

Announcing the 2016-17 Awardees for the David A. Gardner '69 Magic Project Grants in the Humanities Council

In 2016-17, 24 proposals will receive awarded funding from the David A. Gardner '69 Magic Project Grants in the Humanities Council ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to Princeton faculty members, thanks to the generosity of Lynn Shostack, in memory of her husband, David A. Gardner '69.

The goal is to support ideas that break new ground intellectually and pedagogically and have the potential to change how the humanities are conceived and taught. Magic grants are awarded only for first-time projects to be carried out in the 2016-17 academic year.

[Team Teaching Opportunities](#): Through the David A. Gardner Magic Project, the Council invites pairs or groups of Princeton faculty members to apply for summer stipends of \$7500 to develop team-taught undergraduate courses that reach beyond a single department/unit and are explicitly interdisciplinary in their conception. These courses will be cross-listed in Humanistic Studies and fulfill a requirement for the undergraduate certificate program. These courses should examine larger questions and major texts, building bridges either within the arts and humanities, or across the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences.

Team Taught Course

Angela Creager

Professor, History

Michael Levine

Professor, Molecular Biology

This team-taught freshman seminar (spring 2017) *Transformative Ideas in Biology* will teach core principles of the life sciences through a set of key historical questions that biologists have sought to answer. Each week will focus on a different major idea, and show how it answered a longstanding problem in understanding life. Readings will focus on the primary publications that answered these questions; and discuss both the basic biology at stake and what enabled each scientist to see something new. Hands-on sessions will allow students to examine the materials used or see the kinds of results obtained in the historic experiments. By situating key findings in their historical setting we aim to depict science as an inquiry-based, concrete, and ongoing activity, rather than as codified and unchanging.

2016-17 Awardees

Anna Arabindan-Kesson

Assistant Professor, African American Studies and Art and Archaeology

Anna Arabindan-Kesson will create a new freshman seminar, *Imagining Slavery: Art, History and Memory in the Black Diaspora* that analyzes the visual and material culture of the trans-Atlantic slave trade from the eighteenth century to our contemporary moment, drawing heavily on Princeton collections. Students will also have the opportunity to curate an exhibition based on their research into material held in Princeton collections. *Co-sponsored by the 250th Anniversary Innovation Fund.*

Emmanuel C. Bourbouhakis

Assistant Professor, Classics

Emmanuel Bourbouhakis will create a new course, *Constantinople: A Literary Journey to the Capital of Byzantium* (CLA/HLS 230/MED 231), in which students assume the identities of medieval personae to research the legacy created by the “City of Constantine,” capital of the Byzantine Empire, at the cross-roads of West and East. The course will combine theatrical reading of Byzantine literature with in situ study of the monuments by which Constantinople forged its usable past to become a “New Rome” ruling the emergent Christian East as the coveted metropolis of the Middle Ages. *Co-sponsored by the 250th Anniversary Innovation Fund.*

Miguel A. Centeno

Professor, Sociology

Rachael H Ferguson

Lecturer, Sociology

Miguel Centeno and Rachael Ferguson will organize a conference on “Discipline,” related to a co-taught Sociology course for spring 2017, based on their 2016 freshman seminar, itself based on co-authored book, *Discipline*. The purpose of the seminar is to identify and examine the set of practices that seem to lead to orderly, disciplined behavior. Students will read articles and excerpts from books for each of the subtypes, and students will perform ethnographic case studies that reveal the practice of discipline in its different forms. The conference will bring scholars related to the course topic.

Zahid Chaudhary

Associate Professor, English

Zahid Chaudhary will be working on a three year project leading up to a new course on Bollywood cinema entitled "Beyond Bollywood." The course will focus on the cinema's global reach, visual pleasure, mix of traditions and genres, relationship to the popular and to "third cinema," and its checkered history across decolonization, the cold war, globalization, and the age of terror.

Michael Cook

Professor, Near Eastern Studies

Jack Tannous

Assistant Professor, History

Three intensive seminars in Near Eastern Studies will cover the following topics: pre-Islamic Arabia, Islamic archaeology, and Arabic papyrology. Each seminar would be taught by one of the leading scholars in the subject: Christian Robin (pre-Islamic Arabia; Paris), Donald Whitcomb (archaeology; Chicago), Petra Sijpesteijn (papyrology; Leiden). These subjects are in fact taught in only a few places globally and the courses would therefore provide a unique service to students.

