

GRANT NEWS

Hofstra's Humanities Faculty Capture National Spotlight



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We are pleased to introduce a new column called "Grant News."

The purpose of this column is to recognize some of the major accomplishments of Hofstra University faculty in national and international, peer-reviewed grant competitions, and important regional grant competitions.

The 2001-02 academic year has been a banner year for the humanities at Hofstra. One would be hard-pressed to find an institution that scored better in recent national competitions in the humanities.

Summer Seminar Grant: The Vietnam War

Our first piece of exciting news arrived in the form of an award to **Carolyn Eisenberg**, a faculty member in the Department of History. Dr. Eisenberg has received a grant of more than \$86,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to conduct a summer seminar for teachers. Her special topic is *The Vietnam War: Morality and Politics*. Teachers from around the country will vie for one of the 15 seats available in this six-week seminar to be held at Hofstra University from June 24 through August 2.

Dr. Eisenberg explains that her purpose in offering this seminar is to help teachers become familiar with some of the important literature on the Vietnam War and "to consider broad themes which may be helpful to them in developing appropriate curriculum. I want to engage the issue that makes this a difficult subject to teach, namely the intense moral controversy that surrounded the war at the time and which persists in American memory." Dr. Eisenberg explains that we now know "a great deal more about the formation of policy" on the war, pointing to the de-classification of important government documents in recent years. "I would like the participants at the seminar to become familiar with the most recent literature and to gain experience doing a critical evaluation of some key texts."

"Dr. Eisenberg is perfectly suited to conduct this seminar," observes Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean Bernard J. Firestone. "Her book *Drawing the Line: The American Decision to Divide Germany, 1944-1949*, published by Cambridge University Press in 1996, is among the most important and groundbreaking examinations of this foundational period of the Cold War. Her current research on the Nixon administration's policies toward the Vietnam War earned her a prestigious research fellowship from the International Center for Advanced Study at New York University during the fall 2001 semester."

Only 17 universities received Summer Seminars for Teachers grant awards from NEH this year. Each seminar is limited to 15 participants and is open to teachers from either public or private schools in grades K-12. The NEH provides assistance in publicizing these seminars and offers teacher participants a stipend of \$3,700 each to cover costs of travel, housing and other expenses associated with seminar participation. With support of this kind, the selection committee must review large numbers of applicants for very limited seating. Dr. Eisenberg indicates that the selection committee looks for applicants "who are prepared for a rigorous six weeks of study and who will bring to the seminar a diversity of teaching experiences."

NEH Fellowships in 2002

More good news from the National Endowment for the Humanities arrived as the fall semester drew to a close. The names of three Hofstra University faculty

members figured prominently when the NEH announced this year's winners of prestigious Research Fellowship Awards. **James A. Berger**, **Sharryn M. Kasmir** and **Lisa Merrill** combined to give Hofstra University a total of three NEH Research Fellowships this year – an accomplishment exceeded only by the University of Michigan (five awards) and University of Notre Dame (four awards).

NEH Research Fellowships provide financial support that enables selected scholars to pursue advanced work in the humanities. The tenure of an NEH Research Fellowship appointment normally covers an uninterrupted period of nine to 12 months, during which time the fellow devotes full time to the proposed research project. A total of only 171 fellowships were awarded in this highly competitive competition. The award-winning research topics of Hofstra's honorees are as follows:

- James A. Berger, Ph.D., Department of English, Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (American Literature: "Those Who Can't Speak: Language Impairment in Modern Literature and Culture")
- Sharryn M. Kasmir, Ph.D., Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Anthropology: "The Saturn Corporation and the Production of Post-Fordism")
- Lisa Merrill, Ph.D., Department of Speech Communication and Rhetorical Studies, School of Communication (Theater History and Criticism: "Nothing But a Memory: A Volume of the Selected Letters of Charlotte Cushman, 1816-1876")

"The awarding of three such prestigious fellowships to Hofstra University faculty in a single year confirms what I know to be fact, that we have outstanding scholars on our faculty, and that Hofstra University faculty accomplishments are at the very highest levels of their disciplines," said Herman A. Berliner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Grant to Promote Undergraduate Asian Studies

