
MAASANEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MID-AMERICA AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION FEB 2005

ASA approves Graduate Education Standards

The ASA National Council adopted the Graduate Education Standards resolution at the annual ASA convention last November in Atlanta. Inspired by the American Association of University Professors in their Statement on Graduate Students, though modified to address conditions more specific to American Studies and related fields, the declaration was first endorsed in March 2003 by the Students' Committee.

The approved resolution, composed of a preamble, general standards, standards pertaining to program and institutional support, and standards pertaining to teaching, was formulated, as stated in the preamble, "to address the complex reality of graduate study and to foster sound academic policies in graduate programs in American Studies and related fields."

Though a final, edited version will be published on the ASA website and in its newsletter, the resolution, as it was accepted, begins on page two.

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Graduate Education Standards Resolution

Preamble

As the largest professional organization in its discipline and as an organization with broad interdisciplinary reach, the American Studies Association has a unique responsibility to establish the standards of professional conduct and institutional support in graduate programs in American Studies and related fields.

The following statement sets forth recommended standards that pertain to graduate students in their roles as advanced students, future colleagues, and teachers within the university.

Graduate students are not only engaged in an advanced course of study, they are often also in programs of professional academic training and hold teaching and research assistantships. As graduate assistants, they carry out many of the functions of faculty members and receive compensation for these duties.

The statement that follows has been formulated to address the complex reality of graduate study and to foster sound academic policies in graduate programs in American Studies and related fields.

The responsibility to secure and respect the conditions conducive to graduate study is shared by all members of the university community. Every department of American Studies and every college or university has a duty to develop policies and procedures that safeguard against the infringement of the rights of graduate students as outlined in this statement. These standards will not only enhance the educational and professional development of graduate students, but will support the freedom of thought and expression so vital to the intellectual life of the university.

Each program in American Studies has a responsibility to make these standards available to continuing and prospective graduate students and to all faculty members either by inclusion in the program description or by public posting in the department.

General Standards

1. Graduate Students have the right to academic freedom. While graduate students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled, they should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and should be encouraged by faculty to exercise their freedom of discussion, inquiry and expression. Graduate students' freedom of inquiry is necessarily qualified by their still being learners in the profession; nonetheless, their faculty mentors should afford them latitude and respect as they decide how they will engage in research and teaching.

2. Graduate students have the right to be free from illegal or unconstitutional discrimination, or discrimination according to, but not limited to, age, gender, disability, race, religion, political affiliation, national origin, marital status, or sexual orientation, in admissions and throughout their education, employment, and placement. This right extends not only to discrimination in admissions and hiring, but also in the right to study and work in an environment free of intimidation and harassment.

3. Graduate Students are to be considered members of an academic community, and as such, they have the right to collegial and respectful treatment by faculty members and other students alike.

4. Graduate Students are entitled to the protection of their intellectual property rights, including recognition of their participation in supervised research and their research with faculty, consistent with the standards of attribution and acknowledgement relevant to the field of study. This includes the right to co-authorship in publications involving significant contributions of ideas or research work from the student.

The student should receive first authorship for publications which are comprised primarily of the creative research and writing of the student when consistent with the conventions of the field.

5. Graduate students have the right to confidentiality in their communications with faculty and administrators of their program. Discussion of the students' performance among faculty should be of a professional nature and should be limited to the students' academic performance and fitness as a graduate student and graduate instructor.

6. Graduate students should be free of reprisal for exercising any of these rights.

Standards Pertaining to Program and Institutional Support ████████████████████

7. Prospective and current graduate students should be fully informed on degree and program requirements. This includes a clear and regularly updated written statement on program requirements, as well as a clear and consistent articulation of the recommended preparations and procedures necessary for fulfilling those requirements. These requirements should be consistently applied, and if degree requirements are changed, students admitted under the old rules should be allowed to continue under those rules. If the program is discontinued, graduate students already admitted in the program should be allowed to complete their degrees. Students should also be told of acceptance and attrition rates in their program, funding possibilities, employment prospects, and the normative and average time of degree completion.

