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# THE AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF ACADEMIC DEANS and THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY

## Fourth Biennial Conference

### ARE THE HUMANITIES NOW A LUXURY?

November 10-12, 2011  
The Francis Marion Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina

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#### Thursday, November 10

5:00pm Registration Opens [Mezzanine/Meeting Level]

6:00pm - 6:45pm Opening Reception [Pre-Function Carolina A]

All welcome; hors d'oeuvres and open bar.

7:00pm - 9:00pm OPENING PLENARY [Carolina A]

**The Ketchup's in the Bag and the Check is in the Mail: the Humanities, Economic Opportunity and Social Justice**  
President Lynn Pasquerella, Mt. Holyoke College

Recent debates about the value of the humanities during times of financial exigency have centered on whether a humanities education can offer economic opportunity that is worth the investment. This session will frame the issue of whether the humanities are a luxury within the broader context of matters of social justice.

A teacher, scholar, and prominent ethicist with a career marked by local and global engagement, Lynn Pasquerella became the 18th president of Mount Holyoke College on July 1, 2010. A celebrated master teacher who ascended through the professorial ranks in the Philosophy Department of the University of Rhode Island, she stepped into academic administration in 2004 as vice provost for research and dean of the graduate school and vice provost for academic affairs before joining the University of Hartford as provost. Throughout her leadership, she has focused on providing access to academic excellence, interdisciplinary as well as strongly discipline-based teaching and research, connections with and service to the community, and the enduring power of liberal education.

Pasquerella has written extensively in the areas of medical ethics, theoretical and applied ethics, metaphysics, public policy, and the philosophy of law.

#### Friday, November 11

7:30am - 12:00pm Registration Open [Mezzanine/Meeting Level]

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## 8:30am - 10:00am Concurrent Sessions (4)

### 1A. Healing Ourselves: How We Learned to Stop Whining and Embrace the Crisis [Pinckney Room]

In her recent book, *Not for Profit*, Martha Nussbaum argues that critical thinking, empathy, and creativity are essential skills and attitudes learned best through study of the humanities. In this session, we will discuss how to apply these skills we teach to our own efforts to preserve the humanities in higher education and in American culture. Through carefully analyzing the problem, understanding those who would attack our disciplines, and applying creative solutions, we may overcome the “crisis” in the humanities.

**Bonnie Irwin**, Dean, College of Arts and Humanities and **Patricia Poulter**, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Humanities, both of Eastern Illinois University

### 1B. The Humanities in Higher Education: Inconvenient Truths and Inconvenient Politics

[Laurens Room]

This interactive session will begin with some inconvenient truths about the current state of higher education. Economic stringency, spiraling tuition costs, dramatic increases in use of contingent faculty, faculty workload, and student debt are among the truths of contemporary higher education that the academy must come to terms with. Whether the humanities become a luxury, a casualty, or a necessity as a consequence of these pressures will be determined in part by the willingness and the ability of academic administrators to fully engage the question. Such engagement, inconvenient as it may be, will require political acumen and perseverance.

**Howard S. Erlich**, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, Ithaca College; **Paul Ewald**, Academic Dean, Regis College, Regis University

### 1C. Humanities and Its Discontents -Now

[Drayton Room]

In this structured roundtable discussion, four faculty of Berea College argue the claim for crisis in the humanities. By linking the facets of this claim to highly divergent models of understanding the humanities – namely, from the vantages of a senior administrator, center director, mid-career professor, and junior professor – the discussants engage the humanities and its discontents now. Our attention focuses on how these disciplines are envisioned today in a liberal arts tradition at a work college historically dedicated to serving under-represented and economically disadvantaged student populations. Each panelist brings multiple points of view and specific areas of disciplinary or professional expertise to this wide-ranging discussion; and, because each panelist also wears several hats at Berea College as well as in their arguments, this panel paints a nuanced picture of the challenges and potential strengths that tug the humanities in new directions today. The panel will invite audience responses in addition to the structured challenges and questions we aim to pose in the session.

**Stephanie Browner**, Dean of Eugene Lang College at The New School for Liberal Arts; **Chad Berry**, Academic Vice President and Dean of the College; **Stephen Pulsford**, Associate Professor of English; and **Jason Cohen**, Assistant Professor of English, all of Berea College

### 1D. Re-visioning the Humanities Through Undergraduate Research

[Calhoun Room]

The humanities help us to understand the human condition, to consider the enduring questions that each generation must address. If we believe that the humanities develop attitudes and skills necessary for sustaining democracy, what does this mean for higher education, undergraduate research and what changes must be made. Undergraduate education will be enhanced when students have the opportunity to examine questions that lead to a better understanding of the human condition. Undergraduate research in the humanities provides the opportunity for students to explore the big, enduring questions. The skills of framing questions, thinking critically and creatively, and communicating ideas are developed through undergraduate research experiences and these are also some of the necessary skills for an educated citizenry to sustain a democratic community.

