



University of Colorado **Boulder**

2016 Program Review

Center for the Humanities and the Arts

Academic Review and Planning  
Advisory Committee Report

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt W. Hill'.

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs : Date

02/13/2017

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## Process Overview

The review of the Center for the Humanities and the Arts (CHA) was conducted in accordance with the 2016 review guidelines. The Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) conducts and writes the final reviews of all academic units on the Boulder campus. The unit prepared a self-study, which was reviewed by an internal review committee (IRC) of two CU Boulder faculty members from outside of CHA. The IRC noted that CHA's report did not "follow the format of the ARPAC self-study guidelines," failing to enter responses to eight of the seventeen questions. CHA submitted a revised report on April 11, 2016 that addressed some of the IRC's concerns. An external review committee (ERC), consisting of a disciplinary expert from outside of the University of Colorado, visited the unit on April 26 and 27, 2016, reviewed the relevant documents, and met with faculty, students, staff, university administrators, and ARPAC members. The external reviewer's comments and recommendations are cited at appropriate points throughout the report. This public document reflects the assessment of and recommendations for the Center for the Humanities and the Arts as approved by ARPAC.

Academic Review  
and Planning  
Advisory  
Committee  
(ARPAC)

Marie Banich, Professor, Institute of Cognitive Science  
Sanjai Bhagat, Professor, Leeds School of Business  
Adam Bradley, Associate Professor, Department of English  
Erin Furtak, Associate Professor, School of Education  
David Korevaar, Professor, College of Music  
Clayton Lewis, Professor, Department of Computer Science  
Jack Maness, Associate Professor, University Libraries  
David Mapel, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science  
Susan Nevelow Mart, Associate Professor, School of Law  
Bryan Taylor, Professor, Department of Communication

Academic year 2016-2017  
voting members

Non-voting members

Jeff Cox, ARPAC Chair, Vice Provost and Associate Vice  
Chancellor for Faculty Affairs and Professor of English and  
Humanities  
Bob Boswell, Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, and Community  
Engagement and Professor of Molecular, Cellular, and  
Developmental Biology  
Katherine Eggert, Quality Initiative Leader and Professor of English  
Bill Kaempfer, Senior Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor  
for Budget and Planning and Professor of Economics  
Mary Kraus, Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for  
Undergraduate Education and Professor of Geological Sciences  
Ann Schmiesing, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School  
and Professor of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures

Staff

Andre Grothe, Office of Faculty Affairs

## Unit Overview

The campus offers no standardized description of the Center for the Humanities and the Arts (CHA) on the Office of Data Analytics' (ODA) website, but information regarding comparable units can be found there (<http://www.colorado.edu/oda/institutional-research/institutional-level-data/information-department/academic-review-and-0>). For other units in this year's cycle, ODA updates profiles annually in the fall semester, and so other reports from this cycle cite data posted in October 2015 that reflects the states of these units in academic year (AY) 2014-2015. In lieu of ODA data, this report cites figures from the CHA's self-study, revised in April 2016.

CHA is an interdisciplinary research center that aims to foster excellence across humanities and arts disciplines (including the humanistic social sciences) by supporting faculty research, hosting colloquia and guest speakers, sponsoring graduate training, and connecting with the community beyond the campus. The external reviewer notes that CHA is "in [a] good position and poised for growth."

### Personnel and governance

CHA has a faculty director, who is a senior scholar from the humanities or the arts elected for a renewable four-year term. CHA's director reports to the dean of the Graduate School. The current CHA director began his tenure in 2010.

CHA also employs a Program Assistant II, who supports the director and manages the Hazel Barnes Flat in London, and an Administrative Assistant III, who supports the Graduate Committee on the Arts and Humanities (GCAH), CHA's advisory board, and two allied centers (the Brakhage Center and the Laboratory for Race and Popular Culture [RAP Lab]). In addition, a steering committee of faculty of all ranks from across the humanities and

the arts acts in an advisory capacity, meeting with the director at least once a semester.

