

**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT
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SAMPLE APPLICATION NARRATIVE



Humanities Initiatives at Institutions with High Hispanic Enrollment
Institution: John Jay College



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National Endowment for the Humanities

Division of Education Programs

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

This sample of the narrative portion from a grant is provided as an example of a funded proposal. It will give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. It is not intended to serve as a model. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with staff members in the NEH Division of Education Programs well before a grant deadline. This sample proposal does not include a budget, letters of commitment, or resumes.

Project Title: *Law and Literature: Disciplinary Perspectives and Faculty Development*

Institution: John Jay College

Project Director: Allison Pease

Grant Program: Humanities Initiatives for Faculty at Institutions with High Hispanic Enrollment

**Law and Literature:
Disciplinary Perspectives and Faculty Development**

NEH Humanities Initiatives for Faculty at Hispanic-Serving Colleges and Universities
Grant Proposal

Submitted by John Jay College of Criminal Justice
City University of New York

Project Director: Allison Pease

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3. Project Summary

John Jay College of Criminal Justice, one of eleven senior colleges of the City University of New York, has for the last thirty years offered only majors in criminal justice related areas. However, with a new mandate from CUNY's Chancellor, the college is prepared to offer baccalaureate degrees in a number of humanities and liberal arts subjects as long as these majors support the college's mission of educating for justice. The English Department at John Jay has successfully proposed a major in English that offers two concentrations. One concentration engages the traditional texts and methodologies of literary study; the other concentration integrates the methodologies and texts of literary study with the central problems and questions of the law.

John Jay College will have the only undergraduate English Department in the U.S. to specialize in literature and the law and seeks to develop a national reputation in this field. To prepare for its major, the department has hired twenty new faculty in the past three years, one-half of whom specialize in traditional literary fields as they concern legal and criminal justice-related issues.

A Humanities Initiatives for Faculty at Hispanic-Serving Institutions grant will fund a one-year seminar with six distinguished scholars of law and literature. This seminar in literature and the law will allow us to:

- pursue intellectual rigor and coherence in our law and literature curriculum as we develop new courses and rewrite parts of long-standing courses.
- professionally renew and invigorate the English faculty by creating a rich discussion within our department and the college concerning issues in the expanding field of law and literature.
- integrate old and new faculty through collegial study and discussion of our new specialty.
- establish John Jay College as an innovative leader in law and literature scholarship and education.

Visiting scholars will deliver public lectures at the college, thereby raising awareness of the field of law and literature at John Jay as well at neighboring institutions in New York City (CUNY colleges, Columbia, Fordham, NYU), placing John Jay on the map as an intellectual center for scholarship in literature and the law. Further, scholars will lead English department faculty seminars that will address the broad range of issues germane to the study of law and literature. These seminars will provide intellectual support as we further develop our curriculum in literature and the law. Our visiting scholars will also provide practical support by constructively critiquing our syllabi, bibliographies, and the overall design of our major.

4. Narrative Description

Intellectual Rationale

Law and Literature is a scholarly discipline at the intersection of the humanities and social science. A flourishing sub-discipline for both legal and literary scholars over the last forty years, law and literature invites cross-examination of the imagination by the social real, and the social real by the imagination. The province of both law and literature is in the meeting place of language, story, and human experience; both literature and law are narrative practices that create new possibilities for meaning and action in life, and both are subject to indeterminacy and interpretation. Where the law is directly involved with the formal, legitimate processes necessary for the distribution of power and resources in society, the study of literary narratives promotes ethical reasoning in context-specific literary situations, allowing imaginative human narratives to bear on the concrete realities of public life. The study of literature and the law builds critical skills, powers of judgment, and empathy in those students who study them.

