

## **Humanities and Fine Arts Roundtables**

**Summary of Roundtable 1 - Thursday, June 9, 2:30-4:00 p.m.**

*The Humanities at Stony Brook*

**I. Attending:** Provost McGrath, Dean Staros, Joseph Auner, Aaron Godfrey, Ann Kaplan, Bruce Bashford, Christa Erickson, Fred Moehn, Helen Cooper, Helen LeMay, Ira Livingston, Izabela Kalinowska-Blackwood, Jacqueline Reich, John Lutterbie, Krin Gabbard, Peter Manning, Robert Harvey, Sophie Raynard-Leroy, Stephanie Dinkins

**II. Welcome by Provost McGrath**

**III. Introduction by Joseph Auner, Associate Provost**

**IV. Remarks by Dean Staros:**

Part of the task of the workshops should be to define the unique character and “flavor” of the Humanities and Fine Arts at Stony Brook in order to articulate where we would like to be.

Interdisciplinarity has played a major role, with the Humanities Institute as a guiding force.

Work toward more interdisciplinary graduate formations, building on models already well established in the sciences. Stony Brook can be a leader in this area; Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies (see further below) has already demonstrated one successful model.

We need strong departments from which to build interdisciplinary research. Graduate students, increasingly trained in interdisciplinary research, are transforming the disciplines while faculty also sustain traditional disciplinary needs.

**V. Report on the Humanities Institute, Ann Kaplan Director, HISB, and Distinguished Professor of English** (Full report attached below)

We contribute by both reflecting the world and its representations and by devoting time to thinking critically about them. The humanities embody the space and provide the tools for informed, sustained and critical analysis. In the future, we will need such spaces increasingly.

It's an exciting time in the Humanities. Our disciplines are changing partly as a result of the research undertaken in institutes like ours, but partly because of the changing landscape of knowledges being produced, especially in science and technology, and partly because of the related explosion of global intellectual connections due to new technologies. The humanities need to redefine our mission in today's world.

Some Future directions:

**a. Humanists analyzing the impact of science and technology on our disciplines.**

Interestingly some scientists (like Paul Bingham at SB) see interfacing with the humanities as crucial for the future of science.

**b. Impact of science and technology on world problems** we have always been concerned with. Methods developed through cultural studies will be increasingly important.

**c. Need increasingly to work closely with social science disciplines** as political, economic and ecological crises increase with the end of 19th century empires and the impact of globalization in all its complexity (viz the rejection of the EU constitution)

**d. Develop more Interdisciplinary Workshops, hosted by the HISB.** For example, new ideas include a **workshop on Early Modern International Research** and on **Globalization, Immigration and Language.**

**VI. Report on the Cinema and Cultural Studies Major**(Full report attached below)

Officially approved in 1998 and administered through the Department of Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies, the Cinema and Cultural Studies undergraduate major offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of visual culture in the Humanities. With film studies as its base, the program consists of four core courses (CCS 101, 201, 301 and 401) that stress the fundamentals of visual literacy: reading, writing about, theorizing and creating visual culture (film, television, advertising, art, digital media). Integrated with these courses are classes drawn primarily from offerings in 11 departments.

**VII.** Some issues impacting faculty recruiting and retention.

**1. Junior Faculty Development and Support.**

Better support for research support, travel funds, library resources.

**2. Studio space and technical support for artists.**

**3. Building a sense of community**

(Note; FAHSS listserv and web page are being launched to communicate hires, working groups, special projects and events, dissertations underway, funding opportunities, etc.)

**4. Faculty Housing:**

Key factors in retaining Humanities faculty are building low-cost housing on campus, and providing more mortgage support for off-campus purchasing of condos or houses. We cannot build a local community if faculty have to commute from Queens or Brooklyn where they can find affordable housing.

The existing "Faculty Mortgage Assistance Program" should be better publicized:

“Stony Brook Foundation has a pilot program to help first-time home buyers through a second mortgage intended to help cover the down payment.

For information contact Maria Doelger, Assistant Provost for Administration and Operations, maria.doelger@stonybrook.edu, 632-7012.”

**5. Spousal hires** and appointments should be used strategically for faculty recruitment.

**6. Graduate Student Support:**

Stipends have not kept pace with our competitors. Humanities departments attract the highest quality students, but we are often not able to compete with the offers they receive.

We need more TA lines and TA support for a longer period. Many students take on teaching and other work, thus slowing down their progress precisely at the time they are starting work on their dissertations.

