

VISION STATEMENT FOR THE
DEDMAN COLLEGE INSTITUTE FOR
INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND TEACHING

FINAL REPORT

DECEMBER 16, 2011

CHARGE

Dean William Tsutsui formed a committee in the spring of 2011 to formulate a plan for the development of an Interdisciplinary Institute within Dedman College. This report constitutes the work of this committee.

The committee was composed of the following individuals:

Caroline B. Brettell, Department of Anthropology (Chair)
Crystal Danielle Dudding, Undergraduate Student, International Studies Major
Dennis Foster, Department of English
Randy Gordon, Community Member
Bonnie Jacobs, Department of Earth Sciences
Sheri Kunovich, Department of Sociology
Dayna Osherwitz, Department of World Languages
Pamela Patton, Art History, Meadows School of the Arts
Aaron Sanchez, Graduate Student, Department of History
Steven Sekula, Department of Physics
Matthew Wilson, Department of Political Science

Graduate Assistant to the Committee: Lisa Haayen, Department of Anthropology

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During its first 100 years, SMU adapted to changing community and business needs by adding schools and departments that focused on specific disciplines. Today, the world's complex challenges demand new methods for preparing students and empowering faculty to confront the greatest problems of our time.

Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences proposes to transform the learning experience by creating a platform that will span disciplines across the school and the University. The Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching will foster an environment that reflects the interconnected nature of the world, where problem-solving requires the interaction of such disciplines as history, politics, economics and science.

The Institute's mission: Provide a culture of problem-based inquiry where disciplines collaborate to address society's critical needs and challenges.

Desired outcomes:

1. Prepare students for real-world challenges, which require multiple perspectives.
2. Create an environment that reflects the interconnectedness of the world.
3. Help recruit and retain leading faculty researchers and teachers.
4. Support graduate students in their research and degree completion.
5. Engage the community and promote the impact made possible by interdisciplinary collaboration.

The Interdisciplinary Institute will support seven core areas of programming and support:

- I. **Annual Fellows Seminars** will draw public awareness to today's critical issues – exploring topics spanning the humanities, social sciences and sciences. The seminars will bring together faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students as well as the interested public to discuss real-world problems.
- II. **Informal Research Clusters** will create collaborative groups comprising faculty and students from across the University as well as interested members of the public to help build an interdisciplinary culture on campus.
- III. **Interdisciplinary Faculty Appointments** will support interdisciplinary professorships within Dedman College and cross-University interdisciplinary professorships to develop impactful programming and new curriculum offerings.
- IV. **Digital Humanities Lab** will provide vital, interactive space that scholars need to pursue interdisciplinary research and inquiry. This lab will apply state-of-the-art computing technologies to areas of inquiry where it is not currently used.
- V. **Graduate Student Programming** will create transformative professional support for graduate students through seminars and dissertation completion support.
- VI. **Undergraduate Programs and Undergraduate Research** will fund internship opportunities and undergraduate research projects.
- VII. **Directors Programs** will provide ongoing, cost-efficient activities designed to continually promote and develop its core mission and maintain a relevant public profile.

PREAMBLE: ABOUT INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Universities have always asked the fundamental questions about what it means to be human, to live in a world where active intelligence sees the gaps in understanding that need to be filled, the problems that need to be solved, the mysteries that linger at the end of the day. Sciences, humanities and the arts have made such questions their reason for existing, providing the discoveries and narratives that answer our desire for knowledge and give the more pragmatic realms of engineering, law, medicine and commerce the insights they need to do their work. Over the last century, universities have increasingly come to be structured according to autonomous or semi-autonomous segments: schools and colleges, departments and divisions. Within these segments, communities of scholars engage in research and teaching that reflect independent disciplinary perspectives and the specialization that became characteristic of 20th-century society and that give the modern university its power. However, on many university campuses today there are programs and scholars who are crossing disciplinary boundaries and building bridges connecting multiple perspectives. Such initiatives reflect the conviction that the complexity of the questions and problems that we must confront in the 21st century require interdisciplinary work and the strength that comes from collaboration.

What is interdisciplinarity? Richard Brodhead, the current president of Duke University, has identified two forms of interdisciplinarity. The first has involved pulling in another perspective that is not too distant from one's own. This has resulted in new fields of inquiry such as biostatistics, biochemistry, political economy or computational biology. The second form of interdisciplinarity, he suggests, is problem-based inquiry that is enhanced by multiple perspectives.¹ This second form is well-articulated in Allen Repko's definition of interdisciplinary studies: "a process of answering a question, solving a problem or addressing a topic that is too broad or complex to be dealt with adequately by a single discipline and draws on disciplinary perspectives and integrates their insights to produce a more comprehensive understanding or cognitive advancement."² At the level of research, interdisciplinarity reflects what Julie Thompson Klein has described as a "subtle restructuring of knowledge: new divisions of intellectual labor, collaborative research, team teaching, hybrid fields, comparative studies, increased borrowing across disciplines."³

Some of the fastest growing majors within Colleges of Arts and Sciences on U.S. university campuses today are interdisciplinary. This is certainly true of Dedman College, where we can point to Markets and Cultures, International Studies and the new Human Rights major; it is equally true of universities like Vanderbilt, where "Medicine, Health and Society" (a major that grew out of a yearlong seminar at their Warren Humanities Center) is now among the most popular majors in their College of Arts and Sciences. The proposed **Dedman College Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching** will push research beyond the boundaries of traditional disciplines and impact teaching in the process. Critical to this enterprise are processes of integration, collaboration and problem-solving, all of which confront the challenges of complexity.

1 <http://www.cityclub.org/Media/Audio/CityclubPodcast-061110.mp3>.

2 Allen F. Repko, *Interdisciplinary Research* (Sage Publications, 2008), p. 12

3 Julie Thompson Klein, *Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory and Practice* (Wayne State University Press, 1990), p. 11.

THE MISSION OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY INSTITUTE IN DEDMAN COLLEGE AND AT SMU

The Dedman College Strategic Plan identifies two important objectives:

1. to promote an interdisciplinary culture within the College;
2. to support partnerships in research, teaching and outreach across the SMU campus

To fulfill these objectives the plan calls for the creation of “a high-profile institute that will promote interdisciplinary studies across the College.”

Many universities around the United States have something akin to what is being proposed here, most of them humanities centers that frequently embrace the social sciences and sometimes (but not always successfully) also reach out to the sciences.⁴ The Interdisciplinary Institute that we envision **will be innovative in its commitment to encompassing all the divisions within Dedman College** [Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences (which includes Mathematics and Statistics)]. It will also reach out through its programs to the rest of the University, and to the DFW-area community. Thus, it will serve as a bridge between the physical sciences and the humanities, between the liberal arts and the professional schools, and between academia and the broader community. Its scope of activities will therefore be more far-reaching and expansive than Humanities Center counterparts at other universities.

The Dedman College Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching will also be vertically integrative, involving faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students in its programs and activities. Not all Humanities Centers around the country pull undergraduates into their programs. Given the values and particular character of SMU (see below), as well as the growing interest in primary research among our undergraduate students, we suggest that it is essential for the Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute to involve undergraduates in its programs.

Thus, the **mission** of the Dedman College Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching is:

1. to promote and enhance a collaborative and **transformative** interdisciplinary culture within Dedman College by bringing faculty and students (both graduate and undergraduate) from the humanities, sciences and social sciences together to engage in inquiry, tackle problems and discover solutions by putting ideas into action;
2. to reach out beyond Dedman College to the broader University as well as to the metroplex to engage additional scholars and community professionals in its projects and endeavors.

