archival architectural colored drawing and black and white photographs of the bimah, which show the details and colors of the Gwozdziec bimah, possibly the oldest documented wooden bimah built in the seventeenth-century. Through discussions, lectures, demonstrations, and trial and error, faculty and students will research, analyze and replicate a section of a seventeenth-century wooden bimah and a portion of the synagogue ceiling panel of the Gwozdziec synagogue.

The workshop will provide students and faculty the opportunity to work on a portion of a much larger international educational project dedicated to recovering history of over two hundred seventeenth and eighteenth-century wooden synagogues destroyed during the Nazi invasion of Poland during World War II. The work and discoveries made during the University of Georgia workshop will contribute to the larger international project of replicated works being exhibited throughout the United States and in Eastern Europe.

Rick Brown, President of Handshouse Studio, Inc. and professor of sculpture at the Massachusetts College of Art, is the recipient of numerous grants and awards including the Massachusetts Artists Foundation Finalists Grant for Sculpture, MassachusettsArtists Foundation Finalists Grant for Environmental Design, the National Endowment for the Arts Funding for Sculpture Installation (Decordova Museum Lincoln, Mass.), a Ford Foundation Grant, and the Goldsmith Award, Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, Memphis, Tennessee.

Laura Brown, educator, sculptor and artist, was a member of the 3D Department...
at the Massachusetts College of Art from 1996 to 2002. During that time, she served as Curator for an outdoor sculpture exhibition for the City of Boston’s ParkARTS program. She has traveled and lectured extensively on a wide variety of topics. She is skilled in exhibition design and installation, architectural design and building, woodworking, foundry, welding, earth technology, concrete, paper making and photography.

Handshouse Studio, Inc., is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the perpetuation of history, science, architecture and art. Handshouse creates projects outside of the traditional classroom through the reconstruction of large historical objects. Handshouse collaborates with educational institutions providing faculty and students the opportunity to work with scholars, educators, historians, architects, engineers, anthropologists, archeologists, artists, craftsmen, and builders in a wide range of historical subjects.

Handshouse has been featured in *National Geographic*, *Archeology Today*, *Smithsonian*, *Fine Homebuilding*, and *Timber Frame Magazine*.

Handshouse has produced projects for PBS, the Discovery Channel, Channel 4 in England, Channel 5 in France, Czech television, and the BBC.

French, Spanish, and Italian. In 2011, the College also offers Arabic, Chinese, Swahili, Hindi, Hebrew, and numerous other languages from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe.

The Women’s Studies and African American Studies programs have transformed our entire humanities curriculum by showing us the intellectual, cultural, and political limitations of our society’s deeply embedded, socially detrimental assumptions about gender and race in the disciplines.

The College has generally addressed this cultural revolution by inserting new courses into old departments. Chinese and Swahili went into Comparative Literature; Arabic and Hebrew went into Religion. Courses focused on women and race relations which are by nature interdisciplinary developed in nearly all the departments of the humanities and the arts.

Humanities scholars are becoming increasingly interested in research fields and course topics that transcend disciplinary boundaries.

So perhaps the time has come to examine the present departmental and divisional structures in the humanities and ask whether UGA faculty would be happier with different arrangements. I imagine that there will be no shortage of ideas.

I will not be involved in the exciting changes in UGA’s future. On August 1, 2011, I will retire after thirty-eight very happy years at the University, eighteen of them as director of the Willson Center. Although I will remain in Athens I will miss interacting with my outstanding associates at the Willson Center, Julie Dingus and Lloyd Winstead, and all my colleagues across campus with whom I’ve worked over the years. So, to my many friends here, thank you for the opportunity to be part of the University’s emergence as the great public research institution that it has become.
Lectures

Willson Center
Distinguished Lecturer

Paul B. Thompson, W. K. Kellogg Chair in Agricultural, Food and Community Ethics at Michigan State University, will deliver a Willson Center lecture on “The Agrarian Vision: Sustainability and Environmental Ethics” on Monday, January 24, 2011 at 4 p.m. in 248 Miller Learning Center.

Thompson is author of a number of books including The Agrarian Vision: Sustainability and Environmental Ethics (2010) and Food Biotechnology in Ethical Perspective (2007).


Thompson’s research interests include American pragmatist approaches in practical ethics, environmental ethics, risks and ethics of agricultural and food biotechnology, science policy, philosophy of technology and philosophy of economics.

Paul B. Thompson

Eiland Gives GMOA/Willson Center Lecture

William U. Eiland, Director of the Georgia Museum of Art, will give the annual GMOA/Willson Center Lecture on “Strike!: A Look at 20th-Century American Printmaking” on March 1, 2011 in the M. Smith Griffith Auditorium of the Georgia Museum of Art.

Eiland has edited and contributed to more than 50 publications. He is author of The Truth in Things: The Life and Career of Lamar Dodd (1996).

Eiland has received both the Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in the Arts from the Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries and the James R. Short Award for lifetime achievement from the Southeastern Museums Conference.
Dorinda Dallmeyer, Director of the Environmental Ethics Certificate Program, will give an illustrated Willson Center lecture on “The Art and Science of William Bartram” on Wednesday, February 16 at 4 p.m. in 148 Miller Learning Center.

Dallmeyer is editor of Bartram’s Living Legacy: The Travels and the Nature of the South (2010) featuring original artwork by Philip Juras. William Bartram (1739 – 1823), American naturalist and author, published William Bartram’s Travels in 1791. Known for his ability to combine science and poetry, Bartram provided a cultural history in addition to his many scientific notes and drawings. His holism laid the foundation for major themes of modern nature writing as well as environmental philosophy.

Dallmeyer has written extensively on environmental ethics and international law. She received the Phillip D. Reed Memorial Award for Outstanding Writing on the Southern Environment (2005), and a joint award with the University of Georgia Press, for Elemental South: an Anthology of Southern Nature Writing (2004).