## **VIII. New Hiring Models to Populate the New Interdisciplinary Spaces in the Humanities and Fine Arts**

### **1. Teaching outside of Departments.**

Departments feel stretched to cover internal teaching needs while being asked to contribute increasingly to interdepartmental and university initiatives (including Honors Colleges, Undergraduate Colleges, Cultural Studies, Womens' Studies, etc.) CLCS has used adjunct funds to buy faculty teaching time, but this is only a short term solution. Conversely, low faculty numbers in key areas make interdisciplinary units particularly vulnerable to faculty reductions due to sabbaticals, etc. (For example the 04-05 decline in enrollments in CCS due to loss of teaching from one faculty member.) Similarly, Women's Studies needs replacement lines and more support.

a. Where feasible, positions should be defined so that departments plan on contributing to broader teaching and coordinating needs of the university.

b. Clarify mechanism for tracking FTE teaching loads to encourage and reward units that contribute to interdisciplinary and university-wide teaching needs.

c. Institute rewards and incentives for faculty and departments who contribute to interdisciplinary and university-wide teaching needs.

### **2. "Cluster" or Targeted Thematic Hiring Initiatives.**

In this time of increasing points of contact in research areas and theoretical models in the disciplines we discussed the merits of better coordinating searches and future directions in the Humanities by proposing "cluster hires" on themes to be developed by the chairs and communicated to the Dean of CAS over the summer. Both of the possible clusters initiatives noted below would help make the faculty better reflect the diversity of our student body.

a. HFA is especially lacking in African American and African Studies faculty. The Africana Studies Department needs more lines, and more than one line in English is essential to build this area. A "cluster" form of appointments across the disciplines would be productive here: These fields of study are rapidly changing in the wake of Paul Gilroy's concept of "the Black Atlantic" so that the expertise of historians, literary and cultural studies scholars, film scholars, artists and musicians, sociologists and political scientists is required if we are to make intellectual progress.

b. Hiring in Asian American Studies in a "cluster" form would similarly be productive, especially in relation to needs in Cultural Studies.

## **IX. Other Recommendations that were discussed:**

**1. Regarding non-academic impediments to interdisciplinary work: Appoint an Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Studies** (Rutgers University has such a Dean). The HISB has been fostering interdisciplinary research (its main mission), but with an administrative officer in place, concerned with the entire university, much more could be done to promote local and national/international research collaborations in the humanities.

## REPORTS

### Report on the Humanities Institute, Ann Kaplan Director, HISB, and Distinguished Professor of English

#### I. Distinctive Features of Humanities and Fine Arts at Stony Brook

- 1. The rare location of the Arts in the College of Arts and Sciences** has enabled unique close intellectual relationships between humanities and arts departments, resulting in original research projects.
- 2. A unique aspect of the humanities and fine arts at Stony Brook is the focus on interdisciplinarity.** From the start, Stony Brook saw that it could carve out a new role for itself by focusing on interdisciplinarity. If the sciences set the tone in this regard, humanities soon followed, and have continued to initiate new interdisciplinary programs, such as the Art and Philosophy Concentration, the undergraduate major in Cinema and Cultural Studies, and the Advanced Certificate in Cultural Studies, soon to be a Ph.D. program. The Interdisciplinary Women's Studies department is growing but requires replacement of lost faculty.
- 3.** The newly named **Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies Department** combines literature with cinema and cultural studies in an original and productive manner. A unique feature is the coordination of the "Introduction to Cultural Studies" with the Humanities Institute's Distinguished Visiting Lecturer Series.
- 4. The Philosophy Department** has long worked with the Humanities Institute to bring distinguished international scholars to Stony Brook for lectures and extended seminars. Few humanities departments have had such continuing access to the rich offerings of such scholars that has greatly benefited research of both faculty and graduate students.
- 5. The Music Department is unique in its varied research areas, including ethnomusicology and popular music.** Music students take courses in cultural studies and philosophy, creating new approaches and theories.
- 6. We are uniquely poised to move forward into digital arts and technologies.** We already have faculty experts in these areas in Theatre, Music and Art, but administrative support is essential for us to make the best use of faculty already here and to hire more scholars in the area.
- 7. The Latin American and Caribbean Center,** along with our highly regarded Hispanic Languages and Literatures Department, is uniquely poised to initiate new kinds of research through reconfiguring "the Americas."
- 8. Asian and Asian American Studies are newly being developed.** The Wang Center and the Center for Indian Studies are two highly visible units for developing Asian and Asian American Studies at Stony Brook. More lines across the disciplines are needed.

#### II. Distinctive Features of the HISB:

- 1 We are an "integrated" rather than "separated" Institute,** thus closely involved with departments, curricula, graduate students and hiring new faculty.
- 2 Increasingly seeking to involve more undergraduate students** in our research activities: We have a new program providing funds to UG group projects.
- 3 Initiated the Cultural Studies Certificate located in CLCS** (Ira will talk of how this has developed). This is an example of how the HISB collaborates regularly with departments, and helps develop interdisciplinary research beyond lectures, conferences and symposia.