Research, scholarship, and  
creative work

CHA serves the campus as an institute dedicated to fostering excellence in research and creative work across the arts and humanities disciplines. It attends to this mission by administering a series of programs, services, and funding opportunities for faculty and graduate students. Starting in academic year (AY) 2011-2012, CHA launched a Faculty Fellowship Program, an open competition initially offered to assistant and associate professors in need of support to finish projects that might better position them for tenure and promotion. Starting in AY 2014-2015, these fellowships were open to full professors as well. Recipients receive a two-course reduction and present their work at a spring symposium. Awardees are selected by a panel of three anonymous outside reviewers. Since its inception, the program has awarded 40 fellowships. The CHA-sponsored faculty fellowship program replaced the longstanding practice, spanning the first thirteen years of the center's existence (from 1997-2009), of sponsoring year-long interdisciplinary faculty seminars centered on a theme and culminating in a spring conference. Participating faculty received a two-course release.

In addition to the fellowship, CHA coordinates several other initiatives geared toward supporting the research and creative work of faculty in the arts and the humanities. Each year CHA distributes up to \$100,000 in GCAH grants, supporting research travel, special projects, and visiting scholars. Starting in 2013, CHA also began awarding subvention funds to support the completion of faculty publications. In 2014, the director initiated an annual visit from a developmental book editor who provides one-on-one attention to as many as a dozen faculty members and graduate students at different stages of completing book

manuscripts. The external reviewer noted that this initiative is “innovative and important.”

#### Graduate education

CHA has no official role in undergraduate education, though it makes indirect contributions by enriching the artistic and intellectual community on campus and by providing professional development opportunities for faculty members and graduate students. In graduate education, CHA has long funded graduate student fellowships to support research and conference travel. At present, CHA (in part through GCAH, which the CHA director co-chairs) administers the following graduate student fellowships: Arts and Science Fellowships, Thomas Edwin Devaney Fellowships, and CHA Dissertation Fellowships. In the years since the last review, CHA has expanded these efforts by adding the “2<sup>nd</sup>-Leg Graduate Student Summer Fellowship” (modeled on a National Endowment for the Humanities [NEH] mid-career fellowship), which allows students to increase their versatility by pursuing research and training in an allied field. In July 2016, CHA was among 28 units across the country to be awarded a NEH Next Generation PhD grant. Their successful proposal included four core aims: 1) building a digital humanities foundation course; 2) reconceiving the PhD dissertation; 3) establishing nonacademic internships for graduate students; and 4) building a reliable humanities alumni network.

CHA also sponsors the Minorities in Philosophy (MAP) program as well as two graduate student-led speaker series, one in English and one in Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures (GSLL). CHA has also been active in organizing joint recruitment activities for prospective graduate students across several arts and humanities units.

Most significantly, CHA has designed and begun instituting an integrated PhD in literary and cultural studies, the Consortium of Doctoral Studies in Literatures and Cultures, an ambitious program that brings together Asian Languages and Civilizations, Classics, English, French and Italian, Germanic and Slavic, and Spanish and Portuguese in a shared funding model. The memorandum of agreement for the program identifies three core goals: (1) to “improve the quality of PhD applicants”; (2) to shorten time to degree; and (3) “to improve and insure the competitiveness, the ranking, and the diversity of CU’s PhD programs in the literatures.” The program aims to position CU Boulder graduate literature programs to recruit and to retain top students through enhanced graduate packages, opportunities for cross-unit collaboration and teaching, and a stronger sense of intellectual community. In doing so, it answers the call of the Flagship 2030 Strategic Plan for “advancing the graduate education mission.”

#### Budget

CHA has an annual budget of approximately \$700,000. CHA’s funding comes from a variety of sources, including the provost (\$56,000), the dean of the Graduate School (\$100,000), the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (\$190,000), Faculty Affairs and the Leadership Education for Advancement and Promotion program (\$18,000), and private endowments (yielding approximately \$370,000 per annum).

The self-study mentions that remaining balances are transferred on a yearly basis into a plant fund, which supports 25 percent of the Administrative Assistant III salary and funds future fellowships. CHA reports in the self-study that the balance in the plant fund is approximately \$422,000, which includes encumbered funds earmarked for fellowships.



Space            The second floor of the Macky Auditorium building houses CHA. Its space includes a main office, two interior offices (one for the director and one for the program assistant), and a seminar room.