Nearly half of all law schools offer courses in law and literature, and many undergraduate English programs offer one or two courses in the discipline. Currently, however, no undergraduate program offers a comprehensive curriculum in literature and the law. John Jay College of Criminal Justice seeks to become the first college in the country to offer an English major with an optional concentration in Literature and the Law. By doing so, we hope to raise the profile of the humanities at John Jay, better prepare our undergraduates to apply to law school by expanding their critical perspectives on law (one-third of incoming freshman to John Jay aspire to a career in law), and contribute to the law and literature field with an enlarged and enriched understanding of the humanities by the law and the law by the humanities.

Law and literature is a vital and growing field. In addition to the scores of monographs on the subject in the last forty years, there are four scholarly journals currently devoted to the intersection of law, literature, and culture: *Law and Literature*, *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities*, *Law/Text/Culture* and, introduced in 2005, *Law, Culture, and the Humanities*. John Jay's creation of an English curriculum

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with courses in literature and law participates in a national movement and advances the humanities at John Jay.

A faculty seminar in literature and the law is an important part of making our new English major work. The faculty seminar brings long-standing and new members of our growing department together to study and expand our knowledge of the field. Humanities teaching and learning at John Jay will be strengthened by ensuring that participating members have a cutting-edge comprehension of the field of literature and the law, and that the design of our major as well as individual syllabi have been systematically critiqued by important scholars in the field as well as each other in the context of an educational seminar.

Content and Design

The NEH Humanities Initiative will fund six internationally recognized scholars to present public lectures at the college and lead faculty seminars in literature and the law in 2008. We will host three scholars in the spring of 2008 and three scholars in the fall of 2008. These seminars will run in tandem with the commencement of the new English major at John Jay, scheduled to begin in spring 2008.

Each of our visiting scholars will give a public talk on the status and relevance of law and literature studies, emphasizing their own unique areas of expertise. These areas include a broad coverage of historical eras, such as ancient Greek, early modern, Enlightenment, modern and postmodern, as well as an array of rhetorical and cultural studies, such as law and the liberal arts, legal fictions, aesthetic dimensions of law and justice, ethics, legal semiotics, critical race theory, Hispanic literature and the law, Greek law, myth and storytelling, human rights, and psychoanalysis. We have selected our scholars for the depth and breadth they represent as a group as well as their outstanding reputations.

Our experts have been asked to return the day after their public lecture to lead a two-hour English faculty seminar on how their areas of expertise should be considered in terms of curriculum development, and how the ideas they have addressed are articulated in our literature and the law syllabi. Participating faculty will be required to present syllabi from the new curriculum to our visiting scholars. Together, the

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group will discuss the ways that the visiting scholar's approach to the field impacts both individual syllabus design and overall curriculum design. The public lectures and faculty seminars will address the following issues:

- What undergraduates gain by studying literature and the law.
- The originating questions that law and literature studies ask and how those questions have changed since the field's inception.
- The necessary exclusions law and literature studies makes.
- The basic set of ideas about law and literature a student should know upon graduation.
- How the English Department at John Jay College of Criminal Justice can create a literature and the law curriculum that attends to the developmental needs of our diversely prepared student-body.
- How the English Department of John Jay College of Criminal Justice can create a literature and the law curriculum that prepares students for graduate study in literature, law, public policy, or other humanistic study.
- What the central texts to support a literature and the law curriculum are.
- How John Jay's English major with an optional concentration in Literature and the Law can serve as a model for other English curricula across the country.

Pre-Seminar Session: Surveying the Field of Law and Literature

On January 24-25, 2008, before our year-long program of hosting visiting scholars, our faculty will convene for a two-day seminar in which we discuss the major theories of the field. This faculty seminar will be lead by Jon-Christian Suggs, Chair of the Department of English and author of *Whispered Consolations: Law and Narrative in African American Life* (2000), and Sinkwan Cheng, Associate Professor of English at John Jay and editor of *Law, Justice, and Power: Between Reason and Will* (2004). The purpose of this seminar will be to survey foundational theories in the field and the parameters of our discussion for the year. Readings for this seminar can be found in Appendix E to this document.

