

Humanities & Western Civilization Newsletter

University of
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A Word From...

Sandra Zimdars-Swartz, Professor and Director

In anticipation of the new general education requirements, HWC faculty have been working on articulating learning outcomes, learning opportunities and assessment strategies that underlay the program's rich and diverse curricula: the Humanities major, Peace & Conflict studies minor and graduate certificate, and Western Civilization I and II sequence. This important educational exercise has been the occasion for us to explore further the Program's mission to the KU community and to the state of Kansas, and craft a succinct mission statement: *The Humanities & Western Civilization Program at the University of Kansas offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of intellectual and cultural practices and traditions in world civilizations, with an emphasis on the engagement of western civilization in the history of ideas and with other cultures. The program's focus on values, ethics, and civil debate is also reflected in its emphasis on critical thinking, reading and writing, and on individualized student advising and a flexible curriculum.* We believe this encapsulates what we do, and do well.

Special points of interest:

- **April 25th**, 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. "Environmental Geopolitics in the Twenty-First Century," Jayhawk Room, Kansas Union
- **April 30th** Awards Ceremony will be held in the Malott Room, Kansas Union, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- First day of Summer Session starts **June 5th, 2012**



Congratulations...

Dale Urie was recently promoted to Senior Lecturer and was awarded a five-year contract in the Humanities & Western Civilization Program. In June, Dale also participated in the prestigious 2011 Fulbright German Studies Seminar. Over a period of two weeks, in Berlin, Germany and Brussels, Belgium, Dale joined other scholars in exploring what it means to be a member of a distinctive national group in Europe today. She reports that participants "listened to and interacted with many prominent scholars, politicians, community activists working in the field and ordinary people affected by multicultural experiments," with a particular focus on the Turkish community in Germany. This extraordinary experience has already enhanced Dale's teaching, as she has introduced a unit on "Ethnic Diversity and National Identity" into HWC 505 Europe Today, which is cross-listed with European Studies and History,

and she is using materials and insights from the seminar on various state attempts to minimize racism and facilitate integration in HWC 435 Islam in Europe, which is also cross-listed with European Studies 430. HWC is proud of this exceptional and enthusiastic instructor.

Mid-America Humanities Conference

The Third Annual Mid-America Conference for interdisciplinary student research held on March 9th-10th 2012 at the Kansas Union was a resounding success. We are gratified by the quality of the papers, the attendance of both faculty and students at the sessions, and the generous support of our colleagues who served as moderators and respondents, and the many units that provided financial support. Kudos to Director Diane Fourny, who organized a display in the Teaching Gallery of the Spencer Museum of Art, as well as arranging for the showing of Chinese films that were the subject of Professor Jerome Silbergeld's lectures, "Musical Text and Textual Music in Chinese Cinema."

Be sure to check the Humanities & Western Civilization webpage (hwc.ku.edu) for next year's Mid-America Humanities conference, to be held on 8-9 March 2013 at the Kansas Union. The topic for the Fourth Annual MAHC will be "Journeys: Transforming Inner and Outer Landscapes."

University of Kansas

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