## Past Reviews

CHA last underwent program review in 2009. At that time, it employed a full-time director, a full-time staff member, and a half-time staff member. ARPAC's 2009 report outlined a handful of recommendations to the provost and to the unit. To the provost, ARPAC recommended that CHA should continue to report to the dean of the Graduate School rather than to the dean of Arts and Sciences, better reflecting the center's cross-campus reach. This practice has continued and should remain. To the unit, ARPAC offered six recommendations:

1. **Revise its bylaws to establish procedures for the director's selection and term.** These revisions were completed soon after the 2009 report was filed;
2. **Draft a strategic plan.** This work was also done, most recently in the summer of 2013 when CHA undertook a self-study and strategic planning exercise. As the self-study points out, the strategic plan identified three goals: "continued improvement of faculty support, increased support for graduate students, and outreach beyond the campus." As noted in this report, CHA has taken steps to achieve each of these goals;
3. **Find ways of expanding and enhancing its role in graduate education.** As detailed in the present report, graduate education has become a primary focus of CHA under its present director;
4. **Focus on increasing funding opportunities for arts and humanities scholars on the Boulder campus rather than for visiting scholars.** The Faculty Fellowship Program is a direct response to this recommendation;

5. **Plan for and develop a rationale for future space needs.** This remains largely unaddressed;
  
6. **Create a CHA development committee.** As noted in the self-study, the reconstitution of the disbanded advisory board was a primary focus of the first years of the new director's tenure. The present board is active and engaged, if perhaps not fully utilized.

As is the case in the present review, the 2009 the external reviewers emphasized CHA's importance to the campus, noting that "a humanities center is a precious resource for a university."

## Campus Context

CHA is interdisciplinary by design, something noted in the internal review, the external review, and the self-study. The director visits arts and humanities departments regularly so as better to inform allied units of the center's initiatives as well as to gather information to guide future work. In one example of CHA's interdisciplinary coordination, the center brought together forty faculty members, with representatives from all of the humanities and arts units, to draft a 2012 NEH proposal entitled "Radical Philology." Though the proposal was not funded, CHA reports that the process itself cemented important collaborative relationships that helped pave the way for the cross-unit graduate initiative in the literatures.

CHA has acted as an incubator for several other campus organizations, contributing funds and staff support to the Digital Arts and Textualities Archive, the Mediterranean Studies Group, the Laboratory for Race and Popular Culture (RAP Lab), and the Translation Studies Group. It also offers support to existing faculty and graduate student organizations such as the Brakhage Center, the Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, and the Center for Media, Religion, and Culture. In 2013 and 2014, CHA collaborated with the CU Art Museum on two co-curated shows ("David Maisel 'Black Maps,'" 2013 and "Aby Warburg in the West," 2014). Together, these efforts testify to a robust vision of transdisciplinary collaboration in keeping with the mission of the center and the vision of the current director.

## National Context

CHA enjoys growing national visibility, in part because of the current director's membership on the International Advisory Board of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI), an organization of more than 200 humanities centers from over two dozen countries. According to the external reviewer, this relationship "gives tremendous visibility to CHA, nationally and internationally." Also, as a recipient of a recent grant through the National Endowment for the Humanities, CHA joins a consortium under the leadership of the Council of Graduate Schools. This provides CHA with a new network of contacts and raises the center's profile among arts and humanities institutes nationwide.

## Analysis

CHA brings together humanities scholars and artists through interdisciplinary exchange. The present director has implemented several new programs, while doing away with some longstanding practices. These changes have proved a source of some genuine disagreement, as reflected in the IRC report, which argues that CHA “should aspire to a return to greater visibility and to a restored capacity to provide scholars with a sense of community.” The external reviewer sees this activity and visibility already in evidence in CHA’s most recent initiatives, calling on the campus to provide “deeper investment” in CHA to help increase its visibility on campus. According to the external reviewer, “the CHA has the right director for this moment and the potential to fulfill the very promise of all Humanities Centers, which is to be nimble and ahead of the curve, at once innovative and responsive, attuned to the major questions of our times and able to conduct projects that can transform the intellectual and artistic community on campus and beyond.”

## Personnel and governance

The external reviewer lauds the personnel presently in place, observing that “[t]he CHA Director and Staff are excellent.” Additionally, “[t]he Director is respected, thoughtful, energetic, and ambitious, and he and his staff work extremely well together. He has great vision for the CHA and the University more generally, and it is the kind of vision that administrators in the College and Graduate School should continue to support.” The external reviewer recommends the addition of an assistant director. Rather than a member of the faculty, this director would be “someone who holds a PhD in the humanities” and “who understands the disciplines, emerging fields, scholarly needs, etc., but also is comfortable organizing events, writing across disciplines, and audiences, advocating for the CHA will create long-term continuity and allow for the growth and visibility that all with whom I spoke

desire. This is going to be an essential step for the next stage of the CHA.”