4 A unique feature is **the annual integration of HISB's Distinguished Lecturer series with the graduate course, "Introduction to Cultural Studies."**

5 HISB **organized a four-year collaborative international exchange program with Le Collège International de Philosophie** (greatly aided by Robert Harvey). After this concluded, Ann Kaplan has initiated a collaborative research project with the International Center for Writing and Translation at UC Irvine, directed by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. Programs already underway. It has taken the personal initiatives of Kaplan and Harvey to make this work (see action suggestion below).

6 **HISB unique in having Graduate Research Assistants** intricately involved in the running of the HISB, providing excellent pre-professional training. Students regularly write articles for the *Newsletter*.

7 **Kaplan is one of the few "hands-on" institute directors**, enabling long-range networking with departments and faculty across Stony Brook, the U.S. and internationally.

8. Our unique **Internal Resident Fellowship** was cut. This involved selecting a junior faculty member to be released full time from teaching to work on a new interdisciplinary project in tandem with an undergraduate and possibly also graduate student was cut, but this model was hailed by independent evaluators and we would hope it could be restored and increased. Junior faculty release time for research is urgently needed.

## **The Cinema and Cultural Studies Undergraduate Major An Example of Departmental Synergy Across the Humanities**

Officially approved in 1998 and administered through the Department of Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies, the Cinema and Cultural Studies undergraduate major offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of visual culture in the Humanities. With film studies as its base, the program consists of four core courses (CCS 101, 201, 301 and 401) that stress the fundamentals of visual literacy: reading, writing about, theorizing and creating visual culture (film, television, advertising, art, digital media). Integrated with these courses are classes drawn primarily from offerings in 11 departments:

- *Africana Studies*
- *Art*
- *Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies*
- *English*
- *European Languages*
- *Hispanic Languages*
- *History*
- *Music*
- *Sociology*
- *Theatre Arts*
- *Women's Studies*

In addition, we collaborate with the following programs and are pursuing new areas of development:

### Strategic Collaborations:

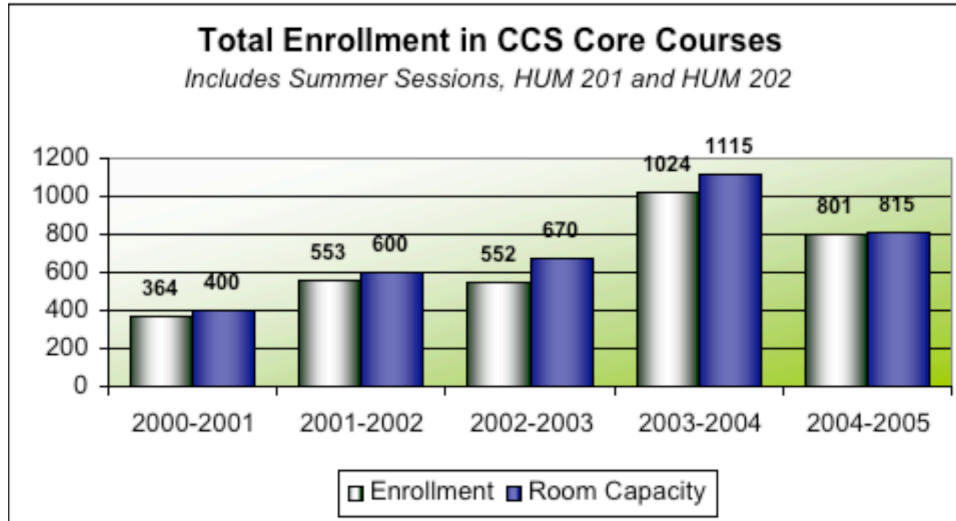
- *The Media Arts Minor*
- *The Media Arts Living Learning Center*
- *The Humanities Institute*
- *The Career Center*

### New Directions:

- *Ph.D. in Cultural Studies*
- *Digital Media Minor*
- *Combined 5-year CCS/M.B.A.*
- *Increased participation in the Internship program*

The Cinema and Cultural Studies major has experienced some impressive growth over the past five years:

Enrollment has met capacity with year-over-year consistency and growth:



Ουρ στудεντσ αρε αχτιπελψ ινπολπεδ ιν ουρ προγραμ βειπονδ τηε τραδιτιοναλ χυρριχυλυμ: τηεισ σερπε ασ υνδεργραδυατε τεαχηινγ ασισιταντσ φορ ουρ χουρσεσ, ανδ μανψ ελεχτ το δο ιντερνησιπσ ιν τηε εντ ερταινμεντ ινδυστρησ ατ συχη εντιτιεσ ασ:

- *Miramax*
- *Cablevision*
- *VH1*
- *MTV*
- *The Stony Brook Film Festival*
- *The Nantucket Film Festival*

Our graduates have gone on to graduate schools in cinema studies and work in the entertainment, advertising, and marketing industries.