January 31, 2013

GLCA-Library of Congress Digital Humanities Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Project:

A Consortial Seminar Program of the Great Lakes Colleges Association
In Conjunction with
The Library of Congress in Washington, DC

Request for Proposals

Summary

In a partnership with the Library of Congress, the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) invites proposals from faculty of its member colleges – and from the extended network of institutions participating in the Global Liberal Arts Alliance – to participate in a faculty/student digital humanities collaborative research project drawing on the resources of the world’s most comprehensive research library. The program offers a unique opportunity for undergraduate students and faculty mentors to receive direct support for scholarly research from designated Library of Congress research librarians – a level of professional research support generally accorded to advanced scholars. In brief:

- Interested faculty members will submit written proposals to GLCA on a topic that is suitable for collaborative research with a team of undergraduate students;
- Faculty members who are selected will have identified a research team comprised of three to four students and a college librarian.

Proposals for the current year are due May 15, 2013. A total of three teams will be selected to participate this year. Proposals will be reviewed by staff of the GLCA and the Library of Congress. The criteria of evaluation will include the strength of the project design involving faculty and students in humanities-based research; the suitability of the research to the range of collections within the Library of Congress; and the potential for interaction and cross-fertilization among different research teams that would participate both on site and through digital communications following their return to their home campuses. The Seminar will begin on Monday, July 29, 2013 at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC; the on-site research segment at the Library concludes at the end of the day on Wednesday, August 7, 2013. Housing will be secured for participants in Washington DC at reasonable rates. The program pays the travel, lodging, and food costs of the faculty leader and home campus librarian during the ten days at the Library of Congress. The program does not cover the cost of student travel, food, and lodging. In assembling their student teams, faculty leaders are encouraged to inquire what funds might be available from their home institution in the form of student research or summer study grants to help support students’ cost of participation. Faculty and students of the research teams
will have full access to the Library’s collections, including its primary resources, and each faculty-student research team will have the direct support of research librarians. Following the return to their home campuses, a Library of Congress research librarian will continue to provide support to the teams through digital means.

While the structure of the project will vary by campus, we expect that in some cases students will participate as members of an advanced course and in other cases as some form of independent study.

**Program Description**

The Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA), in a partnership with the Library of Congress, requests proposals from faculty members of GLCA colleges to participate in the Digital Humanities Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Project. This unique program will support the creation of up to three faculty-student teams from GLCA member colleges as well as teams from participating institutions of the Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA). Faculty/student collaborative research teams will have access to the Library’s resources and support from research librarians at a level more generally accorded to advanced scholars in the humanities. Teams chosen to participate in the seminar will be together at the Library of Congress from July 29 through August 7, 2013 accompanied by a lead faculty member and a home-campus librarian.

Working with Library of Congress staff, participants in the program will identify, refine, and carry out research on a project which draws from the resources of the world’s premier research library. The project offers opportunities for faculty members to engage in faculty-student research, develop continuing support relationships with Library of Congress research professionals, gain access to scholarly resources through digital means, and build collegial relationships with teams of faculty and undergraduates of other GLCA and GLAA member colleges.

Our expectation is that the research topics proposed would be in the domain of the humanities, examining topics from historical, cultural, literary, or artistic perspectives. Within this framework the choice of topics that a faculty-student team proposes to study is at the discretion of a faculty team leader. Ideally the topic will be one that lends itself to different strands of analysis, so that the research that each member of the faculty-student team undertakes contributes to a broader understanding of a topic. Ideally the topics that faculty-student teams of different colleges identify could shed light on one another, helping to create an enhanced perspective and understanding of a related set of topics for all seminar participants.

Library of Congress research staff will work actively with each team during the time on site at the Library. The Library’s extensive collections offer rich resources for examining numerous inquiries within a topic. For example, a faculty member might express a desire to work with students in researching one or more aspects of the War of 1812. As American wars go, it is a minor one: and yet the list of research topics it could generate is inexhaustible. Participants could research the causes of the war; the war’s military developments; the war as a multi-sided conflict between the U.S., Great Britain, the Canadian colonies, and multiple Indian nations; the war’s economic impact on the domestic front; literary depictions of the war; how the war was
reported in American newspapers; how recent immigrants to the U.S. viewed and participated in the war; how perceptions of the war varied across ethnic groups; whether or not the war led to significant social changes; whether or not participation in the war served as a coming-of-age ritual for the generation of young men who grew up in the shadow of their fathers’ Revolutionary War service; the political impact of the war; the war as a crucible of subsequent political and military leadership; the experience of the war in women’s lives; the war in song and popular culture; European views of the war; the effect of the war on transatlantic commerce; whether the war’s military activities created increased opportunities for individuals to attempt escape from slavery; how the war has been remembered and portrayed in later American culture; how the war affected, or failed to affect, the sense of national identity among American elites; the war’s impact on Indian populations; how the war is viewed in Canadian historiography . . .

