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LBSC791
Grant Proposal

Programming the Gaps:
An Interdisciplinary Outreach Initiative at St. Cloud State University Library
A Proposal to the NEH Humanities Connections Planning Grant

Summary

The University Library at St. Cloud State University seeks $35,000 in funding for an outreach program proposing the creation of an interdisciplinary programming initiative. Based in the library, this initiative will also be coordinated through strategic partnerships with faculty from the College of Liberal Arts, the School of the Arts, and other disciplines, as well as the Multicultural Resource Center, and university administration. The initiative's programming will consist of creative programming experiences founded on traditional events such as lectures, workshops, performances, and exhibitions.

The initiative's intellectual and cultural content will supplement classroom practices as well as fill curricular gaps. Derived from subject matter in the arts and humanities, events will be designed to showcase interdisciplinary possibilities at the university and in the world after degree completion. These events will provide fresh approaches to library and university programming by highlighting existing work and collaborations between students, faculty, and their external peers who will engage students in showcasing work and providing professional and career development opportunities.

The Planning Committee currently consists of several key faculty and staff from across the library, student affairs, and humanities and arts programs. The committee seeks more campus partners to sustain innovative ideas and interdisciplinary collaborations as well as ensure a variety of academic units have the chance to partake in events. The Committee has designated steps to be achieved during the 12-month planning period to develop a working infrastructure for the initiative's implementation. Qualitative assessment will determine planners and participants' readiness for launching the initiative.

Narrative

St. Cloud State University Library requests funds of $35,000 to support the creation and planning of an outreach and interdisciplinary programming initiative. Library Resource Services

seek to partner with the humanities and arts schools to achieve a new outreach strategy that engages the campus community through creative programming in the academic heart of the university. The initiative will explore content and themes from the humanities and arts in informal learning opportunities such as workshops, lectures, performances, and exhibits. Creating and contributing to "information experiences" and "intentional relationship building" (Schlak, 2018) explores intellectual and cultural content in and out of the classroom and validates the academic library's role and commitment to engagement in an open, scholarly community.

Project rationale

Central to the core of the university's mission, the University Library provides scholarly resources and services for advancing intellectual discovery and academic success to support students' growth into responsible and engaged professionals and global citizens. The library serves a diverse population of students, faculty, and independent researchers from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities as well as skill levels. But many of these scholars are absent from literacy sessions, work spaces, and regular programming. Additionally, the university averages at a 44% overall graduation rate with a 34% transfer-out rate; evidence of needs for academic, social, and professional support among the student body. The University Library seeks a nontraditional method to reach students and the greater campus community who feel uninformed, unsupported, or disconnected to create a community of belonging, engagement, and success.

The library may not be the first unit that comes to mind for such an initiative. But as the primary repository of research and stories and gathering place for scholastic and social activities, the library is already uniquely situated at the heart of the campus community. Adopting less traditional purposes and roles for a library's services, collections, and spaces centers the library as a place and resource that is committed to supporting the community as scholars and human beings. Cross-campus collaboration only increases the connections and benefits: interdisciplinary partnerships and perspectives; available resources; connecting collections and research; the then and the now; enumerations of faculty, staff, and student collaboration; identity formation and confluence. In addition, the on-campus programming can connect the library with external educational initiatives and partnerships, furthering the local, national, or international scholarly community.

St. Cloud State University is a four-year, public, residential liberal arts and sciences university within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. St. Cloud serves a student body of over 13,000 through 47 academic departments. The 100-acre campus is located along the

Mississippi River approximately an hour from Minneapolis and St. Paul. The Husky Compact, a commitment the university makes to students and that students make to their education, highlights the vision St. Cloud has for students during their time on campus and out in the world. The university believes engaged students, communities, and campus create an environment for deepening reciprocal partnerships and advancing student success through six dimensions. They are: 1) think creatively and critically, 2) seek and apply knowledge, 3) communicate effectively, 4) integrate existing and evolving technologies, 5) engage as a member of a diverse and multicultural world, and 6) act with personal integrity and civic responsibility.

