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Mellon Humanities PhD Intervention Project PhD Program Intervention Grants

The Laney Graduate School and the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry invite faculty in humanistically oriented PhD programs to develop innovative, cross-program proposals responding to at least two of the twelve challenges and suggested reforms identified in the Mellon Foundation [Report Reforming Doctoral Education](#). In addition to reviewing the Mellon documents, faculty developing proposals may wish to consult the Council of Graduate School's [Promising Practices in Humanities PhD Professional Development](#) to learn about innovations at other universities.

Background

The context for this funding opportunity is the LGS's Humanities PhD Intervention Project, which is funded by a four-year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The project invites faculty and graduate students to rethink how we at Emory—more specifically, our humanities faculty and graduate students—might broaden the current paradigm of doctoral education, identifying, acknowledging, and incorporating competencies and skill-sets complementary to training for the professoriate. The project's full name, "Moving from Critique to Engagement: A Call for Productive Interventions in Humanities PhD Programs," has a dual purchase: first, it alludes to the incisive assessment of humanities PhD programs written by Robert Weisbuch and Leonard Cassuto, for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2016. Titled "Reforming Doctoral Education, 1990 to 2015," the assessment frames the state of the question, and summarizes numerous reform efforts, most recently the ACLS's "Public Fellows Program," the American Historical Association's "Career Diversity for Historians Initiative," and the Modern Languages Associations "Connected Academics: Preparing Doctoral Students of Language and Literature for a Variety of Careers." Weisbuch and Cassuto provide a critical framework or, better, critical context for ongoing efforts to respond to recent data showing that a high percentage of humanities graduate students, at some institutions up to 50%, will not become professors, and to the growing sense that well-trained PhD students should be capable of speaking to multiple constituencies, engaging specialists or the general public, undergraduates or fellow graduate students, members of their subfield or of other fields, whenever the occasion arises. In particular, they put forward for review eight "policies" covering topics such as Attrition, Diversity, Data and Assessment, Professional Identity and Public Engagement, Time to Degree, and Career Goals. In referring to "Critique," our project title implies not only that we aim to examine our situation in light of Weisbuch and Cassuto's critique, but also that we want to view it through the lens of our present policies and best practices, to critique the critique so to speak, by formulating a response and mapping a way forward distinctive to Emory. "Engagement" refers to the programmatic resources and apparatus we plan to implement over the next four years—starting now and extending through academic year 2020-2021.

In addition to the issues raised above, we plan to consider the following questions. What sorts of intervention does Emory ultimately want to support? What sorts of new professional development programming should we establish? How do we continue to train students to enter the professoriate, even while broadening our approach to humanities scholarship, helping them gain new skills and competencies, and opening the door to future employment in the academy, in the public sector, and in

the private sector? These are more than merely pragmatic questions; they turn on a more fundamental question—what kind of intellectual enterprise are we promoting when we engage in graduate education?

Funding

Participating programs will each receive up to \$10,000 per year for two years, in support of their joint project. A sample project would be a series of colloquia on the politics of public display, co-moderated by an Art Historian and a Hispanist, focusing on the collections of the Hispano-American Society in New York City, and leading to the design of a virtual exhibition at the HAS. Such a project would touch upon three of the twelve challenges discussed in the Mellon report: Diversity, Professional Identity and Public Engagement, and Pedagogy. Alternatively, programs may wish to focus on the report's recommendations to re-examine the structure of qualifying examinations and other degree requirements, including the nature and norms of the dissertation project itself.

Allowable expenses include salary for student assistants, visits by faculty or public scholars from other institutions, mini-conferences and colloquia, and joint program retreats. Participating faculty and students will report on their projects at Directors of Graduate Studies meetings and at Mellon project events.

Eligibility

1. Emory faculty in humanities and humanistically oriented social science programs.
2. Because the intention is to foster creative, cross-disciplinary innovation, eligibility is not restricted to departmental or program leadership (DGS's for example).

Application Procedures

1. Please submit a statement of not more than 1000 words, describing the project and the cross-program collaboration it fosters. The statement should make clear which 'challenges and suggested reforms' the project addresses.
2. If the project is designed to last two years, please justify the time-span, explaining what will happen in years 1 and 2.
3. Include an itemized budget.
4. Include a plan for evaluating and sustaining programmatic reforms.
5. Submit the proposal as a single PDF to JPHIL22@emory.edu.

Deadlines

Proposals will be accepted throughout the fall and spring semesters.

Questions

Contact Rosemary Hynes at 404-727-2660 or rhynes@emory.edu