We envision an Interdisciplinary Institute that is the pulse of Dedman College, which is the heart of SMU. The Interdisciplinary Institute will provide a synergistic meeting place for students and faculty with shared interests who want to reach beyond the boundaries of their own field to engage in interdisciplinary reflection and/or in problem-based inquiry on critical issues. The Institute, through its programming, will foster innovative collaborations in both research and teaching. It will serve as a catalyst for **interactions and connections that are both planned and unexpected**, across the disciplines. It will be a dynamic center of intellectual life for the College and the University. **Such an Institute can be a powerful tool for both recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty and students.** Further, through the publications and conferences that it might sponsor or support, the path-breaking research that it will generate and the NEH summer institutes that

⁴ See Appendix Three for a list of Humanities Centers with which this committee was in contact during the research phase of its work. Contact included campus visits and telephone interviews with directors or their equivalents. The Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute can not only build on the best practices of some of these long-standing programs but also, as a 21st-century Institute, it can leap ahead in its approach and programming.

it might host, the Dedman College Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching has the potential to **raise the national profile of Southern Methodist University.**

CORE VALUES OF THE PROPOSED INSTITUTE

This institute must reflect the core values and distinctiveness of Dedman College, SMU and the DFW metroplex. SMU's strength, ballasted by Dedman College, is that it has the merits of a small liberal arts college as well as those of a larger research university. It is large enough to have a diverse faculty with a broad range of interests and expertise, but also small enough to permit face-to-face interactions, collegiality and intensive student mentoring.

Critical to the life of Dedman College is the **teacher/scholar model** – reflecting commitment to high-quality teaching as well as high-quality research that sustain and nurture each another. The Institute must be a place that fosters new ideas and collaborations in both teaching and research. In addition, the strong value placed on undergraduate education should be reflected in the activities of the Institute, as should the increasing interest of our undergraduate student population in conducting their own research or in collaborating with faculty on research projects.

SMU is located in the city of Dallas, a city that is young and dynamic and that offers significant opportunities for research and interaction, as does the broader DFW metroplex. More to the point, geographically (and metaphorically) SMU links the technological corridor to the north of campus with the Arts and Business district to the south, a factor that can drive some of the collaborative and interdisciplinary programs of the Institute. **By reaching out through some of its programming to the faculty and students in the SMU professional schools, this institute can explore how the nexus of Technology/Arts/Business can be mediated and nuanced by the perspectives of the humanities, social sciences and/or sciences.**

On the campus, Dedman College faculty and students have been engaging the larger urban environment within which they live and work. Programs such as Big iDeas and classes such as “The Greater Dallas Experience” and Professor Jill DeTemple's classes that research local religious institutions have explored the history and culture of Dallas. We have also seen research partnerships established between the Department of Statistical Sciences and UTSW, the Department of Psychology and The Family Place, and the Department of Economics and the Federal Reserve Bank. **The Interdisciplinary Institute should nurture, enhance and highlight these activities, providing a presence that displays Dedman College's distinctive and valuable involvement with Dallas. A set of critical public impact programs will help convey the excitement of those who participate in the Institute's activities and programs.**

Dedman College has a number of small and often underfunded graduate programs. This is equally true of graduate programs in other units of the University, such as Art History. The small size can be considered both as a positive and as a negative. On the positive side, graduate student cohorts within departments are close-knit groups who are given intensive mentoring. On the negative side, the small size limits the resources available to graduate students and the lack of useful common spaces limits the opportunities for interaction. **The Interdisciplinary Institute can and should fill this void by providing opportunities for extra-departmental training and interaction, pulling in graduate students from across the College and the University. This will create for SMU graduate students a large, robust intellectual community that is absent in their small disciplinary cohorts. We can only imagine the new research and teaching horizons that such diverse interactions will open up.**

Dedman College (and SMU) has a number of interdisciplinary centers already. For the most part these centers focus their activities on their respective missions (for example, the Clements Center on the study of the U.S. Southwest, the Tower Center on political studies, the Institute for the Study of Earth and Man on research in earth sciences and archaeology, and the Center for Scientific Computation in the Department of Mathematics on computer applications for complex scientific and mathematical problems). In addition, SMU is the home to the Bush Institute with its critical emphases on global health, education reform, human freedom and economic prosperity. The Interdisciplinary Institute must **forge partnerships** with these various enterprises so that joint activities are complementary and mutually enhancing. Further, SMU itself represents an uncommon collection of schools that have emerged as a result of its particular history and regional interests: these include the Perkins School of Theology, the Meadows School of the Arts, the Lyle School of Engineering, the Dedman School of Law, the Cox School of Business, and most recently, the Simmons School of Education and Human Development. The Interdisciplinary Institute **should capitalize on this exceptional strength by nurturing novel collaborations** across the schools and bringing diverse perspectives together to explore ideas, address problems and develop solutions.

These distinctive features and values should be reflected in the core programming of the Interdisciplinary Institute.

CORE PROGRAMMING

Our vision for the Interdisciplinary Institute involves a set of programs, each of which accomplishes several (though by no means all) of the following goals.

- Programs should be interdisciplinary and collaborative in their aims and objectives.
- Programs should bridge the divisions of Dedman College as well as be open to engagement with the professional schools.
- Programs should generally be realized with a bottom-up rather than top-down approach that nurtures both involvement and ownership.
- Programs should be open to and involve graduate and undergraduate students.
- Programs should have a public outreach/impact dimension, which could include sponsoring lectures, conferences and symposiums that are open to the public; developing public impact programs; bridging to various public communities; formulating a policy for change, etc.

We outline below those programs with which the Institute should be launched. These programs are focused on building the interdisciplinary culture within Dedman College and the University. In Appendix One of this report we list a number of additional ideas for programming that emerged from our discussions and that might be developed at a later stage as resources become available.

The Institute will need a core endowment for its core programs. Other programs can be separately endowed. However it is also imperative that Dedman College pursue a **Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities** to help launch the Institute. This can then be leveraged to attract further funding. The College should also explore foundation funding, including the Mellon Foundation. **The Mellon Foundation** has supported programming at a host of Humanities Centers around the country. Finally, an NEH grant to help establish the Digital Humanities Lab should also be explored (see Section IV).

I. Annual Fellows Seminars

Each year the Institute will support two theme-based interdisciplinary seminars, at least one of which will have an explicit public impact or applied dimension. Given the mission of the Institute, proposals that can incorporate the perspectives of the humanities, social sciences and sciences will be of particular interest. Those that can reach out to include the participation of some colleagues from the professional schools will also be of interest. If the resources can support only one seminar per year, then we recommend alternating between one that may be more theoretical in focus and one focused on problem-solving and public impacts. While the ideas for these seminars must come from the faculty (that is, from the bottom up), examples of topics for such seminars might include:⁵

- The Concept of Uncertainty
- The Past and Future of Europe: Economic, Political and Social Perspectives
- Good and Evil
- Understanding Freedom
- Evolution and Revolution: Processes of Change
- Materials and Materiality
- Networks in Business, Science and Society
- The Problems of Democracy
- The Liberal Arts in the 21st Century
- America and the Muslim World
- Words and Images
- Dimensions and Impacts of Internet Marketing
- Public Humanities
- Urban Communities

PROPOSING SEMINARS AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The topics for these seminars will be proposed by at least two faculty members from different disciplines/schools, and selection will be competitive. The topics should be broad enough to spark interest from across Dedman College and the University. Once a proposal has been chosen, a call will go out across SMU for faculty participants (up to six as the seminar will also include the co-proposers), who will submit proposals that outline their interest in and potential contributions to the topic in relation to their own work. These proposals would also outline what they hope to accomplish as a participant in the seminar. Where appropriate, graduate students and undergraduate students, as well as individuals from the broader DFW community, might also apply or be encouraged to apply to become a participant in the seminar. Selection of seminar participants will be made by the co-organizers, in consultation with the director of the Institute, and on a competitive basis.

