

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND PROVOST

MEMO

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**ATTENTION:** Senate

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**FROM:** Jonathan Driver, Vice-President, Academic & Provost, and Chair, SCUP

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**RE:** Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: Full Program Proposal for a  
MA in Humanities (SCUP 09-34)

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**DATE:** July 29, 2009

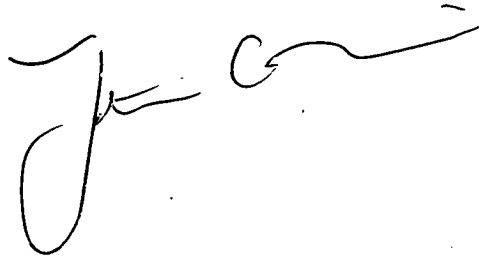
At its July 8, 2009 meeting SCUP reviewed and approved the full program proposal for a MA in Humanities in the Department of Humanities from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

#### Motion

That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the proposal for a MA in Humanities in the Department of Humanities from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

encl.

c: K. Mezei  
c: S. Gandesha



FULL PROPOSAL

MA IN HUMANITIES

JULY, 2009

REVISED

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# FULL PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FOR A MA. IN HUMANITIES

## 1. Executive Summary:

1. **Credential to be awarded:** Master of Arts in Humanities
2. **Location:** Simon Fraser University
3. **Faculty:** Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
4. **Department:** Humanities
5. **Anticipated start date:** September 2010

## 2. Curriculum

### 2.1. Background

In 1980, the Humanities programme was created to offer courses in several core areas of the Western tradition not included in SFU's curriculum, such as classical civilization and culture, the study of religion, and interdisciplinary approaches to social and political thought. By 1999, the programme had grown into a full-fledged department. As of Fall, 2008, enrolment in the existing undergraduate Humanities courses was 888 (almost double the enrollment of 1999). In Fall, 2008, students registered in courses included 27 majors, 19 minors, 38 extended minors. The Humanities Department currently offers 46 courses in the 07/08 calendar, 28 of which are upper division and 18 lower division. Our faculty complement has increased to 10.5 full-time faculty (including the J.S. Woodsworth Chair) and 2 joint appointments. Our steadily rising undergraduate base is an indication of the interest in, and support for, a text-based, interdisciplinary Master's humanities programme.

### 2.2. Objectives

The M.A. in Humanities is designed for students wishing to pursue specific cross-disciplinary, text-based research projects; it will enable specialization in a specific period or theme in the context of a programme that has a strong grounding in the humanistic tradition from ancient Greece to the modern period. Structured around two primary thematic modules—"Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Thought and Culture" and "Modernity and Its Discontents"--under which courses shall be organized, the programme will respond to persistent student demand for advanced studies in these areas. Moreover, it will address the lack of available graduate humanities programmes in Western Canada specifically encompassing the ancient through to the modern world. It will train students to think critically in different disciplines, historic periods, and cultures.

In contrast to Special Arrangements Programme and Graduate Liberal Studies (GLS) programme, it offers students the possibility of a *research-intensive, thesis-based M.A.* within *the context of a cohort and a department.* In contrast, the MLS for GLS is directed toward mid-career and professional students. Because the GLS programme is under the umbrella of the Humanities Department, students seeking a Masters degree will be advised as to the appropriate program to enroll in.

The programme is inextricably tied to the strategic planning of the department, the faculty and the university as a whole. It reflects the goal of the Humanities Department to pursue cross-disciplinary, text-based studies in the foundational areas of Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Studies; Religion and Culture; and Modern and Critical Thought, and Classical and Modern Chinese and Japanese Thought, Culture and Literature. It furthers the strategic aims of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the University, a core component of which, as indicated in the FASS Three-Year Plan 2004-07, consists of "a modernized version of *artes liberales*." Moreover, it advances the "President's Agenda: SFU at 40" that SFU provide the "most innovative interdisciplinary programmes."

