HGSC Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 21, 2013, 3:30-5pm

Attendees:
Kevin Batton, Christy Cones, Sheiba Kaufman, Cynthia Cardona, Andrea Milne, Matt Dworkin, Manuel del Alto, Jared White, Kristen Galvin, Mark Ocegueda, Gina Anzivino (first 1/4), Glen Mimura (first 1/4)

A: Meeting Welcome & Introductions

I. The meeting was opened with a welcome by Glen. There was mention of the end of year Survey, our similar concerns with DECADE, and Humanities Without Borders.

II. Gina discussed the message board as a space for announcements, and encouraged the representatives to post. She also discussed the new suggestion box, which allows posts to be anonymous.

III. A representative asked a question about the new dean’s perspective on the alt-ac track. Glen stated that he is very supportive in general of alt-ac career (training/workshops, etc.) and of public humanities.

IV. There was a question from a representative about the restructuring/reconstitution of the School of Humanities, and if there would be formal representation for graduate students. Glen stated that there is no position on the committee proper but that we should go to the open forum this quarter. Glen reminded students that the committee is an advisory, and a department would have to elect itself out of existence. Julia Lupton, according to Glen, has done some of the research for humanities reconstitution. Staff has not met in regards to the humanities school reconstitution meeting. Glen suggested that students talk to their union representatives about increases in fellowship funding, and TA pay, as contracts are in negotiations.

B. Humanities Out There (HOT)

I. Mark discussed HOT’s background, and how we are trying to get the program back on its feet again. It will no longer primarily be a tutoring program. This quarter we are trying to collaborate with Orange County Public Libraries (OCPL) for an oral history project on Orange County resident’s stories. Mark and Kristen discussed the new Humanities class that they are designing in conjunction with the OCPL Oral History Project, which will hopefully enroll for spring 2014. In the course, students will work in groups to produce short documentary videos over the course of a quarter, which will then post to the OCPL website.

II. Mark and Kristen discussed working in “at-risk” schools as a potential outreach project. There was mixed response to this, and whether it would enhance CVs.

III. While there was excitement expressed for summer funding, and opportunities with OC institutions, again, the issue of CV lines came up. In short, opportunities would
have to be worthwhile in terms of funding and/or a line on your CV. There was concern that this would not be applicable, or attractive, to certain Humanities PhD-granting programs and departments, and that the benefits of a summer fellowships would be disciplinary-specific. One representative felt that this new revamped HOT program may not have much incentive for the Philosophy Department. General consensus was that there is a lot of support and excitement for the program since it could provide avenues for funding and experience for non-academic positions. Others felt it would be good for enhancing your CV for non-academic jobs, or could provide a good service line on your CV.

C. Programming for 2013-14

I. A representative suggested that we have a campus-wide discussion of the state of the Humanities, as a potential event.

II. Representatives felt that the search committee members’ panel is a good idea, especially as a follow-up to the Assistant Professors, from PhD to tenure-track job panel. There was discussion about how to make this most beneficial. If it is too general is it worth going too? How can we address issues of specifics of job hires within each discipline, while making it productive for all? One representative suggested that we have a hire committee talk, from one of the recent hires. Another commented that perhaps the panelists meet beforehand to establish “rule of thumb” generalizations that would apply to all Humanities disciplines to establish “best practices” and general features common to all Humanities Departments. There was a suggestion that an equity advisor, from ADVANCE, also be included on the panel (noted as a great suggestion by the group).

III. Another workshop suggested by a representative was on how to do interdisciplinary work. Or, to even have a panel where there is a general topic that is then addressed from various disciplinary perspectives, or interdisciplinary perspectives. There was interest from the group in promoting interdisciplinary work and connections. A representative intends to apply for a collaborative work group grant from the Humanities Collective in spring to address interdisciplinary issues and the survival of the Humanities.

IV. Representatives liked the marketing and branding workshop theme. There was an additional suggestion for a workshop on producing public intellectual work and how to get freelance work.

V. A pitch workshop for journal articles or manuscripts was suggested.

VI. In terms of improving participation in workshops, suggestions included:
- cluster and make it broad
- to leave the workshop with a tangible skill
- lunch or 5:30pm were optimal times
VII. In sum, these were the suggestions for workshops: 1) How to Do Interdisciplinary Research, 2) State of the Humanities Event, 3) How To Pitch an Article/Idea to Publishers that work with General Public, 4) Public Intellectual Work, 5) How to Publish Articles, 6) Alt-Ac Panel, 7) Pivot Funding Workshop

**Notes on Broader Humanities Topics Panels**

- How to do Interdisciplinary Work Workshop. Combines other schools and other departments. Maybe form around a general topic. Have people present interdisciplinary research. Open it up to school-wide. This was seconded. Workshop would be welcomed. Interdisciplinary workshop, reaching out to different disciplines and keeping the school viable and relevant for the future.
- The History Conference has been struggling in recent years. Would a Humanities-wide Conference be a good idea, as opposed to individual Departmental conferences?
- Marketing and Branding Workshop. Expand it beyond just online and profiles. We should expand it to freelancing and public intellectual work. It’s hard to freelance and we don’t know how to do it. It’d be interesting to see if there is a way that we can do public intellectual work.
- How to pitch articles and writing to different academic journals, public publishing, broad publishing.

**D. Questions/Concerns**

I. **Questions: TA funding.** How are decisions getting made by Humanities? Have they now managed to figure out the problem regarding TA funding? Is it all going through Humanities now? How are TAships getting distributed in departments? Is Grad Division now controlling this? How are students chosen and appointed within Departments? Why is it taking so long to hear about appointments? All of these issues are causing friction within departments, and negatively impacting graduate students, and students are requesting that the process be more streamlined and regulated.

II. **Concern: visibility of and accessibility of faculty within a particular program.**

III. **Questions: Restructuring of Humanities.** Will there be a move towards more individualized instruction and programs of study, as current program structures and protocols seem outmoded, and create stress for graduate students? Will there be a change in program structures with the restructuring of the Humanities? How will restructuring impact such practical concerns of graduate students?

IV. **Concern: Standardization in departments/programs in regards to benchmarks and protocols.** There is contradictory information from faculty on professionalization, and moreover, misinformation on what constitutes programmatic benchmarks within individual programs and departments. Can Humanities Graduate Study intervene and force a conversation on standardization within Humanities Departments/Programs?
Can Humanities Graduate Study hold faculty responsible for implementing and upholding standards? Department standards are nebulous at best, and the problem of non-standardization is currently perceived as getting worse.

V. **Solution to Standardization issue:** Can the School of Humanities survey faculty on program protocols, to enforce issues of standardization?

VI. **Suggestion for social events:** Can we hold a quarterly social meeting to get to know graduates students from other Humanities Departments/Programs, similar to the mixers that AGS used to have. Perhaps a grilled cheese and tomato soup (comfort food) session?