Seminar 1: Canon Formation and Eighteenth-Century Issues in Law and Literature

Our first visiting scholar will be Susan Sage Heinzelman, Associate Professor of English & Women and Gender Studies at the University of Texas, Austin. Professor Heinzelman's seminar will

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focus on canon formation in law and literature studies as well as her area of specialty, eighteenth-century literature. Professor Heinzelman is President of the Association for the Study of Law, Culture, and the Humanities and is a widely recognized scholar in the field of law and literature. Her edited collection, *Representing Women: Law, Literature, and Feminism* (1994) is frequently cited. Professor Heinzelman offers John Jay thorough scholarly knowledge of the field and a record of curriculum development in law and literature. Dr. Heinzelman will deliver her college-wide lecture on February 7, and run her faculty seminar on February 8, 2008. Readings for this seminar can be found in Appendix E to this document.

Seminar 2: Ethnic and Racial Issues in Law and Literature

Our second speaker will be Carl Gutierrez Jones, Professor of English at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Professor Gutierrez Jones's seminar will focus on developing the racial and ethnic studies area of our curriculum. Professor Gutierrez Jones is the author of *Critical Race Narratives: A Study of Race, Rhetoric, and Injury* (2001) and *Rethinking the Borderlands: Between Chicano Narrative and Legal Discourse* (1995). Dr. Gutierrez Jones will deliver his college-wide lecture on March 6, and run his faculty seminar on March 7, 2008. Readings for this seminar can be found in Appendix E to this document.

Seminar 3: The Role of Interpretation in Law and Literature

Our third speaker will be Desmond Manderson, Canada Research Chair in Law and Discourse at McGill University. Professor Manderson's seminar will focus on the role of interpretation in law and literature. Professor Manderson's Tier 1 Canada Research Chair sustains a program of research and graduate supervision focusing on the development, understanding, and interpretation of law in relation to cultural forces including literature, art, music, and ethics. His recent works include *Courting Death: The Law of Mortality* (1999), *Songs without Music: Aesthetic Dimensions of Law and Justice* (2000) and *Proximity: Levinas, Torts, and the Soul of Law* (2006). A curricular innovator, Professor Manderson has, along with McGill's English Department, founded the Shakespeare Moot Project, an interdisciplinary

project that explores the nature of interpretation, the development of a legal tradition, and the way value and meaning intersect in the creation of law and literature alike. Professor Manderson's pioneering and interdisciplinary approach to law and literature is a terrific model for what we can do at John Jay. Dr. Manderson will deliver his college-wide lecture on April 10, and run his faculty seminar on April 11, 2008. Readings for this seminar can be found in Appendix E to this document.

Seminar 4: Oratory, Storytelling, and Greek Law

Our fourth speaker will be Michael Gagarin, James R. Dougherty, Jr. Centennial Professor of Classics at the University of Texas at Austin. Professor Gagarin's seminar will focus on the power of storytelling in law and literature and the nature of Athenian law. Professor Gagarin has a distinguished list of publications, including *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Law* (2005), *Antiphon the Athenian: Oratory, Law and Justice in the Age of the Sophists* (2002), *Early Greek Law* (1986), and *Drakon and Early Athenian Homicide Law* (1982), among others. Professor Gagarin offers John Jay a comprehensive knowledge of classical Greek law and literature and will help us balance our ancient and modern offerings in the curriculum. Dr. Gagarin will deliver his college-wide lecture on September 11, and run his faculty seminar on September 12, 2008. Readings for this seminar can be found in Appendix E to this document.