### **2.3. Outcomes**

Students coming into the programme will receive training that will enable them to bring the methods and content of different, discrete disciplines to bear on their specific research projects. The programme will produce students who specialize in a period or theme in the context of a strong grounding in the humanistic tradition from antiquity to modernity. Students will thus be prepared for further studies either in an interdisciplinary programme of their choice or in specialized disciplines related to their research projects. Accordingly, the Humanities MA:

- responds to persistent student demand for advanced studies in classical, medieval, and renaissance thought and culture and in modernity;
- addresses the scarcity of available graduate interdisciplinary programmes in the humanities in Western Canada;
- trains students to think critically in different disciplines, across disciplines, and across historic periods and cultures;
- in contrast to both Special Arrangements and Graduate Liberal Studies programmes, offers students the possibility of a research-intensive thesis-based MA within the context of a cohort.

### **2.4. Research Expectations and Implications.**

Currently, 5 faculty members have SSHRC Standard Research Grants, which can, in part, be used to employ and train students. Two distinguished Chairs are housed in the department, the J. S. Woodsworth Chair, currently held by Eleanor Stebner, and which has a budget for a Research Assistant, and the Farley Chair, held by Paul Dutton. Graduate students will be encouraged to present their research in departmental colloquia and at events sponsored and funded by the Institute for the Humanities; they will also be mentored to publish their work in appropriate scholarly journals and venues. Our undergraduate students (Andrew Bingham and Daniel Harris) have presented extremely

successful papers at the ACTC (Association for Core Texts and Courses) undergraduate conference in St. Mary's College, Moraga, California, as well as at the ACTC senior conference here at SFU in Spring 2005. We would hope to build on this record in the Graduate programme. Others have gone on to graduate programmes at Cambridge, Oxford, Amsterdam, New York University, York University and University of Toronto, and one of our majors and Special Arrangements MA's has taken up a faculty position at the University of Winnipeg.

## **2. 5. Description of Programme and Learning Methodologies**

The proposed Masters in Humanities is an interdisciplinary graduate programme that normally shall consist of a thesis, and a minimum of 4 graduate courses, 2 of which must be from the list humanities graduate courses (5 credits each). It is designed for students who wish to pursue their own specific cross-disciplinary, text-based research projects. While the trend in graduate education is toward course-based MA's, we are committed to the idea that, given its unique, interdisciplinary nature, our programme ought to encourage students to produce a sustained piece of writing based on original research. We believe, therefore, that students should write a thesis rather than simply an extended research paper. For it would be in such an extended piece of writing that the interdisciplinary enquiries undertaken in course work could be synthesized to bear real fruit. This would, in turn, give graduates of the programme an excellent opportunity to move into disciplinary doctoral programmes, if they so choose. It would also prepare them for the challenges of producing a doctoral thesis.

The curriculum design offers access to students with a B.A. from a range of majors (e.g. Classics, History, English, Modern Literatures, Philosophy, Sociology and Anthropology) in the arts and social sciences from national and international universities.

Faculty research interests and expertise include classical, medieval, and renaissance thought and culture, modernity, religion and culture, cross-cultural translation, humanities and citizenship, humanities and the environment. The programme will draw from the two following modules, and these modules will be regularly and critically reviewed by the department.

### **Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Thought and Culture**

The traditions of classical, medieval and renaissance thought and culture establish the foundations of the humanities. This module affords students the opportunity to engage in philological and historical study of life in these periods. The particular foci would be Greek law, rhetoric and mythology, medieval paleography, religion, thought, culture, and society, and renaissance literature, art, history, and science, and classical Chinese culture and religion.

## **Modernity and its Discontents**

The modern world is constituted out of a unique confluence of three overlapping and occasionally contradictory streams: social modernization, philosophical modernity and aesthetic modernism. In this module, students will be able to explore the relationship between each of these individual currents and in different cultures. Students will also have the opportunity to investigate the closely related problematics of the opposition of reason and faith, the emergence of the scientific method, and the corresponding “disenchantment” and “rationalization” of nature.