8. Graduate students should be assisted with the progress of their degrees through periodic assessments, appropriate and timely course offerings, faculty advisors in every step of their

degree program, and adequate dissertation supervision.

9. Graduate students should be provided with a realistic assessment of funding opportunities by their program and institution upon admission and periodically thereafter as necessary. Programs should have clearly written policies regarding the distribution of financial and resource support, and these policies should be made public or be readily available upon request.

10. Graduate students should be allowed to participate in institutional governance at the program, department, college, graduate school, and university levels, and should be able to voice their opinions in matters of their interest.

11. Programs and departments are encouraged to support the professional development of graduate students through information on professionalization and the provision of conference and research expenses.

12. Graduate students have a right to mentorship and should be offered a fair notice of discontinuation of adviser relationship. If a graduate student's dissertation or thesis supervisor departs from the institution, whenever possible, the student should be allowed to keep on working with that supervisor. If this is not possible, the program should make every effort to assist the student in finding alternative supervision.

13. Programs should be encouraged to provide graduate students, especially those involved in instruction, with offices and workspaces, computing and printing equipment, as

well as access to copiers, subject to appropriate budgetary limits.

14. Graduate students should have access to their files and placement dossiers. If access is denied, graduate students should be able to ask a faculty member of their choice to examine their files and receive a redacted account, at the discretion of said faculty member. Graduate students should have the right to direct the addition or removal of materials from their placement dossiers.

15. Graduate students have the right to refuse duties and tasks not closely related irrelevant to their academic or professional program. This includes the right to request more appropriate assignments without jeopardizing financial aid, or teaching and research appointments.

16. American Studies and similar interdisciplinary programs are responsible for preparing their students for the risks and opportunities involved in obtaining interdisciplinary degrees. Programs that encourage interdisciplinary research should also integrate into their curriculum training in the research methods and standards appropriate to traditional disciplinary study. Such programs should also enhance their students' placement opportunities by providing information and guidance in the relevant application procedures and professional standards of related disciplines.

Standards Pertaining to Teaching ██████████

17. Teaching assistants, faculty fellows, and research assistants should have the right to organize and bargain collectively. Administrations should honor majority requests by graduate students for union representation anywhere state legislation permits such

activity. Graduate students should not suffer retaliation from administrators or faculty because of their activity and position on collective bargaining.

18. Graduate students should be furnished with terms of appointment and with clear guidelines of terms and conditions of their graduate student employment. Graduate students should have the right to grievance procedures in their program and institution that include impartial hearing committees.

19. The time that graduate students spend in teaching, grading, researching, or other graduate employment should be kept to the standard maximum of about twenty hours per week. Programs and institutions should offer sufficient compensation so that graduate student employees are not obligated to seek substantial employment elsewhere. Health, and dental and other essential benefits should be included in any teaching, grading, research or fellowship package.

20. Graduate Programs have the responsibility to train and properly supervise graduate student instructors in pedagogical methods. Graduate Student Instructors should have access to formal seminars on pedagogy and university teaching, and have the right to request that a member of the faculty observe, evaluate, and provide guidance on their teaching.

21. As a service to their own graduate students but also their profession, programs should recognize the adverse effects of relying on adjunct faculty. Although adjunct appointments can add significant dimensions to curricula and some individuals prefer adjunct appointments because of other commitments, (*continued on page six*)

“Worlds Within/Worlds Without”

2005 MAASA Conference University of Minnesota April 15-16, 2005

The 2005 MAASA conference, “Worlds Within/Worlds Without,” will be hosted by the American Studies Department of the University of Minnesota on April 15-16, 2005, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Our theme focuses on the importation and exportation of ideas and cultures between worlds (meaning nation, culture, or state), the movement of people between worlds, the exclusion and inclusion of people within and between worlds and representations of these relationships. We invite papers, panels, workshop formats and performances that will:

- Examine the processes involved in the relationship between worlds as well as the key debates within American studies about those processes;
- Examine relevant methodological issues and focus on the relationships between scholars and community activists who are engaged in these issues;
- Focus on issues related to pedagogy.

