

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Office of the President
Office of Academic Affairs

Carol D. Frost, Vice President
Myron B. Allen, Provost

To: Humanities Initiative Steering Committee

From: Carol Frost and Myron Allen

Subject: Charge to the Committee

Date: November 2, 2012

Copies: Tom Buchanan, Oliver Walter, Nicole Ballenger, Andy Hansen, Maggi Murdock

The humanities belong to the core educational mission of the University of Wyoming: they offer historical perspectives, ways of knowing, insights that are not available through other disciplines, and critical analytical skills of great relevance to today's problems and opportunities. The humanities help develop well-educated citizens who embody ethical and democratic ideals and who sustain the cultural and interpersonal fabric of society.

As part of University Plan 4, we must develop measures that will strengthen and foster faculty scholarship in the humanities and thereby raise the prominence of humanities programs at UW. This planning requires the expertise of our humanities faculty, along with a considerable commitment of their time and creative energies. To assist in this effort, Dr. Todd Breyfogle¹ of the Aspen Institute² will facilitate three weekend sessions with the steering committee and other interested faculty on Nov. 30-Dec. 1, Feb. 1-2, and April 12-13. Paul Flesher, Susanna Goodin, and Eric Sandeen have agreed to co-chair the steering committee and oversee the preparation of a plan for the creation of a humanities center at UW by May 15, 2013.

The charge to the steering committee is as follows:

1. **Define the vision and mission of a humanities center at UW.** How will a humanities center foster a higher profile for humanities scholarship among our faculty? What activities will support humanities scholars and students? The committee may wish to consider how the center will contribute to distinction in humanities research, teaching and outreach.
2. **Describe the learning and scholarly outcomes expected to emerge from the center.** What metrics will enable us to evaluate the success of the center?
3. **Discuss how the humanities center will relate** to and enrich academic units, other UW units related to the humanities (such as the Art Museum and American Heritage Center), and public organizations such as the Wyoming Council for the Humanities.
4. **Lay out short- and long-term logistical arrangements for the humanities center.** In the short-term, how might the humanities center make use of the Guthrie House, which will become available in September 2014? Given current staffing and budget cuts, how might staff and other resources be redeployed to meet the needs of the humanities center? What opportunities for external funding are available in the near- and long-term?
5. **Design a timetable and strategy for implementation** over the next six years.

¹ Dr. Breyfogle is Director of Seminars at the Aspen Institute. He has published and lectured on the great books, political philosophy, theology, literature, and liberal education. His short biography is available at: <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/people/todd-breyfogle>.

² For information about the Aspen Institute, see <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/about/mission>.

Provisional schedule of activities:

November	Discuss charge to the committee with Provost Allen and Vice President Frost
Nov. 30-Dec 1	<u>First facilitated meeting</u> (including an hour for Breyfogle with Allen and Frost)
Dec-Jan	Steering committee meets with Allen and Frost; identifies participants and make plans for focus group meetings, stakeholder presentations, and interviews with external experts
Feb. 1-2	<u>Second facilitated meeting</u>
February	Steering committee meets with Allen and Frost; meets with humanities-oriented departments, plus AHC and Art Museum; conducts focus group meetings, stakeholder presentations, and interviews
March	Outline report, assign responsibility for sections, constitute subcommittees as needed
April 12-13	<u>Third facilitated meeting</u>
April	Steering committee meets with Allen and Frost; continues to write report
May 15	Submit report to Allen and Frost
Fall 2013	Publicize report and begin implementation