## **2.6. Course Offerings**

The programme consists of the following masters courses:

- **Hum 800-5 Theories and Methods in the Humanities** (Fall Semester). Textual interpretation in the humanities within the context of inter-disciplinary approaches and the thematic modules (team taught).
- **Hum 801-5 Research Development Seminar in the Humanities** (Spring or Summer Semester). Articulation and refinement of research focus, agendas, and thesis, and prospectus preparation through faculty guidance and group work (team taught).
- **Hum 802-5 Themes in the Humanities.** Themes drawn from one of the two thematic modules, with topics such as: “Greek Law and Governance;” “History, Memory and Social Change in Chinese Literature and Film;” “What was Modernism?;” “Comparative European Modern Literature;” “Nature, Self, and Community.”
- **Hum 803-6 MA Thesis**
- **Hum 804-5 Directed Readings**
- **Hum 805-5 Special Topics** (e.g. see sample course, “Thinking About Nature, Culture, Persons”)

**Hum 800** will be offered every Fall, followed by **Hum 801** in the Spring Semester. **Hum 800** and **801** will enable students to further determine their area of focus and to sharpen and refine their thesis proposals. (**Hum 802** and **Hum 805** will also be offered each year.) Students will normally be expected to complete their course work within the first 3 semesters. It is recommended that one course be pre-1500, one post-1500. **Hum 800** and **Hum 802** will be offered each fall for entering students; **Hum 801** will be offered every spring to enable students to prepare for and clarify their thesis projects.

With the permission of the Graduate Chair and the relevant outside department, students will be permitted to take two of the four graduate courses in another department, such as History, Philosophy, English, Sociology and Anthropology, Women’s Studies, Contemporary Arts, Communications, and the Faculty of Environment, and receive credit

toward minimum degree requirements. Depending upon the availability of space, students from other graduate programmes will be admitted into our courses with permission of the Graduate Chair.

Upon admission to the graduate program, each student will be assigned a senior supervisor, and by the end of the first semester, the student will have established a supervisory committee as per graduate regulation 1.6 and will have met with their committee. Each student must prepare a ~5 page thesis proposal that is presented to the supervisory committee during their 3<sup>rd</sup> semester in the program. An appendix of the student's thesis proposal must include a timeframe for degree completion.

#### *Language Requirement*

Students will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English, either by passing the appropriate language course or sitting a reading examination.

### **3. Distinctive characteristics**

While there is an international trend in interdisciplinary graduate programmes in the humanities (e.g. the London Consortium's innovative Graduate Programme in Humanities and Cultural Studies), Canada has relatively few such programmes: Laurentian University offers an MA in "Interpretation and Values;" Memorial University, an MPhil in Humanities; York, an MA and PhD in Humanities; Concordia, a PhD in "Interdisciplinary Studies in Society and Culture"; and Carleton, a newly established PhD in "Cultural Mediation in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century".

Our MA would be the only one in Canada, apart from York, to be housed in a *distinct department with its own faculty*. The only other interdisciplinary graduate programme in Humanities in BC is the MA in Interdisciplinary Humanities at Trinity Western University, which, however, unlike ours, is not department based with its own courses, faculty and considerable institutional resources such as the Institute for the Humanities. Rather than drawing upon courses and colleagues from other departments, our programme offers its own courses within the two primary thematic modules; the courses themselves are cross-disciplinary. Moreover, we are unique at SFU insofar as our programme specializes in the reading of primary texts, often in original languages, both classical and modern. We emphasize text-based research projects geared towards the production of a research thesis M.A.

### **4. Evidence of student interest and labour market demand**

In the last four years, 10 Special Arrangement Masters and Doctoral graduate students have sought out supervisors in the Humanities Department. Our programme could therefore accommodate such students. It will also respond to the 70% of humanities majors expressing interest in pursuing graduate studies in humanities as well as the 20%



of Graduate Liberal Studies applicants more suited to a full-time, research-oriented Masters.

Having been provided with a rigorous training in critical thinking, interpretative and documentary methods, effective writing skills and reasoned judgment, graduates of our programme will excel in the teaching professions (secondary and college); in editing and publishing; in the cultural and media industries and public and civil service. Liberal education is considered a particularly valuable asset within a fast-changing business world, which increasingly requires individuals to possess the cognitive and analytical tools to enable them to adapt quickly to new environments.

This degree can serve as a bridge to higher graduate work in either disciplinary or interdisciplinary programmes. Students with a Masters in Humanities will be well prepared for doctoral work in inter-disciplinary PhD programmes such as those offered at York University, Carleton, or Concordia in Canada, and the rising number of such programmes in the U.S. and the U.K. such as the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities in London, The Philosophy, Interpretation and Culture Program at SUNY (Binghamton), The Graduate Program in Humanities at Stanford, The Humanities Program at the University of Texas (Dallas) and the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago, the History of Consciousness programme at UC Santa Cruz, to name but a few.