Although papers and complete sessions on any aspect of the conference theme would be especially appropriate, MAASA also welcomes presentations, complete panels, roundtables, workshops and performances on any issue within the field of American studies. For each proposal (paper, panel, workshop, roundtable, performance), please submit name; address, telephone number and e-mail address; institutional affiliation; title; 250-word abstract; and brief biographical note.

Conference registration, housing and travel information will be mailed at that time. Please mail proposals to Riv-Ellen Prell, 2005 MAASA Conference Chair, Department of American Studies, 104 Scott Hall, 72 Pleasant St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Submissions may also be faxed to 612-624-3858. Submissions via e-mail are not accepted.

Graduate students should know that MAASA will award a \$250 prize for the best American Studies paper delivered at the 2005 conference by a currently enrolled graduate student. Following acceptance of a conference proposal, the deadline for submission of completed papers for consideration for this competition is March 15, 2005. Essays should be no longer than 20 pages, exclusive of notes. The winner will be acknowledged at the conference, and the paper, upon recommendation of the prize committee, will be forwarded to the editors of the MAASA journal *American Studies* for revision and subsequent publication. Submit four copies of the essay by March 15, 2005, to Riv-Ellen Prell, 2005 MAASA Conference Chair, Department of American Studies, 104 Scott Hall, 72 Pleasant St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Submissions may also be faxed to 612-624-3858.

Graduate Education Standards Resolution (continued from page 4)

the practice of hiring numerous adjunct faculty members year after year to teach the core courses of a program of undergraduate study undermines professional and educational standards and academic freedom. It is recommended that departments should establish an appropriate limit on the number of adjunct faculty members in relation to the number of tenured or tenure-track faculty members and of graduate student instructors.

end



cat got your tongue?

If so, send that cat to St. Louis, and we promise to send your tongue right back.

Of course, there are much less messier means of getting the word out about your professional, departmental and institutional affairs, which we'd like to share with readers in upcoming issues.

Just give us the goods at MAASANews at the Department of American Studies, Saint Louis University, 221 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63130, or by email to smithj2@slu.edu.



Arts in American Studies Scholarship Symposium University of Iowa Iowa City, Iowa February 25-26, 2005

Invited Speakers

Thomas Doherty: Ass. Prof. of American Studies and Chair of Film Studies, Brandeis U.

Bruce McConachie: Prof. of Theater and Performance Studies, U. of Pittsburgh

Angela Miller: Ass. Prof. of Art History and Archeology and American Culture Studies Washington U.

Miles Orvell: Prof. of English and American Studies, Temple U.

Speakers from University of Iowa

Kenneth Cmiel: Prof. of History and American Studies

Jane Desmond: Ass. Prof. of American Studies

Kim Marra: Ass. Prof. of Theater Arts and American Studies

Horace Porter: Prof. of English and American Studies

Lauren Rabinovitz: Chair of American Studies, & Prof. of American Studies & Cinema

John Raeburn: Prof. of American Studies and Cinema

Laura Rigal: Ass. Prof. of English and American Studies

Nick Yablon: Ass. Prof. of American Studies

This 1 1/2 day **free** symposium for the purpose of assessing the past, present, and future roles of the arts as broadly defined within the field of American Studies will feature research talks by four nationally prominent American Studies scholars, three "state of the arts" assessment overviews and responses, and a concluding roundtable and open discussion. Our agenda embraces the opportunity to review and assess issues and problems in incorporating the study of the visual arts, performing arts, and cinema into the social and cultural history of the nineteenth and twentieth century United States. There will be an on-campus buffet dinner on Friday evening open to all participants and audience members and a post-symposium party on Saturday night.

For more information, including symposium schedule and housing options in Iowa City, see <http://www.uiowa.edu/~amstud/Events/Arts%20Symposium.htm>.