**Nancy Hensel**, Executive Officer, Council on Undergraduate Research



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10:00am - 10:30am Coffee Break

10:30am - 12:00pm Concurrent Sessions (4)

## 2A. Humanities at the Core of Education: Core Texts, Faculty Cooperation, and Institutional Identity

[Calhoun Room]

Representatives of four institutions recognized for their commitment to undergraduate education grounded in core texts present innovations in assessing and articulating the relevance and necessity of liberal education in relation to the humanities, its impact on institutional culture, and its place in the current national debate on the value of higher education. The Executive Director of ACTC will moderate and describe the ongoing joint ACTC/AGLS initiative that will unite the results of these efforts with those of other participating institutions in a monograph.

**Howard Bloch**, Director, Humanities Program, Yale University; **Roosevelt Montás**, Director, Core Curriculum, Columbia University; **David DiMattio**, Dean of Clare College, St. Bonaventure University; **Kathleen Burk**, Associate Dean, Constantin College of Liberal Arts, University of Dallas; **J. Scott Lee**, Executive Director of the Association of Core Texts and Courses, Session Moderator

## 2B. Citizens, Secularists, and Capitalists: Practicing What We Teach

[Drayton Room]

This roundtable first will describe briefly three forces that have shaped the modern American university - democratization, secularization, and corporatization - before moderating a wider discussion about these forces and their consequences for the humanities. As higher education has evolved, it seems also to have allowed the language of other forces to shape the dialogue, thereby marginalizing the humanities as a central ideal of education: Can the humanities endure? At the heart of this session is a fundamental question facing colleges and universities in the twenty-first century: On what grounds are the humanities a viable, necessary area of inquiry?

**Ty Buckman**, Faculty Development Administrator and Professor English, Wittenberg University; **Jeffrey Kurtz**, Associate Professor Communication, Denison University; **Miguel Martinez-Saenz**, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Student Support Services, St. Cloud State University; **Tammy Proctor**, H. O. Hirt Professor History and President, Omicron of Ohio Phi Beta Kappa, Wittenberg University

## 2C. Student Attitudes Toward the Humanities

[Laurens Room]

The precipitous decline in humanities majors since 1970 often is attributed to students' attitudes, but it is not clear that students understand the humanities well enough to be making a rational choice between intrinsic value and job relevance, or whether they even believe the humanities have intrinsic value. Survey results from students in first-year interdisciplinary seminars as well as seminar readings and assignments designed to increase students' appreciation of the humanities will be presented.

**Eugenia P. Gerdes**, Professor of Psychology, Dean Emerita, College of Arts and Sciences, Bucknell University

## 2D. Humanities with a Purpose?

[Pinckney Room]

Metropolitan State College of Denver and Louisiana State University are answering the question posed by the conference in quite different ways--one very practical and the other wholly impractical. MSCD has developed a minor in Water Studies that blends practical skills and foundational liberal arts education. LSU is offering an English Capstone Seminar in which seniors explore how imaginative literature contributes to democracy, innovation, and the quest for meaning. The presenters hope to spark audience discussion about "meaningful" courses in the Liberal Arts that respond to institutions' unique missions, values, and "market" demands.

**Anna Nardo**, Alumni Professor of English, Louisiana State University; **Joan Foster**, Dean, School of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, and **Sandra Haynes**, Dean, School of Professional Studies, both of Metropolitan State College of Denver



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12:00pm - 3:00pm Lunch On Your Own

3:00pm - 5:00pm **PLENARY SESSION** [Carolina A]

**Fluency Across the Boundaries: A Compelling Case for the Humanities in the 21st Century**  
**President Ronald A. Crutcher**, Wheaton College

Ronald A. Crutcher became the seventh president of Wheaton on July 1, 2004 and was inaugurated on April 16, 2005. Since coming to Wheaton, President Crutcher has led a strategic planning process that has engaged the entire college community in envisioning the components necessary for continued leadership in the liberal arts for the 21st century. The strategic plan, *Wheaton 2014: Transforming Lives to Change the World*, was unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2006 and is now being implemented.