Format

The faculty seminar will meet weekly to a) develop its plan for the year including the responsibilities of each participant; b) discuss a set of common readings; c) host outside speakers/consultants; d) present participant work in a format that is open to the University community at a regular time and place. If speakers are brought in to consult with the participants, they should deliver a broader public presentation open to the University community and the broader Dallas community.

⁵ In Appendix Two we offer a number of other examples drawn from our research on other humanities centers around the country.

Probable Outcomes

Any number of outcomes might emerge from these seminars:

- individual or collaborative publication(s)
- a grant proposal
- a public conference on the theme
- a new course that is team-taught
- new forms of collaborative and interdisciplinary projects
- a report making recommendations to address some need or problem of local, national or international importance
- proposals for NEH Summer Institutes (see Appendix Four)

Required Resources

Annual faculty fellows should have a course release for the duration of their fellowship so that they have the time to devote themselves to the activities of the seminar. Each participant should have a small research fund (larger amounts for faculty; smaller amounts for student participants); each seminar should have access to funding to use as the group sees fit: to bring in speakers, to develop and host a conference, to hold a series of public workshops, to subvent a publication.

II. Informal Research Clusters

The Interdisciplinary Institute will provide a home for informal collaborative and interdisciplinary research clusters (working groups) who wish to meet together at least twice during any given semester to discuss shared interests. These clusters should be open to participants (faculty and students) from across the campus (hence bridging the sciences, social sciences, humanities and the professional schools) and should each have one or two conveners responsible for the activities of the research cluster. Participants might also come from other universities in the DFW area as well as from the broader community.

The Institute should provide the space for meeting, the staff support to organize the meeting times and a small amount of funding for lunches or speakers or reading materials. The Institute should also list these research clusters on its website. Each research cluster should set its own parameters for meetings and activities. Graduate students and undergraduate students should be encouraged to become involved. Students could even propose some of these clusters around their own interdisciplinary interests. Undergraduate students might take advantage of participation in a research cluster to enhance or prepare for an honors or distinction project.

The topics for research clusters are infinite, but some examples are:

migration studies; climate change; sustainability; energy and society; the university and society; global humanities; medical or legal ethics; applied languages; film and society; global health; globalization and development; domestic violence; religion and politics; narrative and psychoanalysis; food and culture; science; law and literature; race, identity and nation; global justice

We also envision the Interdisciplinary Institute providing a space for interaction for faculty and students who are interested in areas of the world; hence research clusters in Latin American Studies, African Studies, Middle Eastern Studies or Asian Studies.

Probable Outcomes

These clusters will contribute significantly to building an interdisciplinary culture on campus through processes of community building that link faculty and students (both graduate and undergraduate). No doubt the interactions will enrich teaching and scholarship. Specifically we anticipate the following concrete outcomes as possibilities:

- proposals for future fellows seminars
- new Ways of Knowing or Capstone courses
- a public forum or small conference open to community outside of SMU
- opportunities for graduate students to meet faculty outside their home departments and for faculty without Ph.D. programs to help mentor graduate students
- undergraduates developing independent research projects with faculty mentors
- links to the SMU QEP for engaged learning
- collaborative research proposals
- proposals for NEH Summer Institutes (see Appendix Four)

Required Resources

Each research cluster should have access to a small amount of monetary resources to support their activities. These funds could be renewable each year depending on each cluster's goals and prior success. Each research cluster should have access to the facilities and staff support of the center.

III. Interdisciplinary Faculty Appointments

1. NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY PROFESSORSHIPS

Although universities increasingly acknowledge that the ability to deploy deep knowledge from a variety of perspectives is key to solving complex problems, the question of how best to go about this remains a problem in itself. One traditional approach is the joint appointment, but this carries with it a host of structural, jurisdictional, procedural and other administrative difficulties with respect to evaluation, promotion, dispute resolution and the like. A more recent, and less common, approach (especially outside the sciences), is the research center or institute appointment, with only one (or perhaps no) departmental appointment (excluding courtesy/"dry" appointments). SMU has an important opportunity to extend this strategy to an interdisciplinary institute by creating **interdisciplinary professorships** that are not aligned with particular departments or schools but with the institute itself. These might take the form of individuals working across the borders of two or more traditional Dedman College departments (e.g., English/philosophy, biology/political science), an interdisciplinary program and a Dedman College department (anthropology or history/human rights), or one traditional department and another school (e.g., law/philosophy, art history/sociology). Another strategy might be a set of cluster hires that enhance interdisciplinary programming (for example, **cluster hires** of two to three faculty members from different disciplines who come together on issues of human rights). These hires would have departmental and institute appointments.

We assume that these faculty members would take on a leadership role in advancing an interdisciplinary culture within the College and the University. Given some of the values outlined above, it would also be important to hire some faculty members who are engaged in public scholarship who could be instrumental to this dimension of institute programming.

Initially, these individuals should be hired at the advanced Associate Professor rank (with the appropriate mechanisms in place for promotion that recognizes their interdisciplinary interests) or at the rank of Full Professor. However, it is important to recognize that it is often younger faculty hired at the rank of Assistant Professor who often best represent the emerging interdisciplinary work that the Institute wants to foster. In this case, their transformative contributions to the life of Dedman College will necessitate an equally transformative change in the institutional infrastructure related to departmental appointments and the mechanisms and processes of evaluation for promotion and tenure.

2. CROSS-UNIVERSITY INTERDISCIPLINARY PROFESSORSHIPS

It is also imperative that the Dedman College Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching provide opportunities for faculty who are already on campus to broaden their interdisciplinary training and engagement. To that end, the Institute should support three to give Cross-University Interdisciplinary Professorships. These would be awarded competitively to Dedman College faculty members who propose to expand their work into a new area or launch a new project that crosses disciplinary boundaries. In either case, the work should involve collaboration with a colleague in another department, another school or perhaps even with a colleague at UT-Southwestern or some other equivalent institution in the metroplex. Faculty members, who would be awarded these professorships for a semester and relieved of all teaching duties in their respective departments, could propose to team-teach a course with a colleague in another department or school, to take a class in another department or school, or work on an interdisciplinary project in collaboration with or consultation with a faculty member in another area of interest or expertise.

This program has infinite possibilities for generating new interdisciplinary, cross-department and cross-school partnerships. One could imagine proposals from a scientist who wants to work with a media specialist in Meadows to model a scientific problem; an anthropologist proposing to work with someone in the Cox School of Business to develop a project on the culture of Wall Street; a faculty member in English proposing to work with a professor in the Department of Philosophy on dimensions of moral reasoning in literature; an historian who wants to develop skills in the spatial humanities by pursuing a course in Geographical Information Systems in the Department of Earth Sciences; a faculty member in the Department of Political Science working with a faculty member in English on the rhetoric of Internet political discourse; or a sociologist pursuing a course on computer modeling in the Lyle School of Engineering.

Probable Outcomes

- The development of cutting-edge research
- The integration of new frameworks into disciplinary research
- A more engaged campus with campuswide conversation and the creation of unusual and bridging partnerships across departments and schools
- New team-taught interdisciplinary courses to enhance the new curriculum
- The enhancement of extant interdisciplinary programs

Required Resources

The new interdisciplinary faculty appointments could, and perhaps should, come from new endowed professorships. These faculty members should, as part of their research load, offer some of the interdisciplinary research seminars sponsored by the Institute at both the graduate and undergraduate level as well as participate regularly in the activities of the Institute. These individuals will

undoubtedly become significant contributors to enhancing and expanding the interdisciplinary culture with Dedman College and at SMU.