Thomas Kaufmann

Professor, Art and Archaeology

A revamped course, *Magical Cities* (ART 337), spring 2017, will be cross-listed with German and the Program of European Cultural Studies. It will approach the Art (and Culture) of Central and Eastern Europe through the lenses of Bohemia and Saxony, and particularly the cities of Prague and Dresden. Students will participate in a spring-break trip to Prague and Dresden and related sites in the Czech Republic and Germany with access and behind-the-scenes to collections connected with the themes of the course.

Beatrice Kitzinger

Assistant Professor, Art and Archaeology

Pamela Patton

Director, Index of Christian Art

Medieval Iberian Study Day will be a symposium on the medieval treasury of San Isidoro in León (Spain), in May 2017, presents an opportunity for students and faculty to join colleagues from

multiple international institutions in examining objects and documents in New York collections that are directly relevant to the conference topic. Visits to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Hispanic Society of America with the participation of the institutions' curators will create a forum for interdisciplinary exchange that furthers the project of the symposium through common, collaborative examination and discussion of medieval works of art.

Joshua Kotin

Assistant Professor, English

Postwar New York Workshops will enhance the graduate course, *Postwar New York*, spring 2017. The workshops will feature works-in-progress by well-known mid-career scholars writing books about important aspects of the artistic, literary, and intellectual culture in New York between 1945 and 1977.

Joel Lande

Assistant Professor, German

Topics in German Culture and Society - Berlin: A Media Metropolis course, which includes a trip to Berlin during Fall Break, explores diverse facets of Germany's most vibrant city. Since the fall of the wall, the city has undergone cultural and political changes at an unprecedented clip. The Berlin of today is built upon a layered cultural history--from newspapers and film to theater and visual art. In the city's cosmopolitan landscape, the entangled political history of Germany is as legible as its rich media history. Attention will be paid to the question what distinguishes mass culture from high art, particularly in the context of media (e.g., monuments, theater) that aim to reach a broad public.

Florent Masse

Senior Lecturer, French and Italian

This new L'Avant-Scène international program will bring a small group of highly selected students to visit drama schools in London, Berlin and Strasbourg. The carefully thought out itinerary and established international collaborators who would facilitate visits and arrange for our students to meet theirs, will create an exciting sense of community and international exchange.

Eve Krakowski

Assistant Professor, Near Eastern Studies and Judaic Studies

Marina Rustow

Professor, Near Eastern Studies and History

The New Princeton Geniza Lab: Medieval Middle Eastern Documents and Laboratory-style Teaching in the Humanities: This pilot project will be the primary catalyst for remaking the Princeton Geniza Lab (PGL) into a collaborative space devoted to laboratory-style learning. The new PGL will offer undergraduates a unique opportunity to encounter original documents free from the deterrents of language and paleography—to lift the technical barriers to an unknown world.

Martha A. Sandweiss

Professor, History

Princeton, Slavery and Historical Memory: This freshman seminar will focus on Princeton University's historical connections to the institution of slavery. Building on work done by undergraduate students for the Princeton and Slavery Project over the past four years, students will explore the meaning of historical memory at both the institutional and personal level. Together, we will think about what Princeton University might do to address its involvement with slavery. The focus of the class, however, will be on how the historical memory of slavery functions in the individual lives of Princeton students, alumni, staff and faculty. Students will work together and with filmmaker Melvin McCray '74 to create a series of short film interviews about the burden of America's slaveholding past and its impact on individual Princetonians descended from slaveholders, slaves and, perhaps, both. *Co-sponsored by Freshman Seminars in Whitman College.*

Cyrus Schayegh

Assistant Professor, Near Eastern Studies

Deprovincializing the U.S. Presidency: Foreign Perceptions of the U.S. President as a Global President conference will encourage three groups of historians to identify existing, and create new, bonds between bodies of literature that are normally not in conversation: U.S. historians, Historians of Europe, and historians of intellectual-cultural production.

Anna M. Shields

Professor, Chinese Literature and East Asian Studies

A Workshop on the Tang-Song Transition: a collaborative Princeton-Columbia Workshop on the Tang-Song transition, with the first meeting at Princeton in 2017.