A recognized leader in the field of higher education, President Crutcher serves as co-chair of LEAP (Liberal Education and America's Promise), the Association of American Colleges and Universities' national campaign to demonstrate the value of liberal education. A past chair of the AAC&U board, he also is a member of the Board of the Berklee College of Music, and the Posse Foundation. He previously served on the Board of the American Council on Education.

An active musician and scholar, President Crutcher holds a faculty appointment at the college. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in March 1985 and has several recordings to his credit. He also is a member of the Klemperer Trio, which performs regularly in this country and in Europe. His publications include journal articles on higher education, leadership, chamber music, and Black classical music.

5:00pm - 6:30pm **Reception** [Gold Ballroom]

All welcome; hors d'oeuvres and open bar.

Saturday, November 12

8:30am-10:00am **Concurrent Sessions (3)**

**3A. From Critical Thinkers to Critical Actors: The Value of the Humanities** [Calhoun Room]

One way of expressing the value of the humanities is to focus on their applicability by suggesting that humanistic study cultivates skills that are reproducible and transferable into life beyond the academic appreciation of artifacts and texts. As valuable and convincing as this justification for the humanities is, this session proposes that we might reinvest the humanities with additional purpose by stressing two vital features of the humanities that are not emphasized enough: imagination and action. We will explore the ways college administrators and faculty can create an academic setting that aims to educate the "whole person" by advancing students' abilities not only to think critically but also to act and lead with imagination, boldness, and courage.

**Katie Conboy**, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; **Joe Favazza**, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty; **Scott Cohen**, Associate Professor of English; **Anna Lannstrom**, Associate Professor of Philosophy; and **John Lanci**, Professor of Religious Studies, all of Stonehill College

**3B. Slow Teaching** [Pinckney Room]

By analogy with the "slow foods" movement, we propose "slow teaching" to designate a desire to work against current tendencies to offer too much stimulation in the classroom, too many different, quick-hit activities aimed at capturing the attention of students who are imagined to be in a state of perpetual distraction. We are concerned that teachers of the humanities, encouraged by administrators to become more and more technologically savvy and heterogeneous in their pedagogical approaches, are eagerly working themselves out of meaningful existence. Instead, our role should be to slow things down in the classroom, to counterbalance prevailing tendencies in the culture rather than trying to hitch a ride. In our presentation, we will share some slow teaching techniques that work for us.

**Anthony R. Haigh**, Professor of Theatre and Chair, Dramatic Arts Program; **Ken Keffer**, Stodghill Professor of French and German; and **Mark Rasmussen**, Professor of English and Chair, Division of Humanities; all of Centre College

### 3C. Are the Humanities Now a Luxury? A Lesson in False Dichotomy [Drayton Room]

The common tendency to juxtapose the pre-professional schools, often thought of as practical, and the humanities, often thought of as a luxury, presents a false dichotomy. There is no juxtaposition, no war, no tension, between study for a vocation and study of the humanities. The struggle is all in our heads. To teach ourselves and our students how to live wisely in the 21st century, we must get out of that box at once. The evidence provided will underscore the popularity of the liberal arts classes and co-curricular activities (lectures, writing workshops). We will conclude with suggestions about how best to promote the liberal arts to various communities within higher education.

**Robert M. Eisinger**, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Savannah College of Art and Design;  
**Lynn Morton**, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and **Van King**, Dean of the Knight School of Communication, both of Queens University of Charlotte

10:00am - 10:30am Coffee Break

10:30am - 12:00pm CLOSING PLENARY [Carolina A]

### English Professors and Everyone Else

**Professor Mark Bauerlein**, Emory University

This talk will outline the terrible costs of the research productivity model in literary studies, a model which dominates more than 700 departments of language and literature in the United States. The pressure on younger and older scholars to publish books and articles is relentless, and the quantity of printed pages required for promotion reached absurd proportions many years ago. The impact it has upon their other professional duties (teaching and service) is severe, but the model continues, even after the objects of literary study--great works and authors--have already undergone thousands of interpretations and inquiries. It's a perverse system, one that purports the advance literary studies but in fact damages the material standing of literature departments on campus. I shall enumerate those damages, and suggest reforms to reverse the decline.

Mark Bauerlein is Professor of English at Emory University, where he has taught since 1989, apart from a term as Director of the Office of Research and Analysis at the National Endowment for the Arts (2003-05). He received his doctorate from UCLA in 1988. His books include *Literary Criticism: An Autopsy* (1997), *Negrophobia: A Race Riot in Atlanta, 1906* (2001), and *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future* (2008). His scholarly articles have appeared in *PMLA*, *Partisan Review*, *Yale Review*, and *Philosophy and Literature*, while his commentaries and reviews have appeared in *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *The Weekly Standard*, *TLS*, *Boston Globe*, *Commentary*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and elsewhere. He is currently working on a study of research and publication in literary studies.



