

## *Graduate Certificate in Philosophy, Arts, and Literature*

***Excerpt from the Approved Proposal for the Certificate  
Approved April 18, 2010***

### *The Steering Committee*

This proposal is presented by a steering committee consisting of Duke faculty working in different national literatures, music, art history and theater studies:

**Sarah Beckwith**, Professor of English and Theater Studies; Chair of Theater Studies

**Owen Flanagan**, James B. Duke professor of Philosophy; Professor of Neurobiology

**Neil McWilliam**, Walter H. Annenberg Professor of Art History

**Toril Moi**, James B. Duke Professor of Literature and Romance Studies, Professor of Philosophy, English and Theater studies; Director of the Center for Philosophy, Arts and Literature (PAL)

**Thomas Pfau**, Eads Family Professor of English and German; DGS-German Studies

**Jacqueline Waeber**, Associate Professor of Music

### *Intellectual Rationale*

The purpose of the *Graduate Certificate in Philosophy, Arts, & Literature* is to provide graduate students with broad and well-defined competence in aesthetics and the philosophy of art, as well as in the philosophical and aesthetic questions that arise in relation to specific art forms. The aim is to enable students to place literature, theater, painting, music, and other arts in conversation with philosophy and aesthetics without reducing different forms of human artistic expression to mere illustrations of various pre-existing philosophical paradigms.

The Graduate Certificate in Philosophy, Arts, & Literature seeks to connect the study of specific works of art and specific art forms (such as literature, music, theater, painting, film, and so on) to questions concerning creativity, the nature of specific art forms, the relationship between knowledge and art, and between ethics and aesthetics. The Certificate aims to make students conversant with philosophical reflections on literature and the arts. As forms of human expression, philosophy and every art form are historical. The Certificate seeks to foster an understanding of the historical nature of different art forms, and of aesthetics and philosophy, and to encourage exploration of philosophy, art and literature from different historical periods.

The certificate is designed to provide students with a firm grounding in the research skills required to enable them to intervene in contemporary debates within the field and to encourage them to consider their own field of study from an inter- or cross-disciplinary approach.

### *Academic Requirements*

Each student must take five graduate level courses approved by the Steering Committee. Each student must also write a research paper and present it at a workshop at Duke. This presentation may take place anytime after the completion of at least four of the graduate level course required for the certificate. The workshop will be organized regularly according to need. A minimum of three members of the steering committee will be present at workshop meetings.

Students are expected to have an interdisciplinary experience in the Certificate. Students must therefore take courses in a minimum of three different departments. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the DGS if sufficiently diverse courses have not been offered in the relevant period. A student cannot earn the Certificate by taking five courses in the same department or five courses with the same professor.

Every semester the Steering Committee will approve a minimum of 2 courses that will count towards the certificate. These courses will be listed on the Certificate's web pages. As a rule, only approved courses will count for the Certificate. However, to ensure that no suitable course is excluded from the Certificate, students may also petition the DGS to count a non-approved course towards the Certificate. To do so, they must provide a detailed syllabus of the course.

--As a rule, Independent Studies cannot replace an approved course.

### *Criteria and Coherence of Approved Courses*

The Steering Committee will approve courses focusing on the philosophical and aesthetic underpinnings—as well as the major formal, medial, and performative dimensions—of the relevant art form, genre, and medium, and courses that raise the question of the relationship between philosophy and a given genre or art form.

Approved courses for the Certificate will satisfy at least one of the following five criteria: (1) the course engages a specific art form or genre in relation to some key philosophical or aesthetic concepts; (2) the course explores the nature of an art form or genre and connects it to key philosophical or aesthetic concepts; (3) the course explores the connection between philosophy and at least one other art form or genre; (4) the course focuses on one or more writers and/or artists, and connects them with philosophically informed reflection on the dynamics of form, meaning, and/or performance; (5) the course focuses on at least one key work or a selected number of works, and connects them with philosophically informed reflections on creativity, the nature of specific genres or art forms, questions of historicity and creativity, ethics and aesthetics, etc.