Working with a research team’s faculty leader, students, and home-campus librarian, Library of Congress staff can accommodate research in a range of topics within a general theme.

Application Process

Faculty members interested in participating in the GLCA-Library of Congress Digital Humanities Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Project should write a proposal of three to five pages outlining the research topic in general terms. Proposals are due May 15, 2013. The proposal should include:

- A general statement of the research project the faculty member proposes to pursue in conjunction with three or four students and a campus librarian, using the resources of the Library of Congress.
- Identification of potential strands of the general research topic, accompanied by a brief discussion of the suitability of the topic as a project of student-faculty research in which each team member’s individual project can contribute to a broader understanding of the topic as a whole.
- Identification of three or four advanced-level students who would comprise a faculty-student team in this consortial seminar project, indicating their academic major and class year as well as a brief statement of the anticipated benefit such a project could have for each student.
- Name and title of the campus librarian who would accompany the faculty-student team to the Library of Congress in July and August and serve in a supportive role to students during their campus-based research during the fall semester of 2013.
- A statement from the campus chief academic officer indicating his/her awareness and support of the faculty member’s proposal to participate in the summer/fall 2013 seminar of the GLCA-Library of Congress Digital Humanities Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Project.
- A current vita of the faculty proposer and home campus librarian.
Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of staff members of the GLCA and Library of Congress. In choosing among multiple competing proposals, consideration will be given to the potential for coherence and mutual enrichment among the proposed research topics. Proposals should be sent by e-mail to:

Gregory Wegner  
Director of Program Development  
Great Lakes Colleges Association  
Wegner@glca.org  
734-661-2338

Frequently Asked Questions

What is it?

The GLCA-Library of Congress Digital Humanities Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Project is a consortial initiative which invites up to three faculty-student-librarian teams from GLCA member colleges to convene for an intensive session of shared learning and research at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. The program combines initial research and community-building among seminar participants at the Library of Congress with a subsequent period of continuing dialogue among all seminar participants – including Library of Congress research librarians – using digital technology from participants’ home colleges. The project provides encouragement and support for faculty members in a range of disciplines to explore the possibilities for student-faculty research in the humanities, while also helping students understand the expanding range of venues in which the processes of researching, creating, disseminating, indexing, and evaluating knowledge take place. The program provides extraordinary opportunities for mentorship and team-building involving a faculty member, three or four students, and a campus librarian from each participating college. For all participants, the program offers rich opportunities for building bonds of collegiality and shared inquiry that extend across several colleges.

How does it work?

Stage One: Topic Selection and Refinement. Each faculty member who intends to submit a proposal should identify three or four students as well as a campus librarian who would likely constitute the team. The time spent on site at the Library of Congress will be July 29 to August 7, 2013, prior the outset of the fall semester. Proposals are due May 15, 2013. The selection of faculty-student teams for this project will be based in part on the likelihood of reciprocal benefit and coherence among the individual proposals received. After the selection of faculty-student teams has occurred, the faculty leaders chosen from three or four colleges of the GLCA – including one or more of the extended network of institutions comprising the Global Liberal Arts Alliance – would meet initially by conference call or Skype to outline potential strands of research that faculty-student teams could pursue in conjunction through the course of this
program. The identification and refinement of a consortial topic should allow for different strands of research and inquiry among different faculty-student teams of the seminar. In all likelihood the original proposal a given faculty member had submitted would continue to guide the work of his or her faculty-student team. At the same time, the initial conversations between the faculty team leaders could result in some refinement and/or enhancement of scope to increase the potential for enrichment and dialogue with other teams of the seminar. The individual projects undertaken would ideally relate to one another as parts of a broader research theme, much as the branches of a tree derive from its trunk. Difficult though it is to predict such matters, one could expect that the general research area or topic selected will evolve from several factors – including the expertise and project proposals of faculty leaders, the likely interest of students, the holdings of the Library, and the knowledge of the LC research librarians to support the topic in conjunction with home-campus librarians of each participating college.

