

Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Center (IHRC)
College of Arts and Sciences
Course Grants for 2024-2025
(Fall 2024, Winter 2025, Spring 2025)
curricular innovation & course development

Collections-Based Courses

The IHRC supports the development of courses that imagine creative use of “collections” and how such are defined/demarcated, collected, and supported. How and when does accumulation accrue value, become a “collection” that endures, shaping knowledge and perspectives?

Projects may wish to engage documentary concepts (e.g., custody, collection development, arrangement, description, organization, representation, and naming), as well as matters of ownership, social justice, preservation, reuse, and sustainability. Projects might elect to engage community-centric histories and participatory approaches to archival practices. Proposals may reimagine notions of “collection” within the broad scope of material culture, as well as develop new “collections” from stories, recipes, data, and other “stuff” within and outside of traditional institutions.

Projects may use institutional collections at the University of Delaware or housed by local and regional institutions and organizations. Especially encouraged are projects that help forge sustainable collaborations with outside experts, curators, librarians, archivists, and community stakeholders or seek to bridge communications with K-12 networks.

Designed for graduate and undergraduate students, previous collections-based course grants have been used to promote and bring visibility to Black and African Diaspora print and material culture, the production and circulation of South American textiles, and the creation of digital archives of community-based arts. Others have focused on documentary photography, oral histories, and [digital storytelling](#) of community stories. All have provided rich opportunities for hands-on experience and public-facing student learning.

Dangerous Ideas

The IHRC invites proposals for curriculum innovation that critically engage with the theme of “dangerous” ideas and the humanities, historically or in our current moment. Proposals may consider texts, design systems, technologies, or concepts that disrupt conventional beliefs and practices. Dangerous ideas may have a particular resonance with discourses around machine learning tools and artificial intelligence, or suggest other radical, strange, emergent and/or counter-canonical ideas that mark a certain departure from the status quo. For this theme we especially encourage play and experimentation in the engagement with dangerous ideas, supporting projects that foreground creative learning opportunities.

We welcome proposals for both the redesign of previously taught courses and the development of new courses. Proposals from all disciplines, not limited to the humanities, will be considered as long as they engage the humanities in its content, methods and outcomes.

Key concepts: unconventional, strange, radical, canon resistant, advancing new skills, considering other forms of knowledge, learning beyond conventions of the academy.

Key goals: experimentation, imagination, heightened levels of inquiry, enhanced research and learning; student-forward course design that identifies the humanities engaged; skill sets attuned to the increasingly complex nature of our world and issues; application of the humanities to contemporary society.

Poetry as Activism & Curricular Innovations

In collaboration with the Library, Museums and Press, the IHRC invites proposals for “Poetry as Activism & Curricular Innovation.” Proposals will interface with the Library, Museums, and Press Mellon Foundation funded [“Poetry as Activism Project”](#) (2022-2024) to develop or redesign a course that aligns with the “Poetry as Activism” theme and content. Joint proposals from faculty teams that wish to explore the theme across courses and departments are also welcome. Faculty are encouraged to incorporate both physical and digital literary collections made available through the Library, Museums, and Press.

Special consideration will be given to proposals that envision a close partnership with the Special Collections Department in the development of learning outcomes, course assignments and activities for student engagement, such as instruction sessions, student consultations with staff, or collaborating with Special Collections staff to design course assignments.