The cross-university professorships would require compensation to the home department for the release time of the faculty member (paid by the institute) as well as a small research fund for the faculty member or the faculty team where relevant. This program could also be supported through a separate endowment.

IV. Digital Humanities Lab: From Scarcity to Abundance

The traditional image of the Humanities scholar is the reader alone with the text – books, journals, files, images, recordings and all the other materials gathered in libraries and archives – who reads, looks and writes. This model implies the very human limit imposed by what the eye and ear can take in. Even with access to the greatest libraries, this limit meant that humanists worked in a situation of scarcity, needing to make interpretive leaps based on some sample of possible sources. The advent of digital technology has radically shifted the ground: as the universe of source materials is being transformed into digital formats, the sheer amount of material has exploded, far exceeding the capacity of any individual or group. Scarcity has been replaced by the problem of abundance.

Digital Humanities is the response to that abundance. Text and image, once translated into digital form, become data that can be read by digital technology. The scholar is now challenged to find ways to store, search, relate and share a vast amount of digitized information. The presence of a Digital Humanities Lab within an interdisciplinary institute could serve a few critical purposes: as a means to support creative scholarly endeavors that seek to utilize the resources present at SMU (see below); as a place where SMU faculty with different digital research experiences can help a new generation of scholars develop their ideas for such research and connect them to the researchers and staff who best understand the solutions to the problems they will face; through the various programs mentioned earlier, identify sources of support for these research projects from within the University and from external funding sources.

In recent years a number of prominent programs have developed around the country, many with the active support of the Office of Digital Humanities, a branch of the NEH. These include Digital Humanities @ UCLA, a collaborative center for a wide range of digital project on that campus; the Digital Innovation Lab at UNC, “a project-focused hub for collaborative, interdisciplinary discovery, experimentation, implementation and assessment in the use of digital technologies”; Mapping the Republic of Letters at Stanford, a project to explore “Correspondence and Intellectual Community in the Early Modern Period (1500-1800)”; and the Digital Humanities Commons at the University of Washington’s Simpson Center, created to “support innovative and experimental research inspired by new technologies.” centerNet, “an international network of digital humanities centers,” currently has members from more than 100 centers worldwide. **It is crucial that SMU become a full participant in this broad, powerful development.**

Extant SMU Resources

SMU already has several important digital resources that have been developing independently. In alphabetical order, these are:

- Center of Creative Computation (Meadows and Engineering, Ira Greenberg)
- Digital Repository Initiative (CUL)
- Digital Commons and OIT
- SMU Press initiative
- SMU High-Performance Computing (SMUHPC) Center

A Digital Humanities Lab could develop ways to connect research ideas to these resources and to the faculty and staff who are already acquainted with their use and scope. In addition, the pursuit of new interdisciplinary questions is likely to identify needs that are not met by these existing facilities, which itself may result in new collaborations that seek funding to expand these resources.

Format and Staffing

We envision a Digital Humanities Lab that is faculty-driven, forging partnerships between faculty with long experience using these resources and those with new ideas who seek to overcome the challenges of information abundance. To facilitate such collaboration, we envision a space (a Digital Humanities Lab) where faculty, staff, researchers and students can come together to meet, share and develop these ideas. Such a space would contain collaborative tools, such as surfaces for sharing and developing information (white-board walls and/or digital surfaces for projecting and creating information), audio and video equipment that facilitates distance collaboration and learning, and computers that allow researchers to connect to the above resources and learn to use them. We envision a vibrant and interactive space where faculty, undergraduates and graduate students can develop the knowledge necessary to work in the field, both as scholars and as other professionals.

Because the work being done in Digital Humanities tends to require the labor and expertise of multiple people, collaboration is central to the concept of the Lab. This requirement has the benefit of contributing not only to the goals of collaborative and interdisciplinary work for the Institute, but to the desire to provide rich opportunities for both graduates and undergraduates to engage in meaningful research in the humanities with professors from across the University. The training necessary to do such work would also provide the equivalent of internship experience for those students who might go on to work in the expanding world of digital technologies.

A regular seminar would also be extremely useful for facilitating research in the Digital Humanities. Such a seminar could be delivered by an SMU faculty or staff member, sharing the use of a new resource within SMU, or could be delivered by an expert from another such digital center (for instance, using the distance learning system mentioned above) who can speak to the challenges faced by their scholars and the solutions that have best worked to enable successful research. The Lab would also allow for SMU to begin offering certificates in Digital Humanities to graduate and undergraduate students, adding significant value to their education in the humanities.

The World-Wide Web has transformed the way we all share and disseminate information. We envision that a Digital Humanities Lab will have a means to digitally share its outcomes with other scholars and the wider community. Such sharing could be made possible by open or proprietary digital publishing mechanisms, or perhaps even access to a print-on-demand system which could, itself, serve as a model for the digital dissemination of University research.

Although there are a number of people working in the area of Digital Humanities on campus, the Lab would need a director with expertise in Digital Humanities on both the technical and conceptual sides.

To summarize, the requirements for the Digital Humanities Program are as follows:

1. Lab for collaborative work where people on campus can work together in a digital environment.
2. Facility to allow for collaborative work at a distance with people from around the world.
3. Central place where people without the necessary experience can find the expertise and technology to develop digital projects.

4. Publishing center for digital and print-on-demand publications, both to disseminate the products of research produced through the Interdisciplinary Institute and for other scholarly publications.
5. Lab for teaching and research in the Digital Humanities, where faculty, undergraduates and graduate students can develop the knowledge necessary to work in the field, both as scholars and as other professionals.

Development Opportunities

The NEH continues to support research and development in Digital Humanities. Grants are available at both the institutional level (including challenge grants to start-up Digital Humanities centers, grants to support the digitizing of valuable archives and support for collaborative work with other centers) and for projects proposed by groups of individuals. The Simpson Center, for example, began their Digital Commons with a challenge grant of \$625,000, matched 3:1 by private donations. The Digital Humanities has been one of the better places for scholars working in the humanities to find external support recently. A challenge grant from the NEH might stimulate a private gift from a Dallas-area donor.

Required Resources

The Digital Humanities Lab within the Dedman College Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching will require spaces for research and teaching, a director (see staffing below) and resources for equipment to launch the center. It will require an annual budget to support operating costs and programming.

V. Graduate Student Programming

The graduate programs in Dedman College are generally small and often lack resources to support students at crucial stages of their degree programs. The Interdisciplinary Institute can therefore be **transformative in its graduate student programming**. We envision this happening through two critical programs, a series of interdisciplinary seminars that will provide a context for graduate student interaction across disciplinary boundaries and a dissertation completion fellows program.

1. INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE SEMINARS WITH VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAM

There are too few occasions where graduate students from different programs in Dedman College or across the University can interact with one another in a classroom setting. Further, they are rarely exposed to faculty in other disciplines within the College and across the University. The Interdisciplinary Institute can create these opportunities by sponsoring an annual or bi-annual interdisciplinary graduate seminar and hence providing a space for the exchange of ideas across academic fields of inquiry. These seminars could also be open to undergraduates in our honors program, thus fostering a dynamic interaction between graduate students and our best undergraduate students and perhaps also mentoring relationships between graduate and undergraduate students.

To make these **seminars both innovative and attractive** to both the faculty teaching them and the students enrolled in them, we propose that each seminar have a Visiting Scholar attached to it. Potential scholars would be proposed by the faculty member(s) teaching the class. They would be encouraged to suggest not only someone of distinction, but also someone whose own perspectives on the topic of the seminar is distinctive from their own, thus enhancing the interdisciplinary dimen-

sion of the seminar. The Visiting Scholar would come to campus for two to three weeks. During that time she/he would teach in the seminar, comment on student research in the seminar, interact with faculty members in various departments and deliver a public lecture. The Visiting Scholar might also visit with the students enrolled in the Undergraduate Methods Seminar (see below). The Visiting Scholar might also offer a **more informal talk in the new Residential Commons**, and it would be ideal if there were an open apartment in the college where this individual could stay for the duration of his/her visit.

