

2016 Application Form for ASC Grants for New Service-Learning Course Proposals

Application Deadline: **March 1, 2016**

You MUST use this form to submit your proposal. Please send submission (form and supplementary materials) to Linda Hood (hood.82@osu.edu), Executive Assistant to Associate Executive Dean Steven Fink.

1. Working Title of Course Proposal

Ohio Field Schools

2. Applicant Information

- Name: Katherine Borland
- Title: Associate Professor
- Department: Comparative Studies
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3. Course Description

- The Ohio Field Schools will provide undergraduate students a six week summer experience in team-based ethnographic fieldwork, preservation and public exhibition of Ohio traditions, expressive culture and artists. In the process they will learn about social justice issues affecting rural and urban communities in Ohio by traveling to, visiting and dialoging with our community partners.
- Course Content: Students will spend one week in the classroom preparing for their field experience. We will cover the basics of folklore: genres, contexts, performances, people, oral history. We will cover the basics of fieldwork: attentive listening, ethics, interviewing, participant-observation, field-notes, photographing, logging, key-wording, describing collections, and designing public exhibitions. Throughout the preparatory phase we will use the history, culture and aspirations of our Ohio community partners as the content for our exploration of concepts and methods.
- Students will spend three weeks in the field working with community partners to document their traditions. Depending on the community partner, this may take the form of oral histories, documentation of festivals, landscapes and buildings, foodways, traditional medicine, music, dance, narratives, occupational traditions, or some other form of expressive culture. Students will spend the final two weeks archiving their collection and working with a contracted public folklorist to design one or more accessible public exhibitions of the research.



- The course goals are to provide students with a pre-organized, team-based, hands-on experience doing public humanities research. We are working under the assumption that having learned the discipline of field work, students will be empowered to conduct their own individual field-based projects and community consultations. The service constitutes the content for the course, and is service in two senses. First, the documentation project is a service for our community partners, and staff will be in conversation with community partners before the field schools to determine the preferred contours of the documentation project. Second, the documentation project is a service to Ohio State, as the research will form a permanent collection at the Center for Folklore Studies Archives. Since this is a team project students will receive immediate feedback on the quality and usefulness of their efforts. Community partners as well as university team members will be their first audience and critics. We will build in regular reflective sessions, so that students can process their experience in and with the project at the same time they are doing the work. This work will be facilitated by the on-site group-living format of the field portion of the course.
- We do not have a syllabus yet. In Summer 2016, program directors, Katherine Borland and Cassie Patterson, Director of the Folklore Archives, will conduct a pre-course survey of locally-based individuals and institutions in the Southeast quadrant of the state to identify those who have an interest in documenting their traditions. From this survey we will identify the projects/communities with whom we can be most productive given our course framework and limited time in the field. We will also attend the Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures summer field-school for teachers in June 2016, to learn about logistics and synergies from a longstanding university-community partnership centered on incorporating knowledge of traditional communities into the public school curriculum. We will also consult with the American Folklife Center staff at the Smithsonian who have decades of experience conducting place-based field schools, collecting the nation's traditions and producing public exhibitions based on their research. The survey work and consultation trips will be funded by a generous donor who has committed to providing CFS with the means to build a quality, sustainable university-community partnership around documenting Ohio traditions, and to underwriting the student program fee for field schools in 2017 and 2018. What our donor has not provided and cannot provide is release time (or the monetary equivalent) for the program directors. Donor funding, however, allows us to conduct preliminary research to map out potential projects for the next several years. After two years of donor-supported field schools, we will partner with the Ohio Humanities Council, whose staff have expressed a need for university-community partnerships to take advantage of their local tourism funding in order to produce quality, research-based, public humanities programming.

4. Community Focus and Reciprocity

- Community partners: We will be conducting a cultural survey in summer 2016 to identify specific partners in the Southeast Quadrant of Ohio with whom we can work. We will work with Ohio State Extension to identify individuals and groups interested in

traditional cultural preservation. We will also visit local museums and historical societies to determine what kinds of documentation exist. In addition we will contact local associations of artists, community action groups, festival organizers and others engaged in cultural expression and preservation efforts. A partial list of partners with whom we are already in conversation through the Appalachian Project, a CFS affiliated service project designed to support OSU students from Ohio Appalachian counties includes:

- Portsmouth Murals Inc.
- Rural Action
- Southern Ohio Museum Center
- Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development
- Live Healthy Appalachia
- Governor's Office of Appalachia (CFS affiliated Appalachian Project has received a grant from them in the past)
- Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth
- Heritage Ohio
- Ohio Main Street Program
- Museum of Appalachia
- Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development
- The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio
- Future Farmers of America

We plan to cast a wide net and to attend to issues of diversity as we survey the region and develop relationships with local stakeholders.

- Community partners will set the agenda for the documentation project. Our goal is to meet with folks interested in cultural documentation and solicit their ideas for projects that will be of value to local stakeholders and feasible given our six week, team-based structure. Recognizing that all policy is cultural policy, we will give priority to existing or emerging traditions that speak to contemporary challenges that urban and rural communities are facing. For instance, a given community may be experiencing conflict due to the in-migration of new, unfamiliar populations. Documenting and exhibiting the cultural traditions of both the old-timers and newcomers may serve as a means to dispel stereotypes and forge new understandings across difference.
- By definition, the service (cultural documentation and public exhibition) will reflect the priorities and stated goals/needs of community partners. We will be privileging prospective projects with partners who have the ability to interact collaboratively with the university-student team. And we expect that the project itself will adapt to a dynamic and changing community vision, since the documentation will inform that vision.
- Communities will benefit in at least three ways from this project. First, the documentation process will provide an opportunity for community members to share their valued traditions and practices. Second, the research will be deposited at a local institution as well as at the Ohio State University Folklore Archives for posterity.

Third, the project team, working with community stakeholders and a contracted public folklorist, will design one or more public exhibitions that will showcase community traditions. Exhibitions may be in the form of physical displays, public presentations, performances, web-based presentations or some other format as determined through consultation.

5. Letter of Support from Department Chair

Requested from Dr. Barry Shank, Chair, Comparative Studies and attached below

Additional Tips for ASC Service-Learning Grants

- We are interested in attending the May term course design institute. I have already attended one of these institutes as a facilitator, but I am anxious to take the course as a practitioner with my co-director, Cassie Patterson.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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March 1, 2016

Associate Executive Dean Steve Fink
S-Learning Program
College of Arts and Sciences
The Ohio State University

Dear Steve,

I write to convey the support of the Department of Comparative Studies for the S-Learning Course proposed by Associate Professor Katherine Borland. Borland proposes a new Field-School course that will train undergraduates in ethnographic methods and folklore collecting techniques. The course is designed not only to develop these skills but also to contribute to the archiving and maintenance of regional and local community traditions. It is very well designed. It will provide students with skills that will be transferable to employment opportunities in a wide range of fields.

The course (tentatively numbered at the 3000 level) fits neatly into our Folklore curriculum, functioning to hone skills introduced in previous courses (CS 2350, CS 2360, CS 3990, RS 2370). It will also be attractive to students working through other concentrations and majors offered by our department such as Religious Studies, Comparative Cultural Studies, and Comparative Ethnic and American Studies. Given the investment of time required by students for this course and the functional reality of this course being offered in summer, it is best that it remain an elective open to any student majoring in Comparative Studies.

Borland has already obtained funding that will ensure the offering of this course for two years. We expect that those first two years will sufficiently seed the demand for the course and direct a consistent flow of students toward it.

Yours,

Barry Shank
Professor & Chair