The Arts and Cultural Politics of Carnival

Obermann Center for Advanced Studies

University of Iowa

July 6-16, 2005

Application Deadline: February 11, 2005

Carnival may be defined as street theatre enacted by individuals with a wide range of creative and political agendas. Literal and metaphorical masking and unmasking occur on several levels and in various interstices. We will examine different kinds of carnival events — from officially recognized formal carnivals such as those in Venice or Trinidad that represent nationalist agendas and are commodified accordingly, to informal carnivals, or carnivalesque performances such as Black Indian parades during Mardi Gras that have developed from or on the fringes of formal carnivals, to visual and performing artists who have used carnival themes in their work. The seminar will focus on the interrelationships of symbols and the meanings of carnival events from around the world, exploring the changing meaning of the aesthetics and cultural politics of carnival interpreted broadly as the clash of cultural meanings and practices between social actors.

How, we will ask together, has migration influenced the carnival performances and peoples' participation? If carnival reveals the public secrets and fantasies of a society, how might these have shifted over time? How have the changing conceptions of citizenship and relationships to the nation-state affected the production and performances of carnival and carnival events? How have overseas/diaspora carnivals and re-imagined aesthetic traditions interacted with those from the original 'homelands' as is the case with Caribbean carnivals? Is carnival as democratic as proclaimed?

The seminar invites scholars, visual artists and performing artists from as wide an array of fields as possible including but not limited to theatre, visual arts, anthropology, music, dance, history, art history, political theory, literature, Caribbean studies, Latin American studies, performance studies, gender studies, carnival studies, intercultural performance studies, ethno-musicology, and semiotics.

Successful applicants will be expected to develop a first draft of an essay by the start of the seminar. Participants will read and discuss each of the draft essays along with common readings and will attend special presentations by notable speakers. Participants will revise their essays during and immediately following the seminar for inclusion in an edited volume.

Fellows are provided with offices, personal computers, Internet access, technical support, library delivery service, copying, and meeting rooms.

For more information and the application procedure, please contact Jay Semel, Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, N134 Oakdale Hall, The University of Iowa, or at jay-semel@uiowa.edu. Or online: <http://www.uiowa.edu/obermann/seminars/SummerSem/2005/stipend2005.html>.

Critical Masculinities

Book-length projects are invited for a new book series from the University of Wisconsin Press. The series focuses on an examination of cultural representations of manhood in which culture and masculinities are understood in the broadest sense.

Centered in the humanities (with the option to publish stimulating work in the social sciences), the majority of the books will be concerned with one or more of the following areas: multicultural and/or transnational masculinities; female and/or queer masculinities; masculinities in literature, film, TV, music, theater, and/or dance; the relationship between science and/or technology and masculinities; and other areas of debate in which masculinities has come to figure as a crucial analytical category.

Please send inquiries or book proposals to any of the editors: Peter F. Murphy (Murray State University), General Editor, peter.murphy@murraystate.edu; Matt Cohen (Duke University), Associate Editor, mxcohen@duke.edu; or Joel Morton (St. Lawrence University), Associate Editor, jmorton@stlawu.edu.

MAASANews is published in February, June, and October. **Editorial Staff:** Editor: Dr. Jonathan Smith (smithj2@slu.edu); Associate Editor: Shawn Wedel (wedelsk@slu.edu). **Contact:** MAASA News--Department of American Studies, Saint Louis University, 221 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63103

New Members Welcome! MAASA membership includes subscriptions to *American Studies* and to **MAASANews**: MAASA Membership, \$20.00; Student Membership, \$8.00 (*requires verification*); Emeritus Membership, \$14.00; *for foreign postage, please add \$12.00*. Send checks (payable to MAASA) to MAASA Business Manager, 2120 Wescoe Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045.

MAASA'S MISSION: MAASA strives "to foster the study of American culture in all its aspects, to provide a forum for communication and discussion among its members and the general public, and to promote scholarship by the publication of the journal, *American Studies*. These ends are to be achieved by the organization of regular meetings, by recognition of outstanding contributions to American Studies, and by cooperation with the national American Studies Association." From the MAASA Constitution, Article I: Name and Purpose