

Individual Teaching and Learning Mini-Grant
Application Cover Page

Date: 30 April 2014

Faculty Information

Name: So Young Park spark@gustavus.edu

Rank: Associate Professor

Dept.: ENG

Project Title: Dante's *Divine Comedy*

Course number: ENG 200-level (course number TBD)

Frequency of course offering: fall semester, every other year (TBD)

Attachments:

- 1) Application
- 2) Project Budget Form

If successful, my proposal can be used as an example to assist future faculty applications. I understand that this decision will not in any way influence the evaluation of my application.

Yes

X No

Application: Dante's *The Divine Comedy*

Rationale:

Dante's *Divine Comedy* tells the story of exile in the context of internecine political struggles of early fourteenth-century Florence, Italy. It offers a compendium of intellectual, philosophical, literary, cultural, and theological histories that continue to fascinate readers and scholars today. As such, the *Divine Comedy* is a key text in a liberal arts education, but currently there are no courses offered on Dante at Gustavus nor are there plans to offer such courses in the near future. (The last time the college offered a Dante course was in January Term 2013, taught by Prof. Eric Eliason.)

I am applying for the Kendall Center's Mini-Grant in order to develop a new course on Dante that explores the *Divine Comedy* in its myriad transdisciplinary contexts. This course teaches students about Dante's poetry and also the rich contexts of philosophy, art history, politics, and literary history that made fourteenth-century Florence not only an unforgettable city but also a culture and mindset that informed post-Renaissance Europe. In March, I successfully applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities Institute on Dante's *Divine Comedy*. This summer, I will be a participant in the Institute, hosted by UC Davis comparative literature professor and Dante specialist Brenda Schildgen. The month-long intensive seminar will be taught by leading Dante experts in the fields of medieval-Renaissance history, art history, ethics, religion, and politics.

I am seeking funding from the KCEL to defray part of the costs of participating in the seminar's in-class and Florence-based programming. Because the seminar takes place in Florence during the height of summer tourist season, my NEH funding covers only a part of my airfare, housing, food, and research/book budget. In this application, I outline a development plan in which I prepare for and participate in the NEH seminar and then design a course based on my learning and research experience in the seminar.

Application Questions

1) What are the basic pedagogical ideas, problems, or questions you will examine during the grant period?

There are two basic pedagogical questions that I will explore during the grant period:

a) how can we make a difficult, 700-year-old poem written in Italian come alive for

undergraduate students?; b) how can we teach students to understand transdisciplinarity as a useful method to access the past? By transdisciplinarity, I mean the use of two or more disciplines of study to understand a text or an intellectual problem: for instance, using the city of Florence as a “living archive” to understand the architectural, civic, and political histories of Dante’s time. How can we do this without resorting to the memorization of dates, timelines, and footnotes? What are some teaching strategies that use objects and contemporary (21st-century) analogues to help students understand intellectual-historical contexts relevant to Dante?

During the NEH Institute, I will learn best practices in how to teach Dante to undergraduates. I will take particular notes on how specialists in fields like art history and philosophy use their own disciplines as a launching pad to learn from and through other disciplines. Since the Institute is team-taught, I will observe how experts from different fields talk to and learn from each other, how scholars cross disciplines, so to speak, in order to understand an historical text or object. Furthermore, I will learn from the Institute how to use on-site venues such as a museum or burial ground as a point of entry into Dante studies. This pedagogical approach of site-study is one that I hope to replicate in my own course on Dante through the use of photographs, readings, and websites that I will collect in Florence.

2) Please describe what course/s you will focus on during the mini-grant period and how you anticipate incorporating the mini-grant project into that course or those courses.

During the grant period, I will develop a 200-level Dante course that will be offered through the English department, but with a broad appeal to Gustavus students. I will focus on the development of a Gen Ed/LARS, 200-level course that investigates themes such as justice, crime, and punishment. In addition to studying Dante’s world, the course will consider adaptations of his poem: examples include Philip Pullman’s young adult novels, recent detective fiction, and contemporary films.

3) What work will be accomplished during the grant period? Supply a brief plan of work.

Grant period: June to September 2014

- **June 2 to June 23:** prepare for the NEH Institute by re-reading the *Divine Comedy*; read and prepare notes on bibliography provided by Institute director; research different English translations for student use.
- **June 30 to July 24:** participate in the NEH Institute in Florence, Italy. Focus on course work (Mondays to Fridays, 9am-1pm) and seminar discussion. Read and critique primary texts and secondary sources (see bibliography). Participate in guided field trips to major cultural institutions like the Uffizi. During free time, gather teaching materials by visiting and documenting on-site institutions like museums, guilds, chapels, and cathedrals in Florence and environs not included in Institute schedule. (See attached Institute schedule.) Practice Italian.
- **July 28 to September 1:** Compile Institute notes and teaching strategies, continue research on Dante scholarship, compile/read textbooks suitable for undergraduate study, and plan syllabus for 200-level course on Dante. (See bibliography.)