Those who wish to continue onto disciplinary programmes, for example, in classics, comparative literatures or religious studies, will be able to demonstrate not only a strong background in the specific discipline obtained during the Masters at SFU but, in addition, bring knowledge of and experience in other disciplines to enhance and broaden their perspectives.

##### **5. List of Faculty and Specialization.**

**Ian Angus:** modern and contemporary continental philosophy; Canadian culture studies

**Steve Duguid:** nature, self, community; sustainability; corrections and modernity

**Paul Dutton: Farley Chair:** medieval studies (cultural and intellectual history)

**Anne-Marie Feenberg:** 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> c European fiction and culture; ancient Greek Literature

**Samir Gandesha:** modern European thought and culture

**Christine Jones:** philosophy of literature; religion, literature and culture

**Tsuyoshi Kawasaki:** Japanese culture, political economy; joint appointment (Politics)

**Kathy Mezei:** domestic space; translation studies; modernism; comparative literatures

**David Mirhady:** classical rhetoric; Greek law; mythology; ancient philosophy

**Emily O'Brien:** Italian Renaissance studies; joint appointment (History)

**Eleanor Stebner, J.S. Woodsworth Chair:** religious studies, women and religion,

**Paul Crowe:** East Asian religion and culture (Asia Canada)

**Shu Yu Kong (2008): Asian Literature and Culture**

**New appointment (2008) in Humanities and Science (early Renaissance) [postponed]**

## **6. Program Consultations and Evaluation**

### **6. 1. Consultations:**

Advice has been sought from other units within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, leading to constructive consultations with the departments of History, Philosophy and English.

### **6. 2. Evaluations:**

The program will be under the direction of the departmental graduate committee composed of 2 departmental faculty, a graduate student representative, and a graduate chair. It will be subject to external departmental review every seven years and follow the policies and procedures of FASS and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## **7. Student admission and evaluation**

Applicants for admission will be required to hold an undergraduate degree with at least a 3.5 GPA in the humanities, or in humanistic disciplines such as Classics, History, Philosophy, English, and Women's Studies, or social sciences such as geography, sociology, anthropology, or political science. They will also have to meet the standard requirements for admission to a Simon Fraser University Master's Programme. Admission decisions will be based on undergraduate grades, a statement of the applicant's proposed area of interest along with a specific topic for the thesis, two samples of the applicant's writing, and three letters of reference. Students will be required to complete four courses in the Humanities and to submit a thesis (60-100 pages).

With a sequenced combination of 4 courses and thesis, students will be expected to complete the degree in 24 months. Thesis examinations will be conducted in accord with SFU minimum expectations. In addition, the Thesis examination regulations of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences will be followed.

We propose to admit a cohort of students for the first year of the programme under the restriction of their being supported financially for 2 semesters of funding from internal sources (eg. TA'ships, tutor marking), and in the 3rd semester per year the student funding is expected from the senior supervisor's research portfolio. This model will be reviewed by the department annually.

The Department of Humanities encourages students from other institutions to take courses or migrate between programmes. Qualified students from other BC institutions will certainly be accepted into the programme. The Western Deans' Agreement also allows students to transfer courses from other universities in Western Canada that articulate with courses of the proposed M.A. programme.

## **8. Fees, Funding and Resources for Students**

All students entering the programme will normally be eligible for departmental support in the form of, for example, Tutorial Assistantships and Tutor-Marker Positions. Depending on SFU budget, a minimum of at least 10 TA'ships and 6 tutor-marker positions in Humanities lower level courses are anticipated available per year. Research grants held by Angus (\$68,000), Dutton (\$30,000), Gandesha (\$58,000), Mezei (\$46,000, plus collaborative grant, \$125,000), Mirhady (\$55,000) funded 5 graduate students. In addition, both the J.S. Woodsworth Chair and the Institute for the Humanities have funds set aside for research assistants. We anticipate that the Dean of Graduate Studies will allocate a couple of Graduate Fellowships to support the first intake.