CHA’s self-study does not address the matter of expanding personnel. However, in a memo to ARPAC dated August 21, 2016, the CHA offered the following addition to their self-study on the matter of staffing: “Since finalizing the report, the work load of the Center has grown considerably: aside from running the [integrated PhD program], and implementing the NEH Grant, we also need to figure out new funding structures for graduate students in History, Philosophy, and Theater and Dance, and implement these. We therefore hope that the external reviewer’s suggestion that the director be supported by an assistant will be given its due weight.” With CHA’s new role overseeing the cross-unit PhD program in literatures and cultures, it would behoove CHA to work with the campus to devise a plan for effective administration of the program. These discussions might involve proposals for hiring an assistant director or, alternatively, for a leadership structure that draws upon the directors of graduate studies from the participating units to help administer the PhD program on a revolving basis. Such a structure would make use of experience from across the units while enhancing unit investment in the program’s success and furthering knowledge of the program’s administrative practices.

Of primary importance to the current director during his first term has been rebuilding an external advisory board (a body that had been disbanded by his predecessor) with the aim of improving fundraising and fostering connection between the CHA and the artistic and humanistic communities outside of the university. For his second term, he would do well to direct attention at maximizing the potential of that board and galvanizing the faculty

steering committee, which by all accounts has atrophied in recent years.

Research, scholarship, and  
creative work

By most accounts, replacing the year-long faculty/graduate student thematic seminar model with an unrestricted individual fellowship competition has proved a success. Numerous faculty publications have resulted from the leave the program provides, and many of the fellows have gone on to be awarded tenure and promotion. However, one consequence of relinquishing the seminar model has been a decrease in CHA's visible role in fostering community and common cause around the humanities and the arts. Rather than returning to the seminar model, CHA might consider alternative means of cultivating community among artists and humanists on campus. This might include, but is not limited to, concepts like faculty development seminars, faculty and graduate student working groups, dissertation workshops, interdisciplinary research clusters, and other models for engaging in collaborative work. Any one or more of these might be undertaken at relatively low cost.

The IRC reports a sense among some faculty in the arts that when it comes to CHA initiatives, the arts has not always been accorded a fair share of consideration as compared to the humanities. Whether this is a real or perceived disparity, CHA would do well to take this sentiment seriously and devise steps to address it, both through continued programmatic efforts and through better publicity of ongoing arts-based initiatives. Focus on the arts shall be an even more pressing need with the advent of the PhD program in literatures and cultures, which will have the perceived and perhaps the real effect of shifting CHA's attentions toward the humanities. One means of remedying possible disparities, both in perception and in practice, might be for CHA to better publicize



and even look to extend its efforts in offering administrative and logistical support for smaller, allied centers.

Graduate education and support

The signal achievement of CHA since the 2009 review may prove to be its development of an ambitious new program for graduate training in the literatures. The external reviewer terms it “perhaps the most exciting institutional project at the CHA.” The reviewer continues: “I imagine that its ultimate success will require the investment of the graduate school in adequate recruitment packages. In combination with the intellectual vision this could make CU one of the most exciting places to study languages and literatures.”

The external reviewer noted in particular that the CHA’s new fellowship model and graduate training program are “bold, thoughtful, and difficult to implement.” They have “the potential to transform CU’s profile” if provided with continued, and increased, support from the university.

Inclusive excellence

CHA reports a handful of efforts to address its stated aim of leading in matters of diversity in the arts and humanities. CHA is well positioned to lead on inclusive excellence given its relationship to units in which the study of diversity and ethnicity are at the core of their academic missions. The first step must be for CHA to submit an inclusive excellence document as requested by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement in the spring of 2016, as soon as possible. The new PhD program in literatures and cultures has the potential to be an engine for diversity, both in the successful recruitment of graduate students from diverse backgrounds and in a diversified curriculum across the participating units. CHA also calls attention to its participation in the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes’ (CHCI)

initiative to establish faculty exchange programs with universities in sub-Saharan Africa.