4) How will you measure the outcomes and impact on teaching and learning of your work during this grant period? Please be specific about methodology, assessment techniques, and evaluation of student learning.

Faculty Learning

My own learning during the grant period will be certified by the NEH program director, Prof. Schildgen. Upon satisfactory completion of the Institute, I will receive a certificate of participation endorsed by the NEH. My work during the grant period and its influence on my teaching will be measured by a new course offering at Gustavus (ENG 200/number TBD), tentatively scheduled for AY 2015-16. English department courses are usually pre-scheduled up to two years in advance. Depending on staffing and scheduling, I plan to offer my Dante course sometime during academic year 2015-16.

Also, I would like to collaborate with other Gustavus faculty who will be participating in NEH programs this summer on a Shop Talk or Teachers Talking session (or another KCEL-sponsored forum) focusing on how to translate our experiences from NEH programs into student learning experiences. I'd be happy to help plan this forum and to serve as organizer or moderator.

Student Learning: Methodology, Assessment Techniques, Evaluation

Methodology and Assessment Techniques

One of the most important outcomes of my participation in the NEH Institute is to discover and compile evaluation and assessment techniques in the teaching of transdisciplinary models. Although assessment techniques abound in various aspects of undergraduate teaching, I have not yet seen a convincing rubric that explores student experiences of cross-disciplinary learning. Through discussion with Institute leaders and participants, I hope to gather assessment techniques appropriate to my course on Dante.

For now, these are the components I anticipate using in my course:

- 1) Writing: Two short essays. First essay on language and imagery. Second essay on historical context explored through an object, painting, or event relevant to Dante's writing. Specific topics will be provided to focus student historical investigation.
- 2) Transdisciplinary Research I: 6-8 page research essay on Dante's worlds: topics include city of Florence, museums, architectural history, recent Dante websites, Dante adaptations. Emphasis on beginning small with a detail, historical object, or character then contextualizing.
- 3) Transdisciplinary Research II: Visual and/or digital presentation of research project. This second iteration helps students to revise and expand their initial discoveries with a more general audience in mind. In consultation with instructor, students will choose the format/mode of their presentation: poster session, short student film, PPT presentation, Tumblr, etc. This format encourages participation in Celebration of Creative Inquiry in the spring semester. Because of this, I will work with my department to offer my course in the fall semester.
- 4) Discussion skills: Lead ten-minute discussion on reading for the day with focus on historical, material, art-historical contexts. Again, beginning with a small detail from the *Divine Comedy*, then telling its story through an intellectual investigation into historical and material contexts.

- 5) Recitation: Students will be asked to memorize approximately 14 lines (the size of a sonnet) of Dante's text in Italian. This assignment encourages students to experience culture and history through language use. It will be especially useful (and I hope enlightening) for students who are monolingual.

Evaluation

In addition to the above components I will use to measure student learning, I will ask students at the beginning, middle, and end of the course to write on key words or terms pertaining to Dante. For the first meeting, to allow for full participation, they will simply write on all the things that come to mind when they hear the name "Dante." The topics will become progressively complex as we learn more about fourteenth-century Florence, moving from "Dante" to "Political Exile," "Patronage," "Politics and Religion," etc. Students will have a chance to assess, revise, and expand on their in-class writings. These in-class writings will be compiled at the end of the course to yield a biographical entry on Dante similar to an encyclopedia entry, but a personal one as well that also represents in stages how the individual student has absorbed information about and understood Dante and his writings in the rich intellectual, artistic, and historical contexts of fourteenth-century Florence.

5) Anticipated project completion date?

- NEH Institute and course development: September 2014
- Dante course offering, tentatively scheduled for AY 2015-16

Appendix I

NEH Institute: Course Schedule (from UC Davis NEH Dante website)

Time 9-1 M-F, with some days taken as field trips. There will be a twenty-minute break at 11 each day.

Daily Organization 9-12 for faculty-led focus on the readings for the day; 12-1, group discussion.

Week 1 (June 30-July 4)

Background: Dante, early works, Virgil, Florence, Politics, Economics, the Church, and Ethics

Reading for the week: Dante's *Inferno* 1-22; Monday: Giuseppe Mazzotta, "Life of Dante," pp. 1-13, CCD; John M. Najemy, "Dante and Florence," pp. 236-56, CCD; Lino Pertile,

“Introduction to Inferno,” pp. 67-90, CCD; Tuesday: Kevin Brownless, “Dante and the Classical Poets,” pp.141-60, CCD; Wednesday: Charles Till Davis, “Dante and the Empire,” pp. 257-69.