Format and Staffing

These seminars should be proposed by faculty members, and the topic must be interdisciplinary in nature. They could be team-taught. As part of the proposal, faculty members would make suggestions for the Visiting Scholar they would like to bring. Applications would be accepted from all departments. These seminars should be aimed at graduate students from across the campus who are interested in the topic and meet once each week throughout the semester. Departments would need to agree to course credit for the seminar. These seminars would help students to:

- move beyond their own disciplines
- develop an understanding of alternative and overlapping approaches to conceptualizing questions as well as different methodologies
- integrate interdisciplinary perspectives in their own work
- engage with faculty members beyond their own departments and with a distinguished Visiting Scholar

These seminars would also provide an opportunity for faculty members in departments without graduate students to teach at the graduate level from time to time.

Required Resources

Faculty whose proposals are accepted should receive a one-course buyout for their department and a small research budget. They should have access to one-time course development funds. The Visiting Scholar Program could be separately endowed. The funds would be used to host the scholar as well as to pay her/him a generous honorarium.

There is a potential for foundation funding for this program (the Mellon Foundation, for example).

2. DISSERTATION COMPLETION FELLOWS PROGRAM

This program will provide four to six (more if resources are available) dissertation completion fellowships for graduate students who will be expected to complete their dissertation during the fellowship year. The fellows will meet regularly to share their work and develop skills vital to the profession. They will be free to invite faculty speakers/interlocutors from across campus. Dissertation completion fellowships provided by the Institute could be supplemented by those provided by the Dean of Graduate Studies and/or by departments who may have their own resources (for example, the Department of English). The most important dimension of this program is that students would learn to clarify and sharpen their ideas: they would have to communicate their ideas to scholars from other disciplines; and they would benefit from the feedback they would receive from beyond their own disciplinary borders.

Selection of Participants

Proposals will be submitted by students from the Ph.D. programs within Dedman and across the University (Meadows, Lyle). Letters of nomination from the relevant faculty mentor and depart-

ment chair would need to accompany the application. Selection would be based on:

- the quality of the project
- the applicant's expressed interest in working in an interdisciplinary context
- the likelihood of completion within the year

Format

Graduate fellows will meet weekly throughout the year. They will be expected to present at least two chapters of their dissertation to the group during that year as well as to present a public lecture toward the end of the year. Some sessions might be devoted to:

- the task of writing a long document
- the nature of interdisciplinary discourse
- professionalization (how to speak in public, how to write a cover letter for a job, how to construct a CV)

The Director of the Institute should help to facilitate these professionalization dimensions by inviting faculty members and others to address the group. Ideally, each fellow would have a place to work for the year as well as a small research fund to support their travel (for research materials, to present a paper, etc.). Each student should also receive a competitive fellowship for the year and would be obligated to work full time on writing the dissertation.

Probable Outcomes

The outcomes of this program are:

- better professional training for our top graduate students
- a completed dissertation
- launching students who are trained in a discipline into an interdisciplinary world of thinking that might enhance their dissertation or the projects they develop as they move forward in their professional careers

This program will also make the graduate programs and the work of graduate students in Dedman College, and at SMU more generally, much more prominent than they currently are.

Required Resources

This program will require at least six full-time competitive graduate student stipends as well as the funds for six small research accounts. As mentioned above, support for some of these stipends might come from contributions from graduate areas around SMU. Much like the annual fellows seminar(s), this program will require a regular seminar room in which to meet, and it would be a real advantage if these students were provided with small offices in the Institute where they could carry out their work and interact in less formal ways.

VI. Undergraduate Programs and Undergraduate Research

In conjunction with the principle of vertical integration proposed in this report, we envision undergraduates at SMU participating in a number of programs sponsored by the Interdisciplinary Institute. They can, by choice, be part of any number of research clusters and might even organize their own as interests and needs develop. Where appropriate, they might be part of a Fellows Seminar, and all the public events would be open to them as they are to all members of the University and DFW communities. The activities and resources of the Digital Humanities Lab would also be available to them, particularly to those students working on independent research projects. Undergraduates will also benefit indirectly from the activities of the Institute because undoubtedly new courses

and new research projects will emerge from the interactions fostered by the Institute – interdisciplinary Capstone or Ways of Knowing courses, for example.

However, given SMU’s distinctive emphases on undergraduate education and on the scholar-teacher model, there should be some Institute programming specifically directed to undergraduates. Further, there are any number of ways in which the programming of the Institute complements the new SMU curriculum: the QEP of engaged learning; the growing emphasis on and interest in undergraduate research; the emphases on both interdisciplinary and capstone experiences. The Interdisciplinary Institute also supports a major goal of the Dedman College strategic plan to enhance undergraduate education.

The following are the programs for undergraduates that the Institute should work to put in place and support in the first years of its development. Since the Institute is housed in Dedman College, and since its activities should contribute to making Dedman College a “place to be” for undergraduates, priority should be given to Dedman College students in this programming.

1. SUMMER RESEARCH SCHOLARS

Unlike students in other schools at SMU, Dedman College students have fewer opportunities for summer internships where they can work in their field or fields of major interests. The Interdisciplinary Summer Research Scholars Program will provide this opportunity by making funding available (equivalent to what a student might earn in a job) for students to work with faculty members on a research project during the summer months. In some cases the funds could be used to take students to field sites where faculty members are working over the summer.

There are several ways in which to match students with faculty: positions or projects can be proposed by faculty members and students would apply to fill these positions; projects can be proposed by the students themselves and the Institute would help to identify a suitable faculty mentor; or a faculty/student team can submit an application together. Alternatively, students could work in supported internships with an organization or company in the Dallas area under the supervision of the Director of the Institute. They would submit a proposal for such work to the Director of the Institute and would be required to write a report on the internship that includes some interdisciplinary reflection on the experience. This kind of work could satisfy the “community engagement” dimension of the new University curriculum. Students in this program would also be required to give a public presentation that demonstrates the application of their knowledge to a real-world issue or problem during the fall after the completion of their work.

Probable Outcomes

- students acquire new research skills and experience the process of generating new knowledge
- students explore applications of knowledge to problem-solving
- development of a student distinction project to be pursued during the academic year
- advances faculty research and may lead to new ideas
- students can fulfill particular dimensions of the new University curriculum

Required Resources

This program would require summer stipends to support the students involved in the program. The number would depend on resources available, but we see significant potential for an endowment for this program.

2. SEMESTER OR YEARLONG STUDENT RESEARCH FELLOWS

As participants in this program, undergraduates would propose an interdisciplinary research project to be supervised by at least two mentors from different disciplines. The project might be developed in conjunction with one faculty member, or the student could identify two mentors from a roster of undergraduate mentors for interdisciplinary research maintained by the Institute. Student applications would be chosen competitively. The Institute might consider emphasizing public impacts in this program or as part of the selection process for at least half of the applications. Students would receive a small grant for research costs and perhaps course credit for their work. The interdisciplinary mentors should receive a small contribution to their respective research accounts. Undergraduate research fellows could participate in the research methods seminar (see below), but they would also be required to present their project at an open Institute forum.

Probable Outcomes

- students experience the process of generating new knowledge, working across disciplines and integrating their cumulative knowledge
- development of a student distinction project
- for faculty members, this program might allow them to begin to engage in an experimental interdisciplinary research project at less cost and lower risk than if they were to move into a more interdisciplinary area on their own

Required Resources

This program would require monetary resources for the research accounts for students and faculty involved in the program.