Seminar 5: Legal Rhetoric and Interpretation

Our fifth speaker will be Marianne Constable, Professor of Rhetoric at the University of California, Berkeley. Professor Constable's seminar will focus on the rhetoric of law and theories of interpretation. Professor Constable's is the author of *Just Silences: The Limits and Possibilities of Modern Law* (Princeton University Press, 2005) and *The Law of the Other: The Mixed Jury and Changing Conceptions of Citizenship, Law and Knowledge* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), which won the Law and Society Association's J. Willard Hurst Prize in Legal History. She has published on a wide range of topics in legal rhetoric and philosophy: Foucault and immigration law, Nietzsche and jurisprudence,

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the rhetoric of "community," the role of law in the liberal arts, Frederick Schauer on rules, Robert Cover on violence, and Montesquieu on systems. She has co-edited two books on law and society and currently serves as Book Review Editor for the journal, *Law, Culture, and the Humanities*. Professor Constable's attention to legal rhetoric and interpretation is of crucial importance to our study of narratives of law and literature. Her presentation will also be of specific interest to the three forensic linguists on faculty at John Jay. Dr. Constable will deliver her college-wide lecture on October 16, and run her faculty seminar on October 17, 2008. Readings for this seminar can be found in Appendix E to this document.

Seminar 6: Theories of Law and Literature

Our sixth speaker is Peter Goodrich, Professor of Law and Director of Law and Humanities at the Benjamin Cardozo School of Law. Professor Goodrich's seminar will focus on the enabling theories of law and literature studies. Professor Goodrich, one of the founding editors of the journal *Law and Literature*, has written extensively in the areas of law and literature and semiotics and has authored ten books, including *Oedipus Lex: Psychoanalysis, History, Law* (1995), *Law and the Postmodern Mind* (1997), and *Nietzsche and Legal Theory* (2005). Professor Goodrich's theoretical approach to literature and the law, as well as his extensive experience as editor of *Law and Literature*, offer John Jay the opportunity to explore the theoretical underpinnings of the field as well as an encyclopedic knowledge of the possibilities of literature and law studies. He will be a thoughtful contributor to our overall curriculum design as well as our more advanced, theoretical courses. Dr. Goodrich will deliver his college-wide lecture on November 13, and run his faculty seminar on November 14, 2008. Readings for this seminar can be found in Appendix E to this document.

The primary beneficiary of these faculty seminars is the collection of individuals called the English Department. As we embark on the adventure of offering this unprecedented major in English, we take our intellectual responsibility to this exciting branch of humanistic study and our students seriously.

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As an English Department faculty with differing scholarly interests, the opportunity to study fundamental ideas in law and literature together will ensure a shared body of knowledge in the field, something every major takes for granted in its faculty, but, because we are mounting a unique major, we cannot.

Our foremost priority is to design a curriculum that is practical, intellectually sound, and sensitive to the needs of our students. Seminars with these notable scholars will allow our faculty to establish the parameters of the field as it can exist for undergraduate study. These seminars will also develop a collegial working environment within this specialty for participating faculty that will allow us to forge scholarly and pedagogical partnerships. Doing so will not only benefit our students, faculty, and John Jay College, it will invigorate the scholarly field of law and literature.

Institutional Context

John Jay College of Criminal Justice ranks as one of the leading institutions of higher education for Hispanics, according to *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education Magazine*. Comprising 42% of our student body, John Jay enjoys the highest Hispanic enrollment of any college in the Northeast. John Jay College of Criminal Justice seeks to become the preeminent institution in the field of criminal justice education while providing its students with a strong liberal arts education. As of 2008, the college will begin offering humanities and liberal arts majors for the first time in thirty years (dating back to a fiscal crisis in New York City that forced the college to narrow its priorities). The proposed English major has been approved by all governing bodies at John Jay and is being considered by the City University of New York governing structure for approval. The University has verbally welcomed this proposal and we do not expect any obstructions. Please see appendix D for a letter from John Jay's Undergraduate Dean, Jane Bowers, explaining the status of the English major.