Recommended: “Letter to Can Grande della Scala;” Virgil’s Aeneid, selections; Thomas Aquinas, selections; Monarchia, Convivio, all as pdf documents on the closed site or on-line.

Monday June 30: Introductions

Professor Peter Hawkins in residence from June 30-July 16

9:00-10:30 Institute faculty introduce themselves. Overview of the goals and objectives of the Institute and planned activities. Introduction to reading strategies for the Divine Comedy, and to iconographic art and literature.

10:45-12:30 Professor Lino Pertile guest speaker

“Introduction to Inferno.”

12:30-1:00 Orientation to Florence’s archives and libraries (Schildgen).

Tuesday July 1

9:00-11:00 Private visit to the Baptistery of San Giovanni and Santa Reparata

11:00-1:00 Inferno 1-4. (Schildgen and Hawkins)

Wednesday July 2

9:00-11:00 Inferno 5-9. (Schildgen and Hawkins).

11:15-1:00 Professor David Ardagh, “Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Free Will, Ethics and Politics”

Afternoon Guided visit to medieval strata of Palazzo della Signoria (Time to be established).

Thursday July 3

9:00-1:00 Inferno 10-17. (Schildgen and Hawkins).

Friday July 4

9:00-12:00 Inferno 18-22. (Schildgen and Hawkins)

Santa Maria Novella visit.

Week 2 (July 7-July 11)

Background: Inferno, Purgatorio, Medieval Politics, Art, and Poetry

Reading for the week: Dante’s Inferno 23-34, Purgatorio 1-24; Wednesday: Jeffrey Schnapp, “Introduction to Purgatorio,” pp. 91-106, CCD.

Monday July 7

9:45-12:00 Private guided visit to Uffizi with Professor William Cook (when it is closed)

2:00-5:00 Inferno 23-27. (Schildgen and Hawkins)

Tuesday July 8

9:00-12:00 Inferno 28-34. (Schildgen and Hawkins)

Afternoon visit to Siena (Guided tour of Palazzo Comunale and Opera del Duomo, Siena with Professor William Cook)

Wednesday July 9

Reading Jeffrey Schnapp, "Introduction to Purgatorio," pp. 91-106, CCD.

9:00-1:00 Introduction to Purgatorio 1-7. (Schildgen and Hawkins)

Thursday July 10

9:00-12:00 Purgatorio 8-16. (Schildgen and Hawkins)

Friday July 11

9:00-1:00 Purgatorio 17-24. (Schildgen and Hawkins)

Week 3 (July 13-July 18)

Background: Purgatorio, the Bible, Lyric poetry, Monasticism and Medieval learning

Reading for the Week: Dante's Purgatorio 25-33, Paradiso 1-10; Monday: Peter Hawkins, "Dante and the Bible," pp. 125-40, CCD, Teodolinda Barolini, "Dante and the Lyric Past," pp. 14-34, CCD; Friday: Rachel Jacoff, "Introduction to Paradiso," pp. 107-24, CCD.

Monday July 14

Reading Peter Hawkins, "Dante and the Bible," pp. 125-40, CCD; Teodolinda Barolini, "Dante and the Lyric Past," pp. 14-34, CCD.

9:00-1:00 Purgatorio 25-28. (Hawkins and Schildgen)

Afternoon Professor Chiara Frugoni, University of Rome, emerita, "Upper Basilica, Church of San Francesco, Assisi" at Santa Croce.

Tuesday July 15

9:00-5:00 All day visit to Assisi and a Franciscan guided visit to the Basilica of San Francesco (Simone Martini, Cimabue, Pietro Lorenzetti, Giotto).

Wednesday July 16

9:00-1:00 Purgatorio 29-33. (Hawkins and Schildgen)

4 PM Visit to San Miniato, "Lecture on Monasticism: St. Benedict and St. Bernard," Benedictine Monastery (followed by Gregorian Chant).

Thursday July 17

9:00-1:00 Paradiso 1-5. (Professor Giuseppe Mazzotta and Brenda Schildgen).

Friday July 18

Reading Rachel Jacoff, "Introduction to Paradiso," pp. 107-24, CCD.

9:00-1:00 Paradiso 6-10. (Schildgen and William Franke)

Afternoon lecture: Professor Giuseppe Mazzotta, Introduction to Paradiso and the encyclopedia of medieval learning.

Week 4 (July 21-25)

Background: Paradiso, St. Francis, Theology and Pedagogy

Reading for the Week: Paradiso 11-33; Monday: Saint Francis of Assisi, "Canticle of Brother Sun," A. N. Williams, "The theology of the Comedy," pp. 201-17, CCD; Selections from Approaches to Teaching Dante; Wednesday: David Wallace, "Dante in English," 281-304, CCD.

Monday July 21

Reading Saint Francis of Assisi, "Canticle of Brother Sun"; A. N. Williams, "The theology of the Comedy," pp. 201-17, CCD.