3. RESEARCH METHODS INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR

The Interdisciplinary Institute will sponsor a “by-application only” yearlong annual seminar for undergraduate students who are involved in primary research/honors projects/distinction projects. This seminar, **which might be held in the new Residential Commons**, should focus on interdisciplinary research methods and ideally would be team taught. Alternatively, the focus might rotate each year to capture two of the three divisions of Dedman College each time – humanities and social sciences, social sciences and sciences, humanities and sciences. During the second semester, the students would present their own research, preferably with invited interlocutors from the campus and/or community. Much of the formatting for such a seminar would depend on the faculty members interested in offering it, and we suggest that this be developed in consultation with the University Honors Program. These seminars might be of particular interest to undergraduates with two different majors, or a major and minor(s) that cross disciplinary boundaries. **The seminar might provide them with a framework for integrating their work across distinct disciplines.**

Probable Outcomes

- students are exposed in a rigorous way to research methodologies across disciplines
- development of student distinction projects and experience of presenting one’s work in a more public format
- interaction of students from across majors and an integrative experience during their final year of college
- adds to the academic programming of the new Residential Commons

Required Resources

The Institute would need to “buy out” faculty time for teaching this seminar. A small fund for special activities associated with the seminar might also be made available.

VII. Directors Programs

While many of the programs we are proposing above would bubble up from the faculty, there are a number of lower-budget activities that can be supported by the Interdisciplinary Institute that are organized and managed by the staff of the institute. These might include the following:

1. WORK IN PROGRESS COLLOQUIA

To enhance and make visible the work of all our faculty colleagues: two interlocutors from different disciplines might be invited or funds might be available to bring in an outside scholar to review and critique an ongoing project – perhaps someone from a different discipline identified by the faculty presenter. This would be particularly important for untenured faculty and might broaden the reach of their work if presented within an interdisciplinary framework. These would be open to the University community and would raise awareness about the work of our colleagues and perhaps even generate new ideas for teaching or research.

2. IMPACT SYMPOSIA

A series of half-day IMPACT (Interdisciplinary Meetings to Address Pressing Current Themes) symposia open to the public that would be focused on thematic discussions or provocative and important topics that are conducive to rethinking in unusual ways or in an outside-of-the-box format. Of particular interest would be topics that can bridge perspectives from the sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts and engineering. These symposia might also involve DFW-area practitioners, depending on the topic. They might also include Rapid Response Forums organized quickly to address, within an interdisciplinary framework, particular events that occur locally, nationally and globally.

3. COORDINATION OF INTERDISCIPLINARY CAMPUSWIDE EVENTS

A few years ago, SMU celebrated the Darwin Year with a series of events – lectures and panels – throughout the year. One faculty member took on the responsibility for giving this program a framework and keeping everyone on target. The Interdisciplinary Institute could assume this responsibility should other yearlong “celebrations,” anniversaries or themes emerge that are conducive to cross-disciplinary discussion and debate.

4. HOSTING NEH SUMMER SEMINARS AND INSTITUTES

The Director of the Institute should explore hosting NEH summer institutes by encouraging faculty members to develop and apply for them and providing the staff support to run them. There may be opportunities for such programming with the NSF (such as the Research Experience for Undergraduates Program) and other funding agencies as well. Further information on the NEH Summer Institute Programs is contained in Appendix Four.

FACILITIES AND SPACE

An objective included in Goal 1 of the Dedman College Strategic Plan is to “create a ‘sense of place’” in Dedman College. The plan points out that “to undergraduates, and even Dedman College majors, the College seems to lack a physical core, a central meeting place for students and faculty and a real sense of spatial identity.” We envision the Interdisciplinary Institute, if established on campus, somewhere at **the physical heart of the College**, and with the right kind of facilities, can provide this crucial sense of place and hence be transformative to the life of the College. We fundamentally believe that if this Institute is housed at a distance from campus, it will not become the pulse of the College and will not develop the broad sense of ownership that is fundamental to its success. **It must be a place that people come in and out of and that is extensively used; it must be a destination; it must be visible.**

This Institute should occupy one floor, or a large part of a floor of a new building, perhaps located above the E parking lot just north of Dallas Hall. The building might also house some new classrooms for the College of different sizes but including a large auditorium that could be used for public Institute events as well as public events for other entities within the College; a central space that could be used for College functions as well as a “hang out” area for students and faculty in the College with some sort of light food service – similar to designation of the Taubman Atrium as a multipurpose gathering and coffee space in the Meadows School of the Arts.

What kind of space does the Institute itself need? We base our suggestions here on our extensive discussions with various Humanities Center directors around the country as well as what we have learned from our visits to several of these centers on the east and west coasts as well as in the middle of the country. The Institute must have (in order of priority):

- staff offices (at minimum four)
- a seminar room or multipurpose room where the fellows seminars and working groups can meet (the room should have a capacity for 35-40 as fellows seminar presentations will be open to the public)
- one or two flexible classrooms/labs for interdisciplinary teaching
- a space where the Digital Humanities Lab can be housed
- a space for the graduate student fellows where they can work and interact for the term of their fellowship (could be small offices or a large space with carrels)
- some kitchen/catering facilities and a comfortable hang-out space for more informal interactions (the Institute must be able to offer some food service for events)
- some collaborative working space for the fellows groups, perhaps with two or three small offices off a central working space (in an ideal world there should be small offices for each one of the faculty fellows – to provide them with a home away from home during their fellowship tenure)
- a few additional offices (to allow for expansion or for the development of a visiting fellow or post-doctoral fellows program)
- easy access (i.e., free of charge) to a large lecture hall for public events, whether in the larger building or somewhere else on campus

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/STAFFING⁶

Director: We recommend that someone from inside Dedman College serve as the Founding Director of the Institute as an outsider would have a learning curve to gain necessary familiarity with Dedman College and SMU. We further recommend an initial five-year term. This could be an endowed position.

Associate/Executive Director: We recommend that the Institute also have a full-time and engaged Associate/Executive Director with the appropriate academic credentials. A staffing plan for the division of labor and responsibilities will have to be developed. In the beginning, this position could be filled half time by a faculty member.

Director of Digital Humanities Lab: As mentioned above, the Digital Humanities Lab will need a director with expertise on both the technical and conceptual sides. This individual would be responsible for managing the programming and services of the lab, including coordinating the seminar or research cluster in Digital Humanities as well as facilitating projects and research.

Administrative Assistant: The Institute must have major staff support to assist the Director and Associate Director and to manage the various programs, including managing applications, coordinating the research clusters, scheduling space should the Institute acquire space, promoting events in whatever venues that are necessary, etc.

Student Assistants: The Institute might have one graduate student assistant (with support from the College of a stipend and tuition waiver – as in Women and Gender Studies) drawn from one of the Ph.D. programs in the College and perhaps one undergraduate work study student (also supported by the College). These students will assist the Administrative Assistant in carrying out his/her work and will be supervised directly by the Administrative Assistant. **It is imperative that the Institute develop a web presence early on, and this might be work that a student assistant could accomplish.**

Executive Board: The Institute should have a small executive board with broad representation across the disciplines of Dedman College and perhaps one or two faculty members from other schools in the University. Ideally, members of this board would serve three-year rotating terms and be renewable for a second term. The primary roles of the Executive Board would be to give advice to the director on programs and activities, and to adjudicate the proposals for the Annual Fellows Seminar, as well as the graduate and undergraduate programs. The members of this Executive Board would also serve as advocates for the Institute among their colleagues in Dedman College – encouraging applications and attendance at events. Members of this Board should be appointed by the Dean after consultation with the Institute Director.