We in the English Department are tremendously excited to offer an English major, slated to begin in spring 2008, and are particularly proud to have designed a major that maintains the integrity of literary studies while explicitly fulfilling our college's mission of educating for justice. Please see Appendix F

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for a copy of the proposal for the major. Because 30% of incoming John Jay students say they intend to study the law after graduation, and because the skills acquired through the study of literature are consistently stated as desired by law schools as well as the American Bar Association, the English major with an optional concentration in Literature and the Law will be an asset to the college and our students.

Staff and Participants

Our project director is Allison Pease, Associate Professor of English at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Professor Pease received her Ph.D. in English Literature at New York University. She is the author of *Modernism, Mass Culture, and the Aesthetics of Obscenity* (2000) and numerous articles on British Victorian and Modernist literature and aesthetic theory. She was an editor of the journal *Victorian Literature and Culture* for seven years. At John Jay Professor Pease serves as Chair of the Task Force for the Creation of an English Major, Chair of the Gender Studies Program and Coordinator of the Gender Studies Minor. Her curriculum vita is attached in Appendix A.

Our project secretary is Erica Class, who is the Office Manager of the English Department. She will be responsible for making travel, hotel, and meal arrangements for visiting scholars.

The visiting scholars are Drs. Susan Sage Heinzelman, Carl Gutierrez Jones, Marianne Constable, Desmond Manderson, Michael Gagarin, and Peter Goodrich. Their brief biographies have been detailed above in the “Content and Design” section of this application. Their credentials and letters of commitment are attached in Appendix B.

John Jay faculty participants are Allison Pease, Associate Professor of English, Jon-Christian Suggs, Chair of the Department and Professor of English, Margaret Mikesell Tabb, Professor of English, Valerie Allen, Associate Professor of English, Andrew Majeske, Associate Professor of English, Auli Ek, Assistant Professor of English, Baz Dreisinger, Assistant Professor of English, Elizabeth Yukins, Assistant Professor of English, Bettina Carbonell, Assistant Professor of English, Sinkwan Cheng, Associate Professor of English, Alexander Schlutz, Assistant Professor of English, Toy-Tung Fung,

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Assistant Professor of English, Caroline Reitz, Assistant Professor of English, John Staines, Assistant Professor of English,. These fifteen members of the English Department at John Jay College are responsible for developing and teaching courses in the law and literature curriculum. Their credentials and letters of commitment are attached in Appendix C.

Evaluation

The seminar will be deemed a success if

- we create an ongoing discussion in the English department and at John Jay College about the field of law and literature and the value of law/lit scholarship to the pursuit of justice.
- we create 5-10 new syllabi in literature and the law, including two versions of our gateway course “Introduction to Literature and the Law,” 3-5 wide-ranging literature and the law electives, and at least 3 Senior Seminars in Literature and the Law.
- upon graduation our students successfully enter post-graduate study and careers of choice.
- we submit a grant proposal to the NEH to host a conference on literature and the law in 2010, through which our curriculum development will be shared with interested scholars.
- individuals in the English Department publish law and literature monographs and articles in high-impact journals.
- John Jay College of Criminal Justice develops a reputation for law and literature scholarship and innovative curriculum design.

Follow-Up and Dissemination

Initial follow-up of the seminar’s work will occur both in curriculum design and implementation of the English major. Routine follow-up will be performed by the Chair of the English Department, responsible for the oversight of individual syllabi, and the English Department’s five-member Curriculum Committee, responsible for the oversight of course development and quality control.

With successful implementation of the major, we expect to be in the vanguard in the field of law and literature, and will seek opportunities to share our expertise, including hosting conferences, contributing to journals, and making individual conference presentations. We believe that instituting a unique English major with a Literature and the Law concentration at a college with a distinctive criminal justice mission has the potential to invigorate undergraduate English curricula worldwide. Further, we know that our curriculum will serve as a model to all of those interested in teaching literature and the law, and our syllabi will be posted on our website. Our program will be made public in as many scholarly and informal venues as possible.