



May 29, 2014

David Manderscheid, Executive Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Dear Dean Manderscheid,

I write to enthusiastically support the team-taught course *Odysseus in the Oculus Rift* proposed by Professors Tom Hawkins (of Classics) and Ken Rinaldo (of Art, Art and Technology) for the ASC Team Teaching Plan competition. The course proposal strikes me not only as incredibly imaginative and intellectually stimulating for the participants on multiple fronts, but as a course that addresses an urgent need in the Humanities. The timing of this proposal could not be more opportune.

In a NYT Education article published on October 30, 2013 entitled *As Interest Fades in the Humanities, Colleges Worry*, NYT reporter Tamar Lewin directly addressed a crisis in the growing disinterest in traditional Humanities at premier US universities, and in American culture at large. In a digital age, how do we bring the great narratives, poetry and history of our intellectual heritage to generations that are coming of age in a world of technology, technological imaging and electronic discourse? The main focus of the article is on a highly successful seminar in the Stanford Classics department, Prof. Hawkins' *alma mater*, that by bringing Rap Genius into the, sometimes considered *most* traditional, setting of a Classics department, can make Antiquity relevant not only to contemporary students' interests, but also to their own intellectual world constructed in a digital age.

The course proposed by Professors Hawkins and Rinaldo exactly targets this need, and would be a pioneering education experience at OSU. As the authors of the proposal correctly observe, it is the unique combination of their talents that makes the course possible: this is one of the best team-teaching arguments, and team-teaching proposals, that this writer has ever seen. I support the course with complete enthusiasm, and very much hope that it can serve as a model of future OSU inter-disciplinary instruction. The integration of texts and images, of mytho-history and fantastical worlds, and particularly of the perspectives different types of *poiesis*, of 'creativity', is absolutely compelling.

Please let me know if I can provide any further support,

Very sincerely,

Benjamin Acosta-Hughes
Professor and Chair