9:00-1:00 Paradiso 11-18. (Schildgen and Franke)

Afternoon lecture: Professor William Franke, "Self-Reflection and the Theological Apotheosis of Lyric in the Paradiso."

Tuesday July 22

8:00-5:00 All day guided trip to Ravenna and its Paleo-Christian monuments.

Wednesday July 23

9:00-1:00 Paradiso 19-22; 24-27.

Afternoon Session: General issues: pedagogy, reception, canons, great books, translation, interrelationship of the arts and sciences in the medieval and early modern periods and applications in a pedagogical setting.

Reading Selections from Approaches to Teaching Dante; David Wallace, "Dante in English," 281-304, CCD to introduce Dante's reception in English.

Thursday July 24

9:00-1:00 Paradiso 30-33.

Closing Session and Summations

Appendix II: Select Bibliography

Primary Texts

Augustine. *City of God*. Trans. Henry Bettenson. London, 1976.

Augustine. *Confessions*. Trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin. London, 1961.

Dante, *Divine Comedy*. Trans. Robin Kirkpatrick. New York, 2006-7.

Dante, "Letter to Can Grande della Scala." Ed. Ermenegildo Pistelli. Trans. Paget Toynbee. Florence, 1960.

Dante, *De Vulgari Eloquentia*. Ed. and trans. Steven Botterill. Cambridge, 1996.

Dante, *Il Convivio (The Banquet)*. Trans. Richard Lansing. New York, 1990.

Dante, *La Vita Nuova*. Ed. Domenico de Robertis. Milan, 1980.

Dante, *Monarchia*. Ed. and trans. Prue Shaw. Cambridge, 1995.

Virgil. *The Aeneid*. Trans. Allen Mandelbaum. New York, 1961 and 2004.

Secondary Sources

Abulafia, David. *Italy in the Central Middle Ages 1000-1300*. Oxford, 2004.

Arnaldi, Girolamo. *Italy and Its Invaders*. Trans. Antony Shugaar. Cambridge, Mass., 2005.

Baron, Hans. *Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*. Princeton, 1966.

Burckhardt, Jacob. *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. New York, 1929.

Cambridge Companion to Dante. Ed. Rachel Jacoff. Cambridge, 1993.

Freccero, John. *Dante: The Poetics of Conversion*. Cambridge, Mass., 1988 (reprint).

Frugoni, Chiara. *A Day in A Medieval City*. Trans. William McCuaig. Chicago, 2005.

Frugoni, Chiara. *A Distant City: Images of Urban Experience in the Medieval World*. Trans. William McCuaig. Princeton, 1991.

Hawkins, Peter. *Dante: A Brief History*. London, 2006.

Hawkins, Peter. *Dante's Testaments: Essays in Scriptural Imagination*. Stanford, 2000.

Partridge, Loren. *Art of Florence 1400-1600*. Berkeley, CA, 2009.

Schildgen, Brenda. *Divine Providence: A History: The Bible, Virgil, Orosius, Augustine, and Dante*. London, 2014.

Waley, Daniel, and Trevor Dean. *The Italian City-Republics*. London, 1969 and 2010.

Appendix III	Book Budget
40.00	Dante. <i>Divine Comedy</i> . Trans. Robin Kirkpatrick. Dual ENG/Italian edition.
20.00	Dante. <i>Divine Comedy</i> . Trans. Robin Kirkpatrick. Digital edition.
20.00	Abulafia, David. <i>Italy in the Central Middle Ages 1000-1300</i> . Oxford, 2004.
25.00	<i>Blue Guide: Florence</i>
12.00	Burckhardt, Jacob. <i>The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy</i> . New York, 1929.
15.00	<i>Cambridge Companion to Dante</i> . Ed. Rachel Jacoff. Cambridge, 1993.
30.00	Freccero, John. <i>Dante: The Poetics of Conversion</i> . Cambridge, Mass., 1988.
20.00	Frugoni, Chiara. <i>A Day in A Medieval City</i> . Chicago, 2005.
53.00	Frugoni, Chiara. <i>A Distant City: Images of Urban Experience in the Medieval World</i> . Princeton, 1991.
28.00	Hawkins, Peter. <i>Dante's Testaments: Essays in Scriptural Imagination</i> . Stanford, 2000.
30.00	Hawkins, Peter. <i>Dante: A Brief History</i> . London, 2006.
38.00	Partridge, Loren. <i>Art of Florence 1400-1600</i> . Berkeley, CA, 2009.
26.00	Schildgen, Brenda. <i>Divine Providence: The Bible, Virgil, Orosius, Augustine, and Dante</i> . London, 2014.
43.00	Waley, Daniel, and Trevor Dean. <i>The Italian City-Republics</i> . London, 1969 and 2010.
400.00	Total