Stage Two: Initial Convening at the Library of Congress. For the initial phase of this seminar project, each faculty leader should plan to meet with his/her student team members in the spring semester of 2013 to identify the topic of study and gain an initial sense of the materials to be consulted during their time at the Library. Each of the selected teams – consisting of a faculty member, a campus librarian, and three or four promising students in their junior or senior year – will convene in late summer (prior to the outset of fall semester) for ten to twelve days at the Library of Congress. Following an initial orientation session, faculty leaders, students, and home-campus librarians will have opportunities to meet together to discuss the common subject of research, establishing bonds among themselves as members of a multi-campus learning community, while also identifying pathways for exploring their individual projects with the guidance of Library of Congress research librarians who bring an extensive knowledge of the field and the ability to help participants benefit from both the collection and staff expertise of the Library. Program participants will have access to the Library reading rooms and dedicated shelving for their study materials during their time on site. By the end of this intensive period, all participants in the program will have gained a clear sense of their respective research project as well as the library materials they will continue to consult in the weeks ahead.

Stage Three: Continued Research and Communication from Home Campuses. The program continues through the fall semester with faculty members and students pursuing their research projects on their home college campuses, with guidance of the lead faculty mentor and home campus librarian as well as Library of Congress staff as needed. At the same time, all participants in the program will maintain active communication through digital means, allowing each to see the progress of his or her research in the context of other inquiries being pursued by faculty and students of other colleges. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, seminar blogs, or other web-based platforms will be employed to foster ready exchange of thinking and information in several forms; this exchange will involve not just faculty and students but also research librarians of the Library of Congress and of the participating college teams as active participants in the digital discussions. In conjunction with the Library of Congress, GLCA will host periodic web seminars among program participants, allowing students and faculty to present early formulations of their thinking and receive feedback from program participants in other
settings. Frequent communication among project participants by these means will contribute to a sense of continuing momentum and exchange, lending inspiration and support for each student and faculty member in the particular branch of research he or she is developing.

Stage Four: Final Presentations of Research Projects. Each faculty member and student in the project will produce a final paper representing the research undertaken, the preliminary findings reached, and provisional conclusions drawn. Each paper would be presented in a style that would ultimately be suitable for publication; they will be placed in the first instance on the GLCA web site as examples of research projects conducted through this program. In addition, each project participant will give a presentation of twenty to thirty minutes outlining the subject of his or her own research. These presentations can be presented as web seminar sessions available only to other participants in the program – or they could be recorded and presented in a more public medium as YouTube links. In some cases the final research product could take a form other than a paper – including, for example, links to resources developed as initial stages of a digital humanities project involving faculty members and students in a collaborative research project.

Logistics and Timeline:
From the standpoint of campus teams, the GLCA-Library of Congress Digital Humanities Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Project should be conceived as an independent study for advanced-level undergraduates. The on-site segment of the program will be convened at the Library of Congress from July 29 through August 7, 2013. By the time the fall semester begins, all students and faculty will be back on their home college campuses, pursuing research through that semester. Web-based technology will be employed to allow program participants to discuss their progress and pose questions to one another as they develop their knowledge and thinking about particular topics.

Final papers from the project will be distributed in digital format to all program participants, and final oral presentations will take place by webinar or as a recorded YouTube posting.

GLCA will make logistical arrangements for participants’ lodging in the Washington, DC area during the team’s research at the Library of Congress.

What is the cost?

We conceive this project as a partnership between the GLCA, the Library of Congress, and the member colleges from the GLCA and Global Liberal Arts Alliance that participate in a given research session, and the students who participate in this program as part of an independent study or other for-credit course arrangement with their home institution. GLCA will pay the travel and lodging costs of the faculty member and home campus librarian from each college team chosen to participate in the Digital Humanities Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Project. Students are expected to pay the cost of their travel, food, and lodging in Washington, DC, much as they would do for other programs of short-term domestic or international study away. GLCA
offers to arrange hotel lodging for the faculty and student teams during the time the program convenes in Washington DC. We have made arrangements with a hotel near the Dupont Circle section of the city. The hotel includes rooms with two double beds for student participants. Students of the same sex may elect to share a hotel room with up to two other students (a total of three students per room) to minimize their lodging costs for the program. The hotel has extended a special rate to students who stay in rooms that have two double beds and can accommodate up to three students comfortably. That rate is $139 per day plus 14.5% in taxes, for a total of $159.15 per day. Students who stay two to a room would split this cost, paying approximately $79.57 per day for lodging including local taxes. If three students share one of these rooms, the cost of the hotel and taxes per student is $53.05 per day.

Each campus would collect tuition and assign academic credit to its own enrolled students as an independent study or special course in the department of the student’s major. As in other study-away programs, the lead faculty member and accompanying librarian of the home campus have responsibility for their students’ comportment, safety, and well-being during their time on-site in Washington, DC.