The Freeman Foundation (Stowe, VT) has announced the approval of a \$500,000 grant to Hofstra University to advance the University's undergraduate programs in Asian Studies. A special congratulations to **Patricia Welch** of the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages, who also serves as Director of the Asian Studies Program. Dr. Welch assumed the leadership role in preparing this grant proposal last spring. "We're all very excited about the grant," Dr. Welch states. "Interest in Asian Studies at Hofstra University is very high, and the grant from the Freeman Foundation will increase our visibility and help us enhance opportunities for students and faculty in the program in the years to come." Margaret Abraham, Chairperson of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, adds that the grant provides "the chance for students and the larger community to learn about the cultural diversity of Asia."

Asian Studies is an interdisciplinary program designed to further understanding of the traditional and modern societies of Asia through teaching, research and service. The grant will allow Dr. Welch and her colleagues to develop new courses and increase research opportunities for students and faculty alike. The four-year project supported by this grant is designed to achieve one central goal: to offer students, faculty and members of the community an opportunity to extend and deepen their understanding and appreciation of Asia.

Although news of the grant did not arrive until January, Dr. Welch reports that several special events funded either in whole or in part through the grant have begun this semester. "In addition to

research and scholarship activities for faculty and students in Asian Studies, the grant allows us to expand the array of Asia-related cultural activities," some of which have already begun. Professor Zuyan Zhou has organized a mini contemporary Chinese film festival. This is the first of several film festivals that will feature Asian themes. Several experts have also been invited to speak on a variety of Asian-related topics, including "Foreign Influences on Chinese Cuisine" (with food samples!) and "Architect Frank Lloyd Wright in Japan." These are just a few immediate examples of cultural exposure that the Freeman grant will allow. "A significant component of the Asian Studies grant will be the initiation of a scholarly exchange program beginning in the second year of the grant," Dr. Welch explains. "The program will be modeled after a similar program at the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan, the Toyota



Provost Herman A. Berliner and President Stuart Rabinowitz meet with Professor Patricia Welch, author of a new \$500,000 grant from the Freeman Foundation, awarded to promote undergraduate Asian Studies programs at Hofstra University.

Visiting Professors program. Foreign scholars and other public figures will be invited to the Hofstra University campus to focus on and participate in short-term scholarly projects."

Dean Firestone takes pride in pointing out that "Asian Studies is one of a number of interdisciplinary area studies programs at Hofstra College. In the past two years, new programs have been created in Latin-American and Caribbean

Studies and Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies. A program in European Studies is currently in development. Taken together, these new programs, along with existing programs in Africana and Asian Studies, form a very substantial Global Studies curriculum. Dr. Welch's successful initiative represents a major contribution to the future of Asian and Global Studies at Hofstra."

Two Tales of a City: Architecture and Sociology in Chicago

Gail Satler (New College) is a recent recipient of a \$5,000 grant from the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation to support the completion of her new book, *Two Tales of a City: Architecture and Sociology in Chicago*, to be published by Northern Illinois University Press. Dr. Satler plans to discuss recent trends in Chicago architecture and planning from approximately 1985 to the present – utilizing the dual perspectives of sociology and architecture to analyze State Street and the city's riverfront. "Interweaving a study of newer or more recent Chicago architects with the tradition of urban sociology that grew out of the University of Chicago offers a new and useful vantage point for viewing and understanding city morphology and meaning," Dr. Satler explains. "I would therefore like to take another look at Chicago's story and place in architecture and urban sociology by looking at those who laid the foundation – Chicago's first and second generation and those who continue to shape Chicago's architectural and social landscape by focusing on two sites: State Street and the riverfront."

Funding for the humanities by government sources and private foundations is very limited and, consequently, very difficult to secure. The recent successes of Hofstra University faculty in obtaining grant and fellowship support speaks volumes to the abilities, talents and determination of our humanities faculty. Congratulations to all.