Irene V. Small

Assistant Professor, Art & Archaeology

Contemporary Art: The World Picture a new version of ART456 Contemporary Art, fall 2016. The course will investigate the prehistory and aftermath of the “global turn” in contemporary art, signaled by the 1989 exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre* (Magicians of the Earth). The students will investigate international mega-exhibitions of contemporary art as forms of world making, and question how they variously seek to question, bridge, and transform cultural divisions. A key component of the course is a field trip over fall recess to visit the 32nd São Paulo Bienal in Brazil.

Jeff Snyder

Lecturer, Music

Dan Trueman

Professor, Music

Reinventions of Old Instruments is an initiative to support the design and development of two new musical instruments, the Feedback Trombone and the bitKlavier. Both of these projects represent radical reinventions of old instruments, in which musical interfaces associated with multiple cultural meanings and performance traditions are examined anew and remade in surprising ways. The new perspectives on artistic tools made possible by this inquiry will challenge performers, designers, and audiences alike to consider what makes a piano a piano, a trombone a trombone, and how these tools shape the art they enable. Co-sponsored by the Council on Science and Technology.

James Steward

Director, Princeton Art Museum

Making History Visible will be commissioned work of public art to be mounted in fall 2017 as part of a campus-wide conversation centered on *The Princeton and Slavery Project*. The Gardner Magic grant will provide the critical seed funding necessary to commission an artist,

whose work would ultimately foster formal and informal dialogues about history, diversity, and the visual arts.

Susan Stewart

Professor, English

In March 2017, *A Dialogue in Poetics* symposium will bring together Princeton scholars of Anglophone poetry with a group of six scholars of English and American poetry from mainland China. The study of Anglophone poetics in China is hampered by language and translation difficulties, scarce resources, and anachronistic methodologies. In turn, the study of Chinese influences upon English and American poetry is based upon a limited knowledge of source texts, styles, and aesthetics. The symposium will offer an exchange with our Chinese colleagues and to open the study of poetics at Princeton to new approaches.

Stacy Wolf

Professor of Theater, Lewis Center for the Arts

Luminaries of the American Musical Theatre: Conversations with John Doyle will look at the work of composers, writers, choreographers, and performers and conduct (and record) conversations with artists who have worked closely with these masters. The recordings would serve as an intimate archive of the giants of American Musical Theater of the past 50 years; transcribed and edited with plans to publish as a book, with the original recordings deposited in Firestone Library.

Susan J. Wolfson

Professor, English

Frankenstein at 200 is a new course on Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. On its 200th anniversary, we'll study this brilliant novel--about an undergraduate's independent study project conducted without a faculty advisor--in several exciting contexts: literary aesthetics, forms, and traditions; classical mythology; scientific enthusiasm and perils; other tales of transgression, outcasts and "monsters"; philosophical ethics; alter-ego psychology; questions of gender and sexuality; cinematic riffs and adaptations. Accompanied by a year of film screenings, colloquia, exhibits, and class trips celebrating the novel's 200th anniversary, this course fulfills a requirement for the interdisciplinary Certificate in Humanistic Studies.

Multi-year projects in the final year:

Nature's Nation: American Art and Environment

Princeton University Art Museum (James Steward)

In spring 2018, the Princeton University Art Museum will present a major traveling exhibition reinterpreting American art in relation to ecology and environmental history. Curated by Karl Kusserow, John Wilmerding Curator of American Art, the exhibition will draw together one hundred works of art that range from well-known masterpieces to rarely exhibited works to reveal for the first time how American artists across three centuries have both reflected on and helped shape perceptions of the environment. The exhibit was heralded by a team-taught (Braddock/Kusserow) seminar, "Nature's Nation," created specifically as a capstone seminar for the Humanistic Studies certificate program.

"Song of Rome": Workshops and Readings on a Contemporary Re-Telling of Virgil's Aeneid

Classics Department (Andrew Feldherr) and the Program in Humanistic Studies (with McCarter Theater)

A McCarter play-in-development by the award-winning actor/playwright team, Lisa Peterson and Dennis O'Hare (who created *An Iliad*) will be explored through class visits, workshops, moderated discussions, and developmental readings, bringing faculty and students into conversation about the creative process and the continuing relevance of the classics for the contemporary moment.

Texts in Context: A Research Trip to Rome for HUM 216-219 Students

Humanistic Studies Program

The post-course fall-break trip to Rome for HUM 216-219 sophomores builds a humanities community, deepening students' experience of foundational texts that they have read the previous year, and giving them substantial preparation to carry out an independently designed research project. Advance guidance is provided by Princeton's faculty, curators, and librarians.