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# *Special Thanks*

THE AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF ACADEMIC DEANS  
AND THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY

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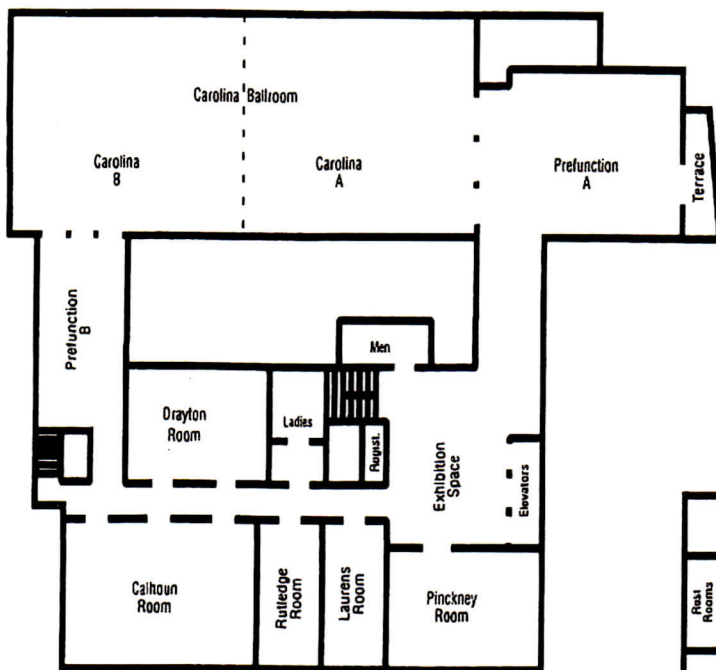
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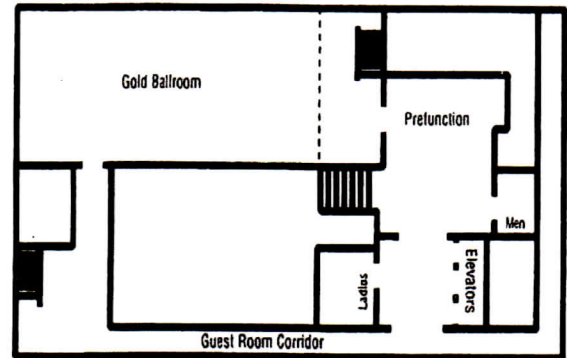
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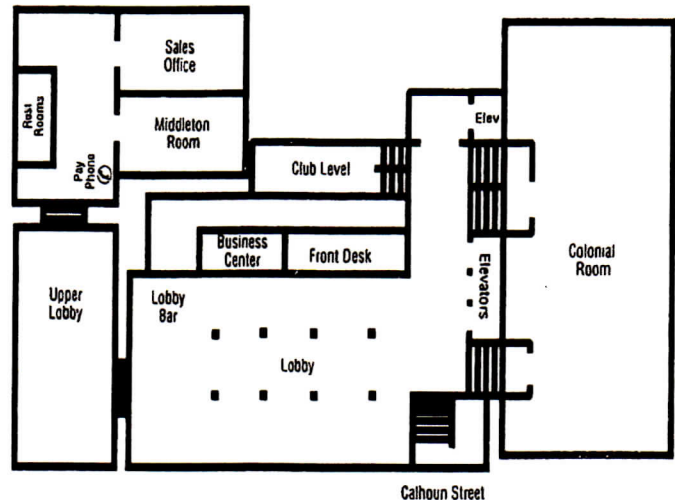
## Conference Room Information



Mezzanine/Meeting Level



The Gold Ballroom/Second Floor



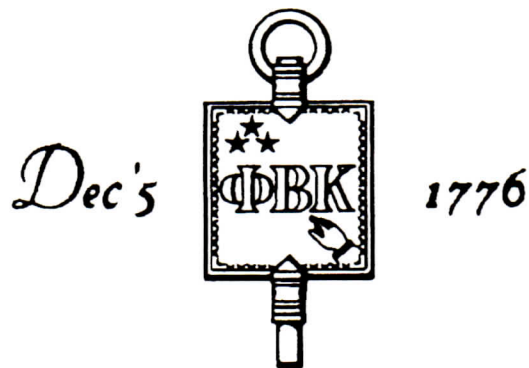
The Colonial Room/Lobby Level

# ACAD

AMERICAN CONFERENCE  
OF ACADEMIC DEANS

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