Each academic year since its inception in 2015 has focused on a dimension. The initiative will actively explore and fulfill the goals each dimension sets forth, using the Compact as a framework for goals and outcomes.

With the Husky Compact laying the foundation for the initiative, the humanities and arts provide the means for relaying and exploring these values. From music to literature to history, these forms are actively woven into the personal, scholarly, and professional identities of the campus community. They are the links between communities and common grounds for unformed networks. Exploring subject matter through exhibits, performances, workshops, multimedia presentations and more, the initiative will create informal learning opportunities and interactive information experiences. As engagement in educationally purposeful activities (Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008) and library use contributes to higher GPA and returning for following semesters, particularly among first-year students (Soria, Fransen, & Nackerud, 2013)., the initiative will impact the campus climate, student persistence and retention, and student success.

 Intellectual content

Increasing cross-campus collaboration and partnerships, especially across the humanities and arts, unifies efforts to increase learning and success while upholding the overall university's mission and values (ACRL, 2017). As disciplines that study and express the human condition and experience, humanities and the arts echo and spark the application of many dimensions of the Husky Compact including thinking creatively and critically, seeking and apply knowledge, and communicating effectively. The initiative's events will continue conversations outside of the classroom, bridging subject matter theory to its context(s) in the rest of the world. For instance, how did using primary sources and 18th century rhetoric in a brief survey of rap history about "America then, as told by America now"(Delman, 2015), become a musical sensation?

With disciplinary faculty, staff, and librarians collaborating in event design, they are not only able to supplement what is covered in the classroom but to fill in curricular gaps. Working with students in other capacities such as office hours, reference and instruction sessions, counseling, or in assistantships gives the planning committee and collaborators insight into student weak spots in comprehension, global understanding, and professional development. In addition to campus figures, the planning committee expects to bring in outside experts and well-known personalities to further bridge these gaps that courses may not have time or capacity to cover. Guest speakers and performers highlight their paths to success, guide and inspire students. Active practitioners can showcase how esoteric research specialties and lived experiences transcend notions of popular fiction authorship or how the digital humanities integrates existing and evolving technologies - another Husky Compact dimension - to produce interactive, open access research and teaching platforms. Concurrent exhibits or book displays specific to each event demonstrate how the campus community can feed curiosity and support similar research projects and interests in the here and now, rather than after degree completion or research recognition.

Cultural Content

Creating immersive information experiences has cultural impacts on engagement and scholarship such as a heightened sense of belonging and increased social capital, i.e. networks and shared understandings and the norms associated with those links and bonds. These experiences, or events, curated by the initiative enhance campus life activities by addressing the community's multilayered identities. Events, quite literally, bring people together.

The initiative will foster community in both collaborations and strategic partnerships in developmental stages and audiences in implementation. While social capital is not typically seen as a library resource, informal learning opportunities work towards dismantling stereotypical perceptions of the library, its services, and who it serves (Ramsey, 2016; ACRL, 2017) . Art, literature, and other representations of our traditions, heritage, and history, can act as both windows and mirrors (Hughes-Hassell, 2013); they can inspire, provoke, and challenge. In doing so, the humanities and arts have the power to alter perspectives and develop communities of diversity, inclusivity, and mutual respect. In this way, the initiative is informed by and contributes to the Husky Compact dimensions of engaging as a member of a diverse and multicultural world and acting with personal integrity and civic responsibility.

Event outcomes such as broadening perspectives, promoting unity, empowering the self and others creates and strengthens networks of people and information sources by improving the flow of information. Promoting resources like library holdings and services or faculty and staff

knowledge and mentorships leads to better informed decisions, exercising responsible action, and a sense of belonging. Students - and faculty - feel better equipped to engage in all that is available in order to succeed whether they utilize campus resources or lean on their networks.

