

College of Arts and Sciences
HUMANITIES COUNCIL
Constitution

Mission Statement

The Humanities Council is dedicated to fostering a campus climate that ensures the continuation of a vibrant role for teaching the humanities and for engaging in intellectual discovery and exchange. The Council supports the discovery, production, preservation, critique, and dissemination of knowledges in and across the Humanities disciplines broadly conceived.

Composition & Membership

I. Eligibility

The Humanities Council is a focal point for the humanities at the university: it supports and advances the humanities broadly conceived. We understand humanistic inquiry to be found both in the traditional humanities disciplines¹ and in related areas of inquiry that augment the role of the humanities by exploring the human condition (past and present) in terms of the social and interpretive contexts of ideas, texts, places, events, people, cultural traditions, identities, languages, religions, artifacts, and/or artistic and aesthetic objects and practices.

Membership or representation on the Humanities Council shall thus be reserved for those academic units and administrative offices or appointments:

- whose mission and function are centered in humanistic inquiry as signaled by disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas with tenure lines in the Humanities Division of the College of Arts and Sciences (see Appendix A, # 1),
- or whose mission and function overlap or collaborate significantly with humanistic inquiry, either within or outside of the College of Arts & Sciences (see Appendix A, # 2).

¹ The National Endowment for the Humanities draws this distinction in the following manner: "The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

II. Determining Membership:

1. While normally the Membership will remain constant, drawn from various academic units (see Appendix A, # 1 and # 2), if the Council finds that participation and active membership grow to the point of impracticality, it may want to consider developing a system of rotating 3-year terms for units outside of the core Humanities areas (see Appendix A, # 2).
2. It is expected that the Council will keep up-dated lists of disciplinary and interdisciplinary units relevant to the Humanities from which potential members might be drawn. Following principles of fairness and inclusion, the Council will annually update the list of units (under Appendix A, #2) and query all of those units in the current academic year to determine interest in membership for the subsequent year.

III. Membership:

1. Council Chair: ex officio, voting member. A new Chair shall be elected by the Council for a two-year, non-renewable term at the end of the current Chair's second academic year of service.
2. Voting members shall include *2 representatives*: the Chair, ex officio, and a selected representative² from each of the Humanities Division units with tenure lines in the College of Arts and Sciences (see Appendix A, # 1).
3. The Council shall invite representation from those units in Appendix A, # 2 that express interest in membership (in response to the annual letter of query sent by the council—see II.2). Each interested unit shall be represented by *1 voting member*³ on the Council.
4. Other voting members shall include:
 - the Tolley Professor(s),
 - the Director of the Honors Program,
 - the Committee Chair of the Jeanette K. Watson Distinguished Visiting Professorship in the Humanities (n.b. Council Functions, # 5).
 - the Director of the Humanities Center
5. Representatives of the College of Arts & Sciences administration (as determined by the Dean of the College) shall be ex officio non-voting members.
6. At the discretion of the Council, units from outside of the College of Arts & Sciences/Maxwell may be invited to nominate representatives to become non-voting members of the Council.

² Selected representatives are chosen by each unit: generally, in the interests of inclusion and rotation, they serve 3 year terms, but this term of service can be renewed or modified to best serve the needs of their individual Department/Program.

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Council Functions

The Humanities Council shall set its own meeting times and establish its own agenda. Its functions include but are not limited to those that follow.

1. The Council may review the College of Arts and Sciences' humanities curriculum and entertain discussion of curricular innovation across disciplinary lines at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
2. The Council shall maintain an informational website.
3. The Humanities Council shall aid the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in selecting proposals for the Ray Smith Symposium Series by: 1) advertising the Symposium as widely as possible; 2) serving as the body to which proposals are initially submitted; 3) selecting proposals to be recommended to the Dean for funding.
4. The Humanities Council shall participate in the selection process for the William P. Tolley Distinguished Professorship in the Humanities in the following way.
 - The Humanities Council shall solicit nominations from members of the departments and programs (with tenure lines) of the Humanities Division of the College of Arts and Sciences (that is, from African American Studies; English and Textual Studies; Fine Arts; Languages, Literatures and Linguistics; Philosophy; Religion; Women's Studies; and Writing).
 - The Humanities Council, on the advice of a Selection Committee drawn from its membership, will recommend to the Dean of the College up to three candidates for appointment as Tolley Professor.
 - In carrying out its work, the Selection Committee will study the nominations, collect additional evidence as needed, and report to the Council.
 - Initial nominations should include a letter outlining the nominee's record as a teacher and be accompanied by a curriculum vitae.
 - At a later stage, candidates who are under final consideration will be asked to submit a statement about how they plan to spend their term as Tolley Professor, including tentative plans for using the Humanities Instructional Development Fund, mentoring junior faculty and developing their own teaching abilities.
5. In cooperation with the Chair of the Committee for the Jeanette K. Watson Distinguished Visiting Professorship in the Humanities, the Council shall discuss and offer advice concerning nominees for this position.
6. The Humanities Council may engage in ad hoc work related to the humanities at the request of the Dean of Arts and Sciences or other relevant units such as OSP (Office of Sponsored Programs). Such activities may include the internal review of NEH Summer Stipend proposals and nominations, for example.

Appendix A

1. Currently (*Spring 2006*), disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas with tenure lines in the Humanities Division of the College of Arts and Sciences include:
 - African/African-American Studies,
 - English and Textual Studies,
 - Fine Arts,
 - Languages/Literatures/Linguistics,
 - Philosophy,
 - Religion,
 - Women's Studies,
 - Writing.

2. Currently (*Spring 2006*), academic programs/departments in the College of Arts & Sciences/Maxwell whose mission is concerned primarily with the humanities include:
 - a) **academic units offering majors and/or graduate degrees**
 - Asian / Asian American Studies
 - Department of Anthropology
 - Classical Civilization
 - Classics
 - Ethics
 - History
 - History of Architecture
 - Department of Geography
 - Interdisciplinary Linguistic Studies
 - Latino-Latin American Studies
 - Medieval and Renaissance Studies
 - Political Philosophy
 - Religion & Society
 - Department of Sociology
 - South Asian Studies
 - b) **academic units offering minors**
 - Chinese Studies
 - Cognitive Science
 - Ethics
 - Judaic Studies
 - LGBT Studies
 - Logic
 - Middle Eastern Studies
 - Native American Studies
 - Russian and Central European Studies