Courses may satisfy these criteria by focusing on a fundamental art form (literature, music, art, film, theater, etc.) or on a specific genre within an art form (fiction, the novel, lyric poetry, opera, the symphony, painting, sculpture, documentary films, the Hollywood melodrama, etc.), or on a specific work (or specific works) of art or literature.

In general, we imagine courses taking a number of different forms:

- a theme and/or a period (Music in literature and philosophy 1800-1945, for example)
- a period considered as a question for philosophy and an art form: e.g. modernism, symbolism
- an exploration of philosophy and literature (or art, or music) in the work of one or two figures (e. g. Beauvoir and Sartre; Rousseau; Melancholy and Literature)
- an exploration of the question of philosophy and literature (or another art form) etc.) either purely as a theoretical problem, or as an exploration of key figures in the tradition (Montaigne, Rousseau, Kierkegaard, Coleridge, Nietzsche, Sartre, Cavell, etc.), or a mixture of both.
- an overview of key ideas in the history of aesthetics and criticism
- an exploration of the relationship between ethics and aesthetics
- an exploration of notions of art, i.e. what art is, what is considered good, or scandalous, art (music, literature) in a specific period, in one or more national contexts (e.g.: Art and Politics in 19th C. France; Art as Melancholia in European Literature)
- an exploration of key questions in criticism (of one or more art forms) in conjunction with philosophy, or from a philosophical perspective
- an author (painter, composer), or a tradition, read with relevant philosophical questions in mind (Shakespeare; Rousseau)
- a work of major importance (example: Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*) or a selection of key works studied in the light of the criteria listed above.

Here is a list of courses that will be offered for the Certificate. Some of these courses are not yet on the books, some are, but will in some cases be changed to fit the purposes of the certificate better:

ARTHIST 200-level course. New course: European Symbolism (McWilliam)  
 ARTHIST 373 The Paris Salon: Artists, Critics and Institutions 1815-1900 (McWilliam)  
 ENG 220S/MEDREN crosslist: New course: Shakespeare, Philosophy, Tragedy (Beckwith)  
 ENG 250S/GER250S Music in Philosophy and Literature, 1800-1945 (Pfau)  
 ENG 271CS Aesthetics, Ethics, and Language in Coleridge, 1790-1834 (Pfau)  
 ENG352.01/LIT352.01 Early Modernism 1870-1914 (Moi)  
 LIT272/ENG272 Wittgensteinian perspectives on Literary Theory (Moi)  
 LIT281.01/FR366.01 Simone de Beauvoir and Jean Paul Sartre: Between Literature and Philosophy (Moi)  
 LIT303.01 History of Criticism and Aesthetics (Moi)  
 LIT 354.01/ENG354.01 Stanley Cavell and Ordinary Language Philosophy (emphasis on literature, film, art) (Moi)  
 MUS 221 Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Music (Waeber)  
 MUS 317D Opera and the Crisis of Language: Voice in Music and Philosophy (Waeber)  
 PHIL/LIT Philosophy and Literature (Flanagan); New cross-listed graduate course (will be taught in 2010/11)

### ***Benefits***

Graduate students who wish to write dissertations involving philosophical or aesthetic questions will get a serious grounding in the key questions in the field. They will also establish a track record of interdisciplinary collaboration across the arts. In today's intellectual climate, such students will offer something new and different. Job market candidates will be able to prove that in addition to their disciplinary expertise, they have proven ability to teach introductory courses in aesthetics (or the "history of criticism"). The Certificate would certainly be a draw for new graduate students in these fields, since our competitors (as far as we know) don't have a Certificate of this kind.

For faculty, the existence of a Graduate Certificate in Philosophy, Arts, and Literature will provide a focus for collaboration and an encouraging environment for work that would otherwise be carried out in isolation. It will also help to attract new faculty.