Community Advisory Panel/Friends: Across the country many Humanities Centers have developed a Board of Visitors/Community Board/Development Council made up of interested individuals in the community (Dedman College already has comparable examples in the external boards of the Tower Center and the Clements Center). Given the nature of the Dallas community and SMU's relationship with that community, we recommend a similar Advisory Panel for the Interdisciplinary

⁶ As this project progresses, University Policy 6.22 should be consulted ("Guidelines for the Establishment of Centers")

Institute. The individuals asked to serve can help with raising funds for the Institute; they can be ambassadors in the community for the activities and programs of the Institute; they can and should attend the events sponsored by the Institute; they can identify particular individuals in the community who might participate in Institute programs; they can be drawn on to assess the programs and mission of the Institute and assist the Director in keeping the programming fresh and forward looking. This Panel should meet at least once each semester. Appointment to this panel should proceed in accordance with University Policy 6.22. Ideally, individuals would serve rotating three-year terms, could be renewed for a second term and would be responsible for nominating new individuals to the panel.

NOTE: The Institute should become a member of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (<http://chcinetwork.org/>).

APPENDICES

Appendix One: Ideas for Additional Programming

During the course of committee discussions, a number of ideas were placed on the table but have not been included in the final report. They were not top priorities but are summarized here for the record and as potential initiatives that could be implemented in the future.

POSTDOCTORAL PROGRAMMING

The Institute could house a few postdoctoral fellows who would teach a minimum of one course/semester with an interdisciplinary focus. This should be two-year appointments, and the postdocs would receive office space, a salary and a small research fund. They would also be asked to participate in other activities of the Institute. There may be foundation support for such positions. Included in this category might be:

Postdocs for SMU Graduate Students

These would be made available to one or two recent SMU Ph.D. students who want to integrate interdisciplinary perspectives into their work moving forward. These postdocs would help SMU graduates acquire interdisciplinary teaching experience, foster new and creative ways of thinking, prepare early scholars for future positions and develop a new generation of interdisciplinary scholars geared with the knowledge to confront the complex issues of today.

External Postdoctoral Fellows

These would be individuals proposed by departments and would be selected on a competitive basis – one or two per year. These would be young scholars doing cutting-edge interdisciplinary research who would teach one departmental course and one more interdisciplinary course open to graduate and/or undergraduate students.

Public Outreach Postdocs

These one- or two-year postdocs would facilitate collaboration between academic disciplines and members of the Dallas community at large. Working with outside organizations, postdoctoral fellows would propose and be funded for placements within organizations where they could engage in a “public” dimension related to their work. The list of organizations included would be broad and could include nonprofits, businesses, educational, political or social service organizations, to name a few. This would provide an opportunity for recent Ph.D.s to engage in interdisciplinary work early in their careers. The experiences would enrich the relationship between SMU and the greater Dallas community, as well as provide postdoctorates new insights and experiences that will enrich their own future work.

LONG-TERM VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAM

A number of Humanities Centers around the country have a visiting scholar(s) from outside the University who is brought to participate in the programming. While we have proposed such a scholar of short duration linked to the Interdisciplinary Graduate Seminar, there is merit in a program for more long-term Visiting Scholars because it brings cutting-edge national or international scholars to campus for a year or two to interact with faculty. It also raises the national and international profile of a university. There was some interest in having a Visiting Scholar, as an Institute Fellow, who works on public impact/public humanities programming.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ENGAGEMENT/FACULTY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The Institute might provide resources for faculty to develop interdisciplinary expertise whether by supporting travel to an interdisciplinary conference (with or without making a presentation), travel to work with a collaborator at another university who is from a different discipline or participation in other kinds of nationwide programs/seminars that facilitate branching out into another discipline and integrating it into their research.

SEED GRANTS FOR COLLABORATIVE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The Institute would support (with seed money of \$5,000) teams of researchers from at least two different disciplines who want to work together to pilot a new research project, to work on a publication together, to develop an interdisciplinary grant proposal⁷ and possibly out of such a collaboration to develop a Ways of Knowing course. At least one member of the team must be in Dedman College, but the other member of the team could be from outside the College or SMU (in the latter case the seed money could be used to bring that person to the Institute periodically).

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY COURSE CREDITS

For graduate students, the institute could facilitate a process to allow graduate students to design interdisciplinary independent study courses to be taken for credit within their own programs. This could facilitate, for example, a history student working with a geography student to jointly explore a topic of common interest. These relationships would enrich relationships across the University, resulting in innovative publications and new connections for graduate students to deploy within their work and within their respective departments.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The Institute could establish an award for the best and most innovative corpus of work that is interdisciplinary in nature and/or has a public impact. This award could be endowed.

⁷ It is important to note that many NSF programs, especially those that run for short periods of time and are “targets of opportunity” for funding, are interdisciplinary. One is the Science, Engineering and Education for Sustainability (SEES) program. Another is the Dynamics of Coupled Natural and Human Systems (CNH) Program.

Appendix Two: Examples of Topics for Annual Fellows Seminars

While we emphasize in this report that the topics for annual fellows seminars must be generated by the faculty, students and other participants, we provide below a sample of some of the projects that have emerged from a few other centers and institutes around the country. These examples demonstrate the infinite range of possibilities for dynamic interdisciplinary research and cross-disciplinary conversation.

The **UC Davis Humanities Center** originally developed from a commitment to California topics and has continued to develop projects as part of the California Initiative that reach out from their Humanities Center. Here are two of their current projects along with links for further investigation:

PASSION FOR THE LAND

Ranchers and Cooperative Extension agents partner with media artists and university scholars to produce and present digital stories on current challenges to agricultural viability and rural community life in the Sierra Valley. The media pieces will be used in outreach efforts designed to help policy makers get a ground-level perspective on resource stewardship and inform regulatory processes that impact working landscapes.

http://artofregionalchange.ucdavis.edu/?page_id=37

COMMUNITY MEDIA PROJECTS

Regional organizations collaborate with scholars and community cultural developers on media arts projects that explore issues and develop solutions for the places they live. The projects that emerge amplify underrepresented voices, spotlight overlooked histories, and foster civic participation via the big screen, the airwaves, gallery walls and the World-Wide Web.

This approach creates opportunities for:

Producing media that can be used in community change efforts

Building community capacity to define issues and advocate for solutions

Creating scholarship with community concerns at the center of inquiry

Developing social networks that promote campus-community partnerships

http://artofregionalchange.ucdavis.edu/?page_id=21

The **Warren Center at Vanderbilt** has provided one of the best-articulated plans for interdisciplinary seminars. Their program for next year suggests a topic we could imagine drawing a range of participants interested in Human Rights and the historical connections between the U.S. and Africa.

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar: 2012-2013

“The Age of Emancipation: Black Freedom in the Atlantic World”

The seminar participants will focus on the freedom movements that resisted and reshaped slavery. The goal of this seminar will be to produce a global perspective on the 1863 U.S. Emancipation Proclamation by locating it within a broader age of emancipation that occurred in the Atlantic World in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Through the comparative study of Atlantic World freedom movements, seminar participants will produce a nuanced account of the various types of emancipations and the cultural technologies that enabled them. By tracing the continuities and discontinuities among types and forms of emancipations in different Atlantic regions and by exploring the intersection of different disciplinary approaches to the topic, the seminar’s deliberations will provide a comprehensive understanding of how the search for

liberty evolved and expanded in the Atlantic World and how it left complex legacies that still persist. Emancipation was never a single event but rather a continuous process that influenced slavery's very structures.

http://www.vanderbilt.edu/rpw_center/facultyfellowships.php

A similar seminar at the **Townsend Center, UC Berkeley**, makes a more explicit connection between the Humanities and other disciplines and schools. The seminar topic of 2011-2012:

“Nature/No Nature: Rethinking the Past, Present and Future of Nature in the Contemporary Humanities”

Perhaps no idea is as critical to the combined future of the human and more-than-human worlds as nature, its meaning and its very survival. But when did the idea of nature emerge in human history, and how has it changed? How the humanities approach changing meanings of nature has implications for reconceptualizing the very realms and interdisciplinarity of the humanities themselves.