In its revised self-study, CHA alluded vaguely to hosting “two conversations among minority faculty and students that revolve around deep changes in diversity politics.” ARPAC hopes to see something more tangible materialize from these deliberations. As the primary interdisciplinary space in the arts and humanities on the campus, CHA has a responsibility to engage actively in both discussions and actions that enhance the diversity of the campus’ faculty and student make-up, the range and quality of its intellectual engagement with the world in all its complexity, and its support of faculty and students from diverse backgrounds. Diversity merits much more clear and specific attention than presently directed to it in the unit’s self-study. CHA might consider devising a strategy for fostering inclusive excellence across the units through a specific CHA initiative.

## Recommendations

The members of the Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC) address the following recommendations to the Center for the Humanities and the Arts, to the dean of the Graduate School, and to the deans of the colleges of Arts and Sciences, and Media, Communication and Information, and Music. It is the committee's intention that the recommendations serve to benefit program improvement and development and to further the mission of the University of Colorado Boulder.

### To the unit

1. Foster a closer and more collaborative relationship between faculty in the arts and in the humanities. Continue to ensure that faculty members in arts units feel welcome and engaged in CHA activities;
2. To raise the center's visibility among unit leadership in the college and among the directors of other campus centers, ARPAC strongly encourages the CHA director to resume his practice of attending chairs and directors' meetings as well as divisional meetings;
3. To extend the center's ongoing efforts to increase its visibility beyond traditionally allied units in the arts and the humanities and to cultivate cross-campus collaboration, expand the director's faculty-meeting visits to include visits to units beyond the colleges of Arts and Sciences and Music that might yield opportunities for collaboration (Business, Education, Engineering and Applied Science, Media, Communication and Information [CMCI], and the Environmental Design Program, for instance);
4. Engage the steering committee more directly in the center's work. This might include, for instance, tasking the steering committee with spearheading efforts to build intellectual

community on campus focused on the humanities and the arts. This might also include developing a collective inclusive excellence project;

5. In the absence of the seminar model, develop strategies and programs to cultivate a stronger sense of intellectual community around the humanities and the arts. These efforts should involve both faculty and graduate students across disciplines;
6. Develop a publicity strategy that calls better attention to CHA's work, both on campus and beyond. This might include a newsletter (online, in print, or both), a targeted social media campaign, and more effective advertising for the center's events;
7. Work with the Graduate School to explore how the center might best administer the collaborative PhD program in the literatures. This might include discussion of hiring an associate director to oversee the new program. Alternatively, it might involve tasking directors of graduate studies from participating units in helping to oversee the program on a revolving basis;
8. Consider scheduling regular meetings with the dean of Arts and Sciences and/or the associate dean for the Arts and Humanities along with the deans of Music and of CMCI to foster clearer communication and collaboration on matters of mutual interest in the development of the arts and humanities on campus;
9. Extend efforts in fundraising and in seeking endowment monies and annual giving revenues. Work with the Graduate

School's advancement officer to outline an aggressive fundraising strategy;

10. Lead in matters of inclusive excellence on campus, both in fostering discussion and in taking targeted action. As a first step, respond to the request of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement to submit an inclusive excellence plan that details how CHA can contribute in this area across the humanities and the arts;

11. Consider extending existing efforts to act as an incubator and source of administrative support for smaller, allied centers if opportunities present themselves, particularly in support of the arts.

To the dean of the  
Graduate School

12. Work with CHA to explore how the center might best administer the collaborative PhD program in the literatures. This might include discussion of hiring an associate director to oversee the new program. Alternatively, it might involve tasking directors of graduate studies from participating units in helping to oversee the program on a revolving basis.

To the deans the colleges of  
Arts and Sciences, Media,  
Communication and  
Information, and Music

13. Consider scheduling regular meetings with the CHA director to foster clearer communication and collaboration on matters of mutual interest in the development of the arts and humanities at CU Boulder.

To the Office of  
Advancement

14. Work with CHA to outline an aggressive fundraising strategy for seeking endowment monies and annual giving revenues.

## Required Follow-Up

The director of the Center for the Humanities and the Arts shall report annually on the first of April for a period of three years following the year of the receipt of this report (i.e., April 1<sup>st</sup> of 2018, 2019, and 2020) to the dean of the Graduate School and to the provost on the implementation of these recommendations.

Likewise, the dean shall report annually on the first of May to the provost on the implementation of recommendations addressed to the school. The provost, as part of the review reforms, has agreed to respond annually to all outstanding matters under her/his purview arising from this review year. All official responses will be posted online.