Planning committee

- Rhonda Huisman, Dean of University Library
- Jennifer Quinlan, Student Success Librarian, University Library
- Iyekiyapiwin Darlene St. Clair, Director, Multicultural Resource Center
- La Vonne Cornell-Swanson, Associate Provost for Faculty & Student Affairs
- Jerry Bulisco, Associate Dean of Students, Student Life & Development
- Mark Springer, Dean of Students, College of Liberal Arts and School of the Arts
- TBA, Undergraduate Student Representative
- TBA, Graduate Student Representative

Planning process

- Collaborate with and continue to build Planning Committee with relevant units and interested campus partners to continue to develop the program.
  - As outlined above, these members are passionate about the initiative's outcomes and already committed to supporting it with time and resources.
- Schedule meetings with other appropriate logistical units, including but not limited to Conference & Event Staff, Public Safety for Special Events, Parking & Transportation, and Facilities Management.
  - Staff from these areas will have the experience and campus knowledge to provide guidance on campus limitations and the city of St. Cloud's policies, especially in discussions surrounding the initiative's scalability and future.
- Collecting and sharing institutional and public data from invested partners.
  - Sharing this kind of information will allow the committee and collaborators to dial into target issues such as engagement, retention, and barriers to student success during the planning stages.
- Identifying student organizations for future collaboration and focus groups.
  - Meetings with students will provide insight to the kinds of engagement students feel is lacking from the campus life landscape and the kinds of approaches that they would be interested in.
- Identifying key humanities and arts faculty, in addition to other disciplinary colleagues, who are already partners or demonstrate potential for interdisciplinary collaboration in research and/or the classroom.

- These members could benefit the committee or be collaborators for designing events with insight into curricular gaps, literature gaps, and student struggles. They also can be pipelines for faculty and students looking for research partners or projects.
- Drafting documents and developing work plans including Memorandums of Understanding for partnerships, event proposals, standard event flows and check-ins.
- Developing marketing strategy across partnerships and for the student body.

Summary assessment

Assessment during and at the end of the planning stage will utilize qualitative methods such as surveys and focus groups to determine the initiative and participants' readiness. These check-ins throughout the process will ensure that goals are being met and functional work plans are produced to create a feasible structure for the initiative. Surveys and focus groups will evaluate student interest, staff and faculty preparedness, and meeting the necessary amounts of participation from key collaborators and cross-campus community.

Budget

Salaries & Wages	Institutional Base Salary (IBS)	% IBS or FTE	Project Total
Rhonda Huisman, Dean of University Library	Academic Year Salary: $88,000	2%	$1760
Jennifer Quinlan, Student Success Librarian	Academic Year Salary: $86,000	8%	$6880
Iyekiyapiwin Darlene St. Clair, Director, Multicultural Resource Center	Academic Year Salary: $87,000	8%	$6960
La Vonne Cornell-Swanson, Associate Provost for Faculty & Student Affairs	Calendar Year Salary: $119,000	2%	$2300
Jerry Bulisco, Associate Dean of Students, Student Life & Development	Calendar Year Salary: $82,000	8%	$6560

Mark Springer, Dean of Students, College of Liberal Arts and School of the Arts	Academic Year Salary: $155,000	2%	$3100
Undergraduate Student Representative	Academic Year Salary: $6,600	2%	$132
Graduate Student Representative	Academic Year Salary: $22,000	2%	$440
Fringe Benefits			
Rhonda Huisman, Dean of University Library	24% of funded salary		$422.40
Jennifer Quinlan, Student Success Librarian	24% of funded salary		$1651.20
Iyekiyapiwin Darlene St. Clair, Director, Multicultural Resource Center	24% of funded salary		$1670.40
La Vonne Cornell-Swanson, Associate Provost for Faculty & Student Affairs	24% of funded salary		$552
Jerry Bulisco, Associate Dean of Students, Student Life & Development	24% of funded salary		$1574.40
Mark Springer, Dean of Students, College of Liberal Arts and School of the Arts	24% of funded salary		$744
Undergraduate Student Representative	9% of funded salary		$11.88
Graduate Student Representative	9% of funded salary		$39.60
Supplies & Materials			
Photocopying			$100

Total Requested from NEH			34,897.88

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