The Collaborative Research Seminar on **Nature/No Nature: Rethinking the Past, Present and Future of Nature in the Contemporary Humanities** will bring together faculty and graduate students from across departments and disciplines to engage such questions as: What is nature? What are natures-cultures? Before the idea of nature, how did people engage with the natural world? When and how did the concept of nature emerge in Western history? What did it mean to Asian cultures and native peoples? What is the history of the rise of the metaphor of law (or laws) as a way to describe order, harmony, norms and regularities in the natural world? Must nature be experimentally confined to be understood, and what are the human and environmental consequences of the control of nature? These questions and others will be addressed from a cross-disciplinary perspective.

http://townsendcenter.berkeley.edu/collaborative_research_seminars.shtml

Another seminar from 2009 brings together the Humanities, Psychology and Law:

Humanistic and Empirical Studies in Moral Psychology

This interdisciplinary seminar at the Townsend Center drew together six faculty and graduate students studying the “moral emotions” – pride, shame, guilt and anger – as well as related concepts and motivations, such as attributions of responsibility, altruism, self-interest, virtue and character. These concepts and emotions lie not only at the heart of moral and political philosophy, but also psychology, education, sociology and economics. The seminar pursued these subjects by looking at the intersection of research within these different disciplines, with each session introduced by one or more of the faculty conveners. Graduate student participants shared responsibility for presenting some material and collaborated across disciplinary lines for the seminar projects.

Primary Conveners: Christopher Kutz (Jurisprudence & Social Policy), Robert MacCoun (Goldman School of Public Policy, Jurisprudence & Social Policy Program).

Co-Conveners: Kathryn Abrams (Boalt Hall School of Law), Alison Gopnik (Psychology), Anthony Long (Classics, Philosophy and Rhetoric), Jay Wallace (Philosophy).

http://townsendcenter.berkeley.edu/crs_moral_psychology.shtml

A recent interdisciplinary seminar from the **Sawyer Center for the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin** focuses on **Biopolitics: Life in the Past and Present**

This seminar explores the mutually productive spheres of politics and life sciences. Biopolitics, stemming from the work of Michel Foucault, explores how state and institutional power is deployed to manage populations and bodies through discourses of hygiene, health, sanitation, sexuality and race. In the contemporary world, global health inequities, regenerative medicine, the organization of reproduction, hunger, biological citizenship, are just some dimensions of biopolitical issues. This seminar brings together philosophers, literary critics, historians, biologists and a range of social scientists. It is coordinated by a Professor of English, Comparative Literature and Jewish Studies, and a Professor of Medical History and Bioethics. Other participants are from the disciplines of philosophy, biology, history and a range of social science fields <http://humanities.wisc.edu/programs/sawyer-seminar.html>

Duke University funds a number of interdisciplinary research projects as part of its P-First initiative. One is **Rethinking Regulation: Democratic Norms, Organizational Culture and the State**, second is **The Haiti Lab**, and a third is **The Cook Stove Initiative**.

Rethinking Regulation: Democratic Norms, Organizational Culture and the State is a project led by an associate professor of history. The team of researchers includes faculty from the schools of law, business, environment and medicine, as well as the social sciences and philosophy. This project team hopes to develop better frameworks for regulatory decision-making and inform smarter design of regulatory institutions and policy. <http://kenan.ethics.duke.edu/research/rethinking-regulation/>

The Haiti Lab is a project co-directed by a professor of French and romance studies and a professor of romance studies and history. The project aims to instigate cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary debates, collaborations and strategies around treatment of mental health in Haiti in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake. <http://www.fhi.duke.edu/labs/haiti-lab>

The Cook Stove Initiative runs under the Duke Global Health Institute and is aimed at studying different techniques to reduce indoor air pollution. Three Duke researchers are examining cook stove technology in India, including factors that contribute to how families use and purchase stoves and the circumstances that could lead to the adoption of new, healthier cook stove technologies. Additionally, poorly functioning stoves have harsh impacts on the environment. The stoves have high fuel requirements, putting strain on forest ecosystems and producing black carbon emissions that result in a short-term, global warming effect. The two-year-long research project is led by Subhrendu Pattanayak, associate professor of public policy, environment, economics and global health. The Duke team is collaborating with other researchers in India. The project involves perspectives from the social sciences, the environmental sciences and public policy. <http://globalhealth.duke.edu/about-the-institute/> and <http://today.duke.edu/2011/04/PFIRST.html>

Appendix Three: Preparatory Research

The Committee did extensive research, both in person, online and over the telephone as part of their work in preparing this report. Members of the committee visited the Humanities Centers (or equivalent) beginning in the summer of 2011 and through October 2011 at Williams College, Brown University, Smith College, University of California-Berkeley, University of California-Davis, Stanford University, Northwestern University, University of Chicago, Vanderbilt University, Rice University, University of Kansas and the University of Edinburgh (Scotland).

In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with directors of many other comparable Humanities or Interdisciplinary Centers at a range of colleges and universities around the country. These included Dartmouth College, Texas A&M, Yale University, University of Oregon, University of Washington, Scripps, Tufts, Cornell, Syracuse University, University of Delaware, University of Florida, Columbia University, Case Western and the University of Pittsburgh.

We attempted in this research phase to gather data from big state universities, smaller liberal arts colleges and universities that are similar in scale to SMU. The latter category included a few of SMU's "aspirational" schools such as Duke and Vanderbilt.

One interview was conducted with Richard Franke, who has funded programming at the Humanities Center at the University of Chicago as well as the Humanities Center at Yale. Franke is now working on a new science and humanities initiative at Yale with the blessing of Yale President Rick Levin.

The Committee consulted with several individuals on campus. The Deans of the various schools, Directors of various Interdisciplinary Programs, Chairs of the Departments within Dedman College, Center Directors, members of the staff of the Bush Institute, individuals responsible for other digital programs on campus (Ira Greenberg in the Meadows School, for example), groups of undergraduate and graduate students, and groups of untenured faculty. Committee members have also had a number of informal conversations with colleagues.

Notes from all of these interviews and campus visits are on file together with other material collected during the research phase of this project.

Appendix Four: NEH Summer Institutes

Each summer, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports national residential seminars and institutes for faculty who teach American undergraduates.

These study opportunities allow faculty and a select number of graduate students to increase their knowledge of current scholarship and advance their own teaching and research. Participants in these two- to five-week projects receive stipends to help cover travel and living expenses.

Among the topics for the summer 2012 institutes are Health and disease in the Middle Ages; 20th-century French history; James Joyce's *Ulysses*; Visual culture of the American Civil War; Leonardo da Vinci; Medieval Muslim-Christian-Jewish Mediterranean; Mesoamerica and the American Southwest; Experimental philosophy; Liberty, equality and justice; World War I in the Middle East

Many seminars and institutes take place on American campuses; others are held at sites in Belgium, England, France, Ireland, Italy, Mexico and Spain.

Further information on this program is available at:
<http://www.neh.gov/projects/si-university.html>

Information on Summer Institutes for school teachers (something that might also be offered by a faculty member at SMU) is available at:
<http://www.neh.gov/projects/landmarks-school.html>