



UNC  
COLLEGE OF  
ARTS & SCIENCES

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September 6, 2009

TO: Dr. Erika Lindeman, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Curricula  
FROM: Marsha S. Collins, Marcel Bataillon Distinguished Term Professor of  
Comparative Literature  
RE: Proposal for MEMS Cluster Program in Renaissance Literature, Art, and Music

I write to propose the creation of a MEMS Cluster Program in Renaissance Literature, Art, and Music. The proposed program aims to bridge and integrate the Humanities and Fine Arts divisions, challenging students to engage with the concept of the Renaissance itself as a movement with key, unifying themes, aesthetic concerns, stylistic characteristics, and philosophical issues that can be identified, studied, and linked across the traditional disciplinary boundaries of literature, art, and music. Students who participate in the program should gain insight not only into the characteristics and significance of the Renaissance as a whole, and Renaissance literature, art, and music in particular, but also into the benefits and problems of periodization in the study of culture and the history of ideas.

**Courses for Cluster and Faculty who frequently teach these Courses:**

CMPL 454 Literature of the Continental Renaissance (in English translation)—Drs. Marsha Collins and Jessica Wolfe

CMPL 365 (newly approved) Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and the Birth of the Imagination—Dr. Marsha Collins

ENGL 227 English Literature of the Earlier Renaissance—Drs. Jessica Wolfe and Darryl Gless

ENGL 225 Shakespeare—Drs. Darryl Gless and David Baker

MUSC 251 History of Western Music to 1650—Dr. Anne MacNeil

MUSC 390H Ovid and [Renaissance] Music—Dr. Anne MacNeil

ART 270 Early Renaissance Art in Italy—Dr. Mary Pardo

ART 271 Italian High Renaissance Art—Dr. Mary Pardo

CMPL 454, which provides students with a wide, international selection of canonical, foundational Renaissance works by canonical Renaissance writers and thinkers, serves as the core course for the proposed cluster. An attempt has been made to offer students both a variety of survey-type courses as well as some courses that focus on

major, representative artists and concepts (Cervantes, Shakespeare, Ovid and Renaissance Music, *The Courtier* and Italian Art, Cervantes and the imagination, and so forth). CMPL 454 can be offered every year, and the other courses are offered frequently, and certainly at least every other year. Dr. MacNeil wishes to develop a new, seminar course that would fit with this cluster, but she could not meet the deadline of the moratorium on new course proposals. Dr. Pardo would like to include other courses she teaches (with higher numbers), but she cannot teach them with sufficient frequency for this program. I have discussed this cluster proposal with the faculty listed above and the Administrative Board of MEMS. The chairs of the respective departments (Drs. Taylor, Rhodes, and Sheriff) also know that this proposal has been made. I have attached syllabi of some of the courses for you to review.

**Genesis of the Proposal:**

This proposal is an outgrowth of several initiatives that came together late in Spring 2009: a request for MEMS cluster program proposals; the approval of the MEMS minor, which calls for students to “group” courses conceptually in consultation with faculty advisor Dr. Brett Whalen; planning for the MEMS major; and the observations of my students in CMPL 454 during the Spring semester of 2009, in which many observed that suddenly their courses in History / Art / Music / Literature “made sense” on a different conceptual level or “fit together” with other courses they had taken pertaining to the Renaissance.

I will be happy to answer any questions that you have.

Thank you for considering this proposal.

With all best wishes,  
Marsha S. Collins  
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