

Simpson Center for the Humanities

One of the largest and most comprehensive humanities centers in the United States, the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities fosters innovative crossdisciplinary research and teaching among scholars. It is known internationally for its initiatives in the digital humanities and public scholarship.



UW faculty and graduate students participate in a public scholarship colloquium at the Simpson Center.

The Simpson Center offers University of Washington scholars a rich spectrum of opportunities for intellectual community and grant support that advances crossdisciplinary understanding, collaboration, and research while networking them nationally and internationally.

The Center's mission is four-fold:

- to support crossdisciplinary research and inquiry;
- to underwrite initiatives in the humanities at the leading edge of change;
- to advance innovative and crossdisciplinary study at the graduate level; and
- to foster scholarship that reaches publics beyond the academy, in the greater Seattle area, across the U.S., and internationally.

In 1987, the UW's College of Arts and Sciences established the University of Washington Center for the Humanities with a mandate to support interdisciplinary activities. In 1997, Barclay and Sharon Simpson endowed the Center, which was renamed the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities, in tribute to Barclay Simpson's father, a lifelong supporter of humanistic education.

The Center relies on the support of generous donors and funding agencies to fulfill its mission. Since 1999, it has received \$11 million in grants and gifts.

Collaboration and Crossdisciplinarity

All Center programs are grounded in collaboration and crossdisciplinarity. The Center provides funding and support for **fellowship programs, research clusters, graduate student interest groups, conferences, and symposia**, allowing faculty and graduate students to exchange ideas and develop individual and collaborative projects with other faculty, students, visiting scholars, and members of cultural institutions in the community.

Between 2000 and 2013, the Simpson Center funded **126 faculty fellowships** and **51 dissertation fellowships** supporting scholars from **30 campus units** across the humanities, arts, social sciences, and professional schools.

The Center also supports **large-scale grants** funded by major foundations and agencies. Recent examples include *New Geographies of Feminist Art: China, Asia, and the World* (American Council of Learned Societies, 2012-13), the Sawyer Seminar on *B/ordering Violence* (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2011-13), and *Biological Futures in a Globalized World* (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, 2011-13).

RESEARCH & TEACHING: RECENT TOPICS

Affect and Audience in the Digital Age

African American Political Thought

Art and Migration in the Age of Globalization

Climate Ethics

Intellectual Property, Privacy, and the Freedom of Speech

Islam and Forgiveness

Korea and Japan: In, Between, and Beyond the Nation

Medieval Studies

Moving Images Research Group

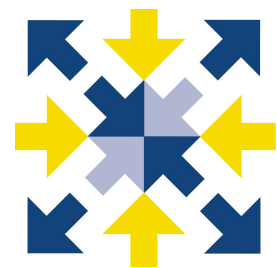
Teaching with Technology

Transatlantic Dialogues on the Environment

Transformative Education Behind Bars

WIRED: Women Investigating Race, Ethnicity, and Difference

Women Who Rock



Digital Humanities

In 2008, the Simpson Center received a \$625,000 Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), an endorsement for its plans to raise funds to establish the **Digital Humanities Commons**, a fellowship program supporting inventive and experimental research inspired by new and emerging technologies in the digital humanities.

In 2010, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation gave \$600,000 to underwrite the Digital Humanities Commons fund-raising efforts. The fundraising goal of \$1,875,000 to match the NEH grant was met in February 2013, and beginning Summer 2014, the **Simpson Center Digital Humanities Commons** will enable UW faculty and graduate students to collaborate with librarians, computer scientists, and designers in the development, innovation, and exchange of digital research and scholarship.

Public Scholarship

The Simpson Center has gained national recognition for its work advancing scholarship as a publicly engaged practice, a field often referred to as the public humanities. Public scholarship promotes mutually-beneficial partnerships between higher education and organizations in the public and private sectors and provides pathways for scholars to share their academic work with broader public audiences.

The graduate **Certificate in Public Scholarship**, housed at the Simpson Center, is a portfolio- and project-based program that enables graduate students and faculty mentors to integrate their scholarly, social, and political commitments in the context of their intellectual and professional development.

The Center hosts the **Solomon Katz Distinguished Lectures in the Humanities**, which feature leading thinkers such as Cathy N. Davidson, Shu-mei Shih, Doris Sommer, and Robin D. G. Kelley in events that are free and open to the public.

“The most robust graduate program for the new public humanists is the Certificate in Public Scholarship, at the University of Washington’s Simpson Center for the Humanities.”

— Julie Ellison, founding director,
Imagining America

SCHOLARLY NETWORKS AND PARTNERS

*Consortium of Humanities Centers
and Institutes*

*Digital Humanities Summer Institute,
University of Victoria*

*Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology
Alliance and Collaboratory*

*Imagining America: Artists and Scholars
in Public Life*

National Humanities Alliance

Washington Consortium for the Liberal Arts

Western Humanities Alliance

RECENT LOCAL PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

*Burke Museum of Natural History and
Culture*

El Centro de la Raza

Experience Music Project

Frye Art Museum

Henry Art Gallery

Humanities Washington

KEXP 90.3 FM

Northwest African American Museum

*On the Boards: Behnke Center for
Contemporary Performance*

Seattle Art Museum

*Wing Luke Museum of the Pacific
Asian Experience*

University Beyond Bars



Clockwise from upper left: Participants in a digital humanities workshop at the Simpson Center; English Department senior lecturer Anu Taranath leads a discussion between UW faculty and Seattle-area high school teachers about curriculum development; and Cathy N. Davidson speaks as part of the Katz Distinguished Lectures in the Humanities series.

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