The fees for the programme will be consistent with other graduate programmes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

## **9. Related programs in your own or other BC post-secondary institutions**

Only Trinity Western University offers an M.A. in this subject, but see 3 above for important differences from our programme.

## **10. Budget Requirements**

There are no additional budget requirements at this point.

There are no new library costs. See revised library report attached as appendix D.

## **Contact Information**

Dr. Samir Gandesha  
Associate Professor  
Department of Humanities  
[gandesha@sfu.ca](mailto:gandesha@sfu.ca) (778-782-3406)

# APPENDIX A FACULTY CV'S

Replacement for pages 1-80 + 1-12 of original document

Detailed CV's for the following faculty members are available for review upon request. Please contact 778.782.3168 or email Bobbie Grant at [bgrant@sfu.ca](mailto:bgrant@sfu.ca).

Ian Angus, Humanities  
Paul Crowe, Humanites  
Stephen Duguid, Humanities  
Paul Dutton, Humanities and History  
Anne-Marie Feenberg-Dibon, Humanities  
Samir Gandesha, Humanities  
Christine Jones, Humanities  
Tsuyoshi Kawasaki, Political Science and Humanities  
Shuyu Kong, Humanities and Asia-Canada Program  
Kathy Mezei, Humanities  
David Mirhady, Humanities  
Emily O'Brien, History and Humanities

# APPENDIX B: NEW COURSE PROPOSAL FORMS AND SAMPLES

(Replacement for pages 13 – 36 of original document)

Detailed course proposal forms and sample course outlines for the following new courses are available for review upon request. Please contact 778.782.3168 or email Bobbie Grant at [bgrant@sfu.ca](mailto:bgrant@sfu.ca).

HUM 800-5	Theories and Methods in the Humanities
HUM 801-5	Research Development Seminar
HUM 802-5	Themes in the Humanities
HUM 803-6	MA Thesis
HUM 804-5	Directed Readings
HUM 805-5	Special Topics

**APPENDIX C CALENDAR ENTRY**

## Appendix C

### Proposed Calendar Entry

#### MA Programme in Humanities

The MA in Humanities is designed for students wishing to pursue specific and advanced cross-disciplinary, text-based research projects; it enables specialization in a period or theme in the context of a strong grounding in the humanistic tradition from ancient Greece to the modern period in different cultures. Structured around two primary thematic modules—"Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Thought and Culture" and "Modernity and Its Discontents" to which courses will be linked, it trains students to think critically in different disciplines, historic periods, and cultures.

#### Admission

Applicants for admission will be required to hold an undergraduate degree with at least a 3.5 GPA in the humanities, or in humanistic disciplines such as classics, history, philosophy, English, and women's studies, or social sciences such as geography, sociology, anthropology, or political science. They will also have to meet the standard requirements for admission to a Simon Fraser University Master's Programme. Admission decisions will be based on material submitted with application.

#### Degree Requirements

Students must complete a total of 20 credit hours and submit a thesis. Hum 800 and 801 are required courses. With a sequenced combination of 4 courses and thesis, students will be expected to complete the degree in 24 months. Students will enter the programme in the fall.

#### Graduate Courses

##### Required Courses:

Hum 800-5 Theories and Methods in the Humanities  
Hum 801-5 Research Development Seminar  
Hum 803-6 MA Thesis

##### Courses:

Hum 802-5 Themes in the Humanities  
Hum 804-5 Directed Readings  
Hum 805-5 Special Topics

### **MA Thesis**

Students will complete a thesis that is defended at an oral examination as described in sections 1.9 and 1.10 of the *Graduate General Regulations*. The thesis proposal must be approved by both the supervisory committee and the graduate committee.

### **Language Requirement**

Students will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English.



## **Appendix D**

### **Library Report – Revised June 2009**

(Replacement for pages 40 – 42)

A detailed report from the Library is available for review upon request.

## **Appendix E**

### **Suggested Reviewers**

(Replacement for pages 44-45)

A list of suggested reviewers is available for review upon request.

Please contact 778.782.3168 or email Bobbie Grant at [bgrant@sfu.ca](mailto:bgrant@sfu.ca) if you wish to review any of the above documentation