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UNH and CCSNH Receive Mellon Foundation Grant to Support the Humanities

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(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2017/02/07/unh-and-ccsnh-receive-mellon-foundation-grant-to-support-the-humanities)

DURHAM, N.H. – Thanks to a \$824,000 grant over three years from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the University of New Hampshire and the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH) will establish the New Hampshire Humanities Collaborative to promote study of the humanities, support the transfer of community college students in the humanities to the university and develop a humanities curriculum focused on grand challenges.

“This collaborative will illuminate the value of the humanities for civic well-being and career advancement by communicating to students the role of the humanities in providing a well-rounded education experience,” said UNH President Mark Huddleston. “It will also allow us to expand our partnership with the state’s community colleges.”

Currently about 700 students transfer from community colleges in New Hampshire to University System of New Hampshire institutions each year. Of those, only three percent enroll in humanities majors compared to the more than 20 percent who enroll in STEM majors.

“We’ve successfully partnered to provide pathways for community college students to matriculate into four-year programs but those efforts to date have been primarily focused on the STEM fields,” said Ross Gittell, chancellor of CCSNH. “The support from the Mellon Foundation will help us to not only illustrate the purpose and value of the humanities, but enhance our curricula and provide pathways for more students to pursue associate and bachelor degrees in the humanities.”

According to Heidi Bostic, dean of the College of Liberal Arts at UNH, the value of a humanities education may not be evident to students, whether they are enrolled at community colleges or four-year universities. “The humanities are vital to our democracy and for addressing the grand challenges of our age, such as health care, urbanization, food sovereignty and the role of technology in human relations and discourse. Although these challenges are sometimes seen as the purview of STEM fields alone, the humanities are crucial for articulating relevant responses and enabling respectful civic discourse.”

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation endeavors to strengthen, promote, and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies.

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH’s research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, receiving more than \$100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

The Community College System of NH consists of seven colleges, offering associate degree and certificate programs, professional training, transfer pathways to four-year degrees, and dual-credit partnerships with NH high schools. The system's colleges are Great Bay Community College in Portsmouth and Rochester; Lakes Region Community College in Laconia; Manchester Community College; Nashua Community College; NHTI – Concord's Community College; River Valley Community College in Claremont, Lebanon and Keene; and White Mountains Community College in Berlin, Littleton and North Conway. The seven community colleges in the system are committed to working with businesses throughout the state to train and retain employees to develop a robust workforce across all sectors and embraces the "65 by 25 Initiative," which calls for 65 percent of NH citizens to have some form of postsecondary education by 2025 to meet future workforce demands.

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